Chief Editors

Dr. Paul Robertson

Dr. Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh

Iranian EFL Journal

Table of Contents

Foreword

Welcome to volume ten and the third edition of 2014. We are happy to announce that our readership is increasing day by day. For a journal examining the topics of EFL/ESL, Literature and Translation studies, the growth and readership has been pleasing. Our bi-monthly Journal has attracted many readers not only from the Middle East but also from different parts of the world. In this third edition, we have presented thirty articles, discussing different issues of EFL/ESL, literature and translation studies. In the first article of the issue, English-language-learning attitudinal Impact on the Development of Expressive Speech Act and Addressee Honorifics in Iranian EFL Settings is studied by Nader Assadi Aidinlou, Mahnaz Rnjbar and Somayyeh Ranjbar. In the second article of the issue, Abbas Moradan, Ehsan Kazemian and Zahra Niroo have studied The Relationship between Perfectionism and Listening Comprehension among EFL Students of Kerman University. In the third article of the issue, Shahin Vandchali and Shahin Sheikh presented Iranian Language Instructors' Perceptions of Speaking Assessment. In the next article, The Viability of M-learning via SMS in Vocabulary perception of Iranian EFL learners is presented by Fateme Alipanahi, Saeied Moharrami Qeydari and Vali Qadiri. In the fifth article of the issue, Hamid Marashi and Samaneh Kordbacheh present Using Inductive and Deductive Consciousness Raising Tasks to Improve Field-Dependent and Field-Independent EFL Learners' Grammar. The next article which is The Role of Gambits in Promoting Iranian EFL Learners' Spoken Fluency is done by Amir Nikmehr and Farahman Farrokhi. In the seventh article of the issue, Biook Behnam and Mehrdad Rezaeian have studied A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Europe`s Economic Crisis in the European and British Print Media Discourse. In the eight article of the issue Sources of Persian Learners' Errors in English Pronunciation is studied by Seyyed Mohammad Reza Amirian and Fatemeh Sadeghi. In the next article, On the Relationship between the Age of Start of English Education in Iranian Schools and the Students' English Achievement is presented by Gholam Reza Kiany and Kolsoum Salarvand. In the tenth article of the issue, Morteza Amirsheibani, Mohamad Sadegh Tamri and Sajad Yaseri Moghadam have studied Dynamic Assessment of Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Ability.

In the eleventh article of the issue, Interpretive Methodology from Literary Criticism: Carnivalesque Analysis of "Young Good Man Brown" is done by **Masoumeh Sohrabi** and Masoumeh Khalkhali Rad.In the twelfth article of the issue, Advent of Proficiency Test in High School Sentence Structure Tests is presented by Leila Sayah and Behzad Ghonsooly.

In the next article, Ahmad Farahmand and Asghar Hatami have presented The Differential Effects of Implicit and Explicit Feedback on the Grammatical Accuracy of Male EFL Learners' Writing. In the fourteenth article of the issue, Investigating four aspects of the Muqatta'at letters translation is done by Sima Ferdowsi, Samira Heydari and Effat Soltani. In the fifteenth article of the issue, Jalal Sokhanvar and Nahid Fakhrshafaie have studied "Absolute Zero": Tramps in Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy*, *Moon Palace* and *Timbuktu*. In the next article, The Effect of Translator's Content Knowledge on Translating Texts in the Field of Management is studied by Ayda Ferdossif ard. In the seventeenth article of the issue, Mahnaz Saeidi, Helen Alizadeh and Nasrin Hadidi Tamjid have presented The Relationship between Iranian EFL Learners' Multiple Intelligences and their Writing Performance.The next article which is Need Analysis: On the Academic Writing Needs of Master's Graduate Students of Applied Linguistics: Instructors' Perception, Students' View, and current Pedagogical Practices is done by Fateme Chahkandi. In the next article of the issue Najmeh Dehghani and Ali Akbar Jabbari have presented The Acquisition of Relative Clause Constructions by Persian Native Speakers of English (L2) and French (L3). In the twentieth article of the issue, The Role of L1 in Online L2 Dynamic Assessment Mediation is studied by Saman Ebadi and Abdulbaset Saeedian.

Iranian EFL Journal

In the twenty first article of the issue, Self-Efficacy, Stressors and Burnout among Iranian EFL Teachers in Private Language Institutes Is done by Nasser Fallah, Saeed Khojasteh Nam and Roya Movahed. In the next article of the issue Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh and Marziyeh Rabieefar have studied Commands among English Speakers and Iranian speakers.

In the twenty third article of the issue, Power of Color in Toni Morrison's *Sula* A Foucauldian Perspective is presented by Nasser Motalebzadeh and Afsaneh Hezarjaribi Ghassab. In the next article, Fereydoun Jafari Laasaki and Ahmad Morad Jokar have done a research on The Role of Cultural-Awareness in the Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Performance.In the next article of the issue, The Effect of Corrective Feedback on Writing's Organization and Accuracy: A Comparison between Children and Teenagers is presented by Mohammad Saber Khaghaninezhad and Saharsadat Hadigheh. In the twenty sixth article of the issue, The Philosophical Nuances of Existential Terminology as Used in Camus` *L`Etranger* and its English and Persian Translation is studied by Amir Hossein Mirsalehian. In the twenty seventh article of the issue, The Role of Pre-Task Planning in the Complexity and Accuracy of Iranian EFL Learners' L2 Writing Performance in a TBLT Context is presented by Seyed Hesamuddin Aliasin and Mahdi Noshadi. In the next article, Rozana Shamsabadi, Parisa Riahipour and Abbas Eslami Rasekh have presented an article entitled: A Genre Analysis on the Rhetorical Moves in Dentistry Research Abstracts by Iranian and English Native Speakers.In the next article of the issue, The Effect of Extroversion/Introversion and Textual Enhancement Technique on Grammar Learning of EFL Learners is done by Sedigheh Vahdat and Asieh Pasideh. In the last article of the issue, Study of English and Persian Thought Patterns through Metadiscourse Strategies is done by Massood Yazdanimoghaddam and Mahboobe Salek.

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

Title

English-language-learningattitudinal Impact on the Development of Expressive Speech Act and Addressee Honorifics in Iranian EFL Settings

Authors

Nader Assadi Aidinlou (Ph.D)
Assistant professor of Islamic Azad University, Ahar Branch

Mahnaz Rnjbar (M.A. candidate)
Islamic Azad University, Ahar Branch

Somayyeh Ranjbar (M.A. candidate)
Islamic Azad University, Ahar Branch

Biodata

Nader Asadi, Ph.D. in applied linguistics and assistant professor and researcher at Islamic Azad University, Ahar Branch. He has published scores of papers and his main research areas are discourse analysis and teaching methodology.

Mahnaz Ranjbar, M.A. candidate in TEFL and is an English language instructor; her main research areas lie in discourse-related issues and teaching methodology.

Somayyeh Ranjbar, M.A. candidate in TEFL and is an English language instructor; her main research areas lie in discourse-related issues and teaching methodology.

Abstract

The hypothesis that widespread interest in speech act competence is a prerequisite for language acquisitionwas, in general, the underlying motive for the present investigation. Thus, the current study tackles the communication-specific pragmatics and attitudes of the EFL learners associated with speech act and addressee honorifics. To this aim, the sketched-out instrumentations, i.e, four self-

designed questionnaires, were administered to two groups of participants (N=200). Broadly viewed, taking the individual variables of the EFL learners into account, the attitudes the learners hold toward learning English language, in light of their age, employment position, formal academic proficiency and marital status, were dramatically interwoven with and effective to speech act and honorific addressee. Statisticallyexpressed, after running t-test on data, the results revealed that there was observed a significant difference(P =0.000) between the attitudes of the two groups of learners, i.e., attitudes of learning English language triggers them to employ appropriate speech act and addressee terms. The implications of the study lend some rich tinges of pedagogical support to further exploration of the speech-act relevant competence in a vast variety of EFL/ESL context impressed implicitly by idiosyncratic qualities of the interlocutors so as to raise the awareness of the educators and EFL/ESL researchers to this phenomenon.

Keywords: Pragmatic competence, Expressive Speech Act, Addressee honorifics, Attitudes

1. Introduction

The steady and speedy expansion of English language learning as a universal language for business, technology, occupation, communication, science, mass-media, etc, has obliged the educationalists, researchers, teachers, testers, linguists, sociologists, psychologist and applied linguists to in detail analyze the nature of communicative competence and find out the key to developing it. One of the tools to set the motion of interaction and communication-relevant competence into action is pragmatics. From our perspectives, too much has been written by too many researchers and its nature by too many has been also argued and criticized; however, there is unlimited space to, within the framework of which, discuss, write about, and make profit of the word "pragmatics". What follows, the modern usage of pragmatics is attributable to its communicative service and also to the fact that it is characterized by psychological, psycholinguistics, biological, sociological and socio-linguistic phenomena (Yates, 2000; Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Ellis, 2008;Levinson, 1983;Leung, 2005; Bouton, 1996;Lantolf& Thorne, 2006).

Fabulously enough, one appealing perspective maintained in the pragmatic filed is that it is mainly concerned with the study of language functions and also that it makes an attempt to explain the facets of linguistic structures by reference to non-linguistic structures.By the same

token, contrary to the definitions which exert pragmatics within restricted framework and limits it, hence, to just linguistic matters, the general consensus is that pragmatics carries functional, communicative, interactive and meaning-based sense (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Ellis, 2008; Levinson, 1983).

2. Review of the Related Literature

Typically, as cited above, so as to act successfully in communication and interaction with others, we are required to know not just language-related phenomena such as syntax, grammar, and text organization, but also we are required to consider a broader framework and hence, have the needed mastery over social, pragmatic and communicative aspects of target language teaching such as speech acts including requesting, greeting, appreciating, apologizing, and the kind of relationships between the speakers involved and the social and cultural context of the situation (Bachman,1990;Brown&Yule,1989;Miyuki,2002;Canale& Swain, 1980). By the same token, Johnson and Johnson (1999) and Fasold (2006) expressed the view that speech act theory is part of pragmatic competence which makes a key and crucial contribution to social understanding and functional facilitation of the language related-phenomenon. Research on cross-cultural comparative discourse (Brown&Yule,1989; Hudson,1980; Levinson, 1983; Halliday, 2003) has indicated that different cultures possess different rules of appropriateness regarding apology.

By way of classification, speech act theory (Levinson, 1983; Kent, 2001; Crystal, 2006; Haliday, 2003) involves performance of three types of act: a locutionary act or an act of expressing something, illocutionary act or the performance of language function by what is expressed and a perlocutionary act or the achieving of some kind of effect on the addressee. On the other hand, five general classes of speech act have been identified (Ellis,2008; Levinson, 1983; Thornbury,1997): 1. representatives: e.g. asserting, concluding,…; 2. directives: e.g. requesting, ordering,…3. Commissives: e.g. promising, threatening… 4. expressive: e.g. thanking, congratulating…5. Declarations: e.g. declaring war, marrying, firing,… Along these different kinds of speech act competence, there exists a requirement to for citing the position of politeness theory in pragmatic and social context. As Johnson and Johnson (1999) and Levinson (1983) viewed, politeness theory is universal, but it varies across cultures; by definition, it elaborates on aspects of how people interpret each other's meanings. To be polite, speakers attempt to give options, avoid intrusion and make their interlocutor feel good; departure from politeness model signals intimacy or aggression. In the

same vein, Elis (2008) and Levinson (1983) held the position that speakers take their relationship with the addressee and the degree of imposition imposed by the illocution and its propositional content into consideration so as to make sure that the required social relationship between the interlocutors is not disturbed.

A vast number of studies have been done in the field. Allami (2006) in his paper, A socio-pragmatic analysis of gripping: the case of Iranian students, conducted a research into complaint-related speech competence. Also, moon (2001) worked on the speech act of complaint as produced by native and nonnative speakers of English. Another research was, along the same line, led by Arent (1996) on complaint. But, the relevant research conducted so far and related to the current investigation is apology. Research has revealed that (Levinson, 1983) events that requir4 an apology have been shown to vary cross-culturally.Arent (1996) statesthat a good body of pragmatic research has examined apologies in different languages, considering different strategies related to appropriateness, the cultural values reflected in the realization of an apology, gender, and strategies used by native and non-native speakers.

Although much research has been conducted on apology and addressee honorifics, there exists no survey done about thanks-related speech act and the attitudinal effect associated with foreign language learning on our use of either one of addressee terms, our appreciation tendency and also on the degree to which we offer apology. This was considered problematic and finally, an intriguing gap was sensed to be bridged with respect to speech-act related competence afresh.

To accomplish the purposes of the study, the following research questions were raised in the following study:

1. Is there any difference between the performance of the two groups in formal and informal settings with respect to addressee terms?

2. Do EFL-learning attitudes affect the apology-related speech acts of the two groups of learners?

3. Do EFL-learning attitudes affect the appreciation-related speech acts of the two groups of learners?

4. Do EFL-learning attitudes affect the appreciation-related speech acts of the two groups of learners?

Generally viewed, we suppose that, on the one hand, there is no difference between the performance of the two groups in formal and informal settings with respect to addressee

terms and on the other hand, EFL-learning attitudes do not affect speech act and addressee terms application of the two groups of learners. Eventually, to supply answer to the above-mentioned questions and to either reject or confirm the hypotheses, the subsequent statistical elaboration will shed light on the reality at hand.

3. Methodology

3.1.Participants

The sole male participants, with different age and educational levels, in this study (N=200) were 100 high school and guidance school EFL learners without employment position and all of whom were single. The other 100 EFL learners were those university graduates searching for job or those government employees learning English for job purposes. The English language proficiency of the government employees and university graduates and School-level EFL learners was pre-intermediate and higher. It is worth reminding that the two groups of examinees, for ease of comprehension and clarity, were namedGroup One (schools-level learners studying English as a foreign language) and Group Two (government employees or university graduates studying English as a foreign language).However, both of these groups were administered the same questionnaires. These participants were selected from three locations: from Iranian Foreign Languages Educational Department, from GasCompany and Cement factory; the latter two were used for the purpose of administering questionnaires to the government employees and the former English language Department was used for collecting data from graduates and school-level EFL learners.Also, there learners were given clear instruction and they were also explained the questionnaire in Persian this was due to the fact that some of them were at elementary level and in order to avoid answer bias, they were asked not write their name. In order to avoid the disturbing variables, some of the variables that were of interest to the researchers were unwillingly eliminated to the consideration of validity of response. For instance, the present study just considered male learners as an attribute variable and excluded the female learners. In line of which, we could, at least in the case related, get assuaged of the reliability of the responses and of interpretation of analysis. Of course, doing this may reduce the generalization from the study to only males (Best &Kahan, 2006).

3.2.Instruments

Four instruments i.e. four one-statement self-designed questionnaires wereused for the elicitation of response from the participants with respect to the following points which have been clearly explained before: EFL-associated-learning attitudes of the participants; apology-related speech acts of the learners; appreciation –related speech acts of the learners; addresseehonorifics, i.e., either formal or informal terms employed in appropriate settings by the participants. It is of use to be stated that the questionnaires prompts were designed according to likert-type model and the learner's were expected to choose either one of the choices from strongly sensitive to the least sensitive.

3.3.Design and Procedures

This study made use of a survey-based design, which was based on descriptive statistics for analyzing speech-act relevant events on the one hand and EFL-associated attitudes and addressee terms triggered to either formal or informal setting on the other hand.

3.4.Data Collection

First, the participants were given the four one-statement self-designed questionnaires, followedby some verbal explanation and instruction in an hour. The obtainedscores from all instruments were compared with each other and the difference between them was also clarified.

4. Data Analysis and Results

The data obtained from the four questionnaires related to the effect of EFL learning on apology speech act, impact of EFL learning on appreciation speech act, influence of EFL learning on addressee honorifics, and use of formal and informal addressee terms were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS Program through descriptive statistics, dependent t-test statistics and Pearson Correlation. P values < 0.05 were considered statistically significant. It is also worth reminding that the two groups of examinees, for ease of comprehension and clarity, were named Group One (schools-level learners studying English as a foreign language) and Group Two (government employees or university graduates studying English as a foreign language).Ultimately,the full-fledged statistical data associated with the present investigation appear as follow.

Addressee honorifics	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Group one	100	3.60	1.1541	-10.71	196	0.000
Group two	100	1.91	1.073	-10.71	198	

Table 1: Result oft-test run on the group One and Group two associated with addressee honorifics

As it is clear from Table 1, there is a statistically significant difference (P = 0.000; Mean=1.91 and 3.60) between the responses of group one and group two. This indicates the fact that the group one considers addressee honorifics and differentiates between intimacy and social closeness with the required and appropriate terms, more than group two. So, response to the first research question is supplied. Statistically evidenced, group one stated that they use TO (you in singular form for one person in Persian language) to reveal intimacy and social closeness and use SHOMA (you in plural form for one person in Persian language)

Impact on addressee honorifics	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Group one	100	3.66	1.571	--6.87	197	0.000
Group two	100	2.16	1.515	--6.87	198	

to display respect and social distance, as is indicated at the end of the paper in questionnaire one.

Table 2: Impact of EFL learning-related attitude on addressee honorifics

To find out whether EFL learning affected the two groups' attitudes toward use of addressee honorifics i.e., using SHOMA (you in plural form for *one person* in Persian) to display respect and social distance, the mean scores and sig (2.16 vs. 3.66 and P = 0.000, respectively) reached a statistical significance, as is represented in Table 2 above. Clearly enough, group one responded that learning English language affects their points of view to differentiate and use appropriate terms corresponding to either formal or informal setting, .i.e., intimacy or respect.

Impact on apology speech act				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Group one	100	3.03	1.274	--6.72	185	
Group two	100	1.95	0.978	--6.72	198	0.000

Table 3: Impact of EFL learning-related attitude on apology speech act

As Table 3 is indicative, the question that either the attitudes of the learners associated with learning English language influences them to apologize others gets obvious. Hence, the mean scores and sig (3.03 vs. 1.95and P = 0.000, respectively) reached a statistical significance, indicating that there is a difference in the attitudes of the two groups. Clearly enough, group one responded that learning English language affects their points of view in apologizing others, but group two indicated that it plays no role in the domain related.

Table 4: Impact of EFL learning-related attitude on appreciation speech act

Impact on appreciation speech act				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Group one	100	2.81	1.00	--7.31	180	
Group two	100	1.95	1.38	--7.31	198	0.000

As Table 4 demonstrates, with a view to the mean scores and sig (2.81 vs. 1.95 and P = 0.000, respectively), there is a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of the two groups: group one stated that learning English language affects their attitudes to appreciate other, but group two displayed that no effect is exerted on their extending their thanks to others.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The analysis of the results demonstrated a significant difference between the performance of the two groups of EFL learners in light of their individual characteristics such as their age, employment position, formal academic proficiency and marital status. As it is clear from Table one, Group One considers appropriateness in connection with addressee terms and their social application embedded with respect or social intimacy, i.e., group one stated that they use TO (you in singular form for one person in Persian language) to reveal intimacy and

social closeness and use SHOMA (you in plural form for one person in Persian language) to display respect and social distance more than group two. A careful look at Table Two indicates another support to Table One findings, e.g., it is typical of the fact that Group One was more affected by learning English language and that this learning influenced their attitude to use TO (you in singular form for one person in Persian language) to reveal intimacy and social closeness and use SHOMA (you in plural form for one person in Persian language) to display respect and social distance. Ideologically viewed on the one hand and their attitude for using speech act were also affected (Table 3 and Table 4) due to some individual characteristics cited. In brief, group two, due to ager-related matters, mental obsession, marital responsibilities, job-seeking and unemployment troubles and experience-related saturation were not easily affected by the ideologically effective and impressive implications which could possibly and potentially affect the learners. It is not very odd, therefore, to observe pragmatically and communicatively various attitudes and different applications for addressee terms and speech acts among these two groups.

6. Implications

Founded on the analysis and discussion of the study, the pedagogical implication follows that some learners fail to fully, appropriately and necessarily get their message across in a communicative and pragmatic terms as possible. Therefore, there is an urgent need for instruction to focus on the pragmatics of the language; so, the teachers ought to, in the instruction context, make a rich attempt to raise the awareness of the learners to these aspects and the researchers should also strive to raise the consciousness of their like-minded colleagues to consideration of individual characteristics of the learners in line with pragmatic realities.

References

Adams,C.(2002). Practitioner review: the Assessment of Language Pragmatics. *Journal of child psychology and psychiatry, 43,973-977* http//dx.doi.org/10.1111/1469-7110.00226

Allami,H.(2006). Sociopragmatic analysis of gripping: the case of Iranian students. *Asian EFL Journal,1,59-76*

Arent,R. (1996). Sociolinguistic decisions regarding complaints by Chinese learners and NNs American English.*Journal of Applied Linguistics,1,125-147*

Backman,L.(1990). Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Best,J. and Kahan,J.(1989). Reseasrch in Education. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall

Bouton,B. (1996). Pragmatics and Language learning, Vol.7, PP.21-39. University Illinois,

Urbana- Champaign: Division of English as an International language.

Brown,G. &Yule.(1989). Discourse Analysis. Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics.

Canale,M., &Swain,M.(1980). Theoretical bases of coimmunicative approaches to second
    language teaching testing. Applied linguistics, 1, 1-47. http//dx.doi.org/10.1093/applin/1.1.1

Crystal, D.(2006). How language works.Penguin Books

Ellis,R. (2008) The Study of Second Language Acquisition.(2nd edition). Oxford

Fasold,R. et al.(2006). An introduction into language and linguistics. Cambridge University
    Press.

Halliday,M.A.K.(2003). Omn Language and Linguistics.Continuum. London. New York

Hudson,R.A.(1980). Sociolinguistics. Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics

Johnson,H.(1992). Defossilizing.*ELT Journal,46(2),80-9.* http//dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/46.2.180

Johnson, K. & Johnson, H.(1999). Encyclopedic Dictionary of Applied Linguistics. Blackwell
    Publications.

Kent,Lee.(2001). Discourse Markers"well" and "oh". [Online] Available:
    http//www.indiana.edu/dsls/publications/Leeweee.pdf

Lantolf.J. and Thorne,S.(2006). Sociocultural Theory and the Genesis of Second Language
    Development.Oxford University Press.

Leung,C.(2005). Convivial Communication: Recontextualizing communicative competence:
    International Journal of applied linguistics, Vol.15, No.2,119-143.
    http//dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2005.00084.x

Levinson, S.C.(1983). Pragmatics. Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics

Moon, K. (2001). Speech act study: differences between native and nonnative speakers'
    complaint strategies

Takenoya,M. (2002). Terms of Address.[Online] Available: http//: www. Indiana.edu/-
    dsls/publications/TakenoyaRevised.pdf

Thornbury, S. (1997). About Language: Tasks for teachers of English language. Cambridge
    University Press..

Yates, L. (2000).Comment-Response Mingle. [Online] available: http//: www. Indiana.edu/-
    dsls/publicatios/lynda2.pdf

Appendix:

Questionnaire 1: Addressee honorifics
We use TO in Persian for one person to reveal intimacy and social closeness and we also use SHOMA in Persian in plural form for one person to display our respect and social distance. Both TO and SHOMA in Persian language converge into YOU in English language. Based on this agreed-upon assumption, answer the following question frame into likert-type scale as honestly and clearly as possible, please.
    Do you prefer to pay attention to this principle in your every day life?
1. I pay too much attention 2. I pay attention   3. I am indifferent
4. I pay little attention   5. I pay no attention at all

Questionnaire 2: Impact of EFL learning on addressee honorifics

How did learning English language affect your attitude to addressee honorifics?
1.It strongly affects my attitude2.It affects my attitude 3.It neutrally affects my attitude

4.It never affects my attitude5.It little affects my attitude
Questionnaire 3: Impact of EFL learning on apology speech act
How did learning English language affect your attitude towards apologizing others?
1. It strongly affects my attitude   2. It affects my attitude   3. It neutrally affects my attitude
4. It never affects my attitude 5. It little affects my attitude
Questionnaire 4: Impact of EFL learning on appreciationspeech act
How did learning English language affect your attitude towards thanking others?
1. It strongly affects my attitude2. It affects my attitude3. It neutrally affects my attitude
4. It never affects my attitude   5. It little affects my attitude

Title

The Relationship between Perfectionism and Listening Comprehension among EFL Students of Kerman University

Authors

Abbas Moradan (Ph.D)
Semnan University, Semnan, Iran

Ehsan Kazemian (M.A)
Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran

Zahra Niroo (M.A)
Semnan University, Semnan, Iran

Biodata

Abbas Moradan, assistant professor in TEFL at Semnan University, Semnan, Iran. He has published numerous papers on language testing and language communication. His research interests are second language testing and educational research.

Ehsan Kazemian, M.A. in TEFL from Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran. At present, he is teaching in Imam Hussein University and Iran Language Institute. He is interested in probing learners' psychological factors and their skills.

Zahra Niroo M.A. in TEFL from Semnan University, Semnan, Iran. She is a full time teacher in various institutes and at present is teaching in Erfan University, Kerman, Iran. She has interest in exploring different aspects of learners including their psychological problems and their skills.

Abstract

The present study attempted to investigate the relationship between perfectionism and listening comprehension among EFL students of Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman. Gender was taken into account, regarding males and females use of perfectionism.97 Iranian EFL students studying at Shahid Bahonar and Islamic Azad universities of Kerman took part in this study. The students were junior and senior students majoring in English Translation and English Literature. To achieve the required data the following scales were capitalized on: Frost et al. (1990) Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS) and a 50-item listening test taken from Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL Test. The findings revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between MPS and LC. Furthermore, it was revealed that female subjects were more perfectionist than their counterparts. In sum, MPS yielded a negative relationship with LC with the female subjects being more perfectionists.

1. Introduction

Perfectionism is a multidimensional and also a multi-faced construct which renders both adaptive and maladaptive dimensions and influences the way one meets his or her perceived standards. Generally, Pacht (1984) defines perfectionism as "holding standards that are beyond reach or rationality, straining to reach those impossible goals, and defining one's worth by the accomplishment of those standards" (p.386). The traditional view on perfectionism considered it as a negative aspect leading to just negative results. The perfectionists were considered as "all or none" while leading to perfectionism or failure (Beck, 1976; Hamachek, 1978). The perfectionists in this aspect were taken as individuals without self-confidence and had a negative feeling that they should always surpass their present achievement (Missildine, 1963), This traditional view took a unidimensional perspective of perfectionism. Hamachek (1978) changed the unidimensional view of perfectionism while presenting a two-faced description of perfectionism, normal and neurotic. In this view it was believed that normal perfectionists seek to make proper use of the construct and the successful consequences would lead to up- and- coming results in the subsequent tasks. By the end of the 1980s, the construct of perfectionism underwent a considerable change. Perfectionism was not a two dimensional issue any longer. It could be related to many factors. As a result, perfectionism became a multidimensional construct. The present studies on perfectionism can be outlined in relation with major dimensions of self and social contexts (Hawkins, 2005).

Hollender (1965) maintains that "perfectionists are too concerned about details and they pay too much attention to orderliness and regularity." (p. 98). This prominence is due to the task of achieving standards for self-evaluation related to performance and a strong need for order (Frost et al., 1990).

As one of the most important language skills, listening has been ignored in most EFL class rooms. Due to its priority in first and second languages, it can be considered as one of the most important skills. Despite the fact that listening had been ignored for many decades(Richards & Renandya, 2002), listening skills have been given more attention over the last two decades and have been capitalized on in methods such as Total Physical Response, Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and the Natural approach. Apart from anxiety, self-confidence and motivation are among the factors in Krashen's affective filter hypothesis.

The affective filter is raised when learners have low motivation, low self-confidence, and high anxiety; as a result, the amount of language intake will be reduced in spite of high input. Nagle and Sanders (1986) proposed that lapses of the comprehension process probably may occur when anxiety is experienced about failure to understand or being answerable for a response (cited in Sadighi, Sahragard & Jafari, 2009). So far it is clear that anxiety plays an important role in the case of language learning. Lynch (1996), believes listening is an ongoing process of making and reinforcing an interpretation of what a specific text in a particular situation is about, according to the information that seems pertinent at the time. The listener, as a result, receives the incoming data by means of the acoustic signals and, capitalizing on a wide range of knowledge, interprets the incoming data for a particular communicative purpose.

In every communicative moment, listening is a frequently used mode of communication. So, listening has appeared as an important component of language pedagogy to promote facilities for the language learners to enhance their progress in the conveyance of reciprocal information in a speech moments. According to Feyten (1991) listening was an ignored aspect in language acquisition and had not given enough attention until the late 1940s. However, even at that time listening was regarded as the Cinderella skill (Nunan, 2002) which was ignored by applied linguists. Inthe last 20 years with the progressions in cognitive psychology and linguistics, teaching listening has gained importance with special attention to authenticity and contextualization (Goh, 2008).

As a receptive skill listening requires great attention. The crucial role of listening comprehension as an indispensable part of language proficiency has been accepted by experts in the field of EFL learning and instruction (Celce-Murcia, 1997). However, listening was given little attention for many years in the heyday of behaviorism, there was no stance for cognition and learning was deemed as a mechanical process whose control was in the hands of external forces. In the meantime by the advent of cognitive theoreticians, and the attention which was given to brain, the role of the learner variables got recognition and learners' emotions, attitudes, and personalities, as the factors of decisive successful and unsuccessful learning, received substantial attention. Teaching methods put the emphasis on productive skills and overlooked the relation existing between receptive and productive skills (Richards & Renandya, 2002). It is the teacher's prowess to train the students how to listen. The debilitative effect of faulty listening skills on second language learning is quite profound; as a result, it is essential for the researchers to find and probe the affective variables in listening comprehension to help unsuccessful students to overcome their difficulties.

So the present study gains significance with hope that it might shed more light on the relationship between the psychological factors, perfectionism and listening comprehension.

To put it in a nutshell, this study aims at finding the relationship between the pearls, namely perfectionism and listening comprehension. Gender is taken into account as well.

The purpose of the present study is to investigate and identify the underlying relationship between perfectionism and listening comprehension. Gender, as a demographic factor, is explored regarding the males and females' score of perfectionism.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Perfectionism

One of the first studies to shed light on this issue was performed by Frost and his colleagues who were interested in the relationships between the two multi-dimensional perfectionism measures described earlier (Frost et al., 1993). These researchers found that some subscales of the two perfectionism scales were positively correlated with positive affect and not correlated with negative affect. A study by Frostand Marten (1990), examined how perfectionistic college students vs. non-perfectionist college students expressed a higher level of negative affect while participating in a graded written task, "a situation analogous to social encounters for social phobic patients". A study conducted by LoCicero and Ashby(2000) also examined the relationship between perfectionism and general self-efficacy. The authors found that subjects in these groups reported significantly different levels of self-efficacy.

Perfectionism has also been studied in Iran. Abolghasemi, Ahmadi, and Kiamarsi (2007) investigated the relationship of metacognition and perfectionism with psychological consequences in the Addicts. The sample consisted of 75 substance dependent males selected from the Hamadan city self-representative center for treatment of substance dependence. The results indicated that high levels of metacognition and negative perfectionism can increase the adverse psychological consequences, while a high level of positive perfectionism may decrease those consequences. Jamshidi, Delavarpour, Naghighat, and Latifian (2009) drew a comparison of dimensions of perfectionism between the gifted and non-gifted student. Their study showed that the gifted students acquired lower scores than the non-gifted students in terms of dimensions of organization and planfulness (two subcategories of perfectionism). Also, gender and giftedness had significant interactive effect on struggle for excellence.

2.2. Listening comprehension

Vandergrift (2003)analyzed listening comprehension strategies applied by efficient and less efficient French students in Canada. The researcher chose an authentic text for the material that corresponded to their daily life situation. Data were collected by recordings after the listening task was over. However, from time to time the listening was stopped to give a chance to the listeners to express their thoughts. The findings revealed that first cognitive strategies, then metacognitive strategies, and finally socio-affective strategies were applied respectively. The cognitive strategies applied by the listeners were inferencing, elaboration, use of imagery, translation, repetition, transfer, and summarization. Regarding metacognitive strategies, planning, monitoring, and problem identification strategies were the most frequent strategies. The final results indicated that there was a difference in strategy use between efficient and less efficient listeners. Vandergrift reached the conclusion that efficient listeners comprehend more with the use of metacognitive strategies, while less efficient learners have a tendency to apply translation strategies.

Chien (2006) investigated the listening difficulties and strategies of college English students on a TOEFL test. The results disclosed that planning, monitoring, self-evaluation, key word, top down, and bottom up processing strategies were the most frequent strategies which were applied. Furthermore, more proficient listeners made use of strategies such as self- management, voice inferencing, top down inferencing, elaboration, and listening for the key words, while mid- proficient listeners applied self- evaluation and bottom upstrategies and finally low- proficient listeners applied translation strategies.

The relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and listening comprehension has been taken into account in Iran. Sadighi, Sahragard and Jafari (2009) conducted a study to find the relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and listening comprehension. Based on their findings, there was a significant and negative relationship between these two factors. That is the higher the anxiety the lower the comprehension of listening among the subjects.In their study it was revealed that the number of years played asignificant role among the subjects. That is a senior, for instance, performed better than a freshman. Finally, they found that female subjects were more anxious than their counterparts.

Baleghizadeh and Rahimi (2011) launched a study to explore the relationship among listening performance, metacognitive strategyuse and motivation. There were 82 students who were majoring in English Translation and Literature at Allameh Tabatabai and Shahid Beheshti Universities in Tehran. The data collection was carried out by three instruments: Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire, Academic Motivation Scale, andthe

listening section of the TOEFL. After administering the listening section of the TOEFL, students were to fill the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire and Academic Motivation Scale. There was a notable correlation between metacognitive strategy use and listening performance, listening performance and intrinsic motivation, and finally metacognitive strategy use and intrinsic, extrinsic motivation.

Kazemian (2013) also studied the relationship among metacognitive listening strategies, foreign language classroom anxiety, and listening comprehension. Making use of 100 subjects, foreign language classroom anxiety scale, and a listening section of the TOEFL, the researcher found a negative relationship between metacognitive strategies and classroom anxiety. The researcher also found that the more use of these strategies reduces the degree of anxiety and increases the score of listening comprehension.

This study aims at seeking answers to the following major and minor questions:

Major research question:

1. Is there any relationship between perfectionism and listening comprehension among Iranian EFL learners?

Minor research question:

2. Is there any significant difference among males and females regarding the score of perfectionism?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The subjects in this study were 97 EFL students studying at the department of foreign languages of Islamic Azad and Shahid Bahonar Universities of Kerman. These subjects (67 female and 30male), were randomly chosen from junior and senior students majoring in English Translation and English Literature. From a statistical point of view 30.9 percent were male and 69.1 percent were female. Their age ranged from 20 to 22 since they were chosen from among junior and senior students. However, in some cases some exceptions were seen since very few students were older than other students. All these students were native Iranian and spoke Persian as their mother tongue. They had all taken the university entrance exam for B.A level and they were busy studying their courses at university. Most of these students were native to Kerman; however, others were from Shiraz, Isfahan, and southern cities. Totally 110 questionnaires were distributed among the students which yielded only 97 completed questionnaires.

Finally, last but not the least, the reason for selecting junior and senior students was that students at higher level of proficiency are believed to have more experiences of doing listening tasks.

3.2. Instruments

In order to obtain the required data on the variables of this study, the followingscales were utilized:

1. Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (Frost et al., 1990)

2.TOEFL listening test (Phillips, 2001)

3.2.1. The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS)

Frost et al. (1990) Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale consists of 35 items in a five 5-point Likert type questions about perfectionism. These 35 items are designed to measure six dimensions of perfectionism. The instructions for this part were: "How much is the following statement true for you as a perfectionism factor?" The participants were required to choose one of the alternatives: 1. not true, 2.mostly not true, 3.not either true or untrue, 4.to some extent true, 5.true. For each item, the highest degree of perfectionism receives five points and the lowest, one point. Students" scores can range from 26 to 130.Thus, the higher the score, the stronger the perfectionism level.

3.2.2. The TOEFL listening test

In order to measure the subjects" listening comprehension, they were given a 50-item listening test taken from Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL Test by Phillips (2001). This test is composed of 50 items and including three sections. The first section is comprised of 30 questions and measures the listener's ability to comprehend short conversations between two people. The second section includes 8 questions and measures the listener's ability in comprehending longer conversations. Finally, the last section includes 12 questions and assesses the listener's ability in comprehending long talks.

3.3. Data collection

The current study was carried out during the class time in the second semester of the academic year (2011). The researcher first gave the listening test to the subjects. The listening test took about 35 minutes. As far as the test was taken from a well-established publication (Longman), it provided the subjects with necessary directions. Furthermore, nearly all the subjects had the experience of sitting for a TOEFL test beforehand. After the listening test, the researcher spent nearly ten minutes to explain about the MP scale.

Then they were given MPS to fill out. The subjects were given whatever time that they needed.

4. Results

In order to determine the descriptive statistics of the variables the descriptive analysis was carried out. These results are presented in Table1.

Table1 The Descriptive Statistics of MP and LC

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	S D	Variance
MPS	97	68.00	54.00	122.00	89.11	15.23	232.20
LC	97	26.00	20.00	46.00	33.29	5.24	27.50
Valid N (Listwise)	97						

The analysis of the data reveals that Pearson correlation coefficients between MPS and LC is -0.76 with the P-values of 0.00 which is less than the significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$. This suggests that there is a strong negative relationship between these two variables. That is the higher the MPS the lower the LC and vice versa. The correlation between these two factors is shown in Table 2.

Table2 Pearson Correlation between MPS and LC.

		MPS	**LC**
MPS	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.76[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	97	97
LC	Pearson Correlation	-0.76[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	
	N	97	97

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

The second research question in this study probed the score of males and females regarding MPS. A sample T-test was utilized to compare the means of males and females. Table 3 shows the means of males and females.

Table3 The means of males and females

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
MPS	Female	67	92.14	14.85
	Male	30	82.33	14.06
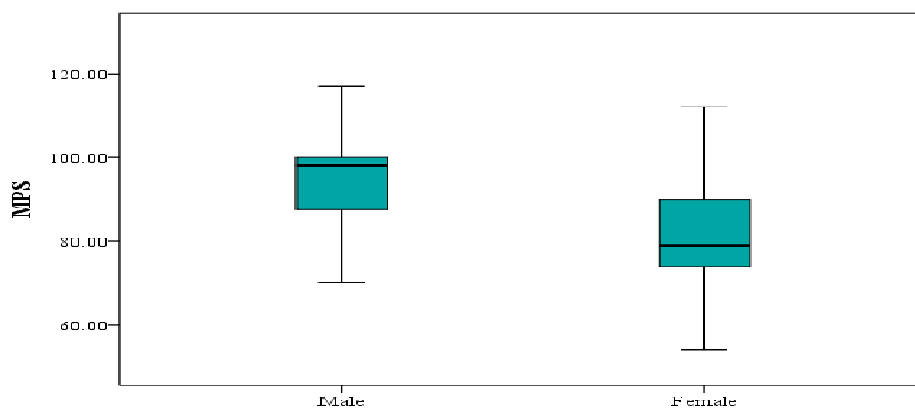
Figure1 Boxplot for Distribution of MPS in Males and Females

As the figure above shows female subjects tend to be more perfectionist during the test in relation with their counterparts.

5. Discussion

Regarding the second research question in this study which sought to explore the relationship between perfectionism and listening comprehension a relatively negative significant relationship was found. The Pearson correlation coefficient between these two variables was found to be is -0.76. Therefore, it can be concluded that those learners who try to be more perfectionistic might miss some points during a listening section. This deficiency might be linked to their efforts to understand every sing word. As it was mentioned above, perfectionism and TA hold a positive relationship between each other; as a result, a cautious conclusion can be drawn that the more the degree of perfectionism the more TA will be experienced. In order to right get to the point, TA and perfectionism both have a negative relationship with listening comprehension. Therefore, a causal modeling is required to explore the direction of this relationship.

Razmi (2012) explored Iranian EFL Learners' Metacognitive Listening Strategy Preferences in Relation with their Perceived Self-Efficacy and Perfectionism. The researcher came to the conclusion that learners who strive for perfection in a specific listening task are able to use more metacognitive listening strategies. Moreover, learners with high levels of personal standards and concern over mistakes face the difficulties with more persistence, and consequently use more metacognitive listening strategies. As a result, the finding in this study is indirectly in contrast with Razmi's (2012) study.

The findings of this study indicate that learners that strive for perfection in a specific listening task are less able to fulfill the task. Moreover, learners with high levels of perfectionism face the difficulties with comprehending the overall message of the listening

task since they expect themselves to understand every word. Therefore, since perfectionism is linked to one's perceived standards in different pedagogical tasks, it clarifies the way perfectionism affects the success or failure of an individual's performance in listening tasks.

The second research question in this study sought to explore whether any difference exists between males and females regarding the score of perfectionism. Making use of an Independent Sample T-test, it was revealed that there is a difference between males and females regarding the score of perfectionism. The male subjects' mean was 82.33, while the female subjects' mean was 92.14. There is a 10-point difference between these two groups. This difference can, however, be justified in terms of the number of the two groups of males and females. It can cautiously be claimed that since the number of female subjects was greater so did the mean of this group. A few studies; however, considered gender and perfectionism, but the researcher did not have any access to these studies to bring them here. Honesty always pays off!

It would be rational to name some limitations involved in this study. The implementation of this study is not without its drawbacks. However, the existing limitations could be considered as food for thought for other researches within the same field in order to cast light on the unknown dark spots of listening comprehension. The small sample size in this study may influence the opportunity to generalize the findings of the investigation. Only ninety seven subjects took part in this study. As a result, the generalizability of the findings might be under question. Second, the limited amount of time and space incapacitates the study. Therefore, it justifies the researcher to include only two factors in this study. Moreover, this study made use of just self-report scales. The unidirectional gathering of data deprived this study to make use of triangulation of data collection. Interviewing and observation were missing in the present study. The only way of data collection in this study were the self-report questionnaire namely, MPS and also the TOEFL listening test. The accuracy of the findings in this case may be affected by factors such as social desirability and halo effect. Other researchers could make use of an acceptable triangulation of data collection such as valid interviews and reliable observations.

Moreover, it is not possible to make causal statements based on the model of this study. Gender was probed in this study; however, due to time consideration it was not probed with the second factor that is listening comprehension. Gender differences can be also investigated with regard to listening comprehension.

Furthermore, there are different factors affecting the listening comprehension, such as anxiety, learning styles, motivation, extraversion, and introversion, to name just a few.

This study, due to time and space considerations, investigated only one factor, namely perfectionism. Last, but not the least although significant findings were drawn; the present study used a cross-sectional design. A longitudinal design would provide a more thorough evaluation of perfectionism and listening comprehension.

References

Abolghasemi, A., Ahmadi, M., & Kiamarsi, A. (2007). The relationship of metacognition and perfectionism with psychological consequences in the addicts. *Journal of Research in BehavioralSciences, 5(*2), 73-78.

Baleghizadeh, S., & Rahimi, A. H. (2011). The relationship among listening performance, metacognitive strategy use and motivation from a self-determination theory perspective. *Theory and Practicein Language Studies, 1*(1), 61-67.

Beck, A. T. (1976). *Cognitive therapy and emotional disorders.* NewYork: International University Press.

Celce-Murcia, M. (1997). Discourse analysis and the teaching of listening. In Cook, G., & Seidlhoser, B. (Eds.), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics: Studies in thehonor of H. Widdowson*(3rd ed).Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chien, L. Y. (2006). A Study of College English majors' EFL   Listening Difficulties and strategies While Taking TOEFL. Unpublished M.A thesis.National Changhua University of Education.

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005). Listening comprehension and anxietyin the Arabic language classroom. *Modern Language Journal*, *89*(2), 206-220.

Feyten, C. M. (1991). The power of listening ability: An overlooked dimension in language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal, 75,*173-80.

Frost, R. O., Marten, P. A., Lahart, C., &Rosenblate, R. (1990). The dimensions of perfectionism. *Cognitive Therapy and Research, 14,*449-468.

Goh, C. C. M. (2008). Metacognitive instruction for second language listening development: Theory, practice and research implications. *RELC Journal, 39*, 188-213. doi: 10.1177/0033688208092184.

Hamachek, D. E. (1978). Psychodynamics of normal and neurotic perfectionism. *Psychology: A Journal of Human Behavior, 15(*1),27-33.

Hawkins, C. C. (2005). *The nature of perfectionism and its academicimplications for secondary school students.* Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Sydney.

Hollender, M. H. (1965). Perfectionism. *Comprehensive Psychiatry, 6,*94-103.

Jamshidi, B., Delavarpour, M. A., Naghighat, S., &Latifian, M. (2009).Comparison of dimensions of perfectionism between the gifted andnon-gifted student. *Journal of Psychology, 13(*1 (49)), 20-35.

Kazemian, E. (2013). *The Relationship among Metacognitive Listening strategies, Foreign Language Anxiety and Listening Comprehension among Iranian EFL University Students.* Unpublished M.A thesis.Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman.

LoCicero, K. A., & Ashby, J. S. (2000). Multidimensional perfectionism and self-reported self-efficacy in college students. *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy, 15,* 47-55.

Lynch, T. (1996). *Communication in the Language Classroom.* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Missildine, W. H. (1963). *Your inner child of the past.* New York: Simon&Schuster.

Nagle, S. J., & Sanders, S. L. (1986).Comprehension theory and second language pedagogy.*TESOL Quarterly*, *20*, 9-26.

Nunan, D. (2002). Listening in language learning. In J. Richards & W. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*(pp. 238-241). NY: Cambridge University Press.

Pacht, A. (1984). Reflections on perfection. *American Psychologist,39(*4), 386-390.

Razmi, M. H. (2012). Iranian EFL Learners' Metacognitive Listening Strategies Preferences in Relation with their perceived Self – Efficacy and perfectionism. Unpublished M.A thesis. Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman.

Richards, J. & Renandya, W. (2002). Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice. NY: Cambridge University Press.

Sadighi, F., Sahragard, R., &Jafari, M. (2009). Listening comprehension and foreignlanguage classroom anxiety among Iranian EFL learners. *The Iranian EFLJournal, 3*, 137-152.

Vandergrift, L. (2003). From prediction through reflection: Guiding students through the process of L2 listening. The Canadian Modern Language Review, 59 (3), 425-440.

Title

Iranian Language Instructors' Perceptions of Speaking Assessment

Authors

Shahin Vandchali (M.A)
Payam-e-Noor University, Rasht, Iran

Shahin Sheikh S.T. (Ph.D)
Payam-e-Noor University, Rasht, Iran

Biodata

Shahin Vandchali, M.A. in TEFL from English Department, Payam-e-Noor University of Rasht, Iran. The present paper is based on her M.A. thesis.

Shahin Sheikh S.T. assistant Professor of Payam-e-Noor University of Guilan and holds Ph.D. in linguistics. She is interested in language teaching and phonetics.

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate Iranian language instructors' perceptions of speaking assessment. For this reason, 39 EFL experienced instructors were selected across a wide range of Iranian teaching contexts. They listened to two different learners' speaking performances in KET and IELTS and made their comments and explained the reasons for the assessment of learners' performances. A reflection sheet was used to collect each participant's comments on the learners' performances. Two coders read, analyzed, and then categorized the qualitative data of reflection sheets into nine criteria by coding into an Excel worksheet. An inter-rater reliability analysis using the Cohen's Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency of decisions among coders. Multivariate extension of McNemar indicated that there was a significant difference in instructors' perceptions of assessment of two different speaking tasks. Moreover, findings revealed that pronunciation and content richness respectively were the most and least important criteria of speaking assessment. The results of the study have some practical implications and suggestions for further research.

Keywords: Perception, Speaking assessment, Language instructors

1. Introduction

An individual's communicative competence is a complex construct composed of several components and it is something that differentiates one individual from others (Young, 2011).

Communicative competence was put forward by different authors with different components in different models. Four components of communicative competence proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) are as follows: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. Grammatical competence concerns with knowledge of language code, or grammatical rules. Sociolinguistic competence entails the appropriateness of meaning (i.e., appropriateness of communicative functions, attitudes, and ideas) and the appropriateness of form (i.e., how these communicative functions, attitudes, and ideas are appropriate in different sociolinguistic contexts). Strategic competence refers to learners' capability to maintain communication using verbal or nonverbal communication strategies in order to compensate for breakdowns in communication and enhance the effectiveness of communication. Discourse competence is defined as the ability to produce a unified spoken or written text using cohesion and coherence.

Bozatli (2003) states that testing speaking is more challenging than testing other skills for three reasons. First, because speaking assessment has an intrinsically subjective nature, achieving reliability in speaking tests is difficult. Second, rating scales used for assessing speaking generate problems related to number and clarity of the categories in the scale. Third, components of speaking ability themselves are not defined clearly, which result in difficulties in choosing components to measure and using the test to provide feedback to learners (Bozatli, 2003). Yet, according to Knight (1992), the difficulties in assessing speaking skills repeatedly lead instructors into using inadequate speaking assessments or even not assessing speaking skills at all.

Speaking assessment is challenging, inasmuch as there are many external and internal factors that influence instructors' impression of how well someone can speak a language (Bozatli, 2003; Chuang, 2007; Luoma, 2009; Winke, Gass, & Myford, 2011) and these may be reflected in the assessing or scoring of learners' speaking. Taylor (2006) states that speaking assessment takes into account many components, including range, accuracy/appropriacy of grammar and vocabulary, coherence, extent and relevance of a speaker's contribution (discourse management), ability to produce comprehensible utterances in terms of stress and rhythm, intonation and individual sounds, and ability to use interactive strategies to achieve meaningful communication. In consequence, as Madsen (1983) argues, since components of speaking ability are not easy to be defined clearly, deciding on the components to be assessed in a speaking test creates another difficulty with regard to speaking assessment (cited in Bozatli, 2003). Another reason why assessing speaking is difficult may be its socio-affective nature, which may be reflected in scoring speech samples,

even when test designers attempt to lessen its impact through the design of a careful and detailed scoring rubric and through intensive rater training (Winke et al., 2011). In other words, the reliability of scoring has permanently been doubted since speaking assessment inevitably requires instructors' personal subjective views instead of their purely objective points of view (Chuang, 2007).

1.1. Statement of the problem

Assessment is nearly integrated with instruction: what is taught is directly related to what is assessed and (in theory at least) what is assessed is, in turn, linked to the reported outcomes (Brindley, 1998). Important to note is that, there has been much discussion of the fundamental concepts of reliability, validity, and washback of all language assessments from different perspectives in literature (e.g., Amy, 2011; Fulcher, 2000; Luoma, 2009; Messick, 1996; Taylor, 2004; Taylor, 2006). However, in spite of the crucial role of instructors' perceptions of assessment in judging the learners' speaking ability and their educational outcomes, there is a paucity of research into probing speaking assessment with regard to instructors' perceptions in the Iranian context, with the result that it is almost none or little known about instructors' perceptions of assessing speaking as an integral part of classroom practice.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Since there is a paucity of research related to topic of the study, it has been tried to review some related studies conducted on speaking assessment. The results of a study by Lee (2010) indicated that classroom assessment was widely conducted using specific speaking tasks and that criterion description plus marking scores were the key types of teacher feedback. His study demonstrated that teachers had a strong tendency towards traditional formal testing for measurement and reporting learning outcomes, which resulted in an overall negative attitude towards the positive effects of such testing on teaching and learning.

Kim (2006) states that in order to ensure validity and reliability of a speaking performance test, the quality of the speaking performance along with scoring that is based on criteria specific to that particular testing context should be paid attention to. Ensuring high validity and reliability also can help guarantee fairness in the speaking assessment. The results of Fetene' (2008) study affirmed that participants perceived continuous oral assessment and feedback as essential and useful educational tools towards improving teaching and learning but neglected the actual practice of continuous speaking assessment

and its most useful assessment methods. Fetene argued that good perceptions alone are not indicators of good practice and mentioned student-teachers' linguistic background, large class size and workloads, inadequacies in using informal continuous oral assessment methods, lack of opportunity for student-teachers' participation in continuous oral assessment, and negligence of formative continuous assessment as major challenges of effective implementation of continuous oral assessment.

Iwashita, Brown, McNamara, and O'Hagan (2008) analyzed 200 speech samples regarding ESL learners' performance on EAP speaking tasks in order to understand the nature of spoken proficiency at different levels. Iwashita et al. found that grammatical accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency had the greatest effect on overall given scores. They concluded that linguistic complexity was not a key feature that differentiated different proficiency levels and a mix of features impacted ratings and these may vary by task types and raters. The results also revealed that features from each category contributed to distinguish overall levels of performance, with particular features of vocabulary and fluency having the strongest impact.

Butler (2009) found that elementary school teachers, either knowingly or unknowingly, avoided setting any criteria, whereas secondary school teachers relied on some form of criteria even when they made holistic evaluations based on their observations. In spite of choosing similar traits for their evaluations such as speaking fluency, confidence in talking, listening comprehension, motivation, and speaking accuracy, both groups of teachers differed in terms of interpreting such traits or constructs and of arriving at their respective assessments of learners. Results indicated that participants differed with respect to their views toward assessment criteria and how to evaluate students' potential ability to communicate competently in a foreign language. It is notable that pronunciation was the least frequently chosen trait, a finding that is to be contrasted with data presented by Iwashita et al. (2008) and Plough, Briggs, and Van Bonn (2010). A detailed qualitative analysis by Butler revealed that different beliefs and practices of the participants were deeply related to their respective teaching and assessment contexts in South Korea.

Plough et al. (2010) found that only listening comprehension and pronunciation were considered as significant predictors of approval for teaching and pronunciation was a major factor in the evaluation of speaking proficiency. With respect to pronunciation, their conclusion corresponds to Brown's (1995) and Iwashita et al.'s (2008).

Orr's (2002) study revealed that there were clearly different perceptions of the nature of each candidate's performance. The raters varied in the severity of their judgments, and that

this variation was not necessarily reflected in the scores. Raters' comments showed varying perceptions of the same performance and raters giving the same score perceived the performance quite differently. Raters' verbal reports showed that they heeded many aspects of the performances not relevant to the assessment criteria and did not follow or attend to the evaluation criteria. Furthermore, a qualitative analysis of participants' transcribed spoken English protocols in Douglas' (1994) study showed very little relationship between the scores on the test and the language actually produced. He speculates that this could be because raters were influenced by features not included in the rating scales.

Brown's (1995) study showed that there were no significant differences in overall grades awarded by different rater groups. Significant differences were found in rating for some individual criteria; raters with a teaching background were harsher in ratings of grammar, expression, vocabulary and fluency, whereas those with an industry background gave harsher ratings of pronunciation that revealed different perceptions of the importance of particular features of language and different perception of the tasks or what constituted a good performance. Therefore, the way in which they perceived the items or assessment criteria and the way in which they applied the scale did differ.

Luoma (2009) maintains that the developers of speaking assessments must have a clear understanding of what speaking is like, define the kind of speaking they want to assess in a particular context, develop tasks and rating criteria that test this, inform the learners about what they assess and then ensure that the assessing and rating processes actually follow the defined plans. On the other hand, as Kim (2006) states, to ensure that the uses and consequences of a speaking test are fair, the operational definition of speaking ability in the testing context should be examined, since the definition of speaking ability varies with regard to the targeted use and the decisions made. Thus, Bozatli (2003) adds that depending on the focus of instruction in speaking classes, the components, assessment of which is desired in a special speaking test should be specified and included in a rating scale, against which learners' performances are appraised. In assessing students' speaking through performance tests, raters are essential because it is their judgment, which actualizes the rating scale in terms of showing how good a performance is (Amy, 2011). Professional judgment is the foundation for assessment and is necessary to properly understand and use all aspects of assessment. Understanding this principle helps teachers "realize the importance of their own judgments and those of others in evaluating the quality of assessment and the meaning of the results" (Rudner and Schafer, 2002, p.7). In line with what has been discussed so far, it can be documented that not only the importance of speaking skills has been emphasized in recent

decades but also the issue of assessing speaking from different perspectives has been the subject of intensive attention among second language learning researchers (e.g., Brown, 1995; Douglas, 1994; Iwashita et al., 2008; Kim, 2006; Luoma, 2009; Orr, 2002; Plough et al., 2010).

3. Purpose and research questions of the study

The main purpose of this study is to examine whether Iranian EFL instructors' perceptions of speaking assessment are similar or different. Hence, the following research questions have been the central concern of the present research:

1.   Are Iranian EFL instructors' perceptions of speaking assessment similar or different?

2.   Which features of speaking are most and least important for Iranian EFL instructors while assessing speaking performances?

4. Significance of the study

Studying teachers' perceptions of assessment is of considerable importance in the sense that it gives an indication of how different forms of assessment are being used or misused and what could be conducted to improve the situation (Chester & Quilter, 1998; cited in Susuwele-Banda, 2005). In other words, research on instructors' perceptions of assessment can describe their thinking about teaching and assessing language and is therefore of great importance in elucidating the way they perceive and organize instruction and assessment. Therefore, the need could be easily felt to yield a clearer insight into the instructors' perceptions of assessment when they are doing performance assessment of different speaking tasks with different traits in order to improve teaching and assessment practices.

5. Method

5.1. Participants

Participants were 39 experienced EFL instructors with at least five to twenty year experiences who were selected based on cluster random sampling. They were teaching language students at several universities of Payam-e-Noor, Azad, State, and also language institutions of Iran. All of them were non-native English speakers; whose first languages were Persian; and were at advanced level of language proficiency with MA or Ph. D degrees and Ph. D candidates. They listened to two speech samples of KET and IELTS in order to assess learners' speaking performance, provide comments and give reasons for their assessment.

5.2. Instruments

A reflection sheet containing the respective directions for participants was used to include instructors' English or Persian comments and explanations for learners' performance and collect the intended data. Reflection sheets included a brief informative data about directions for participants, their teaching location, years of teaching English, and spaces for instructors' comments on assessing learners' performance. Two speech samples of KET and IELTS attached by one reflection sheet were provided for instructors by the researcher. The written comments of instructors were read by two coders and then coded into nine criteria of speaking performance. Then, the speaking criteria obtained from instructors' comments were entered into an Excel worksheet as either 1 or 0 based on whether the instructors mentioned those criteria in learners' performance.

5.3. Procedures

After obtaining instructors' permission, speech samples of KET and IELTS and the respective reflection sheets were given to each instructor by hand or e-mail. The participants were asked to listen to speech samples, assess learners' speaking performance, and write their comments and reasons on the learners' performance. Cohen's kappa statistic, multivariate extension of McNemar, and McNemar's test of symmetry were performed by SAS software to analyze data.

6. Results and Discussion

Some instructors had referred to clear and general aspects in their assessment of learners' speaking performance, for example, pronunciation, vocabulary, and so on as described in the standard rating scales used in their specific institutions or the relevant literature but other instructors used explanatory or descriptive comments in order to explain their reasons for the aspects of performance they thought were important. A considerable amount of critical comments was devoted to the criteria of completeness, interactional competence, and grammar, a finding which is different from research findings of Kim (2009), and Iwashita et al. (2008), which indicated that raters commented on linguistic features more than the other categories of speaking ability. Table 1 shows these nine criteria and a selection of their subcategories and instructors' comments.

Table 1

Speaking Criteria and a Selection of Comments Reported by Instructors

Appropriateness

-The use of joking in expressions did not look interesting,
-He has learned how to communicate and think in English.
Completeness
-short and evasive answers,
-incomplete sentences with no right verbs.
Content richness
-she does not provide reasons.
She does not develop the ideas to questions.

(continued)

Table 1

Speaking Criteria and a Selection of Comments Reported by Instructors (continued)

Discourse competence
-she was incoherent in responding,
-she used no sign of cohesive devices,
Fluency
-she speaks slowly,
-speaker can make use of pause fillers.
Grammar
-Some problems with English Tenses,
-A mix of simple and complex sentence forms,
-she also had wrong use of singular and plural nouns.
Interactional competence
-he communicates very well,
-she uses avoidance strategy,
-this man was risk taking.
Pronunciation
-Stress Placement,
-Voiced vs. voiceless,
-his accent was non-native.
Vocabulary
-Lexical choice,
-He uses variety of words,
-she uses a limited range of vocabulary.

An inter-rater reliability analysis using the Cohen's Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency among coders (Table 2).

Table 2

Inter-rater Reliability of Coding

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreeme Kappa	.852	.118	5.242	.000
N of Valid Cases	39			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

As represented by Table 2, the inter-rater reliability for the coders was found to be Kappa = 0.85 (p <.0.001) that indicated a satisfactory level of agreement among coders.

Multivariate extension of McNemar was run to examine whether Iranian language instructors have a similar or different perception of speaking assessment. The result is given below (Table 3).

Table 3 *Contrast Results for GEE Analysis*

Contrast Type	DF	Chi-Square	pr>ChiSq
SMH Score	9	22.61	0.0071

As illustrated in Table 3, the observed pr>Chi-square is found to be 0.0071 and as such there is a statistically significant difference between instructors' perceptions of speaking assessment. The rationale for selecting KET and IELTS tests was whether instructors assess two different speaking tasks differently, which enforce inherently different requirements. Therefore, this study confirmed that language instructors apply task-specific criteria in assessing two different speaking tasks. It is clear that different preferences of criteria have to determine different proficiency levels of learners. Instructors should not readily interpret some learners' inability to achieve certain levels of performance as their lack of ability but as their actual proficiency level that may be at low, intermediate or high level and thus must be assessed by criteria expected for the task and learners' proficiency level. In fact, if instructors want to adjust their classroom assessment practices with their teaching practices and feedback to learners from assessment be related to improvement in teaching and learning outcomes, they must apply task-specific criteria in spite of its major caveat (i.e., time-consuming). For this reason, according to Stiggins (1987), it is critical that the scoring procedures are designed to guarantee that performance ratings reflect the test-taker's true capabilities and are not a

function of the perceptions and biases of the persons evaluating the performance (cited in Linn, Baker, & Dunbar, 2000).

In addition, McNemar's test of symmetry was used to investigate the most and least important criteria of speaking noted by instructors. The following table presents the result of the above-mentioned test for each single criterion in both KET and IELTS (Table 4).

Table 4 *Summary of the Results of McNemar's Test of Symmetry*

Criteria McNemar Test	Proportion of 1s		Significance Level of
	KET	IELTS	
Appropriateness	8	16	0/077
Completeness	23	5	000/0
Content Richness	2	2	000/1
Discourse Competence	3	5	0/500
Fluency	16	27	0/003
Grammar	21	32	0/003
Interactional Competence	27	25	0/754
Pronunciation	22	34	0/000
Vocabulary	10	15	0/062

As reported by Table 4, it was revealed that *pronunciation*, *grammar*, and *interactional competence* respectively were three most important criteria noted by instructors. Moreover, it was turned out that content richness was the least important feature of speaking as commented by instructors. With regard to pronunciation, this finding is in line with earlier studies of Brown (1995), Iwashita et al. (2008), and Plough et al. (2010), all of which are in sharp contrast to the study reported by Butler (2009) who showed that pronunciation was the least frequently chosen trait by teachers. It is noteworthy that when the results provided by Table 4.58 were examined for KET and IELTS independently, interactional competence was found to be the most important criterion in KET, whereas in the case of IELTS, pronunciation was found to be the most important criterion of speaking. As is manifested from the results, content richness was the least important criterion in both KET and IELTS. Interactional competence, as argued by Markee (2000), entails turn taking, the ability to repair speech, the non-verbal communicative factors, and all of the components of strategic competence (e.g., avoidance and reduction strategies, achievement and compensatory strategies, stalling and time-gaining strategies, self-monitoring and interactional strategies) (cited in Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). As documented by a detailed analysis of the instructor's comments in this study, most Iranian language instructors well understood the importance of both verbal and paralinguistic aspects of speaking.

As affirmed by this research findings, instructors paid more attention to grammar and pronunciation, whereas they should assess not only learners' use of the grammatical structures and phonological categories of the target language but also their lexical categories and other speaking criteria. Shumin (2002) argues that learning to speak a foreign language needs more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. "Learners must also acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange, in which many factors interact" (p. 204). Shumin also states that in EFL teaching, speaking is an aspect that requires special attention and instruction. In order to provide effective instruction, it is necessary for EFL instructors to carefully examine the factors, conditions, and components underlying speaking effectiveness.

7. Conclusions

This study intended to grasp language instructors' perceptions of speaking assessment while they comment on two different learners' performances, investigating just what instructors consider when they assessed speaking performance. The findings of the study revealed that the Iranian language instructors did not have a shared perception of assessment of two different speaking tasks and perceived the speaking performance samples differentially. It was also found that pronunciation and content richness respectively were the most and least important criteria of speaking assessment noted by instructors.

7.1. Implications

The most important pedagogical implication of this study concerns the need for instructors to become aware of the current practices of teaching and assessment because they can make use of the results of this study for matching their teaching and classroom assessment practices with modern views. Teaching and assessment mismatches may be arisen because the assessment is not directly related to the instructors' teaching methodology or interpretation of the criteria during teaching. Therefore, if instructors' goals and practices in an assessment situation do not match with their teaching methodologies and vice versa, the usefulness of that assessment will be limited because instructors are unable to use the results for improvement in their teaching and learners' learning. According to Alderson and Hamp-Lyons (1996), washback is the effect that writers on language testing, syllabus design and language teaching believe a test will have on the teaching that precedes it. In fact, as argued by Wall and Alderson (1993), if there are no conflicts in the aims, activities, or the marking

criteria of the textbook and the assessment, and if teachers accept these and work towards them, then a form of positive washback could be assumed to occur.

In addition, this study could provide instructors with a pedagogical tool for distinguishing between low and high level proficiency of learners through the use of speaking criteria emerged from instructors' comments that could be embedded in teaching materials and could be useful in the development of a rating scale that more fully reflects the complexity of speaking skill.

The second group of people who may use the results of this study are material writers and textbook compilers who require the feedback reflected by instructors, test makers, learners, and so forth. Selecting and grading suitable pedagogical materials had always been a challenging job for them. Care should therefore be taken in providing and sequencing the content of teaching materials, especially designing tasks based on communicative language teaching principles with more focus on speaking proficiency and providing rating scales based on those principles that seem very much valuable in order to ensure a just, reliable, and valid result. In other words, there should be a very powerful connection between teaching materials and classroom assessment practices in order to enhance learners' communicative competence.

7.2. Limitations of the study

As described earlier, instructors assessed learners' performance and wrote their comments and reasons in reflection sheets in their convenient and favorite time. For this reason, the number of times each instructor could listen to the speech samples and its possible effect on assessing remained unknown. In addition, the number of participants was limited to 39 Iranian language instructors and native English speakers were not included in this study. Moreover, the relationship between the instructors' gender and their perceptions of assessment was not studied.

7.3. Suggestions for further research

Considering more qualitative methods for data triangulation, the following suggestions are accordingly made by the researcher for further investigation in this area of study.

It is expected to replicate this study with more learners at all levels of language proficiency in the same teaching centers where instructors are working so that instructors find their own strengths and weaknesses in teaching and assessment, reflect them in their future practices, and use them as a diagnostic tool for professional development and feedback to learners' learning.

Furthermore, it is hoped that similar studies are carried out following this study among school language teachers so that the whole system of language teaching in our country can be aided to match its classroom teaching and assessment practices with modern views of speaking and develop learners' communicative competence.

Finally, the need is felt to carry out similar studies to explore the correspondence between the numerical scores awarded to the learners' performance and instructors' comments (positive and negative) on the criteria and learners' performance.

References

Alderson, J. Ch., & Hamp-Lyons, L. (1996). TOEFL preparation courses: a study of washback. *Language Testing,13*(3), 280–97.

Amy, Ch. K. M. (2011). *Characteristics of raters: reliable and valid versus unreliable and invalid*. The 37th IAEA Conference, Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (pp. 1-10).

Bozalti, I. (2003). *Academic oral presentation skills instructors' perceptions of the final project presentation rating scale used in the modern languages department at middle east technical university*. Unpublished MA thesis. The University of Bilkent, Ankara, Turkey.

Brindley, G. (1998). Outcomes-based assessment and reporting in language learning programmes: a review of the issues. *Language Testing, 15*(1), 45–85. doi: 10.1177/026553 229801500103

Brown, A. (1995). The effect of rater variables in the development of an occupation-specific language performance test. *Language Testing, 12*(1), 1-15.

Butler, Y. G. (2009). How do teachers observe and evaluate elementary school students' foreign language performance? A Case Study from South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly, 43*(3), 417-444.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1* (1), 1–47.

Chuang, Y. Y. (2007). A study of college English teachers' preferences and perceptions of using the types of tasks for assessing Taiwanese EFL students' foreign language oral proficiency. *Journal of Applied Foreign Languages, 8*, 74-105.

Douglas, D. (1994). Quantity and quality in speaking test performance. *Language Testing, 11*(2), 125–44.

Fetene, M. (2008). *The challenges of implementing continuous oral assessment in EFL classes with reference to Debre-Birhan teachers' college*. Unpublished MA thesis. Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Fulcher, G., & Davidson, F. (2007). *Language testing and assessment: an advanced resource*

book. New York: Routledge.

Iwashita, N., Brown, A., McNamara, T., & O'Hagan, S. (2008). Assessed levels of second language speaking proficiency: how distinct? *Applied linguistics, 29*(1), 24-49.

Kim, H. Y. (2006). Issues of Rating Scales in Speaking Performance Assessment. *Teachers College, Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL& Applied Linguistics*, *6*(2), 1-3. Retrieved from http://www.tc.columbia.edu/tesolalwebjournal

Knight, B. (1992). Assessing speaking skills: a workshop for teacher development. *ELT Journal, 46*(3), 294-302.

Lee, S. (2010). *Current practice of classroom speaking assessment in secondary schools in South Korea*. Unpublished MA thesis. The University of Queensland, Australia.

Luoma, S. (2009). *Assessing speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Orr, M. (2002). The FCE speaking test: using rater reports to help interpret test scores. *System, 30*, 143-154.

Plough, I. C., Briggs, S. L., & Van Bonn, S. (2010). A multi-method analysis of evaluation criteria used to assess the speaking proficiency of graduate student instructors. Language Testing, 27(2), 235–260. doi: 10.1177/0265532209349469

Rudner, L. M., & Schafer, W. D. (2002). What teachers need to know about assessment. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

Shumin, K. (2002). Factors to consider: Developing adult EFL students' speaking abilities. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp. 204-211). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stiggins, R. J. (1987). Design and development of performance assessments. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, 6*(3), 33-42.

Susuwele-Banda, W. J. (2005*). Classroom assessment in Malawi: teachers' perceptions and practices in mathematics. *Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia.

Taylor, L. (2006). The changing landscape of English: implications for language assessment. *ELT Journal, 60*(1), 51-60. doi:10.1093/elt/cci081

Wall, D., & Alderson, J. Ch. (1993). Examining washback: the Sri Lankan impact study: *Language Testing, 10*(1), 41-69.

Winke, P., Gass, S., & Myford, C. (2011). *The relationship between raters' prior language study and the evaluation of foreign language speech samples* (TOEFL iBT Research Report TOEFL iBT-160). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Young, R. (2011). Interactional competence in language learning, teaching, and testing. In E. Hinkel (Ed.). *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, Vol. II (pp. 426-443). New York and London: Routledge.

Title

The Viability of M-learning via SMS in Vocabulary perception of Iranian EFL learners

Authors

Fateme Alipanahi (Ph.D)

Saeied Moharrami Qeydari

Vali Qadiri

Biodata

Fatemeh Alipanahi, Ph.D in TESL from Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran. She has published some books about reading comprehension and she is a retired assistant professor at Zanjan University.

Saeed Moharami Qeydari is a TEFL student at Islamic Azad University of Zanjan, Iran.

Vali Qadiri is a TEFL student at Islamic Azad University of Zanjan, Iran.

Abstract

There is growing increase in the use of wireless technologies in education all over the world. In fact, wireless technologies such as laptop computers, palmtop computers and mobile phones are revolutionizing education, and transforming the traditional classroom-based learning, and teaching into anytime and anywhere education. The ready availability and uptake of devices such as mobile phones, personal digital assistants and SMS, have permeated the manner and means of human Communication, socializing and entertainment on a large scale. This paper investigates the use of M- learning with particular reference to the potential of learning new English language words using Short Message Service (SMS) text messaging. The system was investigated recruiting 66 males and female students of an institute in Khodabandeh. The vocabulary perceptions of students before and after the experiment regarding the primacy and recency effects were measured. It was found out that using SMS as an educational tool noticeably contributes to the success of students.

Keywords: M-learning, SMS, Vocabulary Perception, Primacy Effect, Recency effect

1. Introduction

Learning and retrieving vocabulary is one of the most important issues that any learner faces while acquiring another language. Thus, learners have regularly found it necessary to make up for their limited vocabulary (Nyileos & Fan, 2007). Furthermore, teachers strive to be innovative in searching for methods to make their teaching more effective in this respect. These days it seems that mobile phones are employed in every place by each person, which leads to the obvious questions: how can mobile phone technology support learning vocabulary in the second language classroom? The answer is 'in several ways'; because mobile phones come with continually increasing functions that most students are adept at using (Reinders, 2010). The word M-learning or "mobile learning" has distinctive meanings for distinctive people, in spite of the fact that it was commonly related to e-learning and distance learning, it is distinct in its concentrated upon learning across context and learning with mobile devices.

One meaning for mobile learning is every kind of learning that takes place when the learner is not at a steady, preordained location, or learning that takes place when the learner takes benefit of the learning chance presented by mobile technical methods and processes.

Lately various academic studies have addressed vocabulary learning through using mobile phones. Several investigations have shown improved retrieval performance when a target vocabulary is rehearsed through a variety of different manners. Thornton and Houser (2004) performed a comparison between the use of pull (web-based) and push (email) approaches to transferring vocabulary content to mobile phones. Ogata and Yano (2005) showed considerable increases in vocabulary remembrance compared to control when subjects were provided with the CLUE system, which provided a vocabulary concept map over a PDA. Kadyte (2003) presented a mobile system for learning Finnish language that includes audio; a "Language Learning Guide" explains Finnish grammar rules to the mobile user. In addition, a number of commercial products exist that give vocabulary content on mobile devices, including AppliLearning, Xap Words, M-Learning and Bite Size Mobile.

The literature and preceding research in this area propose that in L2 vocabulary learning, m-learning interaction can have many utilities over face-to-face interactions. It provides the necessary conditions for interlanguage vocabulary development. Little research, however, has been done to show the effects of mobile interactions in EFL contexts. The purpose of this study is to determine the role of SMS in L2 vocabulary perception.

According to Geddes (2004), mobile learning is recognized both by being available "anywhere, anytime", we learn across space as we take ideas and learning resources gained in one location and apply them in another. We learn across time, by revisiting knowledge that was gained earlier in a different context through ideas and strategies gained in early years providing a framework for a lifetime learning (Va voula & Sharples, 2002).

1.1. Statement of the problem

One of the major sub-skills in learning any language is vocabulary learning. The potential value of learning via mobile devices or M-learning has been widely realized. Mobile devices enhance learning experiences by enabling communications, learning on the move, and on an anytime and anywhere .Up to now, although studies have been conducted on the M-learning of language, it seems that it is necessary to work on this point, and on the relationship between M-learning via SMS and L2 vocabulary perception, in particular. Having the knowledge of this type of relationship could result in some improvements in both teaching comprehension passages and L2 vocabulary perception for this purpose and the findings of the study will probably help us in dealing with these types of genres.

Something that is clear in Iran regarding learning language skills as a whole is the lack of focus or emphasis on new methods of L2 vocabulary learning of English as a foreign language. This aspect of language, namely, learning of vocabulary or perception of it, if not presented properly in learning or acquisition process, would have negative impacts on the learners' learning process. These learners would rely on their own language perceptions and this will lead to negative interference on the side of the first language vocabulary.

This paper investigates the use of M-learning in education with particular reference to the potential of learning new technical English language words using Short Message Service.

1.2. Significance of the study

There has been significant interest and growth in the number of institutions using mobile devices to support learning and teaching. Vocabulary study is an important part of learning a new language, so the findings of this study on the effects of SMS in learning L2 vocabulary perception could help the English language learners especially with reading comprehension skill.

Investigations of this kind can identify the new methods of teaching vocabulary via SMS and common aspects and the results of the study could be helpful in learning and teaching English vocabulary perception at different educational levels, especially for students at the collage level.

The result of this study or studies like this could be beneficial to different groups including language teachers and language learners at different levels and to the language pedagogy from the viewpoint of new methods of teaching and learning L2 vocabulary. On the other hand, due to intermixing of SMS technology and M-learning among students and teachers, the necessity for such investigations is multiplied, especially regarding M-learning via SMS studies, which their number is too few. Investigation of this type could show the role of blending new technology via SMS in learning and teaching English reading passages.

1.3. The research question and hypotheses

The present study seeks to answer the following questions:

1- Is there any significant difference between the effect of L2 vocabulary learning via SMS interaction and L2 vocabulary learning via printed-paper?

2- Does the primacy effect show more durability over the recency effect in terms of a better storage of new words learned via SMS?

In order to answer the questions posed above, these null hypotheses were put forth:

1- There is no significant difference between the effect of L2 vocabulary learning via SMS interaction and L2 vocabulary learning via printed paper.

2- The primacy effect shows no more durability over recency effect in terms of a better storage of new words learned via SMS.

2. Review of the related literature

According to Linda Diamond and Linda Gutlohn (2006), vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. As Steven Stahl (2005) puts it, "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only infers a definition, but also infers how that word fits into the world." Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever become fully proficient; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. Teaching vocabulary includes far more than searching for words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence. Vocabulary is obtained accidentally through roundabout exposure to words and deliberately through clear instruction in unique and precise words and word-learning strategies. According to Michael Graves (2000), there are four components of an effective vocabulary program:

A: wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge

B: instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words

C: instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and

D: word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning

The extent of research into the use of mobile phones for language learning has been varied. In one study, for example, Kiernan and Aizawa (2004) used mobile phones to have learners exchange e-mails with one another in order to teach targeted structures. In addition, Taylor and Gitsaki (2003) called for their learners to use the browser function of their phones to perform Internet searches, and Levy and Kennedy (2005) sent learners language learning related text notifications through SMS about what they had learnt during class or details of upcoming television programs they wanted the learners to watch. Each of these studies capitalizes on different capabilities of mobile phones (e-mail, web browsers and SMS) and demonstrates the broad potential of the phone as a learning tool.

Studies investigating using mobile phones for learning vocabulary have begun to appear in the literature and the nature of the activities and the concentrations of the research have been varied. Brown and Culligan (2008), for instance, make an overview of a condition where learners complete activities on a computer, after that time they can access vocabulary flash cards on their mobile phones that are produced based on items that the system predicts that they need to work on. In their study, a description is given of how the activities are useful, particularly that targeted items are provided for learners to study at a time and place which suits them, but details are not given regarding how the system was practically used by the learners. Another sample is described by Thornton and Houser (2005), where learners were asked to access video lessons about English idioms from their mobile phones during class time and complete short multiple choice activities about the idioms they had learnt, also on their mobile phones in class. The materials were given a favorable evaluation by the learners, who discovered them both enjoyable and useful.

Chen, Hsieh, and Kinshuk (2008) conducted one study that endeavored to investigate the way in which learners acquire vocabulary through mobile phones. Learners supposed to have varying verbal and visual learning skills according to an online observe into short-term memory abilities were provided with four different types of annotations for learning English vocabulary relied on their learning preferences determined in the survey. Flashcards were sent to their mobile phones via SMS which included one of four different types of annotation; English word only, English word with written annotation, English word with pictorial annotation, and English word with both written and pictorial annotation. The flashcards were viewed in the classroom and learners were given 50 minutes to learn 24 vocabulary items. In a post-test carried out immediately after the activities on desktop computers in the classroom,

they found that the pictorial annotation assisted learners who had lower verbal and higher visual ability to retain vocabulary, at least in the short term.

Studies that have looked at actual mobile phone use outside the classroom include research into sending messages to learners' mobile phones by Thornton and Houser (2005) and Kennedy and Levy (2008). Both studies were based on the "push" mode of operation, that is, where teachers control the frequency and the timing of messages sent to learners. Thornton and Houser sent short mini-lessons for learning vocabulary via e-mail to learners' mobile phones three times a day, using new words in multiple contexts to allow learners to infer the meanings. Similarly, learners in Kennedy and Levy's study were given the option to receive messages which presented known words in new contexts and new words in contexts that were familiar to the learners through SMS to their mobile phones on an average of nine to ten messages per week. A survey was administered in both studies, and in each case revealed that learners felt that these messages were very useful for learning vocabulary, although some indicated that the messages were too regular. To decide effectiveness, the learners who received the e-mail mini-lessons in Thornton and Houser's study were compared against learners who could access the same materials through a website planned for the mobile phone and learners who were given the materials on paper. The study only ran for a two-week period but showed that the learners who received the e-mails scored better on post-tests compared with the other two groups. No measures of effectiveness were conducted in Kennedy and Levy's study.

A restriction annoying research into using mobile phones for language learning, however, is that much of it occurs in simulated settings, ordinarily within the classroom itself. In order to get a real indication of the nature of mobile learning, it is necessary to view its use in naturalistic environment. Stockwell (2008) conducted an example of where learners' mobile phone usage was tracked outside the classroom in a study of 75 pre-intermediate learners of English. Learners were provided with tailored vocabulary activities based on listening activities covered in class, and were able to complete these either on mobile phones through the Internet browser function on their phones or on a normal desktop or laptop computer (PC). Surveys and server log data revealed that learners used the PC in preference to the mobile phone in the vast majority of cases, many of whom indicated from the outset that they did not intend to use the Glenn Stockwell(2010) *Using Mobile Phones for Vocabulary Activities Language Learning & Technology* 97

Finally, studies have showed that incidental learning of vocabulary may lead to such problems as incorrect inferences. The problem of guesses may be due to the fact that unlike

native speakers, EFL students often lack the word knowledge from context and do not use active reading strategies. They need to be able to have constant access to word related resources such as dictionaries to help resolve problems in their academic study.

3. Methodology

3.1. Subjects

The participants of this study included 66 Iranian students from different university majors studying English as a foreign language in a private language institute called Asia Foreign Language Center in Khodabande, Zanjan - which offers TOEFL, IELTS, translation, and ESP courses. These participants were chosen out of 100 students who volunteered to take Michigan proficiency test. Regarding age, participants ranged from 19 to 25 years old .They all were studying in TOEFL preparation course. Of these participants, 33 had a high school diploma, 12 an associate degree, and 21 a bachelor's degree. As for gender, 24 were male and 42 were female.

3.2. Instrumentation

For the purpose of the study and the hypotheses, several instruments were utilized. They were validated through a pilot study before being employed in the project. The instruments applied were:

First, the Michigan proficiency test including 64 multiple choice items along with an answer sheet was used to homogenize the subjects. In other words, the subjects were exposed to the Michigan proficiency test and those students who acquired more than seventy percent of the score were selected for the main purpose of the study. The elected subjects were divided into two groups, control group and experimental group. Each group consisted of 33 subjects.

Secondly, it is expedient to mention that a pre-test and a post-test were employed in the study. The questions were taken from the book, *Longman complete course for the TOEFL test: preparation for the computer and paper tests.* The pre -test and post -test involved 60 items along with an answer sheet. The pretest and the post -test questions were different in wording but they were equal in the level of difficulty. Scores for both the pretest and post-test were defined considering the number of correct item. A correct answer was rated 1 and an incorrect answer was rated 0. The next material used in this study was the words, which are extracted from "word surfing" websites, and these words were used in SMS messages.

3.3. Design

Since real random selection of the subjects was possible, the study followed the True-Experimental Design with the help of pre-test, post-test pattern. The diagram of such a design is as follows:

Table 3.1. Randomized control experimental groups, pretest-posttest design

group	Pre-test	Independent variable	Post-test
E1	T1	X	T2
C	T1	-	T2
E2	T1	-	T2

In this design T1(E1) and T1(C) are the tests before applying the treatment to answer the first research question , and T2(E1) , T2(c) are the tests after treatment, respectively, where X is the treatment. T1 (E2) and T2 (E2) are the tests before and after applying the treatment to answer the second research question.

3.4. Data analysis

Data analysis procedures include calculating descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations for the whole sample and for subgroups related to gender and other key variables. Independent t-tests are used to find out the relationship between variables. The result of data analysis is explaind in the next chapter in detail.

4. Data analysis results

4.1. Descriptive statistics

Initially, descriptive statistics were computed for all instruments employed in this thesis. The results of descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, minimum, maximum and standard deviation) for continuous variables, namely, scores on SMS and PPT are displayed in Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 4.1: Descriptive statistics for Michigan test scores on SMS

N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Maximum	Minimum
66	66.55	15.52	90	21

Table 4.2: descriptive statistics for Michigan test scores of 66 study participants on PPT

N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Maximum	Minimum
66	74.8	0.93	77	73

4.2. Inferential statistics

4.2.1. Difference between vocabulary perception via SMS and PPS

The main focus of this study is the examination of the difference between vocabulary perception through sending words via SMS and printed paper test (PPT). In order to

determine the strength of difference between these two variables, a independent t-test was used. Table 4.3shows the results of the analysis**.**

Before investigating the research hypothesis and running any t-test, it was necessary to examine the normal distribution of scores representing the variables under study through Kolmogrov -Smirnov test. A non-significant Sig. values (values more than 0.05) indicate that the scores are normally distributed (Pallant, 2007). Table 4.3 presents the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the SMS and PPT scores.

Table 4.3: Tests for Normality of Distribution of Scores on SMS and PPT

Variables / Significant indicators	SMS	PPS
Number	33	33
Mean	11.48	7.87
Standard deviation	3.38	4.07
Kolmogorov-Smirnov test	0.766	0.822
Level of significance	0.601	0.509

As the results of Kolmogorov- Smirnov statistics indicate, the significant level values concerning SMS and PPT are 0.60 and 0.50 respectively showing that the scores for these two variables are normally distributed.

Since the scores of SMS and PPT are normally distributed, a t- test can be run to show if learners' vocabulary perception are affected by presenting vocabulary through SMS services or presenting vocabulary via printed paper forms . The results of descriptive and t-test results of the analysis are reported in Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 below. Table 4.4 demonstrates the descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, minimum, maximum and standard deviation) relating to t-test results for learners' score on PPT and SMS.

Table 4.4 *Descriptive Statistics of the T-Tests for SMS and PPT score*

Significant indicators / Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SMS	33	11.48	3.38	0.42
PPT	33	7.87	4.07	0.50

Table 4.5 *independent-samples correlations*

N	Correlation	Level of significance
33	0.399	0.001

Table 4.6 *independent-Samples T-test Results for Scores on SMS and PPT*

Significant indicators Correlation	t-value	Df	Level of significance
MIP and MIS	6.936	32	0.00

As indicated by the results in the tables above, the difference between subjects' mean scores on SMS [(M_1 = 11.48, SD_1 = 3.38] and PPT [(M_2= 7.87, SD_2 = 4.07 ; t(32) = 6.93, p = .000, p<.05)] proved statistically significant. As the level of significance is below .05 level (i.e., <u>sig</u>=.00) the null hypothesis is rejected. This is indicative of the point that SMS scores' mean is significantly higher than PPT scores' mean. Since the two tests (SMS and PPT) were different only with regard to vocabulary load, it can be claimed, with relative confidence, that sending vocabulary via SMS leads to improved vocabulary perception for the participants in post-test. Therefore, with due caution it can be concluded that SMS influences L2 vocabulary perception.

Participants' mean performance on SMS test is significantly better than their mean performance on PPT meaning that using SMS has influenced their performance on vocabulary perception test. In other words, presentation of vocabulary via SMS leads to better vocabulary perception in the study participants.

4.2.2. Primary effect and Recency effect

The second hypothesis stated that the primacy effect shows no more durability over recency effect in terms of a better storage of new words learned via SMS. To test this hypothesis, the researcher conducted an paired-samples t-test analysis to investigate any significant difference between the means of the paired groups' scores on primary learned vocabulary and that of recently learned vocabulary via SMS. The results of the analysis are reported in the Tables 4.7 and 4.8 below. The results revealed a significant difference between subjects' score in this regard [(M_1 = 36.25, SD_1 = 1.34; M_2 = 29.46, SD_2 = 3.16; t (32) = 2.107, p = .036, P<.05] .Tables 4.7 and 4.8 present the descriptive statistics and t-test results respectively.

As mentioned above participants' mean performance on primary learned vocabulary is significantly better than their mean performance on recently learned vocabulary, in other words, primary learned vocabulary indicate more durability.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics for T-test between Primary and Recency learned Vocabulary via SMS

Significant indicators / Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Primary	33	36.25	1.34	0.73
Recency	33	29.46	3.16	0.42

Table 4.8 *T-test for Independent Samples of primary and Recency learned vocabulary*

Significant indicators / Correlation	t-value	Df	Level of significance
Primary and Recency	2.107	32	0.03

5. Discussion

As the findings of this study reveal, EFL learners' vocabulary perception through SMS is significantly higher than their vocabulary perception via PPS. Consequently, the first null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between EFL learners' vocabulary perception through SMS and PPS was rejected. Thus, it can be claimed, with relative confidence, that sending vocabulary via SMS leads to improved vocabulary perception for the participants. Therefore, with due caution it can be concluded that SMS influences L2 vocabulary perception.

The results also reflected a significant difference between subjects' performance on the primary learned vocabulary and that of recently learned vocabulary. As a result, the second hypothesis claiming no durability for primary learned vocabulary over recently learned vocabulary was rejected.

References

Browne, C., & Culligan, B. (2008). Combining technology and IRT testing to build student knowledge of high frequency vocabulary. *The JALT CALL Journal, 4*(2), 3–16.

Chen, N.-S., Hsieh, S.-W., & Kinshuk. (2008). Effects of short-term memory and content representation type on mobile language learning. *Language Learning & Technology, 12*(3), 93–113. Retrieved from http://llt.msu.edu/vol12num3/chenetal.pdf

Geddes, S. (2004). Mobile learning in the 21st century: Benefit for learners. The knowledge tree.RetrievedFebruary13,2011,from:http://flexiblelearning.net.au/knowledgetree/edition06/html/pra_simon_geddes.html.

Kadyte, V. (2003). Learning can happen anywhere: a mobile system for language learning. In

Attwell, J., & Savill-kiewman and Aizawa(2007) retrieved from Wikipedia Lewis, M. (1993). *The lexical approach*. Hove: Language Teaching Publications .

Kennedy, C., & Levy, M. (2008). L'italiano al telefonino: Using SMS to support beginners' language learning. *ReCALL, 20*(3), 315–350.

Kiernan, P., & Aizawa, K. (2004). Cell phones in task based learning. Are cell phones useful language learning tools? *ReCALL, 16*(1), 71–84.

Reinder,H.(2012).Twenty Ideas for Using Mobile Phones in the Language Classroom. US Department of State. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of English Language

Stockwell, G. (2008). Investigating learner preparedness for and usage patterns of mobile learning. *ReCALL, 20*(3), 253–270.

Taylor, R.P., & Gitsaki, C. (2003). Teaching WELL in a computerless classroom. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 16*(4), 275–294.

Thornton, P., & Houser, C. (2005). Using mobile phones in English education in Japan. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 21*(3), 217–228.

Vavoula, G. N., & Sharples, M. (2002). KLeOS: a personal, mobile, knowledge and learning organization system. Proceedings of the IEEE International Workshop on Wireless and Mobile Technologies in Education (WMTE 2002) (pp. 152-156). Vaxjo, Sweden: IEEE Computer Society.

Title

Using Inductive and Deductive Consciousness Raising Tasks to Improve Field-Dependent and Field-Independent EFL Learners' Grammar

Authors

Hamid Marashi (Ph.D)
Islamic Azad University at Central Tehran

Samaneh Kordbacheh (M.A)
Islamic Azad University at Central Tehran

Biodata

Hamid Marashi, Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Islamic Azad University at Central Tehran. He currently teaches the graduate courses and has published in national and international academic journals and presented in international conferences.

Samaneh Kordbacheh, M.A in TEFL from Islamic Azad University at Central Tehran and has been teaching English at different language schools for several years. Her main areas of research interest include methods and techniques of language teaching.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of two different types of consciousness-raising (C-R) tasks, namely inductive and deductive, on the grammar achievement of field-dependent and field-independent EFL learners. To this aim, 120 female EFL learners were selected from among a total number of 220 based on their performance on a sample Nelson Language Proficiency Test and the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) and were randomly put into two groups, 60 field-dependents and 60 field-independents. Each group was divided again into two subgroups to undergo the two types of C-R tasks. All in all, there were four groups: 30 field-dependents and 30 field-independents undergoing the inductive C-R task treatment, and 30 field-dependents and 30 field-independents experiencing the deductive C-R task treatment. A grammar test was administered as the posttest of the study to all the groups once the treatment for 21 sessions was over. A two-way ANOVA was run to test all the four hypotheses raised in the study. The findings revealed that field-independents outperformed field-

dependents in both settings of inductive and deductive C-R tasks while the kind of instruction was not a significant factor.

1. Introduction

One of the most significant aspects of any language which has always been debated by practitioners and researchers and whose importance is self-evident when working with EFL learners is grammar. Knowledge of grammar enables learners not only to produce and comprehend novel linguistic input but also to be more accurate in using the language resulting in a more effective communication and most importantly facilitating the L2 acquisition process (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Paribakht, 2004; Rutherford, 1987; Stern, 1992; Sugiharto, 2006; Widodo, 2006).

There has always been debate among ELT specialists whether grammar should be taught or not. Some scholars (e.g., Krashen, 1982; Nunan, 2004; Richards, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Skehan, 1998) believe that grammar does not need to be taught and it can be acquired naturally through exposure to comprehensible input. But other researchers hold an opposing view and maintain that formal teaching of grammar is necessary (e.g., Bygate, Skehan, & Swain, 2001; Ellis, 1992; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011; Robinson, 2001). Larsen-Freeman (1995), for example, states that even if learners acquire the grammar rules successfully without formal instruction, it does not imply that grammar should not be taught because formal instruction can facilitate the process of grammar acquisition.

To this end, "People agree that grammar is too significant to be ignored, and that without grammar, learners' language development will be severely limited" (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 145). One way for providing learners with explicit knowledge of grammar is through consciousness raising (C-R) tasks which Ellis (as cited in Mohamed, 2004) defines as "a pedagogic activity where learners are provided with L2 data and required to perform operations on or with it, the purpose of which is to arrive at an explicit understanding of some linguistic properties of the TL" (p. 229).

Ellis (as cited in Sugiharto, 2006) differentiates C-R tasks from other form-focused activities by noting that C-R tasks do not emphasize learners' correct use of the targeted feature in spontaneous language use immediately following task performance. Instead, he

states, C-R tasks are intended to form a conscious representation of the target feature, with production of that feature kept to a minimum.

Furthermore, Ellis (2002) argues that C-R tasks can be inductive where the learner is given data and asked to construct the explicit rule behind the data. Some scholars (e.g., Bolitho & Tomlinson, 1995; Bourke, 1996; Felder & Henriques, 1995; Haight, Herron, & Cole, 2007) maintain that an inductive approach is a more efficient means for teaching grammar, but others (such as Fortune, 1992; Sheen, 1992; Widodo, 2006) argue that the most successful method is the deductive approach in which, according to Ellis (2002), a rule is given to the learner allowing him/her to carry out a task. Then again there are others such as Mohamed (2004) who state that inductive C-R tasks are just as effective as deductive C-R tasks.

Various studies (Fotos, 1994; Fotos & Ellis, 1991; Mohamed, 2004; Sheen, 1992) have investigated the effectiveness of C-R tasks. Also Mohamed (2004) has examined the effectiveness of inductive and deductive C-R tasks from the learners' perspective. The findings indicate that learners have no strong preference for a particular type of task and they view both as being useful to the same extent. These findings suggest that both inductive and deductive C-R tasks are effective learning tools and could be used to enhance learners' awareness of linguistic forms, where explicit instruction is necessary.

Although it has been shown that C-R tasks are efficient learning tools, research has shown that there are a number of factors which influence the learning process in general, one of which is learners' cognitive style; according to Brown (2007), "The way we learn things in general and the way we attack a problem seem to hinge on a rather amorphous link between personality and cognition; this link is referred to as cognitive style" (p. 119).

One such cognitive style introduced by Witkins, Oltman, Raskin, and Karp (1971) and further elaborated by Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978) which still continues to be a focus of interest of some practitioners (e.g., Johnson, Prior, & Artuso, 2000; Mulalic, Mohd Shah, & Ahmad, 2009) is field-dependence-independence. Field-dependence (FD) is defined by Brown (2007, p. 121) as "the tendency to be dependent on the total field so that the parts embedded within the field are not easily perceived". On the other hand, he argues that field-independence (FI) "is concerned with the ability to perceive a particular item in a field of distracting items" (p. 121).

FD individuals, according to Witkins and Goodenough (1981), do not have the same sense of separate identity as do FI ones. They are dependent on external cues of reference and have a greater social orientation. According to Ghonsooly and Eghtesadee (2006), the

cognitive style of FD/FI has been also found important in language testing hypothesizing that persons with low FI degrees perform well on integrative tests such as the cloze and the oral interview, in which they are not required to be conscious to discrete items. They further write, however, that, "besides those who maintain a relationship between field-dependence/ independence and second language learning, there are some other researchers who deny any role for field-dependence/independence" (p. 123).

One such example is Ellis (1994) who states that the research into FD and FI has shed little light on the relationship between this cognitive style and L2 learning and concludes that FD and FI does not appear to be an important factor in SLA. Moreover, Griffith and Sheen (1992) who are particularly dismissive of FD and FI argue that this cognitive style does not have and never has had any relevance for second language learning, because the concept is theoretically flawed.

On the contrary, Chapelle (as cited in Ghonsooly & Eghtesadee, 2006) calls this view into question and states that Griffiths and Sheen (1992) have confused fundamental theoretical and research issues and the relation between FD and FI and SLA has a logical foundation and specific benefits might be gained through careful examination of its evaluation.

With all that has been discussed so far and the fact that different people learn differently depending on their cognitive and learning styles, the purpose of this study was to find out whether FD and FI learners benefit from the inductive and deductive C-R tasks differently or not. Therefore, the following null hypotheses were raised:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between the grammar achievement of field dependent and independent EFL learners who are exposed to inductive C-R tasks.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between the grammar achievement of field dependent and independent EFL learners who are exposed to deductive C-R tasks.

H_{03}: There is no significant difference between the effect of inductive and deductive C-R tasks on field-dependent learners' grammar achievement.

H_{04}: There is no significant difference between the effect of inductive and deductive C-R tasks on field-independent learners' grammar achievement.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

To attain the goals of this study, 120 Iranian female elementary students who were studying English as a foreign language in a language school in Tehran, participated in the study. Their ages differed from 13 to 16. These participants were selected from among 220 elementary learners who took the Nelson Language Proficiency Test after it was piloted among 30 students at the same language school with almost similar characteristics in order to estimate its reliability as well as modifying it through item analysis. From among the sample of 220, 153 participants who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean of the sample through the test were selected in order to make sure that there would ultimately be 60 FD and 60 FI learners in each group after the administration of GEFT and selection of 120 participants.

Next, these 153 students took GEFT to be labeled as FD or FI. Subsequently, 120 participants, 60 of whom were FD and 60 other FI learners were selected and divided into four experimental groups in a way that two groups were FD and two groups were FI with 30 learners in each group.

2.2. Instrumentation and Materials

A number of tests, a questionnaire, and a series of instructional materials were used in this study, all of which are described in details below.

2.2.1. Nelson Language Proficiency Test

In order to have participants who are as homogeneous as possible in terms of their language proficiency level, the elementary version of the Nelson Proficiency Test 050 C (Fowler & Coe, 1976) was applied in this study. This test includes 50 multiple-choice items covering grammar. The time allocated for this test was 30 minutes and each item received one point with thus a total of 50. The test was piloted beforehand among a group as similar as possible to the sample group in terms of language proficiency; as a result, the test showed a reliability of 0.88 and 10 malfunctioning items were omitted leaving 40 items in the final version for administration.

2.2.2. Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT)

Once the participants were selected through the Nelson test, in order to determine the participants' cognitive style as being either field-dependent or field-independent, GEFT (Witkins et al., 1971) was administered to the sample group prior to the treatment.

GEFT is a paper-based test consisting of seven practice items which should be completed in one minute and two other sets, consisting of nine items which have the time limit of five minutes for each set. During the test, the participants are required to locate 18 simple geometric shapes each located in a drawing of a larger, more complex pattern

geometric shape. Scores on the GEFT range from 0 (highly FD) to 18 (highly FI). Participants scoring between 0-5 are considered as field-dependent while those scoring between13-18 are considered as field-independent.

The reported split-half reliability estimate of the GEFT in the published test manual, according to the Spearman-Brown formula, is 0.82 for both men and women (Witkins et al. 1971).

2.2.3. Grammar Posttest

Upon the completion of the course, a teacher-made grammar test which served as the posttest was administered to the participants to assess their grammar achievement. This test comprised 50 multiple-choice items and included all the grammatical points covered during the course of instruction. Each item which was answered correctly received one point. This test was of course piloted among 30 students with almost the same language characteristics of the target group.

2.2.4. Instructional Materials

The main course book employed in this study was Pacesetter which is designed specifically for teenagers with a communicative approach and presents the new language in contexts relevant to teenagers and in ways which actively involve them in the learning process. This book contains 15 main units, three consolidation units including project work, and information gap activities for skill work. Each main unit includes two grammatical points.

The grammatical points taught in this study were units 13, 14, and 15 including the future: *will* and *may*, *be able to*, *will*, and *be going to*, the present simple passive, the past simple passive and *by* phrases, *let* and *make*, *like* and *would like* through inductive and deductive consciousness-raising tasks. The tasks were designed by the teacher/researcher. For inductive C-R tasks, the teacher provided the learners with data and asked them to construct an explicit rule to describe the grammatical feature which the data illustrated but for deductive tasks, the participants were supplied with a grammatical rule and were asked to carry out some tasks using the underlying rule.

2.3. Procedure

Following the selection process described above, the treatment commenced. The whole course for the four experimental groups comprised 21 sessions and the participants attended the classes twice a week; each session lasted one hour and 30 minutes. As discussed earlier, the same course book was taught to all four groups by the same teacher (one of the

researchers). The same amount of time was devoted to teaching grammar with one grammatical point being taught in all groups every three sessions which took almost 30 minutes; the procedure of teaching, however, was in the two different ways of deductive and inductive C-R tasks.

In the two groups which included field-dependent and field-independent learners and the teacher employed deductive C-R tasks to teach grammar, the teacher delivered the task sheets among the students not explaining anything about the target grammatical feature and just clarified for the learners how they were supposed to deal with the task sheets. These task sheets were in two main parts. In the first part, the learners were provided with language data in the form of syntactic rules or grammatical information while in the second part, they were asked to use this information to complete a specific language activity. For both parts, the participants worked in pairs. Subsequently, the teacher asked them to read out the sentences they had produced themselves to make sure if they had acquired the grammatical point and she answered the questions raised by the learners.

The above procedure took almost 30 minutes and was repeated for all the grammatical features of the three units covered during the term. For instance, one of the points mentioned was the difference between *will* and *be going to.* To begin with, the researcher explained the use of *will* directly on the task sheet by mentioning "we use *will* to make predictions about the future" and this was followed by some examples, like, "I believe we *will* meet creatures from other worlds one day".

Subsequently they were provided with some information about *be going to* as "We use *be going to* to talk about future plans" following which they could see the examples, such as, "We'*re going to* pay a visit to London." In the next step they produced some examples themselves using the rules they had just learned. Finally, to make sure they had grasped the point and also to have more communication, they had some sentences among which were incorrect ones and they recognized them while explaining the reason.

On the other hand, the other two groups of field-dependent and field-independent learners who were exposed to inductive C-R tasks underwent a different procedure of grammar instruction. As was the case with the deductive tasks, the teacher did not describe the grammatical point at the outset but just provided the learners with the task sheets. In these groups, the students were supposed to work in groups of two, just like the deductive ones. The information presented in the inductive task sheets was identical to that of the deductive tasks. The difference, however, was that rather than explaining the grammatical rules, the participants were required to discover the target rule themselves from the given data. Each of

the inductive tasks contained an element of information gap to encourage learners to communicate and work together to solve the language problem.

Before starting each task, the teacher emphasized that they were supposed to communicate with each other in order to discover the rules. For both tasks, deductive or inductive, the teacher walked along the classroom to observe if everything was clear and to answer any probable questions. And finally, the teacher checked students' understanding of the language feature and clarified any point raised by the participants. This process was repeated for every grammatical point during the course of instruction and took almost half an hour each time.

An example here might serve to better illustrate the point. The participants were just provided with some examples in the beginning, such as, "I believe we *will* meet creatures from other worlds one day" or "We'*re going to* pay a visit to London". Then they had some other sentences that they had to decide which were ungrammatical based on what they read in the first part such as, "I think my mother *is going to* like this CD" or "I'*ll* study French because I really like this language". Subsequently it was the main part in which they tried to make up a rule to explain when *will* and *be going to* were used. And at last, they wrote down some examples about their own life using the rule. At the end of the course, all the learners in the four experimental groups took the posttest.

3. Results

The data analysis including both descriptive and inferential statistics is reported in the chronological order of participant selection, posttest, and hypothesis testing.

3.1. Participant Selection

The Nelson test was administered to a total of 220 students from among whom 153 were selected based on their scores (one standard deviation above and below the mean). Ultimately, 120 students were selected from these 153 based on their scores on the GEFT and were divided into four equal groups: 30 field-dependent students in the inductive C-R tasks, 30 field-independent learners in the inductive C-R tasks, 30 field-dependent students in the deductive C-R tasks, and 30 field-independent learners in the deductive C-R tasks. The descriptive statistics of these four groups on the Nelson test are displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Descriptive Statistics of the Scores of the Four Groups on the Nelson Test Prior to the Treatment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Inductive – FD	30	18.00	33.00	26.5333	4.98780	-.396	.427
Inductive – FI	30	19.00	34.00	27.8333	5.00402	-.317	.427
Deductive – FD	30	19.00	34.00	28.3000	4.50402	-.815	.427
Deductive – FI	30	19.00	34.00	27.1667	4.51880	-.395	.427
Valid N (listwise)	30						

Although the mean scores of all four groups were close, to ensure further homogeneity between the four groups at the outset, a one-way ANOVA was run between the mean scores of the four groups on the proficiency test. As is evident from Table 1 above, the skewness ratios of all four subgroups (-0.92, -0.74, -1.9, and -0.92) fell within the acceptable range of ±1.96. Furthermore, the Levene's test of homogeneity of variances showed that the variances among the four subgroups were not significantly different ($F_{(3,116)} = 0.895$, $p = 0.446 > 0.05$). Accordingly, the results of the one-way ANOVA are reported in Table 2.

Table 2 – One-Way ANOVA of the Scores of the Four Groups on the Language Proficiency Test at the Outset

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	53.692	3	17.897	.790	.502
Within Groups	2628.100	116	22.656		
Total	2681.792	119			

As Table 2 indicates, with the F value of 0.790 at the significance level of 0.502 being greater than 0.05, the mean scores between the four groups were not significantly different. Hence, the researchers could rest assured that the four groups manifested no significant difference in their language proficiency prior to the treatment.

3.2. Posttest

At the end of the treatment, the posttest was administered to all four groups. Prior to the actual administration, the test was piloted among 30 students almost identical in terms of language proficiency level to the target group to identify the malfunctioning items and check the reliability index (0.839). The descriptive statistics of the actual administration of the posttest is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 – Descriptive Statistics of the Scores of All Four Groups on the Posttest

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Inductive – FD	30	17.00	37.00	27.7667	5.55029	-.368	.427
Inductive – FI	30	23.00	40.00	33.7333	5.72311	-.599	.427
Deductive – FD	30	19.00	41.00	30.6333	6.66687	-.255	.427
Deductive – FI	30	22.00	44.00	31.6667	6.40223	.114	.427
Valid N (listwise)	30						

As is clear from the table above, the means of the four groups range from 27-77 to 33.73; further statistical analyses are required to see whether this range implies a significant difference or not (described below).

3.3. Testing the Hypotheses

To verify all four hypotheses of the study together, a two-way ANOVA was required since there is a dual learning modality (inductive versus deductive C-R task) and also a dual personality style (FD versus FI) involved with one dependent variable (i.e. grammar achievement) at stake.

As is evident from Table 3 above, the skewness ratios of all four subgroups (- 0.86, - 1.4, - 0.59, and 0.26) fell within the acceptable range. In addition, the Levene's test of equality of error variances showed that the variances among the four subgroups were not significantly different ($F_{(3,116)}$ = 0.392, p = 0.759 > 0.05).

Table 4 below shows the results of the tests of between-subjects effects.

Table 4 – Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	554.833[a]	3	184.944	4.965	.003
Intercept	114948.300	1	114948.300	3085.956	.000
C-R Task Type	4.800	1	4.800	.129	.720
Cognitive Style	367.500	1	367.500	9.866	.002
C-R Task Type * Cognitive Style	182.533	1	182.533	4.900	.029
Error	4320.867	116	37.249		
Total	119824.000	120			
Corrected Total	4875.700	119			

a. R Squared = .114 (Adjusted R Squared = .091)

As Table 4 indicates, the significance value was less than 0.05 ($F_{(3,116)}$ = 4.965, p = 0.003 < 0.05). There was no significant difference between the impact of the two instruction modalities (inductive and deductive C-R tasks) on all the participants ($F_{(1,116)}$ = 0.129, p = 0.720 > 0.05). However, there was a significant difference between FD and FI learners in this study in general ($F_{(1,116)}$ = 9.866, p = 0.002 < 0.05).

Finally, as the interaction of the teaching type and cognitive style proved significantly different ($F_{(1,116)}$ = 4.900, p = 0.029 < 0.05), the overall conclusion was that the interaction of the two teaching types (inductive and deductive C-R tasks) with the two cognitive styles (FD and FI) proved significant.

Estimated Marginal Means of grammar achievement
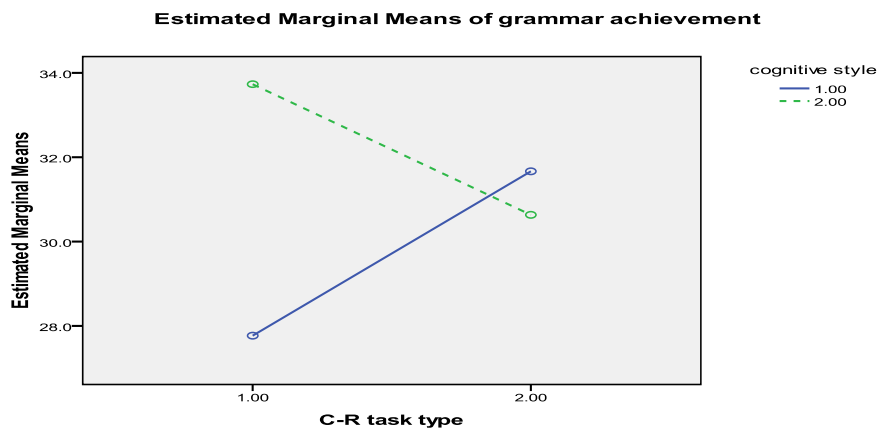
Figure 1 – Interaction of the Teaching and Cognitive Styles on the Posttest

Based on the ANOVA table revealing the significant differences, the first hypothesis of the study, that is, *there is no significant difference between the grammar achievement of FD and FI EFL learners who are exposed to inductive C-R tasks*, is rejected as cognitive style was a significant factor in this study. Likewise, the second hypothesis of the study stating that there is no significant difference between the grammar achievement of field dependent and independent EFL learners who are exposed to deductive C-R tasks is also rejected.

The third hypothesis, however, which states that *there is no significant difference between the effect of inductive and deductive C-R tasks on FD learners' grammar achievement* is not rejected as teaching modality was not a significant factor in this research. And again, the fourth hypothesis which reads *there is no significant difference between the effect of inductive and deductive C-R tasks on FI learners' grammar achievement* is not rejected either.

As in this univariate two-way ANOVA, there were only two modalities of the independent variable (teaching type) and two fixed factors (cognitive style), running Post-Hoc tests was not feasible since a minimum of three cases are required for such tests. Hence, as the differences proved significant, the researchers had to clarify which group significantly outperformed which through a two-by-two comparison.

Finally, the researchers calculated the observed power to determine the strength of the findings of the research, that is, to evaluate the stability of the research findings across samples, effect size was also estimated. The observed power as shown in Table 5, came out to be 0.65 for the teaching modality and 0.60 for the cognitive style. According to Mackey and Gass (2005), these values are generally considered a moderate effect size. Therefore, the findings of the study could be moderately generalized.

Table 5 – Estimates of Effect Size for the Posttest

Source	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Corrected Model	.114	14.895	.905
Intercept	.964	3085.956	1.000
Teaching Type	.001	.129	.651
Cognitive Style	.041	4.900	.593
Teaching Type * Cognitive Style	.078	9.866	.876

4. Discussion

Although various different studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of deductive and inductive C-R tasks with conflicting results in favor of either of the two instruction modalities (e.g., Bolitho & Tomlinson, 1995; Bourke, 1996; Fotos, 1994; Fotos & Ellis, 1991; Sheen, 1992), the present study culminated in no significant difference between the impact of the two kinds of tasks.

Furthermore, another finding of this research was that FI learners performed better on the grammar posttest than FD ones. Quite a number of studies in the literature report that FI learners were more interactive and more successful in communicative skills (e.g., Johnson, Prior, & Artuso, 2000; Seliger as cited in Chapelle & Green, 1992). So this could be one of the reasons that FI learners benefitted more than FD learners from these C-R tasks.

Also, most of the students who were more attentive and accurate and participated more actively in any assignment, were found to be FI after administering the GEFT. Therefore, the overall result of the study was not far from expectation.

Not only was it proved in this study that FI learners outperformed FD ones generally, but also they were more successful in each setting separately, namely, inductive C-R tasks and deductive ones. Since students who are more FI are more analytic, they find it easier to solve problems and tend to provide their own structure to facilitate learning (Witkins, Moore, Goodenough, & Cox, 1977).

In general, FD learners did not succeed as much as FI ones in achieving grammatical points; the reason might be that as they perceive the world globally and find it more difficult to solve problems (Witkins et al., 1977), they are were not accurate and analytic enough to benefit sufficiently from C-R tasks.

5. Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, both kinds of C-R tasks are effective tools for teaching grammar as there was no significant difference between the two different kinds used

in this study. Using these tasks not only leads to learning some grammatical points but also provides opportunities to communicate and enhances this ability.

Furthermore, as cognitive style proved to be a significant factor in gaining grammatical knowledge, it is suggested that the learners' cognitive style as FD or FI be taken into account in instructional settings for achieving higher levels of proficiency.

EFL teachers can take advantage of C-R tasks in their classrooms instead of formal instruction of grammar which is more teacher-centered and could be boring for the students. By designing these student-centered tasks the teachers can somehow make the learners take the responsibility of their own learning since they are supposed to discover some grammatical rules themselves.

Teachers could also benefit from determining the learners' cognitive style as FD or FI in teaching grammar being aware that FI learners achieve more regarding grammar since they are more accurate and analytic. But this does not mean that teachers should ignore FD learners of course. They can perhaps compensate this by paying more attention to FD Learners during these tasks to make sure that they gain as much as FI learners.

Syllabus designers are the other group of people who can benefit from the findings of this research since they play an important role in instructional settings. The materials that they provide can even help the teachers to teach more effectively. They can design some tasks which are more suitable for FD learners as they are less accurate and pay less attention to details. Syllabus designers can provide the tasks and exercises in a way that they draw the learners' attention whether FD or FI to details.

References

Bolitho, R., & Tomlinson, B. (1995). *Discover English*. Oxford: Heinemann.

Bourke, J. (1996). In praise of linguistic problem solving. *RELC journal*, *27*(2), 12-29.

Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching.* New York: Pearson Education.

Bygate, M., Skehan, P., & Swain, M. (2001). Introduction. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds.), *Researching pedagogic tasks*: *Second language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 1-20). New York: Pearson Education.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Language teaching approaches: An overview. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 3-11). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Chapelle, C. & Green, P. (1992). Field independence/dependence in second language acquisition research. *Language Learning*, *42*(1), 47-83.

Ellis, R. (1992). *Second language acquisition and language pedagogy*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (2002a). Does form-focused instruction affect the acquisition of implicit knowledge? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 24*, 223-236.

Felder, R., & Henriques, E. (1995). Learning and teaching styles in foreign and second language education. *Foreign Language Annals, 28*(1), 21-31.

Fortune, A. (1992). Self-study grammar practice: Learners views and preferences. *ELT Journal, 46*(2), 160-171.

Fotos, S., & Ellis, R. (1991). Communicating about grammar: A task-based approach. *TESOL Quarterly, 25*, 605-628.

Fotos, S. (1994). Integrating grammar instruction and communicative language use through grammar consciousness-raising tasks. *TESOL Quarterly, 28*(2), 328-351.

Ghonsooly, B., & Eghtesadee, A. R. (2006). Role of cognitive style of field-dependence/independence in using metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies by a group of skilled and novice Iranian students of English literature. *Asian EFL Journal, 8*(4), 119-150.

Griffiths, R., & Sheen, R. (1992). Disembedded figures in the landscape: Appraisal of L2 research on field dependence/independence. *Applied Linguistics, 13*(2), 133-148.

Haight, C. E., Herron, C., & Cole, S. P. (2007). The effects of deductive and guided inductive instructional approaches on the learning of grammar in the elementary foreign language college classroom. *Foreign Language Annals, 40,* 288-310.

Johnson, J., Prior, S., & Artuso, M. (2000). Field dependence as a factor in second language communicative production. *Language Learning, 50* (3), 529-57.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* Oxford: Pergamon.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (1995). On the teaching and learning of grammar: Challenging the myth. In F. Eckman, D. Highland, L. P. J. Mileham, & R. Weber (Eds.), *Second language acquisition theory and pedagogy* (pp. 131-50). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Mackey, A., & Gass, S. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design.* New Jersey: LEA.

Mohamed, N. (2004). Consciousness-raising task: A learner perspective. *ELT Journal, 58*(3)*,* 228-237.

Mulalic, A., Mohd Shah, P., & Ahmad, F. (2009). Perceptual learning styles of ESL students. *European Journal of Social Sciences, 7*(3), 101-112.

Naiman, N., Froehlich, M., Stern, H. H., & Todesco, A. (1978). *The good language learner*. Toronto, Canada: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Nassaji, H., & Fotos, S. (2011). *Teaching grammar in second language classrooms integrating form-focused instruction in communicative context*. New York: Routledge.

Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching: A comprehensively revised edition of designing tasks for communicative classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Paribakht, T. S. (2004). The role of grammar in second language lexical processing. *RELC Journal, 35*(2), 149-160.

Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., & ***Rodgers***, T. S. (***2001***). *Approaches and methods in language teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Robinson, P. (2001). Task complexity, cognitive resources and syllabus design: A triadic framework for examining task influence on SLA. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 287-318). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rutherford, W. (1987). *Second language grammar: Learning and teaching.* London: Longman.

Sheen, R. (1992). Problem solving brought to task. *RELC Journal*, *23*(2), 44-59.

Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stern, H. H. (1992). *Issues and options in language teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sugiharto, S. (2006). Grammar consciousness-raising: Research, theory, and application. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching, 2*(2), 140-148.

Widodo, H.P. (2006). Approaches and procedures for teaching grammar**.** *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, *5*(1), 122-141.

Witkins, H., Oltman, P. K., Raskin, E. & Karp, S. (1971). *A Manual for the embedded figures test.* Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Witkins, H. A., Moore, C. A., Goodenough, D. R., & Cox, P. W. (1977). Field dependent and field independent cognitive styles and their educational implications. *Review of Educational Research, 47,* 1–64.

Witkins, H. A., & Goodenough, D. R. (1981). *Cognitive styles: Essence and origin.* New York: Wiley.

Title

**The Role of Gambits in Promoting Iranian EFL
Learners' Spoken Fluency**

Authors

Amir Nikmehr (M.A)
University of Tabriz, Iran

Farahman Farrokhi (Ph.D)
University of Tabriz, Iran

Biodata

Amir Nikmehr, M.A in TEFL from University of Tabriz. His interests include communication strategies and gambits.

Farahman Farrokhi, assistant professor of ELT at University of Tabriz. His research interests include corrective feedback, reading comprehension strategies, and critical discourse analysis.

Abstract

An objective for a language learner is to have the ability to start, maintain, and end a conversation. It is here that Communication Strategies (CSs) come to light. It seems that gambits would have quite a say in this matter, one that cannot be simply overlooked. Bearing this in mind, this study opted to find out whether gambits would promote spoken fluency in Iranian EFL learners or not. To this end, this study employed a mixed methods design in which four participants under observation for approximately two years were investigated. Participants A and B observed teacher modeling while the other two (C & D) were engaged in discovery tasks by means of movie retelling. Every five sessions their performances (that is, A & B on an IELTS speaking prompt and C & D on a 10 minute movie retelling task) were recorded and analyzed in terms of fluency and gambit use. Pearson's correlation indicated a very high correlation between gambit use and fluency and that engaging learners in discovery tasks yielded the best results towards improving oral fluency.

Keywords: Communication strategies, Gambits, Oral fluency, Modeling, Discovery tasks

1. Introduction

After the successive rise and fall of a couple of methods and approaches in the early and mid-twentieth century, it became clear for ELT researchers and practitioners that no single method or approach for language teaching is capable of bringing about success in teaching a foreign language. Then, in this tight situation, post-method pedagogy, as proposed by Kumaravadivelu (1994) emerged as a response to a call for the most optimal way of teaching English that would free itself from the method-based stranglehold.

So the notion of autonomous learning surfaced which sought to equip learners with tools that would best serve them once they are on their own and to facilitate their self-directed learning outside the classroom. Little (1991, p. 4) describes it thus, "The capacity of autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts".

An underlying assumption of research on learner autonomy is that in order to equip the learner with tools to eventually become autonomous, training must necessarily take place (see Benson &Voller, 1997; Wenden, 1991). In self-directed learning, the teacher acts more as a facilitator who provides the students with the tools to become autonomous through opportunities to learn and strategy instruction. Thus as Faucette (2001, p. 9) argues, "The connection between a learner autonomy approach and communication strategy instruction should be clear".

Functionalists believe that communication is in fact the primary function of language (Van Valin, 2002). It seems that the development of language owes itself to the necessity of communication, not the other way around. If we consider communication taking place only for the sake of having a language, then to my mind we're underestimating the value of communication. So the need to communicate has led to the development of language.

This leads us to the second issue, i.e., communicating in an effective manner. It is here that communication strategies (CSs) come to light. The role of communication strategies becomes even more salient in second language acquisition (SLA). According to Faucette (2001),

> Communication strategies would serve as an excellent means for less proficient learners to have the tools to maintain the conversation, resulting in the opportunity to receive more language input and improve their language ability. An objective for a language learner is to have the ability to start, maintain, and end a conversation (p. 6).

Thus it can be inferred that the vitality of teaching communication strategies in SLA is undeniable. In other words, the more CSs the learners have at their disposal, the longer they will stay in a conversation and in turn receive more input. Communication strategies are the means by which learners can learn not to surrender in the flow of conversation. As Hatch (1978, p. 434) puts it, "Finally and the most important, the learner should be taught not to give up".

Keeping a conversation going and not giving up will lead to fluency. Fillmore (1979, as cited in Kormos& Denes, 2004) conceptualized fluency in four different ways. First, he defined fluency as the ability to talk at length with few pauses and to be able to fill the time with talk. Second, a fluent speaker is not only capable of talking without hesitations but of expressing his/her message in a coherent, reasoned and "semantically dense" manner. Third, a person is considered to be fluent if he/she knows what to say in a wide range of contexts. Finally, Fillmore (1979) argued that fluent speakers are creative and imaginative in their language use and a maximally fluent speaker has all of the above mentioned abilities.

Think of the last time you were trapped in a situation where speaking English was a must. You wanted to say something but didn't know how to begin.You had a funny remark, but didn't know how to get people to listen to you. At that point, you needed a 'Gambit'. A gambit is a conversational tool that gets us going. For instance, you could have said, "guess what? My parents just got back together again". 'Guess what?' is used to attract attention. By using this gambit, you were able to claim the floor by means of attracting attention in order to start the conversation you intended. According to Keller (1979),

> A psycholinguistic analysis of conversational discourse is concerned with the strategies used by speakers to structure their content and their conversational procedure. Some of these strategies have an overt and verbal representation in the form of semi-fixed expressions that are called 'gambits' (p. 219).

Keller (1979) distinguishes four main functions for gambits, namely semantic introducers, social context indicators, an indication of the learner's state of consciousness and the communicative control function. So it seems crucial for learners to be equipped with the knowledge of gambits in order to communicate efficiently. On the other hand, if we consider fluency as an indicator for effective communication, then the role of gambits in this regard would become even more salient.

Unfortunately, to my mind, the notion of gambits subsumed under communication strategies, has been misunderstood and in turn taken for granted. Some reduce gambits to

merely pause fillers (see for example Dornyei & Scott, 1997, p.190). Others believe that they are fixed expressions (see Tavakoli, Dastjerdi & Esteki, 2011). The thing is that there is much more to gambits than initially believed and in order to truly appreciate its value, first we have to understand its vastness. Fluency as Fillmore (1979) conceptualizes is the ability to talk at length with few pauses and knowing what to say in a wide variety of contexts. It seems that with regard to fluency, gambits as Keller (1979) defines them 'semi-fixed' expressions might have a say in the matter. This is particularly what this study sets out to find. Using the gambit classification based on the model provided by Edmondson and House (1981) (see Appendix 1), in addition to some coined gambits provided by Nikmehr and Farrokhi (2013)(see Appendix 2) and considering speech rate, that is the number of words articulated per minute (WPM) as the best predictor of fluency, the quest will be to find out whether gambits promote the oral fluency of Iranian EFL learners or not.

It is expected that the findings of this study will have both theoretical and practical significance for teaching and learning gambits in EFL contexts. It can also be useful for language teachers, learners, syllabus designers as well as material developers. It seems that everyday conversation is abound with routine formulae, i.e. "highly conventionalized pre-patterned expressions whose occurrence is tied to more or less standardized communication situations" (Coulmas, 1981, p. 2).

Considering what has been mentioned up to now, it is worthwhile the teacher's time to try encouraging students in learning these pre-patterned expressions but of course this is not the whole story. Not all gambits are pre-patterned. According to Nikmehr and Farrokhi (2013),

> There is no limit whatsoever to the quantity of gambits and their functions. So in this light not all gambits should be handed out on a silver platter to the learners and even attempting to do so, is quite pointless because of the infinite nature of gambits (p.236).

So what can the teachers do? It seems that the best a teacher can do is to adhere to: "Activate intuitive heuristics" principle, which is one of the principles within the 'Macro-Strategic Framework', proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003) which highlights the importance of providing learners with rich textual data and allowing them to infer the underlying rules through self-discovery. Thus the teacher can present some well-known gambits and leave the rest for the learners to discover for themselves. It is expected that the more learners discover,

the more fluent speakers they become. However, this is yet a mystery, one which will be decrypted throughout this study.

The underlying assumption is that the more learners become acquainted with the notion of gambits and see its magic in action, the more attracted they will become towards learning and appreciating it. Imagine what it would be like to be able to communicate in English without having the lethal stress of how to begin, how to maintain and how to end. Imagine meeting a native English speaker and not having to stare at him/her or keep silent most of time. Imagine what would it feel like to lead the way in every single conversation, to disagree and speak your mind without imposing or being impolite, to save your face, and this is just the beginning.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will lead the teachers into reconsidering the role of gambits and appreciating its value and effect on spoken fluency and that learners can benefit from the study to become more independent and effective learners.

2. Methodology

2.1. Design

Why case study?

Among the various approaches available for doing the present research, the case study approach was chosen due to the small number of learnersand the long time they were under observation. Although this approach made it impossible to generalize findings, the opportunity to allocate more attention to individual learnerswas unhinged, so a wider snapshot of each learner's development could be observed closely.

The form is a qualitative-quantitative type since the effects of gambits on spoken fluency isn't something that will reveal itself instantly, a longitudinal approach, in which observations of the phenomena under investigation are made at periodic intervals for an extended period of time is required, therefore case studies as a data collection method was chosen to fit the study.

2.2. Participants

The researcher focused on four female participants aged between 22 and 42, two of which (A & B) attended IELTS preparation classes and the other two (C & D), took part in general speaking preparation classes. All participants were taught by the same teacher in a private

setting. Note that the teacher was also the researcher. A full description of each participant is given in Appendix 3, for the sake of transferability.

2.3. Materials

2.3.1. The second part of a structured IELTS interview

The IELTS interview consists of three sections: In the first section, a 4-5 minute conversation takes place between the interviewer and interviewee about general, every day topics. In the second section (2-3 minutes) which is much more demanding and is the focus of eliciting data here, a monologue is given on the interviewee's part based on a prompt which is handed out to her by the interviewer, in which the participant is given 1-2 minutes to prepare her speech. The third part includes questions by the interviewer regarding the information provided by the interviewee in the second part; this part goes on for approximately five minutes. A sample test has been presented in Appendix 4, in order to get a more tangible picture.

2.3.2. Movie retelling task

Every other session a full length movie was given to the learners, they were required to watch the movie (subtitle included). Each session one student was asked to come up front and give an oral summary about the movie. The individual's narration was given approximately 10 minutes. To the researcher's mind, this task seems more efficient than the 4/3/2 technique described by Maurice (1983). As Nation (1989) puts it,

> The 4/3/2 technique which has 3 important features, namely repetition, reducing time and change of audience gives learners the opportunity to perform at a level which is superior to their normal performance (pp. 378-379).

The assumption is that having the opportunity to perform at this higher level will result in an improvement to their normal level of performance. Although repetition seems a key element in increasing fluency, the time limit will in fact lead to cognitive stress on the learner's part, thus hindering her capability to perform her best. The movie retelling task on the other hand, due to its ten minute time span, allows for more flexibility and independence. The speaker knows that she will have ten minutes to cover up the movie, thus reducing the lethal cognitive stress leading to a more natural and independent performance which can be considered as a more valid measure in determining her fluency.

2.3.3. Recorder

A Sony ICD-UX523F device was used by the researcher to record all the classes. This recorder was used precisely because of its high quality and its ability to filter noise.

2.3.4. SPSS

SPSS Statistics is a softwarehttp://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_program package used for statistical analysis. It is now officially named "IBM SPSS Statistics". This software was used to calculate the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, check for linearity by drawing a scatterplot and generate a regression equation as a means of predicting the dependent variable based on the independent variable.

2.4. Procedures

The procedures involved in this study are explained in the following eight consecutive steps:

Step 1: Ad lib performance

At the beginning of the course, the two participants who had taken part in the IELTS speaking preparation class (that is, A & B) were tested in an improvised manner by means of a speaking prompt. These prompts were taken from 'IELTS Speaking Tests with Answers & Sample Interviews' by Iravani (2004). Each individual was given 1-2 minutes to prepare their speech and then as mentioned previously they gave a talk due to the prompt for approximately three minutes. Recall that this talk is a monologue given by the individual without being interrupted by the teacher. Their performances were recorded and then transcribed.

As for the other two participants (that is, C & D) who took part in a general speaking preparation class, they were given a movie with an English subtitle included. The reason for including the English subtitle was to divert the participants' attention to form in the context of meaning. Thereby this type of discovery task with a primary focus on meaning and a secondary focus on form adheres to what Ellis (2003) believes to be FonF (focus on form) rather than focus on forms (Ellis, 2001) in Task-based Language Learning and Teaching. Note that the selection of movies was entirely subjective and based on the teacher's own intuition i.e., the teacher decided which type of movie best suited the learners. The degree of difficulty of the movies given was classified based on the teacher's ten years of teaching experience regarding this type of class. In the second session which was held after a week the learners were asked to retell the movie within a ten minute time span. Again their performances were recorded and transcribed.

Step 2: Modeling and Heuristic tasks

The previously mentioned individuals (A & B) attending the IELTS speaking preparation class were approximately homogenous on their onset performance (as is the case with C & D), although homogeneity is not the case here, since each case will be separately considered. In these classes the teacher modeled a somewhat ideal monologue using gambits, thereby indicating their value in structuring speech implicitly, with the hope that learners would observe and improve their fluency. The underlying idea is that due to a short three minute monologue, modeling the speech based on gambit use on the teacher's part would lead to the best performance under testing conditions. Every five sessions the learners were tested on a prompt not yet modeled by the teacher and their performances were recorded and transcribed. The reason for testing learners on a prompt not yet modeled by the teacher was to reduce the effect of memorization.

Considering the speaking preparation classes, due to a ten minute talk given on a movie retelling task, the teacher believed that modeling was inappropriate. Therefore he left it up to the learners to discover themselves what gambits they needed in order to prepare a ten minute speech. It was assumed that the learners would discover new gambits in each movie and in turn become more fluent speakers. Every five sessions, the learners' performance on a movie retelling task were recorded and transcribed.

Step 3: Analysis of transcriptions in terms of WPM

Ten transcriptions of each participant were considered, expanding over a yearly time interval. Each transcription was first analyzed based on fluency. A number of studies have been concerned with establishing the appropriate measures of fluency. Nevertheless most of them conclude that the best predictor of fluency is speech rate, that is, the number of syllables or words articulated per minute (SPM, WPM). Unfilled pauses under three seconds won't be included, because they are considered as articulation pauses and not hesitation phenomena. This measure was adopted throughout this study.

Step 4: Analysis of transcriptions in terms of gambits

Each transcription was then analyzed based the number of gambits used. The criterion used here was based on the 1981 model by Edmondson and House, in addition to the coined gambits provided by Nikmehr and Farrokhi (2013).

Step 5: Correlation by means of Pearson's coefficient

The researcher wanted to know whether an individual's use of gambits was related to how well they perform on fluency. So the aim was not to identify a cause and effect between the variables, but to examine the association or relationship between them. That is to determine

whether there is a relationship between the independent variable (that is, the number of gambits used) and the dependent variable (that is, fluency measured in terms of WPM). The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson's correlation, for short) which is a measure of the strength and direction of association that exists between two variables was adopted for this purpose. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient ranges from -1.0 (that is, a perfect negative correlation) to 1.0 (that is, a perfect positive correlation). Before analyzing the data using Pearson's correlation, we had to make sure that the data could actually be analyzed using Pearson's correlation, in order to obtain a valid result. To this end, our data had to meet the following four assumptions:

Assumption 1: The two variables should be measured at the interval or ratio level (i.e., they should be continuous).

Assumption 2: There needs to be a linear relationship between the two variables, thus an attempt was made to create a scatterplot using SPSS, where our dependent variable (that is, fluency) was plotted against the independent variable (that is, gambits), and then the scatterplot is visually inspected to check for linearity.

The scatterplot may look something like one of the following:
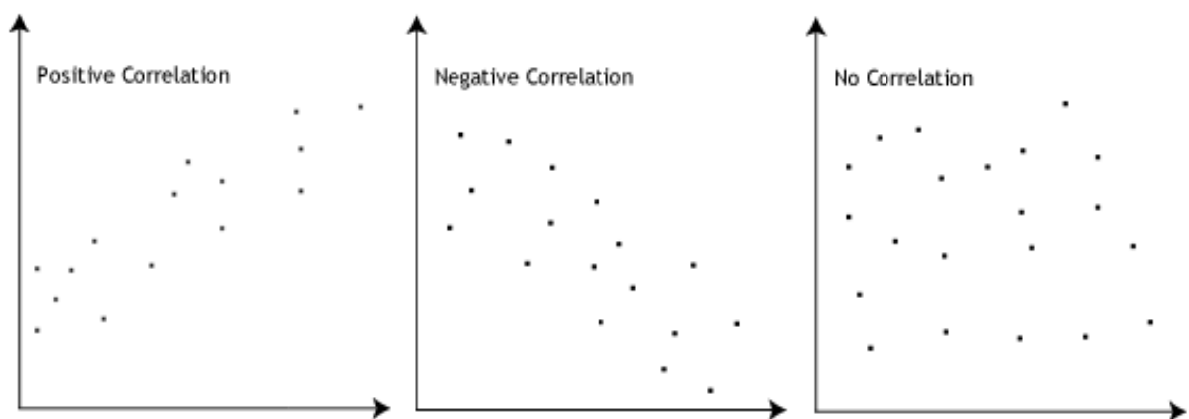
Assumption 3: There should be no significant outliers. Outliers are simply single data points within the data that do not follow the usual pattern. The following scatterplots highlight the potential impact of outliers:
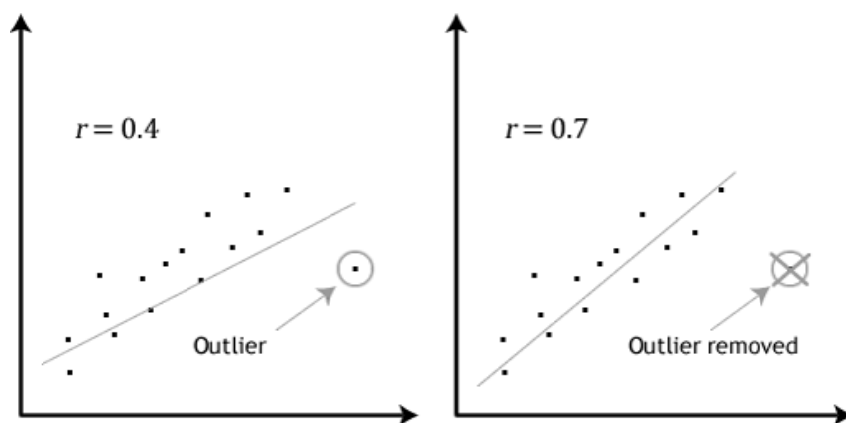
Assumption 4: Our variables should be approximately normally distributed. For this, a normal Q-Q plot is created for fluency and gambits, separately.

Step 6: Linear regression analysis

Linear regression is the next step up after correlation. In order to determine whether the value of gambits can predict the value of fluency, a linear regression analysis was performed and a regression equation generated.

Step 7: Testing Hypothesis

After executing the previous steps, our hypotheses were tested based on the elicited results from the participants.

Step 8: Comparing data set correlations

The researcher attempted to compare the correlations resulting from the data set for participants A and B in the IELTS speaking preparation class which have observed teacher modeling with participants C and D in the general speaking preparation class which have been drawn into discovery tasks, to see whether a stronger correlation can be identified among the two.

3. Data analysis and results

Each participant was analyzed according to her fluency and gambit use (for a transcription sample along with the transcription conventions refer to Appendix 5). The two variables (that is, fluency and gambit use) was then checked on correlation assumptions and in turn correlated. Note that for the sake of brevity, the descriptive and inferential statistics are given only for the first participant (that is, A) and only the numerical results were displayed for the other three participants, with an exception of participant C, due to outlier emerging in the performance of this participant.

3.1. Participant A

As Table 3.1 presents, the number of gambits in every five sessions has shown an increase, which was also the case with fluency. So running a correlation between the two seemed logical, but first the assumptions for correlation had to be met.

Table 3.1 *Recorded Fluency and Gambits for A*

Session	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Fluency(WPM)	52	69	73	111	134	164	169	182	191	213
Gambits	7	11	14	21	28	36	38	49	53	61

As a means of visually inspecting the frequency of fluency and gambit use, the following bar graph is presented for the sake of gaining a deeper understanding.
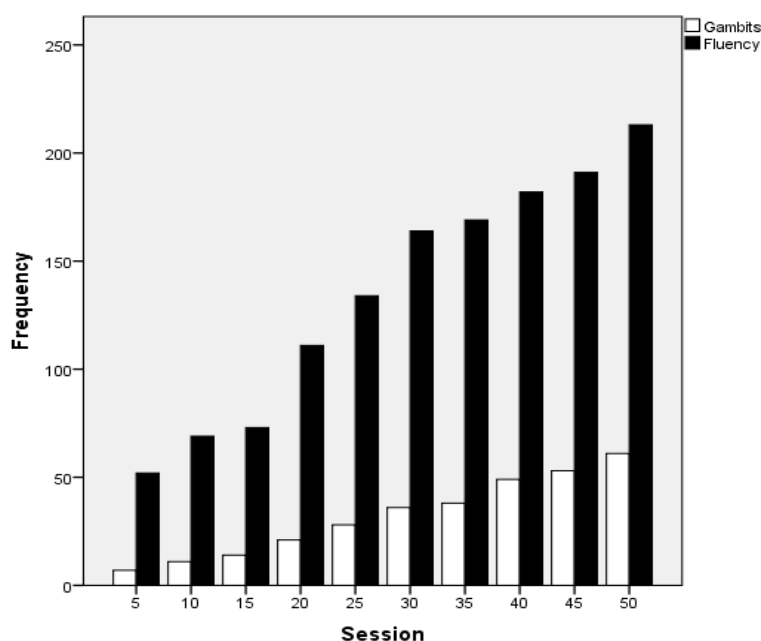
Figure3.1.Recorded Fluency and Gambits for A

Since our variables (that is, fluency and gambits) can be measured along a continuum and they have a numerical value, they are interval and therefore our first assumption was met. An attempt was made to create a scatterplot using SPSS, where our dependent variable (that is, fluency) is plotted against the independent variable (that is, gambits), and then the scatterplot was visually inspected for linearity. The resulting scatterplot is presented in figure 3.2.
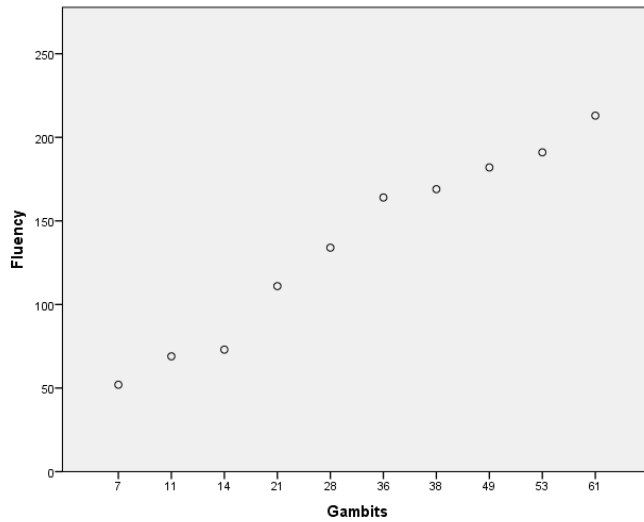
Figure 3.2.Scatterplot of the 2 variables for A

So as the scatterplot illustrates, a linear relationship exists between the two variables implying a positive correlation. As can be seen from the previous figure, no outliers exist and therefore the third assumption was satisfied. As for the fourth assumption, that is, our variables should be approximately normally distributed;a normal Q-Q plot presented in figures 3.3 and 3.4 was separately created for both fluency and gambits.
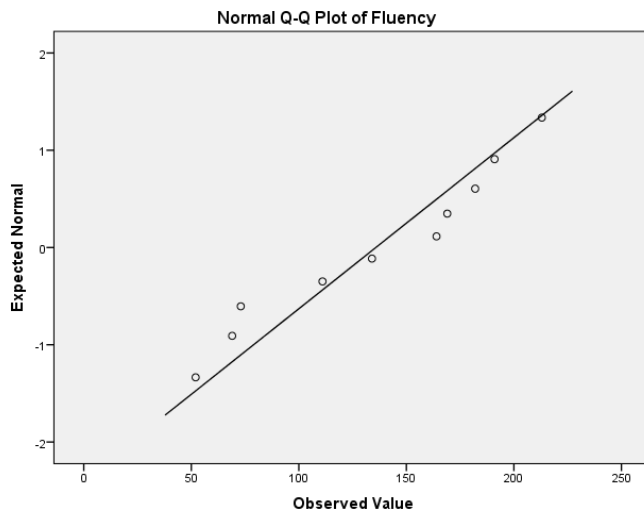
Figure 3.3.Normal plot of fluency for A
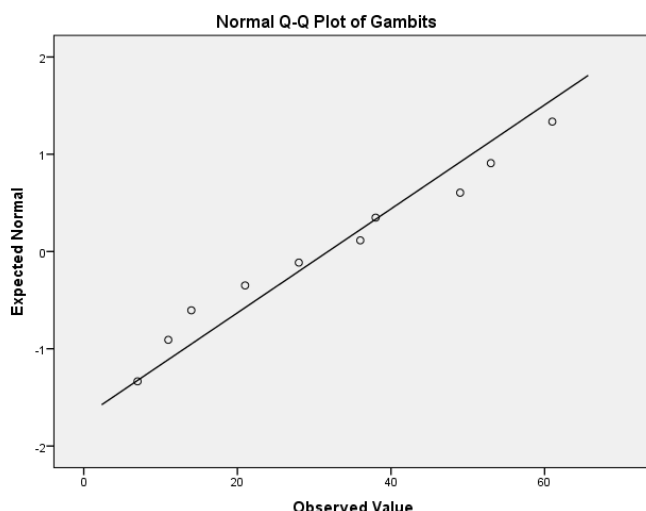
Figure 3.4.Normal plot of gambits for A

In order to determine normality graphically, it should be checked to see whether the data points are close to the diagonal line or not. If the data points stray from the line in an obvious non-linear fashion, the data are not normally distributed. As we can see from the figures above both variables, that is, fluency and gambits are normally distributed and thus the fourth assumption was also met.

Now that the correlation assumptions have been met, attempt was made to correlate the two variables for participant A of our study. The Pearson product-moment correlation was adopted for this purpose. The resultis presented in table 3.2.

Table 3.2
Correlations among study variables for A

	fluency	gambits
fluency	-	.982**
gambits	.982**	-

**$p < 0.01$ level

Due to the information in table 3.2, the correlation between fluency and gambits is very high at 0.982.

Linear regression is the next step up after correlation. Here we use linear regression analysis to predict the value of fluency based on the value of gambits. The results are presented in the following tables:

Table 3.3 *Model Summary of A*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.982[a]	.965	.961	11.235

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gambits

The first table of interest is the Model Summary table. This table provides the R and R^2 value. The R value is 0.982, which represents the simple correlation. It indicates a high degree of correlation. The R^2 value indicates how much of the dependent variable, "fluency", can be explained by the independent variable, "gambits". In this case, 96.5% can be explained, which is very large.

Table 3.4 *ANOVA[a]for A*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	28075.849	1	28075.849	222.438	.000[b]
1	Residual	1009.751	8	126.219		
	Total	29085.600	9			

a. Dependent Variable: Fluency

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gambits

This table indicates that the regression model predicts the fluency variable significantly well, by looking at the "Regression" row in the Sig**.** column. This indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was applied. Here, $p < 0.0005$, which is less than 0.05, and indicates that, overall, the model applied can statistically significantly predict the fluency variable.

Table 3.5
Coefficients[a]for A

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	40.856	7.290		5.604	.001
	Gambits	2.986	.200	.982	14.914	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Fluency

Table 3.5, that is, Coefficients, provides us with information on each predictor variable. This gives us the information we need to predict fluency from gambits. We can see that both the constant (that is, fluency) and gambits contribute significantly to the model (by looking at the Sig. column). By looking at the B column under the Unstandardized Coefficients column, we can present the regression equation as: Fluency = 41 + 2.986(Gambits)

3.2. Participant B

With the assumptions for correlation being satisfied, the correlation between fluency and gambits here was very high at 0.973. According to the linear regression analysis the R^2 valuewas 0.946 indicatingthat 94.6 percent of "fluency"can be explained by "gambits". With a probability value of 0.0005, which is less than 0.05, it can be inferred that the model applied can statistically significantly predict fluency by means of the following regression equation:

Fluency = 15 + 2.465(Gambits)

3.3. Hypothesis Testing and Addressing RQ (1)

Research Question 1 (RQ1): Does modeling gambits via prompts, performed by the teacher, reveal improvement on the learners' oral fluency?

Null Hypothesis 1 (H01): Modeling gambits by the teacher doesn't improve the learners' oral fluency.

The high positive correlation between the variables, in addition to the high prediction value resulting from both participants A and B provides us with confidence in order to reject the first null hypothesis. So modeling gambits by the teacher will in fact improve the learners' oral fluency. In result, the first research questionwas addressed. Both learners, A and B revealed a significant improvement on their gambit use, which in turn led to a higher fluency.

3.4. Participant C

Table 3.6 *Recorded Fluency and Gambits for C*

Session	5	10	15	20	25	30	**35**	40	45	50
Fluency(WPM)	69	83	93	114	131	149	**167**	173	189	193
Gambits	22	37	42	53	70	81	**74**	98	112	118

The table indicates an improvement on both the number of gambit use and fluency for the learner. However, on the 35th session, an outlier is suspected. That is, although the learner's fluency has increased compared to her previous performance, the number of gambits used has dropped. This would be best illustrated on the following scatterplot.
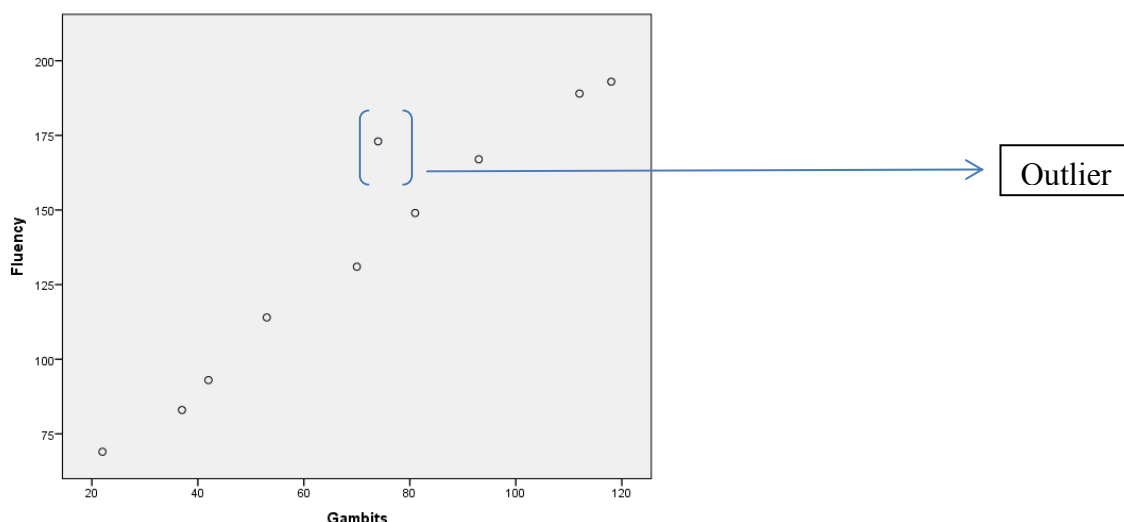
Figure 3.5.Scatterplot of the 2 variables for C

The scatterplot indicates a linear relationship between the variables. As previously predicted, a data point exists within the data that doesn't follow the usual pattern. The presence of an outlier is easily detectable on the scatterplot. Pearson's *r* is sensitive to outliers, which can have a very large effect on the line of best fit and the Pearson correlation coefficient, leading to very difficult conclusions regarding the data. Therefore, it is best if there are no outliers or they are kept to a minimum. Since we have ten data points, and we're dealing with correlation, not for example comparison of single data points with other cases, the best solution seems to be removing this single data point from the dataset. Therefore, the remaining analysis on case C is based on nine data points.

Other assumptions being met, the correlation between fluency and gambits here was very high at 0.997. According to the linear regression analysis the R^2 value was 0.995 indicating that "fluency", can be explained by the independent variable, "gambits" 99.5% of the time. With a probability value of 0.0005, which is less than 0.05, it can be inferred that the model applied can statistically significantly predict fluency by means of the following regression equation:

Fluency = 38 + 1.345(Gambits)

3.5. Participant D

As with the case of the three previous participants, the assumptions for correlation for this participant were also met.The correlation between fluency and gambits was again very high at 0.979. According to the linear regression analysis the R^2 value was 0.958 indicating that "fluency", can be explained by the independent variable, "gambits" 95.8% of the time. With a

probability value of 0.0005, which is less than 0.05, it can be inferred that the model applied can statistically significantly predict fluency by means of the following regression equation:

Fluency = 47 + 0.954(Gambits)

3.6. Hypothesis Testing and addressing RQ (2)

Research Question 2 (RQ2): Do learners performing discovery tasks via movies including subtitles reveal higher gambit use leading to higher oral fluency?

Null Hypothesis 2 (H02): Learners performing discovery tasks via movies including subtitles don't reveal higher gambit use leading to higher oral fluency.

The high positive correlation between the variables, in addition to the high predictive value resulting from C and D, provides sufficient proof to reject the second null hypothesis. So Learners performing discovery tasks via movies including subtitles in fact reveal higher gambit use which in turn leads to higher oral fluency. In result, the second RQ was addressed. Both learners, C and D showed a significant improvement on their gambit use, which in turn led to a higher fluency.

3.7. Correlations for RQ (3)

Research Question 3 (RQ3): Does modeling gambits via prompts, performed by the teacher lead to higher oral fluency on the learners' part, or performing discovery tasks, by the learners themselves?

Null Hypothesis 3 (H03): There's no difference between teacher modeling and performing discovery tasks in terms of learners' oral fluency. In order to address the 3rd research question, the data recorded from A and B and those recorded from C and D will be separately correlated. The data set for A and B is presented in table 3.7.

Table 3.7 *Recorded Fluency and Gambits for A and B*

Session	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Fluency(WPM)	52	69	73	111	134	164	169	182	191	213
	46	47	62	69	86	113	134	139	152	178
Gambits	7	11	14	21	28	36	38	49	53	61
	9	17	19	25	27	41	42	56	59	59

The correlation between fluency and gambits based on teacher modeling was 0.886.

Now let's consider C and D. The dataset recorded for these cases is presented in table 3.8.

Table 3.8 *Recorded Fluency and Gambits for C and D*

Session	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Fluency(WPM)	69	83	93	114	131	149	-	173	189	193
	73	91	115	121	128	138	163	195	214	233
Gambits	22	37	42	53	70	81	-	98	112	118

	34	39	54	79	96	116	129	147	166	192

The correlation between fluency and gambits based on discovery tasks was 0.94.

The correlation results indicate that there is a higher correlation between gambits and fluency (that is, 0.94) when learners perform discovery tasks than observing a model performedby the teacher (that is, 0.886), thus the 3rd null hypothesis is rejected and in turn the 3rd research question is dealt with.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Results on participants A and B revealed an interesting pattern between the number of gambits used by the learners and the fluency of their speech based on observing a model performed by the teacher. Both A and B began the classes with a very low and below par fluency, along with a meager gambit use. The only type of gambits learners used on an ad lib prompt was interjections in the form of Appealers. Appealers according to Edmondson(1981) are used to elicit a reaction to what has just been said by the speaker. But to my mind, learners not only appeal to what has been said by the speaker, they also appeal to themselves. This is particularly the reason why non-linguistic signals, such as, "eh" and "uh" are subsumed under this category in Edmondson and House's (1981) model.

In a monologue given by the learners they appeal a lot to what they have previously mentioned. This is one way to buy time in order to prepare for the upcoming talk. As the classes went on, and the learners observed how the teacher responded to a prompt, they began using more and more gambits with a prolific variety, thus leading to a higher fluency. The interesting thing here worth mentioning is that the learners' improvement in both gambit use and fluency had a mediocre increase up to session 30, but from then on their improvement became more and more salient. The underlying reason for this seems to be rooted in self-confidence. Thus when the learners realized that they are capable of speaking more fluently and more structured, their cognitive stress gradually disappeared, giving them a higher self-confidence along the way. Both learners A and B revealed a significant improvement on their gambit use, which in turn led to a higher fluency. The correlations executed here disclosed that the more gambits used by the learners, the more fluent they became in their speech.

So the results lend support that if the teachers use more and more gambits in their speech, it can be inferred that the learners which look up to them, will also begin using gambits thus becoming more fluent speakers in English. It should be noted that the teacher didn't attempt to manipulate the independent variable (that is gambits). He only used them in

his speech, and the learners observing the teacher's speech began using them, without any idea whatsoever regarding their name and variety.

As for participants C and D which had taken part in a general speaking class, the recorded gambits and fluency showed an increase as the sessions went on. The interesting point here was due to the performance of C, which on the 35th session revealed a decrease in her gambit use, thus leading to the presence of an outlier in the dataset. Her fluency had also a very subtle increase compared with her previous performance. Although this data point was removed from the dataset on further analysis, the teacher (which was also the researcher) was curious to know the reason. When asking the learner directly, it was revealed that a close relative of the learner had passed away and therefore her attentional capacity was low on the mentioned session in class, resulting in an atypical performance. Both learners C and D revealed a significant improvement on their gambit use, which in turn led to a higher fluency. The correlations executed here indicated that the more learners are engaged in discovery tasks, such as movie retelling, the more gambits they will discover and use, leading to a higher fluency in their speech.

The results elicited on the correlation between gambit use and fluency on the entire data set recorded from participants A and B, compared against the correlation run on participants C and Dwere in favor of discovery tasks. That is, a higher correlation was demonstrated for C and D as compared with A and B. This may be due to the infinite nature of gambits and is line with what Nikmehr and Farrokhi (2013) believe gambits to be.

So based on the results, it can be inferred that if the teacher respects the learners' autonomy and instead of trying to instruct learners at all times, provides them with tasks so the learners can discover on their own how to organize their talk, the best results regarding oral fluency will be most likely achieved. One of the slogans of the post method era, that is, learner autonomy is supported here, due to the generated results.

It seems that one of the main aims of the post method era is to encourage and develop learner autonomy. Wenden (1991) defines the autonomous learner as "one who has acquired the strategies and knowledge to take some (if not yet all) responsibility for her language learning and is willing and self-confident enough to do so" (as cited in Faucette, 2001, p. 9). It seems that gambits have quite a say in what Wenden (1991) believes to be an autonomous learner. The results of this study suggests that the more learners become acquainted with the notion of gambits and see its magic in action, the more attracted they will become towards learning and appreciating it, thus becoming more fluent speakers.

Speaking fluently in English has become one of the main nightmares for EFL learners. Learners are horrified when they are asked to speak. As the results here indicated, the more learners were able to use gambits, the more fluent they became, and thus giving them the long lost self-confidence they needed in order to take charge of their own learning. Teachers are more than welcome to try to encourage learners in learning these pre-patterned expressions, but they should be mindful that the quantity of gambits and their functions is infinite and thereby it'squite pointless trying to teach them all. Based on the elicited results here, the best that can be done on the teachers' part is to present some well-known gambits and leave the rest up to the learners to discover.

As seen in this study, engaging learners in discovery tasks yielded the best results towards improving oral fluency. This is in line with the 'Activate intuitive heuristics' principle proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003) which highlights the importance of providing learners with rich textual data and allowing them to infer the underlying rules through self-discovery. The findings here are not only useful for language teachers and learners, but syllabus designers and material developers, as well. One the main issues in EFL contexts is the overemphasis of English courses on grammar, in other words, the syllabus is so occupied with teaching grammar that the speaking skill is partially if not totally neglected. If we believe that speaking is the most important skill, then attention should be allocated towards its development.

Material developers and syllabus designers should thus sober up by breaking away from the dark ages of GTM (Grammar Translation Method) and giving gambits the attention it deserves. Teachers should first try to gain a deep understanding of gambits, then attempt to encourage learners to use them more often for the sake of fluency. Though, modeling and discovery tasks, as the results of this study suggests, prove very fruitful as means of persuading learners to become gambit users and fluent speakers, teachers can come up with their own ways of encouraging gambit use.

References

Benson, P., &Voller, P. (1997). Introduction: Autonomy and independence in language learning. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.).*Autonomy & independence in language learning*. London: Longman.

Coulmas, F. (1981). Introduction: Conversational Routine. *In Coulmas* , 1-17.

Dornyei, Z., and Scott, M. L. (1997). Review Article Communication Strategies in a Second Language: Definitions and Taxonomies. *Language Learning,* 47:1, 173–210. Retrieved in

2013, January, from:

http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/00238333.51997005/abstract;jsessionid=F301F03
9E2409B2BFDECC2436DB45959.d02t04

Edmondson, W. (1976).Gambits in foreign language teaching. In H. Christ and H. E. Piepho, eds.: *Proceedings VIIth Colloquium of the Giessen Foreign Language Teachers' Association.*

Edmondson, W. (1981). On saying you're sorry. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *Conversational routine* (pp. 273-288). The Hague: Mouton.

Edmondson, W. and House, J. (1981).Let's Talk and Talk about it*. A Pedagogic Interactional Grammar of English*.München u.a.: Urban & Schwarzenberg.

Ellis, R. (2001). Investigating form-focused Instruction.*Language Learning*, 51, 1-46.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, (Chapter 6).

Faucette, P. (2001). A pedagogical perspective on communication strategies.Benefits of training and an analysis of English language teaching materials.*Second Language Studies*, 19/2, 1–40.

Fillmore, C. J. (1979). On fluency. In D. Kempler, and W. S. Y. Wang (Eds.), *Individual differences in language ability and language behavior* (pp. 85-102). New York: Academic Press.

Hatch, E. (1978). Discourse analysis and second language acquisition. In E. Hatch (Ed.),*Second language acquisition* (pp. 401-435). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Iravani, H. (2004). IELTS Speaking Tests with Answers & Sample Interviews. *Shumiz,* 8, 62-101.

Keller, E. (1979). Gambits: Conversational Strategy Signals. *Journal of Pragmatics,* 3.3/4, 219-238. Retrieved from in April 2012, from:

http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0378216679900328

Kormos, J., & Denes, M. (2004).Exploring measures and perceptions of fluency in the speech of second language learners.*System*, 32(2), 145-164. Retrieved in 2013, April, from:

http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/10747/1/fluency-preprint.pdf

Kumaravadivelu, B. (1994). The postmethodcondition: (E)merging strategies for second/foreign language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 28,* 27–48.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Little, D. (1991).*Learner autonomy: Definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentik.

Maurice, K. (1983).The fluency workshop.*TESOL Newsletter* 17, 429.

Nation, P. (1989). Improving speaking Fluency.*System,*17(3), 377-384.

Nikmehr, A., & Farrokhi, F. (2013).Gambits in a new Light.*International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature,*4(2), 228-239.

Tavakoli, M.,Dastjerdi, H. V. andEsteki, M. (2011).The Effect of Explicit Strategy Instruction on L2 Oral Production of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners: Focusing on Accuracy, Fluency and Complexity.*Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(5), 989-997. Retrieved in 2013, April, from:http://www.academypublisher.com/jltr/vol02/no05/jltr0205.pdf

Van Valin, R. D. Jr. (2002). Functional Linguistics. In M. Aronof,&J. Rees-Miller (Eds.),*The Handbook of Linguistics* (pp. 319-336). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wenden,A. (1991). *Learnerstrategiesfor learnerautonomy*.New York: PrenticeHall.

Appendix 1

Edmondson and House (1981) model

Uptakers

An Uptaker serves as an acknowledgement of the preceding utterance made by the interlocutor and prefaces a speaker's move.

Receipt: most often realized by tokens "yes" and "yeah" with a falling intonation. Other tokens are: "hmm", "uhum", "aha", "uh" or "I see", "right", "okay". There are also tokens that re-represent the original message. To House they constitute their own category of gambits: the Re-Represent. Edmondson (1976) calls them: The Pick- Up.

Emotive Exclaim: Using an Exclaim, a speaker shows his emotional state about what has been said before (1981, p. 72). Edmondson & House distinguish between four sets of tokens used as Exclaims:

- Subset A: includes tokens like "oh", "ah", "really" or "indeed" that express interest, surprise or disbelief.

- Subset B: includes tokens that are used when the previous utterance contains information that is unwelcome to the speaker. Such as: "oh dear", "oh lord", "god help us", "what a nuisance".

- Subset C: includes tokens that are used when the previous utterance contains information that is welcome to the speaker. Such as: "super", "great", "terrific", and "good".

- Subset D: Tokens reflecting resignation or anger, for example "damn", "Jesus Christ", "not again".

Go-ons: They are realized by the same tokens as Receipts and Exclaims but differ from them in their placing. They occur alone during an extended turn-at-talk by the interlocutor, but do not constitute an interruption. (1981, p. 73) With a Go-on, a speaker does not claim "the floor". Go-ons usually have a rising intonation. (1980, p. 102) For example:

A: So I went up to him and simply introduced myself

B: *Really*

Go-ons are part of the "art of good listening". According to Edmondson/House, they support the conversation. When they are totally absent, it might be that the speaker stops his talk altogether. The use of a Go-on can be interpreted by the preceding speaker as a request for Confirmation or Repetition.

Checks:House introduces another category of Uptakers: "Checks", which are precisely requests for confirmation, repetition or clarification. Typical tokens are "Do you really think so?", "Could you repeat that, please?", "I didn't get that"

Agree: Another category introduced by House is the "Agree". It shows that the speaker accepts the preceding communicative act as right. The token is: "yes, you're right"

Clarifiers

Unlike the Uptakers, they do not refer to the previous utterance, but to the utterance that is uttered now. They have 2 subcategories:

Cajolers: Cajoler serves to establish or even restore harmony between the conversation partners. Its function is to make a communicative act more palatable to the hearer, it appeals for agreement or cooperation. Cajolers also have a "fumbling function" for the speaker because he suspects that what he/she is about to say might not be welcome to the hearer, he can "downplay" the impact of what he is saying (1981: 75). Edmondson and House have shown that Cajolers are the most frequently used gambit type in English. "I mean" and "you know" are the most common tokens (1981: 75); the high frequency of these gambits clearly demonstrates their function to fill conversational gaps. "The Downtoner" can also be considered a special case of Cajolers.

Underscorer: In contrast to the hearer-oriented "Cajoler" it is more message-oriented. It serves to direct the hearer's attention to a particular point the speaker is making. For that reason, Underscorers are often used in Argumentative discourse. Tokens like: "Look I'll tell you what…", "Well the thing is…" are used in pre-position to the sentence underscored, and tokens like: "this is the point", "that's the problem" are used in post-positions.

Appealers

An Appealer is used to elicit a reaction to what has just been said by the speaker. The hearer is expected to react with an Uptaker. Usually the speaker seeks to elicit agreement to what has been said; therefore Appealers are quite similar to a request for confirmation. (1981: 77)

Appealers are commonly realized by tag-questions, such as "isn't it", tags on imperatives like "will you" and also by tokens like "okay", "(all)right", "remember", "don't you agree", or "does he/she/they". Non-linguistic signals like "eh", "uh", "mhm" also serve as Appealers.

Other types

There are also gambits that do not fit into the three main categories, as they are mostly used to fill gaps and don't refer backwards or forward or modify a move internally, the **Starter** and the *Aside*. The Starter usually appears at the beginning of a speaker's turn-at-talk, but it is not to be confused with an Uptaker. It basically just constitutes a claim to the "floor", indicates that somebody is about to say something. The only tokens are "well" and "now". There is also the Aside, which occurs rarely but is quite useful to fill conversational gaps. They can occur anywhere in a turn-at-talk and they appear, as if the speaker was talking to himself. But they also have the function to show that the speaker is conversationally still present, although he is "engaged" with something else at the moment. (1981, p. 82) They look like self-prompts and often stimulate the hearer to provide the prompt in order to assist the fumbling speaker. Tokens include: "Erm oh let me see now", "Yes what it is called erm", "Oh it's erm it's on the tip of my tongue".

Appendix 2
Coined Gambits (Nikmehr&Farrokhi, 2013)

Dodgy Gambits: Unlike gambits used as a time-gaining device, when someone is short of a ready answer, these gambits are used when a person realizes that even if given all time in the world, he wouldn't be able to come up with an answer. E.g., "*I should take a rain check*"; "*I rest my case*".

Felicity Gambits: These gambits are used in order to pave the way for an intimate conversation, pronouns attached to standard formulas of greeting & leave-taking, are such gambits. E.g., "*Hi you*", "*take care you*", "*hi yourself*".

Recast marking Gambits: They have a didactic function of briefly diverting the learner's attention to form. Pick-Up gambits can serve such a purpose as well as underscorers. Gambits such as: "*in other words*" can also do the trick.

Post Recast marking Gambits: Appealers in the form of tag-questions can serve this function.

Sheer Gambits: These gambits signal that an event or action will take place, no matter what. E.g., "*mark my words*", "*there's no way out*".

Comforting Gambits: As the name suggests, they are used when one wants to comfort another. E.g., "*now now*, everything is going to be ok", "*no no*, don't be sad". Repetitions of this kind can also indicate hope.

Irreversible Gambit: These signal events which can't be altered, thus putting emphasis on accepting the fact. E.g., "*what's done is done*", "*that's that*", "*there's no turning back*".

Whenever Gambits: these gambits convey the meaning: "we will cross that bridge when we come to it", Thus implying patience. E.g., "we have enough stock, *for now*", "*hang in there*; we still have plenty of time".

Revival Gambits: These are especially used under testing circumstances, when the participant realizes that he is reaching a dead-end & therefore in need of creating a second chance for himself. E.g., "*let me put it another way*". Another function of these gambits is that they signal to the hearer that the speaker will try his best to make the hearer understand his speech & clear up the vagueness, in an ordinary conversation.

Rheme-Free Gambits: These gambits are merely time gaining devices, and don't move the conversation forward to an outcome. All-purpose words can be considered as a subset of these gambits. E.g., "*The thing is*", "*Well*", "*you know*", "*Actually*". A very interesting point is that a combination of these Rheme-free gambits may imply some sort of meaning.

Wrap-up Gambits: gambits such as "*that's pretty much it*", "*that's all*', "*at the end of the day*" are used to either to indicate the end of one's speech or signal that their speech is about to end. This is extremely important, because most L2 learners are unable to end their utterance with a falling intonation, thereby lacking the proper means of indicating that they're finished.

Self-recast Gambits: whenever a learner notices that he/she has made an error, either grammatical or phonological, and pauses for more than 3 seconds thereby indicating hesitation, but attempts to rectify his/her own utterance before giving the teacher a chance to recast him/her, the recast done by the learner will be considered a 'self-recast' gambit as it functions as a means of self-structuring.

Appendix 3
Bio data of the Participants

Participant A

A 28-year old female holding an MA degree in architecture from Tehran University who had taken English classes at some institutions in Tabriz for three years and like all other university students in Iran, had experienced the regular English course at the BA level. She was desperate to continue her education overseas and therefore was in need of a 6.5 band score in the IELTS test. When she began participating in a 3-hour weekly IELTS class, her speaking fluency was well below par, performing at about 50 WPM (word per minute) on an ad lib IELTS prompt, but after taking a private course for a year she was able to achieve the required band score and thus was motivated to develop her speaking fluency more by attending another private course for two years.

Participant B

A 22-year old female holding a BA degree in architecture from Azad University of Tabriz, which although had taken English classes at some institutions in Tabriz for approximately three years, felt that nothing ever came out of it. When first attending these private classes, she had a very low self-esteem and was somewhat afraid of expressing herself. She wished to continue her education in Australia, but was faced with a huge barrier of achieving a 7 band score in IELTS. Although her skills in reading, writing and listening were rather impressing, on an ad lib IELTS speaking prompt she performed at about 45 WPM (word per minute), indicating the need for developing her speaking skill. After approximately two years, with a weekly 3-hour session, she was able to overcome her lack of fluency and thus achieve the required mark.

Participant C

A 32-year old female holding an MA degree in TEFL from Azad University of Tabriz,that felt a huge gap between her competence and performance and thus attending a private speaking class for the sake of bridging up that gap. On an ad lib movie retelling task, she performed at about 60 WPM (word per minute), but was eager to become a more fluent English speaker, especially for the sake of saving her face in extreme situations. She has been taking part in this class for approximately 14 months with a weekly 2-hour schedule, which would go on for a year or so.

Participant D

This case is a 42-year old female holding a BA degree in TEFL from Azad University of Tabriz. She felt the urge to become a more fluent speaker, and thus attempted to participate in private speaking classes. She had a daughter living in the United States that she often dropped in on. Due to her contact with native speakers, she felt that she didn't have the means to keep up in speaking pace when confronted with them. An ad lib movie retelling task indicated a performance around 65 WPM (word per minute), revealing the need for fluency enhancement. She has been taking part in these classes for approximately 14 months with a weekly 2-hour schedule. She felt a positive difference along the way.

Appendix 4

IELTS Speaking test

Part 1: (4 – 5 minutes) Introduction and interview (getting to know you)

[This part of the test begins with the examiner introducing him or herself and checking the candidate's identification. It then continues as an interview.]

The examiner asks the candidate about him/herself, his/her home, work or studies and other familiar topics.

Examiner: Let's talk about your home town or village.

- What kind of place is it?
- What's the most interesting part of your town/village?
- What kind of jobs do the people in your town/village do?
- Would you say it's a good place to live? (Why?)

Examiner: Let's move on to talk about accommodation.

- Tell me about the kind of accommodation you live in?
- How long have you lived there?
- What do you like about living there?
- What sort of accommodation would you most like to live in?

Part 2: (3 - 4 minutes) Individual long turn (monologue)
Candidate Task Card (prompt)

CandidateTaskCard

Describesomethingyouownwhichisveryimportanttoyou.
Youshouldsay:
whereyougotitfrom
how longyouhavehadit
whatyouuseitfor
…andexplainwhyitisimportanttoyou.

You will have to talk about the topic for 1 to 2 minutes.
You have one minute to think about what you're going to say.
You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

Part 3: (4 – 5 minutes) Two-way discussion (more abstract conversation)
Examiner: Let's consider first of all how people's values have changed.
• What kind of things gives status to people in your country?
• Have things changed since your parents' time?
Examiner: Finally, let's talk about the role of advertising.
• Do you think advertising influences what people buy?

Appendix 5
Transcription Sample and Conventions

Note that the sample transcription below was based on the movie 'Meet Joe Black' and narrated by participant D in approximately seven minutes on her 30th session in class.

Em[AP], *well* [RH], *actually* [RH], meet Joe Black is a romantic movie. One of the main, *eh* [AP], character, *I mean* [CA], *eh* [AP], was William Parish, *eh* [AP], a billionaire who owned a media company. One night he heard a mysterious voice *no* [RE]… *one night he heard* [PI] a voice that said yes! And *eh* [AP], he began to… *began to* [PI] hear this voice, *I mean* [CA] this whisper while he was about to celebrate his 65th birthday, *eh* [AP], with an elaborate party that was planned by his eldest, *I mean* [RE], older daughter Alison. His younger daughter, *eh* [AP], Susan was involved with, *eh* [AP], one of, *eh* [AP], Bill's board memberwas named Drew. *Bill was not impressed by her relationship* [DG] and, *eh* [AP], he asked her daughter in the helicopter weather she, *eh* [AP], loves Drew or not. And, *eh* [AP], he said that, in his idea their relationship has the passion of, *eh* [AP], a pair of titmice and, *eh* [AP], he wanted her to be deliriously (…) happy and, *eh* [AP], asked her to be open for it because lightning could strike and he persuaded her, *eh* [AP], to try because he said "If you haven't tried you haven't lived?" After that Susan met a young man at a coffee shop and they talk to each other and, *eh* [AP], when they wanted to leave they confessed that they liked each other so much. After that, *eh* [AP], the young man was killed, *eh* [AP], in the accident. *You know* [CA] *Eh* [AP], at night, *eh* [AP], Bill heard that mysterious whisper again and, *eh* [AP], this time, *eh* [AP], he said him (…) *said to him* [PI] *eh* [AP], I'm at the front door and, *eh*[AP], Bill, *eh* [AP], sent one of his servants to see…*I'm not sure but I think* [DO] they met each other in the library. At that time, *eh* [AP], Bill recognized that he's, *eh* [AP], *he's* [PI] going to die and, *eh* [AP], that whisper was belong to Death. *Eh* [AP], Death wanted, *eh* [AP], *I mean* [CA] requested that Bill be his guide on Earth because he has the wisdom and the experience and he had a 1st rate life. (…) After that …, *em* [AP] *oh let me see now* [AS]*eh* [AP], yes? [EX] Bill introduced, *eh* [AP], him to his family as Joe Black. At dinner, *eh* [AP], he didn't recognize, *eh* [AP], Susan.*Well the thing is* [UN]*Eh* [AP], Joe said he is going to, *eh* [AP], *going to* [PI] live and work with, *eh* [AP], Bill and everybody shocked because, *eh* [AP], it was a first and Bill never did this before. Susan, *eh* [AP], thought he had a big deal with his father and when, *eh* [AP], he, *eh* [AP], *well, you know, actually* [RH] know that she is her daughter he act like a stranger but *as you know the fact is something else* [UN] and, *eh* [AP], he told her that he had a very certain, *eh* [AP], function to perform and it took too many time (…) *most of his time* [SR] and, *eh*[AP], he hadn't left room for anything else. *Em*[AP], Next day they went to work and, *eh* [AP], Joe and Bill participated at board meeting. There Drew, *eh* [AP], tried to convince Bill to merge…*let me put it another way* [RE] cause Bountique'sgonna broke it up and peddled it piece by piece to the highest… and, *eh* [AP], *this in fact would* [UN] it helps, *eh* [AP], Drew to became more, *eh* [AP], rich. *Eh* [AP], once Quince, *eh*[AP], talk about … *talk with* [PI] with, eh[AP], *talk with* [PI] Bill about, *eh* [AP], why he rejected the… , *eh* [AP], *why he rejected* [PI] the Bountique's offer and he said I've developed the great prospects and I'm gonna, *eh* [AP], talk to you next week and Bill answered, *eh* [AP], it's up to Joe! When Quince said this sentence to Drew it made him crazy and Drew, *eh* [AP], he call for a, *eh* [AP], board meeting.

He convinced the board to vote out the, *eh* [AP], *vote out* [PI] Bill as a, *eh* [AP], chairman. Susan felt deeply in love with, *eh* [AP], Joe and Bill angrily confronted him and, *eh* [AP], when his last birthday arrived he made his, *eh* [AP], last attempt to convince, *eh* [AP]…*well, um, you know, at dinner* [DG], *I mean* [UN]. *Eh* [AP], after dinner they argued… Joe dropped in on Susan at the hospital and, *eh* [AP], at the dinner table they were talking about the woman, *eh* [AP], that, *eh* [AP], were sick and… after dinner they argued and, *eh* [AP], He said that I don't like the way he looks at you and spoke to you but Susan said I like it… and they broke up. Susan was curious about Joe and, *eh* [AP], she wanted to know who he is and *eh* [AP]… but *the thing is that* [UN] Joe didn't say anything because he couldn't, and, *eh* [A], Bill raise the caution flag to her daughter and said if you, *eh* [A], find love in Joe you are on the dangerous ground and finally he, *eh* [A], Joe recognized that…*in other words* [RE] noticed the feelings and he said that you'll always have, *eh* [A],… I promise *you'll always have* [P] the one you met, *eh* [A], in the coffee shop (…) Then suddenly Joe appeared and, *eh* [A]… in fact he was the man at the coffee shop and she recognized him from his, *eh* [A], sentences. *Well* [RH], *uh* [AP], *I believe that's pretty much it* [WR].

Transcription Conventions

- T: teacher
- S: student
- (…) : three periods in single brackets for pauses above 3 seconds
- … : three periods without brackets for pauses under 3 seconds(i.e., breathing time, not hesitation)
- […] : three periods in square brackets indicate the a break down in the student's speech whereby he/she gives up
- ? : rising intonation, not necessarily a question
- *Well, the thing is* : Italics indicate the gambits that are used
- [RE] : the type of gambits is indicated in square brackets
- [CL(UN)]: the subtype of each gambit when used alongside its type is indicated in single brackets
- Acronyms used for each gambit:

[UP]uptaker	[UN]underscorer	[IR]irreversible	[EX] exclaim
[RE] revival	[AP] appealer	[FE] felicity	[RH] rheme-free
[CA] cajoler	[AS] aside	[RM] recast-marking	[WH] whenever
[ST] starter	[PI] pick-up	[PRM] post recast marking	[SR] self-recast
[DO] downtoner	[DG] Dodgy	[CL] clarifier	[RP] receipt
[SH] sheer	[CO] comforting	[GO] go-on	[WR] wrap-up

Title

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Europe`s Economic Crisis in the European and British Print Media Discourse

Authors

Biook Behnam (Ph.D)
Tabriz Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

Mehrdad Rezaeian (Ph.D candidate)
Shiraz Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

Biodata

Biook Behnam, Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics in Islamic Azad University, Tabriz branch, Iran. His current research interests cover Discourse Analysis, ELT and Translation Studies. He has widely presented papers to national and international conferences. He is currently the Editor-in Chief of *the Journal of Applied linguistics*, IAU, Tabriz branch, and is on the editorial board of *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature.*

Mehrdad Rezaeian is a Ph.D candidate at Islamic Azad University, Shiraz branch, Iran. He has taught TEFL courses at Islamic Azad University. His areas of interest are Discourse Analysis, Testing, and Cognitive/Affective Factors Affecting Learning English. He has published a paper in Iranian EFL Journal.

Abstract

Looking at the print media of UK and Europe about the economic crisis, the present study aims to find out how the writers of the print media in UK and Europe use discourse tools to convey their ideas. In a comparative study of the two media with a focus on such grammatical tools like passivisation, nominalisation, thematisation, and word choice strategies, it was found out that the UK media exaggerate the problem while the European media depict a positive picture of the same crisis.

Keywords: Passivisation, Nominalisation, Word Choice, CDA

1. Introduction

According to Johnstone (2008, p. 53), texts embedded in recurring "discursive practices" are actually embedded in "social practices" and are the main ways in which ideology is reproduced. The goal of CDA is to unveil the ways in which discourse and ideology are combined. A very good example of combination of text and ideology is print media. All print media are political and their aim is to impose certain ideas on their readers.

  The economic crisis in Europe has affected the whole world. As a result, there has been a depression in many European countries. But looking at the media of two kinds in UK and Europe, we see there are different interpretations about the same crisis. The UK media

somehow exaggerate the problem as a gripping burden which has immobilized Europe. The European media, on the other hand, conveys a more positive picture about this crisis.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1. Theoretical Background

According to Gee (2013, p.7)," In using language, social goods and their distribution are always at stake. Language is always political in a deep sense". CDA intervenes in social or political subjects and debates in the world. He believes that CDA is practical or applied. Widdowson (2011) states that a language user is subconsciously influenced by the ideological phenomena. Zhao (2011) states that ideology makes great influences on translation, expression, and strategy, which is the product of the ideology. Language understanding means to obtain a semantic network and conditional information from a text in a deep sense. Farrelly (2010) shows how CDA might contribute to the theoretical and methodological repertoire of political studies through its discourse-dialectal theory of how discourse figures as an aspect of social practices without reducing those practices to discourse. Qian (2010) states that news reporting around terrorism is filtered according to a wide range of phenomena including national interests, the goals of those who run the press, international relations, methods of news production, audience, targeting, and other historical, political, and social factors. According to Let & Wang (2009) CDA and systemic functional linguistics (SFL) have a common interest in the link between language and society. CDA uses systemic functional linguistics as a tool to analyze texts and discourses. There are four grammatical features which have practical implications for CDA: theme, lexical density, nominalisation, and grammatical metaphor. Van Dijk (1999), within a framework of discourse and ideology, identified a conceptual triangle of society, discourse, and social cognition, in which ideology plays a prominent role in creating the common social cognitions accepted by social groups, organizations, or institutions.

2. 2. Empirical Background

Khajeh & Khanmohammad (2012) through a comparative study found that distortions or transformations between the original and the two translated versions were not only arbitrary, but also ideologically encoded in the texts with specific purposes and functions. Bonyadi & Moses (2012) conducted a contrastive textual analysis of selected headlines, culled from the editorials of the English newspaper, New York Times, and those of Persian newspaper, Tehran Times. They found out that headlines in the two newspapers presented a subjective

attitude of the writers towards the topic. Benjamins (2012) asserts that contrastive textology assumed that texts are homogeneously designed within and for one country or one language area. He concludes that the relation between media texts, languages, and cultures has to be revisited. Samar & Navidian (2010) investigated the application of Email as a new medium of communication by Iranian and American TEFL students in Academic settings. They found out that the American students indicated more cases of personal and social messages as well as applying more communication strategies in their Emails. Iranian students, however, use more greeting and closing protocols in their Emails. Behnam & Khodadust (2010) ran a comparative statistical analysis of the print media discourse of the two ideologically opposing contexts of Syria and America. In their study they show how discourse producers utilize various lexical and thematic strategies to produce different impressions of the event and implicitly impose the underlying ideology on the readers. Behnam & Moshtaghi(2008) compared the discourse of Iranian newspapers with the British newspapers on the nuclear power program of Iran. The results showed that the British newspapers tended to depict Iran as the main participant mainly portrayed as a social deviant. Khodabandeh (2007) compared the headlines of English and Persian languages. These headlines were the same in using dynamic verbs, active voice, short words, declarative sentences, finite clauses and simple sentences, and different in the use of tense forms, headline types, modification, and omission of words. Sahragard &Rahimi (2006) analyzed the CDA of the e-mails written about the Pope. They have underscored the fact that ideological manipulations are expressed, enacted, sustained, and at times inculcated through discursive structures. Yamashita (1999) studied the relationship between the value of news sources and the choice of representing the verbs in Japanese and American newspapers. They found out that in the Japanese newspaper reports, the reporter transfers himself from the position of first-person singular pronoun "I" to that of first person plural pronoun "we". By contrast in the American news report, the reporter represents discourse from the position of first person singular pronoun. Hatim (1997) states that contrastive discourse processes should be regarded as part and parcel of contrastive linguistics- a component that goes well beyond the sentence and thus below it in a search of higher order decisions that pertain to the intertextual potential of genres, discourses, and texts. Due to the differences between the print media in the two contexts of Europe and Britain, the following research question was raised and investigated in this study: "How are the different ideologies regarding the economic crisis of Europe represented in the two contexts of Europe and Britain print media?"

3. Method

In this study we analyzed the print media in the two contexts of UK and Europe. One context was *Gaurdian* (2013) from which three pieces of news were chosen at random (Appendix A). The other context was the European media which were chosen by chance from electronic sites (opinionpublicfinanceinternational.org, www.euinside.eu, and www.mondaq.com, Appendix B). In order to unveil the ideology underlying the news, the grammatical tools of passivisation, and nominalization (Halliday`s (1985) systemic functional grammar), thematic structure (Paltridge, 2008), and the lexical tool of word choice strategy (Widdowson, 2011) were studied.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

4. 1. Word Choice Strategy

In this part we studied the diction in the two kinds of print media. According to Widows (2011) we choose particular words and expressions unconsciously; therefore, the expressions we choose show the underlying ideological attitude. Based on our persuasive purpose our particular textual choice is affected. Below we have   studied word choice in the UK print media.

 Based on the first piece of news from Guardian (2013), the following results are obtained.

* The word *"controvesial"* has a connotation of dispute and disagreement.

* The word *"rescue funds"* implies being stuck in a financial crisis.

* "**Fight**" implies chaos and dispute.

* *" Protesting trade unionists"* and "demonstrations" have an implication   of fight and disagreement.

* *"Firing"* and *"high unemployment rates"* imply joblessness as a result   of the economic crisis.

* *" Fierce opposition"* has an implication of disobedience.

* *"Protesting"* is repeated in the last paragraph, which emphasises dissatisfaction.

    Reviewing the second piece of news from the *Gaurdian* the following results are obtained:

* *"Selfish"* and *"intrasigent"* imply self-centeredness on the part of some   of the   European countries which consequently would lead to   dissatisfaction   in   the European community.

* The word *"crisis"* is repeated several times for emphasis.

* ***"A mega-European disaster"*** implies the idea of a tremendous financial problem in Europe.

* ***"...the savings of depositors in Germany..."*** refers to the fact that Germany needs foreign help.

Looking at the third piece of news from the *Guardian* the following results are obtained concerning the word choice:

* The word ***"anti-austerity"*** is a side effect of the financial crisis.

*The word ***"recession"*** is associated with the idea of financial crisis.

* The word ***"reform"*** is a change as a result of financial crisis.

* ***"Debt-choked"*** implies too many loans as a result of budget deficit.

* ***"Blasting"*** which means criticism is the result of Berlin`s policy concerning the economic crisis.

* The words ***"divide", "social disintegration"***, and ***"intergovernmental disagreement"*** mean the disagreement among the European countries about how to tackle the financial crisis.

****"U-turn"*** is an abrupt change in the financial policies which is the result of instability.

Analyzing the European media the following results were obtained. The first piece of news gives us the following results:

* The words ***"appropriate", "sound footing"***, and ***"reducing the biggest challenge"*** evaluate the economic policies positively.

****"Competitive Europe", "growth again"***, and ***"sustainable growth"*** imply that Europe`s economy is in a good condition now.

****"Mid-term fiscal consolidation"*** refers to the unification in Europe.

* The words ***"courage", "determination", and "commitment (clear and specific)"*** show Europe`s resolution towards solving the economic problems.

* ***"Supporting (both camps)"*** emphasises unity among the European countries.

Looking at the second piece of news from the European print media, the following results *were* obtained:

* The words ***"export"*** and ***"a significant increase (in exports)"***shows Italy`s strong economy.

* ***"Made in Italy products"***, and ***"strength (of Italian companies)"***, ***"react (to international crisis)"***, and ***"export of technology"*** are repetitions emphasising Italy`s sturdy economy.

* ***"Cultural identity factor"*** appreciates Italy`s products even as a cultural advertisement.

* ***"Opportunity"***, ***"economic recovery"***, ***"an increase in exports"***,   ***"increase of production"***, and ***"flourishing professions and services"*** are   all   positive   words   that imply a sturdy economy.

Looking at the third piece of news from the European media the following results are obtained:

* ***"Limited effects (of debt crisis)"***, and ***"not endured (painful deficit reduction)"*** imply that Germany is not affected greatly by the crisis.

* ***"Low interest rate"***, ***"Germany (safe haven)"***, ***"exports"***, ***"thrive"***, and ***"(money has) flown into"*** all refer to Germany`s prosperous economy.

* ***"Germany`s trade surplus"***, ***"(hit) highest level"***, and ***"record low"***    implicitly mean Germany`s flourishing economy.

* ***"Unemployment falling markedly"***, and ***"(unemployment) be over"***   refer to the plethora of job opportunities in Germany.

In a nutshell, looking at the print media of the European context, we can see a positive picture of the economic crisis. Here, it is shown that Europe has been able to overcome the crisis. Even it has benefited from the economic problem as it has taught the European countries to become more resistant and determined in the time of crisis. But looking at the British print media we can see a desperate environment regarding the economic crisis of Europe.

4. 2. Nominalisation

According to Paltridge (2008, p. 15) " Nominalisations present actions and events as nouns rather than as verbs." By using nominalization a writer foregrounds processes and backgrounds the agents of an action.

Looking at the UK print media (Appendix A) the following nominalisations are observed. The results for the first piece of news are as follows:

* In the phrase ***" The bill*** **outlining the** ***dismissal of..."***, it`s not clear who has

offered the bill. Intentionally information about the agent is   missing.   The action of dismissal is emphasised.

* ***"The firing of some 4000..."***emphasises   the   action   of   dismissing   workers from   their jobs.

Looking at the second piece of news from the UK print media the following nominalisations are obtained:

* *"...accusing her (of causing the single currency crisis)"* emphasises Merkel`s responsibility for the crisis.

* *"demanding (a showdown)"* emphasises the act of asking for a showdown.

Looking at the third piece of news the following results are obtained:

* *"the malaise gripping a nation..."* emphasises the fact that Europe is now trapped in an economic crisis.

* *"calling for enhanced dialogue"*, emphasises the need for a consensus in Europe. This would indirectly mean that Europe is disintegrated.

* The nominalisations *"divide"* and *"social disintegration"* are repetitions showing that Europe is disintegrated.

* *"Berlin`s fixation with austerity..."* criticizes Berlin`s policies of economy.

Considering the nominalisations in the UK print media we see that the economic crisis is exaggerated and the side effects of this economic crisis are foregrounded (e. g. social disintegration, austerity, divide in Europe,...)

Looking at the European print media, we observe the following nominalisations: In the first piece of the news we observed the following:

* *"Confusion"* emphasises lack of clarity about Reinhart/Rogoff mistake.

**"reducing the biggest challenge"* refers to the act of minimizing the economic crisis in Europe.

* *"sound footing"* refers to the correct path Europe is now taking.

* *"Growth "* emphasises Europe`s economic prosperity.

* The word *"commitment"* emphasises loyalty to Europe`s economic consolidation plans.

* *"Consolidation measures"* foregrounds Europe`s unity in financial matters.

* *"Determination"* emphasises the certainty that politicians need in solving the economic problems.

Looking at the second piece of news from the European print media, we observe the following results:

* *"Reference to goods"*, *"significant increase"*, *"strength (of our economy)"*, *"exports"*, and *"exportation"* highlight Italy`s prosperous economic condition.

* *"Surprise"* foregrounds Italy`s large increase in exportation.

* ***"Growth"*** emphasises   Italy`s developing economic condition.

* ***"Economic recovery"***, ***"increase (in exports)"***, and*** increase (of production)"*** imply that Italy`s economy is advancing.

* ***"Investment"***, and ***"the flourishing (of professions)"*** emphasise the fact   that Italy is now a safe haven for foreign investors.

Looking at the third piece of news from the European print media, we obtained the following results:

* ***"Deficit reduction"*** and ***"downgrading of sovereign debt"*** emphasise that Germany has been able to control the economic crisis.

* ***"Exports"*** and ***"capital flight"*** imply that Germany is now a safe place for investment.

* ***"Unemployment (falling)"*** means that there are enough number of jobs now   in Italy.

* ***"Budget constraints"*** and ***"spending cuts"*** refer to the austerity measures   that other countries are enduring.

Taking into account the nominalisations in the European print media we conclude that such processes as Europe`s growth after the economic crisis, reduction of unemployment, growth in exports, economic recovery, and other positive consequences of the economic crisis are foregrounded. Generally speaking, these nominalisations depict a positive picture about the economic crisis in Europe which is contrary to the picture that the UK print media shows about the same crisis. Figure 1 shows the number of nominalisations in UK and EU print media. As it is seen, in the Eu print media more cases of nominalisation are reported. By using nominalisation in this context processes like ***economic growth, reduced unemployment, downgrading of sovereign debt, and deficit reduction*** are foregrounded. In the UK context, on the other hand, by using less nominalisations agents like ***Merkel, Hollande, the socialists, and Anglo-German cabal*** are foregrounded agents dealing with the economic crisis. The role of these agents would have been played down if nominalisations had omitted them.
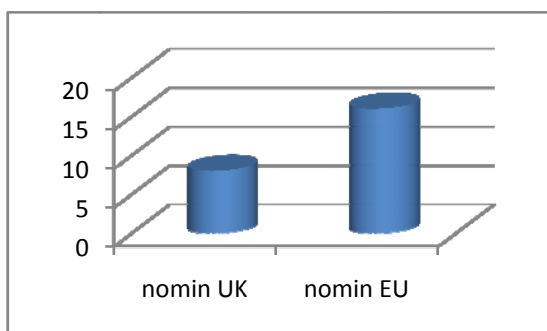
Figure 1: Nominalisation in UK and EU Print Media

4. 3. Passivisation

Passivisation is a structural technique which is used to foreground an action and background the subject of a sentence. This structure also foregrounds the object of a sentence. According to Billing (2008), passivisation has important ideological functions such as deleting agency and reifying processes.

Looking at the UK print media the following passivisations are observed. In the first piece of news from *Gaurdian* we observed the following passive sentences:

* *Greece`s parliament is preparing to....**mandated reforms***. In this sentence   reforms are emphasized to be obligatory.

* ***More demonstrations are planned when the bill is put to vote***. In this   sentence demonstrations against the bill are emphasised. The bill (outlining the dismissal of the civil servants) is also foregrounded.

* ***The firing of ... has been met.....*** . In this sentence the act of dismissing a   lot of workers is foregrounded.

Looking at the second piece of news from the UK media the following results are obtained:

* ***Europe is being run by a rightwing Anglo-German cabal dominated by liberal...***. The passive verbs *run* and *dominate* imply that Europe is   like a puppet   in the hands of Germany and England.

* ***...Hollande`s government has been organized...***. In this sentence the   role of the government is downgraded.

* ***The [EU] community is now scared by an alliance...***. Here the existing terror in Europe is emphasised.

Looking at the third piece of news the following passivisations are observed:

* ***... reforms that Greece has been obliged to enforce***. In this sentence   Greece has been given a passive role in front of EU union.

... the country was headed in the wrong direction. In this sentence the   passive verb implies that Greece has no agency rather it is lead by other   countries   during   the economic crisis.

... a nation now trapped in a sixth straight year of recession....The   passive verb in this sentence emphasises that Greece is economically   paralyzed.

Analyzing the passive structures used in the UK print media we came to the following conclusions. In this context European countries are shown to be passive in accepting the crisis and   the consequent problems which are imposed on them. Themes like **demonstration,** *firing*, and *economic reforms* are foregrounded. But the real instigators (i.e.UK) of such imposed problems on Europe are backgrounded.

Looking at the European print media the following results are obtained:

Looking at the first piece of news the following passive verbs are obtained:

* *... consolidation which should be viewe***d...**. In this sentence economic consolidation measures are foregrounded.

* *Consolidation measures should be selected very carefully*. Again   economic consolidation is foregrounded.

* *Words that can be interpreted as supporting both* camps. In this sentence   words about consolidation measures are emphasised.

* *But this did not prevent Olli Rehn from being literally crucified*. In this sentence Rehn is criticized because of his anti-consolidation measures. Crucification is emphasised by using a passive structure.

* *... these skills cannot be observed*. In this sentence the passive structure emphasises courage and determination which are needed in times of a   crisis.

Considering the passive sentences in the European print media we concluded that issues like *economic consolidation measures, courage, determination, and supporting words* are thematized as the subject of the passive sentences. Figure two shows the frequency of passive structure in UK and European print media. As it is shown the frequency of passive verbs are twice more often in UK print media than Europe print media. By using passive structure in the UK print media the economic crisis of Europe and different aspects of it are more emphasised.
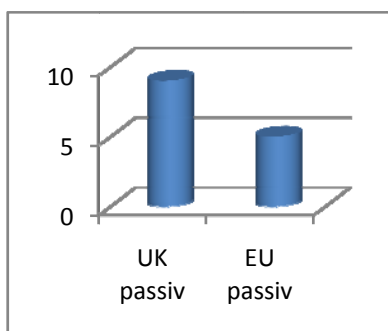
Figure 2: The Frequency of Passive Verbs in UK and Eu Print Media

4. 4. Theme-Rheme Structure

Looking at the UK print media the following themes are foregrounded:

In the first piece of news from the UK media the following themes are observed:

* The word *"bill"* is thematized. This bill is about the economic reforms.

* *"Protesting"*, *"demonstrations"*, and *"protesting farmers"* emphasise chaos and unrest in Europe.

* *"Firing"* foregrounds the act of making many people redundant in Europe.

Looking at the second piece of news from *Gaurdian* the following themes are observed:

* *"Hollande`s governing socialists"* is thematized as accusing Merkel of causing crisis.

* *"Draft paper"* which is on party policy of Europe (about the austerity measures) is foregrounded.

* *"Europe"* is foregrounded as being run by Germany and England.

* *"French socialists"* are thematized as opposing Germany`s dominance over the Europe.

* *"Merkel", "Cameron"*, **and** *"Sarkozy"* are foregrounded as officials who are criticized for their hegemonic stances regarding the economic crisis.

* *"The [EU] community project"* is foregrounded as being spoilt by England and Germany.

* *"British prime minister"* and *"Angela Merkel"* are foregrounded as politicians who want to manipulate the economic crisis by forming an alliance.

* *"France"* is foregrounded as being alone in Europe.

Looking at the third piece of news from *Gaurdian* the following topics are thematized:

* *"A survey"* about the polling in Greece is foregrounded.

* *"Some 76% of respondents"* is foregrounded as the majority who think Greek government is on a wrong direction.

* ***"Antonis Samaras"*** is foregrounded as a suitable candidate for prime   minister. This is a matter of debate in Greece.

* ***"No politician*** "is foregrounded meaning that no one can solve the   economic problem in Greece.

* ***"Malaise"*** is thematized comparing the economic crisis in Europe with an incurable disease.

* ***"Mandated reforms"*** is foregrounded. These are the economic reforms that Greece is forced to implement as a consequence of the economic   crisis.

* ***"Debt-choked"*** is emphasised meaning that Greece is under so much   economic pressure.

* ***"Tsipras"*** is thematized as opposing Berlin`s austerity measures.

* ***"No country"*** is foregrounded as stating the fact that no European   country can solve EU`s economic crisis.

* ***"The future of Europe"*** is thematized. It is said that the current divide   between the north and the south Europe would harm it.

* ***"Samaras*** "is thematized. He is supposed to reshuffle his cabinet as a   result   of the intergovernmental disagreement which is by itself the result   of   the   EU   economic crisis.

* ***"Reform"*** is emphasised. This reform is a consequence of the economic crisis.

Taking into account the themes in the UK print media we concluded that in this context Europe`s economic crisis is foregrounded and different problems and   aspects of it are emphasised by their being thematized (e.g. ***mandated reforms of Eu economy***, ***malaise gripping Europe***, ***demonstration***s, ***firing***,...). On the other hand some officials like ***Merkel*** and ***Sarkozy*** are thematized as authorities who are criticised for their policies regarding the economic crisis.

Looking at the European print media the following results were obtained: Looking   at the first piece of news the following topics are foregrounded:

*'***The heaviest strike"*** is foregrounded. This is the strike over   Reinhart/Rogoff mistake.

* ***"That news"*** is foregrounded. The news is about Reinhart/Rooff`s   mistake.

* ***"The current policies"*** is foregrounded as being appropriate in solving the economic problem of Europe.

* ***"The need (to deleverage, to put Europe on a sound footing) "***is emphasised showing that there is an urgency to help Europe with the   financial crisis.

* ***"Growth"*** is foregrounded. This is the growth we can see in Europe`s   economic status.

* ***"Fiscal consolidation"*** is thematized emphasising the need for the   unification of Europe.

* ***"Olli Rehn"*** is foregrounded to emphasise that his views regarding the   economic policies are criticised.

* ***"Skills"*** is foregrounded to say that courage and determination are   necessary in times of a crisis.

Looking at the second piece of news the following topics are foregrounded:

* ***"Italian exports"***, ***"an increase in exports"***, and ***"made in Italy   products"*** are foregrounded implying that Italy`s economy is flourishing   now.

* ***"Germany"*** is foregrounded as having experienced a rise in exportation.

* ***"The report (on the Italian exportation)"*** is foregrounded.

* ***"Surprise "***is foregrounded. It emphasises the boom in exports of   Italian goods.

* ***"Growth"*** is thematized emphasising Italy`s prosperous economy.

Looking at the third piece of news from the European print media the following topics are thematized:

* ***"Global economic crisis"*** and ***"Europe`s sovereign debt crisis"*** are foregrounded as having limited effects on Germany`s economy.

* ***"Germans"*** are foregrounded as not having endured   painful deficit   reduction.

* ***"Downgrading of sovereign debt"*** is emphasised as benefitting   Germany   in numerous ways.

* ***"Germany`s exports"*** and ***"Germany`s trade surplus"*** are thematized   showing Germany`s flourishing economy.

* ***"Youth unemployment"*** is foregrounded as being very low.

* ***"Budget constraints"*** is foregrounded as forcing   countries other than   Germany to make painful spending cuts.

Considering the European print media, we concluded that in this context topics ***like growth, fiscal consolidation, downgrading of sovereign debt,*** and ***reduction of youth***

unemployment are foregrounded. Such foregrounded pieces of information emphasise Europe`s prosperity, and reconstruction after the economic crisis.

5. Discussion

Looking at the print media in the two contexts of Europe and UK, we can see how they have explicitly and implicitly shown their ideologies. Explicitly they have chosen certain words to depict the situation as they like. In the UK news word strategy shows the economic situation to be very severe and paralyzing. The European media, on the other hand, looks at the situation in a positive way considering it as an opportunity which has helped Europe grow and become independent. Implicitly the two contexts have taken advantage of nominalisation, passivisation, and thematization in order to impose their ideologies on the reader. Regarding nominalization, in the UK print media, we saw that the economic crisis is exaggerated as a problem which has affected Europe severely and cannot be cured any more. But the European print media depicts a positive picture about this crisis emphasising topics like *Europe`s growth after the economic crisis*, *reduction of unemployment*, and *economic recovery*. Analyzing the passivisation in the two contexts, we concluded that in the UK print media the European countries are shown as helpless countries which have to suffer the economic problems imposed on them. In this context, issues like *firing of the workers*, *unemployment*, and *demonstration* are foregrounded. In the European **print media, on the other hand, topics like** *consolidation measures*, *courage*, *determination*, and *supporting words* are foregrounded. Less number of passive sentences were observed in the European print media, a fact which thematizes the European countries as the agents rather than passive entities in more active sentences. Considering thematization, we saw that in the UK print media topics emphasising Europe`s economic crisis and different by-products of it are thematized (*e. g. mandated reforms of the EU economy*, *firing of the workers*, *a malaise gripping Europe*, *demonstrations*, ...). The European print media, on the other hand, thematizes topics like *growth*, *fiscal consolidation*, *downgrading of sovereign debt*, and *reduced rate of youth unemployment*. Such themes refer to the Europe`s reconstruction of its economy, and prosperous economic condition at present.

6. Conclusion

As it was shown in this study, the writers could take advantage of discourse tools to hide their ideology. It was shown how nominalisation, passivisation, and foregrounded themes are used

to impose certain ideologies on the reader. Also it was studied how diction affects the attitude and feelings a text conveys. In this study we saw that a problem is interpreted differently in different print media. The economic crisis in Europe is exaggerated in the UK print media. It is depicted as an incurable disease which has paralyzed the Europe. Contrarily, looking at the European print media we saw a positive picture of the economic crisis. Here the economic crisis is looked upon as an opportunity rather than an incurable disease. It has taught Europe great lessons of commitment and courage in times of crisis and helped it grow.

References

Behnam, B. & Khodadust, R. (2010). A critical discourse analysis of the event of September 11, 2001 in American and Syrian print media discourse, *The Journal of Applied Linguistics, 3*(2), 23-50.

Behnam, B. & Moshtaghi, Z. R. (2008). A contrastive critical analysis of Iranian and British newspaper reports on the Iran nuclear power program. *Systemic Functional Linguistics in Use*, OWPL, C29, ISSN0906-7612, ISBN: 978-87-90923-47-1, 199-218.

Benjamins, B. V. J. (2012). *Contrastive media analysis*. USA.

Billing, M. (2008). The language of critical discourse analysis: The case of nominalisation. *Discourse & Society, 19*, 783-800.

Bonyadi, A. & Moses, S. (2012). Headlines in newspaper editorials: A contrastive study. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences, 1*(3), 1-7.

Farrelley, M. (2010). Critical discourse analysis in political studies: An illustrative analysis of the "empowerment" agenda. *Politics, 30*(2), 98-104.

Gee, P. J. (2013). *An introduction to discourse analysis; theory and method*. New York: Routledge.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *An introduction to functional grammar*. Great Britain: Arnold.

Hatim, B. (1997). *Communication across cultures: translation theory and contrastive text linguistics*. University of Exter Press: ISBNO869884908.

Khajeh, Z. & Khanmohammad, H. (2012).Transmission of Ideology through translation: a critical discourse analysis of Chomsky`s "Media Control" and 15 Persian translations. Retrieved from http://*www.Journals.usb.ac.ir/IJALS/en-   us/Articles/149*.

Khodadust, F. (2007). A contrastive analysis of English and Persian newspaper headlines. *Linguistics Journal, 2*(3), 27-38.

Le, T. & Wang, X. (2009). *Systemic functional linguistics and critical discourse analysis*.ecite.utas. Nova Science Publishers: Le, Q, M (ed), New York

Qian, Y. (2010). *Discourse constrictions around terrorism in the People`s Daily (China) and the Sun (UK) before and after 9.11: a corpus-based contrastive critical discourse analysis*. Peterlang: Germany.

Sahragard, R. & Rahimi, A.(2006). A critical discourse analysis of euphemization and derogation in emails on the late Pope. *Linguistics Journal, 2*, 27-34.

Samar, G.R., Navidinia, H., & Mehrani, M. (2010). Communication purposes and strategies in email communication: A contrastive analysis between Iranian and American students. *International Journal of Language Studies (IJLS), 4* (3), 55-72.

Van Dijk, V. T. A. (1999). Critical discourse analysis and conversation analysis. *Discourse and Society, 10*(4), 459-470.

Widdowson, H. G. (2011). *Discourse analysis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Yamashita, T. (1999). Contrastive analysis of discourse representation in Japanese and American newspaper reports. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 8*, 24-41.

Zhao, J. (2011). Comparative critical analysis of discourse structures. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 1*, 108-111.

Appendix A: Texts from Gaurdian

1. Greece Prepares to Vote on Controversial Reforms

Greece`s parliament is preparing to vote this weekend on a controversial multi-bill of internationally mandated reforms. Helena Smith writes:

The bill outlining the dismissal of 15000 civil servants from the public sector and a host of other "prior actions" Athens` ruling coalition has pledged to enact in exchange for rescue funds worth €8.8bn has just been presented to parliament.

But not without a fight. Protesting trade unionists representing the public and private sector have been out in force today and more demonstrations are plannedwhen the bill is put to vote in the 300-seat House late on Sunday. The firing of some 4,000 civil servants this year and around 11,000 next has been met with fierce opposition at a time when unemployment rates in Greece are nudging 28% - the highest in the euro zone. Protesting farmers in Athens claim that their investments on photovaltic systems are no longer profitable due to tax reforms.

2. French Socialists Accuse Merkel of Causing Crisis

Here`s more on the blast aimed at Angela Merkel by France`s governing socialist party. Europe editor LanTraynor writes:

French president Francoise Hollande`s governing socialists have delivered a blistering assault on Germany`s chancellor Angela Merkel, accusing her of causing the single currency crisis that has been tearing Europe apart for more than three years, of acting selfishly and intrasigently in her own political and German interest, and demanding a showdown with the chancellor of austerity.

In a draft paper on party policy on Europe ahead of a conference in June, the socialists contend that Europe is being run by a right-wing Anglo-German cabal   dominated by liberal free trade interests with the rest of the world and austerity within the EU.

They call into question the Franco-German alliance that has been at the heart of the EU for as long as it has existed and argue that France alone of the big EU countries has a government that is genuinely pro-European.

Merkel, as well as Hollande`s predecessor, Nikolas Sarkozy, and David Cameron come in for stinging attack. Merkel and Sarkozy, the draft declares, managed to turn a small crisis that started in Greece more than three years ago into a mega-European disaster.

The 21-page draft leaked to Le Mond which said it had the tacit support of Hollande`s government has been organized by Jean-Christophe Cambadelis, a party vice-president." The EU community project is now scarred by an alliance of convenience between the Thacherite accents of the current British prime minister- who sees Europe only as a la carte and about rebates - and the selfish intrasigence of Chancellor Merkel who thinks of nothing else but the savings of depositors in Germany, the trade balance recorded in Berlin and her electoral future," the paper said." Today France is alone among the big countries of the EU in having a government which is genuinely European."

3. Syriza Party in Lead in New Greek Poll

Over to Greece where a poll released today shows the fiercely anti-austerity far left Syriza party in the lead as speculation also grows of an imminent government reshuffle. Helena Smith writes:

A survey conducted by the polling firm, VPRC, shoes Syriza recapturing its lead with 29.5% against 27% for the centre-right New Democracy party, the predominant force in the governing coalition. Some 76% of respondents said they believed the country was headed in the wrong direction even if a majority continued to believe that Antonis Samaras was more suitable as prime minister- he received16.6% compared to 9.1% who backed Syriza leader Alexis Tsipras in the role. But 60.3% thought "no politician" was suited for leadership.

In a further study sign of the malaise gripping a nation now trapped in a sixth straight year of recession a nation now trapped in a sixth straight year of recession, 77% of those polled voiced support for the "immediate abolishment" of the EU -IMF mandated reforms that Greece has been obliged to enforce in return for aid, saying the debt-choked country should instead apply a "a plan of economic and productive reconstruction."

Tsipras, who is currently visiting Portugal has been busy blasting Berlin`s fixation with austerity. Earlier today, he insisted that no country in southern Europe would be able to exit the crisis if it continues to enforce such policies. "We have to be aware that the future of Europe does not lie in the divide between the north and the south," he said calling for enhanced dialogue between the countries of the south.

"[The future] does not lie with a German Europe of surpluses in the north and social disintegration in the south."The survey was released amid mounting speculation that Samaras will soon that Samaras will soon reshuffle his cabinet after intergovernmental disagreement, and an embarrassing u-turn, over a reform that was to be part of a bill Athens must pass to secure further aid from creditors.
Syriza leader Alexis Tsipras at a rally during a two day visit to Portugal.

Appendix B: **The EU print media**

1. It`s Not the Austerity, Stupid, It`s the Structural Reforms!

But the heaviest strike the Commission got exactly from the revelation of the Reinhart/Rogoff mistake. That news caused confusion and as a result Commission president Jose Manuel Barro was forced to say that the limits of the current policies were about to be reached. What MrBarroso actually said on April 22nd was that *" the current policies are of course appropriate in terms of reducing the biggest challenge that we have today which is the challenge of unsustainable debt, public and private, the need to deleverage, the need to put Europe on a sound footing so that Europe can be more competitive and can have growth again, but growth that is sustainable, because what we have learned, and this is for me the biggest lesson of the crisis, and I think a lesson that we have not yet completely drawn, is that growth based on debt is not sustainable".*

The difference between what he says and what was heard in media is essential, isn`t it? And the first deputy director of the IMF, David Lepton, joined the controversy by saying that countries should have clear and specific commitments for mid-term fiscal consolidation which should be viewed country by country, while consolidation measures should be selected very carefully. Words that can be interpreted as supporting both camps. But this did not prevent Olli Rehn from being literally crucified in the European Parliament economic committee on April 25th when MEPs from all political groups attacked him strongly. According to one of the influential MEPs, Jean-Paul Gauzes (EPP, France), in times of a crisis politicians needed courage and determination, but in the past months these skills cannot be observed in the Commission, he noted.

2. Italy: Internationalisation of Small to Medium Sized Businesses in an Economic Crisis

With reference to goods, Italian exports have seen a significant increase in October of 2012 of 8.6% while the imports decrease to 3.2%. Looking at Italy compared to other industrial countries, the data confirms the health of our "made in Italy products" and therefore the strength of our companies to react to the effects of the international crisis. In 2012, the Italian exports of goods and services amounted to 6.7%, with a higher position than France that registers 5.3% and the United Kingdom with 4.6%. Germany registers 7.8%, which owes. It is "the best result ever reached by Italy", as stated by a report from Coldiretti. The report on the Italian exportation of "made in Italy products" such as traditional food products, with a stable percentage of exportation towards the European countries and particularly the United Kingdom, for a total increase of 6% in the European Union.

Alongside the traditional trend we find surprises such as a boom in exports of 19% of Italian beer to the UK and 20% rise with cheese exports to France. The growth in the exportation of these manufactured Italian products shows more value than meets the eye: especially given the exports go to countries notorious for the exportation of their own beer and cheese that also are cutting back on the imports of foreign products.

It is also true that 'made in Italy products' are not only a cultural identity factor felt by the majority of Italians but it is also seen as an opportunity for the economic recovery from the crisis. An increase

in exports means an increase of production, investment, and also the flourishing of professions and services related to it.

3. Germany: Still behind the European Project?

Compared to other EU member states, the global economic crisis and the European sovereign debt crisis has had limited effects on the German economy. Unlike Greece, Portugal, and Spain, Germans have not endured painful deficit reduction policies and austerity. In actual fact, the spectre of default and subsequent downgrading of sovereign debt of some member states has benefited Germany in numerous ways: Germany borrows money at low interest rates on international bond markets because of its status as a safe haven, its exports thrive because of the Euro`s low exchange rate, and money has flown into German economy as a consequence of capital flight from the European fringe.

During the peak of the European crisis in 2012, Germany`s trade surplus hit its second highest level in more than 60 years and unemployment was at a record low since German unification. Even in the structurally weaker parts of Germany, unemployment has been falling markedly. Whilst youth unemployment is over 55 per cent in Greece and Spain, and about 20 per cent in the UK, it is only 8 per cent in Germany. Budget constraints forced some countries to make painful spending cuts that seriously disadvantage future generations. But in stark contrast to the much-debated increase in tuition fees in the UK from approximately £3000 to £9000 per annum, German Lander are abandoning fees altogether.

Title

Sources of Persian Learners' Errors in English Pronunciation

Authors

Seyyed Mohammad Reza Amirian (Ph.D)
Hakim Sabzevari University, Sabzevar, Iran

Fatemeh Sadeghi (M.A)
Hakim Sabzevari University, Sabzevar, Iran

Biodata

Seyed Mohammad Reza Amirian, assistant professor of TEFL at Hakim Sabzevari University, Iran.. He has published books and articles and presented in a number of national and international conferences. His primary research interest includes test fairness and validation, differential item functioning, assessing language skills and vocabulary.

Fatemeh Sadeghi is an English teacher at the ministry of education, Sabzevar, Iran. Her research interest includes Language Learning and Teaching Strategies, Discourse Analysis, Teaching Language Skills and Subskills.

Abstract

When a Persian student wants to learn English, he or she may have many difficulties in pronunciation. This study aims to investigate different sources of Persian students' difficulties in pronouncing English words. The results indicated that three major sources of pronunciation errors can be enumerated: the different sound system of English and Persian, the orthography of English, and the effect of the native language or transfer. These different types of pronunciation errors, based on the researcher observation in her English classes in different high schools in Sabzevar, Iran, have been explained. In addition, as a second objective, this study tries to compare segment insertion rules in English and Persian. It is concluded that if an English teacher knows some of the phonological rules of English and can compare them to Persian rules, he or she can raise student's awareness of the differences and help them to overcome these barriers to correct pronunciation.

Keywords: Segment deletion rules, Segment insertion rules, Phonological rules, Orthography, Transfer

1. Introduction

Knowledge of language includes knowledge of the morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences. It also includes the sounds of the language and how they may be "strung" together to form meaningful units. Seidlhofer (2002) stated that pronunciation plays a fundamental role in both our personal and our social life: as individuals, we project our identity through the way we speak, and also indicate our membership of particular communities.

Harmer (2009) believed that all English language teachers teach their students grammar, vocabulary, and different activities and skills but they pay little attention to pronunciation. Perhaps they feel they have too much to do already and pronunciation teaching will only make things worse. It seems that pronunciation practice not only makes students aware of different sounds and sound features, but can also improve their speaking. By considering students' pronunciation errors in the classroom, the teacher becomes aware of his or her students' problems in pronunciation.

In the present study the researcher sought to investigate Persian learners' difficulties in pronouncing English words. Three important factors were explained. First, the different sound system of English and Persian was investigated and some examples were given. Second, the orthography of English was considered as an important factor that caused some errors in learners' pronunciation. Third, the effect of learners' native language based on the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis was explained as the last issue. Two of these issues−orthography and first language transfer− were related to segment insertion.

Consequently, the researcher tried to describe segment insertion rules in English and Persian and asked teachers to consider these factors when they observe students' errors in pronunciation.

2. Literature review

Davidson (2006) pointed out that the production of non-native sequences not only raises the question of which sequences are created with the lowest accuracy, but also the issue of how speakers ultimately repair them. While speakers may choose from various strategies, such as deletion, epenthesis, segment change, etc., previous research has shown that learners most often repair non-native consonant clusters by inserting a vowel between the two consonants. When producing the non-native consonant clusters, second or foreign language learners repaired them more often with vowel insertion than with any other type of repair. This strategy may be a result of the fact that the stimuli were presented both aurally and

orthographically. On the other hand, this is not a drawback of the design; instead, it proposes that when speakers are aware of the intended underlying phonemes of the word they are trying to produce, they prefer to protect as much information about the string as they can. Davidson believed that "the task of the speaker producing non-native consonant clusters is two-fold: not only must speakers determine whether or not the adjacent consonants are able to form a unit, but they must also assign the proper coordination in order to accurately produce the sequence.

Coelho (2004) explained that most of the problems of second language learners in pronunciation result from interference. Interference refers to a learners' transfer of features of the sound system of his or her language to the new language. Li (2007) stated that the transfer of sound from one language into another is not a uniform process, but rather, takes different forms depending on the orthographies and phonological properties of source and target languages. For example, in dealing with Polish loans containing clusters not found in English, speakers typically add the vowel schwa]ə] to break the clusters up into separate syllables. Li (2007)believed that vowel insertion is one of the strategies most commonly used in nativizing foreign syllable structures.

There are some differences between the sound system and consonant clusters of Persian and English. Swan and Smith (2001) indicated that some vowels in English have equivalents or near equivalent in Farsi but some of them may cause problems. These problems are as follows:

- /I/ is often pronounced as /i:/: sheep for ship
- /^/ is often pronounced as /ɑ:/: cart for cut
- /æ/ is often pronounce as /e/: bed for bad

They explained other sounds such as /ə/, /ɔ:/, / ɜ:/, and also some diphthongs such as /ɑ /, /eə/, /əʊ/, /ɑʊ/, /ʊə/ that cause problem for Persian learners. In describing consonants they indicated that Persian students may have difficulties in pronouncing some consonants. The following examples show these problems:

- /ð/ and /θ/ tend to be confused or pronounced as /t/: ten for then, tinker for thinker
- /ŋ/ may be pronounced as two separate phonemes /n/ and /g/, because of orthographic form.
- /v/ and /w/
- /r/ is a weak roll or tap in Farsi and many learners have great difficulty in producing English /r/

- /l/ exists in Farsi as the 'clear' /l/ (as in leaf), but there is no equivalent of the 'dark' /l/ (as in feel)

Another difference between English and Persian is their consonant cluster. Swan and Smith (2001) stated that consonant clusters do not occur within single syllables in Farsi. Therefore, Persian learners tend to add a short vowel, either before or in the middle of the various English Clusters. Examples of initial two-segment clusters that cause difficulty are:

perice for price

pelace for place

geround for ground

gelue for glue

The intrusive vowel in initial position usually approximates to the phoneme /e/, so start becomes estart. The intrusive /e/ is particularly common before clusters beginning with /s/: esperay for spray. Final consonant clusters are also likely to cause problems. Learners again insert an /e/: promptes for prompts.

It seems that the most important strategy that Persian learners use to overcome difficulties in English pronunciation is based on segment insertion. Consequently, the researcher has tried to explain some segment insertion rules in English and Persian and compare them with each other.

2.1. Segment Insertion in English

Segment insertion refers to all the instances of adding a sound segment both within a word and in the boundaries between words. For example, in the pronunciation of the plural forms of the nouns ending in sibilants (strident coronal fricatives), an [ə] sound is inserted between the nouns and plural s which is realized as [z]. The rule can be shown as:

Ø → [ə] before [z] preceded by [+sibilant] or more formally:

Ø → [ə] / [+ strident, +coronal] _____ [+voice, +strident, + anter]

- Insert schwa before the English regular plural and regular past-tense ending when they occur in certain environments:

    Ø → ə [+sibilant] _ [+sibilant]

    place→ places   dish → dishes

    Ø → ə /[+alveolar, +stop] _ [+alveolar, +stop]

    loud→louded

- The segment insertion as the result of dissimilation

- Epenthesis: where a vowel of consonant is added at the beginning of a word or between sounds. For example, in some varieties of English, the word warmth is pronounced [wɔmpθ], i.e. a bilabial [p] occurs after bilabial [m]. This process can be shown as:

[Ø] → [-voice, +stop] after [+nasal] before [-voice, +consonant]

warmth→ [wɔmp ^{θ}]

- Intrusion: the addition of sounds in connected speech. This is when an extra consonant is added at the end of a word to link it to a following word starting with a vowel. In English, an intrusive /r/ is often added, especially before and. For example:

China and Japan /tʃaɪnərəndʒəpæn/

Other examples include 'Africa' is, 'sawAnn' and 'mediaevent' where a linking [r] is added between the two words. This is the result of a process called liaison which is a type of linking transition between sounds, in which a sound is introduced at the end of a word if the following syllable has no onset. In English, words ending in a tense vowel and a following word or syllable beginning with a vowel are usually linked with a glide, so that a phrase like *be able* sounds as though there is a /j/ between *be* and *able* and *blue ink* sounds as though there is a /w/ between the words *blue* and *ink* (Moradkhan, 2009).

2.2. Segment Insertion in Persian

Rohany Rahbar (2010) noted that Persian has an epenthesis process that may arise when a consonant cluster is made at a stem-suffix boundary. An epenthetic vowel (the vowel–e, and in a few cases–o or–a) may be inserted in order to break up the created consonant clusters. Considering a, e, o to be lax vowels and ɑ, i, u to be tense vowels in Persian, with stems having/ ending in the shape CV lax C no epenthesis occurs; while with stems having/ending in the shape CV lax CC, CV tense C, CV tense CC, epenthesis occurs in some cases and not in others. Here are some examples based on her explanation:

- CV laxC (no epenthesis)

  ɢam 'sadness'+ ɡin→ɢam.ɡin   'sad'   *ɢa.me.ɡin

- CVlaxCC(epenthesismayoccur)

  Ardʒ'value'+mand→ar.dʒo.mand~ardʒ.mand 'valued'

- CVlaxCC (no epenthesis)

  xaʃm 'anger'+ nɑk→xaʃm.nɑk   'angry'   *xaʃ.me.nɑk

4. CV tense C (epenthesis may occur)

kɑr 'work' + gar→kɑ.re.gar ~ kɑr.gar   'worker'

- CV tense C (no epenthesis)

kɑr 'work' + gɑh→kɑr.gɑh   'workshop'   *kɑ.re.gɑh

 (6) CV tense CC (epenthesis may occur)

mɑnd 'past stem of mɑndan 'to last''+ gɑr→mɑn.de.gɑr 'lasting'

(7) CV tense CC (no epenthesis)

ist 'stop' + gɑh→ist.gɑh   'station'   *is.te.gɑh

   The observation that epenthesis may occur in suffixation with particular stem structures lead some to consider the environment for epenthesis to be conditioned by properties of the vowel (e.g., Samareh 1977, Lazard 1992 cited in Rohany Rahbar 2010). Samareh (1977) relates the occurrence of the epenthesis to the length of the vowel of the root in cases such as ɑmuzgɑr ~ ɑmuzegɑr'teacher'. Presenting examples such as pɑsbɑn ~ pɑsebɑn'policeman', Lazard (1992) considers the epenthesis to occur with stable vowels, ɑ, i, u -he calls ɑ, i, u stable because they have a relatively constant duration and are not subject to change in quality.

Dehghan (2012) described different insertion rules in Persian as the following:

- *[ʔ] – insertion*

Generally, word-initial glottal stop insertion is based on the property of Persian syllable structure since no word may begin with a vowel in phonetic form. So, if a word begins with a vowel in phonological form, a glottal stop consonant will fill the onset position. Like the examples below:

/abru/ [ʔabru] "ebrow"

/eʤbɑ:r/ [ʔeʤbɑ:r] "obligation"

/oftɑ:d/ [ʔoftɑ:d] "fell"

B. Glide Insertion

However, if one of the prefixes /be-/ or /na-/ places at the initial of the above words, then EP epenthesizes the glide /-j-/ that agrees in features with the contiguous vowel often a "high vowel" (Lombardi, 2002, p. 9, as cited in Dehghan, 2012) to resolve hiatus. And based on it, the glide /-j-/ agrees with the high vowel /i/ in Persian. See the examples below.

/be-j-oftɑd/ [bijoftɑd] "fell"

/be-j-ɑ/ [bijɑ] "come"

/be-j-ɑvar/ [bijɑvar] "bring"

As we mentioned above, the previous researches investigated one or two aspects of learners' difficulties in pronouncing a second or foreign language. Coelho (2004) and Li (2007) explained about the importance of transfer in learners' difficulties in pronunciation. Swan and Smith (2001) have tried to explain different sound system of English and Persian and also the different consonant cluster in these two languages. Davidson (2006) indicated that one of the most important strategies learners use to repair non-native consonant clusters is inserting a vowel between the two consonants—segment insertions. At the present study the researcher has tried to investigate three important sources ofPersian Learners' Errors in English Pronunciation: the different sound system of English and Persian, the orthography of English, and language transfer. Finally it has investigated the different segment insertion rules in English and Persian.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants were 30female students in junior high school randomly chosen from 3 classes in Sabzevar, Iran. They were Persian speakers whose age ranged between 14-15 years old. The participants were studying English in their natural classes during the second semester of the educational schedule.

3.2. Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study to collect data was four reading comprehension passages of the students' textbook in junior high school. Students were required to read one passage in each session one by one. The researcher also made use of a mobile set to record learners' production.

3.3. Procedures

The first step in conducting the present study was to choose thirty students from 3 classes randomly. The students were on their regular classes in the second semester of the educational schedule .This study was conducted during four sessions. In each session the student were required to read one reading comprehension passage of their text book and their voice was recorded. Then, the researcher listened to their voice after the class and transcribed them. The researcher tried to focus on students' pronunciation errors. Their errors were recorded and classified based on their types.

4. Results and Discussion

Based on her observation during four sessions the researcher tried to explain some of the Persian students' pronunciation errors. It was found that Iranian learners' pronunciation

problems can be categorized into three main categories. In other word, three major factors were found to be sources of pronunciation problems which are described below.

The first and the most significant source of error is the different sound system of English and Persian. Some sounds such as /ə/, /θ/, /ð/, … in English are not present in Persian. So a Persian student, when encountering these sounds, cannot pronounce them correctly and tries to replace them with similar sounds in his/her language such as /e/,/s/, /z/,... The following examples found in the present study show the students' errors in this respect:

both /bəʊθ/ → */bəʊs/   think /θiːnk/ → */siːnk/

this /ðɪs/ → */zɪs/   breathe /briːð/ → */briːz/

The second source of pronunciation errors for Persian learners appeared to be the orthography of English. In some English words, there are some letters that are written but are not pronounced. In other words, they are silent letters. Ogden (2009) believed that for English there is no one-to-one mapping of letter to sound, or sound to letter (which is what is meant when people say English is not 'spelt phonetically') (p.4). The results of the current study also indicated that when a Persian student wanted to read English sentences, most of the time, he/she pronounced English words based on the written form and tried to pronounce all the letters in a word. Consequently, some errors happen in pronunciation. The following examples indicate these types of errors:

more /mɔːr/ → */mɔːrɪ/   move /muːv/ → */muːvɪ/   were /wɜːr/ → */werɪ/

In these examples, the student inserts vowel /ɪ/ at the end of the words because he/she thinks that the letter *e* is pronounced. Other examples are:

know /nəʊ/ → */kənəʊ/   night /naɪt/ → */naɪgət/

looked /lʊkt/ → */lʊkəd/   asked /æskt/ → */æskəd/

Finally, the third source of pronunciation problems is the effect of first language or first language transfer. English syllable-initial consonant clusters are difficult for Persian speakers to say as Persian syllable structure does not allow them. Students will often insert a vowel either before or in the middle of a consonant cluster in order to make pronunciation easier. The following observed pronunciation errors in this study illustrate the effect of language transfer.

small /smɑːl/ → */esmɑːl/   student /stjuːdnt/ → */estjuːdənt/

stand /stænd/ → */estænd/   scream /skriːm/ → */eskriːm/

This finding confirms a previous study by Fatemi, Sobhani and Abolhassani (2012) who stated that Persian learners of English, while facing a structure in contrast with their mother

tongue resort to L1 (Persian) to compensate for their lack of proficiency and to deal with the challenge. This could be supported by CAH. Persian learners encountering an English syllable which has little or no similarity to Persian syllable [(C) CCV or (C) (C) (C) VCCC(C) syllabic structure] try to adapt the present English syllable based on their phonological knowledge of the syllabic structure that they already internalized.

Keshavarz (2001) noted that Persian learners of English encounter difficulty in pronunciation of initial consonant clusters since there are not initial consonant clusters in Persian. They add a vowel before the cluster or between that to pronounce it easier. Jabbari and Safari (in press) also in their investigation of different strategies Persian EFL learners employ in producing initial consonant clusters found that vowel insertion was the most frequently used strategy by these learners but what differed was the location of the epenthetic vowel. It depended on the consonants in the clusters. It was concluded that the epenthetic site was based on maximal perceptual similarity between input and output verifying the crucial role of perceptual similarity. There are some potential limitations in this study. Considering the fact that participants were all junior high school students, the generalization of the results for other students in higher or lower level would be limited. Additionally, this study was conducted during four sessions and one reading passage was taught in each session. The result of this study can be generalized more confidently when the time limits of the study expand on several sessions and more reading passages. As this research investigated the difficulties of Persian learners in English pronunciation, it brought up more questions to be addressed in future studies. Firstly, in order to investigate the difficulties of students in pronunciation, long-term observation of students' English pronunciation may be needed. Secondly, the participants selected for this study are all female junior high school students. Future studies should explore the Persian learners' difficulties in English pronunciation with students of different levels of proficiency as well as different genders.

5. Conclusion

Most of the Persian students learning English have many difficulties in pronouncing English words and they have many errors in pronunciation. Three sources of students' errors have been argued in this research: different sound system of English and Persian, the English orthography, and the effect of language transfer. Furthermore, the present study was an attempt to investigate different segment insertion rules in English and Persian. It seems that

segment insertion is one important strategy that is used by the majority of second and foreign language learners to repair non-native consonant clusters.

However, there may be other factors that influence pronouncing second or foreign words. Future studies may consider these factors to help English teachers. It is necessary for an English teacher to know the insertion rules in English and Persian. The findings of this study can raise teachers' awareness of the underlying reasons for Persian students' pronunciation errors and can help them to overcome some barriers to students' correct pronunciation by some remedial instruction or some modifications in their syllabus.

References

Coelho, E. (2004). *Adding English: A guide to teaching in multilingual classrooms.* Canada, Toronto: Pippin Publishing Corporation.

Davidson, L. (2004). Phonology, phonetics, or frequency influences on the production of non-native sequences. *Journal of Phonetcis*, 34, 104-137.

Dehghan , M., & Kambuziya, A. (2012). A short analysis of insertion in Persian. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(1), 14-23.

Fatemi, M. A., Sobhani, A., & Abolhassani, H. (2012). Difficulties of Persian learners of English in pronuncing some English consonant clusters. *World journal of English language*, 2(2), 69-75.

Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., & Hyams, N. (2002). *An introduction to language .* Boston: Heinle.

Harmer, J. (2009). *The practice of English language teaching.* Pearson Longman.

Jabbari, A. A., & Samavarchi, L. (2011). Persian learners' syllabification of English consonant clusters. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 1(1), 236-246.

Keshavarz, M. H. (2001). *A practical course of English phonetics and phonology.* Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications Company.

Keshavarz, M. H. (2009). *A practical course of English phonectis and phonology.* Tehran: Samt Publication.

Li, C. W.-C. (2007, May 8, 2013). *How to transfer sound between languages.* Retrieved from John Benjamins Publishing Company: http://benjamins. com

Moradkhan, D. (2009). *Linguistics.* Tehran: Parseh Institution.

Ogden, R. (2009). *An introduction to English Phonetics.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

RohanyRahbar, E. (2010). On Persian epenthesis in suffixation: An experimental study. *Proceeding of the 2012 annual conference of the Canadian Linguistic Association.* Toronto.

Seidlhofer, B. (2002). Pronunciation. In R. Carter, & D. Nunan, *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 56-65). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swan, M., & Smith, B. (2001). *L earner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems.* Cambridge University Press.

Title

On the Relationship between the Age of Start of English Education in Iranian Schools and the Students' English Achievement

Authors

Gholam Reza Kiany (Ph.D)
Tarbiat Modarres University, Tehran, Iran

Kolsoum Salarvand (M.A)
Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran

Biodata

Gholam Reza Kiany, associate professor of TEFL at Tarbiat Modarres University, Tehran, Iran. His research interests are in the areas of testing and related issues, research methodologies, psycholinguistics and language learning, second language teaching and learning issues, program evaluation, ESP and EAP.

Kolsoum Salarvand, M.A in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, central Tehran branch. Her main research interests are in the areas of research methodologies, second language teaching and learning issues, and language and culture.

Abstract

This article investigates the effects of age of start of English education on students' English achievement. A total of 221 primary and junior high school students including 125 third-grade, fourth-grade, and fifth-grade primary school, and 96 third-grade junior high school students participated in this study. All the participants were boys, and their age range was between 9 to 14 years. An ex post facto design was used. Two researcher-made English Achievement Tests, one for the third-grade, fourth-grade and fifth-grade primary school and the other one for the third-grade junior high school students, were used. Besides, teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Test scores of the third-grade junior high school students were collected from their schools. As the results showed, third-grade junior high school participants who started learning English from the primary school outperformed those of others who started from the junior high school in terms of English Achievement Test. Implications include comparative studies of English education and allocating sufficient funding to incorporate English program into primary school.

1. Introduction

Gömleksiz (2001) believes that one important factor affecting the process of second language acquisition is age of the learner. According to Bialystok (1997), the question of optimal age for L2 (second language) learning is seen in theoretical and practical discussions. If optimal age means a moment in which to learn a second language, it seems young learners achieve higher levels of proficiency. Bialystok (1997) believes that optimal age is interpreted as evidence for critical period. According to Lenneberg (1967), the critical period hypothesis claims that for native-like competence, acquisition must occur within a time frame. This hypothesis originally explains first language data, but is applied to second language acquisition in the domain of phonology and syntax.

One of the concerns of the Ministry of Education in many countries has been English education. Iranian Ministry of education has not been an exception, and foreign-language education in Iran has always been accused of deficiencies and inefficiencies. English education in Iranian schools has always been one of the concerns of the stakeholders. Undesirable outcomes may have different reasons, but the concern of this article is age effects. This is one of the most challenging discussions among decision makers and educational experts. Most of the experts believe that the age of start of English education affects so much on the quality of learning. So, having an efficient system without any changes or research is impossible. To fulfill the objectives, we have formulated the following research question: Are there any significant differences among the English achievement of the Iranian students who started learning English at different levels of the primary and junior high schools?

2. Review of the Related Literature

This section tries to review the current literature regarding language policy, age and proficiency, foreign language education in Iran and its problems, and merits and demerits of the new curriculum for English language.

2.1 Language policy

According to Mahboobi Ardekani (1975), deciding on a language to be taught as a foreign language in a country is both academic choice and government policy. Language policy

consists of "decisions" which determine languages and their use in society, and it is the manipulative "mechanism for organizing, managing and manipulating language behaviors" in a society (Shohamy, 2006, p. 45). According to Liddicoat and Baldauf (2008), official figures decide on a language to be taught as a school curriculum in a process of language education policy. In other words, governments take into consideration a variety of different social, political, economical and cultural factors into account. Kiany, Mahdavy and Ghafar Samar (2013) believe that:

Policy sitting is an important part of designing a foreign language education program. Influenced by social, economic and political changes in the global world, different countries have decided to examine the effects of previous standards in various areas. One consequence of such decisions has been attempts to redefine foreign language teaching in the national curriculum of many countries. (p. 6)

According to Dahmardeh (2011), "The schools in Iran are under the administration of the Ministry of Education" (p. 69). In Iran, the Ministry of Education decides on the educational policies. All major educational policies are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. Learning English language as an international language has found a greater importance compared to previous years in Iran. Increasing the number of language learners, also the interest of parents for their children to learn English can be good evidence for the recent value of English language in Iran. Due to the limitations in state schools, non-profit primary schools have simply attracted an increasing number of students who want to learn English. Recently, educational officials and policy makers in Iran are trying to find ways to introduce English language program at an early age.

2.2 Age and proficiency

There are a lot of studies regarding age and proficiency. Johnson and Newport (1991) argue that in most domains of learning, skill increases over development. Recent research has indicated that the ability to acquire language is at the peak in life and then gradually declines until maturation is complete. This reversed effect of maturation is often referred to as a critical or sensitive period. For language acquisition as well, we will use the term critical period. Singleton (2007) argues that critical period is a limited duration within predictable termini and is related to specific behaviors. Researchers have different ideas regarding the termini for maturational constrains, and that there is no consensus either in terms of the particular acquisitional capacities that are affected by such constraints. Regarding identification of the underlying causes of maturational constraints on language acquisition,

researchers expressed different ideas (p. 49). Regarding the termini for maturational constraints, researchers offered different ages. For example, Krashen (1973) proposed the age of 5, Pinker (1994) age of 6, Lenneberg (1967) age of 12, or Johnson and Newport (1989) age of 15.

2.3 Foreign Language Education in Iran

In Iran, the growth of science and technology has produced a demand for international cooperation. Language education has been emphasized as an essential part of the educational system in Iran for several decades. Kirkgöz (2009) believes that English is the most widespread language of the world. It is the language which is widely used for international commerce, communication, diplomacy and tourism. The spread of English as a lingua franca and globalization has had its own effects on the way English is viewed and taught in different countries.

In spite of the fact that in some countries such as Japan, English has acted as a vehicle of internationalization (Fujita-Round and Maher, 2008), it is a vehicle to educational advancement (Farhady, Hezaveh and Hedayati, 2010). Khubchandani (2008) believes that Iran has not moved in this direction. Iran is more conservative regarding foreign language policy in order to keep national identity and unity among the school children. After the Islamic Revolution officials fear that English might be a threat to the Persian language and Islamic culture.

2.4 Problems with Language Education in Iran

In spite of the fact that English language is taught as a foreign language in Iran, but the quality of the teaching English has always been a matter of debate. One problem is teachers' working in the classroom. Teachers follow a pre-determined procedure which is not in line with the students' needs. They are limited by the prescribed curriculum since they are not allowed to choose textbooks which suit their students' needs (Namaghi, 2006). Teacher-centeredness of the classes is another problem. In communicative pedagogy the major role is assigned to the students, but the English language teaching program does not even refer to this issue (Dahmardeh, 2009). Dahmardeh mentions that another problem concerns the pressure of the university entrance exam on both teachers and students. This pressure limits teachers and forces them to prepare the students for the exam instead of practicing communicative aspects of language education. Damardeh also believes that the training of the teachers is not enough to equip them with enough ability. In such a system, the needs of the students are also overlooked. The centralized system of education determines the materials, teaching method and evaluation procedures to be applied across the country, without

considering the vast social, political, cultural and economical differences existing between different areas. Farhady, Hezaveh and Hedayati (2010) argue that the major problem is the movement from a strict and fixed procedure to a more constructivist one. This movement has made some fundamental changes and has raised many novel issues for educators regarding the process of language teaching and assessment. Farhady et al. (2010) believe that the implementation of the resulting changes requires a drastic reform in the whole educational context and leads to a number of dilemmas. Another problem that some researchers mentioned is lack of English curriculum for elementary schools. According to Yousofi and Hooshangi (2012), there has been no prescribed curriculum for English teaching in elementary schools in Iran. It shows that the issues of teaching and learning in elementary schools are ignored. In Iran, English is just learned in classrooms, and it is not a means for communication. The lack of exposure to English language makes learning difficult for students. The problems of educational system in Iran show the need for the early introduction of English program in schools.

2.5 New Curriculum

According to Dahmardeh (2009), in order to address some of the problems, the Ministry of Education required a number of applied linguistics to write a new communicative curriculum. Dahmardeh (2011) mentions that: "Apparently, in 2007, the first national Iranian curriculum for teaching foreign languages was being developed by a team working under the supervision of the Ministry of Education" (p. 71). Dahmardeh (2009) argues that:

> The Iranian foreign language curriculum was designed in 15 months. Members of committee that was established in order to design and prepare the document held more than 45 meetings and spent more than 400 hours work out of the meetings in order to prepare the document. (p. 119)

Although the proposed curriculum was indeed founded on communicative principles, the implementation of the curriculum was to a large extent affected by political issues (Dahmardeh, 2009). Dahmardeh observed that these political issues limited the teachers in their classes. The merit of the proposed curriculum was that it considered the principles of communicative language teaching. In spite of the fact that the new curriculum was not put into practice, it can lead scholars to conduct another new curriculum.

3. Method

The method section describes the participants, instrumentation, and procedures of the study.

3.1 Participants

Five groups of Iranian students (221 male participants) from 4 non-profit schools (one primary school and three junior high schools) participated in this study. None of these participants had followed extracurricular classes outside the school. The participants' age range was between 9-14 years. The classes were intact. The sample included:

Group 1: third-grade primary school students ($n=40$)

Group 2: fourth-grade primary school students ($n=44$)

Group 3: fifth-grade primary school students ($n=41$)

Group 4: third-grade junior high school students ($n=48$, the start of English education from the junior high school first grade)

Group 5: third-grade junior high school students ($n=48$, the start of English education from the primary school first grade)

3.2 Instrumentation

The instrumentation of this study consisted of two English Achievement Tests.

3.2.1 Researcher-Made English Achievement Tests

To identify the English achievement of the participants, a 60-item English Achievement Test for the primary school and an 80-item English Achievement Test for the junior high school students were made by the researchers. Achievement test for the Primary school students included items on listening, vocabulary, conversation, structure and for the junior high school students on listening, vocabulary, conversation, phonetics, dictation, structure, reading comprehension and writing. To examine the content validity of the tests, two EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers, primary and junior high school teachers, were asked to express their opinions about the tests. They agreed that the tests truly represent students' English achievement. Then, in order to assess the suitability of the questions selected, the researcher-made English Achievement Tests for the primary and junior high school students were refined through pilot study with a group of 100 third-grade, fourth-grade, and fifth-grade primary school, and third-grade junior high school students. The questions were included in the forms of multiple-choice, gap-filling, comprehension, matching, spelling, reordering words and writing skill tests. One point was given for each correct answer.

3.3 The Design of the Study

This study was descriptive comparative. An ex post facto design for five intact groups was preferred due to lack of any kind of treatment. The independent variable of this study was the age of start of English education, and the dependent variable was English achievement.

3.4 Procedure

In Iran, schools officially begin English education from the first-grade junior high schools, and just in some non-profit schools it begins from the first-grade primary schools and is extracurricular. In this article, the researchers wanted to compare the English achievement of the primary and junior high school students who have studied English language at least two years at schools only. Therefore, the researchers were supposed to do the research in non-profit schools. The third-grade, fourth-grade and fifth-grade primary school students had the same EFL teacher, and the junior high school students did too. In addition, all the students followed the same syllabus.

The researchers administered the researcher-made English Achievement Tests to the primary and junior high school participants. The primary school students were asked to use a check mark (√) or underline the correct answers. It is because they were not familiar with the English alphabet. The researchers developed the tests on the basis of the books taught at schools. For the listening test, an accompanying tape was played so that participants could hear and follow along. The researchers collected the data during the English language classes which were held once a week (60 minutes).

During this study (fall semester), midterm tests were run by schools. By permission of the schools principals, all of the scores of these tests were collected by the researchers. Besides, other scores including all midterm scores and the scores of the teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests of the previous educational years (first and second grades) were collected, too. As it was mentioned, at the primary school English program is extracurricular. The exams are oral, and the scores are not kept at schools. So, on the basis of the evaluation of the primary school EFL teacher, students' scores were given to the researchers.

3.5 Data Analysis

Regarding researcher-made, teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including Mean and Standard Deviation, and inferential statistics including one-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) and Tukey' HSD test. English Achievement Tests of the primary school and junior high school participants were

determined based on the range of scores researchers obtained from the data. In order to analyze teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Test scores of the third-grade junior high school students, participants' mean scores were calculated. To search for those subgroups whose mean differences were statistically different, Tukey' HSD test was run.

4. Results and Discussion

This section describes the statistical procedures used in this study in order to answer the research question.

4.1 Researcher-Made English Achievement Tests Reliability

The reliability of the researcher-made English Achievement Tests was assessed by means of Cronbach's Alpha reliability. The results showed that Cronbach's Alpha for English Achievement Test of the primary school was .72 and for that of the junior high school was .70.

4.2 The Results for the Research Question

Research Question: Are there any significant differences among the English achievement of the Iranian students who started learning English at different levels of the primary and junior high school?

In order to answer this research question, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed the results of which are reported below. Table 4.3 presents descriptive statistics for the English Achievement Tests. Table 4.1 shows descriptive statistics for the researcher-made English Achievement Tests.   **Table 4.1**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
primary3rd	40	59.16	15.94	2.52	54.06	64.26	26.67	91.67
primary4th	44	56.40	13.58	2.04	52.27	60.53	28.33	83.33
primary5th	41	59.83	18.13	2.83	54.11	65.56	21.67	95.00
junior3rd	45	69.72	16.15	2.40	64.86	74.57	31.25	96.25
Ejunior3rd	47	80.90	13.19	1.92	77.02	84.77	41.25	100.00
Total	217	65.62	17.87	1.21	63.23	68.02	21.67	100.00

Note. Primary3rd = third-grade primary school students; Primary4th = fourth-grade primary school students; Primary5th = fifth-grade primary school students; Junior3rd = third-grade junior high school students who started learning English from the junior high school; Ejunior3rd = third-grade junior high school students who started learning English from the primary school.

Descriptive Statistics for the Participants' Researcher-Made English Achievement Tests

Because the primary and junior high school students' performances on the researcher-made English Achievement Tests were aimed for this study, the inferential statistic of the present study was required to be one-way ANOVA. As Table 4.2 shows, there were significant differences at the $p<.05$ level among the five groups: $F(4, 212)=19.42$, $p=.000$.

Table 4.2 *The Results of One-Way ANOVA for the Participants' Researcher-Made English Achievement Tests*

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	18512.78	4	4628.19	19.42	.000
Within Groups	50513.98	212	238.27		
Total	69026.77	216			

$p<.05$

Post-hoc Tukey's HSD test indicated that the mean scores of Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 were significantly different from those of Groups 4 and 5 regarding researcher-made English achievement Tests. There were no significant differences among the mean scores of Groups 1, 2 and 3. In addition, there were significant differences among the mean scores of Group 4 and 5 and other groups. The difference between the mean scores of Groups 4 and 5 was significant (See Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 *The Results of the Tukey's HSD test for the Participants' Researcher-Made English Achievement Tests*

Group		Subset for alpha = 0.05		
	N	1	2	3
primary4th	44	56.40		
primary3rd	40	59.16		
Primary5th	41	59.83		
junior3rd	45		69.72	
Ejunior3rd	47			80.90
Sig.		.839	1.000	1.000

Note. Primary3rd = third-grade primary school students; Primary4th = fourth-grade primary school students; Primary5th = fifth-grade primary school students; Junior3rd = third-grade junior high school students who started learning English from the junior high school; Ejunior3rd = third- grade junior high school students who started learning English from the primary school.

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Another aim of this study was to determine the primary and junior high school students' performances on teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests. Table 4.4 shows descriptive statistics for the teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests.

Table 4.4 *Descriptive Statistics for the Participants' Teacher-Made and Centralized English Achievement Tests*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
primary3rd	40	84.62	23.16	3.66	77.21	92.03	.00	100.00
primary4th	44	82.54	23.59	3.55	75.37	89.71	.00	100.00
primary5th	41	70.24	29.76	4.64	60.84	79.64	.00	100.00
junior3rd	48	77.60	14.40	2.07	73.42	81.78	55.00	100.00
Ejunior3rd	48	87.18	14.06	2.02	83.10	91.27	45.00	100.00
Total	221	80.57	22.06	1.48	77.65	83.49	.00	100.00

Note. Primary3rd = third-grade primary school students; Primary4th = fourth-grade primary school students; Primary5th = fifth-grade primary school students; Junior3rd = third-grade junior high school students who started learning English from the junior high school; Ejunior3rd = third-grade junior high school students who started learning English from the primary school.

In order to determine the inferential statistics, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. There were significant differences at the $p<.05$ level among the five groups: $F(4, 216)=4.19$, $p=.003$. Table 4.5 summarizes the results.

Table 4.5 *The Results of One-Way ANOVA for the Participants' Teacher-Made and Centralized English Achievement Tests*

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7725.38	4	1931.3	4.19	.003
Within Groups	99350.63	216	459.95		
Total	107076.01	220			

$p<.05$

Table 4.6 reports the post-hoc Tukey' HSD test for the teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests. The significant differences at the .05 level were among the groups. As it can be seen, the mean score of Group 1 was significantly different from that of Group 3. Also, the mean score of Group 3 was significantly different from that of Group 5. The mean scores of Groups 4 and 2 were not significantly different from those of other groups.

Table 4.6 *The Results of the Tukey's HSD test for the Participants' Teacher-Made and Centralized English Achievement Tests*

Group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Primary5th	41	70.24	
junior3rd	48	77.60	77.60
Primary4th	44	82.54	82.54
Primary3rd	40		84.62
Ejunior3rd	48		87.18
Sig.		.059	.226

Note. Primary3rd = third-grade primary school students; Primary4th = fourth-grade primary school students; Primary5th = fifth-grade primary school students; Junior3rd = third-grade junior high school students who started learning English from the junior high school; Ejunior3rd = third- grade junior high school students who started learning English from the primary school.

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Regarding second language acquisition, many studies have shown that earlier is better (Flege and Liu, 2001). A growing number of countries including China, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan have begun introducing English at the primary school level. In line with this trend and considering the unavoidable importance of English language, educational policy-makers in Iran have discussions on this issue.

It is believed that age plays a key role in second language learning. It is thought that young language learners are more successful, and indeed researchers have found a relationship between age of acquisition and ultimate attainment. Critical period hypothesis supports this. Penfield and Roberts (1959) believed that the optimum period for language acquisition falls within the first ten years of life when the brain retains its plasticity. During this period, lateralization of the language function to the left side of the brain occurs.

With regard to the researcher-made English Achievement Tests, the findings of a one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey's HSD test showed that the primary school students did not improve their English achievement significantly, but the junior high school students (both groups) improved it. The first important finding was that the junior high school participants who started learning English earlier (Group 5) performed much better than the other participants who started from the junior high school (Group 4).

With regard to the teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests, the results of a one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey's HSD test showed that there was not any significant difference between the fourth-grade primary school participants and participants of other groups. The other major finding was that the third-grade primary school (Group 1)

and the third-grade junior high school participants who started English education earlier (Group 5) outperformed the fifth-grade primary school participants (Group 3).

The results of the teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests confirm Penfield and Roberts (1959) that the optimum period for language acquisition falls within the first ten years of life when the brain retains its plasticity. Because of the crowdness of the curriculum in later school years, early immersion is preferred (Singleton, 1992). On the benefits of an earlier start Gürsoy (2011) believes that when the age of L2 learning is reduced, "learners will be exposed to the foreign language longer" (p. 761).

5. Conclusion

This article aimed to discover the effects of age of start of English education on students' English achievement. As it was mentioned, two researcher-made English Achievement Tests, one for the third-grade, fourth-grade and fifth-grade primary school and the other one for the third-grade junior high school students, were used. Besides, teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Test scores of the third-grade junior high school students were collected from their schools. Finally, the scores of the participants were compared in terms of English achievement. The main findings of the study will be discussed in the following section.

The major findings of the present study are as follows: (1) Regarding the researcher-made English Achievement Tests, the findings of a one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey's HSD test showed that the junior high school participants who started learning English from primary school (Group 5) performed much better than the other participants who started from the junior high school (Group 4). (2) Regarding the teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests, the results of a one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey's HSD test showed that the third-grade primary school (Group 1) outperformed the fifth-grade primary school participants (Group 3). Furthermore, there was not any significant difference between the fourth-grade primary school participants and participants of other groups.

In sum, in line with Penfield and Roberts (1959) and better performance on teacher-made and centralized English Achievement Tests for the third-grade primary school participants, the optimal age of start of English education might be age nine.

5.1 Applications and implications

To the best knowledge of the researcher, the number of studies regarding the effects of an earlier start on English achievement in Iranian primary schools is a few. Educational policy

makers in Iran aim at restructuring English language teaching in the country. To this end, comparative studies of language education might provide the policy makers and stakeholders with a better picture of the practices which might be applied in the country. The findings of this study can be used in making policies for the optimal age of start of English education and introducing English program from the primary school. Furthermore, this research can help broaden the knowledge base of school policy makers as well as educational administrators and assist them with making informed decisions regarding foreign language programs in the elementary school systems. Educational policy makers should strongly consider allocating sufficient funding to incorporate English language program into the elementary school.

The first recommendation for further research considers the effect of an earlier start in English education on students' first language. A comparative study of educational system of Iran with that of other countries is necessary regarding English achievement.

Further research should gather evidence from different populations such as other groups of participants including pre-primary school and high school students in order to obtain a more complete picture about the age effects.

References

Bialystok, E. (1997). The structure of age: In search of barriers to second language acquisition. *Second Language Research, 13*(2), 116-137.

Dahmardeh, M. (2009). *English language teaching in Iran and communicative language teaching* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick, Great Britain). Retrieved from http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap/2748

Dahmardeh, M. (2011). Authentic or not? A case study on the role of authenticity in English language teaching in Iran. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, *7*, 67-87.

Farhady, H., Hezaveh, F. S., Hedayati, H. (2010). Reflections on foreign language education in Iran. *TESL-EJ*, *13*, 1-18. Retrieved September 21, 2011, from http://tesl-ej.org/pdf/ej52/a1.pdf.

Flege, J. E., & Liu, S. (2001). The effect of experience on adults' acquisition of a second language. *SSLA*, *23*, 527-552.

Fujita-Round, S., & Maher, J. C. (2008). Language education policy in Japan. In *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (2nd ed., Vol.1, pp. 383–392). New York: Springer Science + Business Media LLC.

Gömleksiz, M. N. (2001). The effects of age and motivation factors on second language acquisition. *Journal of Social Science, 11*(2), 217-224.

Gürsoy, E. (2011). The critical period hypothesis revisited: The implications for current foreign language teaching to young learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *2*(4), 757-762. doi:10.4304/jltr.2.4.757-762

Johnson, J. S., & Newport, E. L. (1989). Critical period effects in second language learning: The influence of maturational state on the acquisition of English as a second language. *Cognitive Psychology*, *21*, 60-99.

Johnson, J. S., & Newport, E. L. (1991). Critical period effects on universal properties of language: The status of subjacency in the acquisition of a second language. *Cognition*, *39*, 215-258.

Khubchandani, L. (2008). Language policy and education in the Indian subcontinent. In *Encyclopedia of language and education, 2nd Edition*, (Vol. 1, pp. 393-404). New York: Springer Science + Business Media LLC.

Kiany, G. R., Mahdavy, B., & Ghafar Samar, R. (2013). Motivational changes of learners in traditional context of English education: A case study of high school students in Iran. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, *2*(1), 3-16. doi:10.5861/ijrsll.2012.92

Kirkgöz, Y. (2009). Globalization and English language policy in Turkey. *Educational Policy, 23*(5), 663-684.<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0895904808316319>

Krashen, S. D. (1973). Lateralization, language learning, and the critical period: Some new evidence. *Language Learning*, *23*, 63-74.

Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). *Biological foundations of language*. New York: Wiley.

Liddicoat, A. J., & Baldauf, R. (Eds.). (2008). *Language planning in local contexts*. Frankfurt Lodge, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Mahboobi Ardekani, H. (1975). *A historical overview of the Iranian civil institutions (translated)*, Tehran: The Society of Tehran University Students.

Namaghi, S. A. (2006). Factors steering language teachers' work in public high schools in Iran. *Reading Matrix*, *6*(2), 90-104.

Penfield, W., & Roberts, L. (1959). *Speech and brain mechanisms*. New York: Atheneum Press.

Pinker, S. (1994). *The language instinct: How the mind creates language*. New York: Morrow.

Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language policy hidden agendas and new approaches*. London: Routledge.

Singleton, D. (1992). Second language instruction: The when and how. *Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée*, *9*, 46-54.

Singleton, D. (2007). The critical period hypothesis: Some problems. *Interlingüística*, *17*, 48-56.

Yousofi, N., & Hooshangi, R. (2012). Change the curriculum: Start teaching English at elementary schools. *proceedings of the 10th international TELLSI conference*, 2012 (222-231), Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran.

Title

Dynamic Assessment of Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Ability

Authors

Morteza Amirsheibani (Ph.D candidate)
Eastern Mediterranean University, Cyprus

Mohamad Sadegh Tamri (M.A)
Payam e Noor University, Abdanan Branch, Iran

Sajad Yaseri Moghadam (M.A)
Payam e Noor University, Abdanan Branch, Iran

Biodata

Morteza Amirsheibani, is a Ph.D. Candidate of ELT at Eastern Mediterranean University, Cyprus. His areas of interest are teaching methodology, language testing and assessment, and CALL.

Mohammad Sadegh Tamri, M.A. in TEFL from AllameTabatabaii University. He is a researcher in educational methodology as well as a lecturer of English language at Islamic Azad University and Payame Noor University. His areas of interest include: contrastive rhetoric, psycholinguistics and language testing and assessment. He has published several articles in international journals and conferences.

Sajad Yaseri Moghadam, M.A. in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, Najafabad Branch. He is a researcher in language teaching and learning as well as a lecturer of English language at Islamic Azad University, Payame Noor University. His areas of interest include: psycholinguistics, language learning and teaching methodologyand language testing.

Abstract

Dynamic Assessment (DA) has been derived from the concept of development in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The central feature of DA is that it does not separate instruction from assessment; on the contrary, it is in favor of a teacher-learner unity that works jointly towards learners' future progress through their ZPD. This study introduces DA and suggests a simple framework for English writing instruction based on the principles of DA. This study determines the effect of DA on Iranian EFL learners' writing ability. To this end, after conducting the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), 32 intermediate EFL learners were selected. They were randomly assigned to one of the two groups, one treatment and one control. The treatment group received the intervention through

the *graduated prompt*, one of the techniques of DA, during writing and the control group was assessed in a static way. The results showed that the treatment group significantly outperformed the control group on the writing test. The beneficial effect of DA on EFL writing ability can have useful implications for EFL learners, teachers and designers.

Keywords: Assessment, Dynamic assessment, Graduated Prompt, Writing Process, Zone of Proximal Development

1. Introduction

Written language has usually been measured through static tests that concentrate on the products of writing. The focus is placed on the mechanics of writing which includes handwriting, spelling, vocabulary and punctuation (Knodel, 1997). This emphasis on mechanical skills leads teachers to focus on the product rather than the process of writing.

Much research has supported writing instruction that concentrates on the writing process within a social context (Vygotsky, 1962). Several researchers have developed interactive writing programs (Englert, 1992; Graham & Harris, 1989). This interactive method between teacher and learner has been developed through the use of scaffolding (Knodel, 1997). Scaffolding is a kind of support that is provided by the teacher to let learners shift from their current unassisted level of functioning to a higher level of cognitive functioning (Brown & Ferrara, 1985).

During the last decades, research in writing has experienced a shift from the writing product to the writing process (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986). According to Hayes and Flower (1980), the writing process has some integrated components which include planning, sentence generation, reviewing and revising.

Dynamic Assessment (DA), which includes an instructional component, evaluates the process of learning (Haywood, Brown &Wingenfeld, 1990). In other words, it is based on the notion of assessment as a process rather than a product. DA is a development-oriented process which reveals a learner's current abilities in order to help them overcome any performance problems and realize their potential (Shrestha& Coffin, 2012). According to Ableeva (2010), DA is grounded in the Vygotskian concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and prescribes mediated teacher-learner dialog during the assessment procedure. DA is a relatively new approach to L2 assessment that has been introduced to L2 research and educational community by Lantolf and Poehner (2004) and Poehner and Lantolf

(2005). Since 2004, there has been growing support for the use of DA in language pedagogy (Ableeva, 2007, 2008; Anton, 2009; Lantolfet al., 2004; Poehner, 2005, 2008; Poehneret al., 2005). The main characteristic of DA is that it does not separate instruction from assessment, but instead, is in favor of a teacher-learner unity that works jointly towards L2 learners' future improvement through their ZPD (Xiaoxiao& Yan, 2010, cited in Birjandi&NajafiSarem, 2012). The ZPD is a basic concept of sociocultural theory that was supported by Vygotsky in the last two years of his life (Ableeva, 2010). During his reform activities among Soviet educators in the early 1930s, Vygotsky developed the concept of the ZPD which appeared in the context of a project concerned with the assessment of school children (Kinginger, 2002).

According to Vygotsky (1978), the development of the child involves the appropriation of humans' cultural experience in collaboration with adults and includes two levels, i.e. the actual level and the potential level of development. The actual level presumes the child's independent problem-solving and corresponds to the zone of actual development. The potential level of development presupposes adult-child collaboration during problem-solving activities. These learning activities are intended to reveal the child's abilities that are in the process of maturation. The potential level is associated with the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, what the child can do now only under the guidance of more skilled others and tomorrow without them consists of the ZPD which appears when the child is engaged in a learning activity (Leontiev, 2001). Like the ZPD, mediation is integral to DA. While the ZPD is about the individual's potential development, mediation provides an opportunity for such development (Shrestha et al., 2012). Additionally, Vygotsky (1978) suggested the evaluation of ZPD through engaging L2 learners in collaboration during the assessment procedure using leading questions, prompts or hints offered gradually and withhold when appropriate.

DA which is based on Vygotsky's ZPD has different kinds and models. One model of DA is the graduated prompt. The graduated prompt provides intervention in the form of predetermined prompts that are sequenced from general to more specific (Brown &Campione, 1984). The graduated prompt approach utilizes the ZPD which provides an indication of what the child is capable of doing with assistance (Knodel, 1997). The graduated prompt is based on fixed standardized hints and leading questions which are used during the test administration (Poehner, 2008). In this study the effect of graduated prompt on L2 learners' writing ability was analyzed.

Second language researchers and educators, however, have only recently begun to examine the pedagogical application of DA (e.g. Lantolfet al., 2004; Poehner, 2005; Anton,

2009). In the following paragraphs a brief history of investigations done regarding DA has been mentioned.

Shresthaet al. (2012) explored the value of tutor mediation in the context of academic writing development among undergraduate business studies learners in open and distance learning, following DA. The intervention was mediated by computers mainly through emails. The analysis of such interaction suggested that DA could help to identify and respond to the areas that learners needed the most support in. Finally, they argued that DA could contribute to undergraduate learners' academic writing development by responding to their individual needs.

The results of Knodel's study (1997) suggested that the Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) was an effective method of assessment for poor writers with and without a learning disability in recognizing potential to learn.

Verspoor, Schmid and Xu (2012) explored the contribution that a dynamic usage based (DUB) perspective can bring to the establishment of objective measures to assess L2 learners' written texts and at the same time to gain insight into the dynamic process of language development. Their study showed that even short writing samples could be useful in assessing general proficiency at the lower levels of L2 proficiency and that a cross-sectional study of samples at different proficiency levels could give worthwhile insights into dynamic L2 developmental patterns.

Some research has been done focusing on DA and other language skills. Balazic (1997) investigated the effectiveness of DA compared to static assessment of reading abilities. The findings demonstrated that DA of reading abilities would compliment static assessment by providing more information about the learner's reading profile.

Also, Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) did research on immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment on EFL reading ability. The results of their study indicated a significant difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment of reading ability in favor of dynamic assessment.

Ajideh and Nourdad (2013) aimed at presenting the advantages of applying dynamic assessment for identifying the individual EFL learner's reading comprehension ability. The qualitative analysis of the results highlighted the advantages of applying dynamic assessment over non-dynamic assessment in deeper and richer description of actual and potential abilities by identifying sources of problem in performance of each individual and the exact stage of the problem because individuals who are unable to answer an item correctly may not necessarily have the same or even similar problems. It also presented the role of dynamic

assessment in identifying the ability of each individual to develop their abilities as a result of mediation and also their ability for independent performance in future.

Shabani (2012) explored the feasibility of computerized dynamic assessment (CDA) in the context of reading comprehension and, more precisely, the effects of electronically delivering textual and visual scaffolding on L2 readers' comprehension processes. The results demonstrated that CDA could discriminate among low-achieving learners with reference to their responsiveness to electronic mediation and diagnose quite vividly their underlying abilities in terms of both independent (ZAD) and assisted (ZPD) cognitive functioning.

Anton (2009) also examined the usefulness of DA with university learners. She implemented DA with third year Spanish majors on the speaking and writing portions of a diagnostic test. She concluded that DA led to a deeper understanding of learners' ability.

In another attempt, Ableeva (2010) investigated DA of listening comprehension in second language learning. The researcher extended traditional understanding of listening assessment in foreign language contexts and applied DA to the development of L2 learners' listening ability. The results of this study indicated that, through interactions in the ZPD, DA allowed to establish not only the actual level of L2 learners' listening ability but also to assess the potential level of their listening development, while at the same time promoting this development.

Davin (2011) explored the implementation of group DA in a combined fourth and fifth grade elementary Spanish classroom as learners studied interrogative use and formation. Findings suggested that while some learners moved from assisted to unassisted performance during large group DA, other learners required peer mediation provided during small group work to develop interrogative use and formation. Finally, it was concluded that DA could be integrated into language curriculum of early language learning programs without the sacrifice of effective language pedagogy and small group work is an essential complement to large group DA.

As it was mentioned, there were few studies related to DA of writing ability and relatively no study regarding Brown's graduated prompt. So investigating the impact of Brown's graduated prompt of DA on Iranian L2 learners' writing ability compared with static assessment is worth considering.

The major goal of this study has been to investigate the effect of Brown's graduated prompting procedure of DA on L2 learners' writing ability compared with static assessment and following questions have been answered:

RQ$_1$: Does graduated prompting procedure of DA improve L2 learners' writing ability as compared with static assessment?

RQ$_2$: Does the number of prompts affect L2 learners' writing score?

2. Method

2.1 Participants

This study was conducted with 32 Iranian EFL learners (male and female) who were selected out of a population pool of 50 EFL learners in one of the language centers in Tabas (one of the cities in Iran). All participants were Persian native speakers, ranging in age from 15 to 33.First, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to determine the learners' proficiency level as well as their homogeneity. For this study, intermediate EFL learners were chosen. Two groups were selected, one as the treatment and the other as the control group. Each group included 16 participants; the treatment group received DA while writing their paragraph.

2.2 Instruments

To gather the data needed for the study, the researcher applied different data gathering instruments at various stages of the study including an OPT, analytic scale for rating composition tasks, a questionnaire and levels of graduated prompt. The Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was used to select 32 intermediate learners.Thirty-two learners were assessed by writing a paragraph. Three levels of prompts were employed in treatment group. Different areas and components of written language were assessed by Brown and Bailey analytic scale (1984).

2.3 Procedure

Before conducting the main study, a pilot study was conducted on a group of 15 learners who had the same proficiency level as the main participants of the present study. The purpose of piloting was to predict the prompts needed in main study and to determine the time needed for writing a paragraph and to check the reliability of the questionnaire. The time required to write a paragraph was 60 minutes. To determine if the questionnaire was reliable enough, the Cronbach's alpha was used. As it was 0.914, it was concluded that the questionnaire had an acceptable reliability. The present study was conducted with 32 L2 learners in Padideh language institute in Tabas. First, the OPT was employed to determine the L2 learners' proficiency level. Thirty-two learners whose score fell between one standard deviation below and one standard deviation above the mean were selected. After the researcher was assured

that the participants were homogenous, they were randomly assigned to one of the two groups, one treatment and one control group. Both groups wrote a paragraph on a certain topic. They described their last vacation. Before the pilot study, some experienced EFL teachers were consulted about the topic. They all believed that "Describing last vacation" is a suitable writing topic for intermediate EFL learners. During the writing session, the treatment group received the intervention that is *graduated prompt*, and the control group was assessed in static way, i.e. without feedback or intervention of any kind during writing. Graduated prompt has three levels:

1. General prompt: The teacher asks L2 learners to take another look at their writing to edit it. This prompt is very general (e.g., take another look).

2. Suggested area of focus: Specific prompts are given to learners (e.g., take a look at your spelling).

3. Specific area of focus/directive with feedback: This kind of prompt is very specific. It is done through direct feedback by the teacher (e.g., what do you need at the beginning of a sentence?).

Because intervention would take a long time, there were 3 teachers assessing the learners. Every 5 learners had one assessor. Teachers were thoroughly informed how to assess the learners. They used analytic scale designed by Brown et al., (1984) to score the learners' writing. The scores of the two groups were obtained and compared. A second rater scored the paragraphs on the same criteria which produced an inter-rater reliability of 0.96. In addition, the total number of prompts for each level needed were totaled. This was done to see which level was used more than the other.

3. Results

The collected data should be sufficiently reliable for the employed statistical analysis. To this end, the proficiency level of L2 learners was assessed through the OPT. After administrating the OPT, descriptive statistics were calculated (Table 1).

Table 1 *Descriptive statistics of the OPT*

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Median
50	12	67	44.42	11.53	46.50

In order to homogenize the groups, participants' score on OPT was standardized to *z*-score and then participants whose score was between ±1 *z*-score were selected. All participants were matched individually based on sex, age, and OPT scores. Then they were randomly

placed in the treatment or control group. To be sure that two groups were matched, *t*-test and Chi-squaredtest were calculated (Table 2).

Table 2 *The results of OPT*

Variable	Treatment group Percent/Mean±SD	Control group Percent/Mean±SD	p value
age	19.81±4.68	20.69±5.84	0.64
sex			
male	8 (50%)	8 (50%)	0.63
female	8 (50%)	8 (50%)	
score in OPT	46.75±6.21	46.75±4.67	0.99

As Table 2 shows, there was statistically no significant difference between treatment and control group based on gender, age, and OPT score (p>0.05).

To determine the participants' writing score in both groups, two raters were asked to score paragraphs written by the participants. The participants' writing score was the average score of the two raters. To become sure about the reliability of the agreement between raters inter-rater reliability was calculated (Table 3).

Table 3 *Inter-rater reliability*

Rater	N	Mean±SD	Correlation	p value
rater 1	16	15.16±2.06	0.96	0.001
rater 2	16	14.46±2.15		

This table shows that the average of the raters' score was similar (R=0.96).

To determine the effect of DA, the scores of the two groups were compared using *t*-test (Table 4).

Table 4 *Final scores in both treatment and control group*

Group	N	Mean±SD	p value
treatment	16	16.66±.81	0.001
control	16	12.97±1.07	

t=10.97   df=30   Sig=<0.001

This table demonstrates that the average of scores in the treatment group was 3.5 points more than the control group. Also, the *t*-test shows the significant difference between treatment and control group (p<0.001).

To determine the change level of scores in both treatment and control groups, the scores were standardized to *z*-score using Mean and SD. Participants whose score fell below -1*z*-score were labeled as Poor, between -1to+1*z*-score as Average and upper than 1*z*-score as Good (Table 5).

Table 5 *The effect of DA on groups' writing skill*

Group	Poor lower than 12.73	Average 12.73 – 16.90	Good upper than 16.90	p value
treatment	0 (0%)	9 (56.2%)	7 (43.8%)	0.001
control	7 (43.8%)	9 (56.2%)	0 (0%)	

X^2=14   df=2   Sig=<0.001

As it is obvious in Table 4.5, the percentage of Poor L2 learners in treatment group was 0%, the percentage of Good L2 learners in treatment group was 43% and in control group was 0%. Findings show that DA has affected the scores. Chi-squared test shows the significant difference between two groups (p<0.001).

In this study, prompts were given in 3 levels: 1. General prompt 2. Suggested area of focus 3.Specific area of focus (Table 6)

Table 6 *Prompts frequency and percentage*

Prompt	Frequency	Percentage
general prompt	16	17.58%
suggested area of focus	70	76.92%
specific area of focus	5	5.49%

Findings show that most of the prompts in this study were limited to level 2 (suggested area of focus) and least of the prompts were on level 3 (specific area of focus). All participants were given prompt level 1 (general prompt) once; their difference was related to level 2 and 3. Linear regression was used to predict the effect of number of prompts on participants' score (Figure 1).
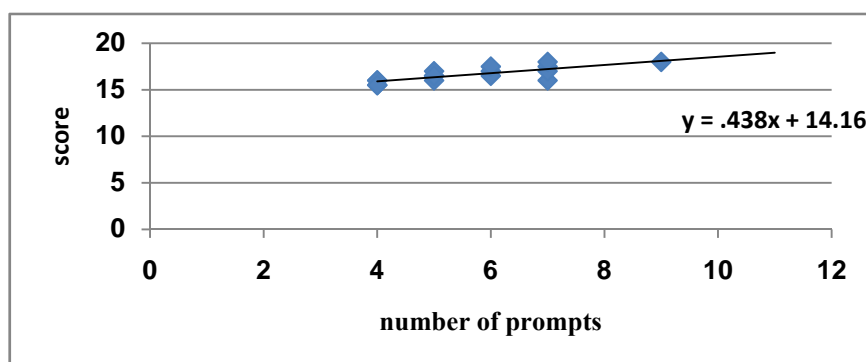
Figure 1: *The effect of number of prompts on scores*

This figure shows that as the number of prompts increased, the participant's score increased, too. As it is seen, each prompt enhances approximately 0.43 score of each participant's score. Regression equation in this study is y=0.438x+14.16. y is the estimation of participant's score and x shows the number of prompts.

4. Conclusion

DA is a new approach of assessment and because it assesses the process, it leads teachers to diagnose the exact problem of L2 learners. This study focused on the effectiveness of DA on L2 writing ability. As the findings showed, assessing L2 learners' writing skill through DA has a positive effect on the learners' writing performance. The graduated prompt approach was found to be an effective method of assessing L2 learners' written language. L2 learners who received more prompts had a better performance. The findings were in line with the findings of some similar previous studies such as Albbeva (2008), Ajideh and Nourdad (2012), Birjandi, et al. (2011), Davin (2011), Knodel (1997), Kozulin and Grab (2002), Naeni and Duvall (2012), and Poehner (2008). All reported results similar to the findings of the present study emphasizing that dynamic assessment improved the abilities of participants in writing and other skills under investigation. In this study, the treatment group outperformed the control group. L2 learners significantly benefited from treatment using the graduated prompt. Findings provide support for the main hypothesis that L2 learners would perform at a higher level of writing taking advantage of treatment with the graduated prompt approach. DA has been shown to be an effective means of determining the performance of L2 learners. In fact, dynamic assessment with its monistic view toward teaching and testing not only assesses the learners' abilities but also provides them with opportunities for learning and development. This in turn has some positive results both for teachers and learners. First, it helps students to take the advantage of mediation provided by the assessor and become autonomous in doing similar tasks later on. Secondly, it leads into positive washback effect because it makes testing and teaching aims and procedures in line with each other and interwoven. Both of the issues of learner autonomy and washback effect are currently of great importance and under investigation in EFL. Thirdly, applying dynamic assessment gives the chance of being mediated for learners with results in reduced stress. In some learning contexts, such as Iran where test scores are very determining for students stress in exam sessions is considered as a major test score pollution source. Consequently, test scores unaffected by stress factor can be more accurate for educational decisions. So it can be concluded that dynamic assessment results in presenting a true picture of the abilities which is the first and the most important aim of assessment. And finally dynamic assessment of learners' abilities can avoid misinterpretations and misrepresentations of the abilities because dynamic assessment unlike traditional static assessments presents learning potential of the learners because it sheds light on both current status of the learners and their hidden potential in the zone of proximal development after removing hindering factors. All in all it can be concluded form the finding of this study that there is great difference between assessing

writing ability of EFL learners dynamically and non-dynamically. Second question focused on the effect of number of prompts on L2 learners' writing score. The results showed that as the number of prompts increased, the participant's score increased, too.

In conclusion, treatment with the graduated prompt is an effective method of assessing and increasing L2 learners' writing performance and it has important implications for teacher preparation and professional development. As Ball and Forzani (2009) argue, teaching is *unnatural*. Teachers must be taught the importance of providing mediation to the learners attuned to the ZPD of those learners. By using this approach, the teacher is able to gain information on the amount of assistance required to reach a criterion level of performance. More importantly, teachers must be able to assess the learners' ability to profit from their level and type of assistance. In the current study, it was important to initially provide the least amount or lowest level of intervention and gradually increase the amount of assistance to allow the learners the opportunity to learn independently.

Although this study was implemented in only one class and the findings cannot be generalized to the larger population, it does suggest the usefulness of DA implementation in early language learning programs. This technique provides the teacher with a clearer idea of his or her learners' learning while also promoting development for learners within the class. The use of assessment practices involving interaction with learners in an individualized manner, like DA, should be included as an assessment component in assessing EFL writing contexts.

The concept of DA should replace that of static assessmentin order to obtain a better picture of what learners can actually do provided that information is obtained from multiple sources and using a variety of methods. The use of standardized assessment would entail assessing learners on a number of occasions using different assessment tools which could include both standard tests as well as DA. DA can help teachers assess learners' learning using flexible procedures that are tailored to individual learners' needs and thus it be can be applied in different second language learning contexts. Institutions should help teachers implement what teachers believe to be good teaching practices by providing them with more authority in the classroom.

References

Ableeva, R. (2007). Assessing listening for development.In R. Alanen and S. Poyhonen (Eds.), *Language in action.Vygotsky and Leontievian legacy today*, 352-379.Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Ableeva, R. (2008). The effects of dynamic assessment on L2 listening comprehension.In J. P. Lantolf and M. Poehner (Eds.), *socio-cultural theory and the teaching of second language*, 57-86. London: Equinox Press.

Ableeva, R. (2010). Dynamic assessment of listening comprehension in second languagelearning (Doctoral dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 2010). 3436042.

Ajideh, P., &Nourdad, N. (2012).The immediate and delayed Effect of dynamic assessment onEFL reading ability.English Language Teaching Journal, 12(5), 141-151.

Ajideh, P., &Nourdad, N. (2013).Dynamic assessment revealing individual differences in EFLreading comprehension ability. International J. Soc. Sci. &Education, 3(2), 340-350.

Anton, M. (2009).Dynamic assessment of advanced second language learners. Foreign Language Annals 42(3), 576-598.

Ball, D. L., & Forzani, F. M. (2009). The work of teaching and the challenge for teachereducation.*Journal of Teacher Education, 60*(5), 497-511.

Balazic, J. (1997). Dynamic assessment of reading abilities (Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, 1997). MQ28697.

Birjandi, P., &NajafiSarem, S. (2012). Dynamic assessment (DA): An evolution of the currenttrends in language testing and assessment. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(4), 747-753.

Brown, A., &Campione, J. (1984). Three faces of transfer: Implications for early competence,individual differences, and instruction. In M. E. Lamb, A. Brown & B. Rogoff (Eds.), *Advances in developmental psychology, 3*, 143-192.

Brown, A. L., & Ferrara, R. A. (1985).Diagnosing zone of proximal development. In J. Wretsch (Ed.), Culture, communication and cognition: A Vygotskian perspective, 35-52. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Davin, K. J. (2011). Group dynamic assessment in an early foreign language learning program:Tracking movement through the zone of proximal development (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2011). 3471889.

Englert, C. S. (1992). Writing instruction from a sociocultural perspective: The holistic, dialogic,and social enterprise of writing.*Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25*(3), 153-172.

Graham, S. & Harris, K. R. (1989). Cognitive training: Implications for written language. In J. N. Hughes & R. J. Hall (Eds.), Cognitive behavioral psychology in the schools, 247-279. New York: Guilford Press.

Hayes, J., & Flower, L. (1980).Identifying the organization of the writing process. In L. W. Gregg & E. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *Cognitive processes in writing*, 3-30. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Haywood, H. C., Brown, A. L., &Wingenfeld, S. (1990). Dynamic approaches topsychoeducational assessment.*School Psychology Review, 19*(4), 411-422.

Kinginger, C. (2002). Defining the zone of proximal development in US foreign languageeducation.*Applied Linguistics, 23*, 240-261.

Knodel, M. K. (1997). Dynamic assessment of written language (Doctoral dissertation,   University of Calgary, 1997). MQ20833.

Kozulin, A. & E. Garb. (2002). Dynamic assessment of EFL text comprehension of atriskstudents. School Psychology International, 23, 112-127.

Lantolf, J. P., &Poehner, M. E. (2004). Dynamic assessment of L2 development: bringing thepast into the future. Journal of Applied Linguistics, 1(2), 49-72.

Leontiev, A. A. (2001).Kluchevyeidei L.S. Vygotskogo – vklad v mirovuyu psykhologiu XX stoletia [Crucial ideas of L.S. Vygotsky as an important contribution to psychology of the 20th century]. In L.S. Vygotsky, Psikhologia razvitiacheloveka [Psychology of human development], 4-10. *Moskva: Smysl.*

Naeni, J., & Duvall, E. (2012).Dynamic assessment and the impact on English language learners' reading comprehension performance.*Language Testing in Asia*, *2*(2), 1-22.

Poehner, M. E. (2005).Dynamic assessment of oral proficiency among advanced L2 learners of French. (Unpublished dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 2005).

Poehner, M. E. (2008). Dynamic assessment: A Vygotskian approach to understanding andpromoting second language development*.* Berlin: Springer Publishing.

Poehner, M. E., &Lantolf, J. P. (2005).Dynamic assessment in the language classroom.*Language Teaching Research, 9*, 233-265.

Scardamalia, M., &Bereiter, C. (1986).Research on written composition. In M.C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook on research on teaching* (3[rd]ed.) 788-803. New York: McMillan.

Shabani, K. (2012). Dynamic assessment of L2 learners' reading comprehension processes: A Vygotskian perspective. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 32,* 321–328.

Shrestha, P., & Coffin, C. (2012). Dynamic assessment, tutor mediation and academic writingdevelopment. *Assessing writing, 17*, 55-70.

Verspoor, M., Schmid, M. S., &Xu.X. (2012). A dynamic usage based perspective on L2writing*. Journal of Second Language Writing, 21,* 239-263.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological process*.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1997). Educational psychology. Boca Raton, FL: St. Lucie Press.

Appendices

Appendix A   Oxford Placement Test (Allan, 2004)

© Dave Allan 2004

Name:

……………………………………………………
………………

Total Grammar Part 1   ………… / 50
Total Grammar Part 2   ………… / 50
Grand Total   ………… / 100

Look at these examples. The correct answer is ticked.

a   In warm climates people **(like ✓ / likes / are liking)** sitting outside in the sun.

b   If it is very hot, they sit **(at / in ✓ under)** the shade.

Now the test will begin. Tick the correct answers.

1) Water **(be freezing / is freezing / freezes)** at a temperature of 0°C.

2) In some countries **(there is / is / it is)** dark all the time in winter.

3) In hot countries people wear light clothes **(for keeping / to keep / for to keep)** cool.

4) In Madeira they have **(the good / good / a good)** weather almost all year.

5) Most Mediterranean countries are **(more warm / the more warm / warmer)** in October than in April.

6) Parts of Australia don't have **(the / some / any)** rain for long periods.

7) In the Arctic and Antarctic **(it is / there is / it has)** a lot of snow.

8) Climate is very important in **(most of / most / the most)** people's lives.

9) Even now there is **(little / few / less)** we can do to control the weather.

10) In the future **(we'll need / we are needing / we can need)** to get a lot of power from the sun and the wind.

11) For many people the name Pele still means **(the more / the most / most)** famous footballer in the world.

12) Pele **(had been / is / was)** born in 1940.

13) His mother **(not want / wasn't wanting / didn't want)** him to become a footballer.

14) But his father **(made him to / made him / would make him to)** practice every day.

15) By 1956 he **(has joined / joined / had joined)** the Brazilian club, *Santos*, and had scored in his first game.

16) In 1957 he **(has been picked / was picked / was picking)** for the Brazilian national team.

17) The next World Cup Finals were in 1958 and Pele was looking forward to
(play / playing / the play).

18) And **(even though / even so / in spite of)** he was injured he helped Brazil to win the final.

19) Pele was **(a such / such a / a so)** brilliant player that he helped Brazil win 3 World Cups.

20) He didn't stop **(playing / to play / play)** for *Santos* till he was 34.

21) After calling it a day in 1974, he became **(from / off / out of)** retirement and played for *New York Cosmos*.

22) **(Till / By / In)** the end of his career he had scored over a thousand goals.

23) He then settled for a role **(as / like / in)** a sporting ambassador for Brazil.

24) By the end of the 20th century he had received a great **(many / number / deal)** of awards.

25) Though honored with the title Athlete of the Century, he will always be remembered
(as footballer / as a footballer / as the footballer).

Football, or soccer as it is sometimes known, **(has been / is being / was)** played for **(above / over / more that)** 150 years, but the first World Cup competition **(has not been / was not / was not being)** held until 1930, when Uruguay **(could win / were winning / won)** the first professional final. Four teams had entered from Europe, but with **(a little / little / few)** success. The 1934 World Cup was again won by **(a / the / their)** home team, Italy, **(who / which / that)** went on to win the 1938 final as well. Winning successive finals is something that **(is not / was not / has not been)** achieved again until Brazil managed **(them / these / it)** in 1958 and 1962. If Brazil **(would have won / would win / had won)** again in 1966 then the FIFA authorities would have needed to **(have / let / make)** the original World Cup replaced.

However, England stopped the Brazilians **(to get / getting / get)** a third successive win.

In the 1970s the honors were shared **(among / between / inside)** Europe and South America. Argentina succeeded **(to win / at winning / in winning)** in 1978, but in 1982, in Spain, they had **(difficulty in / difficulties to / difficulty to)** getting beyond the early stages. They won again in Mexico in 1986, **(where / which / while)** Maradonna managed to win **(much / some / any)** of the games, especially the one against England, almost **(by his own / by himself / on himself)**. The 1990s finals were dominated by European teams **(except / apart / save)** from Brazil's win in the USA in 1994, with the 1998 finals in France again **(to be / being / having)** won by the hosts. Throughout the 1990s police in the host countries **(was / were / have been)** kept busy keeping rival fans apart, but **(there was / there were / it was)** to be no such problems when the first World Cup Finals of the 21st century took **(part / place / hold)** in Japan and South Korea in 2002. Football's third century **(has seen / saw / seeing)** success for a number of footballing nations in Africa and Asia, who **(may well / may as well / might as well)** prove to be the teams of the future.

Grammar Test **PART 2**

51) Millions of **(persons / people / peoples)** around the world now use the Internet almost every day.

52) The majority of children in the UK **(have / has / are having)** access to a PC.

53) Learning to use the Internet is not the same **(as / like / than)** learning traditional skills.

54) Most of us start off with email, **(who / which / what)** is fairly easy to use.

55) Children generally find using computers easy, but some adults can't get used **(to work / to working / work)** with them.

56) There aren't **(no / any / some)** shortcuts to becoming proficient – everyone needs training and practice.

57) Those who do best are those who also use computers a lot **(on their own / by their own / on themselves)**.

58) It's no use **(in trying / to try / trying)** to become an expert just by reading books.

59) There are many who wish they **(started / would have started / had started)** learning earlier.

60) A few unsuccessful learners have resigned themselves to never **(know / knowing / known)** how to use the Internet.

61) Some new users quickly become almost addicted **(to be / to being / be)** on line.

62) Others decide they would just **(rather / prefer / better)** not have anything to do with computers.

63) The trend continues **(to be / be / by being)** for computers to get smaller and smaller.

64) Some companies already have more palmtops **(that / than / as)** desktops.

65) It is thought that we'll have mobile phones as powerful as PCs **(till / by / in)** the end of the decade.

Below is a letter written to the 'advice' column of a daily newspaper. Tick the correct answers.

Dear Marge,

(I'm writing / I will write / I should write) to you because I **(am not knowing / don't know / know not)** what to do. I'm twenty-six and a teacher at a primary school in Norwich where **(I'm working / I've worked / I work)** for the last five years. When I **(was / have been / had been)** there for a couple of years, one of the older members of staff **(would leave / left / had been leaving)**, and a new teacher **(would be / became / was)** appointed to work in the same department as me. We **(worked / have worked / should work)** together with the same classes during her first year and had the **(opportunity for building / possibilities to build / chance to build)** up a good professional relationship. Then, about eighteen months after **(she has arrived / to have arrived / arriving)** in Norwich, she decided to buy **(her own / herself / her a)** house. She was tired of **(to live / live / living)** in rented accommodation and wanted a place **(by her own / of her own / of herself)**. At about the same time, I **(was given / have been given / gave)** notice by the landlord of the flat **(what I was living / that I had lived / I was living)** in and she asked me if I **(liked / had liked / would like)** to live with her. She **(said / told / explained)** me that by the time she **(would pay / would have paid / had paid)** the mortgage and the bills **(it / there / they)** wouldn't be **(a lot / many / few)** left to live on. She suggested **(us to / we should / we may)** share the house and share the costs.

It seemed like a good idea, so after **(we'd agreed / we could agree / we agreed with)** all the details **(what / that / who)** needed to be sorted out, we moved into the new house together. At the end of this month **(we have lived / we have been living / we'll have been living)** together for a year and a half. It's the first time **(I live / I'm living / I've lived)** with anybody before, but **(I should guess / I might have guessed / I'd have guessed)** what would happen. I've fallen in love with her and now she's been offered another job 200 miles away and is going to move. I don't know what to do. Please give me some advice.

Yours in shy desperation,

Steve

Look at the following examples of question tags in English. The correct form of the tag is ticked.

a   He's getting the 9.15 train, **(isn't he / hasn't he / wasn't he)**?

b   She works in a library, **(isn't she / doesn't she / doesn't he)**?

c   Tom didn't tell you, **(hasn't he / didn't he / did he)**?

d   Someone's forgotten to switch off the gas, **(didn't one / didn't they / haven't they)**?

Now tick the correct question tag in the following 10 items:

91) Steve's off to China, **(has he / hasn't he / isn't he)**?

92) It'll be a year before we see him again, **(won't it / won't we / shan't it)**?

93) I believe he's given up smoking, **(isn't he / don't I / hasn't he)**?

94) I'm next on the list to go out there, **(am not I / are I / aren't I)**?

95) No doubt you'd rather he didn't stay abroad too long, **(shouldn't you / wouldn't you / hadn't you)**?

96) He's rarely been away for this long before, **(is he / hasn't he / has he)**?

97) So you think he'll be back before November, **(shall he / will he / do you)**?

98) Nobody's disagreed with the latest proposals, **(did he / has he / have they)**?

99) We'd better not delay reading this any longer, **(should we / did we / had we)**?

100) Now's hardly the time to tell me you didn't need a test at all, **(did you / is it / isn't it)**?

Appendix B

Analytic scale for rating composition tasks (Brown & Bailey, 1984)

	20 – 18 **Excellent to Good**	**17 – 15** **Good to Adequate**	**14 – 12** **Adequate to Fair**	**11 – 6** **Unacceptable**	**5 – 1** **Not college-level work**
I.Organization Introduction, Body, and Conclusion	Appropriate title, effective introductory paragraph, topic is stated, leads to body; transitional expressions used; arrangement of material shows plan (could be outlined by reader); supporting evidence given	Adequate title, introduction, and conclusion; body of essay is acceptable, but some evidence may be lacking , some ideas aren't fully developed; sequence is logical but transitional expressions may be absent or misused	Mediocre or scant introduction or conclusion; problems with the order of ideas in body; the generalizations may not be fully supported by the evidence given; problems of organization interfere	Shaky or minimally recognizable introduction; organization can barely be seen; severe problems with ordering of ideas; lack of supporting evidence; conclusion weak or illogical; inadequate	Absence of introduction or conclusion; no apparent organization of body; severe lack of supporting evidence; writer has not made any effort to organize the composition (could not be

				effort at organization	outlined by reader)
	for generalizations; conclusion logical and complete				
II. Logical development of ideas Content	Essay addresses the assigned topic; the ideas are concrete and thoroughly developed; no extraneous material; essay reflects thought	Essay addresses the issues but misses some points; ideas could be more fully developed; some extraneous material is present	Development of ideas not complete or essay is somewhat off the topic; paragraphs aren't divided exactly right	Ideas incomplete; essay does not reflect careful thinking or was hurriedly written; inadequate effort in area of content	Essay is completely inadequate and does not reflect college-level work; no apparent effort to consider the topic carefully
III. Grammar	Native-like fluency in English Grammar; correct use of relative clauses, prepositions, modals, articles, verb forms, and tense sequencing; no fragments	Advanced proficiency in English grammar; some grammar problems don't influence communication, although the reader is aware of them; no fragments or run-on sentences	ideas are getting through the reader, but grammar problems are apparent and have a negative effect on communication; run-on sentences or fragments present	Numerous serious grammar problems interfere with communication of the writer's ideas; grammar review of some areas clearly needed; difficult to read sentences	Severe grammar problems interfere greatly with the message; reader can't understand what the writer was trying to say; unintelligible sentence structure
IV. Punctuation, spelling, and mechanics	Correct use of English writing conventions; left and right	some problems with writing conventions or punctuation; occasional	Uses general writing conventions but has errors; spelling problems	Serious problems with format of paper; parts of essay not	Complete disregard for English writing conventions;

	margins, all needed capitals, paragraphs indented, punctuation and spelling; very neat	spelling errors; left margin correct; paper is neat and legible	distract reader; punctuation errors interfere with ideas	legible; errors in sentence punctuation and final punctuation; unacceptable to educated readers	paper illegible; obvious capitals missing, no margins, severe spelling problems
V. Style and quality of expression	Precise vocabulary usage; use of parallel structures; concise; register good	Attempts variety; good vocabulary; not wordy; register OK; style fairly concise	Some vocabulary misused; lacks awareness of register; may be too wordy	Poor expression of ideas; problems in vocabulary; lacks variety of structure	Inappropriate use of vocabulary; no concept of register or sentence variety

Appendix C

Levels of Graduated Prompt   The treatment group received three levels of graduated prompt:

1. General type: Take another look

2. Suggested area of focus:

    Take a look at your spelling

    Take a look at your capitalization

    Take a look at your vocabulary usage

    Take a look at your tense

    Take a look at your punctuation

    Take a look at your part of speech

    Take a look at the voice of your sentences

    Take a look at your prepositions

 3. Specific area of focus

    What do you need after "said"? Don't you need a preposition?

    What do you need after "enjoy"? What kind of noun?

    What is the order of noun and adjective?

    What is the comparative form of "famous"?

    What is the relative pronoun for person?

Title

Interpretive Methodology from Literary Criticism: Carnivalesque Analysis of "Young Good Man Brown"

Authors

Masoumeh Sohrabi (M.A)
Moghadase Ardabili University, Ardabil, Iran

Masoumeh Khalkhali Rad (M.A)
Payame Noor University, Ardabil, Iran

Biodata

Masoumeh Sohrabi, M.A. in ELFL from Tabriz Azad University. She teaches part time at Azad University and at some non-profit institutes in Ardabil. Her main interests include English Literature, Literary Criticisms and respective areas.

Masoumeh Khalkhali Rad, M.A. in ELFL from Tabriz Azad University. She teaches part time at Ardabil Payame Noor and Ardabil Azad University. Her interest areas include Teaching English, Translating and works on Dramas.

Abstract

The subversion of religious hierarchies turns Nathaniel Hawthorn's outstanding short story "Young Good man Brown" into an example of Bakhtinian Carnival. Bakhtin's definition of the carnival as an arena where social decorum is rejected and violated and scandalous behavior is overlooked, providing release from oppressive etiquette. The present study offers a survey of religious hierarchy as concerning man's faith. Highlighting the theory of the carnivalesque ,as an utopian world of renewal, which in in direct association with a social institution and up/ down motifs.

Keywords: Bakhtin, Carnival, hierarchy, Young Good man Brown

1.Introduction

"The death of the individual is only mankind, a moment indispensable for their one moment in the triumphant life of the people and renewal and improvement ".(Mikhail Bakhtin, Rabelais and His World)

Perhaps more than any other modern-day literary theorist, Mikhail Bakhtin exemplifies present day literary theory because Bakhtin himself represents diverse academic disciplines and interests(Bressler, 2007).

Bakhtin's discussion of Carnival has important applications of both to particular texts and to the history of literary genres. The festivities associated with carnival are collective and popular, hierarchies are turned on their heads (fools become wise, king become beggars); opposites are mingled(fact and fantasy, heaven and hell); the sacred is profaned.(Seldom,1993)

"Bakhtin's carnival is not only not an impediment to revolutionary change, it is revolution itself. Carnival must not be confused with mere holiday or, least of all, with self-serving festivals fostered by governments, secular or theocratic. The sanction for carnival derives ultimately not from a calendar prescribed by church or state, but from a force that preexists priests and kings and to whose superior power they are actually deferring when they appear to be licensing carnival." (Holquist, 1944)

Hawthorne's short story "Young Goodman Brown" has been and continues to be read from a seemingly endless variety of critical perspectives. "Young Good man Brown" by Nathaniel Hawthorne chronicles the disturbing dream of a young puritan man. He is disgusted by the evil he encounters, not realizing his own involvement.

2.Discussion

The present study seeks to discuss Hawthorn's Good man Brown, with regard to the issue of carnival theorized by Mikhail Bakhtin in his Rabelais and His World, though he did not initiate this theory.(wiles) The article opens with a discussion of the Bakhtinian notion of carnival then continues with an analysis of text such as Young Good man Brown.

M.Keith Booker and Dubravka Juraga emphasize, "we should keep in mind that the carnivalesque energies in Bakhtin's own work derive not from the tumultuous political and cultural climate of the post revolutionary Soviet Union in the 1920s. Bakhtin's carnival is a time of festive and exuberant celebration when normal social boundaries collapse and groups from indifferent social classes and backgrounds meet and mingle freely in a mood of irreverence that runs directly counter to the cold, sterile, and humorless world of official medival Catholicism. The carnival is a time when normal rules and hierarchies are suspended, when boundaries are transgressed, and when the energies of life erupt without regard for conventional decorum. Moreover Bakhtin argues that the energies of the carnival

inform the writing of Rabelaise- with its extravagant linguistic strategies and its heavy use of sexual and excremental imagery and of the fantastic- in important and potentially powerful ways" (Booker, 1996).

"For Bakhtin, the polyphonic nature of the novel implies that there are many truths, not one. Each character speaks and thinks his or her own truth. Although one truth may be preferred to others by a character, a reader, or the author, no truth is particularly certain. Readers watch as one character influenced by another, and readers listen to the multitude of voices heard by each character as these voices shape those who hear them. What develops, says Bakhtin, is a carnivalesque atmosphere, a sense of joyful relativity. This sense of carnival is one of Bakhtin's most significant contributions to literary theory" (Bressler, 2007).

As quoted in Booker, "Terry Eagleton expresses strong skepticism toward the subversive potential of Bakhtin's notion of the carnival, pointing out that carnival is a "licensed affair in every sense, a permissible rupture of the hegemony, a contained popular blow-off as disturbing and relatively ineffectual as a revolutionary work of art". In addition, Bakhtin's apparent treatment of the carnival as an unequivocal image of emancipation seems to ignore the important fact that carnivalesque violence was often directly not at official authority but precisely at the kinds of oppressed and marginal groups that would presumably be liberated by carnivalesque subversion of authority" (Booker, 1996).

"Carnival is the people's second life, organized on the basis of laughter. It is a festive life. Festivity in a peculiar quality of all comic rituals and spectacles of the Middle Ages. All these forms of carnival were also linked externally to the feasts of the church. The official feasts of the Middle Ages, whether ecclesiastic, feudal, or sponsored by the state, did not lead the people out of the existing world order and created no second life. On the contrary, they sanctioned the existing pattern of things and reinforced it. The link with time became formal; changes and moments of crisis were relegated to the past. The suspension of all hierarchical precedence during carnival time was of particular significance. Rank was especially evident during official feast; every one was expected to appear in the full regalia of his calling, rank, and merits and to take the place corresponding to his position. It was a consecration of inequality. On the contrary, all were considered equal during carnival"(Rivkin, 2000).

"Carnival is applied as the reaffirmation of the status quo that "reinforces the bonds of authority by allowing for their temporary suspension. In his investigation of Rabelais's work, Bakhtin alludes to the anarchic, body-based and grotesque elements of popular culture as opposed to the serious, non-festive official culture and introduces the notions of 'grotesque

realism', where "the material bodily principal, that is, images of the human body with its food, drink, defecation, and sexual life, plays a predominant role"(Rivkin2000).

" For Bakhtin. carnival disestablishes and subverts unilateral authority, and laughter, through its universal, ambivalent, and collective properties, provides agency to the populace to critique seemingly unassailable institutions. Parodying the sacred and the privileged through laughter, swearing and other forms of uncrowning frees the folk culture from religious and ecclesiastical dogmatism".(Rollins, 2012)

"According to Bakhtin, carnival is a utopian world of renewal, festivity and laughter. For Bakhtin, every one participates and lives in a second life that is beyond hierarchy, religious dogmas, official norms and prohibitions. Carnivalesque analysis sets forth an alternative interpretation of some phenomena of popular culture by revealing its carnivalesque genre transmute with time, other elements are preserved"(Karimova, 2010).

It is intended here, to expose the complementary details about the idea of carnival with reference to Hawthorn's short story. The story begins as a conventional allegory, creating the expectation that the characters will consistently exhibit the abstractions they symbolize. If Hawthorne intends Brown to be a pathological case, that intention is not evident in the early stages. The problem of man's journey into the mystery of evil is presented in the broadest possible terms. Faith Brown, the wife of three months, is simply "Faith," and Goodman Brown is Everyman. The bargain he has struck with Satan is the universal one, reinforced by such signs as the innocence with which he convinces himself that he can turn aside from his covenant and the assurances he offers himself of his good intentions. Initially, he is a naïve and immature young man who fails to understand the gravity of the step he has taken. Though Hawthorne does not provide a transitional development, he drastically alters this picture: the early indications of Brown's immaturity are succeeded by a presumably adult determination to resist his own evil impulses. His continuing willingness to join the community of sinners coexists with a reaction against that willingness. As the task of turning back becomes increasingly difficult, confronting him with one frustration after another, his struggle takes on heroic proportions (Levy, 1975).

Among readings of Hawthorn's works of fiction, "Young Good man Brown", have usually been authoritative and tended to project the reality of the text on various external realms. Hawthorn's main concern with the material is to use it to develop the theme that mere doubt in the existence of good, the thought that all other men are evil, can become such a destruvtive force as to eat out the life of the heart. In investigating the question of what the

young man really saw during his night in the forest, Hawthorn's imagination is at its most exactly greatful.

"Young Good man Brown" means exactly what it says, namely that its hero left his pretty young wife one evening to walk by himself in the primitive New England woods, the devil's territory and either to dream our actually to experience the discovery that evil exists in every human heart, Brown is changed. He thinks there is no good on earth, Brown waking from his dream, if it was a dream, sees evil where it is not. He had stumbled upon that mystery of sin which, rightly understood, provides the only sane and cheerful views of life there is.

Brown calls out three times for Faith to come to his aid, and not until he sees a pink ribbon from Faith's cap that has vibratility down from the sky and caught on the branch of a tree does he submissive hope, crying "My Faith is gone." As if to reinforce the tangible evidence of Faith's escape . Hawthorne writes that Brown "seized" and "beheld" the fateful ribbon. He now knows that Faith's voice has been mingled with the other "familiar tones, heard daily at Salem village," but now issuing from the depths of a cloud from the company of Satan's followers sailing through the air. The most frightful episode of the tale follows: Brown becomes a "demoniac," "the chief horror" in a scene full of horrors of terrible sounds made up of "the creaking of trees, the howling of wild beasts, and the yell of Indians."

"Utterly possessed by the Devil, he yields to the conviction that the world is given over to sin. But when silence falls and he enters the clearing where the assembly of the damned is gathered for the performance of its ritual, his hopes rise again because Faith, whom he expects to see, is not there. But she soon stands with him among those who are about to undergo their initiation. They are "the only pair, as it seemed, who were yet hesitating on the verge of wickedness in this dark world." They look at each other in fearful anticipation, and for the last time Brown calls out for help: "Faith! Faith! . . . look up to heaven, and resist the wicked one." But "whether Faith obeyed he knew not." The whole spectacle of the witches' Sabbath vanishes at this instant, and Brown, staggering against the rock that had formed the altar, finds himself alone in the wilderness" (Levy,1975).

It proposes that Christ and the Devil may control equally well in terms of daily coordinated moral living in a town, and that dogmatic exclusivity may produce deadly isolation . Young man will come face to face with evil when he enters the forest. Because one code or binary operation that we know is that light implies good and dark implies evil. "Brown thus enters the dark forest and leaves the light of his home, only to find the "false right" of evil emanating from the artificial light- the fires that light the baptismal service of

those being baptized into Satan's fellowship" (Bressler, 2007). It is Satan who brings young Good man Brown and his Faith as close to any heaven as they will ever experience.

"through their forest communion with the religious exemplars, Brown's false consciousness is exposed, and he is ushered into the actual role that religious has played in his life" (Bressler, 2007). He visit Satan in the night as though visited his faith in light of day. According to deconstruction ideas, two binary operation comes at work here. To was good against to be evil, and was with God against be with Satan. As though we discuss he leaves his faith as in sunset and returns to faith in the morning. The trip into wilderness is done in the night:"My journey…..forth and back again" (young good man brown) asserts the young man to his wife. He is in the forest, a place of dark and unknown horrors the young man meets with devil. When he leaves his village he is taken from his superego, then reaches to his ego in the dark and unknown forest, and then subverted to his id. His subversion comes down from his safety to wilderness.

"The communion in the forest, conducted by Satan, is the great leveler of puritan religious interpellation, with the blindfold of bourgeois hegemony having fallen off, Brown sees all manner of people circled around the communal life: godly and ungodly, religious Deacon and common lay person, bourgeoisie and proletariat" (Bressler, 2007).

 At the center of the dark wilderness he discovers a witches Sabbath involving all the honored teachers, preachers and friend of his village. "he returns in the morning to the village and to his Faith, but he is never at piece with himself again. Henceforth he can never hear the singing of a holy hymn without also hearing echoes of the anthem of sin from that terrible night in the forest" (Guerin, 1960).

As we see at the end, young Good man Brown seems to prevail and resist evil, but his success is also his failure. At the climax of his errand, Good man Brown directs his wife, " Faith! look up to heaven, and resist the wicked one". In result, his success in resisting the temptation, his resistance to "the wicked one" is at the same time his wife (imagined) failure to resist. In assuming that he has resisted temptation but his wife has not, Good man Brown commits the sin of pride. In a sense, only by becoming like the devil can Brown overcome him, and by the end of Good man Brown's journey, he has lost his faith and all hope and charity, and his faith converted to wicked one, " My faith is gone".

3.Conclusion

Young Good man Brown was adult in his first journey, this invitation results in a frozen emotional state as the young Good man Brown becomes, overnight , an old and gloomy Good man Brown, without hope through the end of his day. This story is one of extrapolation, an inferring of the unknown from the known. For this reason, throughout this study, I have emphasized that the conversion of young Good man Brown from his identity, and leaving his Faith as his wife and his belief is exemplar of Bakhtin's theory of carnival that manifest in his discussions in medieval folk culture, argued that folk celebrations which allowed for rowdy humor and the parody of authority offered the oppressed lower classes relief from the rigidity of the feudal system and the church and an opportunity for expressing nonconformist, even rebellious views. The carnivalesque spirit, therefore, is a form of popular, low humor which celebrates the anarchic and grotesque elements of authority and of humanity in general and encourages the temporary crossing of boundaries where the town fool is crowned, the higher classes are mocked, and the differences between people are flattened as their shared humanity, the body, becomes subject of crude humor.

References

Booker, M.K. (1996). *A Practice Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism.* USA: Longman

Bressler, Ch.E (2007). *Literary Criticism, An Introduction to Theory and Practice.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Guerin,L.W., Labor, E.G., Morgan, L., & Willingham, J.R.(1960). *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature.* New York: Harper & Row.

Holquist, M. (1994). *Dialogism:. Bakhtin and his world.* London: Routledge.

Karimova, G.(2010). Interpretive Methodology from Literary Criticism: Carnivalesque Analysis of Popular Culture: *Jackass*, *South Park*, and 'Everyday'   Culture. Retrieved from http:// www.pcasacas.org/ articles/writeliving

Levy, L.B.(1975). The Problem of Faith in "Young Goodman Brown". Retrived from http://www. facultyfiles. deanza.edu/ articles/writeliving

Rivkin J. & Ryan M. (2000). *Literary Theory: An Anthology.* Massachusetts: Blackwell.

Rollins, B.O.(2012). Carnival's Dance of Death: Festivity in the Revenge Plays of KYD, Shakespeare, and Middleton(Doctoral dissertation). Georgia State Universty.

Selden R., & Widdowson P.(1993). *A Readers Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory.* New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Title

Advent of Proficiency Test in High School
Sentence Structure Tests

Authors

Leila Sayah (Ph.D candidate)
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran
International Campus

Behzad Ghonsooly (Ph.D)
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad,Iran

Biodata

Leila Sayah, Ph.D. candidate of TEFL at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran. She currently teaches in Farhangian University of Ahvaz, Iran and also has been teaching English at some universities in Ahvaz. Her main research interests include TEFL and Discourse Analysis.

Behzad Ghonsooly, professor in applied linguistics. He is teaching in the department of English, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran. His main research interests are language testing and ESP.

Abstract

The growing global concern over developing, classifying and administrating language proficiency tests in different countries has been the recent main focus of test constructivists and policy makers. Although English proficiency tests are practiced across different countries, the local language standardized tests were mostly neglected and even belittled in the current literature. Since decisions on including proficiency tests in high school exit exams have been analyzed by few researchers, this study attempted to determine the proficiency validation of the new test design in Persian high school sentence structure tests. In an attempt to highlight the universal application of Persian language proficiency tests, 90 high schools Persian Language tests were analyzed using Ghonsooly's (2011) language proficiency test design. The result revealed the significant difference in compound, compound derivation, depending late and simple nouns of English proficiency test and senior high school grade all three grade sentence structural tests. The final goal was to maintain an overall Persian structure including

proficiency tests in high schools as well as including it in global Persian literature tests**.**

1. Introduction

For years, the policy makers, constructivists and test designers' main concern was to design single language proficiency tests as TOFFLE, IELTS all over the world by which they could give birth to the intelligent generations who pass the test barriers easily and successfully. But in this international concern the role of local languages was totally ignored and sometimes fully underestimated not-only by the global test takers but even by the local administrators. It is not meant to belittle the significant impression of such global tests on both linguistic and communicative life domains of many professionals but the overall concern is to highlight the local or native language's effect on the test construction of the first language's framework, the effect that was the first and second language methodologists' main focus for years.

Since language proficiency test professionalizes the inner capabilities and procedural techniques of language learners and also it ''seeks to test the learners' ability to use real-life language'' (Ajideh & Esfandiari, 2009, p. 163), it is recommended to develop and add another level that is each country's native language proficiency test to such standardized tests as TOFFLE and IELTS when administrated in non English speaking countries. Developing Proficiency tests can be observed in several studies (Schrank, Fletcher and Alvarado, 1996; Wilson, 1999; Sun, 2000; Stephenson, 2003; Zhou, 2004; Callahan, 2005; Razmjoo, 2008; Zhang, 2008; Cheng, 2008; Cawthon, 2010). But most of these studies investigated English language proficiency tests focusing on testing high level students as college students.

While ''the limitation of the skills/ components was its failure to recognize the full context and language use'' (Bachman, 1995, p. 82) and to fulfill the communicative feature of Persian tests, and considering that ''Content relevance is related to ensuring that the test is relevant to the knowledge, skills or abilities important in the domain, as described in the domain analysis'' (Fulcher, 1999. p. 227), it is necessary to highlight the relationship between text and context. To this end, Persian Proficiency tests design (Ghonsooly, 2011) was selected to analyze Persian high school tests to realize the possible differences between Persian high school tests' sentence structure questions and whether it is possible to persuade

the syllabus designers and test takers to take such proficiency tests into consideration in high schools and also to compound each country's native language with international proficiency test when analyzing the learners' overall language abilities. Before referring to different researchers' studies on language proficiency, Persian proficiency test design and later Persian sentence structure are explained in brief.

1.1 Persian Proficiency Tests

Though local language proficiency tests have considerably specialized and practiced in few countries as Japan and Spain, there has not been any attempt to construct any Persian proficiency test until recently. Ghonsooly (2011) focusing on two skills of listening and reading organized a Persian proficiency test for non native Persian speakers and unlike Clark (2010) who prepared different online Persian proficiency texts while using English instead of Persian questions, the design comprises the two skills with Persian questions having the overall structure of IELTS and TOFFEL model. The reading tests contain literal, social, historical, and scientific words. The listening section comprises short, mediate and extended conversations. The structure part includes 40 multiple error identification questions. The validation procedures included mainly retrospective protocol analysis of three subject informants and a validation procedure based on argument theory.

1.2 Persian Structure in High School Tests

The importance of Persian language observed in old manuscripts and monuments from the old great Asia to Mesopotamia and India made native and non native Persian speakers to learn this language and consider it as the symbol of unity in Iranian context. This volubility motivated Persian syllabus designers to design Persian language and literature in two separate books and to elaborately both strengthen different skills of this language and apply it in different sciences.   The structure of Persian language has been explained thoroughly in different books (Givi and Anvari, 1996; Meshkatodini, 1995; Sabti , 2009; Omrani and Sabti, 2011). These structures could be summarized as:

1. noun groups: (core, Linked earlier, Depending late, noun characteristics (count, ID, general, concrete), Sentence structure (simple, compound, derivatives)

2. Verb group: (Stems, transient verb, verb, prefixes, suffixes, tense, voice, simplicity,
    complexity , infinitives)

3. Adverb: (Marked, proposition, noun, noun prefix, unmarked, adverb + noun, phoneme,

4. sentence parts: subject, predicate, object, complement, bench, verb

5. letter: Preposition, conjunction, marked

6. Pronoun: Personal, common, exclamation, interrogatory, Ambiguous pronoun, numerical, possessive

7. Pseudo word: vocative, voice

8. Adjective including: reference, numerical, interogative, exclamation, ambiguous, rhetoric including simple, subject property, participle, relative adjective, trait merit

9. Compound and independent sentence

10. Subject verb concordance. Some examples are given in Appendix A. In constructing Persian tests, poets' verses or quotes or used mostly to enquiry about composition_ the role of words in such a composition or Analysis (type)_ the analysis of the characteristics of words outside the vocabulary.

2. Review of Literature

Investigating language proficiency tests was the main focus of some researchers in the past decade. They tried to validate and link the international proficiency tests to different domains. Schrank, Fletcher and Alvarado (1996) examined the validity of three English oral language proficiency tests in terms of Cummin's BICS/CALP distinction at the Kindergarten level; they found strong correlation with the teacher's rating and concurrent validity language proficiency. Wilson (1999) investigated 1,600 native-Japanese speakers language proficiency performance and reported concurrent correlations for listening, and reading Comprehension with direct measures of ESL speaking and writing proficiency.

Sun (2000) investigated the test items in a language proficiency test for specific purposes in three aspects: item difficulty, passing rate, and discrimination. The results were used to determine whether the distracters for each item are overly distracting or whether the test-takers had the required language knowledge.

Stephenson (2003) analyzed Pre-Emergent, Emergent, Basic, Intermediate, and Proficient performance levels among 38,000 ELL students from kindergarten whose first language is not English using Stanford ELP. The result ensured the validity of the ratings and cut scores. Zhou (2004) analyzed two Chinese nation-wide tests (CET-6 and TEM-4) considering test-takers, test scores, and test content. The results showed that the two types of test-takers were quite similar except of the hours of English instruction they had received.

Callahan (2005) analyzed oral language assessment results as a proxy for Language proficiency level. Three EL cohorts were identified in this study: long-term ELs (ltEL), recent immigrant with High Prior Schooling (riHPS), and recent immigrants with Limited

Prior Schooling (riLPS) It was found that English-Only students scored significantly higher than all three non-native English speaking groups (FEP, RFEP and EL).

Razmjoo (2008) investigated the relationship between multiple intelligences and language proficiency among Iranian using100-item language proficiency test and a 90-item multiple intelligences questionnaire. The results pointed no significant relationship between multiple intelligences and English language proficiency in the Iranian context. Zhang (2008) analyzed published reports, documentations, and released data from NAEP (National Assessment English proficiency). He found that the design of assessment programs is determined by the purpose of testing and proposed uses of test results, such as test content, test length, and reporting levels.

Cheng (2008) argued that standardized language tests has been a controversial issue in China considering the debate of some researchers pointing the positive impact of the CET as promoting the role of English teaching and learning at the tertiary level in China (see, for example, Li, 2002). While other researchers (e.g. Han *et al*., 2004; Gu and Liu, 2002) challenged the validity of the CET by pointing out that the test does not assess communicative competence as the teaching syllabus requires.

Cawthon (2010) identified education placement and assessment policies that lead to reduced assessment language support for former-LEP students. The result showed lack of assessment accommodations for secondary students who do not demonstrate English language proficiency (especially CALP), and so no longer LEP-exempt, may result in invalid assessments of these students' true abilities.

Undoubtedly, all these researchers tried to measure the learners' abilities, and valid reliable systematic assessments that are most likely to conceptualize evidence of English language acquisition but none focused on native language proficiency test as the fulfillment of international test that could be administrated nationally in their context. Sometimes students with rich native language capabilities fail international tests as TOFEL and IELTS for many reasons namely anxiety, little English language proficiency not academic proficiency and so the need to add the local language proficiency test as the fifth skill to these tests to decrease this barrier is rightly sought.

Since ''language instruction must be combined with strong content area curriculum development'' (Callahan, 2005) to maintain language proficiency, the objective of this research thus was to analyze Persian high school sentence structure questions using Ghonsooly's (2010) Persian Proficiency design to assert the need to apply this proficiency

design with these tests and also to have a comparison of sentence structure design of Persian high school tests. To this end, the present study intends to answer the following question:

1. Are there any significant differences between Persian high school sentence structure questions considering language proficiency test?

3.Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative methods were selected to analyze the framework of Persian high school sentence structure tests to identify possible similarities and differences of Persian high school structures.

3.1 Text selection

90 grade one, two, and three Persian high school tests were collected randomly from 400 sample tests of Ahvaz's (A city in Iran) bureau as well as the Persian high school coordinated tests available on the net. The Persian high school tests were all written between 2008- 2012. The main reason of selecting these high school tests was the recent changes they have undergone under the ministry of education's license. To identify the structural relationship of Persian high school tests with proficiency tests, Ghonsooly's (2011) proficiency test design was used to indicate the underlined impact of national tests on this newly developed design. Since Ghonsooly's (2011) proficiency test design mostly focuses on sentence structure tests, high school sentence structure parts were used to perform this analysis.

3.2 Procedure

Since Persian high school tests are not in multiple choice designs but in a form of question-answer error identification design, so the frequencies of all functional words as well as other structures including different verbs, nouns, and so on were tracked down and also any possible functional inference in the whole framework. As the second measure, each test was compared and contrasted with the whole corpus then compared with the main Persian Proficiency test design. Finally, *chi-* square tests were run to find out the relationship of different high school questions.

4.Results and Discussion

To answer the question of this study which seeks to identify any possible difference among national Persian language structural tests, the whole corpus was analyzed carefully. It was distinguished that each Persian high school tests enjoy huge differences with each other and with the Persian proficiency test. For example the structures including preposition, clause,

exclamation, question pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and different adjectives such as demonstrative, common, and indefinite adjectives are only practiced in grade one high school tests:. Grade two high school tests include compound sentence and independent clause, different tenses as present and past perfect, future tense, voice as passive, subject verb agreement, pseudo-words (vocative – voice) and proper nouns.

When analyzing grade three high school Persian tests, the following structures were identified: conjunctions, different morphemes (lexical, derivational, and independent morpheme, non-independent morpheme, morpheme lexicon and prepositional object.

As seen in Table one, except for noun groups as depending late, simple and compound nouns, there were no significant differences between the noun group classification in Persian high school grade one, two and three.

Regarding the noun groups as it is seen in Table 1, the significant difference could be observed in compound, compound derivation, depending late and simple nouns of senior high school sentence structural test and proficiency test where the even importance was given to compound derivations in the latter. The significant differences were distinguished as the cognitive ''maturation'' factor_ this kind of tests are provided because learners have been getting older- (Hatch, & Lazartan, 1991) of high school students.

Table 1   *Results of Noun Group in Persian high school test structure*

Noun group	F			x^2	P-value
	G_1	G_2	G_3		
Core	25	15	12	5.346	.069
Linked earlier	15	25	24	2.844	.241
Depending late	12	25	30	7.731	.021
Simple	11	23	10	7.136	.028
Compound	10	30	11	14.941	.001
Derivation	22	29	14	5.200	.074
Compound derivation	0	25	15	2.500	.114

While Ghonsooly's (2011) Persian Proficiency test mostly focuses on subject verb agreement, Persian tests' parts of the sentence analysis (Table 2) showed no specific difference since it was only practiced scarcely in grade two questions. Since bench was referred to as non -occurrent structure in everyday conversation, it was belittled in grade two

and three and so was greatly practiced in grade one as it is seen in Table 2. The significant difference which was traced in complement part (Table 2) was seen as conspicuous cognition of Persian language teachers who focus mostly on grade two and three students due to maturity and their extra cognition while the structure could also be used among grade one student. Complement is one of the major and basic tests in proficiency tests, it should be highlighted and practiced in all high school levels. This cultural trait could be easily reflected in constructing the tests like:

Sǽbr o xiŝtǽndǎri   pirǎyeye momenǎn   dǽr mǽrǎhele sǽxt   ǽst

   Subject   Bench   Complement   transient verb

Patience and restraint   is the Muslim's jewelry in difficult times.

And as was said earlier Persian tests mostly have a sharp reference to poets's verses or quotes:

ǽtǎr Neyŝǎbouri   godrǽt bǽyǎn   fǽrzǽnd bǽhǎ vǽlǽd   ra ŝǎyeste tǽhsin   did.

  Core dependent   core   dependent late dependent late   core dependent

    Subject   object   bench   verb

ǽtǎr Neyŝǎbouri found bǽhǎ vǽlǽd's son discourse admirable.

Table 2 Results *of Parts of the Sentence in Persian high school test structure*

Parts of the sentence	F			x^2	P-value
	G_1	G_2	G_3		
Subject	24	23	25	.83	.959
Predicate	23	15	22	1.900	.387
Object	9	11	13	.727	.695
Complement	15	32	34	8.074	.018
Bench	0	25	12	4.568	.33
Verb	24	14	25	3.524	.172

When interviewing different Persian language teachers, it was revealed that structures like Hampayesaz conjunction- association conjunctions- are considered to be one of the essential parts of compound sentences that should be practiced in grade one and be reviewed in grade three but as it is seen in Table 3, this structure was mostly practiced in grade one high school tests. Use of adverbial group + adjective could be observed largely in grade two tests (Table 4). Adverbial groups as difficult and important structure of Persian proficiency test and Persian National test _administrated for the university's entrance admittance_ only practiced in grade two (Yazarlou, 2012) and used only in slight examples of grade three in the footnote because of students' maturation factor. The other significant differences could be

distinguished in Tables 5, 6 and 7 where pronouns were never applied in grade three questions and no adjectives were traced in grade two sentence structure tests. Though present continuous tense is culturally used by a wide range of people in everyday conversation, it was practiced in grades one and scarcely in grade two high school questions again considering the maturation factor and as Cawthon (2010) puts it, it may lead to invalid assessments of these students' true abilities. It was obvious that Persian syllabus designers pursue specific framework in arranging Persian book structure of developing one time usage of specific structures with no reversion or re evaluation of previous structures in different grades- the fact that should be reconstructed and rearranged.

Table 3 *Results of Different Type of* Conjunction maker in *Persian high school test structure*

Conjunction maker	F			x^2	P-value
	G_1	G_2	G_3		
Dependent conjunction	12	21	10	4.791	.091
Hampayesaz conjunction	20	1	10	17.484	.000

Table 4 *Results of Adverbs in Persian high school test structure*

Different adverbs	F			x^2	P-value
	G_1	G_2	G_3		
Adverb	24	23	25	.615	.433
Adverbial prefix + Noun Group	9	10	0	.053	.819
Adverbial Group + Adjective	15	28	8	12.118	.002

Table 5 *Results of Different Type of Pronoun in Persian high school test structure*

Pronoun	F			x^2	P-value
	G_1	G_2	G_3		
Independent Personal Pronoun	12	27	0	5.769	.016
Dependent Personal Pronoun	11	10	0	.048	.827
Common Pronoun	15	25	0	2.500	.114

Table 6 *Results of Different Type of Adjectives in Persian high school test structure*

Adjectives	F			x^2	P-value
	G_1	G_2	G_3		
Subjective Adjective	10	0	13	7.714	.005
Objective Adjective	30	0	12	3.391	.532

Table 7 Results *of Tense in Persian high school test structure*

Tense	F			x^2	P-value
	G_1	G_2	G_3		
Present continuous	15	12	0	11.643	.003

One important test strategy totally ignored in Persian high school tests was the application of multiple choice items. It was asserted by some Persian language instructors that multiple choice structure tests are not necessarily practiced in high schools because they are available in semi national Persian quizzes. Lack of familiarity with multiple choice items causes anxiety and stress among high school students when confronting local scientific examinations. It is highly recommended that tests as Proficiency tests are administrated by language teachers to both decrease the anxiety factor, and validate the structural tests design.

5.Conclusion

In this study, we tried to find out the possible differences and similarities among Persian high school language sentence structure questions in accordance with Ghonsooly' s (2011) proficiency test design. It was revealed that culture and maturation factor had the significant role in constructing and administrating Persian language tests. But to meet the contextual and national need while pinpointing the importance of Persian constructure in sentence structural tests, it is vital to develop language tests compounding with proficiency tests. Since academic proficiency is much effective than language proficiency, there should be a balance between the high school tests and academic tests' content. So the need to standardize Persian high school language tests is seen as a major factor which may contribute to proficiency success in Persian context. To put this procedure into effect, it is recommended to execute more studies considering Persian proficiency tests among high school and university students to attribute the importance of local national proficiency tests' functional and generalizable feature.

References

Ajideh, P., & Esfandiari, R. (2009). A Close Look at the Relationship between Multiple Choice Vocabulary Test and Integrative Cloze Test of Lexical Words in Iranian Context. *Journal of English Language Teaching. 2* (3), 163-170.

Bachman, L. F. (1995). *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. NewYork: Oxford University Press.

Callahan, R.M. (2005). English Language Proficiency and Track Placement: Variable Effects on Academic Achievement. Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium

on Bilingualism, ed. James Cohen, Kara T. McAlister.

Cawthon, S.W. (2010). Assessment Accommodations for English Language Learners: The Case of Former-LEPs. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation. 15(* 13*)*

Cheng, L. (2008). The key to success: English Language Testing in China. Sage Publications. *Language Testing. 25* (1) ,15–37.

Clark, M. (2010). Persian Computerized Assessment of Proficiency (CAP). Center for Applied Second Language Studies University of Oregon.

Fulcher, G. (1999). Assessment in English for Academic Purposes: Putting Content Validity in Its Place. *Applied Linguistics*. *20*(2). 221-236

Ghonsooly, B. (2011).Tarahi va Ravaee Sanji Azmon Basnadegi Zaban Farsi (Development and Validation of a Persian Proficiency Test. *Pazhoheshhaye Zaban Khareji* (Foreign Language Research), 57, 115-129.

Givi, H., & Anvari, H. (1996). *Persian Language Structure*. Tehran: Fatemi Publications.

Hatch, E., & Lazartan, A. (1991). *The Research Manual: Design and Statistics for Applied Linguistics*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publications.

Meshkatodini, M. (1995). *Persian Language Structure on the Basis of Transformational Theory*. Mashhad: Ferdowsi University Publications.

Omrani, G., & Sabti, H. (2011). Persian Language. Teaching and Learning Guidlines. Tehran: Mobtakeran Publications.

Razmjoo, A. (2008). On the Relationship Between Multiple Intelligences and Language Proficiency. *Journal of the Reading Matrix. 8*(2) , 155-174.

Sabti , H. (2009). *Persian Language*. Tehran: Daryaft Nashr.

Schrank, F.A., & Fletcher, T.V., & Alvarado, C.G. (1996). Comparative Validity of Three English Oral Language Proficiency Tests. *The Bilingual Research Journal. 20* (1), 55-68.

Stephenson, A. (2003). Establishing Performance Levels for the Stanford English Language Proficiency Test. Pearson Education. TECHNICAL REPORT.

Sun, C. (2000). Modern Language Testing and Test Analysis. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages* 23(4): 82–86.

Wilson, K. M. (1999). Validity of the Secondary Level English Proficiency Test at Temple University-JAPAN. Educational Testing Service.

Yazarlou, D. (2012). Persian Language Analysis. Retrieved 20 November 2012 from http://adabkade.blogfa.com/post-39.aspx

Zhang (2008). Validity of Comparing Test Scores on State Assessments with the Results of the National Achievement of Educational Progress. Paper presented at AERA Annual   Conference New York.

Zhou, Y. 2004: Comparability Study of Two National EFL Tests (CET-6 and TEM-4) in China. *The Journal of Asia TEFL 1*(1), 75–100.

Appendix A

Examples of Persian structure sentences: **گروه اسمی**

1- <u>اين</u>   <u>كتاب</u>   <u>داستان</u>   را   <u>خواندم</u>

وابسته پيشين   هسته   وابسته پسين   فعل

1- In   ketăb   dăstăn   ră xăndǽm
Linked earlier + core + depending late   verb
In English: (I read this story book)

___

حرف و ضمير و فعل مركب (Letter- pronoun- compound verb)

2- دوستانم   به دانشگاه   مى روند   كه   در زندگى   موفق شوند.

اسم + ضمير پيوسته   متمم   مضارع اخبارى   حرف ربط   متمم   فعل مركب پيشوندى

2-Dustănǽm   be daneŝgah   mirǽvǽnd <u>ke</u> dǽr zendegi <u>movǽfǽg ŝǽvǽnd</u>
Noun+ dependent pronoun +complement verb conjuction+ com+ compound verb
In English: My friends go to the university to be successful in life.

اجزا ى جمله (Sentence Parts)

3- <u>معلمان</u> فداكار ، امروزه <u>درس هاى</u> <u>زندگى</u> <u>را</u> <u>به</u>   <u>دانش آموزان</u> <u>مى آموزند</u> .

<u>اسم</u>   <u>صفت</u>   قيد   <u>اسم عام</u> <u>اسم</u>   نشانه حرف اضافه   متمم   <u>فعل گذر</u>
نهاد   مفعول
_____گزاره_____

2. Moǽlemăn fǽdăkăr emroze <u>dǽrshăye zendegi</u> ră be dăneŝămuzăn miǽmozǽnd.

  Noun   adjective adverb   object   complement transient verb
In English: Nowadays, devoted teachers teach life lessons to the students.

Title

The Differential Effects of Implicit and Explicit Feedback on the Grammatical Accuracy of Male EFL Learners' Writing

Authors

Ahmad Farahmand (M.A)
Islamic Azad University, Germi, Iran

Asghar Hatami (M.A)
Islamic Azad University, Germi branch, Iran

Biodata

Ahmad Farahmand, M.A. in general linguistics from Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamadan, Iran. He teaches English at Islamic Azad University, Germi Branch, Iran, and he is one of the academic members of Germi University. His research interests are mainly focused on teaching semantics as well as syntax.

Asghar Hatami, M.A. in English teaching from Islamic Azad University, Ardabil branch, Ardabil, Iran. He teaches English courses at Islamic Azad University, Germi Branch, Iran. His research interests are mainly focused on teaching semantics as well as syntax.

Abstract

This study is an attempt to investigate whether explicit or implicit feedback on the use of simple past tense results in greater accuracy on EFL students' writing.It was hypothesized that there is not any significant difference between explicit and implicit feedback and ultimateachievement in learning English as a foreign language.About 70 high school grade three learners were assigned to an implicit and implicit group (35 in each). Through T-test, groups were formed to be homogeneous since there was no significant difference between the performances of them. Treatment sessions began from the second week in which students were encountered with two kinds of feedback. All erroneous verbs of the explicit group were corrected by the teacher, but those of implicit one were implied by codes. After the treatment sessions a posttest and two weeks later a delayed posttest were administered to examine the efficacy of the treatment. The descriptive statistics from the three testing times showed that the mean accuracy scores increased substantially from time 1 to time 2 (i.e., from pre-test to post-test), only there was a very small negative effect for feedback on the delayed post-test. However, it

should be noted that this effect size was not substantial enough to rebut this interpretation. Meanwhile Corrective feedback caused drastic improvement in accuracy levels of learners in the short run.

Keywords*: Explicit feedback, implicit feedback, grammatical accuracy, Male EFL Learner

1. Introduction

According to Allen & Corder (1974) writing is an intricate and complex task; it is the most difficult of the language abilities to acquire. Writing is a complex process even in the first language. Undoubtedly, it is more complicated to write in a foreign language.

Consequently, lots of researchers have intended to identify the common errors EFL students' make in writing in a foreign language. Writing in English is no exception. Certainly, a better understanding of the errors and the origins of such errors in the process of EFL writing will help teachers know students' difficulties in learning that language. Moreover, it will aid in the adaptation of appropriate teaching methods to help them learn better.

Error correction in L2 writing is a source of great concern to writing instructors and of controversy to researchers and composition theorists. Over the past twenty years, approaches to responding to students' grammar problems have included "opposing extremes of obsessive attention to every single student error and benign neglect of linguistic accuracy" (Ferris &Hedgcock, 1998, p. 198). Real-life teachers, however, have always known that students' errors are troublesome, that students themselves are very concerned about accuracy, and that responding effectively to students' grammatical and lexical problems is a challenging endeavor fraught with uncertainty about its effectiveness. Teachers, who regularly provide grammar–oriented feedback would doubtless report that this is one of the most time-consuming and exhausting aspects of their jobs. Because of the perceived importance of error correction and the amount of emphasis both teachers and students place on it, it is reasonable to ask whether grammatical correction is effective and appropriate at all, and if so, what the best ways are to approach it.

There have been many attempts to help students improve their writing quality and increase their motivation for writing tasks. One important attempt is by providing feedback. After the advent of process-oriented instruction and its prevalence in L2 writing pedagogy, feedback has played an important role in students' revision process, and various methods of feedback have been explored to help students as they go through the revision process. Such

feedback includes teacher feedback, peer feedback, teacher-student conferences, oral feedback, self-evaluation, electronic feedback, and so on. Of all these kinds of feedback, teacher response appears to be the most crucial to the development of students' writing (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

Over the last few years, the role played by feedback on the assignments of second/foreign language students (ESL/EFL), has been a matter of considerable debate in the field of second/foreign language acquisition. Truscott (1996,1999,2007) claims that grammar corrections do not have a positive effect on the development of L2 writing accuracy. According to Truscott corrective feedback (CF), which indicates to learners that there is an error in their linguistic output, is seen as not only ineffective but also potentially harmful. In contrast, other researchers (Bitchener&Knoch, 2008; Chandler, 2003) claim that CF is of value in promoting greater grammatical accuracy.

Differences in opinion exist regarding the efficacy of written corrective feedback (CF). Truscott (1996, 1999), reflecting the views of teachers who adhere to process theories of writing, advanced the strong claim that correcting learners' errors in a written text may enable them to eliminate the errors in a subsequent draft but has no effect on grammatical accuracy in a new piece of writing (i.e. it does not result in acquisition). Ferris (1999) disputed this claim, arguing that it was not possible to dismiss correction in general as it depended on the quality of the correction – in other words, if the correction was clear and consistent it would work. Truscott replied by claiming that Ferris failed to cite any evidence in support of her contention. In his most recent survey of the written corrective feedback research, Truscott (2007) again critiqued the available research and concluded that 'the best estimate is that correction has a small harmful effect on students' ability to write accurately' (p. 270). Debates over the value of providing corrective feedback and the efficacy of certain feedback options on writing have been prominent in recent years, so it calls for further research. Specifically, in this study we would like to know if correcting learners' errors is a must and if yes, how they should be corrected. In other words, we are going to specify whether explicit or implicit feedback on EFL students' writing results in greater accuracy in new pieces of writing over time.

2. Previous studies

Despite the call for empirical evidence of the efficacy of written corrective feedback by Truscott (1996, 1999), a number of researchers, assuming the practice is effective in helping

EFL learners improve the accuracy of their writing(e.g., Bitchener&Knoch,2008; Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Sheen, Wtight, &Moldava, 2009).

Bitchener and Knock (2008) in a two-month study (with 144 international and migrant ESL students in Auckland, New Zealand) investigated the extent to which different WCF options (direct corrective feedback, written and oral meta-linguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback and written metalinguistic explanation; direct corrective feedback only; no corrective feedback) help students improve their accuracy in the use of two functional uses of the English article system (referential indefinite 'a' and referential definite 'the'). The study found (1) that students who received all three WCF options outperformed those who did not receive WCF, (2) that their level of accuracy was retained over seven weeks and (3) that there was no difference in the extent to which migrant and international students improved the accuracy of their writing as a result of WCF.

Bitchener, YoungandCameron (2005) compared the effect of different direct feedback combinations typically practiced in advanced proficiency classroom settings: (1) direct error correction (placed above each error) plus oral meta-linguistic explanation in the form of 5 minute one-on-one conferences; (2) direct error correction; and (3) no corrective feedback. They used 53 adult students on three types of error (prepositions, the past simple tense, and the definite article) over a 12 week period. Group one, the full-time class of 19 participants, received direct written corrective feedback and a 5 minute student–researcher conference after each piece of writing. Group two included 17 participants, received direct written corrective feedback only. Group three included 17 participants, received no corrective feedback on the targeted features but, they were given feedback on the quality and organization of their content. The results showed no difference between the three feedback groups when the overall students' error were considered. However, with respect to the students' in any one of the grammatical categories, the study found significant differences among the groups: the feedback groups made more improvement in their writing than the no-feedback group, indicating therefore that the addition of oral meta-linguistic explanation may be the crucial factor in facilitating error reduction. This is a very limited body of evidence so further research into the effectiveness of each of these feedback categories is required if firm conclusions are to be reached.

Building on Sheen's (2007) study of the effects of written corrective feedback (CF) on the acquisition of English articles, Sheen, Wright, and Moldava (2009), investigated whether direct focused CF, direct unfocused CF and writing practice alone produced

differential effects on the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners. Using six intact adult ESL intermediate classes totaling 80 students, four groups were formed: Focused Written CF group (FG, n = 22), Unfocused Written CF group (UG, n = 23), Writing Practice Group (WPG, n = 16) and Control Group (CG, n = 19). The results indicated that all three experimental groups (FG, UG and WPG) gained in grammatical accuracy over time in all the posttests. This suggested that doing writing tasks is of value by itself. The FG achieved the highest accuracy gain scores for both articles and the other four grammatical structures (i.e., copular 'be', regular past tense, irregular past tense and preposition), followed by, in order, the WPG, UG and CG. Overall, these results suggested that unfocused CF is of limited pedagogical value whereas focused CF can contribute to grammatical accuracy in L2 writing.

A number of studies have negative view regarding the efficacy of teachers' error feedback on students' writing accuracy (Ferris&Helt, 2000; Truscott & Hsu, 2008).

Ferris and Helt (2000) examined the impact of indirect feedback across the levels of explicitness focusing on the students' self-editing ability. They investigated how explicit error feedback needed to be to help ESL writers' self-correction ability. The subjects were 75 ESL students who were enrolled in a writing class at California State University, Sacramento. They were randomly assigned to three groups: one experimental group with coded feedback, one experimental group with non-coded feedback and one control group with no feedback. It was expected that non-coded feedback would be more difficult for the students to use in correcting their texts. However, similar to the study of the Robb, Ross, and Shortreed, (1986), they found no significant difference in a 20-minute in-class self-correction activity between the coded feedback group and the group that had received non-coded feedback. They concluded that ESL teachers do not waste time using coded feedback while correcting students' errors.

Truscott and Hsu (2008) studied Forty-seven EFL graduate students, 38 males and 9 females, from a large public university in Taiwan. Learners first wrote an in-class narrative and then revised their writing during the next class. Half the students had their errors underlined and used this feedback in the revision task while the other half did the same task without feedback. Results matched those of previous studies: the underline group was significantly more successful than the control group. One week later, all students wrote a new narrative as a measure of (short-term) learning. On this measure, change in error rate from the first narrative to the second, the two groups was virtually identical. Thus, successful error reduction during revision is not a predictor of learning (at least for the uncoded corrective feedback that has typified studies in this area), as the two groups differed dramatically on the

former but were indistinguishable on the latter. Improvements made during revision are not evidence on the effectiveness of correction for improving learners' writing ability.

This study tries to shed light on the most frequent errors students make in their writings and the effect of feedbackon decreasing the error frequency. As so, this study is an effort to answer the following question.

Research Question: Are there any differences between the effects of implicit and explicit error correction on the grammatical accuracy of male EFL learners' writing?

To answer the above mentioned question the following null hypothesis was tested.

Research Hypothesis: There aren't any differences between the effects of implicit and explicit error correction on the grammatical accuracy of male EFL learners' writing.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The present study investigated the effects of teacher's explicit and implicit feedback on the grammatical accuracy of 70 (two classes) EFL high school grade three learners. They were all male and were interviewed at the beginning of the study to see whether they have already attended any English courses or not. The result of the interview indicated that none of the students had prior English experience in language institutes. Their exposure to English language was limited to high school. It is necessary to mention that non-probability, i.e. convenience sampling was used to assign students to two different groups since the random selection of students in school environments was impossible.

3.2. Target structure

Regular simple past tense was chosen as the target structure of the present study for two reasons. Firstly, learners in this grade were already familiar with and had explicit knowledge of this structure and the second reason was that the simple past tense is known to be problematic for learners and might result in errors (Doughty &Verela, 1998). So, it was hypothesized that although learners in this grade would have explicit knowledge of this structure, they would make errors in its use. The pre-test demonstrated that this was indeed the case.

3.3. Instruments

Both groups completed a pretest, an immediate post-test and a delayed post-test. These tests involved multiple choice and pictorial items. Multiple-choice items were employed in pretest to examine the homogeneity of the learners. It consisted of 25 items from which 5 items were

distracters. The immediate and delayed post-tests also included 25 pictures for each of which learners were asked to write a sentence. Like the multiple-choice tests they include 5 distracters each which were ignored at the scoring process.

3.4. Data collection procedures

The data collected for this research come from the students' involvement in the study for six sessions. To examine the homogeneity of the participants, a pretest regarding their prior knowledge was administered at the first session. In order to satisfy the homogeneity requirement, the raw scores of the performance of the participants in both groups were collected. Then the mean scores of both groups were determined. The researcher chose arbitrary 17 as a cut score. Because, as it is the case with university scoring descriptors, scores above 17 are considered to belong to advanced students. It means that students with scores above 17 at the pretesting phase, attended the class but their marks were ignored at data analysis, it was supposed that such students were advanced and didn't need feedback. 5 out of 35 had marks upper than 17.

The groups were found to be homogeneous since there was no significant difference between their performances as it was clear from T-test results run in the SPSS program. Although the main reason for giving the pretest was to assess prior knowledge of the students about the regular past form verbs, some distracters were also included to detract students' attention from purpose of the study. It is necessary to mention that the effect of distracters on the scoring process was disregarded.

Treatment sessions began from the second week in which students encountered a number of pictorial tests and were asked to write a sentence for any picture. Two different kinds of feedback were provided in administering the research, direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback. Whereas direct corrective feedback took the form of identifying both the error and the target form (example 1), indirect corrective feedback only pointed to the error (example 2).Students were already informed with codes, for example i.t. stood for incorrect tense.

Example 1: Direct(explicit) corrective feedback

My brother ~~listen~~to the radio yesterday.

Example 2: Indirect(implicit) corrective feedback

 She wash the dishes yesterday.

The instructor collected the papers after each treatment session and provided the relevant type of feedback. Having done this, the teacher gave them back to the students and informed them of their errors. At the fifth session a posttest was administered. Two weeks

later a delayed posttest was administered by the teacher which was the final test to be given. The purpose of this test was to see if the students' gain remained constant over time or not. Like the treatment sessions, the posttest and delayed posttest included pictorial test items. They consisted of 25 pictures each from which 5 pictures needed past forms of irregular verbs to be answered correctly. These items were disregarded at the scoring process as they were included only to prevent students from discovering the purpose of the study.

4. Results

This section presents the results of investigating the extent to which different types ofcorrective feedback on targeted linguistic errors helped learners improve the accuracy oftheir writing when producing new texts.The descriptive statistics for the accuracy measurement of each group on each of the three testoccasions are presented in Tables below.

Table 1, bellow shows the standard deviations and mean scores of two groups at pre-testing phase through which it is possible to make judgments about the homogeneity of the groups.Since the means and variances of two groups are very close to each other, we can conclude that groups are homogeneous.

According to Table 2, the obtained value for the mean of explicit group is 13.30 and the standard deviation is 1.93. The obtained value of mean for the implicit group is 11.73 and its standard deviation is 2.04. The explicit group's high mean value indicates the better performance of the participants in this group. Additionally, the low standard deviation of the explicit group represents the superiority of the explicit group's performance in the posttest.

Table 1 Group Statistics for accuracy measurement of pre-test

case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	P
Explicit	30	10.1667	1.68325	-1.006	58	.319
Implicit	30	10.5667	1.38174			

Table 2 Group Statistics for accuracy measurement of post-test

case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	P
Explicit	30	13.3000	1.93248	3.046	58	.003
Implicit	30	11.7333	2.04995			

Table 3 below, shows the means and standard deviations of the two groups at delayed posttest are 12.83, 11.46 and 1.68, 1.81 respectively. It is necessary to mention that both the implicit and explicit groups in this study showed improvement from the pretest to the posttest and delayed posttest, with greater gain in the explicit groups. Therefore, we cannot deny the beneficial effects of using explicit feedback in the classroom for L2 grammar acquisition.

Table 3 Group Statistics for accuracy measurement of delayed post-test

case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	P
Explicit	30	12.8333	1.68325	3.025	58	.004
Implicit	30	11.4667	1.81437			

5. Discussion

It was mentioned earlier that a large number of scholars believe that providing feedback is necessary for the learners if promoting and maintaining the learners' progress is desired. They argue that mere exposure of learners to comprehensible input is insufficient to promote the learners' progress. There should be some techniques to draw learners' attention to disparity between the features of target language and learners' interlanguage in order to obviate learnability problems while acquiring l2. One of these techniques is corrective feedback. The positive effect of corrective feedback on learners' skill development has already been emphasized. However, what has remained the issue of much debate among the researchers is the degree of explicitness of such feedback in different settings. The effects of Implicit and explicit type of feedback were investigated in this study in terms of learners' written performance. The findings of many studies have revealed that the more explicit the corrective feedback in a foreign setting, the more accuracy would result in the learners' written performance. Now, taking into account the findings of those researches, the findings of this study can be explained.

According to the results of an independent t-test discussed in the previous chapter, a significant difference was found between the two groups. It was hypothesized that there was no difference between implicit and explicit feedback concerning their effects on the accuracy of male EFL learners' writing, but as the findings indicate this hypothesis is wrong. In other words, the findings showed that explicit feedback group outperformed implicit feedback group in noticing and learning linguistic features.

This study is in line with those studies which reported the positive effect of corrective feedback on error and that it can help the learners improve the accuracy of their writing (e.g., Bitchener&Knoch, 2010; Chandler, 2003;Ferris&Roberts, 2001; Sheen, 2007; Sheen, Wtight, &Moldava, 2009). However, it is in contrast with those which reported the inefficacy of written corrective feedback (e.g., Ferris &Helt, 2000; Truscott & Hsu, 2008).

What was found in this study is somehow different from those of Ferris and Robberts (2001) and Chandler (2003). In Ferris and Roberts' study three groups were examined with different feedback treatment. One group received feedback on their writing through codes. The errors of the other group were just underlined but with no codes or labels. The third group received no feedback. They found that there was a significant difference between no feedback group and two other groups. But there was no significant difference between codified and no-code groups.

At the second study Chandler (2003) with two treatment groups examined how error correction should be done. Should a teacher correct errors or mark errors for student self-correction? Findings are that both direct correction and simple underlining of errors are significantly superior to describing the type of error. Direct correction is best for producing accurate revisions, and students prefer it because it is the fastest and easiest way for them as well as the fastest way for teachers over several drafts.

6. Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

The study found that both of the groups who received WCF significantly improved their accuracy in using the targeted function of the English past tense (ed) and that they almost retained this level of accuracy when filling a new test two weeks after the immediate post-test. By looking at the descriptive statistics related to three testing events it is clear that the mean accuracy scores increased substantially from time 1 to time 2 (i.e., from pre-test to post-test), and only there was a very small decline in the effect for feedback on the delayed post-test. However, it should be noted that this reduction in the effect is not too big to refute this interpretation.

Although it is necessary to be cautious in generalizing our findings to other areas of related concern because of the limited scope of our study, the following implications are presented. First, teachers should feel confident about providing written corrective feedback on their students' linguistic errors.Secondly, language teachers in EFL settings are recommended to relinquish implicit feedback for low-proficient learners. Instead, they are

advised to provide learners with explicit feedback because, as was concluded in this study, explicit feedback is more effective for acquiring structural rules. The importance of student motivation in the learning process is well understood.

As the first limitation, this study was exclusively carried out with male students. The second limitation of this study relates to the sampling of subjects. Since, it was impossible for the current researcher to randomly select and assign subjects to different groups, intact groups or convenience sampling procedure was used. As a third limitation it is necessary to mention that the present study examined the effects of corrective feedback on just the past regular form of the English verbs and apparently its results cannot be generalized to other areas of grammatical accuracy.

References

Allen, J. P. &Corder, S. Pit.(1974). Techniques in applied linguistics. London and New York: Oxford University Press, p177.

Bitchener, J., &Knoch, U. (2008). The value of written corrective feedback for migrant and international students. *Language Teaching Research Journal, 12*(3), 409–431.

Bitchener, J., &Knoch, U. (2010). The contribution of written corrective feedback to language development: A ten month investigation. *Applied Linguistics, 31*(2), 193–214.

Bitchener, J., Young, S., Cameron, D. (2005). The effect of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing.*Journal of Second Language Writing 14*, 191–205.

Chandler, J. (2003). The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 12*, 267–296.

Doughty, C., &Verela, E. (1998).*Focus on form in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Falhasiri, M., Tavakoli, M., Hasiri, F., &Mohammadzadeh, A. (2011). The Effectiveness of Explicit and Implicit Corrective Feedback on Interlingual and Intralingual Errors: A Case of Error Analysis of Students' Compositions. *English Language Teaching, 3*, 251-264.

Ferris, D. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing, 8*, 1–11.

Ferris, D. R., &Hedgcock, J. S. (1998). *Teaching ESL composition: Purpose, process, & practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ferris, D. R., &Helt, M. (2000). Was Truscott right*? New evidence on the effects of error correction in L2 writing classes.* Paper presented at the American Association of Applied Linguistics Conference, Vancouver, B.C.

Ferris, D. R., & Roberts, B. (2001). Error feedback in L2 writing classes. How explicit does it need to be? *Journal of Second Language Writing, 10*(3), 161–184.

Hyland, K., Hyland, F. (2006).Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching 39*, 83–101.

Robb, T., Ross, S., &Shortreed, I. (1986). Salience of feedback on error and its effect on EFL writing quality. *TESOL Quarterly, 20*, 83–91.

Sheen, Y. (2007). The effect of focused written corrective feedback and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles. *TESOL Quarterly 41* (2), 255–283.

Sheen, Y., Wright, D., &Moldawa, A. (2009).Differential effects of focused and unfocused written correction on the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners.*System, 37*, 556–569.

Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning, 46*, 327–369.

Truscott, J. (1999). The case for ''The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes'': A response to Ferris. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 8*, 111–122.

Truscott, J. (2007). The effect of error correction on learners' ability to write accurately.*Journal of Second Language Writing, 16*, 255–272.

Truscott, J., Hsu, A.Y. (2008). Error correction, revision, and learning.*Journal of Second Language Writing 17*, 292-305.

Title

Investigating four aspects of the Muqatta'at letters translation

Authors

Sima Ferdowsi (lecturer)
Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran

Samira Heydari (B.A)
Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran

Effat Soltani (B.A)
Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran

Biodata

Sima Ferdowsi is a lecturer of translation at Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran. Her research interests include interpretation, audiovisual translation, and translation for children.

Samira Heydari is a B.A student of English translation of Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran. Her research interests include religious texts translation, clinical linguistics and behavioral studies.

Effat Soltani is a student of English translation of Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran. Her research interests include children literature translation, behavioral studies and whispered interpreting.

Abstract

A translator, who attempts to translate the great the Holy Quran, may encounter some parts which cause obstacle in translation process. The Muqatta'at letters are among these parts, whose real and certain meaning is hidden even now. However the translator has to transfer them and while trying, he/she considers different points. This paper set out to examine four different dimensions in these letters' translation. For so, first the Muqatta'at letters were identified. Then three of the best the Holy Quran translations, done by Pickthall (1930), Saffarzade (2001) and UsufAli (1934) and also the most complete present exegesis of the Muqatta'at by Max.Q (2008) were recognized and gathered and the proposed equivalences for the Muqatta'at were marked. Then dynamic and formal equivalence theory of Nida (1964a) and narrative theory of Baker (2010) were applied on their translations. Moreover, the employed translation strategies and whether considering them as Muhkamat or Mutashabihat were investigated. The analysis

demonstrated that formal translation was the most common translation and footnote was the most common strategy. The Muqatta'at were mostly considered as Mutashabihat. Also public and disciplinary narrative, were the most applicable ones. Personal narrative had the third level and meta narrative was the last acceptable one.

Keywords: the Muqatta'at, translation, Muhkam/Mutashabih, dynamic/formal, strategy, narrative

1. Introduction

1.1 Religious Texts

Religious Texts are known as Scripture, Scriptures, Holy write, or Holy books. Generally speaking, all religious texts are somehow related to a special religion. They can be divided into two groups; the first group refers to the texts that are just related to different points of various religions, but the second group contains that sort of texts which are considered as sacred texts. These books or texts are known as *Holy books* for the believers of some special religious. They are regarded as the unique books which were revealed on the prophets. Bible, Scripture and the Holy Quran fall in this category.

As an example a book written about Bible is stated in the first group but the Bible itself belongs to the second group. Another religious text is the Holy Quran; it is written in Arabic and is followed by the believers of Islam. "The word The Holy Quran itself means recitation and the surahs are in fact meant for oral recitation, with many written in rhyming prose" (Baker,1998. p. 200). This great book contains 6236 verses (Ayahs) that is formed of 114 chapters (surahs) and 30 Juz (es).

1.2 The Holy Quran Definition

The Holy Quran is known as the word of God and it is regarded as an immortal linguistic miracle and based on a verse of it, no one can bring even a surah like it

"و ان كنتم في ريب مما نزلنا علي عبدنا فاتوا بسوره من مثله" (Al Bagharah surah, Ayah, 23). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) received it during his life. It was the linguistic and the main miracle of the Muslim's prophet, because at the time of revealing the Holy Quran, Arab people (among whom the Holy Quran was sent down) were masters of oratory, and the rhetoric had significant importance among them. Consequently, by the revelation no one was able to compete with it. Muslims consider the Holy Quran as a sacred text as it is the divine words of God. It is revealed in Arabic and different scientific, semantic, lilting and other

aspects of it are considered as indicators of being a miracle. At the time of revelation, people could just recognize some limited miraculous aspects of the Holy Quran, like its rhetorical power, but by passing the time and developing the science, step by step, we can understand the scientific miraculous aspects of this great book.

1.3 The Holy Quran Translatability and Its Translation Legitimacy

The Holy Quran translatability & its translation legitimacy have been two inseparable questions. Although in historical turns translation of the hadith had been permissible but rendering of the Holy Quran had been illegitimate. Even today there are some assumptions based on which, any the Holy Quran translation is being done illegitimately and is being refused. According to Andalus-born Imam Shatby (c.1133-93) the Holy Quran is untranslatable. He suggested there are some specific senses in the Arabic Holy Quran that cause useless attempting in translating it. Many believe that if the Holy Quran is translatable it must be translated by Muslims and all the translations should be (1) between quotation marks (2) written in graphic marker to shows that it is used for a unique context (Baker, 1998).

> One significant result of these views and the strength in which they are held is that non-Arab Muslims, for example Indian Muslims, have to learn to read and recite the Holy Quran in Arabic. If and when used, translation would function merely as a commentary, explaining or paraphrasing the source text but not replacing it. (Baker, 1998, p. 201).

The preference that had been given to the Muslims, in comparison with non-Muslims, for translating the Holy Quran, moved forward and brought this opinion that translating the Holy Quran by non-Arab Muslim is a kind of paraphrasing or understanding. Abu Hanifa (c.700-67) declared that translating the Holy Quran into another language is permitted but "it wasn´t lawful to put the whole together in one volume unless the Arabic text was placed opposite the translation" (Pickthall, 1931, p. 422).

In Christians' opinion the Bible is Bible, no matter in which language it is. But Muslims don´t have the same belief. They suggest that only the Arabic Holy Quran is *The Holy Quran,* as it is the divine words, but translations of the Holy Quran in all other languages are *Just* translation and nothing more. They opine that no translation, in any language, can convey all aspects of this great miracle. Even if we try to find a special equivalent which transfers the naturalness of the source text, again we must expect "less in semantic content" (Newmark, 1982, p. 42). As mentioned in Baker (1998), Tibawi (1962, p. 4) believed that "every

alphabet. Always they have been regarded mysterious and Muslim commentators have provided just some conjectures about them, but no one could get their certain and exact meaning and it shows the inability of human in their definite deciphering. Muqatta´at letters are treated as the points which differentiate the Holy Quran from all other sacred books, since they are stated as some Mystic letters that have been valued as some mysteries between God and his prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him). Muqatta'at letters are of one to five letters, so in this aspect they can be divided to 5 groups:

1) Three surahs start with 1 Muqatta'at

Table 1: one letter Muqatta'at

Number of the surah	Name of the surah	The Muqatta'at letters
38	tSuaad	tSuaad
50	Quaaf	Quaaf
68	Al-Qalam	Noon

2) Nine surahs start with 2 Muqatta´at

Table2: two letters Muqatta'at

Number of the surah	Name of the surah	The Muqatta'at letters
20	dTa-Ha	dTa-Ha
27	Al-Naml	dTa-Seen
36	Ya-Sin	Ya-Seen
40	Al- Mu'min	Ha- Meem
41	Fosselat	Ha- Meem
43	Al-Zukhruf	Ha –Meem
44	Al-Dukhan	Ha Meem
45	Al-Jaseya	Ha Meem
46	Al-Ahqaf	Ha Meem

3) Thirteen surahs start with 3 Muqatta´at

Table3: Three letters Muqatta'at

Number of the surah	Name of the surah	The Muqatta'at letters
2	Al-Baqara	Alif Laam Meem
3	Ale-Imran	Alif Laam Meem
10	Yunus	Alif Laam Ra
11	Hud	Alif Laam Ra
12	Yusuf	Alif Laam Ra
14	Ibrahim	Alif Laam Ra

15	Al-Hijr	Alif laam Ra
26	Al-shoara	dTa Seen Meem
28	Al-Qasas	dTa Seen Meem
29	Al-Ankaboot	Alif laam Meem
30	Al-Room	Alif laam Meem
31	Luqman	Alif Laam Meem
32	Al-Sajda	Alif Laam Meem

4) Two surahs start with 4 Muqatta'at

Table 4: Four letters Muqatta'at

Number of the surah	*Name of the surah*	*The Muqatta'at letters*
7	Al-Aaraaf	Alif Laam Meem tSuaad
13	Al-Rad	Alif Laam Meem Ra

5) Two surahs start with 5 Muqatta'at

Table5: Five letters Muqatta'at

Number of the surah	Name of the surah	The Muqatta'at letters
19	Maryam	Kaaf Ha Ya Ain tSaad
42	Al-Shuraa	Ha Meem Ain Seen Quaaf

1.5 Theories and exegeses about the Muqatta'at indication

1.5.1 Allama Tabatabaee (1988) expressed his suggestion as so: considering the surahs start with the Muqatta´at, we can recognize that those which start with the same cryptic letters, have the same or similar subjects. For example, the surahs which start with *Ha meem(حم)*, immediately the sentence (تنزيل الكتاب من الله) *or* something with the same meaning would appear; or in the surahs which start with *Alif Laam Ra(الر)*, the second sentence is (تلك ايات الكتاب) or something with the same meaning; or the surahs which start with *Alif Laam Meem(الم)*, would follow by (ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه) or something with the same meaning. Regarding this point, there is possibility on being a special correlation between the Muqatta'at and the content of the surahs; as it can be seen that content of the surah *Al- Aaraaf* starting with (المص), has the comprehensive content of surahs start with (الم) and the surah (ص). Of course this correlation is extremely deeper than something that was said.

1.5.2 It may refer to this point that this great miracle, with which no one can compete, is made of these letters that are available for all people, but the use of them in the Holy Quran is in the way that causes human to kowtow in front of it. As we see there is a verse in it which calls people to bring a surah like it, but till now all were incapable.

1.5.3 It may be suggested that some of these letters may refer to some special names of God and some may refer to the name of Islam's prophet and it is mentioned in some of Islamic hadithes.

1.5.4 They are some oaths of God based on which, it can be understood that the Holy Quran is a divine book.

1.5.5 They are actually some mysteries between God and his prophet.

1.5.6 They are to aware the prophet, of divine revelation and also to make distinction among The Holy Quran and human sayings.

1.6 Farahi's theory about the Muqatta'at meaning based on their linguistic roots

It is said that the letters can be the name of their surahs. The Arabic literature before Islam, confirms this view. But the question is that why the surahs are so called. Scholars have had researches about it but among them farahi (D:1930 AD) had a more plausible theory. As known, Arabic Alphabet is derived from Hebrew Alphabet, whose roots were in the alphabet used in ancient Arabia. Farahi (undated) believed that this mother alphabet, not only represents some phonetic sounds but also like Chinese language, they can be used as the symbols of the object or the meaning to which they refer; then the early Egyptians used them and based on their own concepts they found the Hieroglyphic script. The glyphs of these scripts can be seen in the Egyptian pyramid´s tables. However some of these letters have kept their meanings till now and the way they are written represent their past forms. For example, the letter *Alif* was used to represent the meaning of cow and it was shown by a cow´s head. The letter *Ba* was called Beth in Hebrew and means Bayt (house), Jim was pronounced Gimel and meant Jamal (camel), Ta means serpent and was written in serpent shape. *Mim* means water wave and has a similar writing. Farahi (undated) believed that surah *Nun* is in support of his theory. From the past till now *Nun* has represented the meaning of fish. In this surah the prophet Jonah is named (*Sahibul-Hut*), as he was swallowed by a whale. Farahi (undated) dictated based on this reference, this surah is called Nun. So, he stated that these letters were placed at the beginning of these surahs to represent the relationship between the topic of surah and their ancient connotation. Some names of other The Holy Quran surahs support Farahi´s theory. The surah *Ta-Ha* starts with *Ta* which symbolizes a serpent. Reading the surah, the story of Moses and his stick which was transformed to a snake is represented. Other surahs like *Al-Naml* with (Ta Seen) and *Al-Shoora* with (Ta Seen Meem), which are actually initiated by the letter *Ta,* recall this miraculous episode. Surah Baqarah is another example. It begins with *Alif* which means cow (as was mentioned before). Reviewing this surah, we can recognize that the anecdote of a cow and sacrificing it, are contained within. Also similarity in construction style and topic between the surahs, begin with the same Muqatta'at, is another significant point. For example, the basic content of all surahs initiate

with *Alif* is Tawhid (monotheism). It is also important to know that the letter *Alif* represents Allah, the one and Alone.

1.7 Muqatta'at translatability or untranslatability

Wolfram Wilss (2001, p. 49) stated:

> Translatability of a text is thus guaranteed by the existence of universal categories in syntax, semantics and the (natural) logic of experience… . Linguistic untranslatability occurs when the linguistic form has a function beyond that of conveying factual relationships and is therefore a constituent part of functional equivalence to be achieved.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (2011) is an Indian Muslim scholar and the founder of the centre for Peace and Spirituality International. He is also one of the translators of the Holy Quran into English. As mentioned in Baker (1998), He verbalized that the Holy Quran is the word of Allah, the creator of human, and it is revealed for all mankind, so it is needed to be translated to all languages. He suggested that except for Huruf Muqatta'at, all verses of The Holy Quran are translatable (www.ahl-ul-bayt.org). In Abdul-Rauf (2001) it is observed that Massy (1996) called them Mystery letters and in translation considered marginal note within which explanation and illumination in T.L has a significant importance. Abdul-Rauf (2001) also mentioned that Ali (1983, p. 17) wrote a note and called reader´s attention to the appendix to deal with Muqatta'at. He also enlightened the reader that the cryptics' exact meaning is with God. Abdol-Rauf (2001) suggested that Al-Hilali and khan (1983, p. 3) utilized within- the text- note. However, House mentioned that "cryptic letters can be regarded as part of Meta language, therefore they can´t be translated but they can only be Meta translated" (1973, p. 167); in other words they must be kept in transliterated forms in the target text.

1.8 The main problem

The main focus of this paper is on translation of the Muqatta'at letters. This article is going to investigate whether the translators considered them as Muhkamat or Mutashabihat, whether their translation is dynamic or formal, which narratives can be applied on them and which translation strategies are used. These four aspects are examined in three translations of the Holy Quran and an interpretation of the cryptic letters. The researchers examined these aspects since there has not been any study in this field, so it may make this article worth to review.

2. Theoretical discussion

2.1 THE HOLY QURAN TRANSLATION THEORIES

There is a significant increase in the number of the Holy Quran translations into English. Knowing the Holy Quran as a sacred and great book, each translation has the elements of insufficiency in itself. Cohen (1962) stated that the demand of translating every great book in a century is necessary, as it is to suit the undergo transformation in standards of generation, which will be varied from the past samples. The same thing is vocalized by Lefever (1977), as he believed that different adjustments are needed during various ages.

There are two types of The Holy Quran translation: the first one is semantic translation which considers the Arabic language of the Holy Quran in some literal word order. Abdul-Raof (2001) stated that Translators such as Bell (1973), Pickthall (1969), Arberry (1980), Asad (1980) and Ali (1983) followed this procedure. These literal translators have adopted "an approach to translation that allowed the source language to have dominance over the target language" (Welch, 1990, p. 272). In the second group a communicative translation is prepared such as translations by Akbar (1978), Irving (1985) and Turner (1997).

2.2 Some of the Holy Quran translation strategies: A group of scholars like Hatim and Mason (1990) dictated that in translating the holy books, utilizing footnote is sensible, but in contrast to them some other scholars did not favor using footnotes. Marginal note, paraphrasing, over translation and some other strategies are also proposed. On the Muqatta'at as a part of the Holy Quran, some of these strategies can be applied.

2.3 Muhkamat and Mutashabihat: In the great The Holy Quran there are two kinds of verses. The verses whose meaning is clear and certain based on its words, these are called Muhkamat and the verses whose words do not show the meaning are called Mutashabihat.

2.4 Nida's Translation methods: As stated in Munday (2008), two translation methods proposed by Nida (1964a) are known as Dynamic equivalent and Formal equivalent. Dynamic equivalent is regarded as sense for sense translation and Formal equivalent is known as word for word translation.

2.5 Narrative theory: Based on what Baker (2010) said, there are four types of narrative which are known as Personal, Public, Disciplinary and Meta narrative.

3. Procedure

The four main theoretical frameworks, whose applying on the Muqatta'at letters would be examined, will be stated as follow:

● **THE HOLY QURAN TRANSLATION STRATEGIES:** Paraphrase, within- the text-note and marginal note are among the mentioned Quran translation strategies**.** Since the Holy Quran is considered as an essential text, instead of using paraphrase or over-translation, using footnotes is suggested. As quoted in Abdul-Rauf (2001), paraphrase "labors its way through an accumulation of loosely defined details, vacillating between a cumbersome 'too much' and a tormenting 'too little' " (Schleiermacher, 1813, p. 90). So, translators use footnotes "as a concession to communicative requirement" (Hatim & Mason, 1990, p. 18). Abdol-Rauf (2001) suggested that this use of footnotes have been viewed in the translations of , Schwarz (1955), Nida (1964), Beekman, Callow (1974) Nida and Reyburn(1981), Barnnovell (1983), Larson (1984), Newmark (1988), Samic (1990), Boseworth and Richardson (1991) and Farghal (1993). However, some scholars haven't used footnote in the translation of sensitive books such as the Bible. Based on Abdul-Rauf (2001), Albrektson (1978) did not favour a great deal of using commentaries or footnotes while translating the Bible. According to Abdul-Rauf (2001), Minkoff (1988, p. 37) proposed that footnotes "may be intrusive". He also mentioned that Newmark (1974a) at first disagreed with using footnotes in translation, but his idea changed in 1988. Thus, using footnotes in translating sensitive texts like the Holy Quran is a sensible strategy which helps to provide a real communicative translation. Abdul-Rauf (2001) also stated that Samic (1990) suggested "commentaries are useful for the comprehension of the text of the Holy Quran" (p. 210). It must be mentioned that in a more precise discussion, "cryptic letters can be regarded as part of *Meta language*, therefore they cannot be translated but they can only be *Meta translated*" (House, 1973, p.167). In other words, we keep them in transliterated forms in the target text. Since the Muqatta'at are among the significant parts of the Holy Quran, for their translation some of the Holy Quran translation strategies can be employed.

● **Muhkamat and Mutashabihat;** Regarding Muhkamat or Mutashabihat, some scholars have considered these Muqatta'at Huruf in the category of Mutashabihat, whose perception is only for God. The Holy Quran itself says something about Mutashabihat; in surah (Ale-Imran, verses5-7):

> *Nothing in the earth or the heavens is hidden from Allah; it is he who shapes you in the wombs of your mothers as he wills. There is no deity but him, the Al-Mighty the Al-Wise. It is he who sent down this book for you. There are 2 kinds of verses in this book: **Muhkamat**, which are the essence of the book,*

*and the others **Mutashabihat**. Those that are perverse of heart always go after the Mutashabihat in pursuit of mischief and try to interpret them arbitrarily; whereas in fact none, save Allah, knows their real meaning. In contrast to them, those who posses sound knowledge say: we believe in them because all of them are from our Lord and the fact is that only the people of insight can learn lessons from such things (www.123muslim.com. Huruf-e-Muqatta'at. Parag. 4).*

But Allama Tabatabaee's opinion (undated) is in contrast to the mentioned suggestion, as he expressed that being Muhkam or Mutashabih is the quality of the verses. When the word indicates the meaning, the verse is Muhkam, but if the word does not indicate the meaning, it is Mutashabih. Also he suggested that exegesis «Ta'vil» is not defining the verse, but it refers to the real truths in which the Holy Quranic matters' root is, whether being Muhkam or Mutashabih. So, it can be interpreted that neither the Muqatta'at letters nor their meanings «Ta'vil» are of the Quranic Mutashabihat (researchers' translation). Based on his idea, it can be suggested that the meaning of these letters is not allocated to the God and also human can achieve their meaning.

● **Dynamic And formal Equivalence:** Base on munday(2008), Nida (1964a), whose work is known by his experience in the Bible translation, has announced two terms for methods of translation which are named "dynamic equivalence" and "formed equivalence". Although these equivalences have been expressed for the Bible rendering, they can be executable for any translation. "Rhetorical" was the original name which Nida (1964a) allocated to the dynamic equivalence. Munday (2008, p. 42) stated "dynamic or functional equivalence is based on what Nida calls "the principal of equivalent effect", where "the relationship between receptor and massage should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the massage". According to this definition the target text property should entirely reflect the same effect on the reader as source text has on its readers, which as in munday(2008) was stated, Nida (1964a) knew as "naturalness". Then he continued that Nida quoted "formal equivalence focuses attention on the massage itself, in both form and content… . One is concerned that the massage in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language" (2008, p. 42). Formal equivalence points to the source text and structure of source text itself, both form and content are emphasized for delivering the message of the text. It is the source text structure which strongly influences in choosing the most accurate and correct translation. Based on whether the original grammatical structure or the readability of translation in the target

language is important, dynamic or formal equivalence can be selected. Also it is worth to say that Dynamic equivalence doesn´t reflect the grammatical structure of the original text. Sometimes it is used when the readability of translation is more important than the preservation of the original grammatical structure. As it can be seen in rendering a novel, the dynamic equivalence is being used to have the possibility of a well- reading, but formal equivalence is being used in business in or diplomacy settings, because it is believed that the translator can be faithful to the grammatical structures.

● **Narrative theory:** The next theory is Baker's**.** Based on what Baker (2010) declared, narrative theory suggests that the unit of analysis is an entire narrative, which is known as a concrete story of some world's aspects. It is completed with characters, settings, outcomes or projected outcomes and plot. An analysis model based on this theoretical framework lets you examine the elaboration of a narrative in an individual or several text(s) or event(s), as well as across different media. Narratives are somehow known as stories which are told about the world, which supply human's main connections with the world. Narrative theory splits them into four types: personal, public, disciplinary and meta narrative. Personal narratives are about significant people and if becoming popular, most people around the world would be interested to read them. Some biographies and autobiographies fall in to this classification. The second group are public narratives which are circulated among society or institutions, like: activists groups, the media, the nations… . Disciplinary narratives have the object of enquiry in a scholarly field, like scholars of translation who express narratives about various aspects of translation. The last group are Meta narratives; potent public narrative that persists over long periods of time and influences the lives of people across a wide range of setting.

3.1Corpus selection procedure

The materials used in this paper contain three translations of the Holy Quran, which were translated by Pickthall (1930), Saffarzade (2001) and UsufAli (1934), and also an exegesis of the Muqatta'at letters by Max.Q (2008). The reason for choosing these three translations is that, they are among the best and the most significant the Holy Quran translations; as, the translation of the Holy Quran done by Pickthall is known as a modern translation. Also it was the suggestion of some non Arab Muslims that the Holy Quran translation done by Saffarzade, can be known as one of the best translations, which is, in comparison with lots of the Holy Quran translations, easy to comprehend. It can be proposed that the translation of UsufAli is one of the recent translations which could cause in giving the newest details and information, where needed. This translation is widely used in many English-speaking countries and it was the most popular translation before 1999. So, the researchers thought

that in these three translations, there may be the most details and explanations in every part that is needed, especially about the cryptic letters, which cause the audience to comprehend more of this great book. Also, the exegesis under investigation was the most complete and recent found interpretation of the Muqatta'at letters. Regarding these points, the researchers were inspired to examine the above mentioned theories on each of these translations.

3.2 Data collection procedure

The following steps were taken to accumulate and analyze the data. First, three of the best the Holy Quran translations were identified and gathered. Second, the Muqatta'at letters were recognized and their given explanations, in the mentioned translations were examined. Then the most complete and detailed exegesis given for the cryptic letters was identified and studied. After that, different Holy Quran translation strategies were recognized. Moreover, the theory of Muhkam and Mutashabih, whether in the Holy Quran itself or in the scholars' opinions, was identified and discussed. Realizing Nida's theory (1964a) quoted in Munday's book (2008) was the next step. Also different types of narrative suggested by Mona Baker (2010) were realized. Finally, all of them were examined and applied on the all mentioned translations.

3.3 Data analysis procedure

Studying Pickthall's translation (1930), it was observed that in the first surah which starts with the Muqatta'at letters, he utilized the footnote strategy in which it was just written: "Three letters of Arabic alphabet. Many surahs begin thus with letters of alphabet. Opinions differ as to their significance, the prevalent view being that they indicate some mystic words. Some have opined that they are merely the initials of the Scribe. They are always included in the text and recited as part of it" (1930, p. 6).

The second translation under study is by Saffarzadeh (2001). Here it can be seen that like Pickthall, she used the footnote strategy but with a different writing. In the surah Bagharah, the reader's attention is attracted to the footnote with this content: Abbreviated letters "Al-Muqatta'at" symbol the divine letters, the meaning of which, are known only to Allah. There are 29 surahs which have abbreviated letters prefixed to them. They are regarded as part of each surah; however, the imaginary interpretation of these letters is regarded forbidden. (2001, p. 5)

Now it can be interpreted that in both of the above translations, the translators have vocalized a too short explanation about the cryptic letters and no meaning is suggested. UsufAli (1934) in his translation which, in comparison with the previous two translations, had the most details and information again used footnote strategy, but in the footnote he

referred to the appendix in which, there was an explanation about what these letters are. Then, he had mentioned all the Muqatta'at in Arabic and English, divided to the groups of one to five letters. As it follows, he expressed that the combination of some of the abbreviated letters occur in a series of consecutive chapters; for example Ha-Meem (حم) is seen in 7 consecutive surahs from 40 to 46. Then, he brought the idea that those surahs start with the same Muqatta'at, may have the same content. He also spoke about a little more details, which cannot be considered as a nearly complete meaning. Generally, it can be expressed that all the tree translators have also followed Houses' theory (1973), as all of them by employing meta translation, just transliterated them and they did not decipher them. In the fourth source that is an exegesis of the cryptic letters by Max.Q, it can be seen that as it is out of the whole text of the Holy Quran, its writer did not use the footnote, marginal note etc, instead of that, he suggested the most complete exegesis for all of the Muqatta'at letters. For example in front of the first Muqatta'at letters of the Holy Quran (الم), he wrote:

Table 6: Alif-lam-Meem interpretation by Max.Q (2008)

Alif Laam Meem Consider the following glyphs: Alif- Alep- Phoenician symbol= Ox- strong/ Fervent Laam-Laamed-Phoenician symbol= Goad: Used to guide- Guidance Meem- Mem- Phoenician symbol= Water- Clear, Nourishing and Flowing Combining the meaning of the above symbols with the context of the whole The Holy Quran, and the acronymistic meaning presented by Raghib, the following picture can be rendered: **Alif. Laam. Mim.** The stage is set! Allah – the God, Latif – the unfathomable, Majeed – the Magnificient, knows and understands your needs, and bestows upon you a Fervent Guidance that is clear! The perfect tool – set: An ox, a goad and water. Using ALM, run your plough (Life) through the ground (this world) and sow your seeds (deeds) to earn the harvest (paradise)! And then follows, This is the code in which there is absolutely no doubt concerning authority (and authenticity). It is a Guide for all those who wish to journey through life in true honor and security.	الم ذلک الکتاب لا ریب فیه هدی للمتقین

To read the whole exegesis for all the Muqatta'at letters suggested by Max.Q, the reader can refer to the table 7 in the appendix of this article.

So, it is clear that Max.Q (2008) followed none of the strategies, as it is out of the whole text of the Holy Quran, and instead he tried to find some equivalent meaning for them.

Regarding Muhkamat and Mutashabihat discussion, it can be deduced that based on what Pickthall (1930), Saffarzade (2001) and UsufAli (1934) wrote in their footnotes and also as they did not proposed any meaning for the cryptic letters, all of them considered these letters as Mutashabihat. The only one, who has considered these letters as the Quranic Muhkamat, is Max.Q. So he may have followed Allama's opinion or he has agreed with his idea.

Moreover, the theory of dynamic and formal equivalence by Nida (1964) can be applied on these data. For translating the Muqatta'at letters, Pickthall, Saffarzade and UsufAli has transliterated them. For example, it was observed that in front of (نون) the transliteration form (*Noon*) was written. Now it can be proposed that it is a kind of formal translation, as it is somehow like word by word translation. However in the translation of Max.Q (2008), it is noticed that the translator identified and accumulated the meaning of ancient Phoenician symbols, Arabic symbols, some scholars' theories, etc; and then by combining them, he tried to decipher them. While reading this interpretation, the audience who may be one from another culture, religion or race, may understand something that in the past has been part of the Arabic culture. So, the target text may have the same effect on the target reader as the source text may have on the source text reader.

On the next step, regarding the narrative theory of Baker (2010) and based on the transliteration that Pickthall, Saffarzadeh and UsufAli have done, it can be inferred that the personal narrative may be applicable on their translation as they may have known these letters as something about or related to God or the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Public narrative can also be applicable since these translations have been circulated among a large group of people, whether Muslims or non Muslims and each may have had different comments, ideas or suggestions, whether in favor of their translations or not. Disciplinary narrative is the next applicable item, as all of these translators have followed the theory of Hatim and Mason (1990), as they have utilized footnote. But in the application of the last narrative, meta narrative, there is no certainty, as transliteration may or may not confirm to be the true translation strategy and if it confirms to be true, it would persist from then on. Considering the proposed interpretation of the Muqatta'at letters by Max.Q and Regarding the first type of narrative , Personal narrative, it can be said that applying this narrative on this exegesis, is possible; as personal narrative is about a significant person and some of these

interpretations are about someone special like(يس) that the audience is specifically prophet Muhammad, but it is needed to say that the audience of some of them like (الم) is all the human kind, not a specific person.

The second type of narrative, public narrative, is applicable here; as in its definition, Baker (2010) said that it is a kind, which circulates among a group of people. Also it is observed that this exegesis is demonstrated on the Net, and lots of people have read it, as they put their comments on it. But all did not have the same opinions. Some endorsed him; expressing some sentences authenticates it, like: "are you he who rose from ashes?" But some disagreed with him or even some denounced him, as their comments demonstrate it, like: "you kafir, how dare you try to do a bid'aat. Trying to find their meanings is hara'am and the finder is going to hell".

Disciplinary narrative is the third type. As it was remarked, different scholars' opinions fall into this classification. This narrative is also applicable. Since it was stated that some scholars verbalized that human cannot propose any meaning for them. In contrast to them, was Allama Tabatabaee' opinion, who expressed that these letters are not of The Holy Quranic Mutashabihat, so human can introduce some interpretations for them. Now it is totally clear that Max.Q (2008) was in line with Allama or followed him; since by combining the Arabic and Phoenician symbols and the theories of some scholars like Farahi, he delineated this exegesis.

Finally the last kind of narratives is going to be examined. Being applicable may be a true recognition. Since it was observed that for some periods, no special meaning for the Muqatta'at letters was recommended; during some other periods, only for some of them, some partial and too short interpretations were proposed. Now this new and more detailed exegesis is uttered. However, there is certainty that also this exegesis is partial and we cannot be completely sure about it. On one hand we cannot be sure about its being perennial, but on the other hand, if be, it can be a guide line for human and would affect his life, since it is a part of a greater guidance, a miracle, the Holy Quran.

4. Discussion

Now if desiring to ventilate, it can be inferred that the mentioned translations can be divided into two groups: the three translations by Pickthall (1930), Saffarzade (2001) and UsufAli (1934) fall in one category and the exegesis of Max.Q (2008) is put into another category.

It is obvious that those three translations may have regarded the Muqatta'at letters as the Quranic Mutashabihat, since they did not state any meaning for them. They did not have any potential meaning, so meta translation strategy was preferred by them. Also, they applied footnote strategy in which, just too short explanations, and not meaning, were written; except for UsufAli (1934) that his explanation in the appendix was not that short, but again no special meaning was dictated. Also it must be stated that using footnote is not the reason of not having a complete meaning, as there can be a proposed meaning but again the translator calls footnote, however with more complete information even in appendix. Likewise, it is deduced that knowing Muqatta'at letters as Mutashabihat in these three translations, caused in transliteration, which can be stated as formal translation, as no meaning was transferred. As well, it is possible that in this kind of translation personal narrative be applicable, as the translator may regard them as mysteries about a special person (God or even the prophet Muhammad). Also their translations can accept public narrative, as these translations distributed among different societies and each person may have different ideas about their strategy of translating the Muqatta'at letters. Disciplinary narrative is the third applicable one, since by employing footnote strategy they have followed the theory of Hatim and Mason (1990). Like personal narrative, in applicability of Meta narrative is no certainty, since transliteration without giving any meaning may or may not be proved to be the correct one, but if it is proved to be the correct one, it will persist for ever.

As it was stated, exegesis of Max.Q (2008) falls in another category. Max considered the Muqatta'at letters as the Quranic Muhkamat because he propounded some likely meaning for them. As this interpretation is out of the whole translation of the Holy Quran, he did not employ footnote or other strategies; instead he offered the most complete present equivalences. Also amalgamating Phoenician and Arabic symbols and theories of some scholars, he delineated this exegesis which is known as a dynamic translation, since he tried to give a sense for sense translation. Discussing different narratives, it is concluded that on some parts of his translation, personal narrative is applied where the letters are stated to be about a special person, for example in translation of some of the Muqatta'at like (طه) or (یس), he verbalized the prophet Muhammad as the specific audience. Public narrative is also applicable because this exegesis is distributed on the Net and lots of people put their comments, both in favor of his translation and against it. Again his interpretation accepts disciplinary narrative, as by knowing them as Muhkamat he followed Allama Tabatabaee's theory which caused him try to decipher them. Finally, it is worth dictating that on

applicability of meta narrative is no certainty because this translation may or may not be true and if it is proved to be true, this exegesis remains forever.

5. Conclusion

This study is designed to ponder on the translation of the Quranic Muqatta'at letters. Their translations were examined in different four aspects which are based on dynamic and formal equivalence theory of Nida (1964), narrative theory of Baker (2010) and the Quranic Muhkamat and Mutashabihat. As well, the employed strategies for their translation were investigated. The material on which these four aspects were examined were three Holy Quran translations by Pickthall (1930), Saffarzade (2001), UsufAli (1934) and an exegesis of the Muqatta'at suggested by Max.Q (2008).

Based on the findings the result was as follow: among these translations and the Muqatta'at exegesis, footnote and meta translation were the most employed strategy; as utilized in three translations and only one of them, the exegesis, contained some proposed equivalences. Muqatta'at letters were mostly considered as Mutashabihat rather than Muhkamat, because by *only* transliteration, three of them implicitly stated these letters as Mutashabihat and only in Max's exegesis, they were known as Muhkamat. Pointing two suggested Nida's translation strategies (1964), formal translation was the most employed translation, as three of them were so and only one dynamic translation was presented. Based on Baker's narrative theory (2010), among these four translations, public and disciplinary narratives were certainly and mostly applied. Regarding personal narrative, except for Max's exegesis that this type of narrative was certainly applied on some parts of it, in other three translations there was not high certitude for employing personal narrative. Finally, it was investigated that meta narrative was the one with the least percentage of applicability; as in none of them, there was certainty of being a true translation and lasting for a long time or forever.

Reading the great Quran can be a short cut for those who want guidance in their lives. Each part or aspect of this book is a miracle, but one of the main discrepancies between this book and other religious books is the Muqatta'at. From 1400 years ago till now lots of endeavors are employed to decipher them, but no one could propound an interpretation «Ta'vil», of which human could be sure. However, these efforts are rewarding and even approaching their real meaning is regarded as a feat. After studying all the theories and findings, the researchers reckon that regarding the Muqatta'at letters, the translators are better to state them as the Quranic Muhkamat, which causes in submitting a translation known as a dynamic

equivalence; because it may cause the reader to approach the sense which God aims. Utilizing each strategy can be useful but it is suggested to be added to a sensible interpretation for these letters; as using each strategy without giving any potential meaning is applied till now. If doing so, the translation would accept public and disciplinary narrative, but again personal and meta narrative may be applicable. Also it is worth dictating that, this kind of Muqatta'at letters can be really precious, but it must be in a whole translation of the Holy Quran, not separately.

6. Appendix

Table 7: the Muqatta'at letters exegesis by Max.Q (2008)

Following are the proposed implementations of the Muqatta'at not only in the context of the subsequent verses and the chapter as a whole, but also incorporate the meanings as presented by various scholars discussed in previous sections.	
Alif Laam Meem Consider the following glyphs: Alif- Alep- Phoenician symbol= Ox- strong/ Fervent Laam-Laamed-Phoenician symbol= Goad: Used to guide- Guidance Meem- Mem- Phoenician symbol= Water- Clear, Nourishing and Flowing Combining the meaning of the above symbols with the context of the whole The Holy Quran, and the acronymistic meanings presented by Raghib, the following picture can be rendered: **Alif. Laam. Mim.** The stage is set! Allah – the God, Latif – the unfathomable, Majeed – the Magnificent, knows and understands your needs, and bestows upon you a Fervent Guidance that is clear! The perfect tool – set: An ox, a goad and water. Using ALM, run your plough (Life) through the ground (this world) and sow your seeds (deeds) to earn the harvest (paradise)! And then follows, This is the code in which there is absolutely no doubt concerning authority (and authenticity). It is a Guide for all those who wish to journey through life in true honor and	الم ذلک الکتاب لا ریب فیه هدی للمتقین

security.	
Qaaf In Phoenician, Qaaf of Qop represents the symbol for the "Eye of a Needle". Hence, using it for chapter 50 may need some elaboration to make sense. Instead, Qaaf in Arabic implies to Qif: Stop and Think! Hence: Qif (stop and think)! But, nay, they marvel that a Warner from among their own has come unto them! And so these deniers are saying, "This is a weird thing! How (can we be retuned) after we have died and become dust? Such a return is a thought far – fetched indeed! " The Phoenician symbolic representation can be used to augment the above rendition, giving it a completely new dimension! The eye of a Needle (is indeed too narrow to fit a camel through, but be creative, hold it close to eye and see what happens)! But, nay, they marvel that a Warner from among their own has come unto them! And so these deniers are saying, "This is a weird thing! How (can we be returned) after we have died and become dust? Such a return is a thought farfetched indeed! However, once combined, these two concepts present an extremely powerful message in the beginning of chapter 50: **Qaaf.** Stop and think about the eye of a needle! It is indeed too narrow to fit a camel through; keep on open mind: Hold it close to your eye and see what happens. It is a matter of perception! Al –Qadir, the omnipotent, who can bring you back from the dead, presents this Glorious The Holy Quran as a witness to itself!	ق ق والقران المجيد

And then follows, But nay, they are surprised that a Warner has come to them from amongst them, so the rejecters are saying: "This is something strange!"	بل عجبوا أن جاء هم منذر منهم فقال الكفرون هذا شىء عجيب
tSaad tSaad in Arabic implies Saadiq or Full of Truth, and the Phoenician symbol is Papyrus Plant. Hence, tSaad. Written on papyrus in Full Truth, I swear that this Reading is a profound Reminder! And then follows : But nay, the deniers are lost in false pride and opposition for the sake of opposition. Hence, they split their own personalities forcing themselves into maintaining double standards in life, (like flakes of papyrus that split!)	ص ص و القران ذى الذكر بل الذين كفروا في عزه و شقاق
Nun In Arabic, ن also represents the inkpot, and the Phoenician symbol is a fish. Since the pen is mentioned, the inkpot is a logical choice for the interpretation. However, it also makes sense from the Phoenician symbol point of view, since the prophet Jonah seems to be mentioned as well mentioned! The The Holy Quran mentions Jonah as "the companion of the fish". Hence, Nun. By the inkpot and pen, (like a fish in water,) and that (word) the pen traces (like a fish swims its course!) And then follows : You, (o Messenger) by the blessing of your lord, are not one for whom reality is hidden.	ن نون و القلم و ما يسطرون ما انت بنعمه ربک بمجنون

dTaa Haa This acronym has been successfully been translated by scholars as "O Man! ", or in the context of the The Holy Quran, "O Ideal prophet!"Exclaimed in sheer warmth and affection. Lexicons and dictionaries attribute this word to the southern Semitic language of Ethiopic, which is related to southern Arabic dialects such as Hadramatic and Sabaic. So this word could have been borrowed from these southern Arabic dialects.	طه
Yaa Seen This acronym has been successfully translated by scholars as یاانسان"O Man!", or more appropriately as "O Great Man!"	يس
dTaa Seen For chapters beginning with this instance, it is observed that when read as a word, the meaning of the verses becomes convincingly clear. The word "dTas" طس appears in the lexicon as "delve / sink deep in to something", amongst other meanings. In addition, the two letters when read separately, remind us of Mount Sinai (dToor-e-sinin). It is indeed true, that these chapters do indeed speak of Divine address of Moses. It should be noted here that the meaning, if derived from the Phoenician symbols, is "Good Tooth ". It possibly means a sharp tooth that sinks deep into what is bitten. Thus , 27 : 1-2 could be translated as follows : **dTaa Seen** . Sink / Delve deep in to these Messages of the Book clear in itself that clearly shows the truth of what happened on Mounti Sinai.	طس طس تلک ءآیت القران و کتاب مبین
dTaa Seen Meem The instance طسم occurs at the beginig of chapters 26 and 28 . When read as a word, classical Arabic dictionaries describe "dTasam "as used by common people to mean "shrpen" and "study", among other meanings. Again, when read as acronyms, the reader is reminded of Mount Sinai, but this time Meem is introduced to remind us if Moses specifically,	طسم

possibly since it mentions the commandments given to Moses. Hence , the rendition of 26: 1 -2 becomes : **dTaa. Seen. Meem**. Study well these signs of the clarifying Book that tells you the Revealed Word of Moses on Mount Sinai.	طسم _ تلك ايت الكتب المبين
'Haa Meem When read as a word, حم ('Ham) , which appears in chapters 40,41,43,44,45,46 also has a meaning. According to Classical Arabic dictionaries , the meaning as a noun is something that is " intended " , " fashioned / designed / shaped " or " destined " , or as a verb is " to clean out mud from a well " . It is interesting to note here that if the Phoenician symbols are considered, the meaning comes out to "Fenced Water ", a highly feasible definition of a well. Hence, 40 : 1- 2 and other chapters beginning with this instance can be translated as follows : **'Haa –Meem**. This is a Destined Revelation of the clear Book Designed to cleanse its reader from all confusion! Behold, we have made it a Monograph in clear Arabic language that you may fully understand.	حم حم – و الكتب المبين – انا جعلنا قرءنا عربيا لعلكم تعقلون
Meem , ' Ain Seen'Haa Qaaf For chapter 42, the instance is also coupled by عسق , which according to classical Arabic means " following closely " and " pollinate / pollination " .Thus , 42 : 1-3 can be translated as follows : **'Haa. Meem. 'Ain. Seen. Qaaf**. It is (a Message) Destined to be followed closely, inspiring you in a similar manner by God the powerful, the Wise, as he inspired those before you!	حم عسق حم – عسق – كذلك يوحى إليك والى الذين من قبلك الله العزيز الحكيم
Alif Lamm Meem tSaad Considering the meanings presented above, the meaning can be derived as "A strong teaching / guidance that is clear and true".	المص

Alif Laam Raa It can be observed that the symbol for *(ر)* in Phoenician represents the head, possibly hinting intellect. Considering the meanings presented above, the following rendition can be derived for 10: 1. **Alif. Laam. RA**. Allah the God, Lateef the Unfathomable, Majeed the Magnificent, Raheem the Merciful bestows these verses of the Divine Writ that is a Strong Guidance, Clear and inviting you to use intellect! That which is revealed to you (O Prophet) from your Sustainer is the Truth. Yet most people do not believe in it.	الر الر تلک ایت الکتب الحکیم
kaaf Haa Yaa Ain tSaad To the author, this particular case was the most perplexing, yet proved to be the most trivial. The concept of K H Y 'A tS can be based on the context of Chapter 19 (the births of Yahya Yohanna and Maseehu 'Essa) using Phoenician symbols: Kaaf - branch/palm-of-hand Haa - Birth/window Yaa - Arm/Extending/Extension/Reaching-Out 'Aeen - Eye/Vision/Appointment tSaad - Papyrus/Plant/Truth Hence, Kaaf Haa Yaa 'Aeen tSaad would render "A Branch's [Blessed Child's] Sprouting [Birth] Extends the Vision of Truth (of the Scripture)". However, there is another possibility that seems more feasible. One must keep in mind that Arabic was a spoken, hence very informal, language. In recent colloquial English/electronic communication, several words are shortened in order to get the point across with as little typing as possible. It is also thought of as being creative in an informal way. For instance, many people shorten "How are you" to "How R U" or "I am okay" to "I M OK". This particular case seems to have a somewhat similar connotation. It was already noted that "Yaa Seen" was translated as " O Great Person! ", hence "Yaa" is undoubtedly being used to	كهیعص كهیعص =< ذكر رحمت ربک عبده زكریا _ كیف هذا یا عین الصادق

address someone, presumably the prophet. 'Ain not only stands for the eye, but also means oppointed or appointment. Therefore, کهیعص can actually be considered as a complete clause: "How about this, O sincerely appointed one! Hence, the following would be the rendition of the this case: **Kaaf. Haa. Yaa. Ain. tSaad**. (Allah, Kareem the Honored, Hadi the Guide, Yameen the Bounteous, Aleem the Knower, Sadiqe the Truthful calls for your attention to show you how the birth of a blessed child extends the vision of truth!) O sincerely appointed one! How about this reminder of your Lord's Mercy to His servant Zachariah	

References

Abdul-Raof, H. (2001). *Quran translation, discourse, texture and exegesis.* U.K. Curzon press.

Aiwei, S. (2005). *Translatability and poetic translation*. Translatum journal

Baker, M. (2010). Narratives of terrorism and security: 'accurate' translations, suspicious frames, *Critical studies on terrorism.* University of Manchester, Manchester, U.K. Routledge publication.

Baker, M. (1998). *Encyclopedia of translation studies.U.K.* Routledge publication

Hatim, B., & Mason, L. (1990). *Discourse and the translator.* Longman

House, J. (1973). *Culture and Foreign language Teaching.* The Canadian Modern language review.

Huruf-e-Muqatta'at, Farahi's theory, URL: the Quranonline.com

Max, Q. (2008). *Huruf-e-Muqattaa,* URL: paklink.com.

Max, Q. (2008). *Huruf-e-Muqattaa,* URL: 123muslim.com

Max, Q. *Muqatta'at: cracking the code.* From: www.deenresearchcenter.com.

Munday, J. (2008). Introducing translation studies, theories and applications. London and New York. Routledge publication

Newmark, P. (1982). *A Further Note on communicative and Semantic Translation.*

Nihamathullah, A. *Translating the holy Quran, Is there an ultimate translation for the Quran.* URL: Ahmadiyya.org

Pickthall, M. (1930). *The meaning of the glorious Quran, text and explanatory translation. Salehi publication.*

Religious text, URL: en.wikipedia.org

Saffarzadeh,T. (2001). *The holy Quran, English and Persian, Translation with commentary.* Tehran. Sooreh-Mehr- publishing co.

Saleem, S. *Huruf-i-Muqatta'at: Farahi's theory*, URL: renaissance.com

UsufAli, A.(1934). *The holy Quran: translation and commentary*

Wolfram, W. (2001). *The Science of Translation: Problems and Methods*. Shanghai Foreign language education press.

*Except For Huroof Muqatta'at, All Verses of Quran Can be Translated.*www.ahl-ul-bayt.org

حروف مقطعه (The Muqatta'at letters), from (www.Andisheqom.com)

منظور از حروف مقطعه در قرآن چیست؟ (What do we mean by the Muqatta'at letters in the Holy Quran) from (www.12-14.blogfa.com)

طباطبایی، م. ح،*تفسیر المیزان*، بنیاد علمی فرهنگی علامه طباطبایی (1367)

Title

"Absolute Zero": Tramps in Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy*, *Moon Palace* and *Timbuktu*

Authors

Jalal Sokhanvar (Ph.D)
Shahid Behshti University, Tehran, Iran

Nahid Fakhrshafaie (Ph.D)
Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Iran

Biodata

Jalal Sokhanvar, professor at Shahid Behshti University, Tehran, Iran. His research interests include comparative literatutre and modern literary theory.

Nahid Fakhrshafaie, assistant professor of English Studies at Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Iran. Her research interests include postmodern fiction and culture, and Greek tragic theatre.

Abstract

This article explores the tramp which is a recurring figure in Paul Auster's novels. In *The New York Trilogy*, *Moon Palace* and *Timbuktu,* an ordinary citizen gradually loses connection with the society, deteriorates mentally and physically and turns into a tramp. In *The New York Trilogy,* Quinn, Blue and the narrator of the last part of the trilogy experience a crisis in their identities through doublings, merging of identities or disappearances before becoming tramps. In *Moon Palace,*Fogg gradually turns himself into an "absolute zero" by withdrawing from the society, practicing hunger and experiencing hallucinations. Willy, the schizoid poet in *Timbaktu*who cannot distinguish between reality and dream also lives and dies as a tramp. In these novels, the characters disappear, are mistaken for their doublings, experience hallucinations, and become victims of chance and coincidence. These texts fail to show the negative aspects of the lives of tramps, valorizingtheir lack of identity and their passive attitude towards life.Omission of the frustration, aimlessness and hardships that characterize the lives of the tramps and naturalization of their passivity and submission make Auster's fictional universe a reactionary one.

1. Introduction

In the majority of Auster's novels there is a tramp, a "down and out", a character depicted in the process of loss. This character lives in a metropolis and starts to disintegrate and diminish in the very face of the affluence of the big town. The degradation is usually a long and slow process through which the character gradually loses his mental and physical abilities. Three novels in which the tramp takes center stage are *The New York Trilogy*, *Moon Palace* and *Timbaktu.* In these novels, an ordinary citizen gradually loses ties with the capitalist system as he undergoes experiences which shatter his sense of identity and his mental stability, as well as his physical wellbeing. This article aims at focusing on the gradual physical and mental degradation of the tramp, his loss of identity, the factors involved in his degradation and the implications of glorifying and valorizing his life and experiences.

2. The Problem of Identity in *The New York Trilogy*

2.1.The Fluidity of Identitiesin *City of Glass*

Daniel Quinn is a writer of detective stories who becomes a detective by choosing to answer a wrong number. The call which is meant for Paul Auster of the Auster Detective Agency tempts Quinn to acquire this new identity. His client, Peter Stillman asks him to protect him against the potential harm that might come to him from his father, Peter Stillman .Quinn accepts to trackStillman. He follows Stillman for two weeks and thinks that a map of the old man's wanderings in New York spells out The Tower of Babel. When the old man disappears, he tries to find the real Auster to ask for help. Auster, however, turns out to be a writer and not a private detective. After seeing the successful and happy family man, Quinn feels completely lost. He goes to the Stillman's apartment and keeps constant watch over the apartment from an alley. His degradation becomes gradually complete as he fails to sleep, eat and wash. He goes to the Stillmans' apartment to find all the doors open.Quinn enters a dark room, throws all his clothes out of the window, and starts to write poems in his red notebook. Trays of food are brought to his room, but he eats very little. No mention is made of the provider of food. He keeps writing in the notebook until there are no more pages to write in. Then, the third person narrator changes to a first person narrator who,accompanied byAuster

the character,visits the apartment. What they see in the apartment is only the notebook. Quinn has disappeared.

Before becoming a tramp, Quinn experiences a crisis in his identity. After losing his wife and son in an accident, he stops writing poems. Instead, he writes detective fiction under the name of William Wilson and identifies with his own creation, Max Work, who is a successful private eye. His identity, however, becomes more complicated and problematic when he impersonates Paul Auster. When he wrote poems, he was himself, that is, Danniel Quinn. When he changes from writing poems to writing detective fiction, he becomes William Wilson. Deep down, however,he identifies with Max Work, the detective in his own fiction who is a man of action.

Auster deliberately foregrounds the doubling to stress the problem of identity which dominates the novel. When Quinn who has acquired the identity of Auster goes to the train station to find Peter Stillman, he confronts two Peter Stillmans, one rich, and the other shabbily dressed. It is by instinct that he follows the right person. Stillmanthejunior who has employed Auster, is also called Peter, hence two Peter Stillmans. Quinn's son is called Peter, like Peter Stillman and Auster's son is called Daniel, which is the first name of Quinn. At one point in the novel, Quinn introduces himself to Stillmanthe Senior as Henry Dark, the name of Stillman's fictional character. The centerfield of the Met's is Mookie Wilson whose real name is William Wilson. The doublings function to confuse the reader about who is who in the novel. It is very difficult to attribute a specific name to a character because either another character will emerge with the same name or that very character will happen to have other names. Roberta Roberstein (1998) sees this doubling as figurative, representing not only the alienation of the character, but also the transformation of self into other (p.250).

Quite related to the notion of doublings in the novel is the merging of identities. Quinn has followed Stillman for so long that when Stillman disappears, he feels lost. "It felt as though he had lost half of himself. For two weeks he had been tied by an invisible thread to the old man" (p. 91). Norma Rowan (1999) convincingly argues that both Stillmans represent aspects of Quinn. Stillmanthe junior's failure of language represents Quinn's attitude towards language and his unwillingness to accept responsibility for what he writes. Stillmanthe senior's interest in the prelapsarian languages recalls the early Quinn as a poet, a man in touch with the true source of language (p. 228).When Quinn enters Peter Stillman Junior's apartment and lives naked in a dark room, he reenacts Peter's childhood.

Quinn's disappearance at the end of the novel- although textual- shows that the theme of loss of identity is central to the novel. Steven E. Alford(1995) maintains that Quinn's "textual

sense of the self undermines our commonsense, essentialist notion of selfhood" (p. 615). Daniel Bell (1978) also observes that postmodernist fiction is "simply the decomposition of the self in an effort to erase individual ego" (p. 29). Hans Bertens (1990) taps a similar intellectual vein when he maintains that in postmodernist fiction, language intrudes into character. In other words, in postmodernist fiction character does not exist in the traditional realist sense of the term but rather "seems to be floating into and out of certain fictional structures that are endowed with proper names" (p. 141). In the novel, the doublings, multiple identities and merging of identities finally result in the disappearance of the subject. Quinn's disappearance is the natural consequence of all that he has gone through in the course of the novel. He changes gradually from an ordinary citizen to a tramp, and from a tramp to an "absolute zero". As he oversees the Stillman apartment, he disengages himself from all worldly needs. He sleeps and eats as little as possible and finds out that he is no longer interested in washing, cleaning and changing his clothes. He also uses the bin as both a shelter and a toilet, thus reducing himself and his needs to nothing. In this process, Quinn moves gradually from the outer world in which he wants to save Peter Stillman to his inner world where he loses himself. As Norma Rowan (1999) observes, his search in the outside world for Stillman takes him into his own self where his personal drama has turned into a nightmare (p. 227). Markus Rheindorf similarly argues that like other Auster's characters, Quinn's travels in the town force him to confront his inner world. (n.d).

Quinn's aimless walks in New York provide him with the opportunity to run away from himself. There are critics like MarkkuSalmela (2008) who see in Quinn's detachment from his surroundings, "a sense of independence from society's productive machinery" which makes him an independent free individual(pp.131-144). Salmela's (2008) positive reading of Auster's characters is grounded in the text. Auster's novel romanticizes the live of a tramp and makes him look the attractive and mysterious character he is not. This representation is not based on reality, as the misery and suffering that naturally go with a life like that are omitted. The text represents the passivity and indifference of a tramp as something romantic and thus plays right into the hands of the capitalist system which is responsible for the existence of tramps.

   In addition to his loss of a sense of self, Quinn suffers from delusions. As he follows Stillman in the streets of New York, he draws a map of the old man's wanderings in the city and starts to think that the map spells out TOWER OF BABEL. He develops this assumption after approaching the old man and learning about his theory of the prelapsarian language. There are instances in the novel that show Quinn is not in his right mind when he interprets

Stillamn's wanderings into a phrase. He comes to think, for example, that the busy tone of the Stillman apartment is a sign which tells him that his connection with the case is not over yet (p. 108). It is perhaps only a schizophrenic who would imbue a busy tone with such asignificance. Other examples of his mental imbalance are when he looks up the newspaper reports of Stillman's arrest in 1969 to see whether the event is related to the moon landing of that same year or when he asks himself why the patron saint of travel, Christopher had been canonized by Pope in 1969, at the time of the trip to moon. Then he wonders if the girl who had occupied his apartment was the same girl who was reading his book in the train station. The most important evidence is his contemplation about the phrase that would show all the steps he has taken in life (p. 127). That he thinks all the steps he has taken in his life would spell out a phrase, shows that he has imagined the map of Stillman's wandering in the town. Again perhaps only a schizophrenic is capable of finding connection between events that have no relation to each other. As Quinn fails to distinguish between his private thoughts and reality, he could be thought to suffer from delusions which David Sue, Derald Wing Sue and Stanley Sue (2012) in *Understanding AbnormalBehavior* define as one of the major characteristics of schizophrenia (p. 349).

Somewhere in the novel, the narrative voice refers to the phrase Quinn thinks Stillman's wanderings spell out, and it becomes apparent that the whole thing is a delusion:

…the letters continued to horrify Quinn. The whole things was so oblique, so fiendish in its circumlocutions that he did not want to accept it. Then doubts came, as if on command, filling his head with mocking, singsong voices. He had imagined the whole thing. The letters were not letters atall. He had seen them only because he had wanted to see them. And even if the diagrams did formletters, it was only a fluke. Stillman had nothing to do with it. It was all an accident, a hoax he had perpetrated on himself (p. 71).

The "mocking, singsong" voices are also proof of Quinn's mental imbalance, a sign that his observations of the events that occur around him should be examined with caution. Quinn's metaphoric schizophrenia, though, is more important than the clinical signs of the disease. Seen with the insights ofFredrick Jameson (2003), Quinn becomes the typical postmodern subject who suffers from lack of identity because he lives solely in the present, cut off from his past and future, unable to follow language through time. Quinn experiences what Jameson (2003) calls "a breakdown in the signifying chain":

The connection between this kind of linguistic malfunction [the arbitrary relation between signifier and signified] and the psyche of the schizophrenic may then be grasped by way of a twofold

proposition: first, that personal identity is itself the effect of a certain temporal unification of past and future with one's present; and, second, that such active temporal unification is itself a function of language, or better still of the sentence, as it moves along its hermeneutic circle through time. If we are unable to unify the past, present, and future of the sentence, then we are similarly unable to unify our own biographical experience or psychic life. With the breakdown of the signifying chain, therefore, the schizophrenic is reduced to an experience of pure material signifiers, or, in other words, a series of pure and unrelated presents in time" .(p. 27)

Language seems to be the preoccupation of the three main characters in the novel. Quinn experiences a malfunction in language when he shifts from writing poems to writing detective fiction after his personal tragedy. After interpreting Stillman's walks in New York as "The Tower of Babel", he becomes Peter Stillman at the end of the novel, living naked in a dark room and writing poems in a language which shows his oneness with the universe.In a deconstructive reading of the trilogy, Alison Russel (2004) relates logocentrism in the novel to the denial of paternal authority and maintains that Quinn's lack of belief in God shows the absence of the father who is the founder of logos (p, 100). This reading justifies regarding Quinn as a schizophrenic because Lacan(cited in De Waelhens and El Ecke, 2001, p.30) sees the mother's lack of respect for *the name of the father* as the main cause of schizophrenia because the mother must respect the father, his word and the law he represents . One has to also point to the classical readings of schizophrenia, Freud's (1950) for instance, who sees schizophrenia as a disturbance in the function of language (p. 129).

Quinn is not the only character in the novel who could be regarded as a schizophrenic. Stillman's behavior and speech show that he is suffering from the disease, too. Considering his job- searching for broken objects in the streets to- be "the most important event in the history of mankind", Stillman invents new words that will correspond to the broken objects he has collected. This is a clear example of paranoid schizophrenia which Norman A. Polansky(2009) defines as a mental disorder which gives the grandiose patient the illusion that he or she is historically important (p. 120). Stillman's suicide is further proof of his mental instability. Peter is also a schizophrenic because of his failure of language. Peter speaks a language upon which no grammatical rules govern, a language which is both gibberish and poetic. In addition to the characters, the whole text is also a schizoid text. It is composed of events that waver between reality and dream, the probable and the improbable and the real and the surreal.

2.2 Doublings in *Ghosts*

Thematically, *Ghosts* is a repetition of *The New York Trilogy.* A detective is keeping constant watch on a person, but starts to lose his sense of identity as he sees himself in the person he is watching. White approaches Blue one day and asks him to watch a man named Black. When he starts his job, Blue realizes that there is no adventure in the job: all Black does is read and write. As he keeps an eye on Black, Blue plunges deep and deeper into his own self, an opportunity denied him in his former life. Weeks and months pass and Blue realizes that he is unwilling to continue the job, but is unable to disengage himself from the case. He approaches Black in disguise and is surprised to learn that Black also introduces himself as a private eye who is watching somebody. He breaks into Black's apartment only to find his own reports on Black's desk. Finally he attacks Black in his apartment. At the end of the novel, a narrative voice announces that we do not know what happens to Blue after he leaves Black's apartment.

Like *City of Glass,Ghosts,* deals with the problem of identity manifest in doublings and merging of personalities. Blue first shows signs of a loss of a sense of self when the focus of his life changes from the outward to the inward. His life which has been one of action changes to one of inaction as he keeps watch onBlack who only reads and writes. Deep inside, there's an emptiness he cannot understand, an "unexplored" and therefore "dark" and "unknown" feeling. At the same time, "for the first time in his experience of writing reports, he discovers that words do not necessarily work, that it is possible for them to obscure the things they are trying to say" (p. 145). There is a direct relation between the feeling of emptiness and his inability to relate words to things. In this state of nothingness, his identity gradually merges into the identity of the man he is watching:

There are moments when he feels so completely in harmony with Black, so naturally at one with the other man, that to anticipate what Black is going to do, to know when he will stay in his room and when he will go out, he need merely look into himself. Whole days go by when he doesn't even bother to look through the window or follow Black onto the street…How he knows this remains something of a mystery to him, but the fact is that he is never wrong, and when the feeling comes over him, he is beyond all doubt and hesitation (p. 153).

Black is Blue's double. That is why Blue is unable to leave the case. According to Baudrillard (1994), all human beings are born into a double state and each human being is haunted by his double, always under the threat of merging into it (p. 94).

Blue's relation to Black is very complicated. It seems as if he is related to Black by forces beyond his control. One important scene which is usually ignored by critics could throw light

on the nature of this relationship. In his straying in Orange Street, Quinn is attracted to the statue of Henry Ward Beecher:

In the other direction there is the church, and sometimes Blue goes to the small grassy yard to sit for a while, studying the bronze statue of Henry Ward Beecher. Two slaves are holding on to Beecher's legs, as though begging him to help them, to make them free at last, and in the brick wall behind there is a porcelain relief of Abraham Lincoln. Blue cannot help but feel inspired by these images , and each time he comes to the churchyard his head fills with thoughts about the dignity of man. (p. 156)

It pays to look closely at the statues. There is the statute of Henry Ward Beecher and the statue of two slaves holding on to his legs, pleading for their freedom. The statues find a specific meaning in the present context of Blue's life. Like the slaves who long for freedom, he longs to disengage himself from Black. The statue of Beecher and the slaves show the impossibility of such a freedom.[1] This is not only because Beecher's posture implies superiority and indifference to the plight of the slaves, but also because there is no possibility of change in the relation between the bronze statutes.

Rosemary Jackson (1991) observes that almost all versions of doubles end in either suicide, death or madness, because in trying to be united to the other, the self ceases to exist (p. 91). Pointing out the role of the doppelgangers in pre-modern literature as a sign of preference for order, unity and a stable universe, Gordon E. Slethaugh (1993)argues that double has found a new identity in postmodern American literature. In the postmodern world, Slethaugh points out, the coherent and unified Cartesian self has disappeared as have all the certainties that defined the universe in which this self inhabited. The double in postmodern fiction represents a divided and fragmented self in a world devoid of the former certainties. It functions to decenter the notion of the self and to show a lack of relation between the signifier and the signified. The double points out at the inherent contradictions of the human

---

[1]In an illuminating article on *Ghosts,* Eric Berlatsky (2008) points out the truth about Beecher: he was not an abolitionist, but a racist and an opportunist. Blue's blind spot, Berlatsky argues, is race: he is unable to seediscrimination in the very position of the slaves as inferior to Beecher and Lincoln. Blue's interpretationof the statue as representingthe"dignity of man" shows the depth of his ignorance. Berleatsky further argues that even if the author has consciously deconstructed racial division, postmodern texts including *Ghosts* show its pervasiveness. He draws onToni Morrison who holds that white people use the black populationas a back ground to come to a realization of their positive characteristics. According to Berlatsky, Auster's postmodern fiction is no exception to the rule.

.

existence in a world governed by contradictory principles. In Slethaugh'swords , "it confirms the split sign, the split self and the split text (p. 3).

Blue is not a typical schizophrenic character, although at times he thinks like a schizophrenic. When he comes across a copy of *Walden*and sees that the publisher is Black, he is "momentarily jarred by this coincidence, thinking that perhaps there is some message in it for him, some glimpse of meaning that could make a difference" (p. 149). This is reminiscent of Quinn who used to read everything symbolically and to find relations between irrelevant things.

2.3.The Merging of Identities in *The Locked Room*

Although the narrator of *The Locked Room* is not a detective, he becomes one when he decides to find Fanshaw, a childhood friend and a rival. The story begins when he receives a letter from Sophie Fanshaw[2].Sophie tells him that Fanshaw who has disappeared had asked her to give his manuscripts to the narrator. The narrator who is attracted to Sophie reads the manuscripts and finds them eminent works of literature. This is also what the public and the critics think when the books are published. Sophie and the narrator marry and become rich with the money he gains by publishing Fanshaw's books. One day, the narrator receives a letter from Fanshaw in which he announces that he is alive but threatens to harm the narrator if he tries to find him. The narrator's obsession with Fanshaw increases when he decides to write Fanshaw's biography. To do that, he travels to Paris where Fanshaw had once lived, but forgets his mission and wanders around like a tramp, returning to New York after a long time. After a few years, he receives another letter from Fanshaw who wants to see him in Boston. He enters the house only to learn that Fanshaw who is inside a locked room, has taken poison a few hours ago. From inside the room, Fanshaw instructs him about the whereabouts of a red note book. The narrator leaves the house with the red notebook but without having seen Fanshaw. At the end, the narrator claims the authorship of the first two parts of the trilogy as well as the last part.

"It seems to me that Fanshaw was always there. He is the place where everything begins for me, and without him I would hardly know who I am." This is how *The Locked Room* begins. To the narrator, Fanshaw "was the ghost I carried around inside me". A significant point about the story is the narrator's namelessness. Given his obsession with Fanshaw, it is quite natural that he has no name: he has an identity only because of Fanshaw and with

---

[2]Although Fanshaw is the first name of the narrator's friend, it is not known why his wife is calledSophieFanshaw,
unless we imagine that he is FanshawFanshaw.

Fanshaw. He has a wife and a son because Fanshaw leaves his family for him. He becomes very famous and rich because of Fanshaw's books. As J.M. Tyree (2003, p.83) observes, by taking over Fanshaw's life, the narrator allows Fanshaw to take over his life. Kevin Keane (2009) expresses a similar opinion when he mentions that the narrator and Fanshaw live in a state of constant flux, changing roles throughout the novel (p. 62). The reader understands the great hold Fanshaw has on the narrator when he mentions details from his early life and explains in detail how he came to maturity with Fanshaw. He experienced everything with Fanshaw and through Fanshaw. But with Fanshaw, he was always the second best, never approaching Fanshaw's excellence.

As with the first two parts of the trilogy, doubling is the main motif in the novel. Fanshaw's mother mentions the physical similarities between the narrator and Fanshaw: "You even look like him, you know. You always did, the two of you- like brothers, almost like twins. I remember how when you were both small I would sometimes confuse you from a distance. I could not even tell which one of you was mine" (p. 256). When the narrator goes to France in search of information for Fanshaw's biography, Fanshaw's girlfriend mistakes him for Fanshaw. At some point in the novel, the narrator feels that all his attempts at searching for Fanshaw have been futile becauseFanshaw has been living inside him all the time: "At best, there was one impoverished image: the door of a locked room. That was the extent of it: Fanshaw alone in that room, condemned to a mythical solitude_ living perhaps, breathing perhaps, dreaming God knows what. This room, I now discovered, was located inside my skull (p. 286). The metaphor of the mind of narrator as the locked room in which Fanshaw lives reveals the relation of the two men. When the narrator leaves New York for Paris, Sophie who has realized how he has distanced himself from her says, "We're coming to the end, my darling, and you don't even know it. You're going to vanish, and I'll never see you again" (p. 280). The narrator is walking down the same path that Quinn and Blue had walked, the road which will make him an "absolute zero". Like Quinn for whom fasting had become an art, the narrator realizes that he no longer feels hungry (p. 284). Without any awareness of who he is and what he wants with life, in France he lives an aimless life in the bars with street walkers. Possessed by Fanshaw and without a sense of a self, he has actually become a bum, an absolute nobody. He gets very close to disappearing, to vanishing, as Sophie has already warned him, but is saved miraculously. When he leaves Fanshaw who has taken poison in that locked room, he regains a sense of a self. With Fanshaw dead, it is all "I", "me" and "my" now. Compared to the protagonists of the previous novels- Quinn and Blue, the narrator is lucky. He is on the verge of disappearing and total loss, but is saved by

the voluntary death of Fanshaw. The narrator claims authorship of the first two parts of the trilogy, implying that Quinn and Blue are the products of his imagination. Another reading, though, could attribute the authorship of the first and second part of the trilogy to Fanshaw who has given the red notebook to the narrator before his death. The reader never knows what is in the red notebook as the narrator claims that he tore it to pieces when he leftFanshaw.

3. The Schizophrenic Subject in *Moon Palace*

3.1. "The Poetics of Absence"

In *Moon Palace* Marco Stanley Foggis a student when the death of Victor, his beloved uncle, changes his life for the worse. His money reduces to zero, he fails to look for a job and loses his apartment as a result. As he has nowhere to go, he lives in a park, gets fatally sick and is saved by a friend- Kitty Wu. For a while, he lives in the small apartment of another friend, Zimmer, but leaves his place after he takes a job with Effig, an eccentric and invalid old man .Effig's inquiries about his absent son lead Fogg to the discovery of his absent father who turns out to be Effig's son. After he discovers that Effig is his grandfather,Fogg starts a journey with Solomon Barber in search of the caves that had sheltered Julian Barber/Effig, but kills his father accidently. When his car is stolen, he walks across the desert from Utah to California. The novel ends optimistically, suggesting the possibility of a new life for Fogg.

Fogg is the most significant tramp among Auster's street wanderers and vagabonds. He gradually cuts all his social ties, experiences a crisis in his identity and turns himself into an "absolute zero". After his uncle's death, Fogg deteriorates mentally and physically and begins "to vanish into another world". Fogg suffers from a loss of a sense of self, a condition experienced by Quinn, Blue and the narrator of *The Locked Room*. Fogg thinks that his "life had become a gathering zero, and it was a thing I could actually see: a palpable, burgeoning zero" (p. 24). But the negative feeling is not restricted to his mental conception of himself as an   absolute little nobody; he has trouble conceiving of his body as a unified whole: "I could follow the progress of my own dismemberment. Piece by piece, I could watch myself disappear."(p. 24).For a long time, his uncle's suit serves the function of putting his body together: "…there were times when I imagined the suit was actually putting me together, that if I did not wear it my body would fly apart" (p. 15). In addition, he considers himself as consisting solely of spirit: "I was trying to separate myself from my body, taking the long road around my dilemma by pretending it did not exist" (p. 29). El Moncef (2008) explains

Fogg's situation by referring to Auster's critical device of "the poetics of absence": "Within the Austerian conception of subjectivity, such a poetics figures as a representational medium whereby the paradox …makes for the complex reconstruction of a subject poised 'at the limit' of self-expression, the vanishing point from which it projects its identity and its discursive acts into… 'desert of uncertainty' " (p. 79). Uncertain about his identity, Fogg chooses inaction as his dominant strategy in life. In all crucial situations in his life, he chooses omission over commission. When he runs out of money, instead of looking for a job, he decides to become homeless and kill himself of hunger. When Effigwants to bring death upon himself, Fogg just follows his orders and does nothing to save him. When Kitty leaves him, he does not try to win her back. Like the typical Auster character, he fails to act when a step must necessarily be taken to make a positive change in his life. In his mind, he asks Kitty to forgive him, but "I did nothing. The days passed and still I could not find it in myself to act. Like a wounded animal, I curled up inside my pain and refused to budge. I was still there, perhaps, but I could no longer be counted as present" (p. 285).

3.2. Hallucinations

Fogg's descriptions of his moods reveal him aspsychologically unstable: he is constantly wavering between the two poles of mania and depression: "I was a grotesque amalgam of timidity and arrogance, alternating between long, awkward silences and blazing fits of rambunctiousness" (p. 15). Fogg's dominant symptoms, however, are those of schizophrenia. Signs become for Fogg what Jameson (2003) calls "pure, material signifiers". The dominant sign in the novel which controls all events and characters, is the sign of the Chinese restaurant MOON PALACE. To Fogg, a simple sign loses all relation to its surroundings and simple letters turn into magic letters:

What I could see was filled up by neon sign, a vivid torch of pink and blue letters that spelled out the words MOON PALACE. I recognized it as the sign from the Chinese restaurant down the block, but the force with which those words assaulted me drowned out every practical reference and association. They were magic letters and they hung there in the darkness like a message from the sky. MOON PALACE. I immediately thought of uncle Victor and his band, and in that first, irrational moment, my fears lost their hold on me. I had never experienced anything so sudden and absolute. A bare and grubby room had been transformed into a site of inwardness, an intersection point of strange omens and mysterious arbitrary events. I went on staring at the Moon Palace sign, and little by little I understood that I had come to the right place, that this small apartment was indeed where I was meant to live (p. 17).

This sign disentangles itself from all other things in time and space that could give it meaning. Isolated in this way, it takes on symbolic proportions. It is no longer the sign of a restaurant but a magic symbol able to transform a room into a "site of inwardness, an intersection point of strange omens and mysterious arbitrary events". Fogg's experience of the isolated signifier here is an example of the experience of the subject in the postmodern society, an experience which Jameson (2003) sees as"…euphoria, a high...intoxicatory or hallucinogenic intensity" (p.28). Fogghas a similar feeling when he sells all the books uncle Victor has given to him. Comparing himself to an epileptic on the verge of a seizure, he says "I had entered that strange half-world in which everything starts to shine, to give off a new and astonishing quality" (p. 31). This experience is also a euphoric experience in which the subject-cut off from all social obligations- undergoes feelings and moods which do not relate to the outside world. Like Quinn, Fogg is quick to find relations between irrelevant things and to imbue objects and events with meanings that do not normally occur to people. For example, he thinks that when the moon blocks the sun, he will vanish, or the message in that Chinese cookie was just intended for him (p. 233).

In addition to finding links between ordinarily irrelevant things, Fogg suffers from another clinical symptom of schizophrenia[3]: hallucinations. Convincing himself that he is no longer real, Fogg sees things that do not exist in the real world: A glass of lemonade, a newspaper with his name in the headlines or even "a former version" of himself searching for something in the room. He even smokes imaginary cigarettes and eats imaginary food (p. 30). These are not his only hallucinations, though. One of his hallucinations is very significant: once, in his miserable state in the park he sees the Moon Palace sign in front of him with stunning clarity, but suddenly all other letters disappear from his sight,except for the two *o*s from the word moon. Then he sees himself dangling from those letters, and shortly he is slithering around like a worm, and not existing anymore because the two *o*s have turned into gigantic

---

[3] Schizophrenia is not a negative phenomenon to all thinkers. Deleuze and Guattari ,for example, attribute positive qualities to schizophrenia because of its liberating quality and the way it allows the subject to think outside norms . Quinn who is a schizoid character becomes a poet in the real sense of the term.Fogg hasa poetic imagination,too. And Willy who has been diagnosed and hospitalized for schizophreniais a very talented poet who has published two volumes of poetry. About Deleuze and Guattari'sview ofschizophrenia De Bolle (2010) writes: "The schizophrenic finds himself outside of any symbolic order that is oriented towards 'the name of the father'…The dissolved energy then becomes a free floating, mobile energy,capable of continuous transformation and displacement. Against illness, Deleuze and Guattari oppose a radical and indestructible belief in life". (p. 22)

eyes and he has vanished under the pressure of that threatening gaze. This hallucination belongs to the period when he has practically come to the end.

More than representing clinical cases of schizophrenia, Quinn and Macro are metaphorically schizophrenic. They experience the present with a vehemence that overshadows the past or the future. This is symptomatic of the plight of postmodern man whom the power of pure objects has overwhelmed. According to Jameson (2003) the postmodern subject, is "reduced to an experience of pure material signifiers, or, in other words, a series of pure and unrelated presents in time" , an experience which he explains thus:

…the breakdown of temporality suddenly releases this present of time from all the activities and Intentionalities that might focus it and make it a space of praxis; thereby isolated, that present suddenly engulfs the subject with undesrcibable vividness, a materiality of perception probably overwhelming, which effectively dramatizes the power of the material –or better still, the literal-signifier in isolation. This present of the world or material signifier comes before the subject with heightened intensity, bearing a mysterious charge of affect, here described I the negative terms of anxiety and loss of reality, but which one could just as well imagine in the positive terms of euphoria, a high, an intoxicatory or hallucinogenic intensity. (pp.27-28)

Quinn and Fogg are also both dominated by the power of the material world, the power of the signifier which makes experience a state of anxiety.

3.3.Gaze

From a political perspective, the gigantic eyes could be seen as belonging to the statuesque. Under the gaze of these eyes, Fogg becomes a worm and vanishes as an absolute zero. The domineering gaze could be explained by interpellation. Althusser(1993) uses interpellation to show the dominant power of ideology on individuals: "All ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, by the functioning of the category of the subject" (p. 47). Althusser (1993) further explains how individuals are made into subjects by the very process of interpellation: "…ideology acts or functions in such a way that it 'recuits' subjects among individuals (it recuits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace every day police (or other) hailing: 'Hey , you there'"(p. 48)! The individual could be mentally and physically too weak to return the policeman's gaze and assume a social role. Consequently, she or he fails to become a subject in the system. This is what happens to Fogg. Under the gaze of those

gigantic eyes, Fogg is unable to assume any social roles. He is so alien to the system that even when he considers it his duty to be part of it, he is rejected. Not that he is willing to join the army: "I had always known that I would never join the army…" (p. 75). He reports himself because of the fear of being hailed a criminal by the system. He knows that if he does not report, he will be a "prisoner …A prisoner of conscience." (p. 76). The system controls individuals from within through what Althusser (1993) sees as Ideological State Apparatuses which he defines as plural, private institutions like the church and the school which function without obvious violence to stabilize the statuesque. (pp. 17-18).Fogg will feel guilty if he does not report. He has internalized all the principles of right behavior and he does not need the police to take him by force. However, a greater part of him resists the system. Fogg's way of showing his resistance is through hunger.[4]

3.4.Hunger

Fogg's hunger could be thus read metaphorically. His refusal to eat could be seen as a sign of his alienation from the system. An anorexic's refusal to eat is because of lack. According to Lacan (1993) food and words conceal a feeling of emptiness deep inside that the anorexic does not want to hide (p, 140). Levinas (2003 cited in Hegyi2010) also observes that before anything else, the world is "an ensemble of nourishments" (p. 6). By refusing to eat, the individual refuses to have any connection with the world. When Fogg celebrates his hunger, he is actually celebrating his lack of conformity. Hunger and fasting could be translated into refusal to engage in social life. Fasting and hiding in the park turn Fogginto a tramp, "a pox of failure on the skin of mankind". The park gives him shelter for a while and makes him forget that he does not belong. Hegyi(2010) sees in Fogg's sheltering in the opening in the park a reference to Jonah in the belly of the leviathan (p. 8). A metaphoric reading of the cave would increase the number of characters involved with caves into three: Fogg, Efigg and Solmon Barber. Auster's use of mise-en-abyme- the mirroring of the events of the main plot in the paratext- shatters the reader's sense of reality.

Fogg's passivity and his internalization of the teachings of the system is not the only reason why Auster's novel could be called reactionary. The relation between Fogg and Effig

---

[4]The way Auster's characters experience hunger is very similar to the way Kafka's hunger artist experiences hunger, although the exhibitionist nature of Kafka's character is lacking in Auster's characters. A better example of hunger in its metaphorical sense is theexperience of the unnamed narrator of KnuttHumpson's *Hunger*who, like Auster's characters, has self-destructive tendencies.

and the way it is made to look natural is also anti-democratic. The contradiction in Effig's speech and behavior makes Fogg doubt his honesty:"So much of his character was built on falsehood and deception, it was nearly impossible to know when he was telling the truth" (p. 101). He even thinks that Effighas feigned blindness. Effig abuses Fogg in many ways, treating him like a slave. Strangely, in spite of his dissatisfaction with Effig, Fogg stays with him. As Fogg tries to rationalize his own behavior, he fails to understand why he cannot leave the man he hates. Auster makes this relation look so natural that the reader might not notice that it is an unhealthy relationship. In addition to naturalizing and romanticizing the relation between the domineering Effig and the obedient Fogg, Auster relies heavily upon chance. Chance works in the novel not only through the discovery of the dying Fogg by his friends or the chance encounter between Fogg and his grandfather. Chance is also manifest in the characters' reliance on factors which are beyond their control. Fogg repeatedly emphasizes the importance of chance: "If I had any thought at all, it was to let chance determine what happened, to follow the path of impulse and arbitrary events" (pp. 50-51).Although the text has no obvious political content, it sends a very clear political message.As Fredric Jameson (1983, p.5) says, "the only effective liberation from such constraints[inability to grasp history as class struggle] begins with the recognition that there is nothing that is not social and historical_ indeed that everything is in the last analysis political" .Implying the message that there is something inherently attractive about a tramp's preference of death over life and passivity over activity, the text naturalizes and glorifies this kind of life and plays right into the hands of the Capitalist system which is the main reason for the existence of tramps.

4. Passive Dreamers in *Timbuktu*

4.1. Unstable Identities

Like *The New York Trilogy* and *Moon Palace,Timbaktu*celebrates passivity and escape from reality. The novel is narrated in third person, through the filter of consciousness of Mr. Bones who goes with his master Willy G. Christmas from Brooklyn to Baltimore. Willy dies in Baltimore and the grieving Mr. Bones has to look for a new master in the cruel human society. Even after Willy's death, Mr. Bones sees him in his dreams and talks to him about Timbuktu- Willy's name for the other world where dogs and human beings are treated equally. Mr. Bones finds a friend in Henry Chow who calls him Cal, but has to run away when he learns that dog is served in the Chinese restaurant Henry's father owns. Next, he finds a new home with the Joneses who rename him Sparky and castrate him. When the

family decides to go on a vacation, he is sent to a canine hotel, but he escapes and decides to join Willy in Timbaktu by running across a highway. The novel ends with the strong suggestion that Mr. Bones' heroic act must have taken him to Willy in Timbaktu.

Willy Gurevitch whom the reader observes through Mr. Bones' filter of consciousness, is the typical Austerian character- the nonconformist who resists the American life style and the dominant materialism of the society. Willy prefers his free but "hand to mouth" life to the luxurious life of the rich of the society who have become numb because of their material possessions. Under the eyes of an outsider- Mr. Bones- American culture seems to be based on discrimination, lack of justice and deception. Trained by Willy, Mr. Boneshates the luxuries of bourgeois life and feels humiliated when he has to live the life of a tamed and controlled animal in the house of the Joneses.

Both tramps lack a stable identity. Willy Gurevitch changes his name into Willy G. Christmas after Santa Claus appears to him in one of his hallucinations. Mr. Bones' identity also changes in spite of his disapproval. Henry calls him Cal and the Joneses give him the diminutive name Sparky which is by no means appropriate for a dog of his age and temperament. Like the previous characters, Willy and Mr. Bones deteriorate physically as they move on in the course of the novel. At the beginning of the novel, the reader encounters an ailing Willy, "a man in decline" who is about to die at the doorstep of Poe's house.The flashbacks, though, reveal that Willy has seen better days and has gradually become a tramp. The reader also observes Mr.Bones'sgradual deterioration after his master's death.

4.2.Lack of Distinction Between Reality and Dream

The most significant point about the tramps in this novel is their inability to tell the difference between reality and dream. Willy is unable to distinguish between his hallucinations and reality and considers the Santa Claus he sees on the TV to be real. Similarly, Mr. Bones cannot tell the difference between reality and dream. When Willy is taken to the hospital, part of him remains in the corner of the street and another part follows his master to the hospital in the form of a fly. As a fly, he sticks to the ceiling and watches his master on his death bed. After Willy's death, he returns to his place in the corner of the street and realizes that he has had a dream within a dream within a dream. He opens his eyes and sees Willy alive, talking as usual. But the details of his speech correspond exactly to what he was saying in the dream: "Mr. Bones wondered if he was going mad. Had he slipped back into the dream, or was the dream an earlier version of what was happening now? He blinked his eyes, hoping he would wake up." (p. 78)

Significantly, mention is made in the novel of Disneyland, a constructed city where the real and the fantastic are comingled to such as extent that they cannot be told from each other. The trip to Disneylandis the realization of a dream, the final destination of the dreamer. It is a place, in Umberto Eco's (1983) words, that "if the visitor pays this price [passivity], he can have not only the real thing but the abundance of constructed reality" (p.48),where "we also enjoy the conviction that imitation has reached its apex and afterwards reality will be always inferior to it" (p. 46). Fredric Jameson (2003) explicitly criticizes fantasy worlds and wax museums. Referring to Sartre's "derealization" of the everyday reality, Jameson argues that the visitor of unreal things and figures which are made to look like the real, extends her or his doubts about these figures to the real people moving about in the same place. Even for a short while the beholder will transform real people into wax figures and simulacra. Consequently, the world loses its reality and becomes like an illusion (P.34). Jameson's doubts about the exhilarating effect of such an experience could be applied to all experiences in which the distinction between reality and dream is blurred. Willy has trouble making this distinction and his disciple Mr. Bones who has the same problem finally escapes the world of reality to reach an imaginary world, Timbuktu. Alice's escape to the world of the imaginary and her travel to Disneyland are only symbolic acts which throw light on of Willy and Mr. Bones who cannot tell the unreal from the real.

Inability to tell the real from the unreal reduces the possibility for action. Dissatisfaction with the real world takes Mr. Bones to the world of dream, imagination and memory: "…he understood that memory was a place, a real place that one could visit, that to spend a few moments among the dead was not necessarily bad for you , that it could in fact be a source of great comfort and happiness" (p. 115). Quoting Borges who considers thinking, dreaming and the material world all equally real, Gerhard Hoffmann (2005) defines the real world and the narrative world in terms of "modalities"- the continuation of the real in the fantastic and the fantastic in the real. (p. 246).

It is precisely this blending of the boundaries of the real and the unreal that is problematic about the novel. Without definite distinctions between the two universes, ontological questions about the universe in which the characters live,the distinction between the two worlds and their authenticity start to emerge. It is not clear in the novel whether these are the only worlds or whether there are plural universes. There is even the possibility that there is a world within a world within a world. In contrast to the real, the simulacra becomes more real than the reality. Timbuktu, Willy's notion of the other world in which people and dogs are equal becomes so real to Mr. Bones that he decides to join Willythere:

…from everything Mr. Bones could gather, it was located in the middle of a desert somewhere, far from New York or Baltimore, far from Poland or any other city they had visited in the course of their travels. At one point, Willy described it as "an oasis of spirits." At another point he said: "Where the map of this world ends, that's where the map of Timbuktu begins." In order to get there, you apparently had to walk across an immense kingdom of sand and heat, a realm of eternal nothingness.(48)

Timbuktu is a simulation with little, if any, relation to its referent. As its referent, the other world has no distinct characteristics. Like Borges's map which becomes vaster and more detailed than the empire it represents, Timbuktu becomes more real than the other world it is meant to signify: It has specific geographical features and is governed by specific rules and regulations. Baudrillard (1994) defines simulation as opposed to representation which is marked by a one to one relation between the sign and its referent:

Such is simulation, in so far as it is opposed to representation. Representation stems from the principle of the equivalence of the sign and the real (even if this equivalence is utopian, it is fundamental axiom). Simulation, on the contrary, stems from the utopia of the utopia of the principle of the equivalence, from the radical negation of the sign as value, from the sign as the reversion and death sentence of every reference. Whereas representation attempts to absorb simulation by interpreting it as false representation, simulation evolves the whole edifice of representation itself as simulacrum.(p. 6)

Mr. Bones' escapes from the real world to the world of imagination is described as heroic and his escape is made to look like a romantic act:

It was fun, it was invigorating, it was a challenge to every dog's athletic skills. Just run across the road and see if you could avoid being hit. The more times you were able to do it, the greater champion you were. Sooner or later, of course, the odds were bound up to catch up with you…but that was the beauty of this particular game. The moment you lost, you won. And so it happened that…Mr Bones, a.k.a. Sparkatus, sidekick of the late poet Willy G. Christmas, set out to prove that he was a champion among dogs…he run toward the noise, towards the light, toward the glare and the roar that were rushing in on him from all directions…. (p.181)

5. Conclusion

Rejecting the world and renouncing life in favor of death distinguishes Auster's postmodern fiction from fiction that inspires hope and resistance. Auster glorifies and romanticizes the

lives of his tramps- Quinn, Blue, the narrator of *The Locked Room,* Marco Stanley Foggand Willy G. Christmas who gradually lose their position in the society and deteriorate mentally and physically .The degradation of the tramps is accompanied with a loss of a sense of self – a difficulty on the part of the subject to situate himself temporally and spatially.In Auster's universe, there is something potentially positive in having a passive attitude to life and refusing to take practical steps for the betterment of one's life and the lives of others. In all these charactersidentity is fluid. The characters either merge into their doubles or swap identity with others or simply lose it by vanishing into thin air. Auster'scharacters who suffer from a shattered sense of the selfgradually lose their ability to understand the world they inhabit and becomeunable to act. They are also disempowered by the dominance of ontological concerns. The political unconscious of all these texts deconstructs the intended meaning and the texts turns against themselves to create a reactionary fictional world which promises no hope for action and change.

References

Alford, S. E . (1995). Spaced-out: Signification and Space in Paul Auster's*The New York Trilogy.Contemporary Literature* 36 (4), 613-632.

Althusser, L. (1993).*Essays on Ideology.*(3rded). London: Verso.

Auster, P. (1985). *The New York Trilogy: City of Glass, Ghosts, The Locked Room.* London: Penguin.

Auster, P .(1998).*Moon Palace*. New York: Penguin.

Auster, P. (1999).*Timbuktu.* New York. Henry Holt.

Baudrillard, J. (1994).*Simulacra and Simulation.*(Sheila Faria Glaser, Trans.). Michigan: University of Michigan.

Bell, D .(1987).*The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. (3rded). New York: Basic Books.

Bertens, H.(1990). Postmodern Characterization and the Intrusion of Language.*Exploring Postmodernism.*MateiCalinescu and DouweFokkema (Eds). Paris: John Benjamin B.V.

Berlatsky, E. (2008). Everything in the World Has Its Own Color: Detecting Race and Identity in Paul Auster's*Ghosts.The Arizona Quarterly*. 64 (3),109-142.

De Bolle, L .(2010). Desire and Schizophrenia.*Deleuze and psychoanalysis: Philosophical Essays on Deleuze's Debate with Psychoanalysis (Figures of the Unconscious)*. Leen De Bolle (Ed.) Leuven University Press.

De Waelhens, A&ElEcke W. (2001). *Phenomenology and Lacan on Schizophrenia: After the Decade of Brain.* Leuven*:* Leuven University Press.

Dimovitz, S. A (2006).Public Personae and the Private I: De-Compositional Ontology in Paul Auster's The New York Trilogy. Modern Fiction Studies.52 (3), 613-633.

Eco, U. (1983). *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays*. (W. Weaver, Trans).San Diego: Harcourt Brace.

El Moncef, S .(1999). Figures in (De)composition: The genesis of the paradoxical self in Paul Auster's*Moon Palace* (a fuzzy grammar of subjectivity).*Angelika*,4 (3), 75-91.

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09697259908572057

Freud, Z .(1950).*Collected Papers: Volume IV*.(J.Riviere Trans). London: Replika.

Hegyi, P . (2010). Extended Mise-en-Abyme in Paul Auster's*Moon Palace*.*Americana*. 6(2).

Retrieved from http://www. americanaejournal.hu/vol6no2/hegyi

Hoffmann, G . (2005).*From Modernism to Postmodernism: Concepts and Strategies of Postmodern American Fiction*. Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V.

Jackson, R . (1991). *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. London: Methuen.

Jameson, F .(1983). *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act.* London: Routledge.

Jameson, F. (2003).*Postmodernism: or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism.*(10[th]ed). Durham: Duke University Press.

Keane, K . (2009).Doubles in *The Locked Room* by Paul Auster: Identity in Flux.*Journal of Language and Culture: British and American Language and Culture*, 4 : 51-64.

Retrieved from http://www.lc.osakafu-u.ac.jp/Lng_Clt/2009LC/09_keane.pdf

Kershner, R. B. (1997).*The Twentieth- Century Novel: An Introduction*. Boston: Bedford Books.

Lacan, J. (1977).*The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*.(Alan Sheridan Trans.) London: Hogarth.

Polansky, N. A. (2009). *Ego Psychology and Communication: Theory for the Interview*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Rheindorf, M. (n.d.) .Processes of Embodiment and Spatialization in the Writings of Paul Auster. Retrieved from http://reconstruction.eserver.org/023/rheindorf.htm

Roberstein, R . (1998). Doubling, Intertextuality, and the Postmodern Uncanny: Paul Auster's New York Trilogy. *LIT*.9 ,245-262.

Rowen, N. (1999).The Detective in Search of the Lost Tongue of Adam: Paul Auster's*City of Glass*. *Critique*.32 (4),224-234.

Russell, A .(2004).Deconstructing the New York Trilogy: Paul Auster's Anti-Detective Fiction.*Paul Auster*. Harold Bloom (Ed.). Philadelphia: Chelsa House.

Salmela, M. (2008).The Bliss of Being Lost: Revisiting Paul Auster'sNowhere."*Critique*.49(2),131-146.

Slethaugh, G. E. (1993).*The Play of the Double in Postmodern American Fiction*. Illinois: Southern Illinois University.

Sue, D, Wing Sue D. & Sue S.(2012). *Understanding Abnormal Behavior*.(10th ed.) Wadsworth.

Tyree, J.M. (2003).Fanshaw's Ghost. *New England Review*. 24(3),76-86.

Title

The Effect of Translator's Content Knowledge on Translating Texts in the Field of Management

Author

Ayda Ferdossifard (M.A)
Islamic Azad University, Science& Research Branch, Tehran, Iran

Biodata

Ayda Ferdossifard, M.A in Translation Studies from Islamic Azad University, Science & Research Branch, Tehran, Iran. Her research interests are in the fields of Orientalism, CDA, Culture in translation, and Metaphor in translation.

Abstract

Translation as one the most important means of international communication has always been in the center of attraction. Many scholars have tried to illuminate the differences and difficulties of translation through presenting different theories, translation methods and evaluation criteria. Translation of technical texts has also had an important place among translators. What counts in translation of technical and non-technical texts was discussed in this research through the comparison of the translation of one technical text (in the field of management) by graduated students who were familiar with the subject and graduated students of translation. The technical text was analyzed to discover whether the technical content knowledge of the translators affect the translators' ability of translation. The comparison model was based on Farahzad's pattern (1992). The statistical measures were calculated using SPSS.

Keywords*: Performance technical, Text text, Non-technical text, TPT, IELTS, Source language (SL), Target language (TL)

1. Introduction

It is widely known that in order to translate a text, a translator must be familiar with not only the target language system, but also the source language system. One should also be familiar with the field s/he is translating. The translation problem does not just depend on the SL itself, but on the significance of the translated text for its readers as members of a certain scientific field with certain expressions known as technical items which are different form non-technical items. One of the most difficult problems facing translators is how to find accurate equivalents for the scientific expressions which are not known in the receptor language.

Since the translation of scientific texts is an essential need because most of the scientific texts are written in English, a colonial heritage, which is not the language of the masses, translators" content knowledge and language knowledge, is of great importance. The present study tries to find out whether the translator's content knowledge makes the translation better. Technical translation is a specific form of cross-cultural and inter-lingual knowledge transfer. Technical texts contain subject-field-specific terminology (often from different domains). Today, translating scientific texts correctly is a need. Although this matter is extremely important, there are a lot of books and texts that have not been translated accurately, whether because of translators" lack of content knowledge or lack of language knowledge. So, the concern of this study is to perform a comparative work. The present study is significant as the result can show that whether the translator's content knowledge affects the ability of the translator to deal with scientific texts.

1.2. Technical Translation

Technical translation is a specific form of cross-cultural and inter-lingual knowledge transfer. Technical texts contain subject-field-specific terminology (often from different domains).

Based on Jody Byrne (2006), Technical translation is a type of specialized translation involving the translation of documents produced by technical writers (owner's manuals, user guides, etc.), or more specifically, texts which relate to technological subject areas or texts which deal with the practical application of scientific and technological information. While the presence of specialized terminology is a feature of technical texts, specialized terminology alone is not sufficient for classifying a text as "technical" since numerous disciplines and subjects which are not "technical" possess what can be regarded as specialized terminology.Technical translation covers the translation of many kinds of specialized texts and requires a high level of subject knowledge and mastery of the relevant terminology and writing conventions Williams J.A. Chesterman (2002).

As a field, technical translation has been recognized, studied, and developed since the 1960s, Daniel Thompson, C. Finch. Stemming from the field of <u>translation studies,</u> the field of technical translation traditionally emphasized much importance on the source language from which text is translated. However, over the years there has been a movement away from this traditional approach to a focus on the purpose of the translation and on the intended audience, Geoffrey Kingscott (2002). This is perhaps because only 5-10% of items in a technical document are terminology, while the other 90-95% of the text is language, most likely in a natural style of the source language, Peter Newmark (1988). Though technical translation is only one subset of the different types of professional translation, it is the largest subset as far as output is concerned. Currently, more than 90% of all professionally translated work is done by technical translators, Geoffrey Kingscott (2002) highlighting the importance and significance of the field.

According to Newmark (1988, pp.187, 188), "there are some points to be considered in technical translations. According to Reiss(2000,pp.24,25), "just as the translator must realize what kind of text he is translating before he begins working with it, the critic must also be clear as to the kind of the text represented by the original if he is to avoid using inappropriate standards to judge the translation." The translation of scientific texts is an essential need since most of the scientific texts are written in English. Whenever the scientific text is translated, the gaps in the terminology are filled by English words into the language systems, or by borrowing terms from other languages. Consequently, scientific texts require that translators have to be able to understand the text, and scientific documents may be no simple matter to understand. Scientific translators must therefore also have a scientific educational background and be familiar with the terminology. What is more, as the terminology is being expanded continually with neologisms and new technological advances, translators must keep themselves completely up to date. A good scientific translator must have broad-based training and several years of practical experience. However, nobody is capable of acquiring a comprehensive knowledge of all branches, so it is vital to be able to rely on good information sources.

The role of the technical translator is to not only be a transmitter of information, but also to be a constructor of procedural discourse and knowledge through meaning, particularly because often, the technical translator may also take on the role of the technical writer Geoffrey Kingscott (2002). Research has demonstrated that technical communicators do, in fact, create new meaning as opposed to simply repackaging (198) old information. This emphasizes the important role that technical translators play in making meaning, whether

they are doing technical translation in one language or in multiple languages, Marjorie Rush Hovde (2010).

Much like professionals in the field of technical communication, the technical translator must have a cross-curricular and multifaceted background. In addition to grasping theoretical and linguistic orientations for the actual translation process, an understanding of other subjects, such as cognitive psychology, usability engineering, and technical communication, is necessary for a successful technical translator, Jody Byrne (2006). Additionally, most technical translators work within a specialized field such as medical or legal technical translation, which highlights the importance of an interdisciplinary background, Jody Byrne (2006). Finally, the technical translators should also become familiar with the field of professional translation through training, Timothy Weiss (1995).

1.3. Criteria for Correcting Translations

In this research the evaluation of translations has a great importance. Regarding this, some factors in evaluating translations will be discussed here. These factors were chosen based on correction model presented by Frahzad (1992, p. 277). In this model, accuracy, appropriateness, naturalness, cohesion, and style of discourse or choice of word, have been given priority in correcting translation. According to Farahzad (1992, pp.276, 277), scoring model, the examiner should decide on the unit of translation in each part of the translation test and the weight that will be given to each part. Usually the unit of translation is "sentence", particularly when examinees must correct a translation or write their own translation of sentences. Two main features are to be checked for each unit of translation, namely, Accuracy and Appropriateness.

1.4. Translation Assessment

One of the concerns of this research is how to evaluate the subjects' ability of translation and give a numerical value to their works. Regarding this, translation assessment plays an important role. According to Louise Brunette, (as cited in Carol Maier, 2000), one distinctive characteristic of translation assessment is that it is carried out on a text considered final. The assessor receives a finished product from the translator or evaluates a text already delivered to a client. Another distinctive characteristic of assessment is that it is not necessarily performed on the entire translated text, but sometimes only on a sample. According to the assessors in the Canadian Public Service, a 400-word segment of a text is sufficient for a reasonably accurate evaluation. A translation is assessed according to supposedly objective criteria, using grids of varying complexity. The work assessed is always graded or assigned a rating determined according to the number and seriousness of the errors found.

2. The Study

2.1. Research Questions

To focus more clearly on the process of research, the following research question and hypothesis are formulated:

1. Does the translator's technical content knowledge make the translation more accurate, or his/ her translating and language knowledge?

2.2. Research Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the translation of graduated translators and graduated students of management in translating technical texts.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was Frahzad's scoring model (1992). In her scoring model, the unit of translation is the sentence. Two points are allocated to each sentence. One is accuracy and the other one is appropriateness.

2.4. Subjects

Subjects participating in this research were selected among two groups of graduated students who studied English Translation and Management as their field of study, at different universities. These students had done related courses recently; they were both males and females. The number of participants taking part in the first part of this research was 200. Among them70students were selected for each groupbased on their scores; they did not have any previous preparation and background about the focus of the research. The students were allowed to use dictionaries or any other books to translate the texts given.

2.5. Instrumentation

In this study the researcher used two different tests as the research instruments. These instruments were:

1. A test of General IELTS (except speaking test) to make both groups homogenous.

2. A Translation Production Test (TPT).

Two paragraphs were given to the subjects. One was just to make students familiar to the topic, and they did not have to translate it. The second paragraph (with 300 words) was a text which was taken from a book. Both paragraphs were technical and related to the considered field. The items included in the translation test were designed as carefully as possible. They were selected on the same level of difficulty; each of them contained some technical terms and expressions. They were chosen from easy to hard. There were not multiple choice items

in the given test. The reason to select sentences with technical terms was to see if the selected students translating the translation test were able to identify and understand them and which group translated more accurately based on Farahzad's translation scoring model.

3. Procedure

To conduct the procedure for the research, the researcher preceded the following steps.

First of all, the researcher lookedfor the sources relating to the topic. After gathering some information from the internet or related books about the topic (management), the researcher selected an appropriate text to be translated. The selected text contained technical terms relating to the field of management. After appointing the date of administrating the test, first the IELTSwas administered to both groups of subjects to make them homogenous regarding their English knowledge. The score of homogenous group should be between 6 to 7. The reading part of the test was taken into consideration to be compared with the translation test. Once a homogenous group was chosen, it was time for TPT to measure their translation ability. The time allocated for the TPT was60 minutes. After the students translated the given test on the given time, the papers were gathered to be analyzed. In order to decrease the effect of scoring on translation production test results, three raters were asked to score the translations. All the raters were trained to follow Farahzad's (1992) 'objectified scoring' method of translation (see Appendix A). The average of the scores of the three raters on each translation was the final score of each one of the students.

4. Design

The design of this study was an ex post facto one based on the nature of the study which was a correlation one. In the current study this design was used to determine the degree of relationship between two variables. After collecting the appropriate data under direct observation, the data wasanalyzed according to a scoring model and the results were shown based on descriptive statistics. The data is in SPSS.

5. Data Analysis

The aim of this study is to investigate and analyze the data attained in the process on the translation of the participants of this study from English into Persian within the problematic area of translating technical terms. Previously, the subjects and instruments as well as the procedures, followed in this study, were defined. The aim was to identify the effect of content

knowledge and translators abilities to cope with this problematic area. The scoring model used in this study was introduced by Frahzadin1992. In her scoring model, the unit of translation is the sentence. Two points are allocated to each sentence. One is accuracy and the other one is appropriateness. After scoring and comparing the scores, the results are described as they are shown in following tables and figures.

6. Results

6.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the two tests done by Management students andTranslation students. It should be noted that scores were converted to the scale of 20.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Two Ggroups

		Management Students	Translation Students
N	Valid	70	70
	Missing	0	0
Mean		12.8829	12.3571
Std. Deviation		4.27273	5.24483
Variance		18.256	27.508
Minimum		6.30	4.00
Maximum		19.50	20.00

It can be seen that the mean of the Management students' scores (M = 1288) is slightly higher than the mean of Translation students' (M = 12.35).

Table 2. Correlation Coefficient between TPT done by the Two Groups

		Management Students	Translation Students
Management Students	Pearson Correlation	1	.989**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	70	70
Translation Students	Pearson Correlation	.989**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	70	70

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

As Table 2 shows that the correlation between the two tests issignificant, and the correlation coefficient oraccording to Backman (2004) the coefficient of determination is not veryhigh. In order to see if the students' performances on the two tests have been similar or not, a paired *t*-test was used. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 4. *Paired t-Test between Management Students' TPT and Translation Students' TPT*

Test Value = 0

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Management Students	25.226	69	.000	12.88286	11.8641	13.9017
Translation Students	19.712	69	.000	12.35714	11.1066	13.6077

As the above table shows, paired t-Test between groups (two-tailed) indicates that the Management students performed better on the TPT.

7. Discussion

Based on the findings, it can be argued that since the correlation was rather low and at same time there was a difference between the mean scores of the two groups, theTranslation students' scores cannot be considered better thanManagement students' scores. If the correlation had been stronger, it would have been possible to make predictions about the translation ability of the participants based on their scores. In general, the results of the present study revealed that the Management students performed better on the TPT than Translation students. There had been an assumption that Translation students would perform better since they had studied related courses. However, the results of this study rejected the assumption and indicated that the studentsof Management had a better performance on the TPT. The obtained results may be due to the fact that the Management students are usually more familiar with the technical words appeared in the texts related to their major. Another reason may be due to the content knowledge of the students.

8. Conclusion

There are always some obstacles in translation that are needed to be got through. One of these obstacles and maybe the most important one is translating technical words, the phenomenon discussed in this research. This research was carried out to see if the translator's content knowledge affects the quality of the translation or not. Translating technical words is one of the most problematic issues which is almost always forgotten by both translator and English Translation students to be focused on. For that reason, this research was carried out to consider this issue in translation. As it is mentioned in the above tables, Management students did a better translation. Although the number of the subjects selected in this research is not enough to make a conclusion, according to this research, when translating a text in case of

facing a technical word the translator who has the related content knowledge can produce a more qualified translation. This research was concluded to clarify such important issue as content knowledge in translation which is not taken seriously in educational system developed in Iranian Universities taking translation as a field of study.

References

Byrne, Jody (2006). *Technical Translation: Usability Strategies for Translating Technical Documentation*. Dordrecht: Springer. pp. 3–4.

Carole, M. & Baker, M. (Eds). (2000). The Translator: Evaluation and Translation. Manchester, UK: St. Jerome Publishing.

Catford, J. C. (1965). A linguistic Theory of Translation. London, New York & Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Farahzad, F. (1992).Testing Achivement in Translation Classes: Testing Translation and Interpreting Training Talent and Experience.Amesteram and Philadelphia: John Benjamin B.V.

Finch, C. (1969). An Approach to Technical Translation: An Introductory Guide for Scientific Readers. New York: Pergamon Press.

Kingscott, Geoffrey. (2002). "Studies in Translatology." Perspectives 10.4: 247-255. http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a921760804

Newmark, P. (1988).Approaches to Translation.Pretice Hall International (UK) Ltd.

Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Reiss, K. (2000), translation Criticism-The Potentials and Limitations:St. Jerome Publishing. Manchester, UK.

Rush Hovde, M. (2010). "Creating Procedural Discourse and Knowledge for Software Users: Beyond Translation and Transmission." Journal of Business and Technical Communication 24.2: 164-205.

Thompson, D. (1967). "Theophilus Presbyter: Word and Meaning in Technical Translation." Medieval Academy of America 42.2: 313-339. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2854679.

Venuti, L. & Baker, M. (Eds). (2000). Principles of /correspondence: The Translation Studies Reader. London & New York: Routledge.

Weiss, Timothy. (1995). "Translation in a borderless world." Technical Communication Quarterly 4: 407-25. http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/detail?accno=EJ525808

Williams, J; Chesterman, A. (2002).*The Map: A Beginner's Guide to Doing Research in Translation Studies*. Manchester: Saint Jerome Publishing. pp. 12–13.

Appendix A

Scoring Method of Translation Production Test

Dear Mr. / Ms.

Thank you for rating these papers. Scoring these translations should be performed according to the scoring method presented by Farahzad (1992). The method is as follows:

The target texts (Farsi) which are written by students must be read two times, first to check the *accuracy* and *appropriateness*, then for *cohesion* and *style*.

Accuracy: The rater should see whether the translation conveys the information in the source text precisely, without addition or deletion, and whether it is natural in forms of diction.

Appropriateness: The rater should see whether the sentences sound fluent and native, and are correct in terms of structure and natural in terms of grammatical forms).

In checking for accuracy and appropriateness, sentence and clause should be the units of translation. Thus each verb in the source language text marks a score, since 'verb' is the major marker of the sentence. Whenever the source language sentence consists of a main clause plus subordinate clause(s), the main clause receives one score and each sub-clause another score. Accuracy and appropriateness are checked in each sentence and clause. A correct sentence which does not preserve the content, receives no score. If the target version conveys the message, but in a structure which distorts the meaning, the translation receives no score. And if the message is conveyed, although in a grammatically unnatural form, the translation receives half a score.

Cohesion and style cannot be checked and scored at the sentence and clause level. The elements of *cohesion* (e.g., transitional, appropriate use of pronouns, linkages, etc.) are spread all over the text as are the elements which form the *style of discourse* (choice of words, grammatical structures, etc.); in checking them the rater must allot points for cohesion and others for style, depending on the importance attached to each.

Title

The Relationship between Iranian EFL Learners' Multiple Intelligences and their Writing Performance

Authors

Mahnaz Saeidi (Ph.D)
Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch, Iran

Helen Alizadeh (M.A)
Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch, Iran

Nasrin Hadidi Tamjid (Ph.D)
Islamic Azad University, Tabriz , Branch, Iran

Biodata

Mahnaz Saeidi, assistant professor of English language at Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch. She is one of the editorial board members of The Journal of Applied Linguistics, Tabriz, and a member of the Research Committee at the University. In 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 she won an award for being the best researcher. She has published several articles and books and participated in a number of inter/national conferences. Her major research interests are multiple intelligences, focus on form, feedback, and communication strategies.

Helen Alizadeh, M.A. in TEFL from Islamic Azad University-Tabriz Barnch. Her research interests are on Multiple Intelligences, writing, gender and proficiency in language learning.

Nasrin Hadidi Tamjid, assistant professor of TEFL who has been teaching at Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch for 15 years. She is also an official translator to the justice administration. She has published and presented a number of papers in different international journals and conferences. Her main research interests are alternative assessment, ESP, and teaching writing.

Abstract

Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT) has rapidly found its way into school curricula in educational systems across United States and other countries (Christine, 2003).Nowadays writing is one of the main ways by which people communicate. But, less research has been reported in the literature to explore the relation between Multiple Intelligences and writing performance. Thus, this study aimed at investigating a possible relationship between male Iranian EFL learners' Multiple Intelligences and their writing performance. To conduct this study, 15 male participants from a reputable institute in Tabriz

participated. They passed through a placement test to enter the course, yet, the researchers administered a *Preliminary English Test* (PET) to ensure the homogeneity of the group. Later, *Multiple Intelligence Developmental Assessment* (MIDAS) questionnaire was administered. Next, the learners were asked to read and write summaries of the given text. The written texts were analyzed for general writing ability utilizing Jacobs et al.'s (1981) writing scale. The results for correlational analysis revealed a positive relationship between Kinesthetic Intelligence and general writing ability of the participants in the study.The findings suggest English teachers to consider the role of multiple intelligences in learning and teaching process and provide more effective activities to help learners of different intelligences improve their second language writing skill. The pedagogical implications of the study for language teaching and teaching writing have been discussed.

Key words: Multiple Intelligences, writing performance, MIDAS, PET test, correlation analysis

1.Introduction

Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT), a major relevant theory which has seized many educators, has recently been embraced by numerous theorists andapplied by countless language instructors (Tahriri&Yamini, 2010). Human beings are all so different because they possess different combinations of intelligences (Christison, 1998).Armed by this perspective, success or failure of a learner is no longer judged with the amount or degree of Intelligent Quotient (IQ) s/he possesses (Brown, 2000). This means, we cannot blindly conclude that since a learner has little amount of IQ, s/he is not going to be a bright or successful person in Math, Geography, Art or Music (Ashton, Vernon &Visser 2006).Since 1983, Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences has rapidly found its way into school curricula in educational systems across United States and other countries (Christine, 2003). Many teachers accept and attempt to teach students in a way to help the dominant intelligence(s) to blossom.

In an EFL context, usually teachers' main focus is developing communication skills. Nowadays, writing is one of the main ways by which people communicate. Harklau (2002, cited in Ahmadian&Hosseini, 2012) declares that "writing should play a more prominent role in classroom-based studies of second language acquisition" (p. 329). To him learners should

not only learn to write but they should also write to learn. In accordance with this ideas, Ahmadian and Hosseini (2012) stated that these days "reading and writing pass from being the object of instruction to the medium of instruction" (p. 336).

As Sadeghi and Farzizadeh (2012) mentioned, developing writing ability is a skill which is given slight attention in Iranian context both by teachers and learners. In most language classes, a small amount of class time is devoted to developing this skill. Writings are mostly done outside the classroom for which learners try to get help from other sources. Sadeghi and Farzizadeh further mentioned that in this type of context, writing is seen as a means to strengthen vocabulary and grammatical knowledge rather than as a tool of communication. Nowadays, by the growing attention of teachers to the individual differences among learners as members who are equipped with Multiple Intelligences, their individual potentials in intelligences can be counted beneficial in developing their language skills. As Gardner (1983) stated, individuals are different because of their unique combination of intelligences. So, individual differences exist as a fact in educational settings, which should be taken into consideration.

As Ahmadian and Hosseini (2012) mentioned, despite the growing number of researches being conducted on the relationships between Multiple Intelligences and aspects of language learning, less research has been reported in the literature to explore this relation between Multiple Intelligences and writing performance. Thus, this study investigates the possible relationship between male EFL learners' Multiple Intelligences and their writing performance.

In order to conduct the study the following research question and null hypothesis were formulated:

Q: Is there a significant relationship between intermediate male EFL Learners' Multiple Intelligences and the quality of their writing?

H0: There is nosignificant relationship between intermediate male EFL Learners' Multiple Intelligences and the quality of their writing.

2.Participants

To conduct this study, 50 intermediate participant, form a reputable institute in Tabriz, took part as the initial candidates. All the participants in the present study had already taken a standard placement test which was administered by the experts at the institute. But, the

researcher felt necessary to homogenize the group by conducting a standard proficiency test, Preliminary English Test(PET).

As mentioned, a number of 50 intermediate participants took part in the Preliminary English Test (PET) test. The test contained four parts:1-Reading (5 parts/35 questions) and Writing (3 parts/ 7 questions), taking together 90 minutes, 2-Listening (4 parts/ 25 questions), taking 30 minutes, 3-Speaking (4 parts) an interview taking 10 minutes. But, due to practicality problems, the listening and speaking sections were not administered. Therefore, the total score was out of 50; the mean score obtained was 35. So, 15 male participants who obtained scores between 28 and 43, that is, one standard deviation bellow and above the mean, were selected out of 50 candidates. As a result, a final intact group of 15 male participants comprised the intermediate group of the study.

There are several scales to assess learner's Multiple Intelligences out of which MIDAS (Multiple Intelligences Developmental Assessment Scale) was selected. MIDAS is a self-report instrument designed by Shearer (1996). This instrument contains 119 Likert-type (from a to f) questions. These questions cover eight different intelligences introduced by Gardner. It also minimizes the pressure on the respondent to make guesses. To rely on MIDAS as a reliable and valid source, Shearer (1996, 2006) indicated that the MIDAS scale can provide a reasonable estimate of one's MI strength and limitations. Since MIDAS has been taken by 10.000 people around the world, it enjoys high reliability. To avoid complexity and difficulty in answering the test, the translated version of MIDAS into the learners' official language, Persian, was utilized.The reliability of the Persian version was calculated using CronbachAlpha analysis for 50% of the participants and the result revealed a reliability of 0.94.

3.Procedure

A complete session (90 minutes) was devoted for the group to introduce the research study and completely explain the process which the participants were going to get through. The students were guaranteed to be informed of the results and interpretations of the results of the study. Therefore, they tried their best to honestly answer and participate in the research study.

A week after the introductory session, the participants were asked to complete the MIDAS scale while they were well aware of the purpose of taking the test, terms used in the scale, and the time (30 minutes)needed to answer the questions. The researcher thoroughly explained the purpose of the study and benefits of taking MIDAS test and patiently answered

the questions posed by the participants. Many learners did not know or even heard anything about Multiple Intelligences. But later, they felt blessed to be chosen for the study and were excited to go on. They were comfortable to answer the questions honestly since choices like "I don't know" or "Does not apply" existed. The answer sheets were collected after 30-35 minutes. Later, the answers given by each participant was entered into a Microsoft Excel sheet and was sent back to the test designer, Dr. Branton Shearer, the designer of the MIDAS. On the third week of the study, the researcher introduced a topic for the group. The topics were chosen from the learners' main course books; Interchange Third Edition student's book 3 by Jack C. Richards, with Jonathan hull and Susan Proctor for intermediate level. The course books were chosen by the experts in the field, in accordance with the proficiency level of the students. The group had a text entitled "How Serious is Plagiarism?" (Appendix A).They had 60 minutes to carefully read the text and write a summary of the text. It was ensured that the participants completely understood the topic and had no problem interpreting the whole text.   The written summaries were collected for being carefully studied and analyzed in order to assess the writing quality through Jacobs et al.'s (1981) scoring profile. According to this scale, maximum 30 points was devoted to content, 20 to text organization, 20 to vocabulary, 25 to language use and just 5 points to mechanics. At the end, the MIDAS scores were correlated with the scores obtained from writing analysis of the 15 participants utilizing SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) V.17.

4.Data Analysis and Discussion

A Preliminary English Test (PET) was used to create a homogenized intermediate group. Their total score was out of 50 and the mean score was 35. A number of 15 male participants who obtained scores between 27-43,that is, one standard deviation below and above the mean score were selected out of 50 candidates. Table1.presents the descriptive statistics of the participants'PET scores.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for PET Scores of Intermediate Learners

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PET	50	20.00	48.00	35.1800	8.83567
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Table 2.shows the descriptive statistics for overall MI and quality of the male Intermediate learners' writing. The mean scores for the quality of writing and the overall MI are 77.46 and 87.66, with the standard deviation of 13.29 and 87.66 respectively.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Overall intelligences and Quality of Intermediate Male Learners' Writing

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Writing	15	49.00	95.00	77.4667	13.29805
MI	15	164.88	474.39	370.7987	87.66922
Valid N (listwise)	15				

In order to find out the relationship between the overall MI and quality of writing in the male intermediate learners' writing, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted. The results of the analysis in Table3.reveal no significant relationship between overall MI and the quality of male intermediate learners' writing, r = .107, p = .70, p > .05

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Analysis for Overall MI and Quality of Intermediate Male Learners' Writing

		MI	Writing
MI	Pearson Correlation	1	.107
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.704
	N	15	15
Writing	Pearson Correlation	.107	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.704	
	N	15	15

Thus, the null hypothesis, which claimed no relationship between intermediate male EFL learners' Multiple Intelligences and quality of their writing, was not rejected.

As no significant relationship was found between overall MI and quality of male intermediate learners' writing, the researcher conducted a Pearson correlation analysis for the components of MI and the quality of the male intermediate learners' writing. The results of the analysis in Table 4.show that among the components of multiple intelligences, Kinesthetic Intelligence showed a significant positive correlation with the quality of the male intermediate learners' writing, r = .535, p = .04, p < .05.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Analysis for Components of MI and Quality of Intermediate Male Learners'Writing

		Music	kinesthe	logical	spatial	linguistic	inter	intra	naturalistic
writing	Pearson Correlation	.172	.535*	-.053	.003	.305	.331	.176	.188
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.540	.040	.850	.992	.268	.228	.530	.502
	N	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15

The results of the correlational analysis between the components of MI and writing quality of the participants revealed that among all intelligence types only Kinesthetic intelligence positively correlated with the writing quality. The findings are in line with Marefat's (2007) finding in the sense that she has also claimed kinesthetic, interpersonal and existential intelligences to be as accurate predictors of writing performance. However, there are other researchers who reported finding no relationship between Multiple Intelligences and writing ability of the learners (Sadeghi&Farzizadeh, 2012).

In the present study,Kinesthetic intelligence which is the potential of using the whole body in problem-solving or the creation of products (Gardner, 1999) was found to have a significant relationship with the writing quality of the learners. Since writing a descriptive summary is based on complete understanding of the whole text and describing the main facts, it is closely related to the ability of the learners with reported high kinesthetic intelligence. Marefat (2007) also reported that kinesthetic intelligence made the strongest contribution to the writing scores of the learners.

According to Gardner (1983), linguistic intelligence is the sensitivity to spoken and written language and the ability to use and learn new languages. The reason why we did not come across a relationship between linguistic intelligence and writing quality of the participants in this study can be justified in many ways. First, the participants in this study were asked to read the given text and produce a summary of the text. Based on Hidi and Anderson (1986), there is a distinction between the nature of summarization and general writing ability. They mentioned that summarization is done based on an existing text and already planned discourse while most other writings require careful planning of content and structure. Second,

individual differences, according to Gardner (1983), exist as a fact in educational settings. Maybe if the same study will be conducted in another educational setting, with other individuals as the participants, we would come to different results.

5. Conclusion

The use of MI-based instruction has already been investigated by some researchers. In line with the findings of the present study, Tahriri and Yamini (2010), Saeidi (2006), Dung and Tuan (2011), also reported on the effectiveness of Multiple Intelligence-based instruction.Based on the existence of individual differences as a result of varying combinations of intelligences in educational settings (Gardner, 1983), teachers, curriculum developers, and material developers should take this fact into consideration for teaching and designing materials that would fit learners with varying intelligence combinations and of course different dominant intelligence. It is important to create situations in which learners would identify their intelligences, nurture them and at times, benefit from the stronger intelligences to develop and improve the weaker one(s).

This study, indeed investigated the relationship between male EFL learners' Multiple Intelligences and their writing performance. But it is a matter of question to find out whether the same results will be obtained if the participants were female and at another proficiency levels. Also, what the results would be likeif other skills such as reading, speaking and listening were investigated. Finally, it is a matter of question to investigate same relationship with other aspects of writing performance rather than the quality of writing.

References

Ahmadian, M., &Hosseini, S.(2012).A study of the relationship between Iranian EFL learners Multiple Intelligences and their performance on writing.*Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, *Vol. 3* (1). Doi:10.5901/mjss.2012.03.01.111.

Ashton, M.C., Vernon, P.A., &Visser, B.A. (2006).Beyond g: Putting multiple intelligence theory to the test. *Intelligence,34*, 487–502.

Brown, H.D. (2000).*Principals of Language and Teaching* (4[th]ed.).San Francisco State University.

Christison, M.A. (1998). An Introduction to Multiple Intelligence Theory and Second Language Learning. In: Reid, J.M. (Ed.), Understanding Learning Styles in Second Language Classrooms (pp. 1-14). Prentice Hall Regents, NJ.

Dung, N. T., & Tuan, L. T. (2011). Accommodating classroom activities to EFL learners' multiple intelligences. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 2* (1), *79-109.*

Gardner, H. (1983).*Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences.* New York: Basic
    Books.

Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence Reframed. Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*, New York:
    Basic Books. 292+x pages. Useful review of Gardner`s theory and discussion of issues and
    additions.

Hidi, S., & Anderson, V. (1986). Producing written summaries: Task demands, cognitive operations,
    and implications forinstruction. *Review of Educational Research*, *56* (4), 473–493.

Jacobs, H.L., Zinkgraf, S.A., Wormuth, D.R., Hartfiel, V.F., &Hughey, J.B. (1981). *Testing EFL
    Composition: A Practical Approach.*Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Marefat, F. (2007).Multiple intelligences: Voice from an EFL writing class (electronic version).
    *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji, 32,*145-162. Retrieved June 2, 2011, from

http://www.magiran.com/magtoc.asp.mg

Richards, J. C., Hull, J., & Proctor, S., (2005). *Interchange third edition student's book 3.*
    Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sadeghi, K., &Farzizadeh, B., (2012). The relationship between multiple intelligences and writing
    ability of Iranian of Iranian EFL learners.*Canadian Center of Science andEducation*, ISSN:
    1916-4742, *5*(11), (pp. 136-142).

Saeidi, M. (1385).*Multiple intelligence-based focus on form from theory to practice*. Islamic Azad
    University-Tabriz Branch.

Shearer, C. B. (1996).*The MIDAS: A guide to assessment and education for the multiple intelligences.*
    Columbus, OH: Greyden Press.

Shearer, C. B. (2006).*Towards an Integrated Model of Triarchic and Multiple Intelligences*.

Retrieved December 30, 2012, from http://*www.miresearch.org/files/Think2.doc*.

Tahriri, A. &Yamini, M. (2010).On Teaching to Diversity: Investigating the Effectiveness ofMI-
    Inspired Instruction in an EFL Context.*The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS), 2,* (1),
    59/4, (pp. 166-183).

Title

Need Analysis: On the Academic Writing Needs of Master's Graduate Students of Applied Linguistics: Instructors' Perception, Students' View, and current Pedagogical Practices

Author

Fateme Chahkandi (Ph.D candidate)
University of Isfahan, Iran

Biodata

Fateme Chahkandi, Ph.D. student at the University of Isfahan and an instructor in Farhangian University in Birjand branch. Her areas of research interest include teacher education, ESP, and discourse analysis.

Abstract

This paper seeks to explore the writing needs of master's graduate students of applied linguistics. 16 master's degree holders and PhD students and 8 master's students were interviewed for identification of target and present writing needs and the content of questionnaire was complied out of their responses. Next, 211 master's students and 10 instructors filled the questionnaires out to rate the importance of each writing item and students' current ability on them. Analysis of results indicated that instructors' and students' perceptions regarding important tasks were similar and included theses and term papers, articles, proposals, genre knowledge of different parts of theses, and making articles out of theses. Moreover, they held similar views about the areas in need of training and preparation. A discrepancy, however, emerged between what teachers believed to be important students' needs and their common practice in writing courses. The implications were then discussed for instructors, students, and syllabus designers.

Key terms: Need assessment, Graduate students, Students' and instructors' perception, Present and target situation needs

1.Introduction

Writing is the most critical language domain for students (Huang, 2010). It is a skill which socializes students to the academic and disciplinary communities to which they strive to gain acceptance and it is a tool for communicating their professional identities and sharing their ideas with other members of the community. In fact, much of professional communication is carried out through writing: proposals, theses, dissertations, emails, articles, reports, applications, and interviews all form part of the life of university or college students. Moreover, writing is a skill which students need to manage in order to acquire higher degrees and pursue higher education. It gains greater importance as students progress through graduate studies (Casanave & Hubbard, 1992). Without mastering the writing requirements, students will not be able to meet the demands of different exams including entrance exams of universities. In addition, applying for a majority of different certifications and licensures requires disciplinary writing skills to obtain. The importance of mastery of writing skill goes further for graduate students of applied linguistics since as would-be teachers and university instructors of English they have to develop in themselves the writing command to be able to support their students and to act as models, coaches and consultants as their students grow in their writing ability or as they proceed in writing their articles, theses, proposals, etc.

Taking the importance of academic writing for graduate students of applied linguistics into account, it is necessary that the writing courses designed for these students meet their particular needs and help them with the requirements of professional community. However, not many of the writing courses offered to students in the context of the study are successful in this regard. The evidence for such a claim was found in interviews with students of applied linguistics in several universities most of whom felt deficient in writing and considered more practice a must. Neglecting the importance of need assessment and providing traditional, product-oriented writing courses in which students are supposed to write personal essays on predetermined, irrelevant topics to the their academic enterprise and present or future needs is not what is needed by the students as was commented by most of them. All these complaints and inadequacies point to the significance of need analysis for course design.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Over decades, the focus of need assessment studies has shifted from EAP courses and research across academic disciplines to major-specific single disciplines. The impetus for

such a shift of attention, as Berkenkotter, Huckin, & Ackerman (1991) put it, comes from the claim that every academic discipline has its own rhetorical and linguistic conventions that students need to master in order to serve as good writers. In addition, much of academic literacy is embedded in a socio-cultural context which requires different social roles on the part of students leading to different lines of reasoning and employing different types of evidence (Herrington, 1985).

From among the pioneer studies in EAP realm, Ostler (1980) investigated academic needs including writing needs of undergraduate and graduate students across ten majors in University of Southern California. Analysis of results indicated a clear distinction between academic skills needed by graduate and undergraduate students. Moreover, many of the students expressed reading academic papers and textbooks, note taking skills, asking questions and writing research papers as their most pressing needs. Some years later, Bridgeman and Carlson (1984) employing questionnaire surveys from 190 academic departments examined the academic writing demands of undergraduate and graduate students. Their findings pointed to the importance of writing in graduate training and after graduation. Lab reports, brief article summaries and longer research papers were among the common writings practices of undergraduate and graduate students. Mainly discourse-level characteristics such as organization and content were also used as criteria for evaluation of students' writing assignments. In an attempt to find the typical academic writing tasks common in EAP classrooms, Horowitz (1986) also identified seven categories of summary of/reaction to a reading, annotated bibliography, report on a specified participatory experience, connection of theory and data, case study, synthesis of multiple sources, and research project.

In the next decade, Casanave and Hubbard (1992) also enquired about the writing requirements and problems of native and non-native students of graduate studies in a broad range of disciplines. A survey of 85 graduate faculty indicated that global features of writing such as content and idea were perceived by all respondents as more important than local features of grammatical accuracy and spelling. In addition, they indicated that non-native students have problems with surface-level features while discourse- level aspects of writing was problematic for speakers of all languages, whether native or non-native. Moreover, appropriateness of vocabulary was shown to be the most serious problem of students in humanities and social science because of its quasi-technical rather than technical or standardized nature in social sciences. Finally, they found a difference in faculty's view regarding the type of writing they considered important for their students given that

humanities/ social science faculty ranked text-based writing (writing based on materials students have read e.g. critical summaries) higher than activity-based writing (writing based on activity students have done e.g. lab reports) whereas this was the reverse for science and technology faculty.

As one of the more recent studies in EAP area, Huang (2010) surveyed the writing needs of graduate and undergraduate students across different disciplines and probed the importance of different skills and students' competency on each skill from students' and instructors' perspectives. The overall results showed that all students and instructors considered writing as the most important language domain and as area in need of practice and progression and that there was an overlap between instructors and students in what they considered as very important writing skills for course completion. Disciplinary writing, for example, was considered as very important and as a skill in need of help by all graduate students and ability to demonstrate a command of standard written English was the single skill recognized as important by both humanities and social sciences. This, they assumed, suggested that students had a clear idea of what is expected from them for successful completion of undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, students' self-assessment and instructors' assessment of students' competency revealed great divergence. Students assessed themselves to be at higher levels of competency than their instructors perceived to be the case.

From among studies conducted on writing needs of ESP students, Braine (1989) analyzed 61 writing assignments, student papers and manuals from ten undergraduates of science and technology and provided a classification of writing assignments including a) summary of or reactions to readings, b) report on a specified participatory experience which 85 percent of the sample fitted into this category, c) report on a stimulated participatory experience, d) case study, and e) synthesis of multiple resources. The writing assignments were also scrutinized for audience to which they are directed and it was indicated that except for 25 percent of the sample the rest specified course instructor as audience. Braine stressed that it would be better for the students to direct their writing to a non- academic audience since writing to the teacher who is already fully informed about the subject matter makes students reduce in persuasiveness and expressiveness of their writing. Furthermore, he insisted that in spite of the homogeneity of science and technology students, teachers and instructors apply individualization practice which is under each category, students create actual assignments of their own academic majors.

In another study, Zhu (2004) outlined the genre type of writing assignments of undergraduate and graduate business courses. Having analyzed 95 course syllabi and handouts and 242 writing assignments and interviewed 6 business faculty members, Zhu identified 9 genre types including case study, article report, business report, business proposal, design project, library research, reflection paper, letters and memos, research proposals and paper, and miscellaneous all of which had a problem-solving and decision making orientation and aimed at socializing students into the business world. He concluded that the genres of business assignments were both related to university context and business discipline which cast students into different roles of learners and business agendas.

Numerous other studies in the ESP domain have identified the writing and language needs of graduate and undergraduate students in different disciplines and across various contexts including engineering graduate students, (Jenkins, Jordan, & Weiland, 1993), business students (Bacha & Bahous, 2008; Edwards, 2000), undergraduate science students (Jackson, Meyer & Parkinson , 2006) economic graduates (Taillefer, 2007), and nursery and midwifery students (Mazdayasna & Tahririan, 2008). However, the writing needs of graduate students of applied linguistics have been understudied and not a single study, to the researcher's best knowledge, has been done on it. This paper is to analyze the present and future writing needs of students and the gap that should be bridged. It also probes students' and faculty perceptions on the degree of importance of and students' abilities on each of writing items. Therefore, this study addresses the following key questions:

1. What are the target and present writing needs of graduate students of applied linguistics?

2. Is there any significant difference between instructors and students regarding the importance of the needs?

3. Is there any significant difference between instructors and students regarding the current ability of students on the identified needs?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

First, a group of 8 PhD- level students, 8 master's students and 8 master's holders were interviewed for the identification of their present and future writing needs. Second, the questionnaires for the current study were distributed among 347 students in the field from several universities either personally by the researcher or through email. From the total sample, 211 questionnaires were sent back, a return rate of 60.8%. The subjects were females

and males with the age range of 22 to 38. They had either passed the writing course or just were offered the writing course in the term the study was being undertaken and thus had some sense of their writing needs and the efficiency of writing courses presented to them. Finally, 10 university instructors who had past experience in teaching writing courses for graduate students completed the questionnaires.

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1. Interview

Since the analysis of target situation needs involves asking questions from various participants being engaged in the target situation and their attitudes toward it (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987), a group of 8 PhD-level students and 8 master's degree holders were interviewed. In addition, 8 master's students being involved in the learning process (4 students who has just passed writing courses in the previous term, and 4 who were passing the course) were interviewed for identification of present situation needs and lacks. The interview form was either given to students or was emailed to them since not all of them were accessible to the researcher. Diverse students from different universities were selected to eliminate the effect of prejudiced viewpoints they may have regarding a particular instructor and to present a more complete picture of the writing practices and needs of students nationwide. Moreover, care was exerted to select students with different writing experiences so as to incorporate different writing needs which may elude master's graduate students who were passing the writing course. The questions posed for M.A students were about the effectiveness of their writing courses, the topics and pedagogical practices of the course, if they were satisfied with the procedure or if they felt any lack in the course and in general what areas they felt necessary to work on in their writing courses and for PhD students and M.A holders what writing needs they had after graduation from M.A studies which they hadn't practiced in writing course. Based on the interviews some 14 items were determined to be important for students for their future academic enterprise. These items were then comprised the basis of questionnaire development.

3.2.2. Questionnaire

The content of questionnaire was determined based on exploratory interviews with students. Both acceptable and unacceptable writing activities identified by the students were included in the questionnaire to investigate other participants' views on their practicality. These activities include: writing theses and term papers, articles, reviews of articles, proposals, academic e-mails, knowledge of different writing styles, genre knowledge of different parts of these and articles, essay writing on applied linguistics issues, summary writing, making

articles out of theses, analysis of common errors in theses and papers, paper submission procedure, writing essays on non-ELT issues, APA style and punctuation. The questionnaire comprised two parts: the first part investigated the importance of 14 writing needs for which students were required to identify a number from 1 to 4 on a Likert scale with 1 indicating no importance and 4 great importance. The second part examined students' perception of their current ability on the same 14 items on a 4-point Likert scale with 1 showing their inability and 4 their perfection. The same questionnaire was then given to 10 instructors and they were asked to indicate the degree of importance of each item for students and their perspectives on current writing abilities of their students.

3.3. Procedure

First, 24 students including 8 PhD students, 8 MA holders, and 8 M.A students were interviewed through mail, phone and face-to-face. Having analyzed their answers to the open-ended questions, the researcher grasped an idea of their present and future needs and could list 14 items considered important by the interviewees. These items then constituted the basis of the questionnaire development. Being developed, the questionnaire's first draft was given to an ESP specialist to be examined for relevance and clarity of items. Afterwards, the questionnaire was emailed to M.A students and instructors or was taken to several universities by the researcher. The respondents were allowed to add any item they regarded important at the end of the questionnaire. In the analysis part, the mean ranks of the items on the importance rating scale and on the writing status scale were computed and items with a mean rank higher than 3 on the importance rating scale and those with a mean rank lower than 2 on writing ability scale were considered as important items and those in need of support and help respectively. In addition, non-parametric statistical tests of Mann-Whitney were run to examine the significance of difference between students' and instructors' ratings.

4. Results

4.1. Interviews

The results of interviews compiled from interview forms were categorized into two categories of dissatisfaction with the writing courses and students' writing needs and each is elaborated on below.

4.1.1. Dissatisfaction with the Writing Courses

With the exception of one participant, all the others expressed their dissatisfaction with the writing courses. Although the M.A student who had just completed the writing course in the last term endorsed the practicality of activities, he also conveyed that he could not attain much from the course especially with respect to writing his thesis and articles due to shortage of time and lack of critical help:

As for my advanced writing class, the main focus was on writing theses and research papers in our discipline. We were supposed to write an article on different issues of applied linguistics each week. The instructor would comment on our works either orally in the class or through a written feedback in the next session. We also would get some handouts regarding different formats of writing articles. We were supposed to write a paper on an issue of applied linguistics as our term project. The content of the paper would not be as important as its format. Though, the course practices were useful, I personally did not get much from this course. I think, I needed more time and critical help to enhance my writing ability. Surely, I will need to enhance my ability for writing articles and my thesis in future.

One of the M.A holders who had completed her master's program just one year prior to the study described a wide ranges of topics from personal to academic assigned to them but complained that they did not meet their needs which were learning to write theses and articles. She pointed to the lack of preparation for entering M.A writing courses as the major cause:

The topics assigned ranged from describing a person you liked to comparison and contrast of silent method and communicative language teaching or writing about one of your best memories. I was not satisfied with the course. This was not what we needed for writing in an MA course. I feel the course in this level should prepare students for thesis and later on for writing an article, but in fact this was not what we faced. It was really far from our need. Maybe, this was not our teachers' fault but because we were not good writers when we enter MA. My suggestion is that it is better to start with genre analysis. We must first start with reading some theses and articles, then analyze their structure, vocabularies, and organization and finally write a sample. This is what I like, but as a student I have never had the chance to do so. However as a teacher, whenever I did it, it worked very well.

Another PhD student highlighted the diversity of teaching practices and methodologies different instructors employ and regarded working on research genre and common error students commit in writing theses and articles as good techniques:

It was ok till we had Mr. X as our teacher. He worked on genre of different parts of thesis and brought samples of theses and articles written by students in our field to the class

which we then analyzed and worked on their errors. But the course didn't pay off since very soon our writing teacher changed just at the beginning of the course. This new teacher didn't focus on what we really needed such as knowing how to write our thesis and articles.

A second M.A holder called attention to irrelevant writing practices such as writing reviews of plays and novels and turning a blind eye to their needs which impose a great hardship on them:

In our writing class we were supposed to write personal essays on social, academic and this sort of things not one of which was related to what we faced later. Our instructor who was a literature teacher at the university assigned us to write reviews of literary novels and plays such as Romeo and Juliet which for me, an M.A and Bachelor's of applied linguistics created a great burden. Later, when I submitted my first article for publication, I received the feedback from the editor that "It seems this is your first experience publishing an article. This article is problematic almost in all areas." I was totally unaware of the way of writing manuscripts and their specific genre. We hadn't learned about it.

Another M.A student who was doing his writing course at the time of the study complained about the course and emphasized providing concrete examples of different genres and styles of writing:

The course is not satisfying. We are supposed to write on topics which we hardly need for our future academic education. Topics such as describing your university, democracy, globalization and modern societies are of little use for us. They are only good for improving general English. We need to know how to write our theses. We still do not know about the genre of different parts of a thesis or article. I think it's better to provide students with concrete examples of genres and styles of writing. For example, if different styles of writing are in question, provide students with examples of argumentation, description and cause and effect writing and its features.

One of M.A holders working as an instructor at the university characterized her writing course as comprising reading and discussion in conjunction with writing with the main focus on short essays. To this participant, it didn't meet the requirements of disciplinary community to which they strived membership.

On our MA Writing course, we were supposed to focus mainly on the chapters of one Kaplan publication. On the front cover a number of genres have been addressed: essays, correspondence, reports, proposals, research papers, and more! To my experience, however, none of these text types except short essays was the focus of our attention during the course. As far as I could remember, class sessions were mostly spent on reading through the weekly

assigned chapters together with the instructor and exchanging some hints on how to proceed through each phase to be more effective. Writing assignments were done out of the class, handed in to the teacher and returned to us after a while. We perhaps did about 4-5 of such writing tasks throughout the semester. I do not remember any systematicity in the topics identified for the assignments. The outcome of the course, when approached quantitatively, seems quite satisfactory. Nevertheless, with the prospect of the demands of the academic community to which we were seeking membership, certain flaws in the experience were indispensable.

4.1.2. Master's Graduates' Writing Needs

In answering to the question that "What writing needs you've encountered since you've finished your master's studies which you wished you 'd worked on in writing course?" a PhD student mentioned witting theses, term papers, articles and academic emails:

I think we should have been taught how to write theses and term papers, how to make articles out of thesis, how to submit our papers for publication, how to write reviews of articles and of course how to write academic e-mails."

Another graduated student with M.A degree pointed to making students familiar with samples of academic genres, equipping them with evaluation criteria, involving them in self- or peer evaluation and focusing on rhetorical organization of texts as helpful practices in writing courses.

Certain academic genres could have been scrutinized and the frameworks could have been adopted through writing in practice or even challenged critically by us. A good number of samples could have been provided with the students' contributions to be compared and contrasted as to the extent they follow the standards. Our progress throughout the process of writing could have been monitored more closely either by the self/ peers or the teacher if we had been equipped with appropriate means of assessment and/ better aware of the objective(s) of each step and the whole set of procedures. The process nature of the course requirements could have provided enough space to focus on even certain rhetorical organizations we perceived to be weaker at but demanded to know. In short, stronger links could have been sought between the demands of our academic life and the course—both socio-cognitively and affectively!

One of the M.A students who was undertaking the course suggested working on APA style and punctuation:

As part of assignments for writing course, we are required to prepare summaries of the texts we read for other courses. The other tasks include writing on topics which are

academically oriented but are not on ELT-related issues. These activities are worthwhile in that they give us a sense of literary style of writing and making us acquainted with vocabularies and structures prevalent in academic style of writing; however, they do little in preparing us for writing theses, term papers and articles. The other day, I was attending a defense session and only there I got the importance of knowing APA style and punctuation. Admittedly, I have to confess I'm weak at this area.

Implicitly or explicitly, almost all students pointed to the answer to the first research question: what are the writing needs of graduate students of applied linguistics? Among these, writing theses and research articles form their first and foremost need. Other items include writing proposals, term papers, reviews of articles, academic emails, knowledge of different academic and research paper genres, APA style and punctuation, and manuscript submission procedure.

4.2. Questionnaire

The results achieved from questionnaires_ the degree of importance instructors and students gave to each of the writing needs and the current abilities of students on each of the items from students' and instructors' view_ were summarized below.

4.2.1. Degree of Importance of Each Writing Item

In order to make clear what writing items are important for students and instructors mean rank was calculated for each item on the scale for both groups and those items for which the mean rating was higher than 3 were selected as important ones (mean ranks range from 1.5 to 4). Results reported in Table 1 indicate that theses and term papers, articles, proposals, genre knowledge of different parts of theses, and making articles out of theses were the options identified important by students. With the exception of academic emails, all the other choices of instructors overlap with those of students. Items judged important by the faculty include theses and term papers, articles, proposals, academic emails, genre of different parts of theses and making articles out of theses. Interestingly, the least importance was attached to essay writing on non-ELT issues by both faculty members and students.

To check the significance of difference between instructors and students regarding the importance of needs Mann- Whitney tests were calculated for each writing need and the results were summarized in the Table 2. As is depicted, none of the P values for different writing items are significant when P=.05. This pinpoints to the similarity of perception of faculty and students regarding the writing needs students have and will face in their discipline.

4.2.2. Students' Current Ability in Each Writing Item

Similar to the importance of need section, the mean ranks for students' self-assessment and instructors' assessment of students' ability level in different writing items was calculated and compared. Those items with a mean rank of 2 and below were chosen as activities for which students needed more preparation and practice (mean rank ranging from 1.66 to 3). As Table 3 reveals, students signified theses and term papers, genre knowledge of different parts of theses, making articles out of theses, paper submission procedure and essay writing on non-ELT issues as areas in need of development. Similarly, instructors evaluated students' ability low in areas of writing theses and term papers, article, knowledge of different styles of writing, genre knowledge of different parts of theses, making articles out of theses, paper submission procedure, and essay writing on non-ELT issues. 2 items were identified by instructors but were not within the students' self-assessed needs: writing articles and knowledge of different styles of writing. Noticeably, students reported they were most proficient in writing academic emails and summery writing.

To probe the third research question (the significance of difference between faculty members and students regarding students' current ability) again, Mann-Whitney tests were conducted on rankings of students' proficiency level on each of the writing items and the results were presented in Table 4. The P values reported in the table show that none of the differences between instructors and students in students' writing status is significant at the level of P=.05. This suggests that students' view on their writing power is similar to their instructors' and in cases that differences exist, they are not statistically significant.

5. Discussion

The current study had as its aim exploring the target and present situation analysis of masters' graduates of applied linguistics and identification of their writing needs. The results from interviews with 16 doctoral and master's students as well as 8 master's degree holders showed their dissatisfaction with the writing courses and leaded to the identification of 14 writing tasks by the researcher to be incorporated in the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of writing items including theses and term papers, proposals, articles, reviews of articles, academic emails, genre knowledge of research papers and theses, different writing styles, APA style and punctuation, manuscript submission procedure, essay writing on applied linguistics and non-ELT issues, analysis of common errors in writing theses and papers, making articles out of theses and summary writing. In the first part of the questionnaire, instructors and students were supposed to identify the importance of each

writing activity and in the second part they assessed students' current capability on each item. The overall results indicated that students' and instructors' perception of important writing needs greatly overlapped and like the other disciplinary writing needs across majors (Huang, 2010) included: theses and term papers, articles, proposals, genre knowledge of different parts of theses, and making articles out of theses. Academic email was the only choice of instructors not shared with students. Furthermore, their attitudes about areas on which students needed more progress did not differ significantly, however; instructors' judgment on these areas included two extra items: writing articles and knowledge of different styles of writing.

The fact that most students and teaching staff attached paramount importance to writing theses and term papers, articles, proposals and genre knowledge of them is by no means surprising given that these modes of discourse are the most vital requirements expected from students for fulfillment of their degree and pursuing postgraduate studies. The surprising point is that these items, though identified in need of support and progression by both groups, do not form part of the usual course of action in the writing classes. one possible reason, as was hinted by one of the interviewees, may be that M.A students have not received enough training and preparation in their B.A courses and hence instructors felt compelled to practice on students' basic writing skills such as paragraph development, rhetorical organization of texts, controlling ideas, and different styles of writing as prerequisites to domain- specific writing. The evidence for such a claim comes from the fact that knowledge of different styles of writing and essay writing on non-ELT themes were among the options on which instructors proposed more work. Admittedly, students' defect in writing requirements for EAP purposes is well-noticed by them and essay writing on non-ELT issues was selected as one of the domains to be supplied with practice.

If this assumption is to be true, writing courses in undergraduate education takes a prominent role in making students prepared for the demands of disciplinary discourse communities. Students need to be armed with the basic writing skills before entering graduate courses. The role of graduate writing courses can not be undermined to teaching introductory and preliminary skills as this would prevent devoting class time to more effective, domain specific and genre-based practices. Moreover, as research has shown (Leki & Carson, 1994), students have different experiences and perceptions concerning writing for EAP and disciplinary purposes which focusing on EAP side in graduate courses might be at the expense of overlooking the other side. Writing for general academic purposes draws on the writer's general world knowledge or personal experience and emphasizes linguistic and

rhetorical forms more than content whereas in academic content courses the emphasis is reversed (Bridgeman and Carlson, 1984). Johns (1988) also emphasized the inadequacy of presenting students with EAP writing tasks and pointed to the importance of considering literacy practices compulsory for integrating students in authentic discourse communities: "general academic English, employing artificially constructed topics and materials, is insufficient for students who are exposed daily to the linguistic and cultural demands of authentic university classes" (p. 706). Although of crucial role, preparatory undergraduate courses can not carry all the responsibility for making students proficient in disciplinary writing; instructors in graduate programs should also support their students and consider incorporation of students' writing needs, practices and viewpoints. Their practice should not be dissimilar to their beliefs. For example, they can present instances of students' work including term papers, theses, manuscripts and other text types produced by the students to class and analyses can be made of their assets and weaknesses or the genre of each part can be explored and elaborated.

In our findings, academic emails while not being important for the students was selected as an area to be developed by the instructors. One possible explanation may be that students are able to communicate their message through emails even if it doesn't concord to the expected level of accuracy. Yet, instructors being aware of students' weakness in this area considered practice important for the students. That is why instructors' report of students' level of competence is lower than that of students. In addition, instructors and students had a similar view with regard to students' writing competence level. This suggests that students have a clear idea of what constitutes their writing needs (Ferris, 1998). These results are not in line with several other studies (Thorp, 1991; Sherman, 1992; Zhu & Flaitz, 2005; Huang, 2010) in which instructors' and students' assessments showed a great divergence. For instance, Bacha and Bahous (2008) investigated contrasting views of faculty and students in relation to business writing needs and found that, like Huang's findings (2010), faculty viewed students' capability significantly lower than students did. The over rating of students' self-assessment was in contrast to the fact that their teachers complained about the inadequacy of their writing skill. Therefore, the authors interpreted students' self- ratings unrealistic and related these findings to the students' high grades in business exams which give them the impression that their proficiency status meets the expected level. Overall, the difference in the results of various studies may be attributable to different contextual factors under which research is being carried out. Huang (2010), for example, associated the observed contrast between the results of different studies to the participants' varied language

backgrounds, diverse knowledge and experience of the items on the questionnaire, students' lack of consciousness about academic challenges and their competencies, and instructors' mistaken judgments about students' struggles.

The other finding of this study was that the items identified important by the participants mostly coincided with those perceived to be in need of more learning. This may reflect the idea that those items in which students need more help are the ones recognized important for them. However, inclusion of essay writing on non-ELT issues among present needs but not target ones dispels the idea. One possibility may be that students needed essay writing on non-ELT issues only as part of credit admission but not for their future academic success. This sentiment is reflected in Huang's study (2010) as well. In her study too, the results of correlational analyses indicated that the skills students identified important did not correspond with what they perceived to be in need of support. This finding underlines that present and target situation needs may not be necessarily similar and identification of both is essential in need assessment studies to get a clearer picture of practices and requirements in the field.

The results of this study have important pedagogical implications. First, the findings have an immense importance to material developers and curriculum designers to cater for students' needs and crystallize the content of the course and materials round the needs of students without which course design and material development remain a matter of guesswork. Second, the present study can make teachers cognizant and sensitive to the areas their students view important and how they would prefer their needs to be approached. Instructors can adjust pedagogy through a more learner- centered approach by informing them where master's students are, prioritizing their teaching, incorporation of ideas from the students, and presenting them with appropriate writing practices which meet the demand of the professional community. Third, support service classes can be developed for those students who still have problem with basic writing skills so that graduate writing courses can be allocated to more disciplinary literacy practices and activities. Finally, it can also be of special help to students themselves to be aware of the domains they should have command of to be successful in their academic enterprise. It can provide students with a basis for self-study and self-practice. Though contributing, the findings are restricted in generalizability due to context-specific nature of study and reliance on self-report data. Any generalization of the findings to other cultural backgrounds and institutional environments should be done with great care. Furthermore, the present study was an attempt to investigate the writing needs of M.A students of applied linguistics. Similar studies can be carried out to investigate listening,

speaking, and reading needs of students as well as writing needs of B.A students with the aim of determining prerequisites writing skills to graduate studies.

References

Bacha, N., & Bahous, R (2008). Contrasting views of business students' writing needs in EFL environment. *English for Specific Purposes, 27,* 74-93.

Berkenkotter, C., Huckin, T., & Ackerman, J. (1991). Social context and socially constructed texts. In C. Bazerman and J. Paradis (Eds.), *Textual Dynamics of the Professions*. (pp. 191-215). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Braine, G. (1989). Writing in Science and technology: An analysis of assignments from ten undergraduate courses. *English for Specific Purposes*, *8*(1), 3-15.

Bridgeman, B., & Carlson, S. (1984). Survey of academic writing tasks. *Written Communication*, 1.2, 247-280.

Casanave, C., & Hubbard, P. (1992). The writing assignments and writing problems of doctoral students: Faculty perceptions, pedagogical issues, and needed research. *English for Specific Purposes, 11*, 33-49.

Edwards, N. (2000). Language for business: effective needs assessment, syllabus design and materials preparation in a practical ESP case study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 19(*3*), 291-296.

Ferris, D. (1998). Students' views of academic aural/oral skills: A comparative needs analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, *32*, 289–317.

Herrington, A. (1985). Writing in academic settings: A study of the contexts for writing in two college chemistry engineering courses. *Research in the Teaching of English, 19,* 331–359.

Horowitz, D. (1986). What professors actually require: Academic tasks for the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, *20*, 445-462.

Huang, L., S. (2010). Seeing eye to eye? The academic writing needs of graduate and undergraduate students from students' and instructors' perspectives. *Language Teaching Research, 14*(4), 517-539.

Jackson, L., Meyer, W., & Parkinson, J. (2006). A study of the writing tasks and reading assigned to undergraduate science students at a South African University. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25, 260-281.

Jenkins, S., Jordan, M. K., & Weiland, P. O. (1993). The role of writing in graduate engineering education: A survey of faculty beliefs and practices. *English for Specific Purposes*, *12* (1), 51-67.

Johns, A. M. (1988). What's real? Some thoughts on authenticity in the classroom. *The ORTESOL Journal*, *9*, 1-12.

Leki, I., & Carson, J. (1994). Students' perceptions of EAP writing instruction and writing needs across the disciplines. *TESOL Quarterly, 28,* 81–101.

Mazdayasna, G., & Tahririan, M. H. (2008). Developing a profile of the ESP needs of Iranian students: The case of students of nursing and midwifery. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes,* 7, 277-289.

Ostler, S. E. (1980). A survey of academic needs for advanced ESL. *TESOL Quarterly*, *14*, 489– 502.

Sherman, J. (1992). Your own thoughts in your own words. *ELT Journal*, *46*, 190–98.

Taillefer, G. F. (2007).The professional language needs of Economics graduates: Assessment and perspectives in the French context. *English for Specific Purposes,* 26 (2), 135-155.

Thorp, D. (1991). Confused encounters: Differing expectations in the EAP classroom. *ELT Journal*, *45*, 108–18.

Zhu, W. (2004). Writing in business courses: An analysis of assignment types, their characteristics, and required skills. *English for Specific Purposes, 23,* 111-135.

Zhu, W., & Flaitz, E. (2005). Faculty views on the importance of writing, the nature of academic writing and responding to writing in the disciplines. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*, 39-48.

Table 1
Instructors' and students' mean ranks on the importance rating scale.

Writing item	Student mean ranks	Instructor mean ranks
Theses and term papers	3.94	4
Articles	3.6	3.25
Reviews of articles	3	3
proposals	3.2	3.75
Academic e-mails	2.87	4
Knowledge of different styles of writing	3	2.75
Genre of different parts of theses	3.13	3.5
Essay writing on applied linguistics issues	3	2.25
Summary writing	2.26	2.5
Making articles out of theses	3.06	3.25
APA style and punctuation	2.93	2.75
Analysis of common errors	2.66	2.25
Paper submission procedure	3	2.5
Essay writing on non-ELT issues	2.06	1.5

Table 2
Mann Whitney results for the degree of importance of each writing item.

Writing items	Significance level
Thesis and term papers	.885
Articles	.307
Review of articles	1.00
Proposals	.262
Academic e-mail	.596

Knowledge of different styles of writing	.596
Genre awareness of dif. Parts of thesis	.469
Essay writing about applied linguistics issues	.100
Summary writing	.885
Making article out of thesis	.885
APA style and Punctuation	.736
Analysis of common errors	.469
Paper submission	.357
Essays on non-ELT issues	.307

Table 3

Instructors' and students' mean ranks on the students' ability level in each item.

Writing item	Student mean ranks	Instructor mean ranks
Theses and term papers	2	2
Articles	2.26	1.75
Reviews of articles	2.53	2.5
proposals	2.66	2.25
Academic e-mails	2.73	2.5
Knowledge of different styles of writing	2.26	1.66
Genre of different parts of theses	2	1.75
Essay writing on applied linguistics issues	2.53	2.75
Summary writing	2.85	2.75
Making articles out of theses	2	2
APA style and punctuation	2.6	3
Analysis of common errors	2.33	2.5
Paper submission procedure	2	2
Essay writing on non-ELT issues	2	2

Table 4

Mann-Whitney results for students' writing ability on each item.

Writing items	Significance level
Thesis and term papers	.810
Articles	.185
Review of articles	.961
Proposals	.530
Academic e-mail	.530
Knowledge of different styles of writing	.250
Genre awareness of dif. Parts of thesis	.530
Essay writing about applied linguistics	.574
Summary writing	.961
Making article out of thesis	1.00
Punctuation	.411
Analysis of common errors	.721
Paper submission	.912
Essays on non-ELT issues	.912

Title

The Acquisition of Relative Clause Constructions by Persian Native Speakers of English (L2) and French (L3)

Authors

Najmeh Dehghani (M.A in TEFL)
English Department, Yazd University, Yazd, Iran

Ali Akbar Jabbari (Ph.D)
English Department, Yazd University, Yazd, Iran

Biodata

Najmeh Dehghani, M.A. student of TEFL at Yazd University, Yazd, Iran. Her research interests include second language acquisition and L3 Acquisition.

Ali Akbar Jabbari, associate professor of linguistics at Yazd University, Yazd, Iran. His research interests include linguistics, phonology, second language acquisition, L3 acquisition.

Abstract

Recent decade has been prominent in investigating third language acquisition (L3). Studies on the acquisition of a third language (L3) have shown that literacy in two background languages facilitates the acquisition of a third language (Cenoz & Valencia, 1994; Swain, Lapkin, Rowen, & Hart, 1990). The present study contributes to the investigation of the relative clauses on the basis of three prominent transfer hypotheses of third language acquisition concerning L1 transfer hypothesis, i.e., Full Transfer/Full Access (Håkansson et al. 2002), L2 transfer Hypothesis, i.e., L2 status factor (Bardel & Falk 2007, 2010; Rothman & Cabrelli Amaro, 2010), and both positive transfer of L1 and L2, i.e., Cumulative Enhancement Model Hypothesis (Flynn et al., 2004). Data have been obtained from 40 Persian learners of English (L2) and French (L3) comprising two groups of lower-intermediate and upper-intermediate French proficiency level. Two tasks were conducted, one on the grammatically judgment/correction task (GJCT), and the other on the translation test. The results showed that in the L3 acquisition, L2 transfer played a significant role.

1. Introduction

During the last decade, there has been a boom in the study of third language acquisition (TLA). One of the main issues in this field is the issue of cross-linguistic influence (CLI). CLI has long been an important topic in the second language acquisition (SLA) research. However, during the last decade, this issue has become the major focus of TLA too. CLI is referred to as the effect that previously learnt languages can have on the learning of a new language. From the point of view of CLI, the question arises as to how the three languages interact with one another during the language learning process. The phenomenon of language transfer, a fundamental issue in second language acquisition, has recently been examined from the perspective of multilingualism, or L3 acquisition, as it is commonly referred to. Most studies in the field of L3 acquisition have focused on this phenomenon (e.g. Flynn, Foley & Vinnitskaya, 2004; Bardel & Falk, 2007; Rothman & Cabrelli Amaro, 2007, 2010).

The present study is intended to investigate the effect that the L1 and the L2 may have on the acquisition of L3 syntax. Specifically, this study focuses on the structure of relative clause (RC) constructions in the three languages of Persian (the participants' L1), English (L2), and French (L3). Also, it investigates the role of the four affecting factors in the L3 acquisition namely, L1 transfer, L2 status Factor, Cumulative Enhancement Model (CEM), and the proficiency level.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Originally, the idea of Language transfer was mentioned in second language acquisition (SLA); later on, while multilingualism became of prominent importance among the researchers, language transfer expanded beyond that of L2 (see, for example, Cenoz, Hufeisen, & Jessner, 2001b; Leung, 2006; Rothman & Cabrelli Amaro, 2010).

A number of studies are mainly concerned with third language acquisition and also the affecting factors in this field. As the focus of this research is on relative clause constructions in the three languages of Persian, English, and French, below is the definition and summary of the structure of relative clauses in each of the mentioned languages. Also, the three main hypotheses in this field have been investigated.

2.1. Definition of Relative Clause

In linguistics, a relative clause is a <u>clause</u> that generally modifies a <u>noun</u> or <u>noun phrase</u> and in English language grammar, it is introduced by a <u>relative pronoun</u> (*which, that, who, whom, whose*), a <u>relative adverb</u> (*where, when, why*), or a <u>zero relative</u>. It is also known as an <u>adjective clause</u>. A relative clause is a <u>postmodifier</u>, that is, it follows the noun or noun phrase it modifies. As an example of English, in the following sentence *'this is the employer who pays the wages'*, the relative clause is *'who pays the wages'* and it modifies its preceding noun which is *'the employer'*.

2.1.1 Relative Clause Constructions in Persian

Modern Persian has only one relative pronoun, namely 'ke', but there had been instances of different relative markers in the ancient Persian such as 'koja' which was used in 'khorasani'[5]style as a synonym for 'ke'. 'ke' in modern Persian can be used with nouns that have the semantic features of [+human],[+animate,-human] or [-animate] and also with adjuncts of place and time. Unlike English, Persian has only 'ke' which is equivalent for all relative pronouns in English like 'where', 'when', 'who', 'that', 'whom', 'which', and 'whose' (Keshavarz, 1992). Following are some illustrative examples of Persian relative marker 'ke':

    I.   In ketāb-khane-i ast **ke** dar ān dars xāndam

       This library-part is **where** in that study -PAST-1SG
       'This is the library where I studied'.

    II. Vaqt-i **(ke)** ou amad havā bārān-i bood

       Time-part **(when)** he come-PAST weather rain-part was
       'When he came, it was raining'.

There are two types of RC in Persian, 1.Restrictive (attributive), and2.Non-Restrictive (appositive). Taghavipour (2005) distinguishes between these two types of RCs and states that they are semantically different; in this regard, he defines Restrictive RCs as those which use background information to identify the referent of the NP, while non-restrictive RCs present new information and presuppose that the referent has already been spotted. Keshavarz (1992, p.40) defines restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses as "restrictive relative clauses identify a person or a thing, whereas appositives or non-restrictive relative clauses give further information about an already mentioned person or thing". According to Taghavipour (2005, p.23) "all restrictive relative clauses in contemporary standard Persian

---

[5] 'khorasani' is one of the oldest styles of Persian used for writing poems.[5]

obligatorily modify an NP with the _i suffix". The examples of restrictive and non-restrictive relative clause in Persian are as follows. RCs are put in brackets.

1. [aks_i **ke** did-am**]**, ziba ast

The/that photo-part-RES that see-past-1SG beautiful is
'The photo **(that)** I saw is beautiful'.

   However, example 2 is ungrammatical in Persian and is not considered as a restrictive relative clause, since the NP is not followed by _i.

2. [*photo **ke** did-am**]**, ziba ast

The/that photo **(that/whom)** see-PAST-1SG beautiful is
'The/that woman (that/whom) I saw is beautifull'.

   There are two main features in Persian that help distinguish between restrictive and non-restrictive RCs: 1.non-restrictive RCs obligatorily use a comma after the noun to be modified, 2. Restrictive RCs show the marker '_i' after the noun to be modified.

However, Ahangar (2000, p.79, as cited in Taghavipour, 2005, p.23) claims that "while the noun that has been modified by the RC has an adjective or a noun complement, the restrictive _i does not necessarily attach to the noun itself". The examples below show this fact.

- ketāb_i **ke** did-am

Book-RES **(that/which)** see-PAST-1SG

'The book (that/which) I saw'

   Ahangar (2000, p.79; cited in Taghavipour, 2005) explains that restrictive_i is not the sister of the noun that RC modifies. He describes this phenomenon through the tree diagram and claims that "_i is the sister of N' which is the sister of CP". Below is the tree diagram of the above-mentioned example.
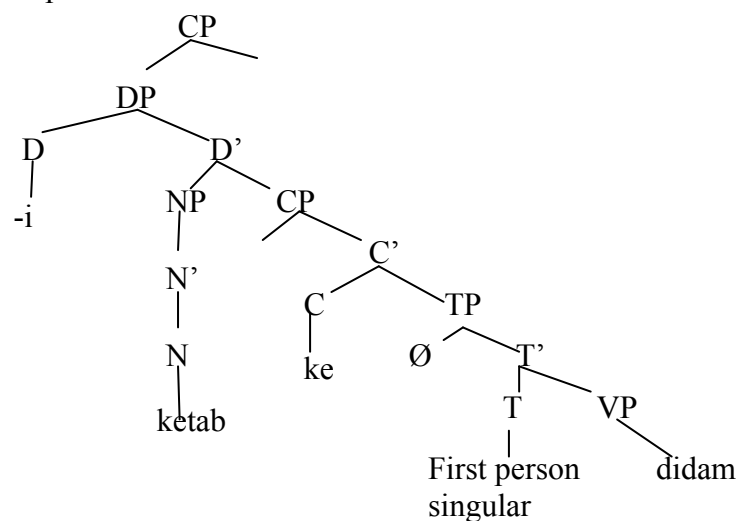
2.1.2 Relative Clause Constructions in English

English relative clauses are the clauses that modify the preceding NP. There are various ways of classifying RCs in English which two of them are worth mentioning here: a. by the type of relative pronoun, b. regarding the finiteness of the clause (Jong-Bok Kim & Peter Sells, November 20, 2007; p. 225). Below is a summary of these two classifications.

a. **By the type of relative pronoun.** The relative pronouns in English are of three kinds:

1. 'wh-relatives', such as when, where, who, whose, which, and whom. The examples are as follows. RCs are in brackets.

- The president [whom John voted for] died.
- The professor spoke in a manner [which was enthusiastic for the audience].

2. 'That' as a relative pronoun.

- The shoemaker [that struggles for his life] is in danger.

b. By the finiteness of the clause. All the previously mentioned examples were finite relative clauses. Following are the relative clauses which are infinite.

- There are beautiful things in nature [for which to be thankful_].
- She is the kind of person [with whom to marry_].

Below is the tree diagram of English relative clause:

'[The senators who Fred met], were angry.'
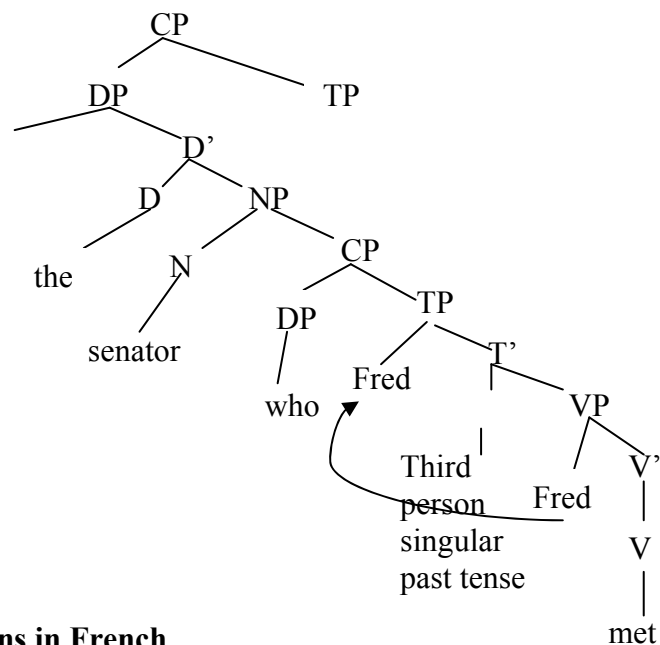
2.1.3 Relative Clause Constructions in French

The phenomenon of relative clause construction is a universal concept, and this is the reason that most of the L3 studies focus on this type of structure. So, the definition of the RCs in Persian, English and French are similar. All of them define RCs as the embedded clause within the main clause which functions as the modifier of the preceding NP in the main

clause. According to R.E. Batchelor and M. Chebli-Saadi (2011,p.473) "generally in English, the subject of the subordinate clause relating back to the main clause is that/who while the object of the subordinate clause is that/whom." For example

- The girl **who** washes the dishes is an actress.
- The girl **who(m)** I saw is an actress.

In the first sentence, 'who' is the subject of the subordinate clause, while in the second, 'whom' is the object of it.

Relative pronouns in French are different from those of English and Persian. Following is a chart provided by R.E. Batchelor and M. Chebli-Saadi (2011) that shows the relative pronouns in French and what they refer to.

Table 2.1 Relative Pronouns in French

	Referring to people	Referring to things	Referring to neuter pronouns
Subject	qui	qui	qui
Direct object	que	que	que
Genitive or possessive	don't, de qui	don't, duquel, etc	don't, duquel, etc
After prepositions	qui, lequel	lequel, etc	quoi

After the short description of relative clause construction in French, here is the tree diagram of the sentence 'C'est la dame qui habite là-bas'
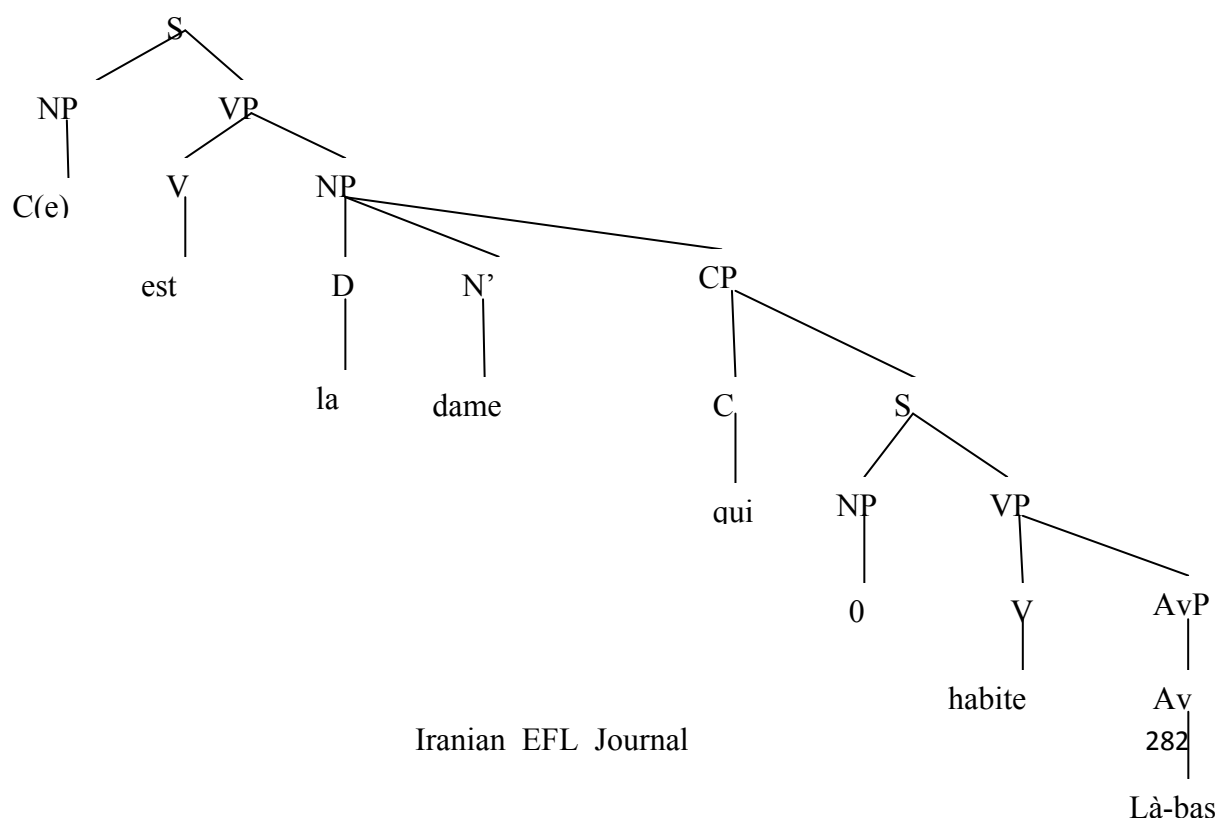
2.2 L3 Acquisition Hypotheses

a)   **L1 Factor Hypothesis:** this hypothesis claims that in L3 acquisition, this is the L1 that has a main role in L3 (Håkansson, Pienemann & Sayheli, 2002). Regarding this hypothesis, the RC structures that are similar in L1 and L3 but different in L2, are transferred from L1 to L3. Unlike English, the French relative pronoun 'que', and the Persian relative pronoun 'ke' when in the role of object, cannot be omitted. However, English relative pronoun 'that' can be omitted in different situations. Example (1) below represents this characteristic across the three languages under study that is Persian, English, and French respectively.

> 1)   Persian: poul-dar-tarin zan-I **ke az** ou aks gereft-im
>
> English: the richest woman **(whom)** we have photographed (the parenthesis shows that the using of the word is optional)
>
> French: la femme la plus riche **que** nous ayons photographiée

In the Persian example above, the relative pronoun *'ke'* cannot be omitted, and their omission makes the sentence ungrammatical. This is similar to the French one, since the use of *'que'* as a relative pronoun in this sentence is obligatory and cannot be omitted. But, in the English example above, *'whom'* which is the relative pronoun can be omitted and its omission does not cause any problem.

b)   **L2 Status Factor Hypothesis:** Bardel and Falk (2007) introduced this term to confirm the main role for L2 in L3 acquisition. In this regard, those RC structures which are similar in both the L2 and L3, but different from L1, are transferred from L2 to L3. French and English syntax contain more than one relative pronoun; however Persian has just one relative pronoun *'ke'*. Example (1) and (2) below are the indicators of this fact.

> 1)   Persian: man ba pedar va mādar-e ou harf zad-am **ke** az qabl ān-hā rā mi-ŝenakht-am.
>
> English: I talked to his/her father and mother, **whom** I already knew.
>
> French: j'ai parlé avec son père et sa mere, **que** je connaissais déjà.
>
> 2)   Persian: in hotel-I ast **ke** ou ākhar-in sāl-hā-ye omr-aŝ rā dar ān gozarānd.
>
> English: this is the hotel **where** he spent the last years of his life.
>
> French: voice l'hôtel dans **lequel** il a passé les dernières années de sa vie.

In the examples above, it is obvious that for each and every situation in Persian, the relative pronoun is *'ke'*. However, in the English example (1) above the relative pronoun is

'whom', while in the English example (2), the relative pronoun is *'where'*. This fact is similar to French, since in the French example (1) above, the relative pronoun is *'que'*, while in the third one it is *'lequel'*. This illustrates the fact that there are various relative pronouns in English and French but not in Persian.

c)   Cumulative Enhancement Model Hypothesis**:** According to Flynn *et al.* (2004), all languages known (L1 and L2) may act as a source for transfer, but the L2 only supersedes the L1 when the structure 'searched for' is not present in the L1: "Language learning is cumulative, all languages known can potentially influence the development of subsequent learning" (2004, p: 5). There are some RC constructions that are similar in both L1 and L2, however they are different in L3. In this regard, there is an RC structure in Persian stating that when a noun Phrase (NP) which modifies its relative clause is in the role of indirect object, then its antecedent in the relative clause is a pronoun that modifies the preceding NP. This fact is similar to English; however, in French this is the verb of the relative clause that modifies the preceding NP, not a pronoun. Following is the example (1) for making this statement more tangible.

1)   Persian: tourist-I **ke** bā ou harf zad-am az Quebec mi-āy-ad.

English: The tourist, **whom** I spoke to, comes from Quebec.

French: le touriste à **qui** j'ai parlé vient du Québec.

In the Persian example above, *'tourist'* is the NP of the sentence, and this is the relative pronouns *'ke'* that modifies it. Also, in the English example, *'the tourist'* is the NP, and this is the relative pronoun *'whom'* which modifies it. But, for the French one the matter differs. *'le touriste'* is the NP, *'qui'* is its relative pronoun, but this is not the relative pronoun that modifies the NP, rather the verb of the relative clause, that is *'parlé'* plays the role of the modifier of the preceding NP.

d)   Proficiency level**:** the last factor that will be investigated in this study is the role of proficiency in L3 acquisition. According to the free online dictionary (http://www.thefreedictionary.com), proficiency in language means "the level of competence in the language, or the state or quality of being proficient". Proficiency has been considered one of the most important factors in the studies of CLI. There are contrastive views among researchers about the proficiency level of both the target and the native language and their effect on transfer. Some studies argue that transfer happens at the low proficiency level (Dewaele, 2001; Fuller, 1999; Hammarberg, 2001; Williams & Hammarberg, 1998), while others have a contrastive view, stating that the more proficiency in the background languages, the most positive transfer occurs in the L3 acquisition (see, for example, Williams &

Hammerberg, 1998; Leung, 2006). In this study, I will examine this fact that whether the learners' proficiency level in both L2 and L3 has any impact in the transfer of RC construction into L3 or not.

3. Methodology

3.1 Hypotheses and Predictions

This study has attempted to investigate the following hypotheses:

1. The properties of the RC constructions are transferred from L1 (Persian) to L3 (French); (the L1 transfer hypothesis of Håkansson et al., 2002).

2. The properties of the RC constructions are transferred from L2 (English) to L3 (French); (the L2 status factor hypothesis of Bardel & Falk, 2007).

3. The properties of L1 (Persian) and L2 (English) RC constructions which are common in L3 (French) are transferred into L3; (the Cumulative Enhancement Model (CEM) of Flynn et al., 2004).

4. The more proficient the learners become in French RC constructions, the more transfer of this structure occurs from their background languages.

3.2 Participants

The participants of this study were forty native speakers of Persian with English as their L2 and French as their L3. Since the aim of the study was to investigate the L3 acquisition of relative clause constructions, the French level of the participants had to be intermediate and above. In this regard, they were selected from the university. They were all female students of French literature in B.A. in Isfahan University, Iran. After giving them the English and French oxford placement test, they were divided into two groups, each group involved twenty participants, one lower-intermediate and the other upper-intermediate, according to their French proficiency level; also all of the participants were in the intermediate level of English proficiency.

3.3 Tasks

In order to measure the participants' proficiency level in both English which is their second language, and French which is their third language, two oxford placement test (OPC), one in English to measure the participants English proficiency level, and the other in French to measure their French proficiency level, were conducted.

3.3.1 English Oxford Placement Test

The first test that was conducted in this research was the English oxford placement test to measure the participants' English proficiency level. Since English is the participants' L2 it is necessary to see whether they are in a proper level of English to transfer its RC properties into French. For this reason, knowing the RC structures of English requires the learners to be at least in the intermediate proficiency level. For this purpose, the paper and pencil version of the oxford quick placement test (2001) was administered to forty subjects who were B.A. students of French literature at Isfahan University.

3.3.2 French Oxford Placement Test

The second test in this study was that of the French oxford placement test. Since the subjects' third language is French, it is necessary to measure their proficiency level in French language. The participants should at least be at lower-intermediate level of French to understand the RC constructions of this language. In this regard, the forty participants that were selected in the English oxford placement test were given the French Oxford PlacementT too. Out of these forty subjects, twenty got the level of lower-intermediate, and twenty got the level of upper-intermediate in French proficiency test.

Then two types of tests namely, Grammaticality Judgment Test (GJT) and the Translation Test were conducted in order to check the comprehension ability of the learners and the production ability of the learners respectively.

3.3.3 The Grammaticality Judgment Test (GJT)

According to Tremblay (2005), the most widespread data collection procedure that linguists use, is the grammaticality judgment task (GJT), which distinguishes between the learners' competence (the subconscious knowledge of language) and performance (the actual use of language). So the present study used the GJT to test the comprehension ability and the competence of the learners. The test consisted of 24 items, each followed by three options of correct, incorrect, and I don't know, written in French and the students had to judge the grammaticality of each sentence. Among these items there were 5 distracters, and the rest of the items were all representative of relative clause constructions in French. The whole items were constructed on the basis of the three scenarios of the research. The first scenario that conforms to L1 factor hypothesis is shown by the alphabet 'A' and consists of 6 items; the second scenario which conforms to the L2 status factor hypothesis is shown by the alphabet 'B' and consists of 7 items; and the third scenario of this study which conforms to the Cumulative Enhancement Model is illustrated through the alphabet 'C' consisting of 6 items. In this study and in order to see the cross-linguistic influence (CLI) in L3 acquisition, all the grammatical sentences were representative of the French relative clause structure and all the

ungrammatical sentences were indicative of Persian and English relative clause structures that are absent in French.

3.3.4 The Translation Test

As was argued by Tremblay (2005), GJT focuses on the competence of the learners not the performance. So in order to measure the actual performance of the learners there was a need to use the Translation task beside GJT. The test was in the written form and included 20 items in learners' first language (i.e. Persian) and they were asked to translate the sentences into fluent French (i.e. their third language). All the items in this test, beside 5 distracters, were developed according to the three L3 transfer hypothesis mentioned previously.

3.3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Two oxford placement tests, one of English and the other of French, were conducted in this study to measure the proficiency level of the participants in both their English (L2), and French (L3) acquisition). The result of the English placement test showed that all the participants were in the intermediate level; however, in French proficiency test 20 of them were placed in the upper-intermediate and 20 in the lower-intermediate level. All the groups of learners were tested by the researcher herself and with the same conditions.

After identifying the participants' proficiency level in French and English, they were classified into two groups of lower and upper-intermediate, and each group contained 20 participants. Then the translation test was administered and the participants were informed about the time limit, and also the instructions were explained to them in their mother tongue. The time devoted for this task was 30 minutes. They were supposed to look at Persian sentences and give a French equivalence for that item. The items were designed according the participants' French proficiency level and the researcher tried not to choose any unknown or difficult word in the items. In this regard, they would not have any difficulty finding the meanings of the words, and they were informed to ask the meaning of any word they could not decipher.

Then the GJT was administered and the students were asked to identify the grammaticality of each item by choosing the right choice if the item was correct grammatically, or incorrect if the item was incorrect grammatically, or if they were in doubt they would choose the option 'je ne sais pas'. Below is the detailed explanation of each context of the two tests that refers to the three hypotheses under study.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Translation Test

This section is divided into two subsections of, 'classification' and 'result. In the 'classification' section all the information about the variables, their classification, and the types of analyses used are presented; and in the 'results' section, the results of the analyses are presented.

4.1.1 Classification in Translation Test

The first task of the study was the translation test which tried to measure the participants' performance and production on the related structure. This test contained 20 items written in the participants' native language (Persian), all based on the structure of relative clause. The items were divided into three parts. The first part included the items that dealt with the second hypothesis under study namely, 'L2 Status Factor'. The second part was items relating to the first hypothesis namely, 'L1 Factor hypothesis'; and the last part of this test represented the items based on the 'CEM'. Since all the participants of the study were female, there is no need to analyze the effect of gender in this test. In order to see the effects of these three hypotheses on the participants' performance in the translation test a mixed between-within subject ANOVA was conducted. The detailed description of the results of this analysis is presented in the following section.

4.1.2 Results of the Translation Test

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of participants' performance in the three contexts (Translation Test)

	level	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
L1 factor	upperintermediate	84.00	13.917	20
	lowerintermediate	83.00	17.502	20
	Total	83.50	15.616	40
L2 status factor	upperintermediate	78.0000	18.23819	20
	lowerintermediate	47.0000	26.17753	20
	Total	62.5000	27.24532	40
CEM	upperintermediate	48.0000	31.38890	20
	lowerintermediate	26.0000	29.09151	20
	Total	37.0000	31.88119	40

As it is shown in the above table, in the first hypothesis (i.e. L1 Factor hypothesis) there is no significant difference between the mean score of the two groups of lower and upper-intermediate, since the scores are near each other. However, this difference is obviously shown in the second and third contexts (i.e. L2 Status Factor & CEM); since there

is almost a big difference between the mean score of the lower-intermediate group and the upper-intermediate in these two contexts (see 78, 47 &48, 26). This contrast will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

In order to analyze the result of the translation test, a mixed between-within subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of the three contexts (i.e. the three mentioned hypotheses under study) on the two groups of participants. Subjects were divided into two groups of lower and upper-intermediate according to their French proficiency level (each group included 20 participants). The interaction effect between the three contexts and the group level in the translation test was statistically significant, [Wilks' Lambda=0.76, F (2, 37) =5.62, p=.007, partial eta squared=0.23]; however the effect size was small. The result showed that there was an interaction effect between the three contexts and the level. Table 4.2 below represents the results of the first between-subjects ANOVA.

Table 4.2 Between-subjects ANOVA on the group performance and the three contexts in the Translation Test

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Translation * level Pillai's Trace	.233	5.624ᵃ	2.000	37.000	.007	.233
Wilks' Lambda	.767	5.624ᵃ	2.000	37.000	.007	.233

However, the analysis showed that there was an interaction effect for the level. Thus, a one-way between-group ANOVA was conducted to see where this difference lies between the groups. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<0.05 level in the scores of the two contexts of B and C (i.e. L2 Status Factor & CEM) for the two groups of participants, context B: F (1, 38) =18.88, p<0.05, and context C: F (1, 38) =5.28, p=0.027. But context A (i.e. L1 factor hypothesis) showed no statistically significant difference in its scores in the two groups, F (1, 38) =0.04, p=0.84. These results proved the L2 Status Factor hypothesis and CEM in L3 acquisition, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Table 4.3 below represents the results of the one-way ANOVA in the translation test.

Table 4.3 a One-way Between-groups ANOVA in Translation Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
tr_A Between Groups	10.000	1	10.000	.040	.843
Within Groups	9500.000	38	250.000		
Total	9510.000	39			

tr_B Between Groups	9610.000	1	9610.000	18.882	.000
Within Groups	19340.000	38	508.947		
Total	28950.000	39			
tr_C Between Groups	4840.000	1	4840.000	5.285	.027
Within Groups	34800.000	38	915.789		
Total	39640.000	39			

4.2 The GJT

Similar to the first section that dealt with the translation test, this section is divided into two subsections of 'classification' and 'result'. The classification part deals with the grouping, classifying, and describing of the variables in this test, and also the type of the analysis used; the result section represents the detailed results of the GJT analysis.

4.2.1 Classification in GJT

The second task used in this study was the GJT (Grammaticality Judgment Task) to measure the production ability of the learners. This test was designed on the basis of the three already mentioned hypotheses under study namely, the L1 Factor hypothesis (A), the L2 Status Factor hypothesis (B), and the CEM hypothesis (C). The test included 24 items all focusing on the structure of relative clause in French and all the items were written in French (L3). The first part was items representing the second hypothesis (B), the second part contained the items that represented the first hypothesis (A), and the last part of this GJT included the items that represented the third hypothesis (C). Since all the participants under study were female, there was no need to measure the effect of gender in this test. Similar to the translation test, in order to see the effects of these three hypotheses on the participants' performance in the GJT a mixed between-within subject ANOVA was conducted. The detailed description of the results of this analysis is presented in the following section.

4.2.2 Results of the GJT

Table 4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Performance in the three Contexts in the GJT

level	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
GJT_A upperintermediate	60.0000	17.43828	20
lowerintermediate	64.1667	21.81461	20
Total	62.0833	19.60707	40
GJT_B upperintermediate	72.8571	19.05388	20

	lowerintermediate	56.4286	21.47864	20
	Total	64.6429	21.69854	40
GJT_C upperintermediate		53.3333	20.66157	20
	lowerintermediate	45.0000	21.01239	20
	Total	49.1667	20.99722	40

The above table shows that in the first context (i.e. L1 Factor hypothesis) there is not much difference between the mean score of the participants in the two groups of lower and upper-intermediate, since their mean scores are 64 and 60 respectively. However, the second context (i.e. the L2 Status Factor hypothesis) shows more tangible difference in the mean scores of the participants in the two groups of lower and upper-intermediate (56 & 72). Also, in the third context (i.e. CEM hypothesis) the statistics shows that there is a difference between the mean score of the participants in the two groups, but this difference is smaller comparing to the second context.

In order to analyze the result of the GJT, also a mixed between-within subjects ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of the three contexts (i.e.L1 Factor, L2 Status Factor & CEM hypotheses) on the two groups of lower and upper-intermediate participants according to the participants' French proficiency level (each group included 20 participants). The interaction effect between the three contexts and the group level in the GJT was statistically significant, [Wilks' Lambda=0.85, F (2, 37) =3.15, p=.055, partial eta squared=0.14]; however the effect size was small. The result showed that there was an interaction effect between the three contexts and the level. Table 4.5 below represents the results of the second between-subjects ANOVA.

Table 4.5 Between-subjects ANOVA on the group performance and the three contexts in the GJT

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
GJT * level Pillai's Trace	.146	3.150[a]	2.000	37.000	.055	.146
Wilks' Lambda	.854	3.150[a]	2.000	37.000	.055	.146

Since there was an interaction effect for the three contexts, a one-way between-group ANOVA was conducted to see where this difference lies among the three contexts. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<0.05 level in the scores of the context B (i.e. L2 Status Factor) for the two groups of participants, context B: F (1, 38) =6.54, p<0.05. But context A (i.e. L1 factor hypothesis) and context C (i.e. CEM) showed no statistically significant difference in their scores in the two groups, context A: F (1, 38) =0.44, p=0.50,

and context C: F (1, 38) =1.59, p=0.21. These results of GJT proved the L2 Status Factor hypothesis in L3 acquisition. Table 4.6 below represents the results of the one-way ANOVA in the GJT.

Table 4.6 a One-way Between-groups ANOVA in the GJT

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
GJT_A	Between Groups	173.611	1	173.611	.445	.509
	Within Groups	14819.444	38	389.985		
	Total	14993.056	39			
GJT_B	Between Groups	2698.980	1	2698.980	6.548	.015
	Within Groups	15663.265	38	412.191		
	Total	18362.245	39			
GJT_C	Between Groups	694.444	1	694.444	1.599	.214
	Within Groups	16500.000	38	434.211		
	Total	17194.444	39			

5. Conclusion

The present study aimed at investigating the role of L1 (i.e. Persian) and L2 (i.e. English) in the acquisition of L3 (French) RC constructions. So the Relative clause constructions in French were examined and explored. The students' acquisition of the structure under study was evaluated through two tests namely, the Translation test which was a translation of several items containing RC construction from Persian into French and the Grammaticality Judgment Test (i.e. GJT).

5.1 Findings

The findings of the present study are as follows:

1) The results of the study proved that the upper-intermediate group used their L2 RC knowledge more than the lower-intermediate one in L3 acquisition in the translation test, that is, similarities of the RC structure in L2 and L3 helped more proficient learners of French to transfer the knowledge of that structure from their L2 into their L3, that is the results prove the L2 Status Factor hypothesis, and that of the fourth null hypothesis (i.e. the impact of proficiency). However, those less proficient French learners, who were in the lower-intermediate group, transferred these RC structures into L3 less than the other group. Also for the GJT the results were the same as the translation test in which the upper-intermediate

group of learners tended to transfer the structures of L2 which were similar to L3, more into L3 than that of the lower-intermediate group, again evidence for the L2 Status Factor hypothesis.

2) The findings of the translation test prove the CEM proposed by Flynn et al. (2004). These findings state that the more proficient French learners tend to transfer the similar RC structure of L1 and L2 into L3 more than those less proficient learners. In the GJT on the other hand, the learners could not do well in the third context (i.e. those items in the GJT which were produced according to the CEM hypothesis, the RC structures that are similar in both L1 and L2). This shows that in using their comprehension, the learners of both groups of lower and upper-intermediate comprehended more the RC structures of the recent language that they acquired, that is English. This proves the role of L2 in L3 acquisition and so the L2 Status Factor hypothesis. On the other hand, the GJT did not prove CEM, and neither of the groups transferred their knowledge of RC constructions from their L1into the L3, but just from their L2.

3) The results of GJT also proved the role of proficiency as was mentioned in the fourth null hypothesis of the study. These results can be explained in this way: the more proficient the learners become in acquiring a third language, the more they use their knowledge of their recently learned language (i.e. L2) in the L3 syntax, and in this case, those structures that are similar in both the learners' L2 and L3, are transferred to the L3 during the L3 acquisition.

5.2 Applications and Implications

This section deals with the theoretical as well as the pedagogical implications of the study.

The findings of this study can help with multilingualism and provide more insights in language acquisition specially the L3. The results also proved that both L1 and L2 play significant role during the process of L3 acquisition. This study has also provided empirical data which contributes to the development of interlanguage theories by confirming the findings of the 'L2 Status Factor' hypothesis and 'CEM' and disconfirming that of the 'L1 Transfer'.

Upper-intermediate learners, in this study, could outperform the lower-intermediate ones in acquiring the French relative clause properties discussed in the previous sections, since they were more proficient in L3(French) and this proficiency helped them transfer the RC structures of their previous languages which are similar to the French, to the third one. Multilingualism is a growing concern globally, and particularly in Iran. For this reason studying the factors affecting L3 is of great importance in such contexts. This study has

highlighted the advantages of L2 over L1 in acquiring a new language. According to the findings of this study, French language teachers should be very cautious dealing with the students with different French proficiency levels who have acquired more than one language before staring French. Those students who are more proficient in their L3 might learn the new syntactic structures of their third language in a different way than the less proficient ones, that is the more proficient ones transfer the specific structure more from their L2 rather than from their L1, and it is the role of a language teacher to know these differences and act equally to both groups of learners.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

The field of third language acquisition has got prominence during the last decade, and still there are many features that need to be studied in this field of research such as the acquisition of lexicon and phonetics. As a language contains both the written and the spoken form, it is suggested that later studies of this field measure the students' performance of the third language orally, because this study contained the tests in the written form and did not measure the spoken form of the language.

If a similar study is to be conducted in this domain, it is widely advisable that if it is possible, the number of the participants be enlarged in order to get more generalized results.

Finally, in this study, only the role of transfer in L3 acquisition and the impact of previous languages on the third language had been investigated, but the role of UG has been ignored; thus further studies can be carried out in order to investigate the role of UG in L3 acquisition.

References

Ahangar, A. A. (2000). *The Subordinate Clause Construction in Persian based on Government   and Binding Theory.* Doctoral dissertation, University of Tehran, Iran

Bardel, C. & Falk, Y. (2007). The role of the second language in third language acquisition: the   case of Germanic Syntax. *Second Language Research. 23(34),* 459-484.

Bardel, C. & Falk, Y. (2010). Object pronouns in German L3 syntax: Evidence for the L2 status factor. *Second Language Research***.** 27: 59.

Batchelor, R.E. & Chebli-Saadi, M. (2011). A Reference Grammar of French. *University of Nottingham and Universit´e Stendhal Grenoble 3. cambridge university press.*

Cenoz J, Hufeisen B, and Jessner U (2001) (eds) *Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: Psychological perspectives.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Flynn, S., Foley, C., & Vinnitskaya, I. (2004). The cumulative enhancement model for language acquisition: Comparing adults' and children's patterns of development in first, second and third language acquisition of relative clauses. *International Journal of Multilingualism,* 1, 3-16.

Håkansson, G., Pienemann, M. & Sayheli, S. (2002). Transfer and typological proximity in the context of second language processing. *Second Language Research, 18*, 250-273.

Jaensch, C. (2008). Defective adjectival inflection in non-native German: prosodic transfer or missing surface inflection? In: Roberts L, Myles F, and David A (eds) *EUROSLA Yearbook 8: Volume 8*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 259–86.

Keshavarz, M.H. (1992). Relativization in Persian. *The international journal of humanities.* vol. 3, No. 3,4. 39-43.

Radford, A. (2004). *Minimalist Syntax: Exploring the structure of English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rothman, J., & Cabrelli-Amaro, J. (2010). What variables condition syntactic transfer? A look at the L3 initial state. *Second Language Research* 26: 189–218.

Taghavipour, M. (2005). *Persian relative clauses in head driven phrase structure grammar* Doctoral dissertation, University of Essex, England. Retrieved August 25, 2010, from http://www.essex.ac.uk/linguistics/publications/theses.

Williams, S., & Hammerberg, B. (1998). Language Switches in L3 production: Implications for a polyglot speaking model. *Applied Linguistics, 19,* 295-333.

Title

The Role of L1 in Online L2 Dynamic Assessment Mediation

Authors

Saman Ebadi (Ph.D)
Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Abdulbaset Saeedian (M.A student)
Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Biodata

Saman Ebadi, assistant professor of applied linguistics at RaziUniversity, Kermanshah, Iran. His areas of interest are sociocultural theory, dynamic assessment, CALL, SCMC, language acquisition, and syllabus design. He has published and presented papers in international conferences and journals.

Abdulbaset Saeedian, M.A student of TEFL at Razi University of Kermanshah, Iran. His research interests include dynamic assessment, sociocultural theory, discourse analysis and attitudes towards language learning.

Abstract

Theoretically framed within Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of mind (SCT), dynamic assessment (DA) is a new approach to classroom assessment offering mediation in the form of leading questions and prompts to help learners perform beyond their level of independent functioning. This study investigated the role of learners' L1 as a primary symbolic tool mediating L2 processing and development in online DA mediation from a sociocultural perspective.The typology of L1 use emerged out of thematic analysis as the general framework for data analysisin mediation between the mediator and two university studentsin the collaborative Web-based DA. The results of the study highlighted the importance of L1 as a social and psychological mediating tool used by the learners and the mediator to bring about L2 cognitive development.
Keywords: L1, L2, Mediation, Dynamic Assessment (DA)

1. Introduction

Dynamic assessment is a new approach to assessment which is based on dynamic interaction between the examiner and the examinee in which the examiner mediates the examinee with support in the form of leading questions and prompts.DA is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of mind (SCT) which believes that thought is socially originated and language functions as a mediating tool in the development of human cognition.Vygotsky believed that language is the most important symbolic tool to mediate the mind and transform the cognitive functions. Mediation, a fundamental concept of sociocultural theory, is defined by Lantolf& Thorne (2006) as "the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts, and activities to regulate (i.e. gain voluntary control over and transform) the material world or their own and each other's social and mental activity" (p.79). It is mediation that causes cognitive development. Mediation may include leading questions, hints, prompts, feedback, and examples.

Central to the concept of mediation is intersubjectivity which is described by Wertsch (1985) as the establishment of shared understandings between the learner and the tutor. Summers (2008) indicates thatintersubjectivity between two individuals is reached when the participants share common understanding of a situation. Intersubjectivity as a component of mediation contributes to the process of internalization which in turn leads to cognitive development.

Transforming the learning process, computers can also be perceived as mediating tools that may be utilized to support the process of L2 development (Sauro, 2009). It is believed that web-based interaction which is inherently collaborative and includes learners' participation and data generation would enrich the mediation process in online DA.
Although the use of L1 in L2 cognitive processing has been the subject of investigation of both face to face interactions in classroom and Web context among peers(e.g., Anton &DiCamilla, 1998; Brooks &Donato, 1994; Darhower, 2002; Thomas-Liao &Szustak, 2005), it has not been studied in expert/novice interactions in online L2 DA. Inspired by Anton and Dicamilla (1998), the present study intended to uncover the L1 functions emerged out thematic analysis of online L2 DA mediation to reflect the learners' L2 cognitive processing.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1 L1 use in L2 processing

Recent studies framed within Vygotskyan SCT (e.g., Anton &DiCamilla, 1998; Brooks &Donato, 1994; Darhower, 2002) highlighted the importance of L1 as a psychological tool in

the cognitive processing of L2. Darhower (2002) points out that during mediation L1 is used as a facilitative tool to maintain the intersubjectivity between the parties involved in interaction which represents L1's social and cognitive functions in mediation.L1 use in L2 processing provides additional assistance in dialogic interactions between learners and gives them access to higher mental functioning in processing and completion of a task.

Brooks and Donato (1994) examining collaborative interactions between Spanish learners, enlisted three functions of L1: (1) metatalk, which is considered as self-directed talk about the task to gain control over its performance; (2) intersubjectivity, a joint understanding of the task and finally (3) formulation of the learner's goals. Anton and Dicamilla (1998) investigated the advantages of L1 use in L2 classroom in dialogic interactions of English learners of Spanish. Their findings indicated that L1 was used as a mediating tool in both interpsychological and intrapsychological planes. Interpsychologically, it was used to support scaffolding and establish intersubjectivity to promote interactions among learners in L2 context. Intrapsychologically, L1 emerged in collaborative interactions in the form of private speech as a cognitive tool for problem solving. They also found that learners often switch to their L1 to help them access higher mental processes of L2.

Swain and Lapkin (2000) worked on an immersion program in which learners collaborated to carry out a writing task. They investigated the role of L1 in learning L2. They reported three main categories of L1 functions: to move the task along by establishing intersubjectivity, to concentrate on vocabulary and grammatical forms and to promote interpersonal interactions.

Thomas-Liao&Szustak (2005) explored the use of L1 in collaborative tasks carried out in web context. They examined the learners' chat logs to find out about L1 functions in carrying out jigsaws in Chinese, Spanish and English languages. They concluded that the learners used L1 to varying degrees for different functions primarily to move the task along. Additionally, they referred to the participants' task management strategies and the use of symbols as factors affected the use of L1 in online context. This study intended to uncover the functions of L1 as a key factor in DA mediation over the Web.

3. Method

3.1 Participants and Context

Due to the nature of the study which required access to the broadband internet and online users, the researcher used snowball or chain referral sampling which is a nonrandomized

purposive sampling to recruit participants not easily accessible by the researcher. At the outset, the study was briefly explained to the participants in the recruitment email. Within two weeks, I managed to establish contacts with 12 participants residing in different countries via email among whom two were selected to participate in the study having one-to-one individual weekly online DA sessions with the mediator. They were prompted to present their oral narratives of a series of picture stories and short video clips in which their patterns L1 use and grammatical problems were revealed and became the target of mediation in DA sessionsover Skype for a period of two months.The learners and the mediator worked together through the mediation procedure which is explained elsewhere (Birjandi&Ebadi, 2012) in details with the aim of promoting cognitive development of some target structures.

Skype, a free online phone service, was used to provide oral mediation and prompts in DA sessions offering live interactions via text, audio and video. To document the data collection procedure an online free software of Skype mp3 call recorder was downloaded and employed for audio recording of oral narrations. The tasks for oral narrations were the same for both participants but the mediation was individually based. Regarding the ethical considerations, to ensure the confidentiality of the participants pseudonyms were chosen for them through the whole research. Every effort was made to protect the identities of the participants by storing all audio and video recordings of their online interactions with the mediator in password- protected internal and external hard drives.

3.2. DATA Analysis

In this study, the L1 functions emerged out of thematic analysis of transcripts of oral narratives of the learners interactions with the mediator over the Web. Boyatzis (1998) points out that thematic analysis is a method in qualitative research used for uncovering patterns and themes in a particular phenomenon. Boyatzis defines theme as "a pattern found in the information that at a minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at a maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (p.4). In the present study, thematic analysis was used for encoding the transcripts of the interactions between the mediator and the learners in online DA. The researcher in this study adopted the inductive process for data analysis to find out about emerging key themes through scrutinizing the mediation's raw data between the mediator and learners.

To begin with code development, audio files of online DA sessions were transcribed and organized for each participant in the study. Despite being time-consuming and frustrating at times, the transcription provided the opportunity for the researcher to hear oral narrations once more and reduce the raw data.The transcription conventions were adapted from Johnson

(1995) which accounted for various discourse-related features that occurred during face-to-face interactions between the interlocutors (e.g. pauses). Whenever Persian was used, it was bolded and followed by an English translation through the sessions. Darhower (2002) maintains that data reduction is necessary to maintain consistent and systematic data analysis. Reduction was achieved by the selection of language related episodes. After reducing the raw data into LREs for mediation between learners and the mediator, the interactions were detailed by noting the following points to identify the general themes:

A. The date of each exchange with the name of the participant

B. The frequency of L1 use in oral narration and through the mediation

C. My comments on the whole mediation process

After coding the data, a report was generated for the key themes of L1 functions in online DA mediation.

4. Results and Discussions

This section deals with the functions of L1 during mediation in online DA to find out how L1 use contributed to the learners' cognitive development and intersubjectivityto collaboratively overcome the problems in a joint venture with the mediator. The following table represents the general functions of L1emerged out of thematic analysis of data in interpsychological domain realized in online DA mediation.

Table 1

The typology of L1 use in online L2 DA mediation

	Themes	Description	Categories
1	**Metatalk**	Self-directed talk about the task to gain control over its performance	1.1 Self-directed talk about task
			1.2 Self-directed talk about performance
2	**Filling L2 linguistic gaps**	Because of low linguistic competence , the learners resorted to L1 to overcome their structure problems	2.1 focus on grammatical structure by the learners and the mediator
			2.1 Vocabulary search
3	**Intersubjectivity**	A joint understanding of the task	3.1 Technical support in SCMC

Transcription conventions**: ..** Pause,**…** Long pause,**….**Longer pauses, **Bold,**L1 use

As presented in the Table (1) three main themes of metatalk, filling L2 linguistic gaps and intersubjectivity emerged from the thematic analysis of oral narratives of the learners in the

study which bear some resemblance to categories reported in Brooks and Donato (1994). This study added some subcategories to metatalk and intersubjectivity functions of L1 used in online mediation.L1 use had a metalinguistic function when the learners tried to produce complex linguistic forms, they resorted to L1 to gain control over the task performance. At the same time, L1 used to express their level of understanding of a particular linguistic form at the end of mediation. Because of the fact that the study mainly focused on the development of grammatical structure, the lion share of L1 use was dedicated to filling the L2 linguistic gaps in both grammar and vocabulary. The learners talked about the details in the picture stories to gain control over their performance, they presumably lacked enough linguistic competence to express their meanings in English so they resorted to L1 to gain more psychological space to think of some alternatives to solve the problems. The mediator sometimes used L1 to explain some difficult structures that seemed to be problematic for the learners. As the collaborative mediation carried out over the Web, it required a high degree of electronic competence which was provided by the mediator using L1 in the form of technical support to ensure intersubjectivity. Thus, L1 functions not only as a cognitive tool, but it also servers socially to construct a social space that made the completion of the task possible.The following excerpts illustrate the categories reported in Table (1):

4.1 Metatalk

When faced with difficulty both in content and structure, the learners switched to L1 as a cognitive facilitator of L2 processing. In the following episode, Dara(D) talked about the details in the picture stories to gain control over his performance, he clearly lacked enough linguistic competence to express his words in English so he used L1 to gain more psychological space to think of some alternatives to solve his problems with the mediator(M).

1.D:Nemidonamchera sag khafehmisheh(I don't know why the dog sinks)

2.D: Oh…, (se chizdargardanehsageh) (three things hang on the dog'sneck)

Similarly, Sepideh(S) talked about a calligrapher working in a room, but she did not know how to talk about this scene in L2. Therefore, she resorted to L1 to talk about the details in the scene in the following example:

3.S:Yekmard dash roy..yaddashthayghadimikarmikard(a man wasworking on some old handwritings)

There were some instances in which the learners talked about their performance problems during mediation in L1. In this way, they constructed a social space to move the task forward in their collaborative social interactions with the mediator. In the following excerpts, Dara

initiated a talk about his background of English structure to have both psychological and social space to mediate his thinking about the problem.

*4. **D:** The robber gives them three pears for… thankfully**. (MidonamThankfullygalatast, man gablaninoomidonestam**) (I know thankfullyis wrong, I knew this before)*

*5. **D:** It was ..un animal. (**naunrainjorinemineveshtim**)(No, we did notwrite un this way)*

*6. **S:**The lion said,…..(**ghatikardam**)(I am confused), how did you ?*

Although the mediator did not ask for any explanation about some target structures, the learners initiated self-directed metatalk to explain some points in L1 at the end of mediation. This might reflect willingness to express their high level of understanding of the points being mediated for which they lacked enough linguistic competence. Therefore, they resorted to L1 to fill in the gaps in their L2 knowledge. The same reason applies to when they were asked to explain their reasoning for the corrections made after mediation.

*7. **D:** on a tree, (**choonyekderakhtbodeh**)(because it was one tree)*

*8. **D:** no, in a..basket(**choon ma an ranemishnasim**)(because we don't know it)*

*9. **S:** Aha (**wanted gozashtas pas**)(wanted is past so) there was*

*10. **S:**Oh, the basket(**choon do bar be karraftehast**)(we used it twotimes before)*

*11**. **S:** (**bad azharezafeh "ing" miad?**)(We use 'ing" afterprepositions), so, After using.*

*12. **S:**May have (**choon have sheklsadehfelast**)(because have is thesimple form ofverb)*

*13. **M:**Yes, why?*

*14. **S:** (**choonmofradeh**),(because it is singular)*

*15. **M:** Why?*

*16. **S:** Because it is passive and we use….(**gesmatsevom**)(PP)*

4.2 Filling L2 linguistic gaps

The following examples illustrated learners' use of L1 to overcome their structure problems in oral narratives:

*17. **D:(Azroyderakht on the tree ya at the tree misheh?**)(At the treeor on the tree?)*

*18. **S:(catchspeleshchejoreyh**)(how to spell catch?)*

*19. **M:** c-a-t-c-h*

*20. **S:** He couldn't find other lion anymore in that day.*

*21. **S: (another misheh, doresteh?**) (Is it another?)*

*22. **M:** They take some photo,*

*23. **S:(chandaksgeraeftan**)(take some photos),is it wrong?*

The following examples show Dara'sdesperate vocabulary search in oral narratives of the picturestories. It should be reminded that searching for meaning of unknown vocabularies occurred more in oral narratives because of immediacy of task and itsfleeting discourse.

*24. **D:** But the lion keeps it...(**mohkam chi mishod**?)(What was "firmly" inEnglish?)*

*25. **D:** this is the photo of the dog after the....(**nejatchimishod?**)(What was the meaning of rescue?)*

The following examples demonstrated the mediator's use of L1 to explain some target structure as the most explicit form of mediation:

*26. **S:** A sun and a sky?*

*27. **M:** No, (**barychezhaeeketakhastandbayadaz the estefadehshavd**)(we use "the" with things which are inclusive in the universe like sun, sky, moon)*

*28. **S:** But the hunter got very sad because he missed the lion.*

*29.**M:** But the hunter got very sad because he missed the lion. (**choonJomlahbadigozashtas**)(Because next sentence is in the past)*

*30.**M:** Here you need to use modals (**afalnaghes**) like "could, should, must...etc." to talk about past events*

*31. **M:** yes, (**Kari kemitonestehanjambedehvalianjamnadadeh**)(something that she could do but she didn't).*

4.3 Intersubjectivity

As the study was carried out over the Web, some technical information was given in L1 because of some learners' unfamiliarity with computer and the Internet jargons. As the mediation was unfolding in real time over Skype and some mediation moves included sending texts and web links, the mediator inevitably used some computer related terms that some learners found difficult to handle. Therefore, to ensure intersubjectivity between the learners and the mediator and to have a joint understanding of cyber-mediation, L1 was used as illustrated in the following Examples:

*32. **M:** Please scroll down the page*

*33. **S:** What?*

*34. **M:** (**Lotfansafhatopaeenbiar**) (Please scroll down the page)*

*35. **M:** Can you see my Skype's screen sharing?*

*36. **E:**(**Kojabayadberam?**) (Where to go?)*

*37. **M:** Just wait, you can see it in your desktop*

*38. **M:** The link is embedded in your Skype*

*39. **B:** Where is it?*

*40. **M: (dakhelmatndarSkype hastesh)**(It's inside the text inSkpe)*

It should be reminded that without restoring to L1, the mediation could not go along smoothly and it might even fail at some points. L1 use provided a social context in which the task completion could be facilitated. Framed within a sociocultural perspective, the data presented here evidenced that the use of LI is beneficial for language learning. It acted as a social and psychological tool that enabled learners to engage effectively in mediation in online DA.

5. Conclusion

Three general themes of L1 functions emerged out of the thematic analysis of learners' oral narratives included: metatalk, filling L2 linguistic gaps and intersubjectivity. Metatalk was characterized by the self-directed talk about the task to gain control over its performance. L1 use had a metalinguistic function when the learners tried to produce complex linguistic forms, they resort to L1 to gain control over its production. There were many instances in which the learners talked about their performance problems during mediation in L1. In this way, they constructed a social space to move the task forward in their collaborative social interactions with the mediator. Although the mediator did not ask for an explanation to some target structures by the learners, they used self- directed metatalk to explain some points in L1 at the end of mediation. This might reflect their willingness to express their high level of understanding of the points being mediated for which they lacked enough linguistic competence to explain their reasoning.During the online collaborative mediation, L1 was used to reduce the learners' cognitive load, to keep the flow of mediation, bring learners' attention to target forms and negotiate intersubjectivity within a shared communicative context.

Tomlinson (2001) encourages the use of L1 in the foreign language classroom to achieve the multi-dimensional representation necessary for meaningful processing of L2. He maintains that if learners are forced to communicate only in L2 in which the linguistic representation is only focused on, it raises doubts about the likelihood of meaningful L2 communication. From sociocultural theoryperspective, language is the primary semiotic system that mediates our thinking, both intermentally and intramentally. Thus, to have an effective collaboration in online DA in virtual classrooms, L1 should be used as a social and psychological tool to meet the demands of the task of learning a second language. From a pedagogical standpoint, the findings of this study provided greater insight into the important

role of LI as a mediating tool which might be of interest to language teachers to soften their tough stance against the use of L1 in the classroom interactions as counter-productive particularly in collaborative tasks when performing completely in L2 is impossible or beyond the students' linguistic ability.This study is not intended to generalize its findings to a larger population, but as a web-based qualitative inquiry aimed at providing an emic perspective and a thick description of the learners and the mediator' use of L1 in online L2 DA mediation. The long-term effect of L1 on DA mediation in relation to mediation moves and learners' reciprocity is an issue worthy of further research.

References

Anton, M., &DiCamilla, F. (1998). Socio-cognitive functions of L1 in collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 54 (3), 314-342.

Birjandi, P. &Ebadi, S. (2012). Microgenesis in Dynamic Assessment of L2 Learners Socio- cognitive Development via Web 2.0.*Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 32, 34–39.

Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Brooks, F.B., &Donato, R. (1994).Vygotskyan approaches to understanding foreign language learner discourse during communicative tasks. *Hispania*, 77, 262-274.

Darhower, M. (2002). Interactional features of synchronous computer-mediated communication in the intermediate L2 class: A sociocultural case study. *CALICO Journal, 19*(2), 249-277.

Johnson, K.E. (1995). *Understanding Communication in Second Language Classrooms.*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lantolf, J., & Thorne, S. L. (2006).*Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sauoro, S. (2009).Computer-mediated corrective feedback and the development of l2 grammar. *Language Learning & Technology, 13*(1), 96-120.

Summers, R. (2008).*Dynamic Assessment: Toward a Model of Computer-mediated Dialogic Engagement.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation.University of South Florida.

Swain, M., &Lapkin, S. (2000). Task-based second language learning: The uses of the first language. *Language Teaching Research*, 4, 251–274.

Thoms, J., Liao, J. &Szustak, A.(2005).The use of L1 in an L2 on-line chat activity.*The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 62, 161-182.

Tomlinson, B. (2001). The Inner Voice: A Critical Factor in L2 Learning. *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning and Teaching*, 6, 23-33.

Wertsch, J. V. (1985). *Vygotsky and the Social Formation of Mind.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Title

Self-Efficacy, Stressors and Burnout among Iranian EFL Teachers in Private Language Institutes

Authors

Nasser Fallah (M.A)
University of Zabol, Iran

Saeed Khojasteh Nam (M.A)
Hamidiyeh Payam Noor University, Iran

Roya Movahed (M.A)
University of Zabol, Iran

Biodata

Nasser Fallah is a TEFL instructor at the University of Zabol. His main research interests include Teacher Education, Psycholinguistics and Individual Differences in Foreign/Second Language Learning.

Saeed Khojasteh Nam, M.A in TEFL from Iran University of Science and Technology. He has been teaching English at the Ministry of Education for about ten years. His research interests include Psychology of Teaching, Multilingualism and Cognitive Linguistics. He is now teaching English at *Hamidiyeh Payam Noor University*

Roya Movahed is a TEFL instructor at the University of Zabol.. Her research interests include Psycholinguistics and Individual Differences in Foreign/Second Language Learning.

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the role of self-efficacy in burnout, the effects of job stressors on burnout and the moderator role of self-efficacy in the stressor–burnout relationship in a sample of 247 Iranian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers. The results of hierarchical regression analyses revealed that the stressors had significant positive effects on burnout dimensions. Further, it was shown that, apart from being a potent predictor of burnout dimensions, teacher self-efficacy had significant moderating effects on the stressors-burnout

bond, depending on the different dimensions of self-efficacy and burnout and the kinds of stressors under study. Implications are discussed.

Keywords: Burnout, EFL teachers, Self-efficacy, Stressors

1. Introduction

Stress is a widespread feature of teaching profession. At least one third of teachers can be seen as suffering under high stress (Capel, 1991). According to Milstein and Farkas (1988), stressors generate negative changes in teachers, in physical, psychological and behavioral terms. Furthermore, DeFrank and Stroup (1989) indicated that teaching has been associated with significant levels of burnout.

Research has also suggested that the relationship between stressors and their negative consequences (e.g., burnout) could be moderated by different factors, such as personality features and coping resources (e.g., Jex & Bliese, 1999; Jex & Elacqua, 1999). One of these resources is self-efficacy as a belief in one's capability. Research shows that self-efficacy acts as an important determinant of motivation, affect, thought and action (Bandura, 1992). Schwarzer (1999) also argued that self-efficacy can make a difference to people's ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Regarding feelings, a low sense of self-efficacy is connected with depression, anxiety and helplessness. This also applies to foreign language teaching, with its high levels of affective involvement, complexity and constant interaction.

According to Brown (1987), no learning is as emotionally involved as foreign language learning. It is a complex task that is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, anxiety, apprehension and self-doubt; that is, teachers should deal with students who come to class not only with diverse abilities but also with a range of emotional tendencies. EFL teachers should empathize with learners, try to keep them motivated and encourage them to participate in classroom activities, especially peer and group conversations. Besides these roles, they are also supposed to engage in many other tasks such as paperwork, evaluating students, preparing for the class and keeping themselves up-to-date with their teaching area. At the same time, they should deal with potentially stressful interactions with administrators, parents, counselors, supervisors and other teachers, put up with rather low pay and lack of tenure status (due to shrinking private language institutes' budgets), and ensure learners meet standards of accountability.

These concerns can be partly confirmed by the reports of Pennington and Riley (1991) and Blader and Tobash (1989, as cited in Pennington and Ho 1995) of high level of

dissatisfaction among practitioners with pay, benefits, and professional status within the TESOL field.

McKnight (1992) also noted that many TESOL teachers have to endure a powerless, relatively solitary position, and deprivation from the support of colleagues, administrators, and bureaucrats. And the roles and responsibilities of ESL teachers still are not appreciated and understood by administrators and many of the teachers. Besides, for some TESOL teachers, positions are short-term and insecure, and their position is in many ways worse than that of school teachers, who at least have the choice to return to subject or grade teaching when the attractions of ESL begin to fade away.

The combination of all factors such as these affects the teachers psychologically and may make them feel more accountable, yet more confused, and arguably less supported with no special job security. It is no wonder many experience a form of burnout at some point in their language teaching profession.

Nevertheless, no study addressing the moderating role of teacher self-efficacy on stressor-burnout bond has been done with EFL teachers. Therefore, it seems that some research should be carried out in this realm to examine if and how occupational stressors affect teacher burnout and to test the potential moderating effect of teacher self-efficacy on stressors-burnout relationship.

1.1. Literature review

1.1.1. Stressors and burnout

We are always evaluating the daily demands we experience in life and comparing this to the resources we have for dealing with them. If demands are viewed as surpassing our resources, they become stressors and render the stress response (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). hence, teacher stress may be deemed the perception of a disproportion between demands at school and the resources teachers have for coping with them (Troman & Woods, 2001).

Over the last few decades, considerable research has been conducted in order to identify occupational stressors in the teaching environment (e.g., Farber, 1991; Fimian, 1984; Lewis, 1999; Pithers & Soden, 1998).

Pithers and Soden (1998), for example, highlighted role overload as a significant stressor in teachers. They assessed levels of strain, organizational roles and stress in 322 Australian and Scottish vocational lecturers. Strain was found to be average in both national groups, but there were high levels of stress, with role overload emerging as the major cause.

Lewis (1999) examined teachers' estimations of stress arising from being unable to discipline pupils in the way they would prefer. Overall, maintaining discipline emerged as a

stressor, with those worst affected being teachers who placed particular emphasis on pupil empowerment. Morton, Vesco, Williams, and Awender (1997) conducted a study among 1000 student teachers. The results revealed that classroom management and evaluation apprehension as the greatest stressors. A study of a group of EFL teachers also showed that the main stressors were lack of sufficient time, unwanted classroom observations and poor relations with colleagues (Bress 2006).

Further, Fimian (1984) classified teaching stressors into five clusters: Time Management, Work related stressors, Professional distress, Discipline and motivation, Professional Investment.

According to Fimain, time management refers to the general level of demands made on teachers within very short period of time and teachers find it difficult to manage. Work related stressors refer to work overload and time pressures, e.g., too much work to do, fast pace of work, big class size etc. Indeed, the variety of demands made on a teacher in a typical school day, often with tight deadlines attached to them; make this aspect of teaching a major area of stress. Professional Distress is comprised of those sources related to some professional variables as lack of progress and promotion opportunities, inadequate salary, lack of recognition etc. Many studies have explained poor working conditions in the sense of prestige, salary, and respect for their status and opportunities for progress (e.g., Laughlin, 1984; Wanberg, 1984). Discipline and Motivation have also been the main sources of stress in many studies (e.g., Laughlin, 1984). The last factor, professional investment refers to lack of control over decisions, lack of improvement opportunities etc. These sources of stress have also been discussed in many studies. Warr (1992) describes low job discretion as the most important single characteristics in terms of causing stress at work. Karasek (1979) hypothesized that high job demands were not necessarily harmful in themselves but when accompanied by low decision latitude would result in psychological strain.

On the other hand, burnout is conceptualized as resulting from long term occupational stress, particularly in human service professions, including teaching (Cherniss 1980). According to Cherniss, professionals who were burned out were unable to effectively avoid and cope with stress. Consequently, these individuals became physically and emotionally exhausted. Expanding upon this definition, Maslach and Jackson (1981) operationalized teacher burnout as entailing three components: Emotional exhaustion (EE) referred to a lack of energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources were used up; depersonalization (DP) indicated callous and impersonal responses towards the clients; and, reduced personal

accomplishment (PA) or unaccomplishment was characterized by a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively (Maslach and Leiter 1997).

Burnout might have serious negative consequences not only on the teacher's wellbeing but also on the teaching-learning processes in which he or she is engaged (Vaezi & Fallah, 2011a). Research shows that burnout negatively influences student academic performance and quality of teaching, and it might also lead to job dissatisfaction, work alienation, and teachers' leaving the profession (see Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999). Also burnout negatively affects interpersonal relations between student and teacher (Yoon, 2002).

However, in the TESOL field, research on teacher burnout is rather scarce. A library search for this subject yielded only a few studies.

For example, Pennington and Ho (1995) using the Maslach Burnout Inventory with a sample of randomly selected members of TESOL, found no indication of job burnout. Ratings on key variables were lower than for other groups surveyed using the same instrument, including K–12 teachers, attorneys, social service workers, and police, although the ESL group scored somewhat higher on the emotional exhaustion scale than several other groups. The authors ascribed the lack of overall burnout to the ESL teachers' moderate to high job satisfaction in categories having to do with the nature of teaching work and its intrinsic values. They opined that due to this intrinsic satisfaction, ESL teachers might experience lower levels of stress (in comparison with other teachers) despite registering rather low job satisfaction in categories having to do with pay and particularly with opportunities for advancement.

Unlike Pennington and Ho's (1995) findings, Mukundan and Khandehroo' (2010) results indicated that burnout was evident at high levels in all dimensions among EFL teachers in Malaysia. Lalou's (2008) also demonstrated that Greek EFL teachers experienced low to moderate levels of emotional exhaustion, low levels of depersonalization in relation to students and quite high levels of depersonalization in relation to administration and colleagues, and a high degree of personal accomplishment in their work.

In a cross-cultural study including Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers, Khezerlou (2013) investigated the potential links between teacher self-efficacy and the burnout dimensions. The findings indicated a moderate significant difference between Iranian and Turkish groups only in EE dimension, two subscales of self-efficacy as the dominant predictors of EE, DP and PA, and three subscales of self-efficacy as discriminatory predictors in EE, DP and PA processes across the groups.

Mede (2009) studied the effects of personal variables (gender, age and experience) and perceived self-efficacy in eliciting social support on the burnout dimensions among 63 Turkish EFL teachers working at a preparatory school in Istanbul. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant correlation among burnout, personal variables and perceived self-efficacy beliefs in eliciting social support both from colleagues and principals.

Mukundan and Ahour (2011) attempted to find the possible relationship between demographic variables and burnout syndrome among 437 female EFL teachers in Malaysia. Conducting univariate analyses, the authors found out that level of teaching, the number of children, years of teaching experience, and age were significant indicators of burnout among the teachers. However, marital status and workload were not significantly related to their burnout level.

1.1.2. Teacher self-efficacy

During the past few decades, the construct of self-efficacy, as a belief in one's capability, has received increasing attention in educational research. Teachers are one group of professionals whose self-efficacy has been extensively researched. It has been defined as "the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context" (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy, 1998: 22).

Research has demonstrated the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their instructional behaviors. Pajares (1992), for example, found a strong relationship between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their lesson planning, instructional decisions, classroom practices, and subsequent teaching behaviors. He argued that "beliefs are far more influential than knowledge in determining how individuals organize and define tasks and problems and are stronger predictors of behavior" (p. 311). Further, a strong sense of teacher's self-efficacy promotes a firm commitment to the profession and collaborative relationships with colleagues and parents (Ross, 1998), contributing fruitfully to the promotion of a rich and stimulating learning environment.

The relationship between self-efficacy and stress/burnout has also been examined (e.g., Brouwers and Tomic, 1999, 2000; Chan, 2002; Doménech-Betoret, 2006, 2009; Friedman, 2003). Doménech-Betoret's (2009) findings, for example, revealed that external (school support resources) and internal (classroom management self-efficacy and instructional self-efficacy) coping resources could negatively affect job stressors among a sample of 724 primary and secondary Spanish school teachers. In turn, job stressors had a positive effect on teachers' burnout, confirming Doménech-Betoret's (2006) results indicating that teachers

with a high level of self-efficacy and more coping resources reported suffering less stress and burnout than teachers with a low level of self-efficacy and fewer coping resources, and vice versa. Brouwers and Tomic (2000) also showed that teacher self-efficacy had a longitudinal effect on depersonalization and a synchronous effect on personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion.

However, in almost all of the studies done on the buffering effects of teacher self-efficacy on stress/burnout, conceptualization of self-efficacy has only focused on teacher's performance in the classroom context, without considering efficacy beliefs pertaining to other aspects of the school context. Thus, the present study takes Friedman and Kass's (2002) conceptualization of teacher self-efficacy, embracing both classroom context and organizational aspect of teacher functioning. Whereas classroom efficacy focuses on the teachers' functioning inside the classroom (instruction and classroom management) and has been mentioned in numerous works (e.g., Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Chan, 2002), the latter focuses on the organizational aspects of teaching (e.g., participation in decision making, and involvement in school activities), and has been the object of few studies though was found to be an important factor in explaining stress (Cherniss, 1993). These two forms of self-efficacy complement each other and are needed to fulfill educational objectives (Friedman, 2000). Thus, we believe it important to use them.

1.2. Objectives and hypotheses

This study aims at investigating the role of self-efficacy in perceiving potential job stressors and burnout, the effect of job stressors on teacher burnout and the moderator role of self-efficacy in the stressor–burnout relationship.

Basing our work on the literature reviewed to this point, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1:

We expect high levels of stressors to be associated with higher levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and unaccomplishment.

Hypothesis 2:

 It is expected that low levels of self-efficacy will be significantly associated with high levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and unaccomplishment.

Hypothesis 3:

We expect that self-efficacy will moderate the occupational stressor-burnout relationship. That is, we assume that the stressors will be significantly linked to burnout only in those teachers with low levels of self-efficacy.

2. Method

2.1. Participants and procedure

Upon obtaining permission from principals, nineteen private language institutes were sampled randomly in Iran. Out of 325 recruited teachers, 247 returned completed questionnaires (76 % return rate). These teachers aged between 19 and 48 years old (M= 29.82, SD= 5.75) with a range of between 1 and 19 years of teaching experience (M=7.58, SD=3.91). 113 (49.1%) were male and 134 (50.89%) were female. They were teaching general English courses including all the language skills and sub-skills based on their institutes' specified schedules in classes with 7-18 students with age range of 15-35 years. The teachers were B.A. and M.A. graduates in one of the following fields: English Language Teaching (114 teachers), English Literature (62 teachers) and, English Translation (71 teachers).

Before the data collection, all participants were informed of the objective of the study, and the estimated time needed to complete the questionnaires (approximately 30 minutes). The participants were all assured that their participation would be voluntary and anonymous, and the findings would consist of group data and individual participants and language institutes would not be identified. This information was presented in an informed consent form that was handed out with the survey packet. The completion of the survey packet indicated implied permission and thus no signed consent form was returned to the researchers. The participants were encouraged to contact the researcher if any questions or concerns arose as a result of their participation in the study. They took the questionnaires home, filled them out and submitted them to the researchers within 10 days.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Self-Efficacy scale

Self-efficacy was measured by the original English version of Friedman and Kass's (2002) Teacher Self Efficacy Scale. The scale includes 33 items. It measures teacher self-efficacy in two domains of functioning, classroom context (sense of professional efficacy pertaining to teaching, educating and motivating students, as well as controlling inter-relations with students) and school context (involvement in school activities, participation in decision-making and influencing school organizational politics). The classroom context subscale consists of 19 items (e.g., *I believe I know how to link what I teach to students' everyday interests.*) and the school context subscale includes 14 items (e.g., *I believe I can enjoy a*

good rapport with the school administration). The response options for the items ranged from 1 (never) to 6 (always). To analyze the questionnaire, Friedman and Kass's (2002) chose a group of 555 teachers from 22 randomly selected elementary and secondary schools in Israel and analyzed the norms of the test. As they stated, the questionnaire has generally good internal consistency, test–retest reliability, and construct validity. In the present study, cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were α = 84 for classroom, and α = 82 for organizational self-efficacy scales.

2.2.2. Burnout scale

Teacher burnout was measured using the original English version of Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator's Survey (MBI-ES) (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). The scale is considered in the literature as "the most widely used operationalization of burnout" (Lee & Ashforth, 1996, p. 124). It is a 22-item self-report instrument consisting of three subscales: Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA). Participants respond on a seven-point frequency rating scale, ranging from "never" (0) to "every day" (6). High scores on the EE and DP subscales and low scores on the PA subscale are characteristic of burnout. Representative items on the scales, EE, DP, PA are as follows, respectively: *I feel emotionally drained from my work*; *I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects*; *I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job*. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were α = .92 for EE, α = .87 for PA, and α = .79 for DP in this study.

2.2.3. Stressors scales

The stressors were measured using the original English version of five sub-scales of Fimian's (1984) Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI). The scales includes time management (8 items, e.g., *There isn't enough time to get things done*), work related stressors (6 items. e.g., *There is too much work to do*), professional distress (5 items, e.g., *I lack recognition for the extra work and/or good teaching I do*), discipline and motivation (6 items, e.g., *I feel Frustrated because of discipline problems in my classroom*) and professional investment (4 items, e.g., *My personal opinions are not sufficiently aired*). In the present study, cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were α = 77 for Time management, α = 78 for Work related stressors, α = 74 for Professional distress, α = 75 for Discipline and motivation, and α = 68 for Professional investment scales.

3. Data analysis

To accomplish the objectives set out, moderated regression analysis, as the recommended method for testing interaction effects (Cohen & Cohen, 1983), was used. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed to detect main effects and interaction effects of stressors and the two moderator variables (classroom self-efficacy and organizational self-efficacy) on each one of the burnout dimensions. To minimize multicolineality, following the recommendations of Aiken and West (1991), multiplicative terms were created for the standardized independent variables. The standardized independent variables were introduced into the equation in four successive steps; at the first step (1), age, gender and teaching experience were introduced to control their possible influence. Next (2), stressors, followed by (3), the moderator variables, and finally (4), the two-way interactions.

To guard against inflated family-wise error, we set an adjusted p-value (Bonferroni correction) for each dependent variable by dividing our desired p-value by the number of hypotheses (comparisons) being conducted i.e. we divided .05 by 10 (.05/10 = .005), giving us our new threshold of significance (p < .005), maintaining our 95% confidence in our regression analyses.

The significant interaction effects would support Hypothesis 3. Nevertheless, we also take into account the main effects, given that, as Jaccard et al. (1990) argued, the main effects of the independent variables generally yield significant information. The significant main effects would support Hypothesis 1. Finally, the significant main effect of the moderator variable supports Hypothesis 2.

4. Results

Table 1 shows the number of items, factors, means, standard deviations and alpha coefficients for the scales used. Table 2 also indicates intercorrelation among the variables.

Table 3 shows the results of the regression analysis in which emotional exhaustion is considered a dependent variable. These results reveal that most of the stressors significantly predict emotional exhaustion (time management, β = -.16, p < .005; work related stress, β = .24, p < .005; professional distress, β = .27, p < .005; professional investment, β = .22, p < .005), accounting for 33 % of the explained variance (ΔR^2 = .33, ΔF [5, 238] = 27.29, p < 0.005). However, the moderators' predictive strength did not reach statistical significance (Classroom efficacy, β = .04, p > .005; organizational efficacy, β = .06, p > .005).

Regarding the interaction effects, the results show that other than having a significant main effect (ΔR^2 = .09, ΔF [10, 226] = 4.51, p < 0.005), moderators also significantly

moderate some of the relationships between stressors and EE as follows: time management x classroom efficacy, β = .21, p < .005; professional investment x classroom efficacy, β = -.29, p < .005; and professional investment x organizational efficacy, β = .31, p < .005.

Table 1

Summary of the descriptive statistics and internal consistency of the

scales (n = 247)

Factors	No. items	α	Mean/StD
Burnout			
Emotional exhaustion	9	.92	15.67/11.52
Personal accomplishment	8	.87	37.03/6.84
Depersonalization	5	.79	5.44/5.24
Moderators			
Classroom efficacy	19	.84	75.53/12.05
Organizational efficacy	14	.82	53.21/9.98
Stressors			
Time management	8	.77	24.01/4.23
Work related stressors	6	.78	17.02/5.12
Professional distress	5	.74	14.70/4.90
Discipline and motivation	6	.75	14.75/4.84
Professional investment	4	.68	9.46/3.48

Table 2

Pearson's bivariate correlations among the study variables (n = 247)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Gender		.22**	.13*	-.04	-.12*	-.18**	-.13*	-.14*	.09	.14*	-.22**	.01	-.07
2. Age			.69**	-.17**	-.07	-.11	-.33**	-.29**	.34*	.14*	-.22**	.01	-.41**
3. Exp				-.09	-.04	-.11	-.29**	-.26**	.52**	.48**	-.21**	-.25**	-.43**
4. TM					.35**	.24**	.20**	.12	-.12	-.00	.09	.05	.05
5. WRS						.28**	.22**	.23**	-.21**	-.07	.42**	.34**	.20**
6. PD							.31**	.32**	-.21**	-.24**	.52**	.31**	.23**
7. DM								.65**	-.35*	-.35**	.43**	.48**	.32**
8. PI									-.40**	-.45**	.55**	.48**	.36**
9. CE										.55**	-.39**	-.45**	-.50**
10. OE											-.32**	-.29**	-.49**
11. EE												.58**	.25**
12. DP													.32**

13. RPA

Note: Exp=Experience, TM=Time management, WRS=Work related stress, PD=Professional distress, DM=Discipline & motivation, PI=Professional investment, CE=Classroom efficacy, OE=Organizational efficacy, EE=Emotional exhaustion, DP= Depersonalization, RPA=Reduced personal accomplishment

Table 3

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis (n = 247). Dependent variable:

Emotional exhaustion

Variables	β	t	ΔF
Step 1			7.75*
Gender	-.09	-1.88	
Age	-.05	-.78	
Experience	-.09	-1.24	
Step 2			27.29*
Time management	-.16	-2.87*	
Work related stress	.24	3.63*	
Professional distress	.27	3.78*	
Discipline-motivation	.04	.62	
Professional investment	.22	2.87*	
Step 3			3.06*
Classroom efficacy	-.04	-.54	
Organizational efficacy	-.06	-.93	
Step 4			4.51*
Time management x classroom efficacy	.21	2.58*	
Work related stress x classroom efficacy	.06	.73	
Professional distress x classroom efficacy	-.18	-1.74	
Discipline-motivation x classroom efficacy	.18	1.84	
Professional investment x classroom efficacy	-.29	-2.61*	
Time management x organizational efficacy	-.12	-1.63	
Work related stress x organizational efficacy	-.05	-.65	
Professional distress x organizational efficacy	-.17	-1.93	
Discipline & motivation x organizational efficacy	.09	.81	
Professional investment x organizational efficacy	.31	2.56*	

* $p < .005$

Note. $R^2 = .08$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .33$ for Model 2; $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Model 3. $\Delta R^2 = .09$ for Model 4

Table 4

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis (n = 247). Dependent variable:

Depersonalization

Variables	β	t	ΔF
Step 1			5.96*
Gender	.06	1.59	
Age	-.10	1.34	
Experience	-.08	-1.06	
Step 2			21.91*
Time management	-.15	-2.50*	
Work related stress	.24	3.34*	
Professional distress	-.07	-.94	
Discipline-motivation	.18	2.45*	
Professional investment	.29	3.46*	
Step 3			8.84*
Classroom efficacy	-.33	-4.06*	
Organizational efficacy	.11	1.50	
Step 4			2.37*
Time management x classroom efficacy	.13	1.46	
Work related stress x classroom efficacy	.15	1.61	
Professional distress x classroom efficacy	-.07	-.64	
Discipline-motivation x classroom efficacy	-.06	-.65	
Professional investment x classroom efficacy	-.11	-.98	
Time management x organizational efficacy	-.11	-1.45	
Work related stress x organizational efficacy	-.11	-1.39	
Professional distress x organizational efficacy	-.11	-1.17	
Discipline & motivation x organizational efficacy	.21	1.73	
Professional investment x organizational efficacy	.09	.74	

* $p < .005$

Note. $R^2 = .06$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .29$ for Model 2; $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Model 3. $\Delta R^2 = .05$ for Model 4

Table 5

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis (n = 247). Dependent variable:

Unaccomplishment

Variables	β	t	ΔF
Step 1			22.32*
Gender	-.05	1.06	
Age	-.24	-3.20*	
Experience	-.01	-.16	

Step 2			8.36*
Time management	-.21	-3.57***	
Work related stress	.18	2.55**	
Professional distress	.04	.62	
Discipline-motivation	.05	.68	
Professional investment	-.01	-.08	
Step 3			17.78*
Classroom efficacy	-.31	-3.84***	
Organizational efficacy	-.17	-2.35**	
Step 4			2.82*
Time management x classroom efficacy	-.04	-.46	
Work related stress x classroom efficacy	.27	2.84*	
Professional distress x classroom efficacy	-.07	-.62	
Discipline-motivation x classroom efficacy	-.13	-1.34	
Professional investment x classroom efficacy	.14	1.23	
Time management x organizational efficacy	-.12	-1.55	
Work related stress x organizational efficacy	-.06	-.76	
Professional distress x organizational efficacy	.13	1.38	
Discipline & motivation x organizational efficacy	.02	.21	
Professional investment x organizational efficacy	-.04	-.34	

* $p < .005$

Note. $R^2 = .21$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .11$ for Model 2; $\Delta R^2 = .08$ for Model 3. $\Delta R^2 = .06$ for Model 4.

In order to present a more in-depth interpretation of these results, the interactions have been graphically represented (see Figures 1, 2 and 3). Figure 1 shows that classroom self-efficacy moderates the relationship between time management stressor and emotional exhaustion. Although levels of EE increase slightly with a rise in the stressor for teachers with high levels of classroom self-efficacy, the stressor is more related to EE in EFL teachers with low levels of classroom self-efficacy. As depicted in Figure 2, professional investment presents a pattern of results similar to the previous case. This stressor is associated with EE in the case of teachers with low levels of classroom self-efficacy. For those with high levels of self-efficacy, increases in the stressor are slight. Further, Figure 3 shows that organizational self-efficacy can moderate the relationship between professional investment and EE. Not unlike the previous observed patterns in Figurers 1 and 2, for teachers with low organizational self-efficacy, professional investment stressor sharply increases as the levels of EE increase. However, the increasing rate is much slower for teacher with high organizational self-efficacy.

In sum, for emotional exhaustion Hypothesis 1 is confirmed for all stressors excepting discipline and motivation, Hypothesis 2 is not confirmed, and Hypotheses 3 is partially confirmed.

In case of depersonalization as dependant variable, the results of hierarchical regression analysis show significant main effects due to some stressors (time management, $\beta = -.15$, $p < .005$; work related stress, $\beta = .24$, $p < .005$; discipline and motivation, $\beta = .18$, $p < .005$; professional investment, $\beta = .29$, $p < .005$), accounting for 29 % of the explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = .29$, $\Delta F [5, 238] = 21.91$, $p < 0.005$), and one moderator (classroom self-efficacy, $\beta = -.33$, $p < .005$). However, the effect of organizational self-efficacy and the interaction effects were insignificance, which is contrary to that hypothesized (see Table 4).

Summarizing, in terms of depersonalization, Hypothesis 1 is confirmed in the case of the stressors excluding professional distress. Hypothesis 2 is confirmed for classroom but not for organizational self-efficacy, since the latter is not significantly associated with depersonalization. Finally, Hypothesis 3 is not confirmed.
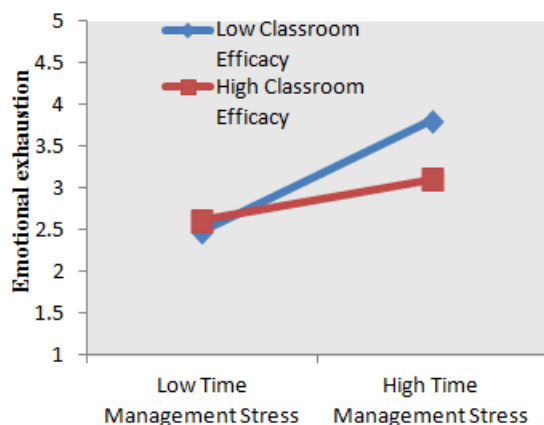

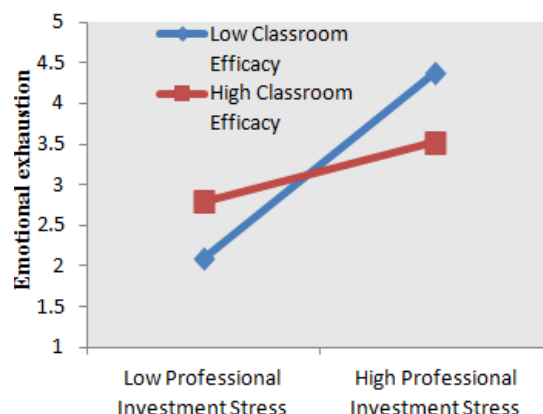**Fig 1.** Classroom Efficacy as Moderator of Time Management and EE

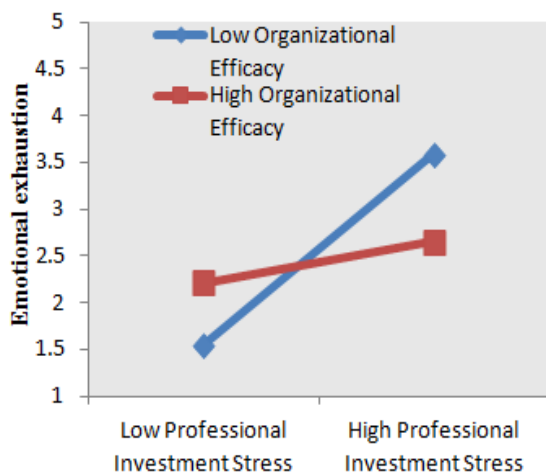**Fig 2.** Classroom Efficacy as Moderator of Professional Investment and EE

Fig 3. Organizational Efficacy as Moderator

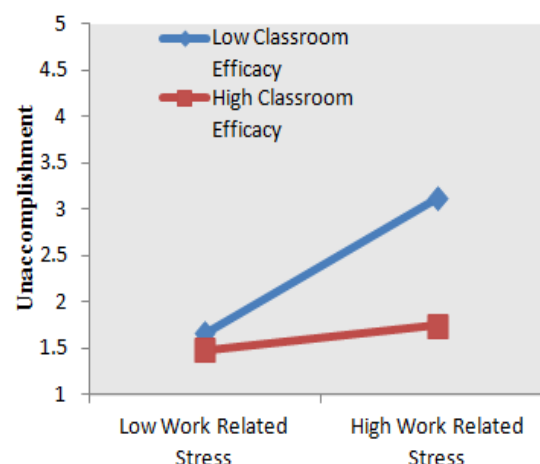**Fig 4.** Classroom Efficacy as Moderator of

Table 5 displays the results of the regression analysis in which unaccomplishment is taken as dependent variable. The results indicate that, among the stressors, only time management (β = -.21, p < .005) and work related stress (β = .18, p < .005) had significant main effects. However, the whole model could accounted for 11 % variance (ΔR^2 = .11, ΔF [5, 238] = 8.36, p < 0.005) in unaccomplishment. Regarding the effects of moderators, unlike the findings obtained for EE and DP above, it was found that both classroom (β = -.31, p < .005) and organizational self-efficacy (β = -.17, p < .005) had significant main effects on unaccomplishment. Altogether, they accounted for 8 % of variance (ΔR^2 = .08, ΔF [2, 236] = 17.78, p < 0.005). Finally, only one significant interaction effect was detected: work related stress x classroom efficacy, β = .27, p < .005. Figure 4 shows that high levels of classroom self-efficacy have almost constantly low levels of unaccomplishment, irrespective of whether levels of work-related stress are low or high. This is not the case for EFL teachers with low levels of classroom self-efficacy, since their unaccomplishment rises rather sharply as levels of the stressor increase.

To put it in nutshell, Hypotheses 1 and 3 were partly confirmed, and Hypothesis 2 was totally confirmed.

5. Discussion

As stated before, this study aimed at studying self-efficacy, stressors and burnout among 247 EFL teachers in private language institutes. The first objective concerned with examining the predictive capacity of the stressors on teacher burnout. The results obtained from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses show positive and significant main effects of most of the stressors on some burnout dimensions, indicating that when these stressors increase, teacher burnout also increases. More specifically, time management and work related stressors have predictive capacity on all dimensions of burnout; professional investment stressors can predict emotional exhaustion and depersonalization; professional distress and discipline-motivation can significantly predict emotional exhaustion and depersonalization respectively. This is in accordance with previous theoretical and empirical studies on the role of stressors in burnout, though these are limited where teachers are concerned, and quite sparse in the foreign/second language context altogether.

Adams and Jex (1999), for example, found that perceived control of time mediated between setting goals and priorities, mechanics of time management, and preference for organization on the one hand, and health and job satisfaction on the other hand. Previous research showed that time management was positively related to health, and negatively to job-induced and somatic tension, strain, and psychological distress. Jex and Elacqua (1999) found a moderating effect of time management behavior on the relation work-family conflict and strain.

In addition, empirical studies have clearly revealed that work related stressors such as work overload strongly influences the presence of teacher burnout (e.g., Chan, 2003; Dorman, 2003). Capel (1991) also found that teachers' burnout levels progressively increased over a school year when they experienced a constantly high level of work overload.

Further, several researchers have found that teachers spontaneously identify student misbehavior and lack of motivation as potential sources of stress (Blase, 1982). There is often a significant association between student misbehavior and teacher burnout in correlational studies (Borg and Riding, 1991; Byrne, 1994), and comparisons between high and low burnout teachers have also shown that student misbehavior is associated with high levels of teacher-reported burnout (Pierce & Molloy, 1990). Friedman (1995) also revealed that typical student misbehaviors including disrespect and inattentiveness accounted for 22% of the variance in predicting teacher burnout across all grade levels.

As for professional distress and professional investment, it seems plausible to expect that teachers who have the opportunity to learn and subsequently cultivate their pedagogical, content and curricular knowledge while they are employed will prevent the manifestation of burnout. The scant material available has shown that the lack of self-actualization on the job such as, regular in-service professional development opportunities was positively associated with teachers' emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Anderson & Iwanicki, 1984; Danylchuk, 1993) as well as their absenteeism and attrition (Chapman & Hutcheson, 1982). Chan (2003) also found that prospective teachers who did experience a 4-week authentic training practice during the end of their undergraduate education exhibited signs akin to burnout, particularly emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Besides, teachers who feel they are respected, appreciated, valued, and rewarded by others in their work place or greater community are less subject to burnout phenomenon. Studies exclusively examining this relationship are sparse, but generally reveal that teachers' dissatisfaction with their status as teachers (i.e., status society holds for teachers) and the recognition they receive from others concerning their skills and worth exacerbates burnout (Russell et aI., 1987). Moreover,

having professional interactions that are devoid of contingent feedback by others, whether it is praise or punishment, largely impacts teachers' job stress (Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997), emotional exhaustion (Danylchuk, 1993), and depersonalization (Schwab et aI., 1986).

Regarding the second objective of the present study, the results show that self-efficacy is a potent predictor of burnout, depending on the kind of self-efficacy and burnout dimension. Thus, teachers with low levels of self-efficacy feel more burnt out. For example, classroom self-efficacy turned out to be a significant predictor of depersonalization and unaccomplishment, and organizational self-efficacy could significantly predict unaccomplishment.

In line with previous research (Chan, 2002; van Dick & Wagner, 2001), teachers with a high level of self-efficacy reported less burnout than teachers with a low level of self-efficacy, and vice versa. This suggests that when teachers have a positive perception of their self-efficacy, teacher burnout is reduced or mitigated. Furthermore, Blase (1982) argues that insufficiency of coping resources in tackling job stressors brings about teacher stress and precipitates burnout. According to Achwarzer and Greenglass (1999), the lack of these resources predisposes teachers to make unfavorable stress appraisals and to cope poorly with stress. Bandura (1997) also notes that teachers that are devoid of efficacy adopt a custodial view of education and are often angered by student misbehavior, utilize coercive disciplinary practices, and are often cynical about student motivation and ability. Teachers that have a high sense of self-efficacy believe that teaching makes a difference and that they personally can affect student learning; teachers that have low self-efficacy believe that the action of teaching has little influence and they cannot overcome environmental and situational obstacles to learning (Gordon, 2001).

One possible explanation for the high strength of classroom efficacy in predicting burnout dimensions is that teachers with a low sense of classroom efficacy, instruction efficacy including instruction efficacy and classroom management, might get entangled in classroom problems, are stressed and angered by student misconduct, pessimistic about student potential to improve, and focus more on subject matter than student development (Vaezi & Fallah, 2011b). Teachers with high sense of classroom efficacy believe that unmotivated students can be taught, given the extra effort and appropriate strategies; that family support can be enlisted; and that negative community pressures can be overcome through effective teaching (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). This can either help buffer the deleterious effects of job stress, or directly improve teacher's well-being (Vaezi & Fallah, 2011b).

On the other hand, due to the nature of the organizational efficacy construct, it is expected that teachers' positive perception of themselves as employees of an organization in which they are constantly interacting with others (e.g., colleagues, principal, and supervisors) will have a buffering effect on work stress (Vaezi & Fallah, 2011). In such a situation they can act more effectively, and consequently, enjoy higher sense of accomplishment. The findings of the present study corroborate Cherniss's (1993) arguement that the organizational domain of the teacher functioning at school has a significant effect on the teacher as an employee. A positive school climate, one that is supportive, helpful, cooperative, and respectful of teachers, was negatively related to teacher stress and burnout (Sava, 2002). On the other hand, preventing teachers from participating in decisions on teacher-related issues will result in declining employees' morale, dissatisfaction and professional esteem (Smylie, 1999). Finally, these increasing effects will manifest themselves in professional stress and burnout (Byrne, 1994).

Our study also shows that self-efficacy moderates the relationship between stressors and burnout dimensions. In other words, the results confirm that, in general, stressors have a less negative impact on individuals when they have high levels of self-efficacy. However, this moderation depends on the kind of self-efficacy and stressor and on the specific dimension of burnout. For example, classroom self-efficacy has stronger moderation effects on the stressor-emotional exhaustion (for the cases of time management and professional investment) and on the stressor-unaccomplishment (for the case of work related stressors), while organizational self-efficacy has stronger moderation effects on the stressor-emotional exhaustion relationship (in the case of professional investment). These results are in line with those obtained by Jex & Gudanowski (1992) and Jex & Bliese (1999), who conclude that the moderation of self-efficacy depends on the specific stressor-consequence relationship under examination.

6. Conclusion and implications

One contribution of this study to the scientific literature lies in the fact that we added a new type of self-efficacy (organizational) which was mainly neglected in the study of stressors-burnout bond. Another contribution is the inclusion of a wide range of teaching stressors which were only partly taken into account by previous research.

Despite some limitations, this study extends past findings on job stressors and teacher burnout and self-efficacy, and contributes to a better understanding of these phenomena. The

findings obtained may also have implications to help prepare EFL teachers to reduce stress and avoid burnout.

Our study suggests that high levels of self-efficacy can help EFL teachers to cope more effectively with stressors and burnout. Its enhancement in the work environment would thus appear to be beneficial. Observing colleagues managing different aspects of teaching may increase individual teachers' self-efficacy, particularly when teachers work in teams and have ample opportunities to observe each other. A practical implication of this reasoning may be that one should attempt to raise teachers' competencies collectively through school development and in-service training, rather than sending individual teachers to courses and workshops outside of the school. However, these are theoretical speculations that need to be tested in longitudinal studies. Teachers' self-efficacy can also be empowered through training programs designed to enhance self-efficacy, specifically classroom self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) has described strategies to increase self-efficacy: active domain, verbal persuasion, vicarious learning and emotional activation.

According to Friedman (2000), enhancing the teacher's awareness of the issue of stress and burnout, either before entering the teaching profession or during the first years in teaching, can be an important measure in assuaging burnout. Research by Cockburn (1996) also concluded that the first step for teachers in reducing stress is to develop their awareness of stress levels. Also teachers and language institute administrators should collaborate to discuss the sources and consequences of teacher stress as well as ways to alleviate teacher stress. Some sources of teacher stress have been documented in the literature, but each language institute and district is likely to have unique sources of stress, specific to that district or building that needs to be addressed. Besides, it is recommended that school authorities and teachers do more to enhance and strengthen the organizational aspect of teaching, that is, the capacity to work as an employee receiving services, assistance and support from others (e.g., colleagues, supervisors, and chancellor). Social support within the organization and organizational support in general can reduce stress (Friedman, 2000). EFL teachers can also attend special workshops in which they can benefit from listening to colleagues describing their stress experiences. According to Friedman (2000), the feeling of not being alone in the stress arena is a source of support and solace and might open for the teacher avenues for a better understanding of the burnout phenomenon, its causes, and the directions in coping.

Effective time management seemed to lower professional stress and burnout. Hence, it is recommended that EFL teachers be made aware of time management's potential impact on occupational stress, and of what activities should be undertaken instead of leaving it to trial

and error. Pre-service training and in-service workshops can encourage and assist teachers to ameliorate their time management skills and their capacity to survive and deal with high work stress. According to Peeters and Rutte (2005), through time management including goals setting and prioritization, action planning, and progress monitoring, teacher stress and burnout could be diminished by a great extent.

As several researchers concluded, social support have significant negative effect on burnout and people who have social support available are less likely to experience burnout. Principles can also help teachers to tackle stressors by fortifying collegial relationship. The negative relationship between burnout and supportive school environment and collegiality is well documented in teacher burnout (Dworkin, Saha, & Hill, 2003). However, according to Tsai (2006), collegiality in schools occurs only if it is valued and positive actions taken to overcome the obstacles to its development. Teschke (1996) argued that principals could play a vital role in burgeoning collegiality if they could explicitly mention expectations for cooperation among teachers, model collegiality themselves by joining with teachers to work on improving school conditions, and reward collegiality by granting release time, recognition, and other resources.

Further, based on the findings of the present study, developing strong classroom management skills is crucial to preventing burnout in the profession. Student misconduct and teacher frustration with behavior issues often lead to work stress, job dissatisfaction, and loss of teachers. Thus, adequate training during student teaching and throughout a teacher's career on how to handle classroom problems may offer effective solution to the prevention of teacher burnout.

Apart from relying on help from colleagues, EFL teachers should also learn to manage their own stress. Strategies such as taking direct actions to solve problems and using relaxation techniques would also be useful (Kyriacou, 2001). In addition, the practice of controlling negative and emotional rumination would also be useful alternatives (Roger and Hudson, 1995).

The first limitation of the present study relates to the use of self-reported data for all constructs. For obtaining a more precise estimate of stressors, self-efficacy and burnout, future research should combine self-reporting measures with other measures based on objective performance. The second major limitation is related to the representativeness of the sample used. Teachers participated on a voluntary basis in this study and, as such, were not selected by a rigorous procedure to ensure that the sample was representative of the population. We must therefore be cautious about generalizing these findings, and should

emphasize the need for cross-replication studies with more representative samples of teachers. Strictly speaking, the applied cross-sectional design cannot provide any proof of causality. A temporal sequence between variables is required to establish a cause-effect relationship. Longitudinal studies are therefore suggested.

References

Achwarzer, R., Greenglass, E. Vandenberghe, R. & Michael Huberman, A. (eds) (1999). *Teacher burnout from social-cognitive perspective: A theoretical position paper. Understanding and preventing teacher burnout,* pp. 238-246. Cambridge University Press , Cambridge, UK .

Anderson, M.B., & Iwanicki, E.F. (1984). Teacher motivation and its relationship to burnout. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 20* (2), 109-132.

Adams, G.A. & Jex, S.M. (1999). Relationships between time management, control,work-family conflict, and strain. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 1,* 72-77.

Aiken, L.S. & West, S.G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Bandura, A. (1992). Exercise of personal agency though the self-efficacy mechanism. In R. Schwarzer (Ed.) *Self-efficacy: Thought Control of Action. Berlin*: Taylor & Francis.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* W.H. Freeman, New York.

Blase, J. J. (1982). A social-psychological grounded theory of teacher stress and burnout. *Educational Administration Quarterly 18*(4): 93–113.

Borg, M.G., & Riding, R. J. (1991). Occupational stress and satisfaction in teaching. *British Educational Research Journal, 17* (3), 263-281.

Brown, H. D. (1987) *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Regents.

Brouwers, A., & Tomic, W. (1999). Teacher burnout, perceived self-efficacy in classroom management and students disruptive behavior in secondary education. *Curriculum and Teaching, 14* (2), 7–26.

Brouwers, A., & Tomic, W. (2000). A longitudinal study of teacher burnout and perceived self-efficacy in classroommanagement. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 16* (2), 239-254.

Byrne, B. M. (1994). Burnout: Testing for the validity, replication, and invariance of causal structure across elementary, intermediate, and secondary teachers. *American Educational Research Journal, 31* (3), 645-673.

Chan, D. W. (2002). Stress, Self-efficacy, social support, and psychological distress among prospective Chinese teachers in Hong Kong. *Educational Psychology, 22* (5), 557 - 569.

Chan, D. W. (2003). Hardiness and its role in the stress-burnout relationship among prospective

Chinese teachers in Hong Kong. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 19*, 381–395.

Capel, S. A. (1991). A longitudinal study of burnout in teachers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 61*, 36–45.

Chapman, D. W., & Hutcheson, S. M. (1982). Attrition from teaching careers: A discriminant analysis. *American Educational Research Journal, 19*, 93-106.

Cherniss, C. (1980) *Professional burnout in human service organizations*. New York: Praeger.

Cherniss, C. (1993) Role of professional self-efficacy in the etiology and amelioration of burnout. In W. B. Shaufeli, C. Maslach, and T. Marek (eds.) *Professional burnout; Recent developments in theory and research,* 135-149. Washington D.C: Taylor & Francis.

Cockburn, A.D. (1996). Primary teachers' knowledge and acquisition of stress relieving strategies. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 66,* 399-410.

Cohen, J. & Cohen, P. (1983). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioural sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Danylchuk, K. E. (1993). The presence of occupational burnout and its correlates in university physical education personnel. *Journal of Sport Management, 7,* 107–121.

DeFrank, R. S., & Stroup, C. A. (1989). Teacher stress and health: Examination of a model. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 33*, 99–109.

Doménech-Betoret, F. (2006). Stressors, Self-Efficacy, Coping resources and Burnout among secondary school teachers in Spain. *Educational Psychology, 26*, 519-539

Doménech-Betoret, F. (2009). Self-efficacy, school resources, job stressors and burnout among Spanish primary and secondary school teachers: A structural equation approach. *Educational Psychology, 29,* 45-68.

Doménech-Betoret, F., & Artiga, G. A. (2010). Barriers perceived by teachers at work, coping strategies, self-Efficacy and burnout. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology, 13* (2), 637-654.

Dorman, J. P. (2003). Testing a model for teacher burnout. *Australian Journal of Educational & Developmental Psychology, 3,* 35-47.

Dworkin, A.G., Saha, L.J. & Hill, A.N. (2003). Teacher burnout and perceptions of a democratic school environment. *International Education Journal, 4,* 108-120.

Farber, B. A. (1991). *Crisis in education: Stress and burnout in the American teacher*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Fimian, M. J. (1984). The development of an instrument to measure occupational stress in teachers: The Teacher Stress Inventory. *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 57,* 277-293.

Friedman, L. (1995). Student behavior patterns contributing to teacher burnout. *Journal of Educational Research, 88,* 281–289.

Friedman, I.A. (2000). Burnout in teachers: Shattered dreams of impeccable professional performance. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 56,* 595-606.

Friedman, I.A. (2003). Self-efficacy and burnout in teaching: The importance of interpersonal-relations efficacy. *Social Psychology of Education, 6,* 191-215.

Friedman, I.A., & Kass, E. (2002). Teacher self-efficacy: a classroom-organization conceptualization. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 18*, 675–686.

Gibson, S., Dembo, M.H. (1984). Teacher efficacy: a construct validation. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 76*, 569–582.

Gordon, L. M. (2001). *High teacher efficacy as a marker of teacher effectiveness in the domain of classroom management.* San Diego, CA. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the California Council on Teacher Education, (Fall 2001).

Jaccard, J.; Turrisi, R. & Wan, C.K. (1990). *Interaction effects in multiple regression.* Newbury Park: CA: Sage.

Jex , S. M. & Bliese, P.D. (1999). Efficacy beliefs as a moderator of the impact of work-related stressors: A multilevel study. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 84*,349-361.

Jex, S.M. & Elacqua, T.C. (1999). Self-esteem as a moderator: A comparison of global and organization-based measures. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 72*, 71-81.

Jex, S.M. & Gudanowski, D.M. (1992). Efficacy beliefs and work stress: A exploratory study. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour, 13*, 262-279.

Karasek, R. A (1979). Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: implications for job redesign. *Administrative science Quarterly. 24*, 285-308.

Khezerlou (2013). Teacher self-efficacy as a predictor of job burnout among Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences. 70*, 1186 – 1194.

Kyriacou, C. (2001). Teacher stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review,53* (1), 27-35.

Laughlin, A. (1984). Teacher stress in an Australian Setting: The Role of Biographical Mediators*. Educational Studies, 10* (1), 7-22.

Lalou, M. (2008). *Factors affecting teachers of English appointed in Greek state schools; Towards eliminating the imminence of teacher burnout.* Unpublished Master's Thesis. Hellenic Open University, Patras.

Lazarus, R., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal and coping.* New York: Springer Publications.

Leiter, M. P., & Maslach, C. (1988). The impact of interpersonal environment on burnout and organizational commitment. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 9,* 297-308.

Lewis R (1999). Teachers coping with the stress of classroom discipline. *Social Psychology of Education 3,* 155-171.

Maslach, C. & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behavior* 2: 99-113.

Maslach, C., Jackson, S.E., & Leiter, M.P. (1996). *Maslach burnout inventory manual.* Consulting Psychologist Press, Palo Alto, CA.

Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (1997) *The Truth about Burnout; How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What to Do about It.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

McKnight, A. (1992). I loved the course but …: Career aspiration and realities in adult TESOL. *Prospect* 7 (3): 20-31.

Mede, E. (2009). An analysis of relations among personal variables, perceived self-efficacy and social support on burnout among Turkish EFL teachers. *Journal of the Faculty of Education, 10* (2), 39-52.

Milstein, M. M., & Farkas, J. (1988). The overstated case of educator stress. Journal of *Educational Administration, 26,* 232–249.

Morton L. L., Vesco R., Williams N. H., & Awender M. A. (1997). Student teacher anxieties related to class management, pedagogy, evaluation and staff relations. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 67,* 69-89.

Mukundan,J., & Ahour, T. (2011). Burnout among female teachers in Malaysia. *Journal of International Education Research. 7* (3), 25-38.

Mukundan, J., & Khandehroo, K. (2010) Burnout among English language teachers In Malaysia. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research. 3* (1), 71-76.

Pajares, M.F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: clearing up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62* (3), 307–332.

Peeters, M.A.G. & Rutte, C.G. (2005). Time management behaviour as a moderator for the job-demand-control interaction. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 10*, 64-75.

Pennington, M. C., & Ho, B. (1995) Do ESL educators suffer from burnout? Prospect 10: 41–53.

Pennington, M. C., & Riley, P. V. (1991) A survey of job satisfaction in ESL: ESL educators respond to the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. *University of Hawai'i Working Papers in ESL* 10 (1): 37–56.

Pierce, C.M.B., & Molloy, G.N. (1990). Psychological and biographical differences between secondary school teachers experiencing high and low levels of burnout. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 60,* 37-51.

Pithers, R.T. & Soden, R. (1998). Scottish and Australian teacher stress and strain: A comparative study. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 68*, 269-279.

Roger, D. and Hudson, C. (1995). The role of emotion control and emotional rumination in stress management training. *International Journal of Stress Management, 2,* 119-132.

Ross, J.A. (1998). Antecedents and consequences of teacher efficacy, in: J. Brophy. *Advances in research on teaching.* JAI Press, Greenwich, CT, 49-74.

Russell, D. W., Altmaier, E., & Van Velzen, D. (1987). Job-related stress, social support, and burnout among classroom teachers. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 72* (2), 269-274.

Sava, F.A. (2002). Causes and effects of teacher conflict-inducing attitudes towards pupils: A path analysis model. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 18*, 1007-1021.

Schwab, R. L., Jackson, S. E., & Schuler, R. S. (1986). Educator burnout: Sources and consequences. *Educational Research Quarterly, 10* (3), 14-30.

Schwarzer, R. (1999). *General perceived self-efficacy in14 Cultures*. Self-Efficacy assessment, http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~health/world14.htm.

Smylie, M.A. (1999). Teacher stress in a time of reform, in: R. Vandenberghe and Huberman, A.M. (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 59-84.

Teschke, S. P. (1996).Becoming a leader of leaders. *Thrust for Educational Leadership,26*,10-13.

Troman, G., & Woods, P. (2001). *Primary Teachers' Stress*. London: Routledge-Falmer.

Tsai, E., Fung, L., & Chow, L. (2006). Sources and manifestations of stress in female kindergarten teachers. *International Education Journal, 7* (3), 364-370.

Tschannen-Moran, M., Woolfolk-Hoy, A., & Hoy, W.K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: It's meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research, 68* (2), 202-248.

Vaezi, S., & Fallah, N. (2011a). The relationship between burnout and emotional intelligence among Iranian EFL teachers. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 2, (5), 1122-1129.

Vaezi, S., & Fallah, N. (2011b). The relationship between self-efficacy and stress among Iranian EFL teachers. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 2, (5), 1168-1174.

Vanderberghe, J. & Huberman, A. M. (1999) *Understanding and Preventing Teacher Burnout: A Sourcebook of international Research and Practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Dick, R., Wagner, U. (2001). Stress and strain in teaching: A structural equation approach. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 71,* 24-259.

Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research 54* (2): 143-178.

Wanberg, E. G. (1984). The complex issue of teacher stress and job dissatisfaction. *Contemporary Education, 56* (1), 11-15.

Warr, P. B. (1992) Job features and excessive stress. In: R. Jenkins & N. Coney (eds) *Prevention of Mental Ill Health at Work*. HMSO, London.

Wisniewski, L., & Gargiulo, R. M. (1997). Occupational stress and burnout among special educators: A review of the literature. *The Journal of Special Education, 31*, 325-346.

Yoon, J. S. (2002) Teacher characteristics as predictors of teacher-student relationships: Stress, negative effect, and self-efficacy. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal* 30 (5): 485-493.

Title

Commands among English Speakers and Iranian speakers

Authors

Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh (Ph.D)
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Marziyeh Rabieefar (M.A)
Payam-e-noor University of Rasht, Iran

Biodata

Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh, assistant professor in English language and literature. He is a faculty member at Department of English, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran. He has participated in numerous national and international conferences and published books and many articles in the areas of English language and literature.

Marziyeh Rabieefar, M.A in English from Payam-e-noor University of Rasht, Iran. Her research interests include pragmatics, psychology of language learning, discourse analysis specifically error analysis.

Abstract

This article aimed at investigating commands in English and Persian languages. The research is done by studying samples of speeches having commands, produced by adult English native speakers and adult Persian speakers. Finding similarities and differences of this speech act in English and Persian was sought comparing the produced samples. To do the reasearch, a DCT consisting of 20 different situations was distributed among 30 participants in Iran and its English version was sent to 30 participants in the United States. Data were analyzed by employing percentage and chi-square. The results revealed both similarities and differences in using commands. Differences appeared to be due to cultural differences of the two communities.

Keywords: Speech act of command, Cultural differences, English and Persian speakers

1. Introduction

Speaking is the basis of the society and successful interaction becomes prominent when it comes to cross-linguistic and cross-cultural interactions. In fact, many people encounter communication breakdown or misunderstanding when interacting with people with different language backgrounds. In fact, Thomas (1983) called communication breakdown as 'pragmatic failure' and believed learners transfer their native language pragmatic rules to the target language. According to Yorio (1980), language speakers should use language grammatically (involved with formality of language), appropriately and effectively (involved with sociolinguistic aspect of language). In other words, successful communication requires both linguistic competence and pragmatic competence. Inhibiting communication breakdown has entailed the development of pragmatics and speech acts as one of its subcategories which has been of interest of researchers for a long time (e.g. Allwood, 1978; Takahashi and Beebe, 1987; Dietz & Widdershoven, 1991; Vanderveken & Kubo, 2001).

After John Austin (1962) introduced speech act theory by "How to do things with words" and defined speech acts as the acts we do in our utterances such as ordering, apologizing, promising, etc., the crucial role of speech acts in appropriate language interaction has been focused on Schmidt and Richards (1980) claimed that explanation of communicative competence is the main contribution of speech act theory.

Many scholars discussed that speech act strategies are to some extent universal (e.g. Brown & Levinson, 1978; Matsumoto, 1988; Yu, 2003). However, learners should learn particular applications of universal forms which are different across different cultures. They need to be aware of certain contexts associated with certain speech acts (Schmidt and Richards, 1980). As to Lakoff (1973), politeness helps to avoid conflicts that may occur in a conversation between the participants. It is especially important about speech act of command since it is in touch with face threatening acts. According to Lavric (2007, p.29),

an order threatens the positive and the negative face of the addressee by infringing on his/her social status and constraining his/her freedom of action; on the other hand it enhances, if obeyed, the negative face or territory of the speaker because the speaker gets something done by somebody else. The positive face of the speaker might also get enhanced in terms of the image of self-power, but it might equally get threatened should s/he be considered too authoritarian or imposing, or should the order simply be ignored.

Therefore, it is necessary for a foreigner to be aware of which speech acts are threatening in a special culture in order to save face and not to be called rude. The awareness of proper speech acts in proper contexts can be achieved through instruction and examples of how certain speech acts are performed and interpreted in a second language. Speech act of

command needs certain attention especially because it is the most straightforward way of getting people to do things and therefore is closely connected with face keeping. We give orders to people we feel superior such as our children, students, people who work under our supervision, etc., while this feeling of being superior varies in different cultures. When someone does not know or is in doubt about how to produce a speech act, they may refer to their first language to compensate for the part they are not sure about which in an EFL context is mostly sociolinguistic knowledge rather than linguistic knowledge. This will cause errors and communication misunderstanding and in some cases even loss of face. In fact, many studies indicated that there is pragmatic failure in non-natives (e.g. Takahashi and Beebe, 1987; Janani, 1996; Al-Khateeb, 2009; Bu, 2012) which according to Thomas (1983) could be attributes to cross-culturally different perception of appropriate linguistic behavior. Many of the L2 pragmatic transfer studies have shown that despite being linguistically competent in L2 language, learners are likely to transfer L1 pragmatic rules in their L2 production (El Samaty, 2005).

Therefore, this study tries to find out if there is any significant difference between English native speakers and Iranian Persian speakers in production of commands in terms of frequency of strategies used for giving orders. Also, it tries to discover how they differ qualitatively in using speech act of command.

2. Review of related literature

Many studies have focused on performance or use of speech acts with contrasting native speakers' and non-native speakers' performance. As to Renkema (2004) speech act theory has influenced the field of discourse studies, since the main object of this theory is to realize what people are doing when they use language. Therefore, there exist a large numbers of studies conducted on speech acts, within theoretical framework as well as empirical framework.

Within theoretical framework, defining speech act theory and its classification engaged many scholars including Austin (1962) who is known as the introducer of this theory, Searle (1969), Schmidt and Richards (1980), Yule (1996), Richards and Schmidt (2002), to name a few. There were also critics to the classifications namely Ballmer and Brennenstuhl (1981) and Stapleton (2004). Direct and indirect speech acts were also taken into consideration by Chastain (1988), Yule (1996), Richards and Schimdt (2002) and many others. Politeness Theory appeared appealing to many researchers (e.g. Lakoff, 1973; Tannen, 1986; Brown and

Levinson, 1987) and a great number of studies tried to explore politeness and the effective factors to date. Universality of speech acts drew attention of many scholars who discussed either for or against it (e.g. Blum-Kulka, 1987; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Schmidt & Richards, 1980; Yu, 2003). Another concept which has been the center of attention of many researchers is transfer of speech acts.

Within empirical framework, there are many studies indicating that there is pragmatic failure and transfer in non-natives (e.g. Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989; El Samaty, 2005; Al-Khateeb, 2009; Bu, 2012).

There are many studies which aim at comparing and contrasting speech acts in different languages. These cross-cultural studies investigate strategies, form, frequency of use, acquisition, realization and production of speech acts in two or more languages one of which is often English.

Despite great number of studies about different speech acts, speech act of order has been left untouched. Defining of different speech acts has been established since the 1960s, although, there is no study defining this speech act in English language which is the target language of EFL/ESL learners in different cultures. Therefore, there is no specific empirical study investigating speech act of command and this study is a pioneering one.

Speech act of order is often investigated under the term 'imperatives', including requests, suggestions, and commands. However, it is often the speech act of request and then suggestion which grab researchers' attention and speech act of commands is ignored as a distinct case and left untouched in pragmatic aspect. In one case Flock (n.d.) studied directives and found out that there is significant difference in the frequency of directness between DCT elicited data and authentic conversation elicited one.

To this end, this study is devoted to investigate the difference and variations of speech act of order between Persian and English by analyzing its production in English and Persian native speakers.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

Participants for this study consist of 30 English native speakers and 30 Iranian Persian speakers. The selection of number of participants was based on feasibility, especially in the case of English native speakers. They were intended to be American English native speakers. They were living in America, mostly in Colorado, Alabama and Arizona and took part in this

study by answering the questionnaire they received by email. However, it should be mentioned here that more than 600 requests were sent but only 32 were answered among which two did not meet the necessary criteria.

All 30 Persian native speakers who took part in this study screened for their knowledge of other languages in order to prevent the effect of a second language schema. Only basic knowledge of a second language was tolerated. They were selected among adult individuals living in different places in Mashhad, Iran.

Although age was not a variable in this study, participants all were selected among adults in order to make sure they were familiar with pragmatic features of communication in their own language.

3.2 Materials

Two versions of a DCT (Discourse Completion Test) were used for collecting the required data. It was designed in two parts: the first part about personal information of participants which was used for screening the questionnaires and deciding if the participants met the conditions of the study.

The second part illustrated 20 different situations in which an individual gave order to the other one(s) to perform a certain act. The situations varied in terms of settings and authorities to probe the actual behavior of respondents in different situations. Suitability of the situations and the questionnaire was examined and approved by two English language professors in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran.

An instruction on what a participant is supposed to do and how to complete the task was given accompanied by an example. In order to evoke the desired responses, they were explicitly asked to write an order for each situation.

3.3 Procedure

The DCT written in English was sent to American English speakers in America by email. They were either introduced by friends or friends' of friends or were contacted through the email addresses available on university websites. Approximately 600 requests were sent during five months but only 32 among them cooperated.

The Persian version of DCT was distributed in several working places in Mashhad, Iran to include people with different jobs and social positions. Instruction on how it should be completed was given and collected questionnaires were checked to be in accordance with defined criteria.

Responses were analyzed based on a 9-point rating scale by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) who claimed that "the categories on this scale are expected to be manifested in all

languages studied" (p.201). This taxonomy has been wildly used in speech act studies (e.g. Dalton-Puffer, 2003; Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011; Shams & Afghari, 2011). Besides, since request is the most similar speech act to the speech act of command, this taxonomy was selected for this study. The categories of this taxonomy and an example mentioned by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984, p.202) are illustrated in the table 1.

Table 1

Request strategy type

No	Strategy type	Example
1	Mood derivable	Clean up this mess, please.
2	Explicit performatives	I'm asking you not to park the car here.
3	Hedged performative	I would like you to give your lecture a week earlier.
4	Locution derivable	Madam, you'll have to move your car.
5	Scope stating	I really wish you'd stop bothering me.
6	Language specific suggestory formula	How about cleaning up.
7	Reference to preparatory condition	Could you clear up the kitchen, please?
8	Strong hints	You've left this kitchen in a right mess.
9	Mild hints	I'm a nun (in response to the persistent boy).

In order to analyze the responses, each sentence was first determined to belong to which category by considering the lexicon and syntax of the sentence and comparing it with explanations and examples of the rating scale. The reliability of rating the data was examined by two English language professors in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran and modified again. The frequency and percentage of each category was calculated in both groups and illustrated in the form of tables and graphs.

To examine if there is the difference between English native speakers and Iranian Persian speakers in production of commands is significant, a test of chi-square was conducted. The findings were then analyzed syntactically, lexically and pragmatically and discussed accordingly. Some pedagogical suggestions were proposed.

4. Results

To answer the question of this study, a contrastive analysis was made between English natives and Persian natives by categorizing their responses based on the 9-point rating scale

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) and utilizing frequency and percentage of their responses as follow:

Table 2

Frequency and percentage of strategies used for ordering by English native speakers and Persian native speakers

	English natives		Persian Natives	
Strategy type	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Mood derivable	411	68.5%	439	82.2%
Explicit performatives	0	0%	0	0%
Hedged performative	0	0%	0	0%
Locution derivable	52	8.6%	17	2.8%
Scope stating	0	0%	0	0%
Language specific suggestory formula	30	5.0%	0	0%
Reference to preparatory conditions	74	12.5%	26	4.4%
Strong hints	32	5.3%	63	10.5%
Mild hints	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
Total	600	100.0%	600	100.0%

As table 2 indicates there are both similarities and differences in using strategies for ordering between English native speakers and Persian native speakers. The comparison of strategies used by English natives and Persian natives is illustrated in the following graph:

Percentage of strategies used for ordering by English native speakers (EN) and Persian native speakers (PN)
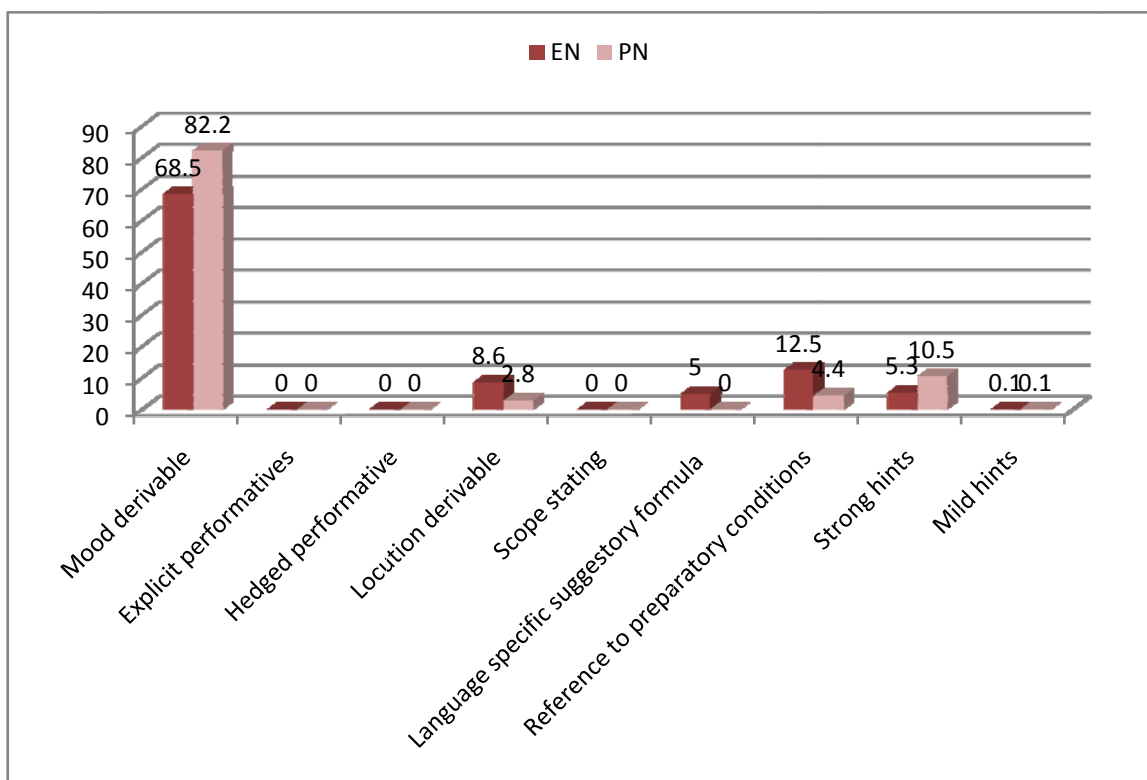
As demonstrates above, both English natives and Persian natives had almost the same preferences in using strategies for giving orders. Both groups used 'Mood derivable' as the most commonly used strategy for giving order (68.5% and 82.2%). Some strategy types such as 'Explicit performatives', 'Hedged performative', and 'Scope stating' were not used by either groups.

However, English natives and Persian natives varied in the frequencies of strategies they used for commanding. English natives used 'Mood derivable' (68.5%), 'Reference to preparatory conditions' (12.5%), 'Locution derivable' (8.6%), 'Strong hints' (5.3%), 'Language specific suggestory formula' (5%) and 'Mild hints' (0.1%) while Persian natives used 'Mood derivable' (82.2%), 'Strong hints' (10.5%), 'Reference to preparatory conditions' (4.4%), 'Locution derivable' (2.8%) and 'Mild hints' (0.1%) as the most frequent used strategies for issuing an order respectively. Persian natives did not utilize 'Language specific suggestory formula' while English natives used 'Language specific suggestory formula' (5%) as one of their strategies for ordering. As the results demonstrate there is great tendency for using 'Mood derivable' for issuing an order in both English natives and Persian natives. This tendency is higher among Persian natives, though.

To find out if difference in frequencies is meaningful, a test of chi-square was conducted in each group and the results were demonstrated in table 3.

Table 3

Chi-square results of English natives and Persian natives' strategy use

	English Natives	Persian Natives
Chi-Square	1190.260[a]	1466.533[c]
df	5	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

As table 3 demonstrates, significant difference was revealed in choosing strategy types for issuing an order in both English natives (x^2 = 1190.26, p< .05) and Persian natives (x^2 = 1466.533, p < .05).

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study intended to investigate how speech act of command is performed in English language and Persian language and to probe the similarities and differences in their strategy use. Results of the study demonstrated that both languages used the same types of strategies for issuing an order except for one category namely 'language specific suggestory formula' which was not used by Persian speakers that suggests no specific suggestory formula exists in Persian language for issuing an order. This indicates that linguistic devices for command are almost the same in English and Persian. However the frequency of employing the strategies is different which is in line with findings of many other studies (e.g. Afghari & Kaviani, 2005; Afgari, 2007; Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011; Farashiyan & Hua, 2012).

Difference in frequency of applying strategies could be traced to different cultural values of the society in which the language in used. The effect of culture on different aspects of speech acts and pragmatics has been observed in different languages (e.g. Chen, 1996; Hong-lin, 2007; Al-Khateeb, 2009; Tang and Zhang, 2009) as well as in Persian language (e.g. Shams & Afghari, 2011; Farashiyan & Hua, 2012).

American people value individualism and equality (Hong-lin, 2007). As Han (2012, p.1909) also put it, "in the western society, people emphasize doing things by themselves and avoid imposing on others. Closely related to individualism is the value of equality, the freedom of individuals". On the other hand, as Eslami-Rasekh et al. (2010) cited from Scollon and Scollon (2001), Iranian people have a hierarchal culture in which social hierarchy and social orders are observed. This explains why 82 percent of Persian speakers used the most direct strategy type for issuing an order whereas 65 percent of English native

speakers applied this strategy with five among 30 mentioning that they would actually apply request not command.

Moreover, three among 30 English native speakers stated they could not imagine having a driver when they were asked to order their driver to drive them home in one of the situations in the questionnaire. No similar case was observed in Persian speakers meaning that Iranian people had no problem putting themselves in the higher rank and commanding in any of the given situations. This also reveals how the two cultures are different and demonstrates the hierarchal structure of Iranian culture reflected in their language.

One more difference in linguistic behavior between Iranian Persian speakers and English native speakers was observed regarding 'language specific suggestory formula'. It appeared that in Persian language suggestion devices were not utilized to function as commands whereas English language benefited from this device, though not at high frequency. This could be again explained in terms of cultural differences. Hierarchal structure of Iranian culture use this device for suggestion and separate it from command, but cultural feature of equality and not imposing on others in English language makes this device a good choice to ask others to do what the speaker desires in a polite way by keeping the face.

Moreover, Persian speakers applied a wider variety of downgraders compared with English native speakers who used '*please*' as the downgrader. Iranian Persian speakers get more benefit of different types of downgraders presented by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) which could be attributed to Iranian cultural schema of ritual politeness-'*ta'arof*' as an influencing elements in Iranian cultures.

In addition to downgraders, upgraders were also present in commands in Persian language but not in English. Expressions such as '*hatman*' (surely) or '*sari'an*' (soon) were utilized to intensify the impact of the speech act of ordering. The justification for absence of upgraders in English could be the equality concept severely observed in American culture which does not allow imposing on others and compels politeness as much as possible.

Altogether, the findings demonstrated the influential role of culture in communicating appropriately in L2 and also indicated that cultural norms of a target language need to be taken into account when teaching that language. NNSs need to be informed about the strategies used for using speech acts in different situations since each situation might be conceived differently in the culture of L1 and L2. For example, in the following situation Iranian and American culture revealed to be different in perception of hierarchy and therefore the type of strategy used.

Situation: Order a porter to carry your bags to your car.

English native speaker:

> *Do you mind getting my bag?*
>
> *Would you take theses bags to that car, please?*
>
> *Could you take these to my car please?*

Persian native speaker:

> *Agha, chamedanha ra dakhele mashin bezariz. (Sir, put the bags in the car.)*
>
> *Eenaro bebar to mashin. (Carry them to the car.)*
>
> *Agha lotfan een chamedanha ra bebar to mashin. (Sir, please carry these bags to the car.)*

English native speakers considered individualism and mostly applied 'Reference to preparatory condition' whereas Persian native speakers considered hierarchy and mostly used 'Mood derivable' sometimes even without a downgrader.

Language teachers need to be equipped with these socio-linguistic differences first to develop their own knowledge of cultural differences and then to be able to teach them to the learners. Due to fact that in Iran teachers are not much familiar with different aspects of the target language, teacher training courses and educational materials become of high importance in this regard. It is their duty then to collect and provide functional sources for teachers. Material developers, too, ought to provide materials which define sociocultural rules as well as sociolinguistic concepts. To this end, authentic material could be of great use as mentioned in previous studies (e.g. Jiang, 2006; Grossi, 2009).

Nevertheless, further studies are needed to make the findings of this study more reliable as well as generalizable since this study pioneered investigating speech act of command as a discrete speech act and separately from other directives. Customary to all pioneered works, this study sure has limitations and shortcomings which need to be considered regarding application and further researches.

References

Afghari, A. (2007). A sociopragmatic study of apology speech act realization patterns in Persian. *Speech Communication, 49*(3), 177-185.

Afghari, A., & Kaviani, V. (2005). Apology speech act realization patterns in Persian. *IJAL, 8*(2), 1-28.

Al-khateeb, S. L. (2009). The speech act of thanking as compliment response as used by the Arab speakers of English- *A comparative intercultural study*. Master thesis, An-Najah National University, Palestine, Nablus.

Allwood, J. (1978) On the Analysis of communicative action. In Brenner (Ed.), *The Structure*

of Action. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Ballmer, T., & Brennenstuhl, W. (1981). *Speech act classification: A study in the lexical analysis of English speech activity verbs*. Berlin: Spriger- Verlag.

Austin, J. (1962). How to do Things with Words. Oxford: Clarendon.

Blum-Kulka, S., House, J. & Kasper, G. (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and Apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns. *Applied Linguistics, 5*(3), 196-213.

Blum-Kulka, S. (1987). Indirectness and politeness in requests: Same or different? *Applied Linguistics, 11*(2), 131-146.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bu, J. (2012). A study of relationships between L1 pragmatic transfer and L2 proficiency. *English Language Teaching, 5*(1), 32-43.

Chen, H.J. (1996). *Cross cultural comparison of English and Chinese metapragmatics in refusal*. Doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, United Stated.

Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice* (3rd ed.). San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Dalton-Puffer, C. (2003). "Telling each other to do things in class: directives in content and language integrated classrooms" in Views 12(1), 3-23. Available at www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik/views/03_1/DAL_SGLE.pdf.

Dietz , J.L.G., & Widdershoven, G.A.M. (1991). Speech Acts or communicative action? *Proceedings of the Second European Conference on Computer-Supported Coopemtive Work*, 235-248.

El Samaty, M. (2005). Helping foreign language learners become pragmatically competent. *Proceeding of the 10th TESOL Arabia Conference, 9*, 341-351.

Eslami-Rasekh, A., Tavakoli, M., & Abdolrezaour, P. (2010). Certainty and conventional indirectness in Persian and American request forms. *Medwell Journal, the Social Sciences, 5*(4), 332-339. Doi: 10.3923/sscience.2010.332.339.

Farashiyan, A., & Hua, T. K. (2012). A cross-cultural comparative study of gratitude strategies between Iranian and Malaysian postgraduate students. *Asian Social Science, 8*(7), 139-148.

Grossi, V. (2009). Teaching pragmatic competence: Compliments and compliment responses in the ESL classroom. *Prospect Journal, 24*(2), 53-62.

Han, X. (2012). A contrastive study of Chinese and British English request modifications. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(9), 1905-1910.

Hong-lin, L. (2007). A comparative study of refusal speech acts in Chinese and American English. *Canadian Social Science, 3*(4), 64-67.

Flöck, I (n.d.) 'Don't tell a great man what to do': Directive speech acts in American and British English conversations. 12th International Pragmatics Conference, Manchester.

Jiang, X. (2006). Suggestions: What should ESL students know? *Elsevier, 34*(1), 36-54.

Lakoff, R. (1973). The logic of politeness: or, minding your p's and q's. *Chicago Linguistic Society,9,* 292-305.

Lavric, E. (2007). Code choice and face, *Pragmatics 3*, 23-35. DOI 10.2478/v10016-007-0003-x.

Matsumura, Y. (1988). Reexamination of the universality of face: Politeness phenomena in Japanese. *Journal of Pragmatics, 12*(4), 403-426.

Pishghadam, R., & Rasouli, P. (2011). Persuasive strategies among Iranian EFL learners. *Studies in Literature and Language, 3*(2), 111-117.

Renkema, J. (2004). *Introduction to discourse studies*. Netherland: John Benjamins publishing .

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3rd ed.). London: Pearson Education.

Schmidt, R. W., & Richards, J. C. (1980). Speech acts and second language Learning. *Applied Linguistics*, *1(2)*, 129-157.

Searle, J. (1969). *Speech acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shams, R., & Afghari, A. (2011). Effects of culture and gender in comprehension of speech acts of indirect request*. English Language Teaching, 4*(4), 279-287.

Stapleton, L. E. (2004). *Variations in the performance of speech acts in Peninsular Spanish: Apologies and regrets*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Louisiana, Mississippi.

Takahashi, T., & Beebe, L. M. (1987). The development of pragmatic competence by Japanese learners of English. *JALT Journal, 8*(2), 131-155.

Tang, C., & Zhang, G. Q. (2009). A contrastive study of compliment responses among Australian English and Mandarin Chinese speakers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *41*(2), 325-345.

Tannen, D. (1984). The pragmatics of cross-cultural communication. *Applied Linguistics*,5,189-195.

Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics, 4*(2), 91-112.

Vanderveken, D., & Kubo, S. (Eds.) (2002). *Essays in speech act theory*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Yorio, C. A. (1980). Conventionalized language forms and development of communicative competence. *TESOL Quarterly, 14*(4), 433-442.

Yu, M. (2003). On universality of face: Evidence from Chinese compliment Response behavior. Journal of Pragmatics, 35(10), 1679-1710.

Yule, G. (1996). *The study of language*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Title

Power of Color in Toni Morrison's *Sula*
A Foucauldian Perspective

Authors

Nasser Motalebzadeh (Ph.D)
Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch, Tabriz, Iran.

Afsaneh Hezarjaribi Ghassab (M.A)
Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch, Tabriz, Iran.

Biodata

Nasser Motalebzadeh is the professor of English literature at Islamic Azad University of Tabriz, Tabriz, Iran. His fields of interest are fiction and literary criticism.

Afsaneh Hezarjaribi is an M.A. student of English literature at Islamic Azad University of Tabriz, Tabriz, Iran. Her research interests include literary criticism and novel.

Abstract

This essay aims to scrutinize one of Toni Morrison's works, *Sula* with the help of Foucault's thoughts. Foucault's view of power is directly shown in this novel. Morrison points out how the total of the black society is surrendered to racist authority. Morrison and Foucault clarify the sample of subjectivity in contemporary societies. Morrison applies the description of power in African society particularly in *Sula*. Beauliu (2003) believes that "Morrison shows the development of African American community within a society that places the economic and cultural conditions under white supremacist control" (p.377). Power is generally explained as the facility to force one's will on others, although they stand firm in one way. This Morrison's novel suggests us with an outstanding option to represent Foucault's thoughts at work. Davis (1990) mentions, " All of Morrison's characters exist in a world defined by its blackness and by the surrounding white society that both violates and denies it" (p.217). A study in the light of Foucauldian theories, concerning panopticon, resistance and norm throughout the notion of power, could aid to show how power and color are

mingled with one another in *Sula*.The primary purpose of this study is to illustrate how color affects the characters' domination or marginalization in Toni Morrison's *Sula*.

1. Introduction

The essay at hand tries to study carefully the rich and various lives of the black community of Medallion. Toni Morrison clarifies the destructive outcome; white patriarchal civilization has on minority members of society. On the other hand, the essay tries to find the connections between power and color on the characters in Morrison's *Sula*. Mabalia(1991) intends that in Sula, Toni Morrison is more interested in the struggle for the individual rights in general and women's right in particular than with rights of African people as collective (p.42). Morrison exposes their great effort and in order to depictions white lack of knowledge of black society and customs of life. McKay (1988) claims Morrison considers " a novel about black women's friendships and about good and evil" (p.4).It came to destroy previous stereotypes of black female characters in North American tradition.

The research ,which focuses on Morrison's *Sula* and textual signifiers indicating power of color and its components on the dynamic characters in African culture that will be exposed through the eyes of Foucauldian thought.

Foucault, who is accepted as one of the most considerable scholars in the modern society brings a contemporary analysis of power. Hoys (1986) avows, "power is not simply what dominant class has and the oppressed lacks. Power, Foucault prefers to say, is a strategy and dominated are as much as part of the network of power relations and the particular social matrix as the dominating" (p.134). He junks the conventional hypothesis of power and redefines it. Foucault estimates that power goes on in associations within the society. Foucault (1980) refers to Panopticon as:

A perimeter building in the form of a ring. At the center of this, a tower, pierced by large windows opening onto the inner face of the ring. The outer face of the building is divided into cells each of which traverses the whole thickness of the building. These cells have two windows, one opening to the inside, facing the windows of the central tower; the other allowing

daylight to pass through the whole cell which afforded after all sort of protection. (P.147)

However, if panopticon is employed to the system of jails, a deep relationship between gazers and gazed is expanded. Surveillance and watch are the key means of power. In addition, panopticon" perfects the exercise of power" (Foucault, 1979, p.206) by lessening the number of controllers and rising the number of the controlled persons.

Furthermore, almost surveillance emerges in many organizations, for they create supervision. During surveillance, an immense collection is located under control for the disciplinary power perforates into their bodies to construct them feeble and passive. Smart (1988) mentions, " we may still punish but we seek to obtain a cure" (p.75). What Foucault tends to suggest is an efficient technique of establishing a disciplinary society. Surveillance turns into a technique that aids erect a disciplinary power. Boyne (1990) states, it (the surveillance power) is a general mechanism known through its effects rather than its presence at a given point" (p.110). Surveillance enlarges into a way that supports build a disciplinary power. Shumway (1989) asserts, " We saw how the disciplinary technique could constitute the individual as an object to be judged, measured and examined" (p.146).

However, Sawicki (1991) intends that " power relation only arises in cases where there is conflict, where on the individual or group" (p. 25). Foucault puts forward a theory of resistance in considerations of dealings of power. McNay (1994) states that "Whenever domination is imposed, resistances will inevitably arise. There are no relations of power without resistances" (p.101). Resistance goes on everywhere power is employed. Mills (2003) mentions that "there were no pockets of freedom which escaped power relations but instead resistance existed wherever power is exercised. This resistance was everywhere and at every level" (p.40).Moreover, Foucault relinquishes the outlook that power uses in up to- down way or in descending manner. Foucault (1990) believes that "power comes from below" (p.94).

A norm is what can be used to both the body that needs control, in addition to the people that needs ruling. A punishing system is compulsory in each disciplinary organization to impress normalization.

> A whole micro penalty of time (absence, lateness, interruptions of tasks) Of activity(inattention, negligence, lack of zeal) of behavior (impoliteness disobedience) of speech (idle chatter, insolence) of the body (incorrect attitudes, irregular gestures lack of cleanliness) of sexuality (impurity , indecency) (Foucault,1979 ,p.178).

Foucault exposes that the norm is the structure of power in the contemporary position. Foucault (1979) intends that "Disciplinary punishment is a part of a double system: gratification and punishment" (p.179).This method portrays that any manners is either excellent or terrible according to the norm.

This study gains significance as findings can shed more light on black woman writer, Toni Morrison who tries to show the destructive effect of white people –dominated society in the lives of her characters especially in *Sula*.

2. Discussion

As we mentioned before if panopticon is employed to the system of jails, a deep relationship between gazers and gazed is expanded. In *Sula,* the title 1919 initiates with the story of Shadrack a black soldier who had fight bravely for his country. "Shadrack was suffering from a blinding headache which was not abated by the comfort he felt when the police men pulled his hands away from….They took him to jail booked him for vagrancy and intoxication and locked him in a cell" (Morrison,1974,p.13). He is controlled by police officers in jail. White people subjugated blacks throughout the look. "Lying on a cot, Shadrack could only stare helplessly at wall, so paralyzing was the pain in his head….The sheriff looked through the bars at the young man (Shadrack) with the matted hair" (Morrison,1974,p.13-14). He is overpowered by the looks of Sheriff in the concept of panopticon.

In *Sula,* the relation between whites and blacks becomes the focus of the journey. White authority is also exposed in *Sula* when Helen and her daughter continue a voyage by Jim Crow train to the south. Therefore, Nel's experiences on train journey with her mother persuade the details of racism and sexual weakness of her mother. They feared: It was a chilly day but a light skim of sweat glistened on the two mans face as she and the little girl struggled to hold the door open, hang on to their luggage and entered all at once. The conductor let his eyes travel over the pale yellow woman and then stuck his little finger into his ear , jiggling it free of wax. What you think you doin, gale? (Morrison, 1974,p.20).

Helen Wright is rebuked for being black and female by both a humiliating racial censure and the continuing sexualized look of a repulsive white conductor, where she wrongly gets into the whites only wagon of Jim Crow train. The look of conductor disciplines Helen and Nel.His look construct them weak and passive. The stretch of white gaze is authoritative enough to dominate the black group. Helen is scared. " She licked her lips. Her

glance moved beyond the white man's face to the passengers seated behind him. She turned for compassion to the gray eyes of the conductor" (Morrison, 1974, p.21).

However, they are subjugated absolutely by the white look. They are prisoner that imprison by the white look. The conductor exposes his hates by gaze rather than by bodily punishment. Helen said:

> We made a mistake, sir. You see, there wasn't no sign. We just got in the wrong can, that's all. Sir. We don't ' low no mistakes on this train. Now git your butt on in there. He stood there staring at her until she realized that he wanted her to move aside. Pulling Nel by the arm, she repressed herself and her daughter into the foot space in front of the wooden seat(Morrison, 1974, p.21).

Gaze creates a disciplinary power. Helen and Nel are almost the object of gaze rather than the gazing subject with Foucault's notion about gaze. The pervasion of the white gaze is essentially a kind of repression that black people disregard but Morrison notices.
Foucault (1979) says, "Power is exercised between classes" (p. 26-27). If the researcher applies the idea of the panopticon in Foucault's conception of disciplinary power to the world of the society of the novel, the practice of power between slave and master is easily noticed.

Chakranarayan (2008) says that "an interesting account is given by Morrison as to how slave served his white master with full earnest and sincerity and as a reward the white owner promised him his freedom and a piece of valley land" (p.44). In this regard, the white master acts like a gazer and the black slave acts as a prisoner.

The whites master does not impose the white values on the blacks through the physical violence. They are oppressed implicitly when the moment of the freedom come the white man gave the poor slave the Bottom land and which was actually a hill top and was mockingly called the Bottom of the sky by the white owner:

> The good white farmer promised freedom and a piece of bottom land
> To his slave if he would perform some very difficult chores. When the
> Slave completed the work.... So, he told the slave that he was very
> sorry that he had to give him a piece of the bottom. The slave blinked and
> said he thought valley land was bottom land. The master said oh no! See those
> hills? That's bottom land, rich and fertile, when the God looks down, it's
> the bottom. That's why we call it so. It's the bottom of heaven best land there
> is. (Morrison, 1974, p.5)

The issues of race are intermingling throughout the fabric of the novel. The white master carries disciplinary power by "nigger joke" (Morrison,1974,p.4). The white community establishes itself in the rich and fertile valley while the black community is forced to live on the boundary or margin of the white society.

In *Sula,* black people are examined under the operation of disciplinary power. Helen and Nel are examined by the white conductor's gaze under the operation of disciplinary power when "they entered a coach peopled by some twenty white men and women" (Morrison, 1974, p.20). The white conductor treats Helen like "the bit of wax his finger nail had retrieved" (Morrison, 1974, p.20). From his ear as he coerces her into mortifying submission.

Whites overtly examine blacks as less than human as when the bargeman who finds Chicken Little's body wonders " will those people over be anything but animals fit for nothing but substitutes for mules, only mules didn't kill each other the way niggers did" (Morrison,1974,p.63) and then ironically desecrates the corpse. On the other hand, Early in life, Sula and Nel examine their status as the other, accepting that " they were neither white nor male and that all freedom and triumph was forbidden to them, they had set about creating something else to be" (Morrison, 1974, p.52).

Resistance is always accompanied with power. Foucault (1990) says " where there is power, there is resistance and yet or rather consequently. This resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. Their power relationships existence depends on multiplicity of points of resistance, they play the role of adversary target, support, or handle in power relations" (p.95-96).

However, Helen and Nel go on a trip to the south, they misses the sign colored only and enters the wrong compartment, stopped by white conductor who speaks to her in a degrading way. Helen resists and she" smiled. Smiled dazzlingly and coquettishly at the salmon- colored face of the conductor" (Morrison, 1974, p. 21). She said " we made a mistake sir. You see wasn't no sign. We just got in the wrong car that's all. Sir. We don't low no mistakes on this train. Now git your butt on in there" (Morrison, 1974, p.21).They don't accept submissiveness but endure all of misbehavior from white conductor. For white conductor, a nigger is a nigger despite her speech and dress habits, despite her class association.

However, Willis (1987) believes that "self-mutilation is a means of escaping the societal forces of white domination and method of reaching brings about the spontaneous redefinition of the individual, not as an alienated cripple as would be in the case of the bourgeois society but as a new and whole person occupying a radically different social space" (p.40).In black society, self-mutilation or wound is a kind of resistance.

Sula, when threatened by the white domination of four teenage boys "she searched into her coat pocket and pulled out Eva's paring knife. She slashed off only the tip of her finger in order to corresponding to the act of male castration. The four boys stared open – mouth at the wound and the scrap of flesh like a button mushroom , curling in the cherry blood that ran into the corners of the slate" (Morrison,1974,p. 54) . This act shows her refutation of white dominance and refusal to accept the lower status of a black woman. She says, " If I can do that to myself, what you suppose I'll do to you?" (Morrison, 1974, p.55). She resists instead of submission in front of white boys. The white boys dominated by Sula's knife and her resistance.

Cooper (1981) says, "Foucault actually describes a way in which the marks of power are inscribed directly on the body by branding, wounding, or mutilation" (p. 81).In addition to Sula, Eva peace makes self-mutilation for her children. Eva peace leaves her children in the hands of her neighbor when the suffering from hunger and starvation became unbearable. "Eighteen months later she swept down from a wagon with two crutches a new black pocket book and one leg. First, she reclaimed her children; next, she gave the surprised Mrs.Suggs a ten-dollar bill, later, she started building a house on Carpenter's Road, sixty feet from Boy Boy's one-room cabin that she rented out" (Morrison,1974,p.34-35).

In addition, in every relation of power, the forces of support and resistance co-exist. It is a rare to see a single force to rule oppress or dominant in power relation. The sacrifice that Eva makes in order to provide for her children caste her as the victim of a white and male dominated society. " Somebody said Eva stuck it under a train and made them pay off. Another said she sold it to a hospital for $ 1o/ooo" (Morrison, 1974, p.31).Most of the time there is also a force to rebel against the other force, which intends to modify it. Sula's grandmother Eva is also an example of a mother who would resists all suffering in white society in order to protect her children.

Moreover, O Farrel (2005) " intends power of the norm appears through the disciplines" (p.48).Foucault discovers that norm, the form of power of the modern state. Rabinow (1984) says, "The perpetual penalty that traverses all pointes and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates, hierarchies, homogenizes, excludes, in short, it normalizes" (p.195).

 In short, the white values become the norm in the society, punishment is a tool used to derive people toward the norm and African Americans willingly accept and observe the norm, the ideological hegemony of a set of white values. Boy Boy, Eva's husband accepts white norm. It raises his economic status even higher and is portrayed as a "picture of prosperity and good

will. His shoes were a shiny orange and he had on a citified straw hat, a light – blue suit and a cat's – head stick pin in his tie …talking about his appointments and exuding an odor of new money and idleness" (Morrison,1974,p.36). He rejects his community and his children and accepts a set of white values. Boy Boy has left the Bottom and now lives in the big city but has lost his identity and pride in the process. Interestingly, Eva sees Boy Boy as diminished in status and refers to him as the only " colored person she's ever hated" (Morrison, 1974, p.36).

On the other hand, African Americans are heading to the norm without feeling that they are disciplined or oppressed and the norm they follow is the white value. Sula accepts white's norm. She refuses to marry and to work. Sula also seems to have accumulated money, which makes her financially independent which is unusual for a woman. This creates a huge blankness in Sula. She feels that something inside her has died. "Sula was pariah then and knew it. Knew that they despised her and believed that they framed their hatred as disgust for the easy way she lay with men. Which was true? She went to bed with men as frequently as she could" (Morrison, 1974, p.122). Nel even tries to explain to Sula that she has to change her ways: "You can't do it all. You a woman and a colored woman at that. You can't act like man. You can't be walking around all independent like, doing whatever you like, taking what you want, leaving what you don't" (Morrison,1974,p.142). The white American family is seen as a norm and anything that is different is seen as a state of marginality or immoral other.

Sula rejects all of traditional convention in black community. She imitates the behaviors of the whites was the main cause of her rejection by the black people. Similarly, according to the most of the inhabitants of the Bottom, the worst thing black women as Sula do is " to sleep with a white man" .So "They insisted that all unions between white men and black women be rape, for a black woman to be willing was literally unthinkable. In that way, they regarded integration with precisely the same venom that white people did" (Morrison, 1974, p.112-113). People scorn her because of her independence. She put her grandmother in a nursing home. "When the word got out about Eva being put in Sunny dale" the people in Bottom " shook their heads and said Sula was a roach" (Morrison, 1974, p.112).

However, Sula tries to think white value as a norm. When Sula accepted the white norm, she was punished by black people. Therefore, they watched her far more closely than "they watched any other roach or bitch in the town and their alertness was gratified. Things began to happen" (Morrison, 1974, p.113). Sula is an out caste and therefore she is not accepted by the society itself .She is implicitly oppressed by the norm of the whites."Sula came to their church suppers without underwear, bought their steaming platters of food and merely picked

at it –relishing nothing, exclaiming over no one's ribs or cobbler. They achieved that she was laughing at their God" (Morrison, 1974, p.114-115).

While physically in the community, Sula refuses to adhere to the norms of blacks and conventionality of its members such as marriage and childbirth. As Sula lies dying, Nel tries to make her see the reality of her blackness and says " you can't have it all Sula. You a woman and a colored woman at that. You can't act like a man. You can't be walking around all independent- like , doing whatever you like, taking what you want, leaving what you don't" (Morrison,1974,p.142). Sula replies to her friend Nel, "I know what every colored woman in this country is doing… Dying" (Morrison, 1974, P.143). She leaves her hometown Medallion for further education but had to return home because of prevailing racism.

Sula tries to live a free spirited life ignoring the cultural value of the community. She follows white's manner, in order to be watched at, " she was dress in a manner that was as close to a movie star as anyone would ever see" (Morrison, 1974, p.90). Sula follows the beauty that defined by the norm. " In her right hand was a black purse with a beaded clasp and in her left a red leather traveling case, so small , so charming- no one had seen anything like it ever before" (Morrison,1974,p.90).

Therefore, African American women are oppressed and they must become self-progators. Sula works hard that earns white norm. These works are normal for Sula but are abnormal for Nel. She chooses the role of wife and mother and remains true to her hometown and her roots while accepting her status in society. Sula rejects traditional role ascribe to women, telling Eva" I want to make myself" (Morrison, 1974, p.92) since her oppression as a woman is the result of an oppressive economic system not men.

So, Nel's mother Helen accepts the white norm. Helen whose name means light or fair skinned. She is born to a Creole mother and is a mulatto person. She is raised Catholic and is described as impressive and dignified. She takes being mother seriously and because of her skin and economic status. She is admired by black people. She belongs to the well to the family. Helen fears for her daughter's Nel that "the child had not inherited the great beauty that was hers, that her skin had dusk in it, that her lashes Were substantial but not undignified in their length, that she had taken the broad flat nose of Wiley and his generous lips" (Morrison,1974,p.18). Beauty in the norm mean whiteness, Helen accepts beauty. She discourages Nel form learning Creole and encourages her to be light "by pulling her nose" (Morrison, 1974, P.28) but Nel accepts her blackness and whispers, " I'm me. I'm not their daughter. I'm not Nel. I'm me. Me" (Morrison, 1974, p.28). However, when visiting New Orleans Helen denies knowing the Creole language and thus denies her roots in a lower social

order. "People in the bottom refused to say Helen, they called her Helen Wright and left it at that" (Morrison, 1974, p.18).

Whiteness as a notion of a beauty becomes the norm .When black people violate the norm, they are punishable. Cleanness, polite and obedient in norm denotes whiteness. For example" Under Helen's hand the girl became obedient and polite. Any enthusiasm that little Nel showed were calmed by the mother until she drove her daughter's imagination underground" (Morrison, 1974, p.18). So,Helen's house attracts Sula and she decided to desert her home:

> Where a pot of something was always cooking on the stove, where the mother Hannah never scolded or gave directions. Where all sorts of people dropped in, where news papers were stacked in the hallway and dirty dishes left for the house at a time in the sink and where a one legged grand mother named Eva handed you goobers from deep inside her pockets or read you a dream. (Morrison, 1974, p.29)

3. Conclusion

Sula shows the cultural problems inherent for the black community. Therefore, if the panopticon is applied to the system of prisons, a subtle relationship between gazers and gazed is developed. White superiority is also shown in *Sula* and the white gaze in African – American society supervises blacks. They cannot escape the white's gaze. The spread of white gaze is powerful enough to oppress the black. Black people are oppressed implicitly by the white gaze. They are prisoner that imprison by the white look. For white people their looks carry their racist value and disciplinary power. Nevertheless, in *Sula* most of the blacks resist in the white society, they do not accept submissiveness and endures all of naughtiness from whites. The power of norm appears through disciplines. African Americans are heading to the norm without feeling that they are disciplined and the norm they following is the white value.

References

Beaulieu, Elizabeth Ann. (2003). *The Toni Morrison Encyclopedia*, Green Wood Press, 377.

Boyne, Roy. (1990). *Foucault* and *Derrida*: *The other side of Reason*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 110.

Chakranarayan, Mohini. (2008).*Sula*: *A Critical Study*. Vardan press 44.

Cooper, Barry.(1981). *Michel Foucault*: *An Introduction to the Study of His Thought*. New York and Toronto: The Edwin Mellon Press, 81.

Davis, Cynthia. (1990). A. *Self-Society and Myth in Toni Morrison's Fiction*. *Toni Morrison*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 217.

Foucault, Michel. (1979). *Discipline and Punish The Birth of Prisons*. Trans. Alan Sheriden. New York: Vintage Books,26-27-178-179-206.

Foucault,Michel. (1980). *Power and Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, 1927-1977. Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books, 119-147

Foucault, Michel. (1990). *The History of Sexuality Volume 1*: An Introduction. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books, 94-95-96.

Hoy, David Couzens. (1986). *Power, Repression, and Progress*: *Foucault, Lukes, and the Frankfurt School. Foucault*: *A critical Reader*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 314.

Mabalia, Doreatha Drummond. (1991).*Toni Morrison's Developing Class Conscious*.2nd Ed. Susquehanna University Press, 42.

McKay, Nellie. (1988) *Introduction*: *A Critical Essay on Toni Morrison*.Ed. McKay. Massachusetts. K. Hall and Co, 4.

Mcnay, Lois. (1994). *Foucault*: *A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Polity Press, 101.

Mills, Sara. (2003). *Michel Foucault*. New York: Routledge, 40.

Morrison, Toni. (1974). *Sula*. Ed.Knopf, Alfred A. United States.

O Farrel, Clare (2005). *Michel Foucault*. Sage Publications. London. Thousand Oaks. New Delhi, 48.

Rabinow, Paul. (1984). *The Foucault Reader,* Pantheon Books; NewYork, 195.

Sawicki, Jana. (1991). *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, Power and the Body*. New York: Routledge, 25.

Shumway, David R. (1989).*Michel Foucault*. Charlottes Ville: UP of Virginia, 146.

Smart, Barry. (1988). *Michel Foucault*. London: Routledge, 75.

Willis, Susan. (1987). *Eruptions of Funk*: *Historicizing Toni Morrison*. Willis, Susan. Specifying Black Women Writing the American Experience. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 40.