

# On the Role of Language Learners' Psychological Reactance, Teacher Stroke, and Teacher Success in the Iranian Context<sup>1</sup>

Asieh Amini<sup>2</sup>, Reza Pishghadam<sup>3</sup>, & Fahime Saboori<sup>4</sup>

Received: 13/04/2019

Accepted: 23/07/2019

## Abstract

Given the importance of psychological reactance in social and educational interactions and its influence on language learning/teaching, the present study intended to investigate the relationship among stroke, psychological reactance, and teacher success. To this end, a total number of 300 Iranian English learners from different English language institutes filled out a newly developed scale on psychological reactance along with stroke and teacher success scales. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was exerted to both develop and validate the new scale. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was, then, employed to examine the possible relationships. Results revealed that stroke was a positive predictor of teacher success. Moreover, a negative relationship was found between psychological reactance and teacher success. Findings are discussed and suggestions are provided to pay more attention to the role of psychological reactance in English language teaching/learning.

**Keywords:** Teacher Success; Stroke; Psychological Reactance; EFL Teachers; EFL Learners

---

<sup>1</sup>Please cite this paper as follows:

Amini, A., Pishghadam, R., & Saboori, F. (2019). On the role of language learners' psychological reactance, teacher stroke, and teacher success in the Iranian context. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics*, 10(2), 26-44.

<sup>2</sup>English Department, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran; asieh.amini@mail.um.ac.ir

<sup>3</sup>Corresponding author, English Department, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran; pishghadam@um.ac.ir

<sup>4</sup>English Department, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran; fahime.saboori@gmail.com

## 1. Introduction

Effective learning occurs in a context where L2 learners enjoy their learning experiences through productive interactions with teachers, experience emotional and attitudinal equilibrium, and receive adequate emotional support from their teachers (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). In a broad sense, among various factors, which provide emotional support for L2 learners, teacher-learner relationship is of great significance. Because the relationship of teachers with learners is central to the satisfaction of learners' emotional needs, social researchers have paid an increasing attention to its quality and nature (e.g., Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Pierson, 2003; Pishghadam & Khajavy, 2014; Shirai, 2006).

A number of studies have dealt with the various effects of positive teacher-learner interaction, namely teacher success (e.g., Black & Howard-Jones, 2000; Markley, 2004; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Pierson, 2003; Swank, Taylor, Brady, & Freiberg, 1989), teacher care (e.g., Alder & Moulton, 1998; O'Connor, 2008; Pishghadam, Naji Meidani, & Khajavy, 2015; Rogers & Webb, 1991), and teachers' personality traits (e.g., Elizabeth, May, & Chee, 2007; Pishghadam, Baghaei, & Shahriari, 2011).

Teacher success, indeed, plays an important role in making a firm teacher-learner bond (Markley, 2004). There is a consensus among social researchers that teachers are the most important building blocks for a successful education and can bring about educational betterments (e.g., Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992; Pishghadam et al., 2011; Swandee, 1995). With respect to the significance of teacher success, Mangiante (2011), further, states that teacher success has shifted into the "focus of educational policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (p. 42).

Pishghadam et al. (2015), expanding the notion of *stroke* to mean "gentle," "supportive," and "encouraging behavior" regarded it as one of the important components of teacher care. Indeed, this type of teacher behavior seeks to maintain an efficacious bond between teachers and learners (Rogers & Webb, 1991). In other words, stroke, as a behavioral technique, is applied with the intention of satisfying individuals' need for recognition or their recognition hunger. In this regard, both teachers and learners are on a continuous line of stroke hunger (Berne, 1988). The notion of stroke has, unfortunately, been left unnoticed among the theories of motivation. Nevertheless, a few studies have recently conducted systematic research about stroke (e.g., Irajzad, Pishghadam, & Shahriari, 2017; Noorbakhsh, Pishghadam, & Saboori, 2018; Pishghadam & Khajavy, 2014; Rajabnejad, Pishghadam, & Saboori, 2017).

In each interaction, teachers and learners may also affect each other positively or negatively. On the one hand, a positive teacher-learner relationship

beneficially turns into a worthwhile source of support, prompts L2 learners' motivation, and bring about an opportunity to establish some needed interpersonal skills (Khajavy, Ghonsooly, Fatemi, & Choi, 2014; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Pierson, 2003). On the other hand, a negative teacher-learner relationship can give rise to various inappropriate confrontations. If teachers do not provide positive and sufficient amount of stroke, L2 learners may try to get the required attention in negative ways. Teachers' negative strokes can also trigger some negative emotional and psychological states, known as *reactance*. Psychological reactance, in fact, occurs when an individual feels his or her freedom is threatened by external constraints and inappropriate regulations (Brehm, 1966). The psychological reactance theory (PRT), proposed by Brehm (1966, 1968), is one of the well-developed theories in social psychology. There are, however, insufficient studies that have taken into consideration the effect of psychological reactance in an academic setting, in general, and English language teaching, in particular.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. *Potential Role of Teacher Success*

Success in each educational system, to a great extent, depends on the teacher's professional skills (Daneshpazhuh & Valiollah, 2006). In complicated networks of educational settings, teachers usually tolerate the most burdens on their shoulders while still fulfilling their various roles and functions (Pishghadam, Saboori, Samavarchi, & Hassanzadeh, 2016). Furthermore, teachers are the golden keys to successful education because practical improvements are usually brought about by teachers (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992; Swandee, 1995). However, the problem is that not all teachers are qualified enough to be regarded as efficient in the teaching profession (Steyn, 1999).

Regardless of multitudinous studies on the characteristics of effective teachers (e.g., Alexander, 2001; Clark 1993; Domas & Tiedman, 1950; Markely, 2004; Swank et al., 1989; Vogt, 1984), there is, unfortunately, no unified definition for teacher success. Weimer (2013), for instance, has considered teaching success as a multifaceted construct with numerous definitions. In this regard, Pishghadam et al. (2016) maintain that such diversity of definitions is justified because individuals' experiences and reactions to pedagogical instructions vary in different educational settings.

A number of researchers have also tried to merge these various definitions for teacher success into a general one (e.g., Clark, 1993; Swank et al., 1989; Vogt, 1984). They have contended that a successful teacher is the one who considers himself or herself as an important contributor in L2 learners' achievements. In spite

of the variations in the definition of teacher success, there are some common concepts such as encouragement, praise, positive emotions, and feedback that have been frequently reported as important teacher success factors.

Based on a meta-analysis of 31 studies, Feldman (1988), for example, concludes that those teachers are regarded as successful by L2 learners who are positive, interesting, accessible, and have oratory skills. Similarly, in a more recent study, Pishghadam, Shayesteh, and Rahmani (2016) associated teacher success to the use of emotionalization and contextualization by teachers. Also, Noorbakhsh et al. (2018) reported a positive correlation between teacher success and stroke.

## ***2.2. Defining Stroke***

The psychological term stroke, or praise, goes back to transactional analysis (TA), proposed by Berne (1988), as one of the approaches of examining interpersonal relationships. “TA is a theory of personality and a systematic psychotherapy for personal growth and personal change” (Stewart & Joines, 1987, p. 3). Newell and Jeffery (2002) believe that TA encompasses six key components: strokes, time structures, ego states, life positions, life scenario, and transactions. Strokes are exchanged unconsciously and continuously. For this reason, all people need to be praised and acknowledged by others (Barrow & Newton, 2015; Stewart & Joines, 1987). Indeed, according to Berne, Stroie, and Gheorghe (2011), stroke is a necessary factor for the improvement of our life quality. Of course, people have various tactics in giving and taking a stroke. In this regard, Stewart and Joines (1987) have classified three dichotomous types of stroke: positive/negative, verbal/nonverbal, conditional/unconditional.

In educational psychology, stroke is mostly applied to refer to teacher feedback and teacher praise (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Interestingly, various studies are available on the two concepts just mentioned (e.g., Pishghadam et al., 2015; Witt, Wheelless, & Allen, 2004). Freedman (1993) states that a stroke-rich teaching environment encourages L2 students to have a better performance. Now, when L2 students succeed, teachers are regarded as successful, as well. Teachers (strokes) can stroke students (strokees) in several ways, such as calling students’ names, letting them express themselves, providing sufficient feedbacks, and encouraging students in various possible ways (Pishghadam & Khajavy, 2014).

According to Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett, and Little (2004), teacher strokes are efficient tools in reinforcing L2 learners’ academic motivation and improving their behaviors. Likewise, Stewart and Joines (1987) explain that when someone receives stroke for a behavior, he or she is more likely to repeat it in the future. Thus, stroke has a hand-to-hand relationship with motivation in the sense that it encourages

individuals to maintain their success-related behaviors (Freedman, 1993; Kusluvan, 2003).

Indicating a firm positive relationship between teacher stroke and student motivation, Pishghadam and Khajavy (2014) hold that “when teachers pay attention to their learners and ask them to take part in classroom activities, learners can gain higher level of motivation and better performances” (p. 6). In the same vein, Rajabnejad et al. (2017) believe that teacher stroke can predict L2 learners’ willingness to attend classes. Among the four subscales of the stroke questionnaire they employed, nonverbal strokes significantly predicted the learners’ willingness to attend classes.

### ***2.3. Defining and Assessing Psychological Reactance***

“Assail my sense of personal control by telling me I cannot do something, and I will want to do it all the more” (Phares, 1991, p. 473). The quotation, just given, succinctly refers to the essence of *psychological reactance*. It is, thus, a motivation-related state being experienced when one feels his or her freedom has been threatened by external restraints and unsuitable situations or his or her set of alternatives have been taken away or restricted (Brehm, 1966; Clee & Wicklund, 1980). Psychological reactance, thus, includes some dimensions, such as resistance, willingness to be free, and control over one’s own freedom. Generally, PRT posits that a threatened or eliminated freedom instigates individuals to restore that lost freedom. Although the notion of psychological reactance enjoys a more clear-cut definition compared to teacher success, it has not allowed a vast literature review yet, especially in educational settings. The following bulleted list deals with just a few studies thereof:

- With regard to the importance of freedom, Hammock and Brehm (1968) found that those participants who had not been given different choices experienced psychological reactance.
- In another study, the researchers found that the teachers regarded themselves as successful when they received encouragement, but reacted negatively when they encountered restrictive conditions (Shafiee, Rezaee, Akbar, & Kayvani, 2013; Tyson & Silver 1994).
- Also, Akin-Little et al. (2004) observed that the learners’ behaviors improved much more and fewer confrontations occurred when they received positive reinforcement and praise.
- In addition, on the association of feedback and psychological reactance, two other studies (Cohen, Steel, & Ross, 1999; Mashek & Hammer, 2011) revealed that the provision of more feedback was not sufficient, but the feedback had to be of encouraging nature to stop reactance. Finally, Mashek

and Hammer (2011) showed that when the learners did not construe feedback as punishments, they could contain their reactance.

In sum, with such reasons on the importance of the study variables, the present survey study, hence, was an attempt to find out more about the possible relationships of stroke and psychological reactance, as two relatively new concepts in the educational field, with teacher success in an Iranian EFL setting. The integral aim of this study was to deal with the role of L2 students' psychological reactance and teacher stroke in EFL teachers' success. To this end, a new scale to measure the arousal levels of psychological reactance of the Iranian EFL learners was, first, designed and validated by the researchers. Following that, any probable and significant relationships between the learners' psychological reactance, teacher stroke, and teacher success from the viewpoints of the Iranian EFL learners were examined. Accordingly, the following research questions were formulated regarding the Iranian EFL context:

1. Does learners' psychological reactance scale (LPRS) enjoy psychometric properties?
2. Are there any significant relationships among psychological reactance, teacher stroke, and teacher success from the viewpoints of the Iranian EFL learners?

### **3. Methodology**

#### ***3.1. Participants***

In the present study, 300 EFL learners, both males ( $n = 158$ ) and females ( $n = 142$ ), within the age range of 18 to 22 ( $M = 21.54$ ,  $SD = 1.79$ ) participated in the study. They studied English in different language institutes in Neyshabur and Mashhad, Iran. They were asked to fill out the respective questionnaires. The method for sample selection was convenience sampling, where the participants were upper-intermediate English learners and had the option to discontinue their cooperation anytime they found themselves disinterested.

#### ***3.2. Instruments***

##### ***3.2.1. Learner psychological reactance scale (LPRS)***

To measure the learners' magnitude of reaction to power-limiting situations, a new scale titled Learner Psychological Reactance Scale (LPRS; see Appendix A), initially consisting of 18 items in Persian, was designed and validated through a one-step construct validity assessment: confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to confirm the factor solutions (Ullman, 2001). Thus, LPRS was a 12-item questionnaire covering

the two subscales of Desire for Freedom (DFF) and Sense of Resistance (SOR) that could be rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 5 (*Strongly Disagree*). The items associated with each subscale in the final version of LPRS are presented in Table 1, and further explanation about the validation of LPRS will appear in Results and Discussion sections:

Table 1. *Items in Learner Psychological Reactance Scale (LPRS)*

Subscales	Item No.
Sense of Resistance (SOR)	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11
Desire for Freedom (DFF)	2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
Total Items	12

### 3.2.2. *Student stroke scale (SSS)*

To evaluate the students' stroke, an 18-item questionnaire named Student Stroke Scale (SSS; see Appendix B), developed in Persian by Pishghadam and Khajavy (2014), was applied. This scale is a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Never*) to 5 (*Always*) with the following subscales and items: Classroom Activities Stroke (CAS items # 15, 16, 17, & 11), Verbal Stroke (VS items # 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, & 18), Valuing Stroke (VAS items # 9, 10, 12, & 13), and Nonverbal Stroke (NVS items # 1, 2, 3, & 4). Regarding the internal consistency of the four subscales of SSS, the following acceptable Cronbach's alpha values were obtained: CAS = .725, VS = .861, NVS = .850, VAS = .890, and the overall scale = .913.

### 3.2.3. *Characteristics of successful Iranian EFL teachers scale (CSIETS)*

To assess the EFL teachers' success in language teaching, a 47-item questionnaire called Characteristics of Successful Iranian EFL Teachers Scale (CSIETS; Moafian & Pishghadam, 2009; see Appendix C) was employed. Also, it was in the students' L1 (i.e., Persian) and included 12 subscales that could be rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 5 (*Strongly Disagree*). The 12 subscales of CSIETS were Teaching Accountability (TA), Attention to All (ATA), Interpersonal Relationships (IRs), Commitment (CO), Examination (EX), Creating a Sense of Competence (CSOC), Dynamism (DY), Learning Boosters (LBs), Class Attendance (CA), Empathy (AMY), Teaching Boosters (TBs), and Physical and Emotional Acceptance (PHY-EMO ACC).

To make sure of the internal consistency of CSIETS, we, once again, ran Cronbach's alpha for both the total scale and its subscales. The corresponding calculated alpha values were as follows: TA = .910, ATA = .925, IRs = .841, CO = .753, EX = .797, CSOC = .811, DY = .903, LBs = .865, CA = .860, EMY = .713, TBs = .750, PHY-EMO ACC = .890, and the total scale = .924. With regard to the

acceptable values obtained, we could make sure that CSIETS was suitable to be applied in the present study.

### 3.3. Procedure

The data collection was conducted at different language institutes in Neyshabur and Mashhad in the northeast of Iran with the participation of 300 upper-intermediate English language learners who willingly helped the researchers. Three questionnaires were applied in the current study: LPRS that was a newly developed questionnaire together with SSS, and CSIETS. It took around 15-20 min for the participants to complete the questionnaires in August 2017. The normality of the data distribution was checked by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for which SPSS (version 20) was used. Also, SPSS was used for the descriptive statistics of the study. To examine the reliability of SSS and CSIETS, Cronbach's alpha test was run for both the overall scales and their individual subscales using the same software. Afterward, CFA using Lisrel software (version 8) was applied for the validation of LPRS. Finally, structural equation modeling (SEM) was run to shed light on the (causal) relationships among psychological reactance, stroke, and teacher success to address the second research question of the study.

## 4. Results

To check the normality of the data distribution, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed. If the  $p$ -value is nonsignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ), we can say that the distribution of a sample is not significantly different from a normal distribution; therefore, it is normal. If the  $p$ -value is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), it implies that the distribution is not normal (Chakravarti, Laha, & Roy, 1967).

Table 2 presents the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. As shown, the obtained *Sig.* value for all the variables (i.e., LPRS, stroke, & teacher success) is higher than 0.05. Therefore, it can safely be concluded that the data are normally distributed across all the study variables:

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics and Kolmogorov -Smirnov Test*

	Item No.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Learner Psychological Reactance	12	34.17	6.56	.07
Stroke	18	3.19	.97	.81
Teacher Success	47	176.89	21.10	.13

### 4.1. Validation of Learner Psychological Reactance Scale (LPRS)

CFA was run to assess the fit of the model. It is a technique in SEM that takes confirmatory hypothesis-testing approach (Kline, 2011). The model with all



factor loadings and the association between each subconstruct of the proposed model are indicated in Figure 1. As shown, no item was deleted from the scale in this phase. To check the model fit, goodness-of-fit measures were used. In this study, chi-square/degree of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), normal fit index (NFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were taken into account. To have a fit model,  $\chi^2/df$  should be less than 3, GFI and CFI and NFI should be above 0.90, and RMSEA should be less than .08 (McCollum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). Based on Table 3, all the indicators in goodness-of-fit indices were above the cut-off values. Therefore, the results of the CFA confirmed the factorial structure of LPRS. In other words, we were confident enough that LPRS with the two subscales of DFF and SOR could be applied in their study:

Table 3. *Goodness-of-Fit Indices of LPRS in CFA*

	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Acceptable	< 3	>.90	>.90	> .90	< .08
Fit Model	97	.93	.91	.94	.72

Figure 1 is a representation of the 2-factor model (i.e., DFF & SOR) for LPRS with 12 items:

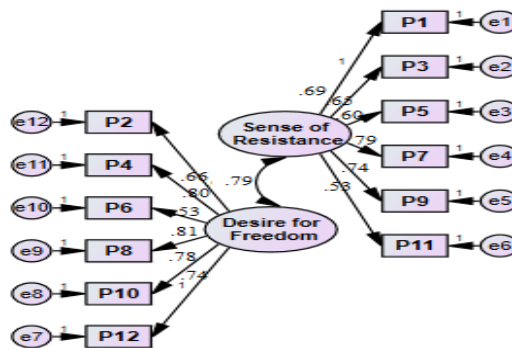


Figure 1. CFA Model of Learner Psychological Reactance Scale (LPRS)

The scale was, further, checked in view of reliability using Cronbach's alpha. The calculated  $\alpha$  values were considered as acceptable. The report of the reliability indices for both the overall scale (LPRS) and its individual subscales is as follows: total scale  $\alpha$  value = .758,  $\alpha$  value of SOR (items # 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, & 11) = .714, and  $\alpha$  value of DFF (items # 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, & 12) = .791.

To address the second research question and to check the strength of the (causal) relationships among the variables, SEM was used and the standardized estimates were examined. Table 4 shows that all the fit indices lie within the

acceptable fit thresholds. Hence, it can be concluded that the proposed model had an acceptable fit with the empirical data:

Table 4. *Goodness-of-Fit Indices for Three Scales*

	X2/df	GFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Acceptable	<3	>.90	>.90	>.90.92	<.08.06
Fit Model	2.21	.95	.91		

Figure 2 represents the relationships among psychological reactance, stroke, and teacher success. It indicates that stroke is a significant positive predictor of teacher success in language teaching ( $\beta = .39, p < .05$ ). However, teacher success is predicated negatively while significantly by reactance ( $\beta = -.29, p < .05$ ). Moreover, we can observe that there is a negative relationship between psychological reactance and stroke ( $\beta = -.20, p < .05$ ):

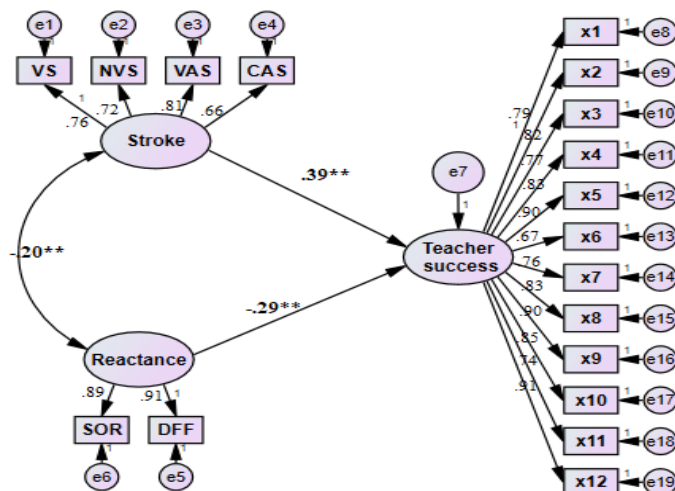


Figure 2. Relationships Among Psychological Reactance, Stroke, and Teacher Success

## 5. Discussion

Regarding the first goal of the study, although ample literature could be found about the psychometric properties of Hong's psychological reactance scale (e.g., Dillard & Shen, 2005; Hellman & McMillin, 1997; Hong, 1990; Hong & Giannakopoulos, 1994; Hong & Langovski, 1994; Joubert, 1990; Joubert, 1992), no field-specific validated scale is designed for EFL settings. The present study, thus, managed to develop one scale that take into account the Iranian EFL LPRS towards their teachers' manners and attitudes in class management.

The first aim of the present study was to substantiate the construct validity of LPRS that was successfully done through CFA; therefore, LPRS covering the two subscales of DFF and SOR enjoys psychometric properties to measure the magnitude of the EFL learners' reactance, at least, in the Iranian context of EFL teaching/learning. Furthermore, the reliability of the scale was measured via Cronbach's alpha, reporting that the scale enjoys acceptable reliability.

As to the second goal of the study (i.e., the probable relationships among psychological reactance, stroke, & teacher success), the results of SEM revealed a positive relationship between stroke and teacher success. Here, the positive relationship between stroke and teacher success was in accordance with the study done by Noorbakhsh et al. (2018) on the role of stroke and teacher gender identity in teacher success, where stroke was a positive predictor of success in teachers. In a similar vein, Weimer (2013) and Feldman (1988) indicated that the learners had described successful teachers as those who had been helpful, accessible, eloquent, and knowledgeable. That is to say, the attributes related to stroke or praise were among the characteristics that the learners had mentioned for the successful teachers.

In the current study, similar attributes were employed in the phrasing of the items of SSS and CSIETS, and as expected, once more, the earlier background knowledge on the positive association between stroke and teacher success through such phrases was confirmed. Also, the present finding was consistent with Cohen and Steele (2002) who had indicated that the teachers who regularly had interacted positively with the learners were regarded as more successful. In other words, the more the teachers had provided the learners with positive stroke, the more they had been known as successful. As mentioned in Literature Review section, Stewart and Joines (1987) elucidated that stroke reinforces the behavior that is stroked.

Moreover, teachers gain success when they make teaching atmospheres free from psychological reactance, stress, and tensions—the factors that usually reduce teacher efficacy (Flook et al., 2013). L2 teachers' profession is accompanied by L2 learners' anxiety; in turn, this intensifies tense conditions for teachers and makes the teachership a stressful career (Newell & Jeffery, 2002). Teachers who resort to various types of stroke such as eclectic class activities—to mention only one—turn a teaching atmosphere into a dynamic one. In such dynamicity, both teachers and students develop stronger relationships and are less likely to experience adverse emotional states like psychological reactance. Another positive indicator of teacher success is feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Verbal feedback is a type of stroke that makes teacher-learner relationships stronger (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). In this regard, Pishghadam et al. (2015) believe that teachers who wish to care for their learners should provide them with various types of feedback.

The other important result of the study was the negative relationship between psychological reactance and teacher success. In other words, whenever the psychological reactance of L2 students decreases in a class, teachers will have a greater opportunity to perform successfully in that class. This negative relationship of teacher success and reactance has been justified by a number of studies emphasizing that reactance triggers adverse conditions (e.g., Brehm, 1966; Freedman, 1993; Clee & Wicklund, 1980; Wicklund, 1974) and reduces teachers' desired performance (e.g., Pishghadam & Khajavy, 2014). Also, Miner, Ebrahimi, and Wachtel (1995) have maintained that though reactance is a type of motivation to achieve something, it is more associated with anger and revenge than achieving success according to required norms. To sum up, psychological reactance negatively disturbs one's determination to achieve success, hinders positive outcomes (Seibel & Dowd, 1999), and raises various educational problems (Seibel & Dowd, 2001).

Finally, we should add that teacher success cannot be attributed to a single variable; instead, it should be assessed in relation with other variables. Thus, there are still various factors that can be studied within the field of psychological reactance and English language learning. Studies like this provide insights into the nature of successful class management and proper decision making by teachers. Perhaps, the most undeniable characteristic of a successful teacher is his or her enjoyment of teaching latitude and making proper decisions (Brehm, 1966; Brehm & Brehm, 1981; Wortman & Brehm, 1975).

## 6. Conclusion

The present study was conducted to explore the relationship of Iranian English language LPRS with teacher stroke and teacher success. As it is the case with most studies, the current study, too, has both limitations and implications. The current findings can, first, add to the growing body of literature on psychological reactance and stroke that are relatively novel concepts in L2 education contexts. Second, the results can help L2 teachers minimize their LPRS while increasing their engagement in learning and reshaping their social control practices. Third, the findings would make L2 teachers more aware of their learners' personal experiences under freedom-restrictive situations in academic settings. Last but not least, the validated and designed scale (i.e., LPRS) paves the way for future improvements on it by those interested and can, further, enrich the related literature in the field of educational psychology.

On the other hand, it is unlikely to conduct a study without limitations. Therefore, future researchers should be very cautious in generalizing the findings of this study due to the limitations it has: First, this study was contextualized by a relatively small sample of Iranian learners (i.e., 300 English language learners).

Surely, a larger sample could increase the generalizability of the findings. Second, the participants were upper-intermediate learners chosen through convenience sampling. Definitely, this has decreased the generalizability of the findings. Thus, our suggestion to future researchers is that they can still find more about the concept of psychological reactance because, as a new research niche, it may be extended to include different variables across various settings and proficiency levels.

### References

- Akin-Little, K. A., Eckert, T. L., Lovett, B. J., & Little, S. G. (2004). Extrinsic reinforcement in the classroom: Bribery or best practice. *School Psychology Review*, 33(3), 344-462.
- Alder, N. I., & Moulton, M. R. (1998). The eye of the beholder: Middle schoolers talk about caring. *Schools in the Middle*, 21(3), 15-32.
- Alexander, F. K. (2001). The changing face of accountability: Monitoring and assessing institutional performance in higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 71(4), 411-431.
- Barrow, G., & Newton, T. (Eds.). (2015). *Educational transactional analysis: An international guide to theory and practice*. London, England: Routledge.
- Berne, E. (1988). *Game people play*. New York: Grove Press.
- Berne, E., Stroie, L., & Gheorghe, N. (2011). *Analiza tranzactionala in psihoterapie*. Bucuresti: EdituraTrei.
- Black, R. S., & Howard-Jones, A. (2000). Reflections on best and worst teachers: An experiential perspective of teaching. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 34(1), 1-13.
- Brehm, J. W. (1966). *A theory of psychological reactance*. New York: Academic Press.
- Brehm, J. W. (1968). Attitude change from threat to attitudinal freedom. In A. G. Greenwald, T. C. Brock, & T. M. Ostrom (Eds.), *Psychological foundations of attitudes* (pp. 277-296). New York: Academic Press.
- Brehm, J. W., & Brehm, S. S. (1981). *Psychological reactance: A theory of freedom and control*. New York: Academic Press.
- Chakravarti, I. M., Laha, R. G., & Roy, J. (1967). *Handbook of methods of applied statistics*. New York: Wiley.

- Clark, D. (1993). *Teacher evaluation: A review of the literature with implications for educators*. Unpublished seminar paper, California State University at Long Beach.
- Clee, M. A., & Wicklund, R. A. (1980). Consumer behavior and psychological reactance. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 6(4), 389-405.
- Cohen, G. L., & Steele, C. M. (2002). A barrier of mistrust: How negative stereotypes affect cross-race mentoring. In J. Anderson (Ed.), *Improving academic achievement: Impact of psychological factors on education* (pp. 310-322). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Cohen, G. L., Steele, C. M., & Ross, L. D. (1999). The mentor's dilemma: Providing critical feedback across the racial divide. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25(10), 1302-1318.
- Daneshpazhuh, Z., Valiollah, F. (2006). Assessment of teachers' professional skills of primary schools. *Pedagogical Innovations*, 18(5), 135-170.
- Dillard, J. P., & Shen, L. (2005). On the nature of reactance and its role in persuasive health communication. *Communication Monographs*, 72(2), 144-168.
- Domas, S., & Tiedman, D. V. (1950). Bibliography of teacher competence. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 19, 101-218.
- Elizabeth, C. L. M., May, C. M. H., & Chee, P. K. (2008). Building a model to define the concept of teacher success in Hong Kong. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(3), 623-634.
- Feldman, K. A. (1988). Effective college teaching from the students' and faculty's view: Matched or mismatched priorities? *Research in Higher Education*, 28(4), 291-329.
- Flook, L., Goldberg, S. B., Pinger, L., Bonus, K., & Davidson, R. J. (2013). Mindfulness for teachers: A pilot study to assess effects on stress, burnout, and teaching efficacy. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7(3), 182-195.
- Freedman, M. (1993). *The kindness of strangers: Adult mentors, urban youth, and the new voluntarism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. G. (1992). *Understanding teacher development*. London, England: Cassell.
- Hammock, T., & Brehm, J. W. (1968). The attractiveness of choice alternatives when freedom to choose is eliminated by a social agent. *Journal of Personality*, 34, 546-554.

- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81-112.
- Hellman, C. M., & McMillin, W. L. (1997). The relationship between psychological reactance and self-esteem. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 137(1), 135-138.
- Hong, S. M. (1990). Effects of sex and church attendance on psychological reactance. *Psychological Report*, 66(2), 494.
- Hong, S. M., & Giannakopoulos, E. (1994). The relationship of satisfaction with life to personality characteristics. *The Journal of Psychology*, 128(5), 547-558.
- Hong, S. M., & Langovski, N. (1994). Sex difference in psychological reactance amongst Korean residents in Australia. *Psychological Reports*, 75(1), 578-578.
- Irajzad, F. Pishghadam, R., & Shahriari, H. (2017). Examining stroking behavior of English, Persian, and Arabic school teachers in Iran: A mixed-methods study. *International Journal of Instruction*, 10(1), 219-236.
- Joubert, C. E. (1990). Relationship among self-esteem, psychological reactance, and other personality variables. *Psychological Reports*, 66(3), 147-157.
- Joubert, C. E. (1992). Antecedents of narcissism and psychological reactance as indicated by college students' retrospective reports of their parents' behavior. *Psychological Reports*, 70(3), 111-115.
- Khajavy, G. H., Ghonsooly, B., Fatemi, A. H., & Choi, C. W. (2014). Willingness to communicate in English: A microsystem model in the Iranian EFL classroom context. *TESOL Quarterly*, 50(1), 154-180.
- Kline, R. B. (2011). Convergence of structural equation modeling and multilevel modeling. In M. Williams & W. P. Vogt (Eds.), *Handbook of methodological innovation in social research methods* (pp. 562-589). London: SAGE Publications.
- Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119, 254-284.
- Kuslivan, S. (2003). *Managing employee attitudes and behaviors in the tourism and hospitality industry*. New York: Nova Publishers.
- McCollum, R. C., Browne, M. W., & Sugawara, H. M. (1996). Power analysis and determination of sample size for covariance structure modeling: *Psychological Methods*, 1(2), 130-149.

- Mangiante, E. M. S. (2011). Teachers matter: Measures of teacher effectiveness in low-income minority schools. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Accountability*, 23(1), 41-63.
- Markley, T. (2004). Defining the effective teacher: Current arguments in education. *Essays in Education*, 11(3), 1-14.
- Mashek, D., & Hammer, E. Y. (2011). *Empirical research in teaching and learning: contributions from social psychology*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Miner, J. B., Ebrahimi, B., & Wachtel, J. M. (1995). How deficiency in management contributes to the United States' competitiveness problem and what can be done about it? *Human Resource Management*, 34(3), 363-387.
- Moafian, F., & Pishghadam, R. (2009). The role of Iranian EFL teachers' multiple intelligences in their success in language teaching at high schools. *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanhayeh Khareji*, 42, 5-22.
- Newell, S., & Jeffery, D. (2002). *Behavior management in the classroom: A transactional analysis approach*. New York: Routledge.
- Noorbakhsh, Z., Pishghadam, R., & Saboori, F. (2018). Stroke and gender identity in teacher success: From learners' viewpoints. *Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences*, 41(1), 39-48.
- O'Connor, K. E. (2008). "You choose to care": Teachers, emotions and professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(1), 117-126.
- Peng, J. E., & Woodrow, L. (2010). Willingness to communicate in English: A model in the Chinese EFL classroom context. *Language Learning*, 60(4), 834-876.
- Phares, E. J. (1991). *Introduction to psychology*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Pierson, W. J. (2003). *Reflection on the process of learning the work of nurses during practice experience*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Simon Fraser University.
- Pishghadam, R., Baghaei, P., & Shahriari, H. (2011). Development and validation of an English language teacher competency test using item response theory. *International Journal of Educational and Psychological Assessment*, 8(9), 54-68.
- Pishghadam, R., & Khajavy, G. H. (2014). Development and validation of the Student Stroke Scale and examining its relation with academic motivation. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 43, 109-114.



- Pishghadam, R., Naji Meidani, E., & Khajavy, G. H. (2015). Language teachers' conceptions of intelligence and their roles in teacher care and teacher feedback. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(1), 60-82.
- Pishghadam, R., Saboori, F., & Samavarchi, L., Hassanzadeh, T. (2016). Examining the gender identity of language teachers using a masculinity-femininity scale: A case from Iran. *Issues in Educational Research*, 26(1), 131-146.
- Pishghadam, R., Shayesteh, S., & Rahmani, S. (2016). Contextualization-emotionalization interface: A case of teacher effectiveness. *Revista Internacional Multidisciplinaria Ciencias Sociale*, 5(2), 97-127.
- Rajabnejad, N. F., Pishghadam, R., & Saboori, F. (2017). On the influence of stroke on willingness to attend classes and foreign language achievement. *Applied Research on English Language*, 6(2), 141-158.
- Rogers, D., & Webb, J. (1991). The ethic of caring in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 42(3), 173-181.
- Schutz, P. A., & Pekrun, R. (2007). *Emotion in education*. San Diego, CA: Academic.
- Shafiee, S., Rezaee, A., Akbar, M., & Kayvani, L. (2013). A comparative study of performance evaluation system of teachers. *International Journal of Basic Sciences and Applied Research*, 2(1), 77-83.
- Shirai, S. (2006). How transactional analysis can be used in terminal care. In *International Congress Series*, 1287, 179-184.
- Seibel, C. A., & Dowd, E. T. (1999). Reactance and therapeutic noncompliance. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 23(4), 373-379.
- Seibel, C. A., & Dowd, E. T. (2001). Personality characteristics associated with psychological reactance. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 57(7), 963-969.
- Stewart, I., & Joines, V. (1987). *TA today: A new introduction to transactional analysis*. Nottingham, England: Life Space.
- Steyn, G. M. (1999). Out of the crisis: Transforming schools through total quality management. *South African Journal of Education*, 19(4), 357-363.
- Swandee, A. (1995). Students' perception of university instructors' effective teaching characteristics. *SLLT Journal*, 5, 6-22.
- Swank, P. R., Taylor, R. D., Brady, M. P., & Freiberg, H. J. (1989). Sensitivity of classroom observation systems: Measuring teacher effectiveness. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 57(2), 171-186.

- Tyson, L., & Silverman, S. (1994). An analysis of physical education and nonphysical education teachers at the elementary and secondary levels on statewide teacher assessment. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 14(1), 85-98.
- Ullman, J. B. (2001). Structural equation modeling. In B. G. Tabachnick & L. S. Fidell (Eds.), *Using multivariate statistics* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Vogt, C. G. (1984). Developing a teacher evaluation system. *Spectrum*, 2(1), 41-46.
- Weimer, M. (2013). *Defining teaching effectiveness. Teaching professor blog*. Retrieved January 1, 2018, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/>
- Wicklund, R.A. (1974). *Freedom and reactance*. Potomac, MD: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Witt, P. L., Wheelless, L. R., & Allen, M. (2004). A meta-analytical review of the relationship between teacher immediacy and student learning. *Communication Monographs*, 71(2), 184-207.
- Wortman, C. B., & Brehm, J. W. (1975). Responses to uncontrollable outcomes: An integration reactance theory and the learned helplessness model. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 8, 277-336.

## Appendix A

### Sample Items of Learner Psychological Reactance Scale (LPRS)

1. When a teacher puts so much emphasis on speaking English, it rather urges me to speak more Persian.  
*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐
2. When a teacher does not consult with us about our teaching-learning supplementary materials, it makes me want to have a role in it.  
*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐
3. When a teacher does not allow using bilingual dictionaries for various activities in class, it rather persuades me to use them more.  
*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐
4. When a teacher obligates us to write on the topics he chooses, it makes me feel like I am rather limited.  
*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐
5. When a teacher plays favoritism towards some students, it makes me show more defensive reaction.  
*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐
6. When a teacher considers me as dependent on him in every activity, it makes make me want to play more independence.

*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐

## Appendix B

### Sample items of Student Stroke Scale (SSS)

Items	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
1. Teacher pays attention to me				
2. Teacher devotes enough time to me outside the classroom				
3. Teacher uses my personal experience in the classroom				
4. Teacher uses me in the class discussions				
5. Teacher mentions my name in the classroom				

## Appendix C

### Sample Items of Characteristics of Successful Iranian EFL Teachers Scale (CSIETS)

1. Teacher has enough knowledge in teaching subject material.

*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐

2. Teacher has a friendly relationship with learners.

*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐

3. Teacher has desire to teach.

*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐

4. Teacher is willing to help learners inside and outside the classroom

*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐

5. Teacher attends learners' instructional difficulties.

*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐

6. Teacher organizes subject material well for each session and the whole course.

*Strongly Agree* ☐ *Agree* ☐ *Neither Agree Nor Disagree* ☐ *Disagree* ☐ *Strongly Disagree* ☐