Journal of Language Teaching and Research

ISSN 1798-4769

Volume 2, Number 5, September 2011

Contents

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 949-956, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.949-956

Audio Description, Rhetoric and Multimodality

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***Abstract*—This paper constitutes a theoretical reflection within the Project AMATRA of the University of Granada (Spain), part of the European Project Technological on-line framework to integrate the work flow of audiovisual accessible translation. We also are member of the Project PRA2 which is oriented towards creating a technological website platform open to any user, where people, regardless of the functional characteristics, can interact with any audiovisual resources. In the paper, we present the audio descriptive text as a new modern discourse, a coherent oral text and a speech act according to the five phases of Quintilian Rhetoric: *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria* and *actio.* We also offer examples of the main tropes and figures that ornament the audio descriptive text and make it a rhetorical discourse.**

***Index Terms*—audio description, inventio, dispositio, elocutio, actio, rhetoric discourse**

I. Introduction

AMATRA is a translation research group of the University of Granada with a theoretical interest in Access to Knowledge, Multimodality and Translation training. This interest led us to create a data base of films with Spanish audio description (AD) in order to analyze, through Multimodal Corpus Linguistics methods, the characteristics of Spanish AD. Results from this analysis have a professional and a didactic application. They serve the double purpose of being the basis to carry out AD reception experiments that may contribute to the improvement of existing AD guidelines, and a valuable set of reference materials for AD training, AD training teaching, as well as for AD professionals.

This paper constitutes a theoretical reflection within the Project AMATRA oriented towards creating a technological website platform open to any user, where people, regardless of the functional characteristics, can interact with any audiovisual resources. In the paper, we present the audio descriptive text as a new modern discourse, a coherent oral text and a speech act according to the five phases of Quintilian Rhetoric: *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria* and *actio.* We also offer examples of the main tropes and figures that ornament the audio descriptive text and make it a rhetorical discourse.

During the 21st century, we find that we are immersed in multiple and multicultural thought and thus we could speak of a new foundation for academic knowledge that uses the studies on the audio descriptive text as the basis of the complex theory of discourse.

The audio descriptive text makes sense only within a singular society; if Rhetoric was born in the polis, with democracy as the frontier, Audio description can be considered within a social institution: the blind community. It is born into a society able to admit social exclusion as an element of social integration. If Rhetoric seeks to build rhetorical discourses to convince the audience concerning solutions to civil and political problems, the audio descriptive text builds a text to bring artistic discourse closer to the blind audience.

II. Rhetoric and Audio Description (AD)

We know that Rhetoric is an art that teaches citizens to speak in public and it defends them by giving them the ability to say anything they wish without being offensive with their words. The orator can create a world faithful to reality, a world with a vision of the reality most adapted to the audience.

However, there is a mismatch between the real world and the "world" that we apprehend, think about, structure, or try to explain to the others. Therefore, we do not transmit to the other people that the real things are really are there, but rather they appear symbolized by the language, which enables us to build true discourse. As is well known, reality cannot be expressed or thought about only with words.

In this sense, Rhetoric is an essential perspective to persuade listeners, who receive the text depending on different communicative situations, sometimes completely opposed to the sensitive world of blind people. Therefore, in this paper, we contend that rhetorical discourse and AD can be, and in fact must be, understood as a real act of communication. However, it is a real act of speech also because it makes it possible for the audio descriptive text to be understood as rhetorical discourse, a coherent and functional text.

In this sense, it is important for the audio describer to be conscious of using language in order to build persuasive speech—that is, "attractive, convincing, and provocative worlds"—because these resulting discourses, these audio descriptive scripts, try to win followers: blind people completely able to share the feelings and opinions created by the social establishment.

In the same way as traditional Rhetoric acted at the beginning of the history of literature, AD starts to be considered as an art: the art of creating coherent discourses using the same ornaments that the Rhetoric used.

Rhetoric does not in fact need to know the reality of things because it is a sort of artisan of persuasion. It presupposes the teaching of languages and literature from the orator based on many meditative readings and a sort of familiarity with poets and stylists from everywhere. Something similar occurs with AD, because we consider it to be a technique (*tekné*). As a new rhetorical discourse, it uses the prior knowledge of the audio describer, new materials to remake the audio descriptive script in order to move the sensitive world of the blind people.

Thus, it could be said that the art of AD, if we understand that the audio descriptive text is an artistic text, in a lotmanian way, as Álvarez de Morales (2010) argues, recovers part of the essence of Quintilian Rhetoric, because its matter is built by all the themes and plots used by the audio describer who is interested in collecting, from the text prepared by himself/herself, all the particular elements which are part of the plot and genre treated in the film.

If the orators had to use their language taking advantage of their own text, and combining their intelligence with the emotional effect and the vivacity of the images of the recreated world, the audio describers, based on the oratory exercises of eloquence, will be able to write their scripts. They will perform this task based on the units of meaning that are part of the textual "corpus" able to serve as a channel of information between the world who can see and those who cannot.

As is well known, Rhetoric, step by step, and throughout the history, started to open a path and entered new fields of knowledge such as the Literature, Hermeneutics, or Aesthetics, which were the last disciplines to be influenced by the art of persuasion. During the 18th and 19th century, Rhetoric was open to the studies dedicated to Speech Acts and to Communication. Hence, Rhetoric was not equivalent to padding, affectiveness, or sophistication but it implied the art of organizing language from the main five oratory functions studied and defined by Quintilian: *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memory* and *actio*. Four of these appear clearly in the audio descriptive script (but the *memory*, because the audio descriptive script is expressed but not memorized, only in the case of the AD of the theatre).

III. Audio Description: A New Speech Act

Austin and Searle were the creators of the Theory of the Speech Act, and this Theory contends that to speak is to make a speech act, considering the context as one of the most important parts of the script and (apart from the meanings) and considering also the illocutionary force[1] that must be interpreted taking into account the totality of the speech act. In sum, in the speech act, we must interpret the semantic meaning of the words used by the speakers, interpreted as a pragmatic meaning, which is the same meaning as audio describers use when creating their text susceptible to being divided into many units of meanings.

Tropes and figures of diction and thought are born from the illocutionary act of speech, considering the illocutionary value as a true one. Thus, tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole and irony, or figures of diction and thought are located in a certain situation, in a context, in a speech act; taking into account the importance of the relationship between the speaker and the listener, they result from the speaker's intention in exhorting the listener. In this sense, we should remember Austin's (1962) assertion: "The speech act will be successful if the circumstances that the words expressed are appropriate somehow" (p.49). The same applies to the audiodescriptive text because we can locate in it the tropes and figures that confer the audiodescriptive text an illocutionary character, its essence of a speech act. One example of this situation is the analysis of some audiodescriptive scripts of different films tagged throughout the software *TAGGETTI* used for the members of AMATRA Project.

[1] Illocutionary force: what words do as carriers of the speaker's intention.

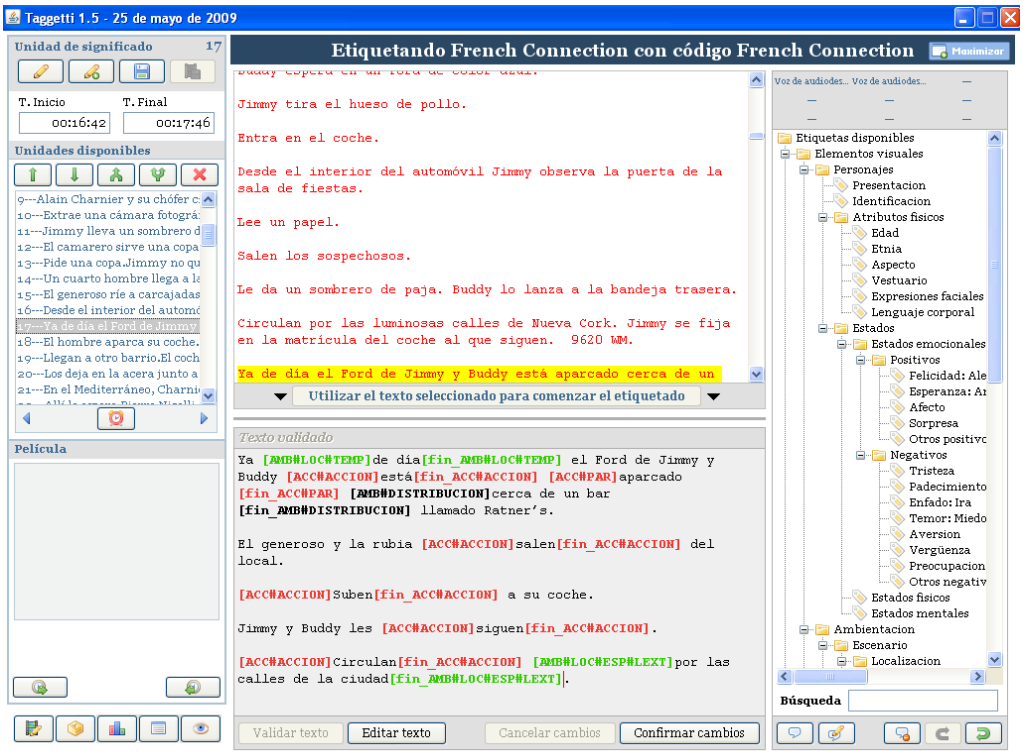

Figure 1. Caption of the *Taggetti* software used to tagged the audio descriptive script

In these scripts, we find a large number of tropes (they are short of figures) which slide across the AD text, ornamenting them and conferring them a stressed artistic aspect.

We know that the pragmatic dimension of the speech act has to do with Semantics and Syntax as well. The syntax will determine the type of text or discourse we have to examine, as the Spanish Stylists said: "the human being reorganizes the world with the puzzle of the language which is full of metaphors". Consequently, audio describers who are the absolute creators of their text can build the audiodescriptive script peppered by metaphor, metonymy and different tropes, all being considered ornaments of the new rhetorical discourse.

In this sense, we should remember that Rhetoric is essentially pragmatic because it studies the speech act in a certain way: in the middle of a linguistic situation. The AD acts in the same way because it seeks to make the blind person receive the real world described by the audio describer who validates his/her own text based on images, sound, and context recreated in the film. If we write a discourse for a particular auditory/audience we influence them, so that the language we use is important in order to make what we say understood. In addition, the AD is sensitive about building intelligible and correct sentences, but we must know the world which is common to all of us. Finally, the audio describer must know the complex mechanism of cognition which is seeks to make efficient use of the common symbols used by the speaker and the receiver. Thus, the AD rhetorical discourse will be locutionary, if it transmits some information. Rhetorical discourse is always illocutionary, as well as the audio descriptive text. It is illocutionary, if the sentence is transmitted next to an associated force related to the verbs: order, promise, insult, object, etc. Rhetorical discourse implies the persuasion of the audience who attentively listens to the orator. The audio descriptive text, on the other hand, achieves its function, too, because it uses adjacent verbs to the theme of the audio descriptive script and many of them are verbs oriented to make the text closer to the particular world of the blind person, in the sense that the text influences the blind person, at least persuading him/her and making him/her identified with the reality represented by images that the blind cannot perceive.

Finally, perlocutionary, when the sentence determines some reactions in the audience according to the special circumstances, the rhetorical discourse always has to do with this speech act. However, the audio descriptive text does not, because it depends on the emphasis that the audio describer can give to his/her script and it depends on the speaker's capacity to transmit an important emotional charge to the blind people, who answer the description with different reactions: smiling, crying, shouting, etc. López Eire (2000) says that "Rhetoric is an art which teaches us to create acts of speech that have the force to make the judges absolve or condemn the victim, to make the blind people suffer or enjoy, depending on the emotions they listen to" (p.202).

Rhetoric then studies rhetorical discourse which is a complete, closed linguistic text that results unitary and coherent thanks to its pragmatic meaning which makes it a functional one. It is coherent also because the audio describer thinks of it, structures it, verbalizes it and represents it with a determined and well-defined intention that it is seen in the theme of the discourse, the theme of the discourse being the object of attention of the audio describer when he/she prepares the discourse to be in tune later with the receiver, who is the centre of the emission.

We might recall that Grice, in his Principle of Cooperation, invites the audience to joint to him in the contemplation of the narrated sequences to evaluate them and to answer to them. His intention was not only for the listener to believe it but as Grice (1989) defends, to be able to feel the things explained from an imaginative and affectionate viewpoint.

IV. Audio Description: A Tautology of Semiotic and Rhetoric of Communication

As mentioned above, Rhetoric is a science of conceptual representations of the statements of discourse because it studies the speech acts that influence the audience due to the message so well prepared by the audio describers.

In this sense, Rhetoric is closely related to the Theory of Communication based in the Theory of Relevance and defending the maximum cognitive effect gained with the minimum effort of processing the act of cognition as a speech act.

We believe that, in the future, Rhetoric must work closely with Pragmatics, which considers communication to be the consciousness of the soul–that is, communication is not only a process of transmission but a selection of information and participation, because communicators select from among all information offered to them. Therefore, "communication is selection, not intention"[2]. The AD starts from this premise because despite that the audio descriptive text can move, the main task of the audio describer is to select among all the material he/she has in order to prepare a coherent and thematically cohesive discourse, able to order and clarify human experience.

Thus, we recognize that AD, taken as a sort of modern Rhetoric is very close to social Pragmatics in the best sense, because it implies the study of the speech act, and as Habermas (1973) says "speech and action are interpreted by each other" (p.237) and they never appear separated in the frame of social life.

In fact, the audio describer will centre his/her attention in one or more aspects of the traditional Rhetoric like the dispositio or elocutio and on many occasions in the total process of the Rhetoric phenomenon from a semiotic standpoint. In the sense that Rhetoric is a sort of secondary grammar, a grammar of the devices of the primary rules which make up proper grammar. It is a grammar that contains a system of rules of the persuasive linguistic configuration. It is a grammar of the language created by the orator to target the audience.

Thus, due to the integration of Rhetoric in the Semiotics, the Linguistic of the Text and the Pragmatic, discourse can be successfully analysed with the literary text or the audio descriptive script.

Semiotics or the Science of the Signs of the texts throughout the Linguistic of the Texts runs into Pragmatics, which is the science in the relation to interpreters, because it studies the communicative speech act as such act, the speech as the use of the language by the speaker taking into account the following aspects: the context as the identity of personality of the participants in the act of communication, the spatial and temporal functions, the features in the communicative act, the believes, the knowledge and intention of the audio describers and many other circumstances around the speech act.

V. Where is the Audio Description into the Linguistic Text Located?

The Linguistic of Text will see in the AD text the result of different operations prepared to localize the external semantic materials (inventio) and the internal ones (dispositio).

In this macro text the coherence results from the intentionality of the author in a single act of speech and the adaptation of the speaker to the communicative situation, expressed in the text as a sum of linguistic signs of great complexity that are used as a framework of syntactic, semantic, and semiotic relations.

RHETORIC	PRAGMATIC OF TEXT	AD SCRIPT
Inventio	Extensional material (ideas used)	Units of meanings (*Taggetti*)
Dispositio	Macro intentional Structures	Statements (*Taggetti*)
Elocutio	Micro intentional Structures	Sentences (*Taggetti)*

Figure 2. Table of representation of these linguistic signs

Dispositio is responsible for the coherence of the rhetorical discourse in all dimensions and it results from the adaptation of the whole Rhetoric discourse and, from each of the constitutive elements and resources that unleashes in the audio describer the determination of intervention to modify the previous situation. The opportunity is a concept from the Medicine in the Athens of 5th century B.C., and it is understood as the principle which guides the process of preparation and the deliver of the rhetoric speech because it determines the inventio (ideas to express), the dispositio (order of these ideas) and the elocutio (expression of the ideas).

If the audio describer does not connect with the audience because his/her discourse fails, the opportunity of the discourse must be valued, the adaptation to the place, the moment, the mentality and the particular vision of the world that the blind people have.

We should not forget that to compose a successful text, we need two prior conditions: the first is to complete levels of form and content and the second is to attain the perfection of the text as well as the level of action at which the

[2] Niklas Luhman (1984). Soziale System. Grundriss einer allgemeinen Theorie: Frankfurt.

linguistic use is controlled. A good rhetorical discourse has well-adapted syntax to create a coherent and functional text with a great success in the communication.

VI. Quintilian Rhetoric and Audio Descriptive Text

As it is known, text is not the same thing as discourse. Text is any written piece with an explicit typographic limit, but the discourse is the result of the integration of the text, the voice, the gestures inserted into the framework of the rhetorical communicative act as a phenomenon[3]. In this sense, the text itself will be understood as a discursive rhetorical text in the Quintilian sense due to the five different phases of rhetorical discourse: invention, disposition, elocution, memory, and action.

We should remember that inventio is a complex rhetoric operation consisting of a method of discovering materials that prove the cause invented by the orator. Inventio is the first rhetoric operation[4] to obtain a good interpretation through the discourse, as Pujante (2003) argues is "the adventure of building a discourse is the adventure of interpreting a part of the world" (p.13), of making a meaning or a corpus of units of meanings, as the units organized by the audio describer in his/her text.

Steiner thought that rhetorical discourse created structures of values, meanings, and suppositions[5].

The second rhetoric operation studied by Quintilian is the dispositio, which consists of the presentation of the facts as we think they have occurred. It is the view of the past, the future or the present regarding certain facts. When we are studying, the facts described are the most effective indicators of this rhetorical operation. Cicero[6] pointed out three types of narration: i) description of the state of things, ii) an external digression from the cause, is a narration into the narration (when we narrate an example), and iii), the literary narration that contains the fibula, the story and the fiction.

Thus, the AD can lie within the limits of the type i) of Ciceronian narration, but using the other types also (e.g. when the audio describer uses the cinematographic techniques of flashback, etc.)[7].

With the dispositio, we realize that the discursive materials must be described within distinct limits by the three narrative virtues: clarity, shortness, and likeliness. With clarity, we make the narration completely comprehensible to a blind person. With shortness, we omit every superfluous thing, and, with the likeliness, we make all the narrative facts coherent in the total narration.

In summary, during the rhetorical act something occurs on two different levels: the level of expression and the level of the narrative structure (dispositio and elocutio, respectively). Today, theoretical studies have recovered the relationship between the meaning and the structure of the narrative elements: when a tale or a novel is understood as a complex sign and it is studied as the integration of the different levels to build complex meanings.

The importance of the dispositio is manifested in two versions: 1) the modern reflection on the narrative structures based on the disposition *in res* (thematic organization) and *verba* (narrative structures) and 2) the reflections that are born from it. The dispositio opens the way to the inventio, so that the audio describer must be able to be an intelligent man delivered with all his forces to the "disembowel of the confusing cause" as Pujante argues (2003). This observation should be directed to the looking for the materials and the order of the significant construction of all of them.

With the elocutio the facts created in the mind by the audio describer are expressed. Thus, the thoughts are stated with accuracy. During this phase the audio describer realizes that the expressive virtues: purity, clarity and ornamentation must always be fulfilled. Purity is a grammatical virtue. The objective of clarity is to be understood. And embellishment is to ornament the discourse thanks to the tropes of figures of diction or thoughts.

The memory is the 4th Quintilian operation but it may take into account only in the AD of the Theatre, and not always. The audio describer needs to sharpen his/her perception of the referential world to express it in the AD script. In this sense, he/she must to know previously in the performance any single signs, words or gestures, in case he/she has to improvise and remind the actors of what they forget.

And finally, the Actio is determined by the own reception of the Rhetoric discourse or the AD text by the blind audience.

VII. Tropes and Figures in the Audio Descriptive Script

The audio describer, as creator of the audio Rhetoric discourse must be able to distinguish between tropes and figures, knowing that the trope represents a mutation, a translation of meaning but not in the figure, because the figure consists on the full form of a sentence or thought, in a reasonable change, a change in the words or in the sense, depending on the manner of speaking.

[3] The definition we use for discourse is taken from David Pujante's Theory of Rhetoric because we consider it the most appropriate for our definition of a rhetoric AD text (Pujante, D. (2003*). Manual de Retórica*. Castalia Universidad: Madrid).
[4] The Quintilian Rhetoric operations are: *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria* and *actio.*
[5] Steiner, G. (1998). *Errata.* Madrid: Siruela: 13.
[6] Cicerón, M.T. (1976). *De Inventione*. London-Cambridge U.P.
[7] In the AD script of the Spanish film *Del rosa al amarillo*, we find the case of the William, the main character of the film when he dreams about the First World War. Or in the case of the film *Citizen Kane*, when the main character remembers his childhood, and the AD script uses the technique of the flashback to describe it.

Quintilian distinguished the tropes depending on their meaning or depending on the way of expressing their ornamentation of the text. He studied some tropes such as the metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, antonomasia, irony, periphrasis, hyperbole, emphasis and litotes. In this paper, we realized that they appeared in some of the AD scripts tagged by the software *TAGGETTI*. Therefore, we have discovered that the tropes are the usual elements of ornamentation use by the audio describer in his AD text. Let us see some examples from different films shown by the Spanish National Organization of the Blind People (ONCE) that works with us in the Project AMATRA. In this sense, we will offer firstly the definition of the tropes from a *Dictionary of literary terms*[8] and, secondly some examples of six tagged script where we have found these tropes.

Metaphor

Cuddon (1986) defines metaphor as "a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. It is the basic figure in poetry. A comparison is usually implicit; whereas in simile it is explicit" (p.391).

Examples of metaphors in the AD script of the Spanish film *Del rosa al Amarillo*[9]:

(1) William wakes up with the First World War on the Russian Snowed Steppe, German soldiers attack under a rain of bombs.

Metonymy

Cuddon (1986) defines metonymy as "a figure of speech in which the name of an attribute or a thing is substituted for the thing itself. Common examples are 'The Stage' for the theatrical profession; 'The Crown' for the monarchy" (p.394).

Examples of metonymy in the AD script of the film *French Connection*[10]:

(2) The Lincoln is parked next to him.

From the same script:

(3) In the morning Jimmy and Budd's Ford is parked near a bar called Ratner's.

Synecdoche

Cuddon (1986) defines synecdoche as "a figure of speech in which the part stands for the whole, as thus something else is understood within the thing mentioned" (p.676).

Examples of synecdoche in the AD script of the film *Ben Hur*[11]:

(5) Ben Hur came near the rest.

(6) He overtakes the sixth.

Antonomasia

Cuddon (1986) defines antonomasia as "a figure of speech in which an epithet, or the name of an office or dignity is substituted for a proper name" (p.50).

Examples of antonomasia in the AD script of the film *Ben Hur*:

(7) The Caid asks the Roman for patience.

(8) Mesala brings the knives closer to the Corinthian wheel.

Irony

Cuddon (1986) says that irony "In Plato's *Republic* where it has approximately the meaning of 'a glib' and underhand way of taking people in (…)" (p.335).

Examples of irony in the AD script of the film *Del rosa al amarillo*:

(9) There is a section of Spanish soldiers of the Blue Division with them who attacks in a chaotic way producing surrealist images, it was almost a joke.

Periphrasis

Cuddon (1986) defines periphrasis as "a roundabout way of speaking or writing; known also as circumlocution; thus, using many or very long words where a few or simple words will do" (p.500).

Examples of periphrasis in the AD script of the film *Chariots of fire*[12]:

(10) Eric gives a gift to a boy. Eric is sitting in front of a table. Next to him his family and the chancellor are sitting. He looks at a man next to him.

Hyperbole

Cuddon (1986) defines hyperbole as "a figure of speech which contains an exaggeration for emphasis" (p.316).

Examples of hyperbole in the AD script of the film *Del rosa al amarillo*:

(11) There is a soldier who attacks with an open umbrella to support the rain.

Emphasis

Cuddon (1986) defines emphasis as a "stress laid on a word or words to indicate special meaning or importance" (p.461).

Examples of Emphasis in the AD script of the film *Del rosa al amarillo*:

(12) The screen turns in pink colour. From a heart appears the image that makes William to dream: Margaret and he were walking down the beach.

[8] Cuddon, J.A. 1986. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*. London: Penguin Book.
[9] *Del rosa al amarillo* (Manuel Summers, 1963; AD: Javier Navarrete, 1998).
[10] *French Connection* (William Friedkin, 1971; AD: José Antonio Álvarez, 2003).
[11] *Ben Hur* (William Wyler, 1985; AD Antonio Vázquez, 2008).
[12] *Chariots of fire* (Hugo Hudson, 1981; AD: José Antonio Álvarez, 2005).

Litotes

Cuddon (1986) defines litotes as "a figure of speech which contains an understatement for emphasis, and is therefore the opposite of hyperbole. Often used in everyday speech (frequently with a negative assertion) and usually with laconic or ironic intentions. A stock instance is 'not bad' meaning 'very good' (p.366).

Examples of litotes in the AD script of the film *Chariots of Fire*:

(13) Eric runs quickly and he maintains the distance from his rivals. Nobody can catch him. He runs straight to the end.

At this point in the discourse created by the audio describer we find many examples of ornamentation by the tropes. The figures of diction and thought can be elements of ornamenting a rhetoric text, but in the case of the AD they do not appear so frequently. The figure in his literate sense is a form (of the body), and in this case is an expressive form, the oral one. In the traditional Rhetoric the figures were known as schema, which consists in a reasonable change of the meaning or the words from the vulgar mode to a simple one. The figures are: figures of diction, that affect the linguistic expression (schemata) and figures of thought. All are grammatical figures and they consist of morphological and syntactic devices, as the rhetoric figures which are figures of words but with a different grammatical device. But the repetition, the rest of the figures of diction or thought do not appear in the AD discourse.

VIII. Conclusions

The audio descriptive text can be and should be considered (in our opinion) to be modern rhetoric discourse, a coherent oral text and at the same time a functional act of speech. Giving some examples of the traditional Rhetoric and comparing them with the audio descriptive scripts, we find that four of the Quintilian rhetorical phases appear in the AD discourse as well. Thus, the audio describer using them in a script can draw the blind audience closer to the artistic text, which is intended to be a cohesive and coherent multimodal oral discourse in a rhetorical way.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 957-962, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.957-962

Self-correction among Iranian EFL Learners: An Investigation into their Preferences for Corrective Feedback

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Abstract—**This article reports on the self-correction of Iranian EFL learners, their preferences regarding corrective feedback and the speech act through which they correct their own mistakes. The participants were 160 EFL learners from different language institutes, who have been selected from females and males, adults and teenagers and three different proficiency levels- starter, intermediate and advanced. A questionnaire was designed which proposed a situation where a mistake is made. Based on the frequency and percentage of the options selected by the participants, the provided answers were analyzed and the influence of age, gender and proficiency level on the speech act of correction was discussed in detail. The obtained results suggested that Iranian EFL learners prefer self-correction to teacher and peer correction when they themselves notice a mistake in their utterances.**

Index Terms—**self-correction, speech act, corrective feedback**

I. Introduction

In most foreign language classrooms, the sociocultural context of the language is taken for granted. However, we must keep in mind that to achieve the communicative goal in ELT classrooms, not only the sociolinguistic ability of the learners but also their sociocultural knowledge must be given heed to by EFL/ ESL teachers. A major field which can help in this regard is that of 'speech acts'. Since learners need to use speech acts in all daily interactions, they must be taught how to produce, interpret and comprehend them (Johnstone, 2008).

'Speech Act' which is a "functional unit in communication" (Cohen, 1996, p. 384; Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 498), consists of actions such as requesting, apologizing, commanding etc. (Yule, 1996). Speech act theory, brought forth by the philosopher John Austin (1962) and later developed by John Searle (1969), "analyses the role of utterances in relation to the behavior of the speaker and hearer in interpersonal communication" (Crystal, 2003, p. 427). There are various speech acts with which learners need to be familiarized such as gratitude, apology, request etc.

One of the speech acts which requires to be investigated and has been left somehow untouched is 'the speech act of correction'. Therefore, in this study we are about to explore how Iranian EFL learners perform self-correction if they make a mistake, and whether they differ in their speech acts or their preferences if their age, gender, proficiency level or culture change.

II. Theoretical Framework

Correction is called for in any ELT class since learners consider correction as a source of improvement (Chaudron, 1988, as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001), but it is the teacher who determines the most proper time for correction, the best type of that and whether to correct or not. There are different types of correction (Brown, 2007; Celce-Murcia, 2001): Explicit/ Direct (Brown, 2007), Implicit/ Indirect (Richards & Schmidt, 2002), Peer-correction (Paulston & Bruder, 1976), Self-correction (Swain, 1985), Clarification request, Repetition, Recast, Metalinguistic feedback, Elicitation (Brown, 2007).

According to Brown (2007, p. 379), corrective feedback includes responses to learners' produced utterances which "repair" or "call attention" to their errors. When a mistake is made in ELT classrooms, it might be corrected by the teacher, the learner or others. Overall, the situations where learners make the correction are as follows:

Teacher makes a mistake (teacher-correction)
Peers make a mistake (peer-correction)
They themselves make a mistake (self-correction)

In the current study, we are dealing with the third type, and therefore it will be discussed in detail. Self-correction as defined by Sultana (2009, p. 11), is "the technique which engages students to correct their own errors". In other words, self-correction happens when "the speaker hears himself/ herself make a mistake in pronunciation, grammar, choice of words etc. and immediately corrects it" (Lam, 2006, p. 144).

A concept which is closely connected with self-correction is 'learner autonomy', i.e. when learners are encouraged to correct their own mistakes, not only they become independent, but also as Makino (1993, p. 340) puts it, they are given "an opportunity to consider and activate their linguistic competence, so that they can be active participants". Therefore, as many scholars have already suggested (e.g. Makino, 1993, Rief, 1990), teacher correction might be very helpful to some learners, but self-correction might be more beneficial to others and must be encouraged.

Havranek and Cesnik (2001) believe that when learners can perform self-correction, it means that they know the correct form or may have it as an alternative in mind. "What is missing is fine-tuning, confirmation of the correct alternative, and routine access to it", which is achieved through self-correction" (p. 107). So what teachers are required to do is to 'involve' learners, and therefore foster learning.

"A student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" is called 'uptake' (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p.49). Therefore, when a learner produces an erroneous utterance, it may be followed by teacher's feedback resulting in teacher-initiated correction which is uptake, or the error might be noticed and corrected by the learner himself/ herself which might lead to a self-initiated correction.

In recent learner-centered educational settings where collaborative learning is exercised and learner autonomy is highlighted, 'self-correction' is required and has been proved essential (Edwards, 2000; Rief, 1990; Sultana, 2009). However, as Sultana (2009) also suggests, the specific educational context and learners' demands must be examined carefully before the application of any method or technique.

Hitherto, plenty of research has been carried out on speech acts in English including various cross-cultural studies which have compared and contrasted English speech acts with those of other languages such as Persian, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, and Turkish. Speech acts such as compliment (e.g. Grossi 2009, Tang & Zhang 2008), refusal (e.g. Chang 2008, Ken, Lin & Tseng 2006), request (e.g. Kılıçkaya 2010, Jalilifar 2009), apology (e.g. Shariati & Chamani 2009, Afghari 2007), complaint (e.g. Young 2008, Umar 2006), and disagreement (e.g. Guodong & Jing 2005) have been dealt with so far.

As it is obvious, one of the noteworthy speech acts which has not captured researchers' interest is the speech act of correction, though it is quite significant in teaching. There are merely a few studies available in this realm such as those of Takahashi and Beebe (1993) and Pishghadam and Kermanshahi (in press).

The issue of 'correction' has also been dealt with a lot so far. Among copious research on correction, we can refer to that of Panova and Lyster (2002) who observed patterns of error treatment in ESL classrooms and tried to find a relationship between feedback type and learners' response. Many researchers highlighted the type of correction favored by teachers and learners and concluded that teachers prefer indirect correction (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2001). Some other researchers such as Vickers and Ene (2006) examined correction in writing who concluded that the most effective type is self-correction since it leads to greater grammatical accuracy. Still other scholars studied peer correction in writing and ESP courses or investigated its effectiveness (Edwards, 2000; Rollinson, 2005; Hansen & Liu, 2005).

What matters most in all mentioned situations is the speech act through which correction is made. However, unfortunately, few studies have analyzed the speech act of correction in depth so far and have focused on *learner correction* as well- Takahashi and Beebe (1993) and Pishghadam and Kermanshahi (in press). In these studies only two aspects of learner correction have been investigated and those are learners correcting teachers and learners correcting peers, not the aspect under study in the current research_ learners correcting themselves.

III. Purpose of the Study

As mentioned earlier, it seems that a great deal of research has been carried out in other realms of speech acts including refusals, requests, apologies, compliments, complaints etc. However, the speech act of *correction* had remained somehow untouched. Moreover, there are plenty of studies (e.g. Havranek & Cesnik, 2001; Rief, 1990; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977; Sultana, 2009) which studied the issue of self-correction, all focusing on the distinction between self and other-correction, advantages and disadvantages of giving feedback by the teacher or learners themselves, the relationship between learner characteristics and the effectiveness of corrective feedback. However, none of these researchers highlighted the *speech act* through which a learner corrects himself/ herself. Therefore, paucity of research in this realm makes this particular study significant, with the chief purpose of delving into ELT classrooms to discern how EFL learners self-correct, whether the speech act of correction differs among different age groups, whether males and females apply the same speech acts for correction and how culture influences the way learners give feedback.

IV. Methodology

A. Setting and Participants

This research was carried out in language institutes in Mashhad, a city in Iran, and a community sample of 160 EFL learners participated, comprising 80 males and 80 females aged between 15 and 45. In this study, age, gender, proficiency level are the three variables whose roles were to be examined. First, to determine the role of proficiency level in the speech act of correction, the sample comprises EFL learners of three different levels– starter (N=50), intermediate (N=50), and advanced (N=50). Second, the present study seeks to figure out whether age plays any crucial role in the corrective behavior or not; so among the participants 80 are adults and 80 are teenagers. Third, the effect of gender on the use of speech act of correction was a salient point to be investigated in this research.

B. Instrumentation

Among various methods of data collection on speech acts, the most straightforward one which will gather a lot of data at full pelt is through discourse completion questionnaires (Cohen, 1996).

For collecting data, a questionnaire was designed based on the guidelines provided by Takahashi and Beebe (1993), Pishghadam and Kermanshahi (in press), and personal teaching experiences. There is a situation where a mistake is made by the learner himself/ herself and the participants must pen how they would react to their own mistake. Four options were provided to aid the participants, and a space to write their opinion if it was not included, as it follows:

Situation

You are a student in an English class. You make an example and at the end you realize you made a mistake; instead of 'they had gone' you have said 'they have gone'.

A) I would probably say nothing. ☐

B) '*Oh, no excuse me… They had gone*'. ☐

C) I'd ask my friend '*was it correct*'? ☐

D) I'd wait for the teacher to correct and then I'd say '*yes*'. ☐

☐ Something else: ……..

The content validity of this questionnaire was substantiated through a pilot study in which 60 EFL learners took part. On the recommendations of an expert in this field and based on the feedback received from participants, questions were revised and ambiguities were removed.

C. Procedure

In October (2010), at the beginning of a new semester in language institutes, the process of data collection started and it ended in December (2010) after 3 months. The designed questionnaires were distributed among EFL learners in different language institutes. Their classes were interrupted for 10 minutes by kind permission of their teachers; some instructions and needed guidance were provided by the researchers before responding. Then, the participants had about 3 minutes to read the situation and options and to decide on their responses. The questionnaires were collected afterwards to be analyzed.

The options selected by the respondents were transformed into tables displaying the frequency and percentage of each, and three tables were compiled, each focusing on one of the variables under study. Then, the tables were analyzed qualitatively through comparing and contrasting the options. The participants of each group – males and females, adults and teenagers, starter, intermediate and advanced learners – were compared and the results were discussed.

V. Results

In the designed questionnaire, learners are asked to mention how they would react if they make a mistake in answering a question, and there are four options to be checked off in this situation. Based on the collected data, the influence of the three different variables are to be examined (gender, age and proficiency level). For the first part of the analysis, we are to demonstrate whether females' and males' self-correction differs, and if it does what the differences are, i.e. what the role of gender in self-correction is.

TABLE I.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ANSWERS TO EACH OPTION CONSIDERING GENDER

Variables / **Options**	**A**		**B**		**C**		**D**	
male	5	3.1%	43	26.8%	17	10.6%	19	11.8%
female	5	3.1%	58	36.2%	9	5.6%	17	10.6%

According to Table 1, males and females do not differ in the priority they have given to the options. Both groups selected option 'B' more than any other option (36.2% of females and 26.8% of males):

*Oh, no excuse me… 'They **had** gone'.*

This indicates that no matter what the gender is, learners try to self-correct when realizing a mistake in their utterance. And they might add exclamations such as "oh, no!" or "excuse me" to show they have realized the mistake.

The second option selected by most male and female learners is option 'D'. 11.8% of males and 10.6% of females opted for this option in the second place:

I'd wait for the teacher to correct and then I'd say *'yes'*.

It can be inferred that Iranian EFL learners try to correct themselves in the first place, if not, they would rely on the teacher to do that and they would merely confirm. Less number of them rely on peers for correction (option C), and very few of them tend not to correct at all. The summary of the results obtained for the first part are displayed below:

males	B >D >C >A
females	B >D >C >A

TABLE II.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ANSWERS TO EACH OPTION CONSIDERING AGE

Variables / Options	**A**		**B**		**C**		**D**	
adult	4	2.5%	53	33.1%	13	8.1%	14	8.75%
teenager	4	2.5%	49	30.6%	13	8.1%	21	13.1%

The obtained results for part two -the influence of age on self-correction- seem to be exactly the same as that of the previous part with minute differences in percentage of each. Both adults and teenagers opted for option 'B' more than the other ones (33.1% of males and 30.6% of females). The second favored option by both groups is again option 'D', the third one 'C' and the last one 'A'.

Up to this point we can deduce that neither Iranian male and female EFL learners differ in the way they self-correct, nor adults and teenagers, i.e. gender and age do not play any significant role in the process of self-correction by Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, it is inferred that they mostly tend to correct themselves at the first onset, and will rely on the teacher in the second place or their peers at the end. The summary of results about the effect of age is displayed below:

Adults	B >D >C >A
Teenagers	B >D >C >A

TABLE III.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ANSWERS TO EACH OPTION CONSIDERING LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY

Variable / Options	**A**		**B**		**C**		**D**	
starter	3	2%	31	20.6%	10	6.6%	12	8%
intermediate	1	0.6%	35	23.3%	8	5.3%	10	6.6%
advanced	5	3.3%	31	20.6%	10	6.6%	11	7.3%

According to Table 3, most starters (20.6%), intermediate learners (23.3%) and advanced students (20.6%) selected option 'B' (self-correction) as the most favored one. The next selected options are 'D' (reliance on teacher), 'C' (reliance on peers) and 'A' (no correction) in sequence. Therefore, it is inferred that Iranian EFL learners at any proficiency level, seem to correct themselves when noticing a mistake, that is even if they are starters, they first rely on themselves and then on the teacher or classmates. The results of the role of proficiency level in self-correction are summarized below:

Starter	B >D >C >A
Intermediate	B >D >C >A
Advanced	B >D >C >A

Overall, based on the results of the current study, age, gender and proficiency level do not play any major role in Iranian EFL learners' self-correction, that is no matter what the age, gender and proficiency level are, most of them prefer to correct themselves if they make a mistake.

VI. DISCUSSION

According to the presented findings in the previous section, Iranian EFL learners tend to self-correct when they notice a mistake in their utterance, independent from their age, gender or level of proficiency. This might be closely connected to the idea of 'learner autonomy'. They try to be independent from the teacher or peers when repairing.

A salient point to be discussed is the distinction between 'self-correction' and 'other-correction'. The participants of the current study seemed to be more interested in the first one rather than the latter. As Schegloff, et al. (1977, p. 361) define them, self-correction is done "by the speaker of that which is being corrected" and other-correction is "correction by some 'other' ". In the current setting, the others are the teacher and peers; therefore, it may be due to the growth of the idea of 'learner autonomy' in educational context of Iran, or some innate characteristics of Iranian learners such as 'self-reliance', that they mostly prefer to rely on themselves rather than the 'others'.

The role of culture and environment can also be highlighted here. Iranian EFL learners seemed to be interested in self-correction and self-reliance, so this is open to more research to examine whether it is the same in other cultures, whether other EFL learners prefer self-correction to teacher correction and peer correction if they notice a mistake in their utterance or not. And how they would correct themselves would be of great importance, i.e. the question arises whether or not they would apply similar speech act of correction.

The process of self-correction is closely connected to another issue, i.e. the initiation of the correction. Sometimes it is self-initiated and sometimes 'other-initiated'. If the learner makes a mistake, the teacher repeats or highlights the erroneous part in some way, and the learner self-corrects, it would be teacher-initiated. However, as Havranek and Cesnik (2001) indicate, "when the learner is able to self-correct he probably already has at least partial knowledge of the correct structure or is considering it as an alternative", so sometimes the correction is self-initiated. In the proposed situation of the current study, the latter type is suggested, i.e. the learners themselves notice there is a mistake, and therefore the results are confined to that.

As it has been previously mentioned, regarding the interlocutors in an ELT classroom, there are three types of correction for a mistake by learners: teacher correction, peer correction and self-correction. Though the first two types have been proved helpful (Pishghadam & Kermanshahi, in press), there are also some disadvantages with them. When the teacher corrects learners, his/ her authoritative role is reinforced and that is in contrast with cooperative learning, and when peers correct their friends it may lead to "open conflict" between them as they are "all highly competitive in nature" (Edwards, 2000, p. 294).

No method of correction by itself has been proved effective, and self-correction is not an exception. However, there are some positive points about it which motivates teachers in its application. When learners are involved in something they will learn it better than the time they are passive, and as Havranek and Cesnik (2001, p. 107) put it, in the process of self-correction the learner is "actively involved and must make an effort in order to correct himself", and therefore it will lead to learning. Benjamin Franklin's quotation can well summarize the mentioned points: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

Examining the results of this study, several implications are put forward; first, it will bring about consciousness-raising of those involved in EFL/ ESL learning or teaching through informing them about self-correction and learners' tendencies in different ages, levels or gender. Second, this study will be of great importance to cross-cultural studies which aim to compare different cultures and figure out the sources of cross-cultural miscommunication or failure. Though the subject of self-correction has been previously discussed, the speech act through which learners correct themselves, and how age, gender and proficiency level influence this speech act proposes a lot more to write about.

As it was mentioned before, when learners make a mistake, the three types of correction involved are: *teacher correction*, *peer correction* and *self-correction*. In previous studies (Pishghadam & Kermanshahi, in press), the first and second type of correction were examined among Iranian EFL learners and they were compared to other groups, and in the current research, the third type – self correction- was studied. These were all correction situations where learners correct the teacher, their peers or themselves; however, further research is called for to examine the types of correction applied by the teachers as well, i.e. teachers correcting students, colleagues or themselves.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 963-968, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.963-968

Current Language Attitudes of Mainland Chinese University Students

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***Abstract*—This paper reports on an investigation of Chinese university EFL learners' attitudes towards English and Chinese in relation to their motivation to learn the language and awareness of their ethnic identity. 302 university students answered a 22-item Language Attitudes Questionnaire and 112 of them answered four open-ended questions. Analyses of the data reveal that the participants held positive attitudes towards English, were motivated to learn the language, and valued their association with English-speaking culture and people, meanwhile considering their native language superior to English. Thus the paper concludes that the students had a sound sense of Chinese identity with an appreciation of the value of the English language.**

***Index Terms*—language attitudes, EFL, motivation, ethnic identity**

I. Introduction

With globalization, communication and interaction between people from various cultures and ethnics increase rapidly. Since language plays a major role in the development of social identity in general (Eastman, 1985) and ethnic identity in particular (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977; Giles & Johnson, 1981, 1987), research on attitudes towards a second/foreign language (SL/FL) and the mother tongue has caught increasing attention (Ibarraran, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2008; Lin & Detaramani, 1998; Patri & Pennington, 1998; Pennington & Yue, 1994; Pierson, Fu, & Lee, 1980). As Gudykunst and Schmidt (1987, p. 157) said, "language and ethnic identity are related reciprocally, i.e. language usage influences the formation of ethnic identity, but ethnic identity also influences language attitudes and language usage".

With the rapid economic development in China, Chinese people's interactions with English-speaking people from various countries have dramatically increased. Adolescents and young adults in contemporary China have a strong desire to learn English because they believe that being able to use English will help them find lucrative employment in the future or because English is necessary for tertiary education (Liu, 2006, 2007a; Yang, Liu, & Wu, 2010). Knowing about their attitudes towards English and their mother tongue at present is important in understanding their ideas about their ethnic identity and adopting appropriate language policies in education in the future. For this purpose, the present paper aims to describe the attitudes towards English and Chinese held by Chinese university students.

II. Literature Review

Attitudes and motivation often interact with each other and play a paramount role in language learning (Dörnyei, 1990, 2001; Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Krashen, 1982; Liu, 2009; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Just as Richards (1998, p. 308) claimed, "Students' attitudes towards their language course and their teacher can greatly affect their desire to learn and their classroom participation; their attitudes towards the language itself can shape their reasons for learning and the strategies they use; …". Numerous studies (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Liu, 2009; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995) have confirmed that positive attitudes towards a language often lead to higher motivation to learn and higher proficiency in the language.

As this research area has grown, more and more researchers turn their attention to the relationship of learners' attitudes towards a SL/FL and their mother tongue, the role of the language and their own ethnic identity (Giles et al., 1977; Giles & Johnson, 1987; Ibarraran et al., 2008; Kwok & Chan, 1972; Patri & Pennington, 1998; Pennington & Yue, 1994). Kwok and Chan (1972) found that many Hong Kong university students felt a knowledge of English to be essential to the securing of a lucrative position while disdaining the use of English except under compulsion. To investigate the relationship between language attitudes and English attainment, Pierson et al. (1980) developed a 5-point Likert Direct Attitudes Questionnaire with items related to politics, interethnic relations, career, and education. They administered the questionnaire to 466 secondary school students in Hong Kong, and found six factors were significantly related to English proficiency: 1) freedom of language choice, 2) desire to learn English, 3) lack of self-confidence in

using English, 4) approbation for using English, 5) discomfort over Chinese speakers using English, and 6) English as a mark of education. Their study indicated that Hong Kong students saw use of English and Western values as a threat to Chinese identity. Pennington and Yue (1994) modified the Questionnaire and applied it in their research on about 285 students from non-fee paying schools in Hong Kong and found no such association. The researchers attributed the difference to sampling and methodology deployed in the two studies.

Administering Pennington and Yue's (1994) questionnaire to 250 Cantonese native speakers from Forms 5-7 from families of the middle income bracket, Axler, et al. (1998) found that: 1) the students did not feel that the use of English was associated with a threat to their ethnolinguistic identity or that English should not be the medium of instruction in Hong Kong schools, 2) the students were more willing to acknowledge the social and instrumental value of English than were their counterparts in 1980, and 3) it confirmed Pennington and Yue's (1994) finding. Thus, the researchers claimed that a change in attitudes of Hong Kong students occurred during the past two decades. Also, most of the findings were consistent with those in Patri and Pennington's (1998) investigation of the language attitudes of 40 Indian students attending middle schools in Hong Kong via the same questionnaire. Patri and Pennington (1998) found that the Indian students expressed similar but more positive attitudes towards English than did their Chinese counterparts of the generation: instrumental value of English to be used as the medium of instruction and for material success, a strong motivation to learn English, high confidence in speaking English, English being associated more with education than with other social values, English being perceived not as a threat to their native language. These suggest, according to the researchers, that the participants had a healthy sense of Indian identity and appreciated the value of English. The pattern, as believed by the researchers, could imply an acculturative style of cultural adaptation in terms of multiple group orientations.

Ibarraran et al. (2008) examined the language attitudes held by 125 local and immigrant secondary school students in the Basque Country in Spain. The results showed that both groups held rather negative attitudes towards Basque, but very positive attitudes towards Spanish. The immigrant students' attitudes toward English were far more positive than those of their local counterparts. And their attitudes towards their own languages were the most positive. Thus, the researchers claimed that a language awareness component should be included in the Basque secondary education curriculum.

Much research has also been done on Mainland Chinese EFL learners, often via Gardner's attitudes questionnaire (1985), which has revealed that Chinese students often hold positive attitudes toward English and are more instrumentally motivated to learn the language (Hao, Liu, & Hao, 2004; Liu, 2007a; Yang et al., 2010; Zhang & Hu, 2008). For example, 30 Chinese postgraduate students studying in America participated in Zhang and Hu's (2008) study of second language learners' attitudes towards English varieties. The results showed that the learners were positive towards the varieties of English they had been exposed to and their attitudes were not related to the understandability of the passage delivered by the speakers of the three varieties. Nevertheless, few studies on the relationship of language attitudes and ethnic identity are situated in Chinese EFL contexts. To fill in the gap, the present study sought to examine Chinese university students' attitudes towards English and Chinese in relation to their motivation to learn the language and awareness of their ethnic identity using the Language Attitudes Questionnaire adapted from Axler et al. (1998).

III. Research Design

Participants. 302 (174 female and 128 male) students from five top-rank universities in Beijing participated in the present study. With an age range of 19 to 22, the participants came from various disciplines such as business management, civil engineering and environmental engineering.

Instrument. The Language Attitudes Questionnaire used in Axler et al. (1998) was modified to better fit the present situation. The original item 1 "It is a good thing to have English as the main official language of Hong Kong" was changed to be "It is a good thing that English is enjoying a high status in Mainland China" since English is not an official language of the country; and the original item 15 "My history, geography, and mathematics textbooks should be written or translated into Chinese" was deleted since it is not true in the present situation. Thus resulted in the 22-item 5-point Likert questionnaire ranging from "1 = Absolutely Disagree" to "5 = Absolutely Agree". And the items could be grouped into six categories, as done in Patri and Pennington (1998): (1) support of the high status of English (items 1, 6, 17, 21), (2) personal commitment to English (items 15, 19), 3) intrinsic/integrative motivation (items 7, 9, 11, 18, 22), (4) confidence in using English (items 8, 16), (5) association of English with education (items 2, 4, 13, and (6) ethnic identity (items 3, 5, 10, 12, 14, 20).

To allow for the possibility of 'cross-cultural accommodation' (Bond & Yang, 1982), the questionnaire was worded in both mandarin Chinese and English, as done in Axler et al. (1998). In addition, four open-ended questions were added: 1) what do you think of the status of English in Mainland China? 2) Is it helpful to the development of China if the status of English is raised? How? 3) Which of the two do you think is more important to a Chinese, to learn English well or Chinese well? Why? and 4) what do you think of the present enthusiasm for learning English in Mainland China?

Procedure. About 400 students in five universities in Beijing were invited to complete the questionnaire online in 10 minutes and answer the online open-ended questions in 10 minutes as well if they were willing to. Finally, 302 collected questionnaires were valid for further analyses; and 112 students answered all the four open-ended questions.

Data analysis. The survey data were analyzed in terms of mean, standard deviation and rank to reveal the general pattern of the students' attitudes towards English and Chinese. Then, within-group patterns were further examined. The responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed according to the themes that occurred, with frequency and percentage being counted to indicate, for example, how many participants believed that Chinese was superior to English and how many held that learning English was helpful to China's development. Results of these qualitative data were integrated into the discussion of those of quantitative data.

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Overall Pattern

To reveal the overall pattern of the students' attitudes towards English and Chinese, the mean and standard deviation of each item in the questionnaire were calculated. From the means, the items were placed in rank order. The results are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1:
LANGUAGE ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE
Responses for Chinese University Students (N = 302)

Statements	Mean	SD	Rank
1. It is a good thing that English is enjoying a high status in Mainland China. 1. 英语在中国大陆地位很高，这是一件好事情。	3.19	1.19	12
2. English is the mark of an educated person. 2. 英语是人受过教育的标志。	2.76	1.32	15
3. When using English, I do not feel that I am Chinese any more. 3. 说英语的时候，我感觉自己不再是个中国人。	1.61	.89	21
4. If I use English, I will be praised and approved of by my family, relatives, and friends. 4. 如果我使用英语，我会得到家人、亲戚和朋友的赞许。	3.10	1.13	13
5. At times I fear that by using English I will become like a foreigner. 5. 有时，我害怕使用英语会使自己变得像个外国人。	1.79	.97	20
6. I should not be forced to learn English. 6. 我不应该被迫去学英语。	3.73	1.21	4
7. To read English magazines is a kind of enjoyment. 7. 阅读英文杂志是种享受。	3.24	1.08	11
8. I do not feel awkward when using English. 8. 使用英语时，我并不感到尴尬。	3.52	1.11	7
9. I love conversing with Westerners in English. 9. 我喜欢用英文与西方人交谈。	3.52	1.12	8
10. The Chinese language is superior to English. 10. 汉语优于英语。	3.65	1.32	5
11. I like to see English-speaking films. 11. 我喜欢看英文电影。	3.96	1.06	3
12. If I use English, it means that I am not patriotic. 12. 如果我用英语，说明我不爱国。	1.46	.85	22
13. If I use English, my status is raised. 13. 如果我用英语，我的地位也提升了。	2.18	1.08	19
14. I feel uncomfortable when hearing one Chinese speaking to another in English. 14. 听到两个中国人用英文交谈，我感觉不舒服。	3.37	1.37	10
15. I wish that I could speak fluent and accurate English. 15. 我希望自己能说口流利且准确的英文。	4.54	.82	1
16. I feel uneasy and lack confidence when speaking English. 16. 说英语时，我感到不安，且缺乏信心。	2.96	1.23	14
17. The use of English is one of the most crucial factors which have contributed to the success of the prosperity and development in today's Mainland China. 17. 使用英语是使中国大陆目前繁荣发展最重要的因素之一。	2.70	1.23	16
18. The English language sounds very nice. 18. 英语很好听。	3.45	1.09	9
19. I would take English even if it were not a compulsory subject in school. 19. 即使不是必修课，我也会选修英文课。	3.59	1.06	6
20. I feel uneasy when hearing a Chinese speaking English. 20. 听到中国人说英语，我感觉不自在。	2.37	1.08	17
21. English should not be a medium of instruction in any school in Mainland China. 21. 在中国大陆的任何学校，英语都不应该成为一种课堂教学语言。	2.19	1.10	18
22. The command of English is very helpful in understanding foreigners and their culture. 22. 运用英文，对了解外国人及其文化很有帮助。	4.31	.89	2

Based on the means and rank orders, the two highest ranking items were 15 and 22 with a mean of more than 4.30, indicating strong agreement. With a mean range of 3.10 to 3.96, items 11, 6, 10, 19, 8, 9, 18, 14, 7, 1, and 4 were top-ranking items, indicating moderate agreement. Items 16, 2, 17, 20, 21, and 13 (mean range: 2.18-2.96) ranked low

in the questionnaire, implying moderate disagreement; and the remaining items (items 3, 5, and 12) scored below 1.79, reflective of strong disagreement. The responses show that the participants strongly wished to be fluent and accurate users of English and strongly believed the command of English to be helpful in understanding foreigners and their culture. Meanwhile, they moderately agreed that it was a good thing for English to enjoy a high status in Mainland China, that a good user of English would be praised, that they loved to use English, that Chinese was superior to English, that English was nice, and that they would learn English even if not required. Nevertheless, they strongly denied the feeling of being not Chinese or patriotic when using English. These results were largely consistent with those in Axler et al.'s (1998) study of Hong Kong secondary school students but only moderately conformant with those in Patri and Pennington's (1998) of Indian secondary school students in Hong Kong. Like their younger peers in Hong Kong (Axler et al., 1998; Patri & Pennington, 1998), these university participants did not feel that the use of English was associated with a threat to their ethnolinguistic identity, while they desired to learn and use the language well and were willing to acknowledge the social and instrumental value of the language.

B. Within-group Patterns

The within-group patterns are described in the six categories, as described by Pierson et al. (1980) and done in Patri and Pennington (1998).

1. Support of status of English

Four items (items 1, 6, 17 and 21) were included in this category. Responses to these items (mean range: 2.70-3.73 as shown in Table 1) suggest that these participants were generally supportive of the high status of English (item 1) and of English as the medium of instruction (item 21) in Mainland China, although they generally disagreed that the use of English greatly contributed to the prosperity and development of today's China (item 17) and more than half of them believed they should not be forced to learn the language (item 6).

This result is generally consistent with the responses to the open-ended questions. Among the 112 collected answers, the status of English in Mainland China was believed to be low by 13 (11.6%), ordinary by 4 (3.6%), and high by 95 (84.8%) of the participants. Among the 95 respondents who maintained that English enjoyed a high status in Mainland China, 26 (27.4%) held that it surpassed Chinese in importance, 9 (9.5%) believed it was as important as the latter, and 60 (63.2%) claimed that it was inferior to Chinese. As to the benefits English could bring to China, 2 (1.8%) of these respondents denied any use of English, 4 (3.6%) believed it to be both beneficial and detrimental, and 2 (1.8%) believed it to be harmful to China in the long run mainly due to brain drain. The majority (102/91.1%) maintained that English contributed to the development in China in international communication, global cooperation, intercultural exchange, economic development, education, knowledge expansion and upgrading, and business. They held that because of the use of English, China had came to know the world better and make herself better understood by the world as well.

2. Personal commitment to English

This group had two items: 15 (mean = 4.54) and 19 (mean = 3.59), the positive responses to which show a strong orientation to English, implying that the students not only desired to know English well but also were motivated to take actions to improve their English, as reported in several studies of similar students (Axler et al., 1998; Liu, 2007a; Hao et al., 2004; Yang et al., 2010).

3. Intrinsic/Integrative motivation

Items 7, 9, 11, 18, and 22 were associated with intrinsic and integrative motivation to learn the English language (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Gardner, 1985; Patri & Pennington, 1998; Yang et al., 2010). The fairly positive responses to these items, with means ranging from 3.24 to 4.31 as reported in Table 1, demonstrate that the respondents agreed that it was an enjoyment to read English magazines, to watch English-speaking films, and to converse with westerners in English. This indicates that the participants learned English for its own sake rather than only for fulfilling instrumental goals or the expectations of others, slightly different from the finding in Liu (2007a) and Yang et al. (2010). This might be accounted for by the fact that all the participants were studying in Beijing where students normally have more access and exposure to English as well as more opportunities to use the language.

4. Confidence in using English

This category consisted of two items: 8 (mean = 3.52) and 16 (mean = 2.96). The responses to these two items were implicative of moderate confidence in speaking English, which is both cause and effect of frequent use (Balla & Pennington, 1996; Lai, 1993; Liu, 2006, 2007b). This might be because English, as a foreign language, is still rarely used in the students' daily life despite their more exposure and access to the language in Beijing.

5. Association of English with education

This cluster had three items: 2 (mean = 2.76), 4 (mean = 3.10), and 13 (mean = 2.18). The responses to these items indicate that English was less associated with education for these students than for their peers in Hong Kong reported in Axler et al. (1998) and Patri and Pennington (1998). They did not believe that English was the mark of education or that one's status was raised if she/he used English. It seems that these participants were fairly aware of the status of English as a foreign language in Mainland China and the predominant role and use of Chinese as the majority language, as happened in Ibarraran et al. (2008).

6. Ethnic identity

This category included six items: 3 (mean = 1.61), 5 (mean = 1.79), 10 (mean = 3.65), 12 (mean = 1.46), 14 (mean = 3.37), and 20 (mean = 2.37). The responses to these items show that the respondents generally held the view that their

mother tongue (Chinese) was superior to English and felt uncomfortable when hearing one Chinese speaking to another in English. Meanwhile, they vetoed the other four items indicating the denial of Chinese identity or being patriotic by using English. This finding is further supported by their responses to the open-ended questions. Except that 3 (2.7%) and 30 (26.8%) of the 112 respondents believed that English was more important and that English was as important as Chinese respectively, 79 (70.5%) of them maintained that Chinese, as the mother tongue, was definitely (much) more important than English. Hence, when asked to comment on the present enthusiasm in learning English, although 89 (79.5%) of them considered it to be meaningful, they, as well as the rest of the 112 respondents, held that not every Chinese should learn English, that Chinese learners should not spend too much energy on the language, and that Chinese should never be ignored at any time. All these clearly manifest that English was not seen as a threat to their own identity by the participants, as found in Axler et al. (1998) and Patri & Pennington (1998). As claimed by Hall and Gudykunst (1987), competence in an out-group language may increase with strong in-group identification. As all the participants were native Chinese studying in Beijing, English was hence unlikely to be perceived as a threat to their native language or their ethnic identity.

V. Conclusion

As illustrated above, the present study reveals that the participants were positively oriented towards English, were motivated to learn the language, and valued their association with English-speaking culture and people. Nevertheless, they considered their native language superior to English and were not praised by their families for being able to associate with English culture and language, as found in Patri and Pennington's (1998) study of Indians in Hong Kong. This pattern of attitudes illustrates a sound sense of Chinese identity with an appreciation of the value of the English language, as found in Ibarraran et al. (2008) and Patri and Pennington (1998). These results confirm that there is a communal social identity that involves support for and knowledge of English in China. They also imply that the present policies concerning English education in China is appropriate.

Meanwhile, it is worth noting that all the participants of the present study came from Beijing. Their attitudes towards English might be more positive since they normally had more access and exposure to the language and had more opportunities to use it. A different picture might be revealed if university students in other parts of China were involved. The pattern may also be different to younger students such as middle school students. Thus, future studies are called for to compare the attitudes towards English and Chinese held by different groups of Chinese students with diverse backgrounds.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 969-976, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.969-976

A Comparative Study of Intuitive-imitative and Analytic-linguistic Approaches towards Teaching English Vowels to L2 Learners

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***Abstract*—In spite of the importance of pronunciation in L2 learning, its training has remained largely neglected in the field of English language teaching (ELT) and does not have a secure place in most L2 curricula (Setter & Jenkins, 2005). On the importance of teaching speech features, Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) introduce the intuitive-imitative approach, an approach that deals with listening and imitating the sounds and rhythms of an L2 without explicit teaching. It can be done by using audiotapes, videos, and computer programs. On the other hand, a majority of L2 teachers use the analytic-linguistic approach, an approach in which they use explicit and structured teaching of speech features by articulatory descriptions, charts of speech, phonetic alphabet, and vowel charts. This study was an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of intuitive-imitative and analytic-linguistic approaches on teaching pure vowels and diphthongs, and also, sought to examine whether elementary L2 learners respond differently to the abovementioned approaches. The participants were 40 Iranian L2 learners attending a language school in Isfahan in the form of 2 elementary classes. In one class, English vowels were taught through intuitive-imitative approach, and in the other one, through analytic-linguistic approach. Then, the participants audio-recorded data were given to an English native-speaker instructor to be rated. The results of the paired samples *t* test and comparing means indicated that the L2 learners taught through the intuitive-imitative approach had a better pronunciation in diphthongs, and accordingly, the L2 learners taught through the analytic-linguistic approach outperformed in pure vowels. The study could have some implications for L2 research and pedagogy that will be discussed throughout the paper.**

***Index Terms*—intuitive-imitative approach, analytic-linguistic approach, pure vowels, diphthongs**

I. Introduction

While pronunciation and the role it plays are important in getting our meaning across, both transactionally and interactionally, according to Kelly (2000), it is the Cinderella area of L2 teaching. On the definition of pronunciation, Schmitt (2002) defines it as "a term used to capture all aspects of how we employ speech sounds for communication" (p. 219). Moreover, there are some reasons which put emphasis on the importance of pronunciation in learning an L2. On the importance of this neglected area of L2 teaching, Fraser (2006) states that, first, it enhances comprehensibility. Second, when the finite number of sounds, sound clusters, and intonation patterns are mastered, it enables an infinite use. Third, it is of great assistance to those who have integrative motivation, because with native-like pronunciation they will not be marked as foreigners. So, having good pronunciation is important because it is a part of successful communication.

Jones (2002) classifies pronunciation into segmental features (i.e., vowels and consonants) and suprasegmental (prosodic) features like stress, intonation, pitch, and rhythm. Research in different fields of L2 learning and teaching has shown that the use of explicit instruction can have useful effects in learning (Murphy, 2003). According to Fraser and Perth (1999), most L2 teachers now feel that explicit pronunciation teaching is essential.

According to Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996), three approaches to pronunciation instruction are generally proposed. These are the intuitive-imitative approach, the analytic-linguistic approach, and the integrative approach. These approaches combine traditional methods and modern techniques.

In the intuitive-imitative approach, as proposed by Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996), L2 learners listen and imitate the rhythms and sounds of an L2 without any explicit instruction. Particular technologies are used today for this purpose, such as audiotapes, videos, computer-based programs, and Web sites. On the other hand, in the analytic-linguistic approach, L2 learners are provided with explicit information on pronunciation (e.g., the phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, and vocal charts).

In a similar vein, Lee (2008) believes that "in integrative approach, pronunciation is viewed as an integral component of communication, rather than an isolated drill" (p. 1). Pronunciation is practiced within meaningful task-based activities. In fact, L2 learners use pronunciation-focused listening activities to facilitate the learning of pronunciation. Also, Lee (2008) claims that there is more focus on the suprasegmentals of stress, rhythm, and intonation as practiced in a discourse beyond the phoneme and word level.

Regarding the integrative approach, Morely (1994) believes that in the aforementioned approach the primary goals of pronunciation teaching are for the L2 learner to develop intelligible speech and be able to communicate in the L2. In this approach, Morely (1991, as cited in Chen, 2007) identifies basic pronunciation goals of functional, intelligibility, functional communicability, increased self-confidence, speech monitoring ability, and speech modification strategies. According to Morely (1994, as cited in Lee, 2008, p. 2), there is a dual-focus oral communication program in which the microlevel instruction is focused on linguistic competence by practice of segmental and suprasegmentals, and the macrolevel pays attention to global elements of communicability, with the goal of developing discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence by using language for communicative purposes.

Derwing and Munro (2005) believe that pronunciation is a multifaceted experience affected by biological, social, and psychological factors which make this skill complex. It is argued that with good pronunciation, a speaker is intelligible despite other errors; with poor pronunciation, a speaker can be very difficult to understand, despite accuracy in other areas (Fraser, 2000).

There are two basic assumptions about the learning of L2 pronunciation. The first, based on the critical period hypothesis (CPH), claims that it is virtually impossible for adults to acquire native-like pronunciation in an L2. The second, arising primarily from the work of Krashen (1982), insists that pronunciation is an acquired skill and focused instruction is useless, so pronunciation cannot be affected by focused practice and the teaching of formal rules. In a similar vein, Jones (2002) argues that factors that mostly affect the learning of L2 phonology (e.g., L1, interaction with native speakers, and motivation) seem to be those on which L2 teachers and classrooms have the least influence.

On the other hand, there are two different perspectives towards pronunciation teaching. According to Harmer (2001), the first perspective assumes that teaching of pronunciation not only makes L2 learners aware of different sounds and sound features but can also improve their speaking immediately. In contrast, the second perspective presupposes a small role for L2 teachers to influence the natural course of phonological development and is rooted in ineffectiveness of pronunciation teaching.

Some reasons may lead to the controversies among L2 teachers in teaching pronunciation. Fraser (2002) believes that this uncertainty about the way of teaching may arise from the selection of pronunciation features, the ordering of the features selected, the type(s) of the discourse to practice pronunciation, undesirability of L2 learners, and lack of enough time. Several empirical studies (e.g., Bruck & Genessee, 1995; Catford & Pisoni, 1970; Cicero & Royer, 1995; Couper, 2006; MuraKawa, 1981; Neufeld, 1987; Verhoeven, 1994) have shown positive effects for explicit teaching of different aspects of pronunciation like segments, suprasegmentals, and fluency.

The learning of English pronunciation has been the subject of investigation for a long time. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) have illustrated several pronunciation teaching approaches ever since L2 teaching started. The approaches are presented in Table 1:

TABLE 1.
PRONUNCIATION TEACHING APPROACHES

Years	**Approach**		**Definition**
late 1800s & late 1900s	Direct Method		Teachers provided L2 learners with a model for native-like speech. By listening and then imitating the modeler, L2 learners improved their pronunciation.
1940s-1950s	Audio-Lingual Method in the US & Oral Approach in the UK		Pronunciation was taught explicitly from start, and L2 learners imitated or repeated after their teacher or a recording model.
1960s	Cognitive Approach		This de-emphasized pronunciation in favor of grammar and vocabulary
1970s	Silent Way		L2 learners focused on the sound system without having to learn a phonetic alphabet. Attention was on the accuracy of sounds and structures of the L2 from the outset.
	Community Language Learning		The pronunciation syllabus was primarily student-initiated and designed. The approach was imitative.
Mid-late 1970s (1980s-today)	Communicative Approach		The ultimate goal was communication. Teaching pronunciation was urgent and it was necessary in oral communication. Techniques to teach pronunciation were listening and imitating, phonetic training, minimal pair drill, and so on.
20th century	Grammar Translation & Reading-Based Approaches		Oral communication was not the primary goal of L2 instruction. Therefore, little attention was given to speaking and almost none to pronunciation.
	Naturalistic Methods	Total Physical Response	L2 learners began to speak when they were ready. L2 teachers were tolerant of L2 learners' errors.
		Natural Approach	The initial focus on listening without pressure to speak gave L2 learners opportunity to internalize sounds.
Today	New Directions		The use of fluency-building activities, accuracy-oriented exercises, and adaptation of authentic materials is dominant.

In an attempt to define teaching pronunciation, Lee (2008, p. 7) defines it as part of the communicative approach and traditionally L2 teachers of pronunciation had used the phonetic alphabet and activities like transcription practice, diagnostic passages, recognition or discrimination tasks, and developmental approximation drills. Also, other popular methods were listening, imitating, visual aids, practice of vowel shifts related by affixation, and recordings of L2 learners' production. Some L2 learners benefited from these methods, but others did not learn the pronunciations of other languages.

Although the number of studies which have focused on teaching suprasegmental features of an L2 is at large (e.g., Champagne-Muzar, Scheneideran, & Bourdages, 1993; Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1998; Hall, 1997), there are few number of studies, to the best of the present researchers' knowledge, which have focused on the segmental features (i.e., vowels and consonant) of an L2. Champagne-Muzar, Scheneideran and Bourdages (1993) implemented a program focusing on both French segmentals and suprasegmentals that consisted of 12 one-hour lessons. The result of the posttests indicated that the experimental group surpassed the control group, showing that instruction was beneficial in both discrimination and production of pronunciation features. Derwing, Munro and Wiebe (1998) provided empirical evidence for the importance of teaching suprasegmentals in a study that compared three groups of L2 learners over 12 weeks and concluded that the L2 learners responded very positively to the tests after the materials were taught.

By an advanced understanding of an L2, specialists (e.g., Jenkins, 2002) agree that explicit instruction in pronunciation is essential in an L2 curriculum. With the dominance of communicative language teaching (CLT), as Pennington and Richards (1986) have pointed out, teaching of pronunciation shifts from a phonological accuracy to a global conversational competence and is thought to be taught as an integral part of oral communication.

In fact, new directions in teaching and learning L2 pronunciation, as Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) argue, have come from other fields (e.g., drama and psychology). The techniques they have highlighted are the use of fluency-building activities as well as accuracy-oriented exercises, adaptation of authentic materials, and the use of instructional technology in pronunciation teaching. In line with their work, Lee (2008) also believes that the current technology equipment used in education includes computers, digital cameras, scanners, LCD panels, and projectors. Based on the aforementioned approaches, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of intuitive-imitative and analytic-linguistic approaches in teaching pure vowels and diphthongs, and to examine whether these approaches play any role in vowels teaching to L2 learners. Accordingly, the following null hypotheses are formulated:

- H_{01}: There is no relationship between elementary L2 learners' performance on pronouncing vowels (pure vowels and diphthongs) and the intuitive-imitative approach to teaching pronunciation.
- H_{02}: There is no relationship between elementary L2 learners' performance on pronouncing vowels (pure vowels and diphthongs) and the analytic-linguistic approach to teaching pronunciation.

II. Methodology

A. Participants

The participants were 40 Iranian L2 learners attending a language school in Isfahan in the form of two classes, each with 20 learners. The participants were enrolled at the elementary level, using a placement test administered to them by the language school. All the participants were female whose age ranged from 13 to 18. They attended an ELT course in the summer, and received approximately 8 hours a week of L2 instruction. For their term, they were supposed to study *Interchange Intro* written by Jack C. Richard (2005). Table 2 summarizes the characteristics of the participants:

TABLE 2.
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

	Intuitive-Imitative Approach	**Analytic-Linguistic Approach**
Average Age	14	15.5
Gender & Number	Female 20	Female 20
Place of English Learning	Class A	Class B

B. Materials

The basic material was based upon the book *How to Teach Pronunciation* written by Kelly (2000). The present researchers used the audio CD of the book for chapter 3, under the title of *Vowels*. It was used in Class A where vowels were to be taught through the intuitive-imitative approach.

Also, vocal charts were used in this study that show characteristics of each vowel, its position inside the mouth, and position of the lips.

C. Procedure

In this study, there were two elementary classes with 20 learners in each. They took part in classes 6 days a week in the afternoon, and their term consisted of 20 sessions, each 80 minutes. In each session, 15 minutes of class time was allocated to teaching English vowels. In one class, English vowels were taught through the intuitive-imitative approach, and in the other through the analytic-linguistic approach.

In Class A, English vowels were taught through the intuitive-imitative approach. This approach assumes that L2 learners' ability to listen to and imitate the rhythms and sounds of the L2 will lead to the development of an acceptable pronunciation without the intervention of any explicit information. As it was mentioned above, to teach through this approach, the audio CD of the book *How to Teach Pronunciation* written by Kelly (2000) was used. The participants listened to this CD in each session for about 15 minutes, and each time the focus was on one or two vowels. The participants listened carefully and tried to imitate the vowels and their related words. They are usually grouped in the following way:

1. Centering diphthongs: End with a glide toward /ə/. They are called centering because /ə/ is a central vowel (e.g., clearing /ɪ ə/, sure /uə/, there /eə/).

2. Closing diphthongs: End with a glide toward /ɪ / or toward /u/ (e.g., they /eɪ /, boy /ɔ ɪ /, mighty /aɪ /, go /əu/, now /au/).

It is worth mentioning that in this language school, features (i.e., segmental and suprasegmental) of pronunciation were not taught due to time constraints, and the main goal was making the participants able to communicate. In other words, fluency was considered more important than pronunciation accuracy, and this fact ensured the present researchers that the participants had not had instruction in this respect before. These vowels and related words are shown in Table 3:

TABLE 3.
ENGLISH VOWELS AND WORDS

Vowels	**Examples**
i:	bead, key, cheese, scene, police, people
ɪ	hit, sausage, biggest, rhythm, busy, women
u	book, good, woman, push, pull
u:	food, rude, true, who, fruit, soup
e	egg, left, said, head, read, instead, any
ə	about, paper, banana, nation, the
ɜ:	shirt, her, further, pearl, serve
ɔ :	fork, snore, taught, bought, board, pour, all, law, horse
æ	hat, attack, antique
Λ	run, uncle, front, does, come, flood
ɑ:	far, part, half, class, command, clerk, aunty
ɪ ə	beer, beard, fear, pierce, here, idea
uə	sure, tour, obscure
eə	where, wear, chair, dare, stare, there
eɪ	cake, way, weight, say, pain, they, vein
ɔ ɪ	toy, avoid, voice, enjoy, boy
aɪ	high, tie, buy, kite, might, cry, eye
əu	go, snow, toast, home, hello, although
au	house, loud, down, how

In Class B, English vowels were taught through the analytic-linguistic approach. This approach recognizes the importance of an explicit intervention of pronunciation pedagogy in L2 learning. The participants were provided with explicit information on pronunciation (e.g., the phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, and vocal charts). In order to teach according to this approach, the characteristics of each vowel were explained by showing the positions of the lips, articulatory descriptions, and the vocal charts as Kelly (2000) has explained in the aforementioned book. In the analytic-linguistic approach, the researchers taught about the position of the lips and its division in three categories:

1. Rounded: The lips are pushed forward into the shape of a circle (e.g., /u/).
2. Spread: The corners of the lips move away from each other, as when smiling (e.g., /i:/).
3. Unrounded: The lips are not noticeably rounded or spread (e.g., /ə/).

Also, the researchers explained about close, mid, and open vowels through the analytic-linguistic approach:

1. For close vowels, the tongue is quite high in the mouth.
2. For mid vowels, the tongue is neither high nor low in the mouth.
3. For open vowels, the tongue is low in the mouth.

It should be mentioned that because the participants were elementary L2 learners, all the above explanations were in Persian language and also, the participants' voices were recorded at the end of the term when they were practicing one by one and pronounced the vowels. Then, through their recorded voice, the data analysis was done. The vowels are shown in Table 4:

TABLE 4.
ENGLISH VOWELS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

Vowels	Characteristics
i:	The front of the tongue is slightly behind and below the closed front position. The lips are spread. The tongue is tense, and the sides of the tongue touch the upper molars.
ɪ	The part of the tongue slightly nearer the center is raised to just above the half-close position. The lips are spread loosely, and the tongue is more relaxed. The sides of the tongue may touch the upper molars.
u	The part of the tongue behind the center is raised above the half-close position. The lips are rounded, but loosely so. The tongue is relatively relaxed.
u:	The back of the tongue is raised below the close position. The lips are rounded. The tongue is tense.
e	The front of the tongue is between the half-open and half-close positions. The lips are loosely spread. The sides of the tongue may touch the upper molars.
ə	The center of the tongue is between the half-close and half-open positions. The lips are relaxed and naturally spread.
ɜ:	The center of the tongue is between the half-close and half-open positions. The lips are relaxed and neutrally spread.
ɔ :	The back of the tongue is raised to between the half-open and half-close positions. The lips are loosely rounded.
æ	The front of the tongue is raised below the half-open positions. The lips are neutrally open.
Λ	The center of the tongue is raised to above the fully open position. The lips are neutrally open.
ɑ:	The tongue, between the center and the back, is in the fully open position. The lips are neutrally open.
ɪ ə	The lips are neutral, but with a small movement from spread to open.
uə	The lips are loosely rounded, becoming neutrally spread.
eə	The lips remain neutrally open.
eɪ	The lips are spread.
ɔ ɪ	The lips start open and rounded and change to neutral.
aɪ	The lips move from neutral to loosely spread.
əu	The lips are neutral but change to loosely rounded.
au	The lips start neutral, with a movement to loosely round. The glide is not always completed, as the movement involved is extensive.

At the end of the term, the participants were asked to pronounce pure vowels and diphthongs presented in words again. For each student in Class A and Class B, five words which had pure vowels and five words which had diphthongs were selected, respectively. Their voices were audio-recorded as they participated one by one.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were subjected to analysis to explore the probable effect of the two teaching approaches on the participants' performance in pronouncing the English vowels. A female native English-speaker rated (or judged) the recorded data. The native speaker was completely informed of the aim of the study. She awarded one point to every word pronounced with correct pronunciation regarding pure vowels and diphthongs, and zero (no point) to those with wrong pronunciation, respectively. One important point is that, in scoring, any wrong stress on individual words was ignored—the main point was just correct pronunciation of pure vowels and diphthongs. After rating the participants' performance, the researchers, using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), ran paired samples *t* test and compared the means in each group to analyze the data.

In order to test the first null hypothesis, the researchers run a paired samples *t* test between the scores of the pure vowels and diphthongs in Class A where pronunciation teaching was based on the intuitive-imitative approach. Table 5 represents the inferential statistics of the data:

TABLE 5.
PAIRED SAMPLES *T* TEST

	Paired Differences			*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tiled)
	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Differences				
		Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Intuitive-Imitative: Pure Vowels Intuitive-Imitative: Diphthongs	.45000	.19934	.70066	3.758	19	0.001

*Sig. $p < 0.05$

The probability value of the test is 0.001 which is less than 0.05. So, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the two scores of the pure vowels and diphthongs pronunciation; therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected. Because there was a significant difference between the two groups, the next step was to find out which set of scores (i.e., pure vowels diphthongs) was higher. To do so, Table 6 shows a comparison of the two groups mean scores:

TABLE 6.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intuitive-Imitative: Pure Vowels	20	4.000	.36274
Intuitive-Imitative: Diphthongs	20	4.4500	.39403

As the mean score of the two groups show, the mean score for the diphthongs was higher than that of the pure vowels. Therefore, in teaching the diphthongs, which are combinations of vowel sounds, the intuitive-imitative approach paid off better.

In order to test the second null hypothesis, the researchers ran a paired samples *t* test between the scores of the pure vowels and diphthongs in Class B where pronunciation teaching was based on the analytic-linguistic approach. Table 7 shows the inferential statistics of the data:

TABLE 7.
PAIRED SAMPLES *T* TEST

	Paired Differences			*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tiled)
	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Differences				
		Lower	Upper			
Pair 2 Intuitive-Imitative: Pure Vowels Intuitive-Imitative: Diphthongs	-.72500	-1.02366	-.42634	-5.081	19	0.000

*Sig. $p < 0.05$

The probability value of the test is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. So, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the two scores of the pure vowels and diphthongs pronunciation; therefore, the second null hypothesis is rejected. Because there was a significant difference between the two groups, the next step was to find out which set of scores (i.e., pure vowels diphthongs) was higher. To do so, Table 8 shows a comparison of the two groups mean scores:

TABLE 8.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intuitive-Imitative: Pure Vowels	20	4.5500	.45595
Intuitive-Imitative: Diphthongs	20	3.8250	.46665

As the mean scores of the two groups show, the mean score for the pure vowels was higher than that of the diphthongs. Therefore, in teaching the pure vowels, the analytic-linguistic approach was more effective. The results shows that in pronouncing the pure vowels (e.g., /æ/**,** /ə/, /u/, /e/, /i:/), the participants performed better via the analytic-linguistic approach after the researchers explained how the tongue changed its position in the mouth.

IV. CONCLUSION

The results indicate that there is a significant difference between the participants performances after the instruction. In fact, participants improved in performance after making them aware of the pure vowels pronunciation by the phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, and vocal charts. At the end of the term, the participants had better pronunciation in close pure vowels (e.g., /i:/, /ɪ /, /u/, /u:/), mid pure vowels (e.g., /ə/, /e/, /ɜ:/, /e/), and open pure vowels (e.g., /æ/, /Λ/, /ɑ:/). So, in pronunciation of pure vowels, the analytic-linguistic approach is more effective. Thus awareness or consciousness-raising can be influential in acquiring pure vowels pronunciation. Furthermore, implicit teaching of diphthongs through listening to their pronunciation and trying to imitate them can give beneficial results in order to teach diphthongs to learners. Most participants who could not correctly produce the vowels (pure and diphthongs) apparently improved their performance after having been taught about the approaches. So, according to findings of this study, there are 2 ways to teach vowel sounds:

1. Using a phonemic chart: The chart gives the information that L2 learners need in order to be able to use it independently, especially for teaching pure vowels through the analytic-linguistic approach.

2. Repetition and imitation of sounds, especially for diphthongs and teaching through the intuitive-imitative approach.

The analytic-linguistic approach adopts a more analytic view in presenting different linguistic features involved in pronunciation. As Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) state, this approach uses information and tools such as a phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, charts of vocal apparatus, contrastive information, and other aids to supplement listening, imitation, and production. It explicitly informs L2 learners and focuses attention on the sounds and rhythms of the L2.

The purpose of dealing with a sound in isolation in the classroom helps L2 learners move toward more successful pronunciation which has an effect on communication and intelligibility. In spoken language, all sounds are, of course, important, but at times certain sounds seem central to the success of communication. In fact, poor pronunciation can

affect intelligibility and vowels present L2 learners with particular difficulty. Every time someone speaks in class, pronunciation is a matter for consideration.

So, the results of this study are, in part, in line with what Jenkins (2002) claims to be important to teach pronunciation. By an advanced understanding of an L2, Jenkins (2002) agrees that explicit instruction in pronunciation is essential in an L2 curriculum, as it is found in this study that the analytic-linguistic approach works better toward teaching pure vowels. But concerning teaching of diphthongs, the results run contrary to what Jenkins (2002) has claimed. In other words, the explicit instruction does not work to teach diphthongs, and the intuitive-imitative approach is more helpful. To conclude, with the dominance of CLT, as Pennington and Richards (1986) have pointed out, pronunciation teaching shifts from a phonological accuracy to a global conversational competence and is thought to be taught as an integral part of oral communication.

Moreover, this study is against what the CPH claims, according to which it is virtually impossible for adults to acquire native-like pronunciation in an L2, and based on which explicit teaching of pronunciation is useless. It is, thus, argued that although the participants had passed the "critical" period, they still managed to achieve high proficiency in producing vowels through the intuitive-imitative and the analytic-linguistic approaches.

To conclude, it would suffice to mention what Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003) state:

The knowledge of a language includes knowledge of morphemes, words, phrase, and sentences. It also includes the sounds of language and how they may be put together to form meaningful units. Although there may be some sounds in one language that are not in another, the sounds of all the languages of the world together constitute a limited set of the sounds that the human vocal tract can produce. (p. 231)

Thus, the findings of this study may help both L2 teachers and learners to have their own fair share from the implications of this study, and the outcomes may pave the way for better teaching of vowels to L2 learners. It is hoped that the results of the study could shed some light on the process involved between the teaching approach and L2 learners□ performance on pronouncing vowels.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 977-988, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.977-988

A Study of Factors Affecting EFL Learners' English Listening Comprehension and the Strategies for Improvement

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***Abstract*—Listening plays a significant role in daily communication and educational process. In spite of its importance, listening has long been the neglected skill in second language acquisition, research, teaching, and assessment. However, in recent years there has been an increased focus on L2 listening ability because of its perceived importance in language learning and teaching. The study tries to find the factors influencing English listening comprehension and the strategies to be taken that might improve students' listening comprehension. The paper focuses on four main issues. First, it discusses the definition of listening, significance of listening. Second, it reviews the process of listening comprehension, strategies of listening comprehension. Third, analysis of listening comprehension problems is reviewed. Fourth, teaching methods for listening comprehension will be discussed. Fifth, researchers review teaching listening activities. Sixth, general principles in teaching listening comprehension are discussed. Findings based on the review of the literature along with analysis of the data are of great significance and can be advantageous to improve EFL learners' English listening comprehension skill.**

***Index Terms*—listening comprehension, importance, process, strategies, problems, methods, principles**

I. Introduction

Listening plays an important role in communication as it is said that, of the total time spent on communicating, listening takes up 40-50%; speaking, 25-30%; reading, 11-16%; and writing, about 9% (Mendelsohn, 1994). Although the teaching of listening comprehension has long been "somewhat neglected and poorly taught aspect of English in many EFL programs" (Mendelsohn, 1994, p. 9), listening is now regarded as much more important in both EFL classrooms and SLA research. Listening involves an active process of deciphering and constructing meaning from both verbal and non-verbal messages (Nunan, 1998). Thus, the label of passive skill applied to listening is a misnomer. This misunderstanding may stem from the fact that superficially learners seem to only sit in a language lab quietly, listen to pre-recorded dialogues, and write the answers to some questions related to the oral stimulus. It is evident, then, that listening is not as 'passive' as it has been claimed to be as it demands a number of complicated processes on the part of the learners. There are two subsuming cognitive processes: bottom-up (data-driven) and top-down (conceptually-driven). The bottom-up processing involves constructing meaning from the smallest unit of the spoken language to the largest one in a linear mode (Nunan, 1998). Thus, the learners attempt to understand a spoken discourse by decoding a number of sounds to form words. Next, a nexus of words are linked to form phrases, which make up sentences. These sentences build a complete text, the meaning of which is then constructed by the listeners. In addition to the grammatical relationships, such suprasegmental phonemes as stress, rhythm and intonation also substantially contribute to this data-driven processing (van Duzer, 1997). Learners can be trained to perform this processing, for instance, by activities that require them to discriminate two sounds or distinguish rising and falling intonations. The top-down processing, on the other hand, refers to interpreting meaning as intended by the speakers by means of schemata or structures of knowledge in the mind (Nunan, 1998). This view emphasizes the prominence of background knowledge already possessed by the learners in making sense of the information they hear. In the aural perception, the prior knowledge may facilitate their attempt to grasp the incoming information by relating the familiar with the new one, and significant lack of such knowledge can hamper their efforts to comprehend a particular utterance. It is, therefore, essential that learners are accustomed to performing this processing, usually by extracting the gist of the exchange they listen to.

Due to the fact that the communicative approach is increasingly used in EFL situation, we, therefore, stress the importance of students' communicative competence. The need for competence in listening in EFL English language learners is increasing, so that listening teaching has attracted considerable attention. Unfortunately, the teaching of listening skills is still neglected in the English language teaching process. EFL learners have serious problems in

English listening comprehension due to the fact that universities pay more attention to English grammar, reading and vocabulary. Listening and speaking skills are not important parts of many course books or curricula and teachers do not seem to pay attention to these skills while designing their lessons. EFL English language learners have limited listening comprehension. Listening levels of learners are different from each other, because listening is affected by crucial factors. The most important factors that should be emphasized are: the significance of listening, the study of listening teaching theory and use of the most advanced listening teaching methods. In many English language classes, grammar-translation method is used for teaching. This method has been found inadequate to the demands for producing efficient English speakers and listeners. So a new teaching method should be used to meet the needs of students. This new method is called communicative approach. English must be taught as a tool for communication. It is now widely accepted that students' listening ability must be at the core of teaching practice, and it is the area in which teachers need to concentrate their own efforts to improve their teaching. This is a significant challenge for English teachers; however, it is crucial in the development of English language communicative competence. The purpose of this approach is to improve the students' English overall linguistic capability and oral and aural competence. The researchers attempt to discuss the definition of listening, importance of listening. Then, they review the process of listening comprehension, strategies of listening comprehension. Analysis of listening comprehension problems is reviewed. Then, teaching methods for listening comprehension and teaching listening activities will be discussed. Finally, general principles in teaching listening comprehension are discussed. Findings of this study will be beneficial to EFL learners to improve their English language listening comprehension ability.

II. Definition of Listening

According to Anderson and Lynch (1988), arguing what is successful listening, "understanding is not something that happens because of what a speaker says: the listener has a crucial part to play in the process, by activating various types of knowledge, and by applying what he knows to what he hears and trying to understand what the speaker means"(p.6). Underwood (1989) simplified the definition of listening to "the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear" (p. 1). Mendelsohn (1994) defines listening comprehension as "the ability to understand the spoken language of native speakers." O'Malley, Chamot, and Kupper (1989) offer a useful and more extensive definition that "listening comprehension is an active and conscious process in which the listener constructs meaning by using cues from contextual information and from existing knowledge, while relying upon multiple strategic resources to fulfill the task requirement"(p.19). Mendelsohn (1994) points out that, in listening to spoken language, the ability to decipher the speaker's intention is required of a competent listener, in addition to other abilities such as processing the linguistic forms like speech speed and fillers, coping with listening in an interaction, understanding the whole message contained in the discourse, comprehending the message without understanding every word, and recognizing different genres. Listeners must also know how to process and how to judge what the illocutionary force of an utterance is- that is, what this string of sounds is intended to mean in a particular setting, under a particular set of circumstances – as an act of real communication (Mendelsohn, 1994).

Purdy (1997) defined listening as "the active and dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to the expressed (verbal and nonverbal), needs, concerns, and information offered by other human beings" (p. 8). Listening comprehension is an inferential process (Rost, 2002). Linguistic knowledge and world knowledge interact as listeners create a mental representation of what they hear. Bottom up and top down processes are applied to get to this mental representation and achieve comprehension. Rost (2002) defined listening as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says, constructing and representing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding, and creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy. To listen well, listeners must have the ability to decode the message, the ability to apply a variety of strategies and interactive processes to make meaning, and the ability to respond to what is said in a variety of ways, depending on the purpose of the communication. Listening involves listening for thoughts, feelings, and intentions. Doing so requires active involvement, effort and practice (Shen, Guizhou, Wichura, Kiattichai, 2007). To sum up, it is widely admitted that listening comprehension is not merely the process of a unidirectional receiving of audible symbols, but an interactive process (Brown, 2001). In the eight processes of comprehension (Clark & Clark, 1977; Brown, 2001) the hearer, after receiving the information, assigns a literal meaning to the utterance first and then assigns an intended meaning to the utterance. A key to human communication is the ability to match perceived meaning with intended meaning.

III. Significance of Listening

Listening is the most frequently used language skill (Morley, 1999; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). Bird (1953) found that female college students spent 42 percent of their total verbal communication time in listening while they spent 25 percent in speaking, 15 percent in reading, and 18 percent in writing. A study conducted by Barker, Edwards, Gaines, Gladney, and Holley (1980) confirmed Bird's view of the primacy of listening and showed that the portion of verbal communication time spent by college students was 52.5 percent in listening, 17.3 percent in reading, 16.3 percent in speaking, and 13.9 percent in writing. According to Devine (1982), listening is the primary means by which incoming ideas and information are taken in Gilbert (1988), on the other hand, noted that students from kindergarten through high

school were expected to listen 65-90 percent of the time. Wolvin and Coakley (1988) concluded that, both in and out of the classroom, listening consumes more of daily communication time than other forms of verbal communication. Listening is central to the lives of students throughout all levels of educational development (Coakley & Wolvin, 1997; Feyten, 1991; Wing, 1986). Listening is the most frequently used language skill in the classroom (Ferris, 1998; Murphy, 1991; Vogely, 1998). Both instructors (Ferris & Tagg, 1996) and students (Ferris, 1998) acknowledge the importance of listening comprehension for success in academic settings. Numerous studies indicated that efficient listening skills were more important than reading skills as a factor contributing to academic success (Coakley & Wolvin, 1997; Truesdale, 1990). However, Dunkel's (1991b) study reported that international students' academic success in the United States and Canada relied more on reading than listening comprehension, especially for those students in engineering, psychology, chemistry, and computer science. Thus, the importance of listening in classroom instruction has been less emphasized than reading and writing. Nevertheless, it is evident that listening plays a significant role in the lives of people. Listening is even more important for the lives of students since listening is used as a primary medium of learning at all stages of education.

IV. The Process of Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension is regarded theoretically as an active process in which individuals concentrate on selected aspects of aural input, form meaning from passages, and associate what they hear with existing knowledge. Cognitive psychology defines comprehension as information processing. Schemata are the guiding structures in the comprehension process. The schema is described by Rumelhart (1980, p. 34) as "a data structure for representing the generic concepts stored in memory. It can be used to represent our knowledge about all concepts: those underlying objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions and sequences of actions." According to the cognitive comprehension theory, "schema" means an abstract textual structure that the listener uses to make sense of the given text. The listener makes use of linguistic and situational cues and also the expectations he/she has about the new input to evoke schemata. When a schema has been evoked, it will become a guiding structure in comprehension. If the incoming information is matched with the schema, then the listeners have succeeded in comprehending the text; if they are not compatible, either the information or the schema will be discarded or modified. The principle of schema leads to two fundamental modes of information processing: bottom-up processing and top-down processing. These two processing intersect to develop an interactive processing. Thus, models for listening process fall into three types.

Bottom-up processing (the first type of models) is activated by the new incoming data. The features of the data pass into the system through the best fitting, bottom-level schemata. Schemata are hierarchically formed, from the most specific at the bottom to the most general at the top. It acknowledges that listening is a process of decoding the sounds, from the smallest meaningful units (phonemes) to complete texts. Thus, phonemic units are decoded and connected together to construct words, words are connected together to construct phrases, phrases are connected together to construct utterances, and utterances are connected together to construct complete, meaningful text. That is to say, meaning is arrived at as the last step in the process. A chain of incoming sounds trigger schemata hierarchically organized in a listener's mind— the phonological knowledge, the morphological knowledge, lexical and syntactical knowledge (syntactical knowledge aids to analyze the sentence structure). Thus, the listener makes use of "his knowledge of words, syntax, and grammar to work on form" in the bottom-up processing (Rubin, 1994, p. 210). This process is closely associated with the listener's linguistic knowledge. However, bottom-up processing has its weak points. Understanding a text is an interactive process between the listener's previous knowledge and the text. Efficient comprehension that associates the textual material with listener's brain doesn't only depend on one's linguistic knowledge.

Top-down processing (the second type) is explained as employing background knowledge in comprehending the meaning of a message. Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) point out that in top-down processing, the system makes general predictions based on "a higher level, general schemata, and then searches the input for information to fit into these practically satisfied, higher order schemata". In terms of listening, the listener actively constructs (or reconstructs) the original meaning of the speaker employing new input as clues. In this reconstruction process, the listener employs prior knowledge of the context and situation within which the listening occurs to understand what he/she hears. Context and situation involve such things as knowledge of the topic at hand, the speaker or speakers, and their correlation with the situation, as well as with each other and previous events. We must realize if the incoming information the listener hears is unfamiliar to him, it can't evoke his schemata and he can only depend heavily on his linguistic knowledge in LC. Besides, although the listener can trigger a schema, he might not have the suitable schema expected by the speaker. Thus, only relying on top-down processing may result in the failure of comprehension (p. 557).

The interactive processing (the third type) overcomes the disadvantages of bottom-up processing and top-down processing to augment the comprehension. In the early 1980s, it was the tendency that only top-down processing was acknowledged to improve L2 (second language) listening comprehension. However it is now more generally accepted that both top-down and bottom-up listening processing should be combined to enhance LC. Complex and simultaneous processing of background knowledge information, contextual information and linguistic information make comprehension and interpretation become easy. When the content of the material is familiar to the listener, he will employ his background knowledge at the same time to make predictions which will be proved by the new input. As

opposed with this, if the listener is unfamiliar with the content of the listening text and deficient in language proficiency, he can only depend on his linguistic knowledge, especially the lexical and syntactical knowledge to make sense of the information. From the cognitive perspective, Anderson (1985) elaborates that comprehension consists of perception, parsing and utilization. Perceptual processing is the encoding of the acoustic or written message. In listening, this covers chunking phonemes from the continuous speech stream (Anderson, 1995, p. 37). During this stage, an individual pays close attention to input and the sounds are stored in echoic memory. While the input is still in echoic memory, some initial analysis of the language code may start, and encoding processes may transform some of the input into meaningful representations (Anderson, 1985). It seems probable that the same factors in perceptual processing that attend to auditory material excluding other competing stimuli in the environment also attend selectively to certain key words or phrases that are important in the context, attend to pauses and acoustic emphases that may offer clues to segmentation and to meaning, or attend to contextual elements that may fit with or support the interpretation of meaning such as the listener's goals, expectations about the speaker's purpose, and the type of speech interaction contained (for example, a conversation or a lecture). In the second LC process— parsing, words are converted into a mental representation of the combined meaning of these words. The basic unit of LC is a proposition (Anderson, 1985). Complex propositions may be differentiated into simpler propositions that can be regrouped by the listener to produce new sentences whose basic meaning does not alter. Therefore, through parsing, a meaning-based representation of the original sequence of words can be stored in short-term memory; this representation is an abstraction of the original word sequences but can be employed to reproduce the original sequences or at least their planned meaning. The size of the unit or segment (or "chunk") of information processed will rely on the learner's knowledge of the language, general knowledge of the topic, and how the information is presented. The main clue for segmentation in LC is meaning, which may be represented syntactically, semantically, phonologically, or by any combination of these. Second language listeners may have some trouble in understanding language spoken at typical conversational rates by native speakers if they are unfamiliar with the rules for segmentation, even though they may comprehend individual words when heard separately. Findings from research with second language learners show that memory span for target language input is shorter than for native language input (Call, 1985). Complex input materials may be especially difficult to comprehend in a second language because they need combining of parsed segments in the process of comprehension, thus putting an extra burden on STM (short-term memory) which already may be burdened with un-encoded elements of the new input. The third process, utilization, is composed of associating a mental representation of the auditory meaning with existing knowledge. Existing knowledge is retained in long-term memory as propositions or schemata. Connections between the new input meaning and existing knowledge take place through spreading activation in which knowledge in LTM (long-term memory) is activated so that it is associated with the new meanings in STM. Comprehension occurs when input and knowledge are matched with each other. Perception, parsing and utilization stand for different levels of processing. Of the three levels of processing, perception is the lowest. All three phases are recursive and connected closely, and can occur simultaneously during a single listening event. Coakley & Wolvin (1986) suggest that listening comprehension in a L2 (second language) is the process of receiving, focusing attention on, and assigning meaning to aural stimuli. It includes a listener, who brings prior knowledge of the topic, linguistic knowledge and cognitive processes to the listening task, the aural text, and the interaction between the two. Fischer and Farris (1995) regard listening comprehension as a process by which students actively form a mental representation of an aural text according to prior knowledge of the topic and information found within.

V. Strategies of Listening Comprehension

One of the methods learners can become actively involved in controlling their own learning is by using strategies. Vandergrift (1999) showed "Strategy development is important for listening training because strategies are conscious means by which learners can guide and evaluate their own comprehension and responses." In O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper, and Russo's (1985) study, high school ESL students were randomly assigned to receive learning strategy training on vocabulary, listening, and speaking tasks and the result indicated strategy training can be effective for integrative language tasks. Nakata (1999) studied the influence of listening strategy training on Japanese EFL learners' listening competence, and it showed that the effect of listening strategy training was more discernible on perception than on comprehension, especially for those students who received low scores on the G-TELP.

Research into speech perception has shown that listening comprehension involves far more than mere decoding of the sounds. Rivers (1983b) in her discussion of speech perception identifies three stages. First, the listener must recognize that the sounds are an actual message and not just noise. This recognition means to the listener that the sounds are elements of the language system. In the second stage the listener identifies sounds along with lexical and syntactic forms by segmenting and grouping them. The third stage involves recoding in order to retain the auditory message in long-term storage. These stages are necessarily rapid and overlapping. Whether the process of listening comprehension is as described above or in some other form, it is certainly an active process involving cognitive processing (pp. 80-83).

Native speakers and highly proficient second language learners complete the complex process of speech comprehension smoothly. Second language learners at lower levels of language proficiency whether it be due to a lack of auditory experience with varying accents, limited vocabulary, imperfect control of the syntactic and semantic structure of the language, or other limitations with regard to the elements necessary for communicative competency

need to rely on listening strategies to assist them in comprehending the aural communication. Brown (1995) quite appropriately compares strategies to "battle plans": Strategies are specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information. They are contextualized "battle plans" that might vary from moment to moment, or day to day, or year to year (p. 104).

Among all the strategies for listening, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) claimed three main types of strategies: meta-cognitive, cognitive and social strategies. The meta-cognitive strategy was a kind of self-regulated learning. It included the attempt to plan, check, monitor, select, revise, and evaluate, etc. For example, for meta-cognitive planning strategies, learners would clarify the objectives of an anticipated listening task, and attend to specific aspects of language input or situational details that assisted in understanding the task (Vandergrift, 1999). Generally, it can be discussed through pre-listening planning strategies, while-listening monitoring strategies, and post-listening evaluation strategies.

The cognitive strategies are related to comprehending and storing input in working memory or long-term memory for later retrieval. They are investigated from the aspects of bottom-up strategies, top-down strategies. For bottom-up processing, it refers to using the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message. Comprehension begins with the received data that is analyzed as successive levels of organization-sounds, words, as a process of decoding. For bottom up strategies, Henner-Stanchina (1987) engaged in a similar study and pointed out that effective listeners were good at using their previous knowledge and experience to raise hypotheses about a text, integrating new information into their ongoing interpretations, making influences to bridge gaps, assessing their interpretations, and modifying their hypotheses, if necessary. On the other hand, top-down processing went from meaning to language (Richards, 2008). Learners can try to predict what will utter by the signal. However, Chiu (2006) claimed that listening comprehension was neither only top-down nor bottom-up processing. Simultaneously, Lu (2008) summed up that the scholars believed the listeners not only utilized bottom-up but also top-down processing models. In sum, Thompson & Rubin (1996) indicated the effects of meta-cognitive and cognitive strategy instruction on the listening comprehension performance of American university students learning Russian. They found that the subjects who received strategy instruction in listening to video-recorded texts improved significantly over those who had received no instruction.

For social/ affective strategies, Vandergrift (2003) defined the strategies as the techniques listeners used to collaborate with others, to verify understanding or to lower anxiety. Habte-Gabr (2006) stated that socio-affective strategies were those which were non academic in nature and involve stimulating learning through establishing a level of empathy between the instructor and student. They included considering factors such as emotions and attitudes (Oxford, 1990). It was essential for listeners to know how to reduce the anxiety, feel confident in doing listening tasks, and promote personal motivation in improving listening competence (Vandergrift, 1997). According to O'Malley & Chamot (2001), among the four strategies of management strategies, social strategies, cognitive strategies, affective strategies in listening comprehension, both social and affective strategies influenced the learning situation immediately.

A great deal has been written about language strategies. These strategies have been categorized as learning strategies and communication strategies. Ellis (1985:181) has stated that, "Communication strategies are problem-oriented. That is they are employed by the learner because he lacks or cannot gain access to the linguistic resources required to express an intended meaning." They are "short-term answers" while learning strategies Ellis points are "long-term solutions." In general, discussion of and research on these communication strategies have focused on the learner's behavior when his production in the second language shuts down. Little research has focused specifically on strategies employed when the learner finds he cannot comprehend the auditory message. This research specifically intended to address the question of what strategies the listener employed to solve the problem when he/she failed to comprehend the message he/she was listening to. The listener's level of language competency was considered an important variable in the listener's choice of strategy. Paterson (2001:90) states that "Strategy use varies with proficiency and so the relationship between strategy use and proficiency level is an important one."

VI. Analysis of Potential Listening Comprehension Problems

Underwood (1989) states seven causes of obstacles to efficient listening comprehension. First, listeners cannot control the speed of delivery. He says," Many English language learners believe that the greatest difficulty with listening comprehension is that the listener cannot control how quickly a speaker speaks" (Underwood, 1989, p. 16). Second, listeners cannot always have words repeated. This is a serious problem in learning situations. In the classroom, the decision as to whether or not to replay a recording or a section of a recording is not in the hands of students. Teachers decide what and when to repeat listening passages; however, it is hard for the teacher to judge whether or not the students have understood any particular section of what they have heard (Underwood, 1989, p. 17). Third, listeners have a limited vocabulary. The speaker may choose words the listener does not know. Listeners sometimes encounter an unknown word which may cause them to stop and think about the meaning of that word and thus cause them to miss the next part of the speech. Fourth, listeners may fail to recognize the signals which indicate that the speaker is moving from one point to another, giving an example, or repeating a point. Discourse markers used in formal situations or lectures such as "secondly," or "then" are comparatively evident to listeners. In informal situations or spontaneous conversations, signals are more vague as in pauses, gestures, increased loudness, a clear change of pitch, or different intonation patterns. These signals can be missed especially by less proficient listeners. Fifth, listeners may lack contextual knowledge. Sharing mutual knowledge and common content makes communication easier. Even if listeners

can understand the surface meaning of the text, they may have considerable difficulties in comprehending the whole meaning of the passage unless they are familiar with the context. Nonverbal clues such as facial expressions, nods, gestures, or tone of voice can also be easily misinterpreted by listeners from different cultures. Sixth, it can be difficult for listeners to concentrate in a foreign language. In listening comprehension, even the shortest break in attention can seriously impair comprehension. Conversation is easier when students find the topic of the listening passage interesting; however, students sometimes feel listening is very tiring even if they are interested because it requires an enormous amount of effort to follow the meaning. Seventh, students may have established certain learning habits such as a wish to understand every word. Teachers want students to understand every word they hear by repeating and pronouncing words carefully, by grading the language to suit their level, by speaking slowly and so on. As a result, they tend to become worried if they fail to understand a particular word or phrase and they will be discouraged by the failure. It is necessary for students to tolerate vagueness and incompleteness of understanding (Underwood, 1989).

VII. Teaching Listening Activities

Listening is a highly-complex solving activities (Barnes, 1984) in which listeners interact with a speaker to construct meaning, within the context of their experiences and knowledge. When students are made aware of the factors that affect listening, the levels of listening, and the components of the listening process, they are more likely to recognize their own listening abilities and engage in activities that prepare them to be effective listeners. Karakas (2002) states that listening activities try to prevent failure so that they can support the learner's interpretation of the text. Listening activities are usually subcategorized as pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities.

A. Pre-listening Activities

Schema theory provides strong evidence for the effectiveness of pre-listening activities which includes the outline for listening to the text and teaching cultural key concepts. Listening teacher may select certain words, difficult grammatical structures and expressions to be explained through the discussion about the topic **,** and may also ask students to predict the content or what speakers are going to say, based on the information they have already got. Pre-listening activities usually have two primary goals: (a) to help to activate students' prior knowledge, build up their expectations for the coming information; and (b) to provide the necessary context for the specific listening task. The teacher could follow with a listening comprehension activity, such as two people having a conversation about their daily life. Students must answer true or false questions based on the previous listening activity. An example of a controlled practice activity could be a drill activity that models the same structure or vocabulary (Karakas, 2002).

B. While-listening Activities

Listeners who participate actively in the listening experience are more likely to construct clear and accurate meaning as they interpret the speaker's verbal message and nonverbal cues. During the listening experience students verify and revise their predictions. They make interpretations and judgments based on what they heard. Listening teacher may ask students to note down key words to work out the main points of the text. Students answer comprehension questions while listening to the text and select specific information to complete the table provided with the text. While-listening activities usually have some of the following purposes: to focus students' comprehension of the speaker's language and ideas; to focus students' attention on such things as the speaker's organizational patterns; to encourage students' critical reactions and personal responses to the speaker's ideas and use of language. An open-ended activity could follow that allows students to have the freedom to practice listening comprehension in the class about their daily life and asking for further information. Listening comprehension should begin with what students already know so that they can build on their existing knowledge and skills with activities designed on the same principle. A variation on the "filling in the missing word listening activity" could be to use the same listening materials, but to set a pair work activity where student A and student B have the same worksheet where some information items are missing (Karakas, 2002).

C. Post-listening Activities

Post-listening activities are important because they extend students' listening skill. Post-listening activities are most effective when done immediately after the listening experience. Well-planned post-listening activities offer students opportunities to connect what they have heard to their own ideas and experiences, and encourage interpretive and critical listening and reflective thinking. As well, post-listening activities provide opportunities for teachers to assess and check students' comprehension, and clarify their understandings; to extend comprehension beyond the literal level to the interpretive and critical levels. Different comprehension questions can be assigned for students to discuss after listening, students then swap information to complete the "whole class chart", correlating what each student has heard to arrive at the big picture. If there are any questions that remain unanswered during the first or second listening, and after the information swap activity, the whole class can listen to the tape again. The students will then try to find the answer to the questions that have not been previously understood, rather than the teacher providing the answers straight away (Karakas, 2002).

VIII. Teaching Methods for Listening Comprehension

Some of the teaching methods for improving students' listening comprehension skill are as follows:

A. Cultivating Students' Listening Skills

Cultivating students' listening skills is one of the most difficult tasks for any ESL teacher. This is because successful listening skills are acquired over time and with lots of practice. The demands of the task are often frustrating for students because there are no precise rules, as in grammar teaching. Speaking and writing also have very specific exercises that can lead to improvement. However, there are quite specific ways of improving listening skills but these are difficult to quantify. Teachers must develop students' micro skills of listening comprehension. Brown (1994) identifies seventeen listening comprehension micro skills. Some of the more important of these skills are discussed here. For beginners, the most important listening skill is discrimination in English pronunciation, intonation and language flow. They need to acquire the crucial skill of identifying the main information. Wu Zhengfu (1991) recognizes that when students acquire basic discrimination ability, they can select and analyze the meaning of what they hear and grasp the main content. In the teaching process teachers should cultivate students' ability to select main information and instruct students to control the general meaning of listening materials on the whole. In class, for example, teachers can ask students to listen to the general meaning of the passage, and to sum up key points and main information. Predictive ability is also an extremely important listening micro skill. In everyday communication, people continually make unconscious predictions about what speakers will say, and these predictions are made on the basis of their knowledge of the context in which the communication is made. The development of predictive ability has many aspects. Before listening training, teachers might ask students questions related to listening materials, or introduce relevant background knowledge to enlighten students' thinking to allow students a clear recognition of the goals and requirements of listening training. The ability to guess the meaning of words is also an important listening micro skill. Listening comprehension does not mean understanding every word, but some words do play a crucial part in listening comprehension. It is a normal phenomenon not to understand every word that is uttered. However, students may guess the meaning of new words on the basis of the topic being discussed and gain some understanding of the probable linguistic items on the basis of the context of discourses, the grammatical structure and the background knowledge of the topic.

B. Textbook-based Learning and Other Listening Contexts

Listening lessons require listeners to concentrate on the content and make fast responses to what is heard. If students are passive and apprehensive during listening training, they will probably feel nervous and wary of taking chances. Teachers need to take a non-punitive approach and structure lessons that are varied, vivid and interesting. Teachers need to select a wide range of materials to increase listening content besides using textbooks. Students need to listen to different levels of English in order to be exposed to natural, lively, rich language, such as listening to English songs, seeing films with English text. In these ways it is possible to raise students' enthusiasm, cultivate their listening interests, and achieve the goals of learning English.

C. Passing on Cultural Knowledge in Language Teaching

Understanding that language is controlled by particular cultural experiences is a necessity for the language learner. If the cultural differences between the students' own culture and that of the language they are to learn is excessive, learners will usually keep some distance from the target language in their efforts to maintain their psychological comfort level. As a consequence the operating processes of memory and input will certainly be limited (Cheng Huaiyuan, 1999). Thus teachers need to be aware that breaking down the barriers is a significant part of cultural teaching and forms an important aspect of the whole process of language teaching. The aspect of cultural knowledge transmission is an equal part of language improvement and development of work in listening development has the potential for achieving a powerful influence on the formulation of students' thinking habits and the application of foreign language expressions. Cultural teaching, then, has direct and concrete influences on intercultural communication. When students gain an intimate knowledge of the culture of the target language they begin to understand how the language is used to reflect the thoughts, behaviors and customs of that society. In teaching English listening, teachers need to develop students' consciousness about intercultural communication and they need to energize students' capacity for wanting to engage with a different culture. Great care needs to be taken when selecting listening material and auxiliary texts, since these are a crucial aspect of the cultural factors in listening teaching. The selection of material related to British and American cultural background knowledge is of particular importance, since these tend to be the focus of much of the classroom time when students' thinking ability and intercultural awareness is being cultivated.

D. Combining "Intensive Listening" with "Extensive Listening"; Focusing on Listening

Intensive listening requires students to understand the meaning of each discourse and, ultimately, to understand every sentence and word. Generally, intensive listening requires students to listen to a text several times, or divide the text into paragraphs and sentences to understand each one; or by doing dictation word by word. The goal is for students to understand every sentence. Alternatively, extensive listening does not require students to understand every sentence, and every word, instead, students are encouraged to grasp the general meaning of the passage. The key point of

listening is to understand the content. The purpose of intensive listening is to build basic listening skills, while extensive listening is to strengthen and enlarge effectiveness of intensive listening in order to improve overall listening ability. In listening teaching, both intensive and extensive listening should be combined with cultivating students' basic skills, the development of the productive listening habits of active thinking and the ability to understand the text. Therefore, teachers must encourage students to engage in intensive listening in class, requiring students to understand the general meaning and also to become familiarized with English pronunciation, intonation and the changes in language flow. In activities outside the class students need to engage in extensive listening; listening to many different variety of language phenomena and gaining more knowledge through TV programs, radio, the Internet and as many other kinds of exposure to listening training they can find. Exposure to demands of listening should include aspects of everyday life, science and technology, and academic lectures. Teachers must create language-learning environments that stimulate students' interests and raise students' passion and enthusiasm for learning English.

E. Combining Listening with Other Skills

According to language acquisition theory, human capacity for discrimination between language intention and language content is a crucial step in the language acquisition process. Thus listening comprehensive ability plays an important role in acquisition and improvement of language skills. Therefore, in listening teaching, there is a need to combine the development of listening ability with the development of other skills such as reading. In order to improve listening ability it is necessary to listen frequently to a teacher reading well, since it is very difficult to generate a high quality output without appropriate input. Secondly, students need to practice reading aloud among themselves. By such activity students will learn to combine the act of listening with reading. Students must be actively engaged in producing language of high quality if they are to improve their English proficiency levels. Similarly, by combining listening with writing, teachers can divide the work into two parts. First, students might answer teachers' questions in written English after listening to spoken language material. It is also important to remember that good listening entails recalling the essence of the material rather than the precise detail. Thirdly, teachers should combine listening activities with speaking in ways that bring out the basics of oral communication. Inevitably, listeners will lose the information resources without speaking; speaking will lose its objective without careful listening and, as a result, speaking ability will not be acquired. Listening and speaking rely on each other and regulate each other. It is important to strengthen listening through speaking and to improve speaking through listening. Students need to retell and discuss the material they have just heard in order to synthesize their understanding. In this way they learn to combine listening with speaking properly. Students who are able to do this are able to overcome their passive response to the situation and gradually they learn to feel safe when they respond. In order for this to happen, a truly interactive and penalty free listening class is required. Teacher/student and students/student exchanges should be emphasized as opportunities for a free exchange of opinions when participants can consolidate their listening approaches and skills during the process of communication. Through a variety of listening-reading, listening-writing and listening-speaking activities, students can not only strengthen their language skills but also sharpen their interests and raise their motivation to improve their learning efficiency.

IX. General Principles in Teaching Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension (LC) lessons must have definite goals, carefully stated. These goals should fit into the overall curriculum, and both teacher and students should be clearly cognizant of what they are.

1. Listening comprehension lessons should be constructed with careful step by step planning. This implies, that the listening tasks progress from simple to more complex as the student gains in language proficiency; that the student knows exactly what the task is and is given directions as to "***what to listen for***, ***where to listen***, ***when to listen***, and ***how to listen***."

2. LC lesson structure should demand active overt student participation. The "most overt student participation involves his written response to the LC material," and that immediate feedback on performance helps keep interest and motivation at high levels.

3. LC lesson should provide a communicative urgency for remembering in order to develop concentration. This urgency, which along with concentration is a key factor in remembering, should come not from the teacher, but from the lesson itself. This is done by giving the students the writing assignment before they listen to the material.

4. Listening comprehension lessons should stress conscious memory work. One of the goals of listening is to strengthen the students' immediate recall in order to increase their memory spans. "Listening is receiving, receiving requires thinking, and thinking requires memory; there is no way to separate listening, thinking, remembering."

5. Listening comprehension lessons should "teach," not "test." This means that the purpose of checking the students' answers should be viewed only as feedback, as a way of letting the students' find out how they did and how they are progressing. There should be no pass/fail attitude associated with the correction of the exercises (Paulston & Bruder, 1976).

X. Suggestions for Improvement of English Listening Comprehension Teaching among EFL Learners

A. Suggestions on Teaching

1. Listening approach

When students need to use their prior knowledge to interpret the text and to create plausible expectations of what they are about to hear, they will activate knowledge-based processing. On the other hand, they also need to decode the linguistic input rapidly and accurately and to map the input against these expectations to confirm consistencies and to refute implausible interpretations which are referred to as text-based processing. It is acknowledged that listening strategies should be integrated explicitly and treated pedagogically to improve listening ability.

2. Classroom procedure

2. 1. Preparing students to listen

Students can make use of analogy to predict and interpret language with past similar experiences. They have a range of schemata knowledge about particular people, places, situations and text-types which they can call up and use as points of comparison with what is currently being heard and experienced. Prediction is an important process in English listening. EFL learners use their perception of the key features of context and their knowledge of the world to limit the range of possible utterances they are about to hear. This ability helps students to process the message for deviations from what was expected, reducing their memory load in order to monitor the incoming message more efficiently. At the beginning stage, it is the teachers' task to guide students to gradually develop how to predict from the known information of the text. Visual support and transcript are two important sources of support to students. In the form of pictures, graphs, diagrams, maps, etc., the visual support can help students to predict incoming listening materials easily by supplying cultural information. It can provide support by reinforcing the aural message and training them to listen to some difficult specific information. To some students, what is heard is kind of "sound" or "noise" instead of meaningful information and they are very reluctant to pay attention to the overall message but understand every single word. For these reasons a transcript is valuable for it allows students to go back after the initial attempt so that they can check to make sure they can hear and understand everything, increasing their interest and confidence in further listening.

2. 2. Providing students with positive feedback

Providing positive feedback for students means ensuring an experience of success, which helps remove the mental block of the type discussed by Krashen (1982). In contrast, repeated failure can result in a panic and a real psychological barrier to effective listening. If there is a failure for understanding, diagnosing the cause of the failure is so important that remedial action can be taken. Neglecting the failure for a moment is unreasonable for it pushes students to slide into confusion and even into further failure.

3. Raising meta-cognitive awareness

Students are capable of observing their own cognitive processes in their listening and also verbalizing their theories about learning to listen in English. The listening notes by students and pre-listening and post-listening discussions are very helpful in this sense. These activities are very useful by involving students in thinking, not just about the content of listening, but more importantly, about the process of listening. By doing so, they can have chances to share with one another's thoughts and strategies so that they can improve their own listening ability. More importantly, they will be aware of what leads to their success and failure and then work out their own effective strategies in listening.

B. Suggestions on Textbooks and Teacher's Books

(1) Teacher's books should introduce some information about theories on listening training, so that teachers can base their teaching on these necessary theories. The information can cover the nature of listening, such as information processing, listening strategies, problems students may face, and how to solve them.

(2) Listening teaching should be a student-training program covering all listening strategies identified to be involved in listening, which should be systematic. Detailed information of the strategies to be practiced should be given for both teachers' benefits and students' benefits. Suggestions about how to teach each strategy should be as complete as possible, so that even new teachers can have a good lesson plan.

(3) Discourse processing should be encouraged from the very beginning, which is also the way students naturally process a listening text. So the first thing students are asked to do with a text should be to consider it as a whole. Then, exercises can gradually involve more detailed comprehension by analyzing the text to a greater depth.

(4) Textbooks and teacher's books should provide or at least suggest a framework of activities which are integrated with listening strategies: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. As the words pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening show, they are to be performed at three different stages in the classroom teaching of a listening text. Pre-listening activities can be subdivided into "readiness activities" and "guidance activities" (Medley, 1977). "Readiness activities" aim at activating students' prior knowledge by reading the title, new words of the text, sometimes by looking at the pictures given before the exercises in textbooks, and also by asking provocative questions or introducing some background knowledge. "Guidance activities" are intended to guide students' attention to specific aspects of language input by letting them bear certain purposes in mind in advance, that is to say, letting students know what task or tasks they are going to do with the text, or letting students themselves decide what they want to do with the text. As these exercises are designed for students to practice certain strategies, at the beginning stage, teachers should present students with the value and purpose of these strategies, and teach them how to use the strategies and monitor their own use as one part of guidance activities. In the second stage of classroom teaching, while-listening activities are designed for students to practice those strategies considered beneficial when actually receiving acoustic input, and to help to develop a good habit of actively participating in the understanding process instead of just passively receiving

what is coming into the ears. At the beginning of strategy training, one activity usually focuses on one strategy so that students can have a good practice of this certain strategy and make full use of it in listening. As time goes by, activities are then designed to integrate with these strategies. By constant controlled practice with strategies integrated with one listening activity, students will gradually have an effective automatic processing of being able to listen to texts by using various listening strategies, and will thus greatly improve their listening ability. The final stage of teaching a text involves post-listening activities, which cover two kinds of activities: "comprehension activities" (Medley, 1977) and evaluation activities. Comprehension activities focus on checking understanding of English itself and interpretation of the text. Students are asked to do some question-oriented exercises, which test students' comprehension and memory, and the questions are usually offered by textbooks. Evaluation activities aim at developing students' self-evaluation strategy in order to make them more efficient listeners. In order to let students have a chance to practice oral English in a functional situation, we can have one more kind of post-listening activities: production activities, which are intended to promote students' oral ability.

XI. Conclusion

The researchers attempted to review some of the factors that influence students' English listening comprehension skill and the strategies for improving their listening comprehension. Students do not have an innate understanding of what effective listeners do; therefore, it is the responsibility of teachers to share that knowledge with them. Perhaps the most valuable way to teach listening skills is for teachers to model them themselves, creating an environment which encourages listening. Teachers can create such an environment by positive interaction, actively listening to all students and responding in an open and appropriate manner. Teachers should avoid responding either condescendingly or sarcastically. As much as possible, they should minimize distractions and interruptions. An emphasis on listening comprehension as well as the application of listening strategies will help students to decode English input and to achieve greater success in English learning. We must shift our listening classroom from a teacher-centered classroom to a student-based one. To improve students' listening ability, teachers should base their teaching on theoretical principles. And because of the limitations in resources and teacher training, both textbooks and teacher's books should take the responsibility of guiding teachers throughout their teaching, which should inform teachers of relevant theories, and offer suggestions on what activities should be carried out in listening classes and how to train students in various listening strategies. English listening competence is a complex skill that needs conscious development. It can be best developed with practice when students reflect on the process of listening without the threat of evaluation. Guiding students through the process of listening provides them with the knowledge from which they can successfully complete a listening task; it also motivates them and puts them in control of their learning. By focusing on the process of listening, students can acquire a useful tool to raise their English comprehensive competence. Listening comprehension levels affect the capacity for improvement in other language skills such as speaking, reading, writing and translating. The study suggests sound reasons for emphasizing listening comprehension, which highlights the importance of spending much more time doing it. It is important for the teacher to provide numerous opportunities for students to practice listening skills and to become actively engaged in the listening process.

Acknowledgements

We thank Alizadeh for her assistance in data collection. We also thank Ahmadi, Babaei, and Khazaei for their extensive and insightful discussions.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 989-997, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.989-997

The Effect of Explicit Strategy Instruction on L2 Oral Production of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners: Focusing on Accuracy, Fluency and Complexity

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***Abstract*—Communicative strategies have attracted attention during the last few decades. Research on communicative strategies has mainly focused on the effect of teaching these strategies in second language classrooms. There is still a question under investigation as to whether communicative strategies have fulfilled the promise their proponents have claimed. With an aim to determine the effects of strategy instruction on second-language oral production, this paper examined the effects of explicit strategy instruction on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral production with regard to complexity, accuracy, and fluency. 40 homogenous learners were randomly assigned to two groups. The experimental group received 8 lessons on strategies whereas the control group did not. The findings of a pretest and a posttest interview revealed that learners' oral performance improved in complexity, accuracy, and fluency.**

***Index Terms*— communicative strategies, complexity, accuracy, fluency**

I. Introduction

During the past two decades, the concept of communicative competence has become an icon in the area of foreign language teaching. The notion of communicative competence came into existence when Dell Hymes (1972) called for the study of language in context. Hymes challenged Chomsky's (1965) view of a theory of forms, which deals with language knowledge, including phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical rules. For Hymes, to speak of language as an entity outside the context of its use is meaningless. Indeed, he believes that communicative competence is the knowledge of not only if something is formally possible in a language, but also the knowledge of whether it is feasible, appropriate, or done in a particular speech community. Communicative competence, as Richards and Schmidt (2002) also mention, includes grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The above-mentioned aspects of competence have each attracted attention in copious lines of research; however, strategic competence, which refers to knowledge of communication strategies that can compensate for weakness in other areas, constitutes the general focus of this research.

Strategic competence, according to Canale and Swain (1980, p. 30), is defined as "verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be implemented to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence. Communication strategies, then, are expected to help tackle problems in performing and understanding communicative acts. These problems may stem from gaps in linguistic or pragmatic knowledge or from low accessibility of such knowledge (Faerch & Kasper, 1986).

Learners are constantly bombarded with an overwhelming number of thoughts they would like to express. Dressing the thoughts into words obviously calls for a good command of L2, which learners may not have. Even in case of proficient language learners, there may be times at which they do not have access to the required lexical or grammatical patterns due to memory failure or any other reasons.

The prime concern, then, for the learners and consequently for the language researchers is to investigate possible ways to circumvent this problem. As mentioned above, breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence should be compensated for by the use of communication strategies when called into action.

Faerch and Kasper (1986) state that “there exists an inevitable gap between what learners are taught and what they need in present and future situations” (p. 179). In order to bridge this gap, learners are in need of “strategic competence” as referred to by Canale and Swain (1980).

Second language learners are likely to find themselves in a situation where they need to express a lexical item in the target language but do not have the linguistic resources to do so. Some learners are able to paraphrase or make use of gestures to describe the meaning of the term. That is, they are using a communication strategy to express the intended meaning. Others, however, avoid the term or resort to silence.

Bridging the gap between what learners know and what they need to express requires the learner to have another competence, referred to as "strategic competence" by Canale and Swain (1980). The authors point out that the concept of communicative competence should be understood in a broader sense and should include strategic competence in addition to linguistic and sociolinguistic competence. This framework of communicative competence has provided a theoretical basis to communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing (Bachman, 1990).

When there is a deficit in the target language resources required to meet the communicative needs, learners have to make use of all the means available to get the message across. This is the time when they should employ communication strategies to express their ideas and to avoid communication breakdowns. Strategies are specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques students use -often consciously- to improve their progress in apprehending, internalizing, and using the L2 (Oxford, 1990). A learner is claimed to be strategically competent when s/he does not give up easily in case of difficulty and tries his best to communicate the message with the strategies s/he can make use of.

In this sense, the learner who acquires the target language in a natural environment, in which the focus is on understanding and getting the meaning across, will have more opportunities and more motivation to use communication strategies effectively. In contrast, learners in language classrooms often have fewer opportunities and less motivation to use communication strategies. They may not even be aware of the advantages of communication strategies when they encounter linguistic difficulties in their communication. Therefore, the issue of how classroom language teaching could help learners with limited second language resources communicate effectively has become a great concern of second language researchers and teachers.

There has been little research designed to investigate the effect of the teaching of communication strategies on language learners' strategic performance. Some researchers, however, have touched this area and found some promising results.

To examine the effects of awareness-raising about communication strategies on students' strategic performance, Salomon and Marsal (1997) conducted a study of two intermediate college French classes. One class was encouraged to use circumlocution strategy; the other was not. Pretest and posttest were used to measure gains in circumlocution. At the end of the term, both groups significantly improved their ability to circumlocute. Although the findings show no significant differences in statistical results between the two groups, qualitative data revealed that the experimental group could focus better on the salient features of the lexical terms and, therefore, could circumlocute more effectively.

Brodersen and Gibson (1982, cited in Faerch & Kasper, 1986), however, have been known as the two researchers among pioneers who have carried out systematic research examining the effect of strategy instruction on the strategy use of language learners. The subjects of the study were Danish learners of English, and the study had a one group pretest-posttest design. The teaching program consisted of a discussion of the effectiveness of strategy use based on the students' conversations with a native speaker of English (which had been videotaped prior to the experiment) and direct teaching of communication strategies with role-play activities. The researchers found that, in terms of strategy use, the students with the intermediate level of proficiency made much more progress, whereas those with high or low proficiency showed no measurable development. However, the attitude of the class as a whole changed. That is, more students were willing to use strategies when they did not have the exact term in English.

Having the same goal in mind, Mosiori (1991) conducted a study in an attempt to obtain empirical data on the educational potential of strategy teaching to language learners. Her study investigated the impact of consciousness-raising about communication strategies on the strategic performance of 30 university students of French, who formed a control group and an experimental group. Both groups were provided with opportunities to use communication strategies through such activities as definitions of concepts, storytelling tasks, or free communication. However, the experimental group also received consciousness-raising about communication strategies, which included presentation of principles of communication strategy use, and provision of analytical feedback and of lexical items useful for verbalizing communication strategies. A pretest, posttest, and a three-week-delayed posttest were administered to both groups. Retrospective report data, first language data, and baseline data were also collected. The results show that, for the most part, there were no significant differences between the two groups' gain scores. However, the experimental group displayed more success in using communication strategies and showed greater willingness to provide more information in their communication.

The study conducted by Dornyei (1995) showed more positive effects of strategy training on 109 Hungarian secondary students, who were divided into three groups: one experimental group and two control groups. The experimental group attended a training session of three strategies: avoidance, circumlocution, and pause fillers. One control group received a conversational training supplement, and the other received no treatment. A pretest and a posttest were used to elicit the language from the students, and the data collected from these two tests were compared.

The findings indicated that there was a significant improvement in oral skills of the experimental group. The students in this group used circumlocution more effectively in expressing their ideas and employed a greater frequency of fillers and circumlocution than the control groups in the posttest.

Dula (2001) partly replicated Dornyei's study with American students of French at the university level. The students were randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received two weeks of training in the use of circumlocution, fillers, and request for clarification. Both groups were asked to do three tests: a pretest, an immediate posttest, and a delayed posttest. The results revealed an increase in the use of circumlocution and a decrease in the use of requests for clarification of the experimental groups. Yet, the use of fillers of this group increased in the first two tests but decreased in the last test. By contrast, the control group's use of circumlocution and fillers decreased over the three tests. The use of requests for clarification of this group, however, increased from the pretest to the immediate posttest, but remained the same in the delayed posttest. The findings, therefore, showed some beneficial influence of the direct teaching of communication strategies on language learners' strategic performance.

Learners of French were also the research participants in a study conducted by Scullen and Jourdain (1999). The researchers investigated the effects of the explicit teaching of circumlocution on two groups of students—experimental and control—who studied French at an American university. Both the experimental group and the control group completed a pretest, three practice sessions, and a posttest. The experimental group received a single session of instruction in the use of circumlocution immediately prior to each practice session. Results showed that both groups made significant gains in successful use of circumlocution over time, but the between-group difference on the posttest was not significant. These results, however, might have been influenced by the short period of training and by the small, unequal group size (17 students in the experimental group and 8 in the control group).

Unlike the other researchers who were more interested in examining the impact of strategy teaching on intermediate or advanced learners, Brett (2001) wanted to explore whether or not communication strategies could be taught to language learners at the beginning level. She conducted a study in which beginners of German were instructed in a variety of strategies: turn-taking phrases, requests for help, clarification and repetition, greetings, and pause fillers. Data were collected from questionnaires and audio-recordings of pairs of students' collaboration on speaking tasks in class activities and in an oral test. The researcher found that the students could employ the communication strategies they had learned in their English speaking. Yet, they used a smaller range of the strategies in the test than in less formal situations. They also used repetition and self-talk as a means of gaining thinking time but did not utilize any pause fillers in their interactions. Finally, there seemed to be an influence of the students' personality and their language proficiency on their strategy use.

More recently, Rossiter (2003) reported on the effects of communication strategy instruction on second language performance (communicative success, speech rate, message abandonment) and on the use of communication strategies. The participants were two classes of adult immigrants who attended a full-time intermediate proficiency ESL (English as a second language) program at a postsecondary institution in Canada. One class received 12 hours of direct communication strategy training, and the other served as a comparison group. Three tests were given to the learners: pretest, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest. Results showed a direct effect of communication strategy instruction on the range of strategies used by the treatment group in the object description task. Yet, the instruction appeared to be less effective in the narrative picture task, where the learners were able to avoid describing one unknown aspect by identifying another element for which the language was known.

In general, the findings of these studies show that the teaching of communication strategies had certain positive effects on the learners' strategic performance, which could, to some extent, help them cope with their communicative problems. It also helped make them more aware of the advantages of strategy use and thus become more willing to risk using communication strategies in their communication. In addition, the strategy instruction could be given not only to learners whose second language competence has developed sufficiently for strategy use (Brodersen & Gibson, 1982; Dornyei, 1995; Dula, 2001; Mosiori, 1991; Rossiter, 2003) but also to those at the beginning level of language learning (Brett, 2001). However, there are some notable differences in the results of the studies. The teaching of fillers, for example, proved not to be very successful in Dula's and Brett's studies but revealed very significant results in Dornyei's experiment. Also, while the experimental group in Dornyei's research displayed considerable progress in the employment of the studied strategies compared to that of the control groups, the experimental and the control group in Mosiori's experiment showed no significant differences in their strategic performance. These differences, as pointed out by Yule and Tarone (1997), might result from the differences in the training situations and categories of analysis.

All in all, although there have been some empirical studies aimed at investigating the effects of strategy teaching on language learners' strategic competence, the results are far from conclusive. Hence, the present study is founded on the assumption that L2 learners need to attend to communicative strategies in order to manifest a better performance in expressing their thoughts and ideas.

II. Purpose and Research Questions

Given the aforementioned points, this study seeks to investigate whether it is effective to teach learners how to use strategies (i.e., circumlocution, approximation, all-purpose words, lexicalized fillers) in order to improve students' oral productions with specific focus on complexity, accuracy, and fluency.

Based on the purpose and the problem under focus in the present study, the following research question was addressed:

Does explicit strategy instruction have any effects on Iranian EFL learners' oral production in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency?

III. Method

A. Participants

Intermediate EFL learners at Isfahan language schools formed the population. These learners, who participated in English language classes in summer 1389, were called intermediate according to the schools' organization of different English courses, which ranged from beginner to advanced levels. Yet, in order to thoroughly gauge the learners' language proficiency and make sure they were intermediate, obligation was felt to utilize an OPT and a pre-test interview as further instruments of assessment.

At the beginning, 90 intermediate EFL learners were selected from the intermediate level classes of an English language center in Isfahan. They were all male students whose age ranged from 17 to 24 and who voluntarily consented to cooperate. Then, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered for the sake of homogeneity and 65 homogenous learners were selected. However, it was deemed necessary to run interviews to further ensure the learners' homogeneity with regard to oral performance. This was done due to the fact that OPT mostly measures learners' vocabulary and grammar and may not be a good indicator to learners' oral proficiency, which was the core concern of this study. The pretest interview was a researcher-made one and consisted of ten question of high frequency in everyday conversations, such as family, free time, hobbies, field of study, etc. (Appendix A). Out of the 65 learners who participated in the interview, 40 were chosen to serve as the participants of the study. Later, they were randomly (using Tables of random numbers) assigned to two groups (20 participants each).

B. Research Design

The present study was conducted to investigate the potential effect of strategy instruction on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral performance with regard to complexity, accuracy, and fluency. The design of study is experimental with a between-groups design in order to probe into the research questions. The independent variable is communication strategy instruction. The dependent variable is learners' speaking ability which was assessed using the three analytic measures of fluency, complexity, and accuracy.

C. Treatment

Four communication strategies were selected in this study. For the sake of instructing the participants, eight lessons were prepared to be taught in the experiment group. They are in turn described below:

• Circumlocution: It is viewed as the most important achievement strategy and a major component of strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). It is defined as a roundabout or indirect way of speaking. Thus, it "compensates for gaps in a language learner's knowledge" (Salomon & Marsal, 1997, p. 473).

• Approximation: It is also another useful strategy that helps learners use a term that expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (superordinate terms, e.g., *ship* for *sailing boat* or *animal* for *horses).*

• All-purpose words: (e.g., *thing, stuff),* as suggested by Dornyei and Thurrell (1992), can be resorted to when learners are not sure about a superordinate term.

• Lexicalized fillers: They are words or gambits used to fill pauses and to gain time to think in order to keep the communication channel open and maintain discourse when speakers face communicative problems.

To design the lessons for this study, a number of activities suggested by different researchers for the teaching of communication strategies (e.g., Dornyei, 1995; Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991; Willems, 1987) or of English as a foreign/second language (e.g., Doff, 1990; Harmer, 1991) was used. In addition, some activities to teach abstract words, an aspect that has not been touched in other studies, were created.

As noted above, 40 homogenous learners were randomly assigned to two different groups of twenty participants. There were one experimental and one control group.

During the treatment phase of the study, participants in both groups separately attended eight sessions of instruction in which they were involved in communication in English.

As for the participants in the control group, no special material was designed for handling the class and the teacher, who was the researcher himself, went through the normal routine procedure of teaching the materials available for the course in the institute. The materials consisted of miscellaneous tasks and activities via listening, speaking, reading, and writing, each of which was immediately followed activities to foster discussions to the extent possible in order to maintain maximum chances for communication.

In the experimental group, however, the participants were made aware of the availability of different strategies to get rid of problems and difficulties in case they arouse in the course of communication. The four strategies at focus - approximation, all-purpose words, circumlocution and fillers- described above, were brought up occasionally during the lessons and then summarized and reviewed at the end of the class. The main part of the treatment was when the teacher

explicitly explained and emphasized on the importance of communication strategies. This was done by utilizing eight different lessons, which were all well-designed in terms of objectives, materials, and tasks.

Each strategy was taught according to the following procedures, based on the methodological theory of English language teaching suggested by Doff (1990) and Harmer (1991):

• *Presentation stage:* Students were introduced with clear instruction about the strategy they were going to study, including its meaning, its form, and its use. Information handouts that contained phrases for the employment of the strategies studied were given to the students.

• Practice stage: Students were asked to do some tasks to practice using the strategy either in isolation or in given contexts. In this stage, the teacher could provide some intervention while the students were doing the task to ensure that they were on the right track. The students could use the information handouts for reference.

• Production stage: In this stage, the students were required to manage the tasks by themselves without any help from the teacher or the handouts. The teacher gave feedback only after the students had completed the task. In this stage, students were encouraged to do their best to use the language as individuals and arrive at a degree of language autonomy.

• The last lesson was devoted to the consolidation of the teaching session in which students were encouraged to use all the strategies they had learned, where it was necessary, to perform a task. Students had complete freedom to choose the words, structures, and content to express their ideas.

Having completed the treatment phase of the study, the researcher set out to gauge the learners' mastery of the communication strategies in question. For this purpose, the participants in the experimental group were randomly assigned to two groups, each of which had 10 participants. One group was given the instruction task of how to drive a car. The other group was given the narrative task, which demanded the participants to talk about their last trip in detail. All interviews were conducted by the researcher, who was also the teacher.

D. Posttest Interview

Participants in both experimental and control groups took a posttest interview which consisted of a different set of questions (Appendix B). The interviews were transcribed and then rated based on the measures chosen for complexity, accuracy, and fluency.

E. Measures

In order to ensure comparability of the results of the present study with previous research, measures that were already used in similar studies were utilized. The following measures were used in this study to examine each of the three factors.

Fluency: *Total number of pauses* – It was calculated by counting the number of pauses of one second or more. Following Mehnert (1998), no distinction was made between unfilled pauses and pauses that included fillers such as *hm, urn,* and *uh.* This measure was used in Foster and Skehan (1996), Foster and Skehan (1999), Mehnert (1998).

Complexity: *Proportion of dependent clauses per AS unit* (Wigglesworth & Elder 2010). AS-unit is defined as "a single speaker's utterance consisting of an independent clause, or sub-clause unit, together with any subordinate clause(s) associated with either" (Foster et al., 2000, p. 365; emphasis in the original). AS-unit is a syntactic measure that additionally uses pause and intonation phenomena to cut oral data into independent AS-units. Earlier studies (Crookes, 1989; Foster & Skehan, 1999) used a similar c-unit, defined as each independent utterance providing referential or pragmatic meaning. Thus, a c-unit may be made up of one simple independent finite clause or else an independent finite clause plus one or more dependent finite/non-finite clauses (Foster & Skehan, 1999, pp. 228-229)**.** T-unit, c-unit, and AS-unit differ in that they allow for the inclusion of progressively more data in the analysis of the second language speech, which is known for being fragmentary.

Accuracy: *Percentage of error-free clauses* - This is a generalized measure of accuracy, and was found to be sensitive to detecting differences in students' speech (Foster & Skehan, 1996). This measure was used in Foster and Skehan (1996), Foster and Skehan (1999), Yuan and Ellis (2003), Wigglesworth and Elder (2010).

To determine inter-rater reliability, ten oral recordings were randomly selected from the data. A trained rater and the researcher coded the data using the measures described above. Inter-rater reliability was determined by looking at the percentage of agreement between the raters. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients for the scores of the two coders ranged from .92 to 0.81, with only one below .90.

IV. Data Analysis

Each tape-recorded interview was transcribed. All the transcripts were coded using three measures covering fluency, accuracy, and complexity as discussed above. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare CAF of learners' oral production in control and experimental groups (i.e., with and without strategy instruction). Inter-rater reliability coefficients were obtained on all categories identified for analysis by two raters working independently. The analysis of the recorded audios was carried out by the researcher and a research assistant. Inter-rater reliability was above 88% on all measures.

V. Results

The research question addressed the effect of strategy instruction on complexity, accuracy, and fluency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral production. In response to this question, a series of t-tests were carried out on each dependent variable in order to determine for which measures differences reached significance. The minimum alpha for confirmation of the research hypothesis was .05. At first the descriptive data for the three complexity, accuracy, and fluency measures are displayed in Table I. Similarly, summary of the results from the t-test is displayed in Table II.

TABLE I.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR STRATEGY INSTRUCTION AND CAF

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Complexity	Control	20	1.410	.3417	.0764
	Experimental	20	1.775	.2573	.0575
Accuracy	Control	20	41.000	4.8123	1.0761
	Experimental	20	45.150	4.0817	.9127
Fluency	Control	20	21.700	4.9108	1.0981
	Experimental	20	27.150	3.8289	.8562

TABLE II.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TESTS BETWEEN STRATEGY INSTRUCTION AND CAF

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Complexity	Equal variances assumed	1.614	.212	-3.817	38	.000	-.3650	.0956	-.5586	-.1714
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.817	35.304	.001	-.3650	.0956	-.5591	-.1709
Accuracy	Equal variances assumed	.087	.770	-2.941	38	.006	-4.1500	1.4110	-7.0064	-1.2936
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.941	37.014	.006	-4.1500	1.4110	-7.0089	-1.2911
Fluency	Equal variances assumed	2.785	.103	-3.914	38	.000	-5.4500	1.3924	-8.2688	-2.6312
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.914	35.867	.000	-5.4500	1.3924	-8.2743	-2.6257

The mean scores and standard deviations of the complexity, accuracy, and fluency measures (i.e., proportion of dependent clauses per AS unit, percentage of error-free clauses, and total number of pauses, respectively) with respect to control and experimental groups are presented in Table I. The mean scores for all the three measures are higher in the experimental group, indicating that participants in the experimental group tended to produce language which was more complex, accurate, and fluent.

The results of the t-tests, illustrated in Table II, show that there is a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between the control and experimental group, regarding complexity, accuracy, and fluency measures. The mean of all measures are greater in the strategy instruction group, indicating that strategy instruction resulted in more complex, accurate, and fluent oral production. Thus, the first null hypothesis predicting that explicit strategy instruction will have no effect on intermediate Iranian EFL learners' oral production in terms of accuracy, complexity, and fluency is rejected.

To conclude, analyzing the results obtained from the experimental and the control groups with regard to the effect of strategy instruction on the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of oral performance, deductions can be made that strategy instruction benefited all the three characteristics of responses.

VI. Conclusion

This study was designed to investigate whether it was effective to teach learners how to use communicative strategies (i.e., circumlocution, approximation, all-purpose words, lexicalized fillers).

The research question addressed the effect of explicit strategy instruction on complexity, accuracy, and fluency of Iranian intermediate learners' oral production. Findings suggest that strategy instruction benefited oral performance and the experimental group reached a higher level of complexity, accuracy, and fluency. This finding is in line with that of Dornyei (1995), Faerch and Kasper (1983), Tarone (1984), and Willems (1987), while runs contradictory to that of Bialystok (1990), Bongaerts and Poulisse (1989). According to Dornyei (1995), making learners more conscious of

strategies that already exist in their repertoire could be very helpful for them when they lack specific vocabulary items. Faerch and Kasper (1986) also stress the need to increase learners' "meta-communicative awareness" concerning strategy use.

Regarding strategic performance, the results show that fostering communication strategies may have a positive effect on language learners' strategic competence, i.e. strategically aware learners perform with a higher degree of complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Thus, it lends support to researchers who advocate direct teaching of communication strategies to language learners (Dornyei, 1995; Salomon & Marsal, 1997; Scullen & Jourdain, 1999; Tarone & Yule, 1989).

In this study, the teaching of approximation, all-purpose words, circumlocution, and lexicalized fillers was known to be effective in helping the learners get their meaning across. Similar results can be found in the studies conducted by Brodersen and Gibson (1982), Mosiori (1991), Dornyei (1995), Salomon and Marsal (1997), Russell and Loschky (1998), Scullen and Jourdain (1999), Dula (2001), Brett (2001), and Rossiter (2003).

It is obvious that communication strategy use does exist in the learner's native language and thus can be transferred to his/her communication in the target language (Bialystok, 1990; Bongaerts & Poulisse, 1987; Poulisse, 1989). Yet, this is not always the case. Not every learner is equally adept at using communication strategies or commands the same range of communication strategies (Berry-Bravo, 1993; Russell & Loschky, 1998; Willems, 1987). This study lends support to the results that the latter group of authors found in their researches.

The present study also provides support to claims made by Canale (1983), Savignon (1983), Rubin (1987), Willems (1987), Rost (1994), and Dornyei (1995) regarding the teaching of lexicalized pause fillers which help speakers gain time to think and keep the communication channel open. Their findings were consistent with our interests in providing instruction in the use of strategies for speaking in a foreign language. The data show that the students had not used or even had not known about lexicalized fillers until they learned how to use them in the strategy class. Instead, they tended to produce pauses or use non-lexicalized fillers such as "er" when they faced a vocabulary gap. Yet, after the lesson about fillers, they employed this strategy in their talk and thus their fluency has been, to some extent, enhanced.

Explicit strategy instruction proved to benefit learners' oral performance with regard to complexity, accuracy, and fluency. The use of strategies unquestionably boosted the learners' ability to communicate more easily and to circumvent the problems they encountered. In summary, the result of this study regarding the effect of explicit strategy instruction on complexity, accuracy, and fluency of oral production is in harmony with the findings of the previously conducted research in the area, which generally concluded that strategy instruction facilitates oral production.

Despite the fact that there is no doubt about the need to conduct more research as to the efficacy of explicit strategy instruction, and especially to follow the empirical studies that highlight the significance of strategy instruction to improve oral performance, this study has to put forth suggestions for instructional changes in the classroom.

This study was primarily undertaken to cast light on the issue of strategy instruction to determine whether it should have a role in foreign language classrooms. If foreign language teachers methodically introduce and reinforce strategies, the learners will significantly improve their oral performance.

APPENDIX A: PRETEST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where are you from?
4. What is your field of study?
5. What are your interests?
6. What number child are you in your family?
7. How do you spend your free time?
8. What do you do?
9. What do you like to be in future?
10. Are you interested in sports?
11. What sports do you play or watch?
12. What do you hope you'll have achieved by the time you are forty?
13. What are your plans for future?
14. Are you happy with your life?
15. Have you ever been abroad?
16. What kind of person are you?
17. What's your hometown like?

APPENDIX B: POSTTEST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where are you from?
4. What is your field of study?

5. What is the most exciting sport you have ever played? Explain some of the rules of this sport.
6. Are you in favor of science fiction stories? Why?
7. Who is your favorite actor? What does he look like?
8. What do you regret about past?
9. Do you agree with this sentence: "History repeats itself"?
10. What are some of the difficulties of a minor's job?
11. Where do you wish you could live?
12. How do you evaluate your performance in last five years?
13. When did you last go to the theater? What did you watch?

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors are grateful to the Office of Graduate Studies at the University of Isfahan for their support.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 998-1008, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.998-1008

An Investigation of the Nature and Functions of Exercises in Textbooks for Intensive Reading Course for English Majors

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***Abstract*—The qualification of the text exercises directly influences students' learning effect. This research is conducted reviewing and classifying the referred exercises in the English textbook, the author attempts to present the practical application of the exercises by means of investigation, exploratory research and interview with the nature and functions of the exercises as well. The research makes contributions to the deep understanding of the nature and functions of exercises in textbooks, serving as a reference for teachers to select and apply exercise types appropriately and effectively in their teaching practice. It can be of some significance in exercise design, evaluation, compiling and selection and in other areas of study within EFL.**

***Index Terms*—exercises in textbooks, nature and functions of exercises, DE, ME, IE**

It is widely recognised by many educators (Cheng,2002; Cunningsworth, 1995) that teaching efficiency can be improved by focusing on the teaching plan or syllabus design. Surprisingly, very few educators have discussed textbook exercises, and their relevance or impact to the overall learning experience.

Primary research, through interaction and observation, has revealed that textbook exercises receive little or no attention from either the student or teachers. Originally, textbook exercises are designed to ensure that the student has understood the textbook authors' understanding of teaching and language, therefore, they are essential to the overall language learning process. However, a review on those exercises within our domestic periodicals and English textbooks has revealed that the majority of research has only focused on a single aspect of the exercise (Luan, 2004; Hu, 2004). There are few studies that comprehensively discuss the nature and functions of exercises in English textbooks.

It is generally recognized that the goal of language teaching is to cultivate learners' communicative competence. Communicative competence is more than acquiring mastery of structure and form; it refers to the competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts (Hymes, 1972). One of the principle functions of textbook exercises is for students to self-test their mastery of recently learnt knowledge — in essence to cultivate students' communicative competence by means of providing them with more applicable exercises. There is however the debate as to which types of exercises can really facilitate learners' language learning and help them improve the communicative competence.

Therefore, the author will be focusing on those exercises used in the textbook with the aim to explore the nature and functions of learning exercises. Initially this article makes contributions, theoretically and practically, to the understanding of the nature and functions of exercises in textbooks, their design and intended use. Secondly, this research wishes to assist teachers with which types of exercises can be more appropriately and effectively employed in their classroom teaching practice. This research should help teachers either select and apply the exercises in a more consistent manner, or prepare and implement classroom activities. In both instances this research should enable students to make better use of the exercises and improve their communicative learning. Finally, these findings should allow readers greater meaningful evaluation of exercises and inspiration for their use.

I. Research Background

A. The Input Hypothesis

The Input Hypothesis assumes that humans acquire language only by understanding messages, or by receiving "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1985, p. 2). In other words, the language which learners are exposed to should be just far enough beyond their current competence that they can understand most of it but still be challenged to make progress.

We define good input as language that is comprehensible and that the learner has to understand it in order to get a meaningful message. "Learners should be exposed to an abundance of good input and given ample opportunities to process it for form and meaning" (Rubio, Passey & Campbell, 2004, p. 161).

In addition to course book texts, exercises as well direct language exposure to the students and can provide great language learning opportunity. According to the Input Hypothesis, the exercises should be designed for 'comprehensible input'. Namely, based on students' current level of competence, the difficulty and quality of the exercises should, in

many cases, even go slightly beyond their current competence. A drastic deviation from proper difficulty would undermine both students' competence and their language acquiring process. Thus, the exercises should be suitably designed not only for the students' current level, but also form part of the teachers' overall teaching program. In the Chinese ELT context, to design good input exercises for textbooks is very important, but it is still controversial as to what consists the basic criteria to judge the quality of the exercises.

B. The Output Hypothesis

Coined by Merrill Swain (1993), the term "Output Hypothesis" reveals the important notion, that the importance of output to learning could be that output pushes learners to process language more deeply (with more mental effort) than input does. While focusing on output, we may be focusing on ways in which learners can play more active and responsible roles in their learning. If learners fail to speak fluently even though they are given enough good input, the reason is that output activities are not enough; learners are not 'being pushed' in the language output activities. For Swain, 'being pushed' in output is a concept parallel to that of the 'i＋1' comprehensible input (Swain, 1985,p248). She also argues that production may encourage learners to move "from semantic processing to syntactic processing (ibid: 249)". That is, to force the learners to pay attention to the means of expression. Comprehensible output is necessary especially in classroom interaction, after the teacher has initiated negotiation. If the student responds to the teacher's initiation, he has to make necessary adjustments, such as simplification, elaboration, modifying tense or collocation, to his original utterance and make his output more accurate and understandable. This will help the student test his/her hypothesis about the target language and help the teacher evaluate whether others could accept the learner's modified output.

When discussing language input and output, we are actually approaching language acquisition from different perspectives. It cannot be established that language input and output overwhelms one another, as both of them are equally important to SLA.

There are various exercises designed for teachers to improve students' speaking abilities, which focus on the communicative competence and interaction among different people in the real world.

The following output activities are both communicative and have distinct unique characteristics.

A: Structured output activities

Two common kinds of structured output are blank-filling and jigsaw activities. In both types of these activities, students complete a task by obtaining missing information—a feature the activities have in common with real communication. However, blank-filling and jigsaw activities also allow practice on specific items of language, which in essence make them more like drills than communication.

B: Communicative output activities

Communicative output activities allow students to practise using the language they know in situations with real settings. In these activities, students must work together to develop a plan, resolve a problem, or complete a task. The most common types of communicative output activities are role-plays and discussions (Littlewood, 1981).

C. Evaluation of the Exercise/Task

Evaluation of the exercise/task helps teachers to identify particular strengths and weaknesses of exercises in the textbooks already in use so that optimum use can be made of their strong points, while their weaker areas can be strengthened through adaptation. In other cases, teachers need to evaluate materials in order to choose the ones they consider to be most appropriate to their specific teaching contexts. Under such circumstances, "evaluation is a mater of judging the fitness of something for a particular purpose"(Hutchinson, &Waters, 1987,p96). In his paper on task design, Candlin (1987) suggests that task evaluation should cover three broad areas, i.e. 'problematicity', 'implementability', and 'combinability'. Under the rubric of 'problematicity' one would consider the extent to which it is diagnostic or explanatory, whether it provides monitoring and feedback, and whether it can be used as a basis for future action. 'Implementability' leads one to a consideration of the resources required, the organizational and management complexity, and the adaptability of the task. Finally, 'combinability' requires us to consider the extent to which the task can be sequenced and integrated with other tasks (Luanluan, 2004,p4).

D. Discrete Point Testing and Integrative Testing

When we discuss textbook exercises, we are referring to tools that are used for testing students' mastery of knowledge; therefore it is unavoidable for one not to mention language testing. Exercises are actually informal tests to measure students' abilities or knowledge in an overall proficiency of a language. The controversy between discrete point and integrative testing methods is still open for discussion.

The proponents for the discrete point testing, believe that language can be broken down into its component parts. The test can then measure these discrete points of language by adequate sampling of these units and achieve validity. In other words, the discrete points of language can be learnt and tested. As a result of this school of thought, there are some test types designed for measuring how students master the discrete language points, such as single word/phrase blank-filling, and multiple choice on the usage of words or grammar.

However, this approach is criticized by other linguists who argued that language competence is a unified set of interacting abilities that cannot be separated apart and tested adequately. In their opinions, language is regarded as an

integrative system, each component of it cannot be divided into pieces and tested; only when we treat it as a whole, can it be tested. There are some test types designed for this rationale based on the concepts of communicative competence which emphasizes on the integrative competence of the knowledge. Dictation is a typically integrative test which can measure the integrative competence of students.

As both testing methods are still in open debate, one will discover that, there are discrete and integrative exercises within textbooks. The purpose of this research is not to debate which approach is better for testing, but to simply acknowledge that both discrete and integrative terms are used. The author will therefore use both test methods as a classification and analysis category, for the exercise types reviewed in this article.

E. The Present Research concerning English Textbooks Exercises

Some domestic experts and educators have done some research on the exercises in English textbooks. According to Xia (2002, p. 148), the quality of modern exercises should be judged by applying cognitive theories and the communicative rules. Standards according to the cognitive psychology are: the exercises should provide the audio, visual stimuli; The exercises should transfer human's cognitive potential, like experiences, mentality, emotion, and creativity; The exercises should provide a variety of discourses and activities to cater for the different personalities, habits, and learning styles of students etc. The types of exercises could be different, such as: the warm-up activity, leading-in activity, ice-breaking activity, brain-storming activity, gap activity, topic/theme/content-based discussion, situational activity, problem-based activity, case-studies, story-telling etc. The variety and diversity of exercises could provide students with a wide scope of knowledge practice. In all, in the modern EFL context, the design of exercises should show more concern with the needs and abilities of human beings, the exercises may be more"humanistic", the humanistic exercises are said to have the following characteristics: 1) Emphasis on personal experience and group experience.2) Teachers' genuine intervention in learning: students are trying to express meanings they cannot express. 3) Special protection of learners' curiosity. 4) Teachers are genuinely interested in students' replies. 5) Encouraging students to bring themselves physically to class (Arnold, 1999:199-200). In practice, Chang Xinping (Chang, 2007,p.37-56) has done some experiments to apply humanism in her English teaching. Her experimental report indicated students' abilities to use the language, to work with their classmates, and to present themselves in public places were improved greatly after she had employed special humanistic teaching style with the specially-designed humanistic exercises and activities. However, the present EFL learning in China is still test-driven, in other words, examinations still dominate the teaching, most tests and examinations are still designed to evaluate the test takers' grammatical competence without testing students' pragmatic competence. Such a trend of test-oriented English learning and teaching really influences the design of textbooks exercises and activities, most of the exercises may succeed in helping students pass the exams but fail to foster their abilities to use language in real life. But, what is to be tested and what exercise types are employed in textbooks are of great significance to learners' communicative competence development.

II. Research Questions

The present research attempts to answer the following questions:

1) What are the main types of exercises in the referred English textbooks?
2) What are the nature and functions of the exercises in the different categories?
3) Which types of exercises can be considered as facilitating exercises?

III. Methods and Procedures

This research covers three parts. Briefly those parts are:

1) Part one investigated the exercise types in the referred textbooks.
2) Part two is a qualitative analysis of different types of exercises, using the criteria explained in Point 4:3).
3) Part three is the interviews. In this study investigations were the main research instruments, while interviews served as indispensable supplementary tools.

These methods completed with each other in this research.

IV. Investigation into the Exercise Types in the Referred Textbooks for Analysis

A. Research Aims

This investigation will explore the exercise types employed in the textbooks for the intensive reading course. From the investigation, the author attempts to probe the exercise types and their nature and functions, which the learners have been exposed.

B. The Textbooks for Analysis

This research investigates the exercise types employed in the widely used textbooks for English-majors in Guangzhou University. The author chose *An Integrated English Course Book* (ed. He Zhaoxiong, published in 2005 by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press) as the basis for the analysis of the exercises. As this series of textbook is

the main-stay of teaching material for the intensive reading course, it is the author's intention to review the exercises within referred book and determine their validity and applicability to communicative learning. With aims to improve students' comprehensive abilities including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, this series of textbooks claim a full range of exercises that are varied and typical enough for the research.

Since the textbook series have four textbooks, all following the same publisher design principles, the author thought it best to test the first and the last of the books in referred series. It is the hope of the author to demonstrate the change in learning exercise utilization and its significance as the student progresses through the language course. Therefore for the purpose of this thesis the author will focus on book I and IV of this series.

Since the author is analysing both the first (beginner) and the last (expert) book in the series, this research will span both grade one and grade two English-major undergraduates in Guangzhou University.

C. Criteria for the Classification of DE and ME

The textbook exercises are classified by their nature and functions into three categories: DE, ME and IE. When referring to DE, we mean those exercises which orient at discrete linguistic knowledge learning or discrete skill training. With ME, we refer to exercises which orient at meaning conveyance or interactive communication. Finally, IE refers to those integrative exercises which contain both the characteristics of DE and ME by orienting at integrative linguistic skills training.

The different nature and functions of DE and ME allow the textbook exercise classification to become objective. These findings are summarized in the following table A, which will be explained in detail. Each criterion will be explained and used for the analyses undertaken on the textbook exercises, using the predefined categorisation method for DE, ME and IE nature and functions.

TABLE A
CRITERIA FOR THE CLASSIFICATION OF DE AND ME

(1) Whether the exercises are contextulized.
(2) Whether the exercises are meaning-oriented with the aim to convey the meaning.
(3) Whether the exercises are designed with information gaps, which require students to complete from other sources or opinions.
(4) Whether the exercises can be finished by students with free choice.
(5) Whether the exercises are based on the authentic, natural language data.

Each criterion is explained thoroughly below, with recommendations as how to judge whether the exercise is DE or ME.

A. Whether the exercises are contextulized.

The word "contextulized"refers to the existing nature what comes before and after a word, phrase, statement, etc. helping to fix the meaning (Oxford Advanced Learners'Dictionary 1988:250)."Try to give language some context so that items aren't just a string of unrelated language samples "(Brown, 1994,p.271). If the exercises are contextulized, students are put into real situations or an imitated real situation to complete the task. The real situation originates from real life, which provides students with specific circumstances; thus, students can connect the discrete linguistic knowledge and automatically know how to use them in the given situation appropriately. However, it should be discerned that"students often make errors because of a pattern that was rotely memorized in a drill but not properly contextualized"(Ibid: 215).

We can easily distinguish an exercise which is contextulized in nature in comparison to the pattern exercise. Thus, if the exercises are contextulized, they are ME in nature; if the exercises are decontextulized, they are DE in nature.

B. Whether the exercises are meaning-oriented with the aim to convey the meaning.

Meaning-orientation is an important ME character. Only when the meaning conveyance exists, then communication happens, which stresses that rules should serve the purpose of presenting meaning. If the exercises are not designed for conveying the meaning, they are definitely not ME.

C. Whether the exercises are designed with an information gap.

An information gap should require a student to fill in the missing information — the"gap"from other sources or from other opinions. When one person in an exchange knows something that the other does not, then an information gap exists. In the process of filling in the"gap", the students need to discuss in pairs or groups to transfer or negotiate meaning. To be specific, take one exercise for example: if two students in the conversation know the day is Tuesday while the exercise requires students to practice the sentence pattern"What day is today?", the answer is obviously "Tuesday". This conversation is not 'real communication', because both students know the answer and there is no information gap. This exercise is not communicative, and therefore definitely not ME.

D. Whether the exercises can be finished by students with free choice.

The free choice criterion means the language form used by the speakers is not under some control. In communication, people have a choice of what they will say and how they will say it. People can make their own choice freely and casually. In this manner, unforeseen elements are included in the communication. In classroom communication, students do not know the answer and have their own feedback to the command. ME exercises should contain unforeseen elements and allow students greater latitude to experiment and trial their communicative language skills.

If the exercise is tightly controlled so that students can only say something in one way, then the students have no choice and the exchange is not communicative (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 129). In this instance, these exercises are DE in nature. For example, if students are given a topic to discuss jobs they will choose to do in the future, they can freely express their opinions productively and receptively without a controlled situation, making this exercise ME.

E. Whether the exercises are based on the authentic, natural language data.

Authentic language describes how real-life materials are used as the basis of teaching and learning. Larsen-Freeman (2000) defined authentic language as: language which is used in a real context.

One essential way to improve students' comprehensive abilities is to provide them with materials that come from real life with no addition or deletion, or even omission of language difficult point (Xu, 2000,p.62). Thus, if the exercises are based on the authentic, natural language data, they are ME; if not, they are DE.

Integrative exercises (characterized by both DE and ME) emphasize not only discrete linguistic knowledge learning or discrete skill training, but also meaning conveyance or interactive communication. To this end the author only discovered a small amount of IE exercises in the pre-selected textbooks.

V. INTERVIEWS

A. Aims

The interviews were carried out after the investigation. Since the investigation gave a general description of exercise types by their nature and functions, the interviews were conducted to help the researcher to collect more relevant data about the opinions of both teachers and students to the exercise types in the textbooks.

B. Subjects

Since the interview survey is only a small part of the whole project and that it is exploratory in nature, a relatively small sample was chosen. Convenience sampling methodology was used.

The subjects were obtained on a voluntary basis from the English-major undergraduates student body who are using *An Integrated English Course Book* as textbooks in grade one and grade two. Teachers who are giving lectures based on these textbooks were also interviewed.

The ten English teachers selected, have been engaged in English-major teaching for no less than three years. This provides a wealth of reference for this thesis.

Twenty students were chosen based on referrals from the teachers, in Guangzhou University. Ten of them are female with five in grade one and five in grade two, and the remainder male with five in grade one and five in grade two also. In short, ten of the sample are at a high proficiency level whilst the remainder are at a low proficiency level.

C. Interview Questions

The author chose semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The interview questions are concerned with the variety of exercise types, DE, ME and IE, used to facilitate exercises in learning. It should be noted that, before the interviews, the finalized eleven exercise types of DE, ME and IE (listed below) were mixed together and were presented to teachers and students. Pre-instruction or guidance with reference to the concepts of DE, ME and IE was provided to teachers and students only when mentioning question three.

Questions to teachers and students are different, because they would hold various points of view regarding the exercise types, predominantly based upon their knowledge and expectations of the textbook exercises.

The questions were presented to teachers and students in English, because both teachers and students can express in English well in the asking-and-answering process.

The questions to teachers are listed as follows:

Q1: Do you think there is a wide variety of exercise types in your textbook?

Q2: How do you handle different exercise types?(with the table B provided)

Q3: Which types of exercises are the facilitating ones?

The questions to students are listed as follows:

Q1: Do you think there is a wide variety of exercise types in your textbook?

Q2: How do your teachers handle different exercise types? (with the table B provided)

Q3: Which types of exercises are more important in your learning?

TABLE B
ELEVEN EXERCISE TYPES IN THE REFERRED TEXTBOOKS

(1)	Single word/phrase blank-filling orienting at mastering usages of discrete words/phrases or grammatical rules.
(2)	Vocabulary exercises focusing on distinguishing among the synonyms or antonyms.
(3)	Translating sentences into English with given words or phrases which focus on mastering usages of isolated words or phrases.
(4)	Oral activities focus on role playing for meaning conveyance and interactive communication.
(5)	Oral activities on discussing questions or topics orienting at meaning conveyance and interactive communication.
(6)	Oral activities on debate orienting at meaning conveyance and interactive communication.
(7)	Dictation exercises orienting at interpreting meaning and organizing the passage.
(8)	Exercises on listening comprehension that demand comprehensive listening abilities.
(9)	Paraphrasing words or part of the sentence which focus on the restating ability to convey the similar meaning.
(10)	Single word/phrase blank-filling orienting at training reading comprehension with integrative linguistic abilities.
(11)	Composition writing orienting at training writing abilities with integrative linguistic abilities.

VI. RESULTS

A. Results of the Classification of the Exercise Types

The results of the classification of exercise types in textbooks are presented below. Three types of exercises are established as being in the referred textbooks, when using the nature and functions of exercises as a measurement tool.

The first type of textbook exercise orients toward discrete linguistic knowledge learning or discrete skill training(DE). The following detailed exercises with their requirements can be classified into this category.

1) Single word/phrase blank-filling orienting at mastering usages of discrete words/phrases or grammatical rules.

2) Vocabulary exercises focusing on distinguishing among the synonyms or antonyms.

3) Translating sentences into English with given words or phrases which focus on mastering usages of isolated words or phrases.

The second type of textbook exercise orients toward meaning conveyance or interactive communication (ME). The following example exercises with their requirements can be classified into this category.

1) Oral activities focused on role playing for meaning conveyance and interactive communication.

2) Oral activities on discussing questions or topics orienting at meaning conveyance and interactive communication.

3) Oral activities on debate orienting at meaning conveyance and interactive communication.

4) Dictation exercises orienting at interpreting meaning and organizing the passage.

5) Exercises on listening comprehension that demand comprehensive listening abilities.

6) Paraphrasing words or part of the sentence which focus on the restating ability to convey the similar meaning.

The third type of textbook exercises is IE. IE combines the nature of both DE and ME, in other words, they are characterized by both DE and ME. This type of exercises focuses not only on discrete linguistic knowledge learning or discrete skill training but also on the meaning conveyance or interactive communication competence training. This means that IE demands integrative linguistic abilities from students. The following sample exercises with their requirements can be classified into this category.

1) Single word /phrase blank-filling orienting at training reading comprehension with integrative linguistic abilities.

2) Composition writing orienting at training writing abilities with integrative linguistic abilities.

B. Results of the Data on Exercise Types

According to the survey and calculations, there is a total number of 304 exercise items involved in *An Integrated English Course Book* I. Among them, 179 items are DE, representing a percentage of 58.9%, compared with 89 items of ME, accounting for 29.3% of the total number. 36 items are IE, representing a percentage of 11.8%.

As far as Book IV is concerned, it contains 272 exercise items, with 158 items of DE and 81 items of ME, accounting for 58.1 % and 29.8 % respectively. 33 items are IE, representing a percentage of 12.1%.

These results indicate that DE plays a dominant role in the textbooks while ME and IE play facilitating roles.

Chart 1: Data of Book I

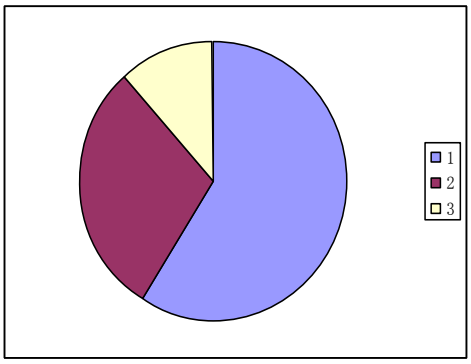

Chart 2:Data of Book IV

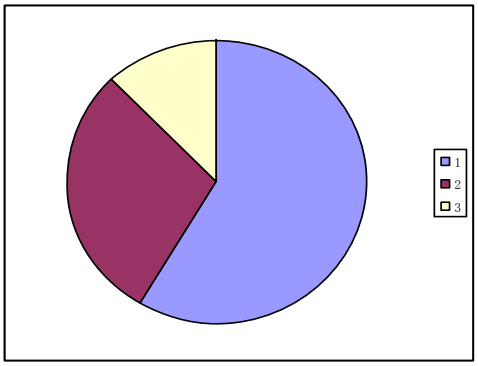

figure 1 is the ratio of DE
figure 2 is the ratio of ME
figure 3 is the ratio of IE

C. Results of the Interviews

1) Feedback from Teachers

Feedback from the teacher interviews makes it obvious that the current exercises in the referred textbooks are not satisfactory as a whole. There are some aspects of the findings which have to be addressed by future publishers.

In response to the first question, all teachers think that students are not exposed to a wide variety of exercises in textbooks. There is the belief that exercise types are so limited and poor, that students can only benefit from some improved exercise types in both grade one and grade two. It was noted that, even the design of the exercises after each unit is the same. Therefore, gradually as students progress through their studies, the exercises would offer less challenge and learning.

Some of the exercises are either too easy or too difficult and not designed well for the current level of students. Most exercises adapted from the texts are too academic and complicatedly structured, lacking in any authentic and natural language that may come from real life. When students make use of the sentences from the textbook exercises during practice, they usually do not know how to use the language appropriately and in what situation. Their answers reflect the fact that to design exercises with more variety and diversity, corresponding with students' current level and getting close to the reality with real language are what compilers need to consider for their future publications. The exercise types need to undergo reform as well as the textbooks. It is of little use that many textbooks are adapted without any reforms to the exercises.

Within the second question, the author focused on textbook exercise item type (see table B). With respect to item type (1) to (3) (gap; vocabulary; translation), all teachers would make comments and explain difficult language phraseology to students, and then leave some time for answering students' questions. They would not spend much time on these three types of exercise items. Items (4) to (6) are the oral activities, all of them would spend one third of the exercise time to develop students' oral abilities. In this part, teachers act as the assistants in helping students to solve problems; act as the participants to join the heated discussions; act as the guides to organize each group and make sure the whole class is under control. All teachers interviewed enjoy this part, in their opinions, students become more active and the atmosphere in the class is more vivid and relaxed. One teacher said that students are engaged in the oral activities on their own initiatives. In order to play the roles, they discuss the plots, assign the roles, have a rehearsal and present the play only within fifteen or twenty minutes, with the result appearing as if much more time was spent in preparation. Items (7) and (8) are listening practice. Five teachers play the recorder and check the answers from students. Another five teachers leave it as homework for students to finish after class. They give students the answers as reference but ask students to copy the tape beforehand. Item (9) is a paraphrasing exercise. All the teachers would paraphrase the sentences in this exercise when they explain the texts. Item (10) is the cloze exercise type. Six of the teachers would explain each blank thoroughly, while the remaining four teachers just answer the questions from students. It is felt that the questions are the most difficult unsolved points for most students, and that this is the best way to find out students' questions. The last item is composition. Three teachers would ask students to finish it after class. Seven teachers would ask students to make an outline within ten minutes in the class, and make some comments on the writing skills or topics of the composition.

The reactions of the teachers reflect that each teacher has his own understanding of the exercises, thus, they would handle the exercises varyingly. However, some handlings are similar: all teachers would not use much time on items (1) to (3) which are DE in nature. This reveals that teachers would not pay much attention on the discrete linguistic points. Meanwhile, oral activities take up much time allowing students to practice their speaking abilities. Oral activities are seen as a climax in the class because of the vivid atmosphere and students' active participation. This reveals that teachers attach much importance to cultivation of students' speaking abilities, meaning conveyance and interactive communication. As for other exercise types, teachers would put either more or less emphases on the specific exercises, thus, the implementations vary. Briefly speaking, teachers actually put emphases on those exercises which are

considered to be the weakness of their students.

To answer the third question, the concepts of DE, ME and IE had been explained to teachers beforehand. Generally, all teachers thought DE, ME and IE can be considered facilitating. However, the teaching effect is different. DE does aid second language (L2) acquisition which is essential for the mastery of a language. The more we can find out about how grammar and vocabulary are learned and used, the better positioned we will be to teach it effectively. ME yields a notable teaching effect in teaching and learning for communicative competence. It was also noted that by combining the characteristics of DE and ME, IE assists students with the development of their integrative language abilities.

Seven teachers consider ME as more facilitating exercises, among them, five teachers also consider IE as more facilitating ones. The rest three teachers regard DE as more facilitating ones.

To summarize, ME and IE were considered as more facilitating exercises in language teaching and development for communicative competence in comparison to DE. Teachers interviewed pointed out that there are more concrete exercises of DE and less ME exercises in the textbooks, since most teachers regard ME exercises as more facilitating ones, with the aim of improving students' communicative competence, they hope that compilers should provide more ME exercises for teachers and students.

The problems noted above reflect that exercises should be improved not only to meet students' needs in learning, but also to meet the demand of modern English teaching—to cultivate students' communicative competence. It was realized that DE or ME, even IE should be better adapted to offer more relevant textbook exercises—this requires greater contributions and input from teachers to drive the correct textbook exercise reform.

2) Feedback from Students

Unsurprisingly, students' feedback from the interview, clearly demonstrates differing views on the questions and functions of textbook exercises. There are some aspects of the findings which will have to be addressed later in this article.

The students' answers reflect that various teachers would handle the textbook exercises differently. The interview illustrates that all students think their teachers use less time for items(1) to(3)—which are the exercises of DE, but use more time for items (4) to (6)—which are the exercises of ME. It reveals that teachers put much emphasis on developing students' communicative competence by improving students' speaking abilities. The discrete words/phrases and grammatical rules usually take place during the comment and answering of student questions—both of which take up a relatively little time. Generally these answers align with the teachers' opinions.

The concepts of DE, ME and IE had been explained to students beforehand, so that they could competently respond to question three. Students responded similarly "All of the exercises are important in my learning". Twelve students regarded ME as the more important exercises, among them, ten students also regarded IE as the more important exercises. Surprisingly the remaining eight students regarded DE as most important.

Actually, it is hard to identify which types of exercises can be considered as the 'more important ones', because each exercise type is designed for the specific purpose to develop students' linguistic competence. The emphasis of each exercise type is on different aspects of language abilities and acquisition. In addition, various students hold differing attitudes toward this question. However, the results indicate that most of the interviewed students regarded ME and IE as the more important exercises. In their opinions, ME focuses on practicing their speaking and listening abilities, so students can make progress in communicating. IE is to develop the students' integrative abilities concerning all aspects of language. Therefore, most of the students through this commentary, regarded ME and IE as the more important exercises, but also recognized that the functions of DE are also necessary for a 'holistic' communicative competence.

VII. Some Problems of Textbook Exercises

During the investigation, some problems were identified to still exist with the textbook exercises:

1) Scarcity of exercise types

By means of analysing the exercise types in the referred textbooks, the author has found that totally there are eleven types of exercises available. There is not a variety of exercise types in the textbooks. The exercise types are too limited and very simple in forms. The exercises do not provide enough content or context for students to learn. If students are not exposed to sufficient exercise types, what provide for them are merely several types of exercises, and there is no or little discourse level training suitable for students' current level. Thus, students may get used to completing the fixed exercise types without being introduced to other types of exercises, which restrict them in a narrow scope of knowledge practice. Gradually, they may cease progress in acquiring the knowledge. To some degree, the scarcity of exercise types can hinder students' learning process.

2) Deviated input of exercise types

Another finding from the investigation is that some exercise types have close connection with the texts but deviate from the real life. Recent research on the discourse types employed within college textbooks indicate that 95.25 percent of discourse types employed in intensive textbooks are of an academic nature (Dong, 2007,p.53). Also of these discourse types, most are expositions and argumentations. Formal and precise as the language in these academic passages is, the language of these exercises is deviated from the reality. Now that students learn to use the target language mainly through learning textbooks, the authenticity of the language in textbooks is crucial to the students' final achievement. Authentic materials enable students to learn real English instead of the English contrived by their

teachers. If students are expected to be exposed to more authentic materials, the communicative competence will be developed. Thus, although the exercises can test the degree of how students grasp the knowledge from texts, they fail to facilitate appropriate language use for daily communication.

VIII. Summary of the Present Study

This thesis has explored the main types, nature and functions of textbook exercises utilized on the intensive reading course for English-major undergraduates in Guangzhou University. Based on the research results described in the previous chapters, possible responses to the research questions are given below.

1) What are the main types of exercises in the referred English textbooks?

The exercises used in the researched textbooks were classified into three categories according to their nature and functions.

The first category of textbook exercises focus on discrete linguistic knowledge learning or discrete skill training (DE). DE example exercise types are: ① single word or phrase blank-filling which concentrate on mastering usages of discrete words/phrases or grammatical rules; ② vocabulary exercises focusing on distinguishing the differences between synonyms or antonyms; ③ translating sentences into English with given words or phrases which focus on mastering usages of isolated words or phrases.

The second category of textbook exercise promotes meaning conveyance or interactive communication (ME). ME example exercise types are: ① oral activities requiring role playing and interactive communication with the intent of meaning conveyance; ② oral activities that discuss questions or topics; ③open oral debates; ④dictation exercises focusing on interpreting meaning and organizing the passage; ⑤exercises of listening comprehension that demand comprehensive listening abilities; ⑥paraphrasing words or part of the sentence enabling ones' restating ability to convey similar meaning differently.

The third exercise category is known as integrative exercises (IE). IE embodies both the nature and functions of DE and ME. IE enables integrative linguistic learning. The primary examples of IE exercises are:

(1) single word or phrase blank-filling(cloze) designed to improve reading comprehension with integrative linguistic abilities;

(2) composition writing with topics or titles with integrative linguistic abilities.

As listed above, there are eleven main types of textbook exercises that can be categorized into either DE, ME or IE. All exercises are designed to improve students' integrative abilities in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The interview results reflect that the diversity and variety of textbook exercise types are not adequate. Therefore, the author believes students are not exposed to a sufficient variety and diversity of exercise types in their learning. Without sufficient input from a wide variety of textbook exercise types, students could find it difficult to use the learned language in 'unfamiliar situations'. This lack of 'real world' exercise exposure, will undoubtedly hinder students' communicative competence development.

Coupled with students' exposure problems, many textbook exercises can be considered either too complicated or easy, and therefore require teachers' intervention or adaptation to make them suitable. Some textbook exercises use far too much academic language that many students will never use in the real world. Such problems as these, must be addressed in future publications.

2) What are the nature and functions of the exercises in the different categories?

By studying and analysing the unique requirements; settings; nature and functions of specific exercises, the author has determined that those textbook exercises employed by Guangzhou University are DE ,ME and IE in nature. Simply these exercises are:

(1) Exercises which focus on discrete linguistic knowledge learning or discrete skill training (DE);

(2) Exercises which enable meaning conveyance or interactive communication (ME);

(3) Integrative exercises contain the characteristics of DE and ME enabling integrative linguistic knowledge acquisition (IE).

In brief, the author's investigation illustrates that there are more DE rather than ME textbook exercises in those books reviewed. It is from this analysis that the author has concluded that DE plays a major role while ME offers a more facilitative role. Both ME and DE, considerably overshadow the IE teaching content, which accounts for a relatively small amount of those textbook exercises reviewed.

Surprisingly, the results of the interviews indicate that too much attention is presently placed on training students' abilities on meaning conveyance or interactive communication, which is probably the most effective means for improving communicative competence.

In an"integrative-sociolinguistic" era with its emphasis on communication, authenticity and context, communicative competence remains the focus of the linguists and researchers. The ultimate goal of language teaching is to cultivate learners' communicative competence. To achieve this goal, the modern teaching approach employs any means to foster students' communicative competence, differing greatly from the more traditional teaching methods, which tended to focus on the formal aspects of language—grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Brown, 1994:265). Meanwhile, the exercises underlying the modern teaching approach should be designed to measure a much broader range of language abilities, including knowledge of cohesion, functions, and sociolinguistic appropriateness, ME exercises with the similar

functions can be used to test the abilities mentioned.

In classroom, although ME accounts for a relatively small part compared with DE, teachers spend much time in handling ME, students become more active in doing ME. Therefore, to meet the demands of the modern English teaching, we need more ME textbook exercises as the teaching tools—all designed with the main aim of improving the communicative competence.

However, one possible reason for compilers' designing more DE exercises may lie in the fact that discrete linguistic knowledge learning or discrete skill training is essential for healthy and meaningful linguistic development. Rich vocabulary and grammatical knowledge with excellent reading and writing are fundamental linguistic competences necessary for fluent interaction and social communication. As these linguistic competences are indispensable, it can only be surmised that DE textbook exercises which constitute the majority in the exercises are a necessary and fundamental tool in language teaching. However, why do DE exercises not yield notable teaching effect? The principal problem with DE teaching is that it takes considerably longer, harder, and slower than its ME counterpart. Due to the nature of DE exercises they are considered by students to be less engaging, and more 'boring'. It is a fine balancing act for teachers to ensure effective communicative competence development but not at the expense of fundamental lexical language understanding. In other words, we can neither overemphasize the functions of ME nor underestimate the functions of DE.

3) Which types of exercises can be considered as facilitating exercises?

In practice, ME textbook exercises are more effective 'communicative capability' facilitators in comparison to DE textbook exercises. ME exercises provide students with real situation, which means contextulized, students could connect what they learnt naturally and appropriately. Thus, ME exercises can be considered as the most facilitating exercises for their notable teaching effects.

IE exercise type is a combination of the best elements of both ME and DE. It has been proven to effectively facilitate language learning as well, however, it currently only represents a minor percentage of textbook exercises available.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1009-1014, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1009-1014

Evaluation of an ESP Textbook for the Students of Sociology

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***Abstract*—The present paper is an attempt to describe the process that was undertaken to evaluate the textbook *English for the Students of Sociology*: *Social Science Texts* taught at the University of Tehran. The purpose of this research project was to determine the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the book toward this specific language program. To achieve this goal, a questionnaire consisting of 20 items and examining 6 factors (practical concerns, materials in relation to course objective, subject matter, linguistic issues, skills and strategies, variety of tasks and activities, and the layout of materials) was used. Participants included 30 students of sociology, who were taking an ESP course at the University of Tehran. The findings indicated that the book, despite having merits, was not very suitable for the course. Suggestions regarding the kinds of activities, strategies, layout and other important issues are discussed.**

***Index Terms*—ESP, English language teaching materials, textbook evaluation**

I. Introduction

English for specific purposes (ESP) has been around for about 40 years. Dudley Evans and St John (1998) maintain that ESP is part of a more general movement of teaching language for specific purposes (LSP). ESP has attracted more attention within the teaching of English as a foreign or second language. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue that ESP must be seen as an approach not as a product. It does not consist of a particular type of teaching material, nor is it a particular kind of language or methodology. As the name suggests, ESP is designed for a particular group of people in a particular context. The materials used are related to the learners' specialized field of study. One of the important factors which is of utmost importance in language learning in general and ESP in particular is to see whether the books and materials are useful for the purpose of the course or not. This is done through the process of textbook evaluation, which is the aim of the current study.

A. Materials and Books

In every teaching context, textbooks play an important role in imparting learning and assisting teachers to fulfill their responsibility. According to Riazi (2003, p. 52), "textbooks play a very crucial role in the realm of language teaching and learning and are considered the next important factor in the second/foreign language classroom after the teacher."

Likewise, As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) put it:

The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in [various] countries…No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook. (p.315)

O'Neill (1982) presents four reasons for the use of coursebooks. Firstly, most parts of coursebook materials are appropriate for students' needs, even if they are not specially designed for them. Secondly, they make it possible for students to plan for future learning and also review the previous materials or lessons. Thirdly, coursebooks provide students with high quality materials at a reasonable price. Finally, suitable coursebooks allow teachers to adapt and modify them to meet the learners' needs and also allow for natural interaction to happen. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) believe that books and materials play a crucial role in every learning situation and help teachers with their responsibilities. They provide four justifications for using materials and books: a) as a source of language, b) as a learning support, c) for motivation and stimulation, and d) for reference.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define six objectives for materials: they should (a) provide a stimulus for learning, (b) help to organize teaching and learning process, (c) embody a view of the nature of language and learning, (d) reflect the nature of the learning task, (e) have a very useful function in broadening the basis of teacher training, and (f) provide models of correct and appropriate language use.

Although coursebooks play an important role in the learning process, it should be noted that a number of scholars argue that a heavy dependence on a book and not using complementary materials can have negative consequences on the students (Allwright, 1981; Cunningsworth, 1995; Stern, 1992; Swales, 1980).

B. Evaluation

Textbooks are among the most important resources utilized to achieve the aims of a course which are based on the learners' needs. However, they should not become the aim of the course themselves and set those aims (Brown, 1995). Regarding the importance of the textbooks, one should make sure that those books meet appropriate criteria. In Cunningsworth's (1995) words, we should ascertain that "careful selection is made, and that the materials selected closely reflect the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program" (p.7).

One of the methods which can help us in achieving the aforementioned goal is the evaluation process. As Nunan (1991) observes:

the selection process can be greatly facilitated by the use of systematic materials evaluation procedures which help ensure that materials are consistent with the needs and interests of the learners they are intended to serve, as well as being in harmony with institutional ideologies on the nature of language and learning. (p.209)

Sheldon (1988) has suggested several reasons for textbook evaluation. He states that the selection of a textbook is indicator of an educational decision in which there is considerable professional, financial, and even political investment. Through evaluation, teachers will become familiar with the content of available textbooks and recognize the weaknesses and strengths of each.

One more reason for evaluation is suggested by Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997). They argue that evaluation can be considered as a means of conducting action research as well as a form of professional empowerment and improvement. It can also be a component of teacher training courses in which prospective teachers become aware of important features which they should search in textbooks. Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) have proposed three types of materials evaluation: predictive or pre-use evaluation in which the future or potential performance of a textbook is examined, in-use evaluation designed to examine the currently used textbook, and retrospective or post-use of evaluation, whereby one can decide how to improve the given textbook for subsequent use.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) define evaluation as asking questions and acting on the responses. They further argue that evaluation "begins with determining what information to gather and ends with bringing about change in current activities or influencing future ones" (p.128). They divide evaluation into formative and summative types. They suggest that ESP practitioners should pay more attention to formative evaluation which takes place during a course and at intervals. As Dudley-Evans and St John put it, formative evaluation involves "mini-evaluations." This kind of evaluation helps to make necessary modifications to the course including materials and books. Summative evaluation takes place at the end of the course or when the course is finished. Therefore, it does not affect the course. This kind of evaluation is used to gauge the usefulness of the course and make improvement in subsequent versions of the course or materials.

Likewise, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define evaluation as a process of matching needs to available solutions. They divide the evaluation process into 4 stages: a) defining criteria, b) subjective analysis, c) objective analysis, and d) matching. They further add that to make the best choice, different parties involved in the course have to be considered: teachers, students, and sponsors.

Robinson (1991) distinguishes between three types of materials evaluation: a) preliminary (before an ESP course begins), b) summative (takes place at the end of the course), and c) formative (conducted while the course is ongoing). She states that evaluation can be carried out by both outsiders and insiders. A further distinction made by Robinson (1991) is between process and product evaluation. The former addresses teaching and learning processes, strategies, administrative and decision-making processes, while the latter is concerned with the students' product such as examination results, essays, etc. By insiders she means teachers, students, and course designers. Robinson lists a number of tools used to carry out evaluation: questionnaires, checklists, rating scales, interviews, observation, and records.

Besides formative and summative evaluation, Richards (2001) suggests another kind of evaluation, namely illuminative. He describes this kind of evaluation as follows:

This refers to evaluation that seeks to find out how different aspects of the program work or are being implemented. It seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the processes of teaching and learning that occur in the program, without necessarily seeking to change the course in any way as a result. (p.289)

McDonough and Shaw (2003) suggest a model for textbook evaluation which involves three stages. First, external evaluation that examines the organization of materials stated by the author or the publisher including claims made on the cover page and information in introduction and table of contents. This kind of evaluation gives information about the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context of use, presentation and organization of materials, and authors' opinion about language and methodology, use of audio-visual materials, vocabulary list and index, cultural aspects, tests and exercises included in the book. Second, internal evaluation in which the following factors are examined: a) the presentation of the skills, b) the grading and sequence of the materials, c) authenticity or artificiality of the listening materials, d) authenticity or artificiality of the speaking materials, e) appropriateness of tests and materials, and f)

appropriateness of the materials for different learning styles and claims made by the authors for self-study. The last stage is overall evaluation in which usability, generalizability, adaptability, and flexibility factors are examined.

II. The Present Study

Swan (1986, cited in Robinson, 1991) put forward eight reasons for the underdevelopment of evaluation in ESP, including the shortness or even one-off nature of ESP courses, the time consuming nature of evaluation, and the lack of any felt need for evaluation. In the Iranian context, the systematic evaluation of textbooks is not usually carried out and students' needs and opinions regarding the materials designed for them are ignored. This study seeks to investigate whether the English textbook designed for the students of social sciences is appropriate or not. In addition, the merits of undertaking the evaluation process will be discussed. It seeks therefore to answer the following research question: Is the ESP textbook designed for the students of social sciences in the Iranian context suitable for them?

III. Method

A. Participants

The participants for this study were 50 BA students of sociology (15 males and 35 females) doing an ESP course. All the participants were young people whose age varied from 19 to 21. They studied at the University of Tehran, faculty of sociology.

B. Materials

The book to be evaluated was *English for the Students of Sociology: Social Science Texts*. Students were supposed to read the texts each session and translate them into Persian.

To do the evaluation, a questionnaire comprised of 20 items about the textbook was used (see Appendix A). It was based on Sheldon' (1988) model of evaluation and modified by Karimi (2006). The questionnaire examines 6 parts: practical concerns, materials in relation to course objective, subject matter, linguistic issues, skills and strategies, variety of tasks and activities, and the layout of materials. To make the items easy to understand, the researchers translated the questionnaire into Persian and it was back translated by an expert in the field. The translated version was piloted with thirty students. The Cronbach alpha reliability index turned out to be 0.76.

C. Procedure

At first, the second researcher talked with the participants about the study for a few minutes and made them aware of the processes they were supposed to go through. They were informed that it was not necessary to write their names and their answers would not affect their course grade. To evaluate the effectiveness of the intended textbook, the participants were asked to give their opinion on a five-point scale: excellent, good, average, weak, and very weak.

IV. Results

The first areas under investigation were practical concerns**:** the first question was**:** *to what extent is the textbook available?* 70% of the participants chose excellent and 30% chose good**.** The second question was**:** *to what extent can the accompanying materials be obtained in a timely manner?* 13% of the participants chose good, 27% of them chose average, 31% chose weak, and 29% chose very weak alternatives**.** The third question was**:** *is the text book cost effective?* 10% of the participants chose excellent, 50% chose good**,** 25% chose average, 7% chose weak, and 8 percent chose very weak alternatives.

The second area investigated the relation between course objectives and the textbook**:** the first question was**:** *to what extent do the objectives of the textbook match the objectives of the course*? 8% of the participants chose excellent, 20% chose good, 23% chose average, 34% chose weak, and 15% chose very weak alternatives**.** The second question was**:** *to what extent does the textbook seem to be in tune with broader educational concerns*? 10% chose excellent, 25% of students chose good, 27% chose average, 25% chose weak, and 13% chose very weak alternatives. The third question was**:** *to what extent is the textbook appropriate for the audience*? 6% chose excellent, 24% chose good, 25% chose average, 35% chose weak, and 6% chose very weak alternatives.

The third area was related to the subject matter issues: the first question was: *to what extent does the subject matter motivate and interest students*? 3% of the participants chose excellent, 15% chose good, 20% chose average, 39% chose weak, and the rest chose very weak alternatives. The second question was**:** *to what extent has the ordering of by topics been arranged in a logical fashion*? 24% chose excellent, 45% chose average, 20% chose weak, and 11% chose very weak alternatives**.** The third question was: *to what extent has the content been graded according to the needs and background knowledge of the students*? 13% of the participants chose excellent, 27% chose good, 30% chose average, 15% chose weak, and the rest chose very weak alternatives.

The next part was related to language issues**:** the *first* question was**:** *to what extent does the textbook contain the basic grammatical patterns and vocabulary*? 7% of the participants chose excellent, 33% of the students chose good, 31% of the students chose average, 19% chose weak, and the rest chose very weak alternatives**.** The second question was*: to what extent does the presentation of structure and vocabulary move from simple to difficult*? 14% chose good,

25% chose average, 40% chose weak, and 21% chose very weak alternatives**.** The third *qu*estion was: *to what extent are the new vocabulary and structures recycled in the subsequent units for reinforcement*? 10% of the participants chose excellent, 21% chose good, 23% chose average, 33% chose weak, and 13% chose very weak alternatives.

The fifth area investigated the skills and strategies involved in the questionnaire**.** The first question was**:** *to what extent does the textbook teach the reading skill*? 21% chose excellent, 23% chose good, 31% chose average, 13% chose weak, and the rest chose very weak alternatives**.** The second question was related to *the strategies and skills: inference making, reading for the main idea, and guessing.* The researchers decided to gather information about these skills and strategies through interview with the participants because most of them had difficulty with the concepts mentioned above. They believed that the book did not deal explicitly or even implicitly with these skills and strategies.

The next area under investigation dealt with the exercises and activities in the book. While checking the answers given by the participants, the researchers noticed that all of them had reported *there is no exercise or activity in the book*. It was surprising to find out about this fact. There were no exercises to reinforce what the students had learnt.

The last part of the questionnaire was related to the layout of the book**.** The first question was**:** *to what extent does the book appear attractive*? 19% of participants chose good, 33% of students chose average, 37 of them chose weak, and 11% chose very weak alternatives. The second question was**:** *to what extent do photographs and illustrations in the book motivate you to talk about the subject*? Unfortunately, there were no photographs and illustrations in the book. Table 1 summarizes the findings of the study.

TABLE 1.
PARTICIPANTS' OPINION ABOUT THE TEXTBOOK

Criteria / Degree	Very weak	Weak	Average	Good	Excellent
To what extent is the text book available?	-	-	-	30%	70%
To what extent can the accompanying materials be obtained in a timely manner?	29%	31%	27%	13%	-
Is the text book cost effective?	8%	7%	25%	50%	10%
To what extent do the objectives of the textbook match the objectives of the course?	15%	34%	23%	20%	8%
To what extent does the textbook seem to be in tune with broader educational concerns?	13%	25%	27%	25%	10%
To what extent is the textbook appropriate for the audience?	6%	35%	25%	24%	6%
To what extent does the subject matter motivate and interest students?	23%	39%	20%	15%	3%
To what extent has the ordering of topics been arranged in a logical fashion?	11%	20%	45%	-	24%
To what extent has the content been graded according to the needs and background knowledge of the students?	5%	15%	30%	27%	13%
To what extent does the textbook contain the basic grammatical patterns and vocabulary?	10%	19%	31%	33%	7%
To what extent does the presentation of structures and vocabulary move from simple to difficult?	21%	40%	25%	14%	-
To what extent are the new vocabulary and structures recycled in the subsequent units for reinforcement	13%	33%	23%	21%	10%
To what extent does the textbook teach the reading skill?	11%	13%	31%	23%	21%
To what extent does the book appear attractive?	11%	37%	33%	19%	-

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the major areas under investigation in the questionnaire were practical concerns, materials in relation to course objectives, exercises and activities, skills and strategies, language issues, and subject matter.

At first it should be noted that every textbook or teaching material has its merits. No teaching material is perfect. As it was observed in the previous section, the book in question was relatively suitable regarding some areas under

examination such as cost-effectiveness, availability, and presentation of basic grammatical patterns and vocabulary. The main goal of this research was to make some practical suggestions to improve the quality of this and other similar ESP textbooks.

Regarding the first area, it was revealed that the main problem was with the supplementary materials. These materials can help students improve their English and learn the textbook contents better. With respect to the second area, it should be mentioned that there was no explicit statement of the purpose in the book. Moreover, students were not aware of the major goals of the course. Regarding the subject matter issues, it is obvious that the book is not motivating. The level of students was not taken into consideration and the topics were not appealing. The next area was related to language issues. With respect to the basic grammatical structures and vocabulary, the participants were pleased with the book. However, this was not the case for two other questions. There was no logical order from simple to difficult and no recycling of the structures and vocabulary. With respect to skills and strategies, as mentioned previously, the participants had a negative attitude toward the textbook. The goal of ESP is to teach learners how to read efficiently by practicing useful skills and strategies such as inference making, guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context, etc.

The layout of the book plays an important role in catching the learners' attention and increasing their motivation. Unfortunately, the book under investigation did not have any photographs or illustrations. This is definitely a source of boredom for the learners.

To provide a suitable textbook for learners, different issues should be taken into consideration like the background knowledge and English level of the learners. However, as seen in the previous section, most of the participants believed that the book was not in harmony with their English proficiency. Simple structures and vocabulary should be introduced earlier, so the students will not be overwhelmed with a huge number of new structures. This, however, was not observed in the present textbook.

Exercises and activities have the role of consolidating what has been learned. It is difficult to imagine a book with no exercises or activities, which should encourage learners to think about what the texts really mean and use their cognitive abilities to solve the given problems. Pedagogical task are good examples of such activities, which were absent in the present textbook.

The main reason for unsuitability of many ESP textbooks is the lack of needs analysis. In many cases, conducting needs analysis is ignored before the course begins, so there is not enough information about the students for which the textbook is provided. While writing the materials, the textbook writers do not have the intended audience in their mind, which forces them to follow predetermined guidelines for all courses.

ESP textbooks should arouse the interest of the students and be motivating. One of the techniques which can be used to achieve this goal is to use pictures, illustrations, tasks, and authentic materials. The materials should include discussion questions, prediction activities, skimming and scanning exercises, and tasks which stimulate critical analysis and evaluation of what they have read. Textbooks should provide the learners with activities which ask them to complete tables, flowcharts, and diagrams. Theses activities draw the learners' attention to the most salient ideas in the text. The content of the books should be related to the previous learning experience and background knowledge of the learners. This is what scholars call meaningful learning. A suitable textbook should cover necessary grammatical structures and be adequate in terms of quantity and range of vocabulary. Besides, it should include pronunciation practice as well as issues of style and appropriacy in correct use of English.

APPENDIX A QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear participants

The following questionnaire is intended for a research on textbook evaluation. Please read the questions carefully and express your idea by selecting one of the options.

1. To what extent is the book available?
   a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
2. To what extent can the accompanying materials be obtained in a timely manner?
   a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
3. Is the text book cost-effective?
   a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
4. To what extent do the objectives of the textbook match the objectives of the course?
   a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
5. To what extent does the textbook seem to be in tune with broader educational concern?
   a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
6. To what extent is the text book appropriate for he audience?
   a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
7. To what extent does the textbook contain basic grammatical patterns and vocabulary?
   a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
8. To what extent does the presence of structures and vocabularies move gradually from simple to more complex?

a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
9. To what extent are new vocabularies and structures recycled in subsequent units for reinforcement?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
10. To what extent does the subject matter motivate and interest you?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
11. To what extent has the ordering of the material by topics been arranged in a logical fashion?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
12. To what extent has the content been graded according to the need and background knowledge of the students?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
13. To what extent does the textbook teach the reading skill?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
14. To what extent does the textbook teach reading strategies?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
15. To what extent does the textbook teach the speaking skill?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
16. Are the exercises and activities varied enough to challenge the students?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
17. To what extent does the textbook appear attractive?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
18. To what extent do photographs and illustrations in the book motivate you to talk about the subject?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
19. To what extent are the materials related to your major?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak
20. To what extent has the content been graded according to the proficiency level of the students?
a. excellent b. good c. average d. weak e. very weak

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1015-1022, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1015-1022

Excessive Extent in Cognition—A Contrastive Study on Mandarin and English

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***Abstract*—Every language has various ways to indicate excessive extent, and the adoption of degree adverbs is always the most popular, such as *hen* 很[1], *fei-chang* 非常 in Mandarin and *very* in English. Mandarin uses excessive construction (e.g. X[2]-*si*, X-*bao*, etc.) as well, and the predicate-complement expressions appear in modern colloquial Mandarin with a very high frequency because of popularity with the young generation. Coping with Mandarin excessive construction, the present paper first tries to figure out the possible generation linking excessive complements with excessive extent. Afterwards, English excessive degree adverbs would be examined to see if the generation works universally. It is our attempt to find out similar cognitive mappings in the two languages, which enables us to further propose RULEs in cognition. We think the cognitive rules might ease the semantic comprehension of a language, and a universal generation in cognition would benefit to foreign language teaching and learning.**

***Index Terms*—excessive complement, excessive degree adverb, cognition**

I. Introduction

EXTENT is somewhat an abstract concept; however, it appears to be the basic experience in human beings' conceptual structure. Extent seems to exist in our daily life, and everything bears a relation to it: the redness of roses, the extent of saltiness, or even the maturity of a man. Some properties, such as car speed, height and length, could be accurately measured by means of certain concrete measures. Nonetheless, there are some properties whose extent could not be told accurately by any concrete measurement instruments, i.e. the extent of tiredness, seriousness, etc. As a result, these properties are thought to be more abstract. What is interesting is that through languages, abstract extent of some conditions or actions could be so vividly described that it will bring the listeners' sympathetic responses and make them identify themselves with the situation. How is this done? The magical effect of the linguistic expressions is attractive, and the conceptual structure operated in human cognition is worthy of exploration. The present study works on the excessive construction in Mandarin and degree adverbs in English. By figuring out the differences and commonalities between the two languages, it would be proposed that cognition teaching would benefit to both language learning and teaching.

The data are mostly collected from the *google* searching engine, and the ones in classical literatures are got from the digital books on websites. Excessive construction composed of a predicate and a complement is a novel use, and its innovation is so speedy that dictionaries fail to catch up. The only term well introduced in dictionaries is *si*, which has a long history. *Google* is really a big corpus containing various sources and styles of languages. The data in colloquial language could be collected from personal blogs, BBS, etc.; such expressions are necessary in that the excessive phrases are mostly uttered by the young generation in informal situations to express personal emotions. Basically, the Mandarin data includes both Taiwan Mandarin and Mainland Chinese. The English data are mainly collected from Yahoo dictionary.

II. Excessive Construction

* The corresponding author

[1] In this paper, the Mandarin data is shown in the following manner.
我 真 的 忙 爆 了
wo zhen-de mang bao le
"I'm really extremely busy."
The Chinese characters are at the first line; the second line displays *pinyin*; the third line presents English translations. *Pinyin* for each Chinese character is adopted from the version of *Xin-Hua Ci-Dian* 新華詞典.

[2] X refers to predicates, usually verbs or adjectives.

In Mandarin, there are various ways to express EXTENT; among them, the use of degree adverbs is the most common. The predicate-complement structure is often used to indicate excessive extent as well, and X-*si* appears with the highest frequency. In this case, the combination is named "excessive construction" and the complement *si* "excessive complement."

1) 我 今 天 累 死 了
wo jin-tian lei si le
"I'm extremely tired today."

The construction is popular with young people because it has dramatic or exaggerative effect. What is more, the construction is not fixed to some certain components but welcomes a variety of lexical terms to be the complement. In modern Mandarin, beside *si*, there are many other excessive complements (e.g. *bao* 爆, *fan* 翻, etc.) Mostly, the complements are grammticalized from lexical terms referring to negative body parts. Going through all the complements, the study first tries to figure out how the negative body parts are connected to excessive extent in cognition. After that, English degree adverbs indicating excessiveness would be examined to support the cognitive operations.

III. Literature View

In recent years, there are more and more studies digging into the so-called "excessive construction". There are papers discussing a certain complement. Some scholars (Wu 1997, Ji 2000, Ho 2005, etc.) focus on the phrase "X+*si*…" because of its highest frequency, some pay attention to *bao* (Huang 2008). Others (Qiu 2001, Liu 2003, Li 2005) include more excessive complements to make an overall study.

Qiu (2001): *si* 死, *dai* 呆, *bi* 斃, *huai* 壞

Liu (2003): *ji* 極, *tou* 透, *si* 死, *huai* 壞

Li (2005): *hen* 很, *ji* 極, *huai* 壞, *si* 死

As to the study on excessive X-*si* phrases, many of the scholars work on the classification of the predicates. Those who study multi-complements focus mainly on the differences among the complements but discuss less about the commonalities. According to Liu (2008), excessive complements are grammaticalized from lexical terms which carry three features: [-count], [negative] and [achievement].

The following chart lists the excessive complements studied before.

Qiu (2001)	Zhu (2006)	Wu (1997)	Liu (2003)	Ji (2000)	Ho (2005)	Li (2005)	Zhou (2005)	Wei (2004)
si 死	*si* 死	*si* 死	*si* 死	*si* 死	*si* 死	*si* 死		*si* 死
bi 斃	*bi* 斃							*bi* 斃
							sa 煞	
huai 壞		*huai* 壞	*huai* 壞			*huai* 壞		*huai* 壞
		sha 傻						
		fong 瘋						
		mong 蒙[3]						
dai 呆		*dai* 呆						*dai* 呆
						hen 很		
			ji 極			*ji* 極		*ji* 極
			tou 透					*tou* 透
								bao 爆
								da 大
								bian 扁
								hun 昏
								can 慘
								fan 翻

The present paper excludes *ji* 極, *hen* 很, *da* 大 and *bian* 扁. *Ji* and *hen* originally carry the sense of extent and do not behave like other complements. *Da* and *bian* are not included because the examples are too few to reach a systematic analysis.

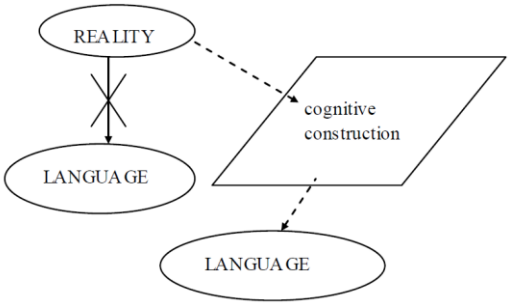
Basically, there is a difference of the degree of generalization, and *si* is so highly generalized that it could collocate with the most predicates. Quite the contrary, the newcoming excessive complements are less generalized and appear only with some certain predicates. The aim of the study is to find out the features shared by the lexical terms which are further grammaticalized to excessive complements, so the degree of generalization is not influential.

IV. Cognitive Linguistics

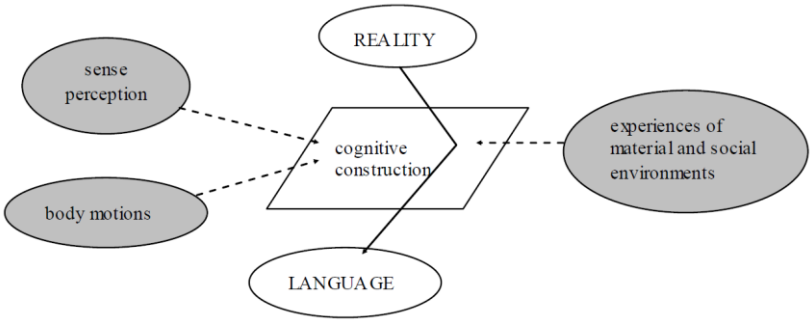
[3] The term is not used in Taiwan Mandarin.

COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS refers to the branch of linguistics that interprets language in terms of the concepts, sometimes universal, sometimes specific to a particular tongue, which underlie its forms. It adheres to three central positions. First, it denies that there is an *autonomous linguistic faculty* in the mind. Basically, cognitive linguists do not deny that part of the human linguistic ability is innate, but they deny that it is *separate* from the rest of cognition. Second, it states that grammar is understood in terms of *conceptualization* and views meaning in terms of the mental spaces. Third, it is claimed that knowledge of language arises out of *language use*. In other words, language is both embodied and situated in a specific environment.

Based upon Cognitive Linguistics, human linguistic ability and other cognitive abilities are indivisible. Cognitive ability is regarded as the foundation of human knowledge; language construction, language learning and language use should be understood through human cognition. The representatives are Charles J. Fillmore, George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, Gilles Fauconnier, L.Tammy, etc. Generally, languages do not directly represent or correspond to the real world. There is a "cognitive construction" lying in-between to link linguistic expressions and reality. The intermediate level stores various conceptual structures people construct from their experiences with the real world.



Take TIME as an example. TIME has no explicit border line in the real world, but people say "*in three minutes*". The preposition *in* is adopted because TIME is conceptualized as an object with limit. Meanwhile, the container image schema and the IN-OUT image schema are in operation. In our opinions, the conceptual system is basically rooted in five senses, body motions and human's experiences in material and social environments, which could be lumped together as HUMAN EXPERIENCE.



V. DISCUSSION

A. *Commonalities Shared by Mandarin Excessive Complements*

Up to present, the complements appearing in the excessive construction in Mandarin are *si* 死, *bi* 斃, *huai* 壞, *sa* 煞, *sa* 傻, *feng* 瘋, *dai* 呆, *gua* 掛, *hun* 昏, *can* 慘, *fan* 翻 and *bao* 爆. Since the construction is quite productive, the number of excessive complement is increasing. Some other lexical words are grammaticalized to be the excessive complement, and the latest terms used by the young people are *dian* 癲, *tan* 癱, *can* 殘, *fei* 廢 and *chi* 痴.

***dian* 癲 "insane"**

(2) 帥　癲 了啊 親愛 的 杰倫 (Mainland)
Shuai dian le a qin-ai de Jie-lun
"Dear Jay, you're very handsome."
(3) 那 天，我 忙　癲 了！
Na-tian wo mang dian le
"I was extremely busy on that day."
(4) 我　真 的　快 冷 顛　了那...鼻涕 流的 難　受 死 了那...
Wo zhen de kuai leng dian le na　bi-ti liu de nan-shou-si le na
"It's really very cold. My running nose makes me very uncomfortable."

(5) 一聲一聲香甜酥軟的爸爸，叫的老爸樂顛了，樂昏了。
Yi-sheng yi-sheng xia-tian shu-ruan de ba-ba jiao de lao-ba le dian le le hun le
"(Her) sweet calling of "pa-pa" made Father very happy."

***tan* 癱 "paralysis"**

(6) 長 得 超 像 李 俊 基的~~ 簡 直 是 帥 癱 了!!
Zhang de chao xiang Lee Jun-ji de jian-zhi shi shuai tan le
"(He) looks very much like Lee Jun-ji…He's extremely handsome."
(7) 老 師這幾天快忙癱了，又要考試，國語日報又一直催稿 (Taiwan)
Lao-shih zhe ji tian kuai mang tan le yiu yao kao-shih guo-yu-ri-bao yiu yi-zhih cui-gao
"The teacher is extremely busy these days. She has to give exams to students, and Mandarin Daily News hurried her to give the manuscript."
(8) 一 想 到 還 有 壓歲 錢 可以拿你 就樂 癱了..
Yi xiang dao hai-yiu ya-sui-qian ke-yi na ni jiu le tan le
"You're extremely happy about getting red envelops."
(9) 馬大 和 小黑 在路邊 等了我 半 小時，已經冷癱了
Ma-da han xiao-hei zai lu-bian deng le wo ban xiao-shi yi-jing leng tan le
"Since Mark and Black have waited for me for half an hour beside the road, they are freezing."

***can* 殘 "cripple"**

(10) 帥 殘 了的 羅 志 祥！！
Shuai can le de Luo Zhih-xiang
"How handsome Luo Zhih-xiang is !"
(11) 姐姐, 最 近 忙 殘 了
Jie-jie zui-jin mang can le
"Dear sister, I'm awfully busy recently."
(12) 笑 翻 了，樂殘了！
Xiao fan le le can le
"(We) are laughing to death, we're very happy."
(13) 本 人 也 冷 殘了，一下 雪 就 1 星期.
Ben-ren yie leng can le yi xia-xue jiu yi xing-qi
"It has been snowing for one week. I'm very cold."
(14) 忙 碌 的 半 周 結 束 了，累殘了...
Mang-lu de ban-zhou jie-shu le lei can le
"The busy half-week comes to the end, and I'm very tired…"

***fei* 廢 "disabled"**

(15) 放 假 前 的諸多 事情， 感 覺自己都要 忙 廢了。
Fang-jia qian de zhu-duo shih-qing gan-jue zi-ji dou-yao mang fei le
"There is a bundle of things to be done before the vacation, I'm extremely busy."
(16) 有 酒友 則香 大家 樂廢了..
Yiu jiu-yiu ze xiang da-jia le fei le
"Everyone is extremely happy to have buddies to enjoy the wine."
(17) 天 氣 冷 廢了
Tian-qi leng fei le
"It is extremely cold."

***chi* 痴 "idiot"**

(18) 帥 呆 了！帥 痴 了！他越 來 越 帥 了！
Shuai dai le shuai chi le ta yue lai yue shuai le
"How handsome he is! He's getting more and more handsome."
(19) 哈哈，我 樂痴了。
Ha-ha wo le chi le
"Ha-ha! I'm extremely happy."

The predictability of these new-coming complements is so weak that they are only fixed to some certain predicates. After a careful study, we find that the excessive complements are mainly derived from four types of lexical words.

1. DEATH（*si* 死, *bi* 斃, *gua* 掛, *huai* 壞, *sa* 煞）
2. ABNORMAL MENTAL CONDITION（*feng* 瘋, *dai* 呆, *chi* 痴, *dian* 癲）
3. ABNORMAL PHYSICAL CONDITION（*hun* 昏, *yun* 暈, *tan* 癱, *fei* 廢, *can* 殘）
4. OTHER（*fan* 翻, *bao* 爆, *can* 慘）

Literally, most of these words indicate basic or possible experiences of the body. In fact, however, many people have not experienced the conditions yet and they even do not want to have any of the experiences. As a result, they understand and value the experiences through others'. All the experiences included in the four types are quite terrible, so the negative value is given. Human beings are afraid of death in that it strands for unexistence; as a result, DEATH is regarded the most terrible experience among all. The combination of mentality (soul) and body together constitutes a human being, and the abnormality of either one would bring about a threat to the person. As a result, the loss of perception and physical function is positioned at the top of dread scale. Explosion and turnover appear not that terrible as death. Nonetheless, in terms of Liu (2008), since the two incidents might bring the cost of one's life, they are thought to be very serious.

B. English Excessive Degree Adverb

It is found that negative bodily experiences are easily linked to excessive extent. The generalization found in Mandarin seems to be applicable in English as well. In English, *deadly* plays the role of an excessive degree adverb. In addition, the phrase "V *to death*" signifies the extremity of a condition.

He was tired to death after a day's work.

I'm busy to death.

However, English prefers degree adverbs to *V-to-death* construction. Consequently, degree adverbs appear much more frequently. Since there is a variety of excessive degree adverbs in English, an overall study is necessary to find out a generalization. First, a classification would be made based upon the literal meaning of the terms from which the excessive adverbs are derived. After that, a comparison between Mandarin and English is held to see whether the two languages have the same cognitive operations. By doing this, languages universal would be found. Basically, degree adverbs which are not derived from lexical terms (i.e. *very*) would be excluded.

According to our data, English words of the following types could become excessive adverbs through suffixation, i.e. the addition of the suffix *-ly*.

1. DEATH

deadly: *deadly* dullness

2. DREAD

awfully: You're *awfully* nice to me.

terribly: I'm *terribly* sorry.

fearfully: He is *fearfully* busy.

dreadfully: I'm *dreadfully* busy.

frightfully: I am *frightfully* sorry.

horribly: Everything has gone *horribly* wrong.

shockingly: My sandwich is *shockingly* good today

3. MISERY

miserably: They were *miserably* poor.

woefully: I am *woefully* sorry for Iraqis.

4. PAIN

painfully: He was *painfully* shy because of his shabby clothes and down-home ways.

sorely: We shall miss her *sorely*.

bitterly: It is *bitterly* cold today.

piteously: But in proportion to Beijing's population, the figure is *piteously* low, probably the lowest compared to other capitals in the world.

cruelly: The job was *cruelly* difficult.

5. SORROW

lamentably: The bonus CD is *lamentably* sparse.

sadly: But, in this case, the apparent militancy behind the comment is *sadly* funny.

grievously: The voice is *grievously* happy.

6. OUT OF EXPECTATION

surprisingly: It was *surprisingly* cheap.

astonishingly: Your English is *astonishingly* good.

incredibly: I felt *incredibly* embarrassed.

7. OTHERS

bloody: It's *bloody* wonderful!

badly: She wants to go *badly*.

Quite similar to Mandarin, English uses terms with negative connotations to indicate excessive extent. At first sight, the negative experiences adopted in English are not that concrete as those in Mandarin. Physical experiences are concrete; comparatively, the English terms refer to abstract psychological experiences. However, the abstract experiences adopted in English are often experienced in one's life, and people have no difficulty in understanding them. Contrarily, the concrete bodily experiences adopted in Mandarin are not experienced by everyone, and it possibly is human's **dread** of the negative experiences that brings about the derivation of excessive sense. Actually, it is not

surprising that dread is linked to excessive extent in Mandarin. In the following sentence, *ke-pa* "dread" indicates excessiveness itself.

人多到很可怕

Ren duo dao hen ke-pa

"There are so many people."

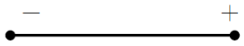
C. The Linking in Cognition

a. Why Bodily Experiences Related

Human beings are born with a body, and they use the body to experience everything and know the real world. The body then is projected to the outside world; as a result, many objects become human beings through metaphor and possess body parts, such as *shan-tou* 山頭 "the tope of the mountain", *shan-yao* 山腰 "the mountainside", *shan-jiao* 山腳 "the foot of a mountain". Such a people-oriented phenomenon is well seen in metaphorical expressions. To speak strictly, except some subtle differences (i.e. color of eyes/hair/skin, weight, height), every human body is constructed of the same types of body parts and internal organs. Then, what is experienced from the body is universal. In our opinions, the adoption of **universal** bodily experiences would ease communication. What is more, extent is quite abstract, and it is quite natural that people use **concrete** bodily experiences to understand extent. The adoption of bodily experiences is language-universal, but the choice of terms is language-specific. Mandarin excessive complements are mostly derived from words referring to abnormal body conditions while English prefer terms related to emotions such as sorrow, pain, misery and dread.

b. Why Negative

According to the discussion above, it is not difficult to find that both Mandarin and English adopt negative experiences, especially those that would bring a threat to the human body, to indicate excessive extent. Actually, many other languages have the same linguistic phenomenon. By and large, both the most positive terms and the most negative ones could derive the sense of excessiveness in that they indicate the extremity of a condition and would be positioned at the two extremities of a scale[4] in cognition.



However, negative terms usually bring great impact than their affirmative counterparts, and it seems to be a tendency that negative terms are more likely linked to extent than positive ones.

Why are lexical terms carrying negative connotations more easily adopted to express excessive extent? The frequency of use matters to some extent. Basically, the high frequency of use will eliminate the magic power of a word. Positive terms are heard all the time, and people might gradually treat their appearance as normal. Quite different, people always feel more interested in things which are rarely seen. In the same way, linguistic expressions that are seldom heard catch the audience's attention more easily. Since negative words are forbidden in public and rarely uttered, they would bring about an unimaginable effect. In consequence, the function of exaggeration is achieved.

c. Paradoxical Combination

Taking a negative term to be excessive degree adverb would bring about an interesting phenomenon. A paradoxical combination arises when the negative term appears with a positive adjective. The same phenomenon appears when an adverb derived from a positive lexical term modifies a negative adjective.

awfully excellent

painfully happy

You can hear it in every guitar strum, and with the woefully beautiful pitch of his voice.

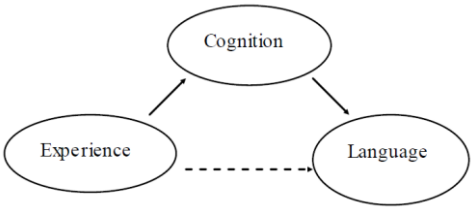
perfectly terrible

A reader or listener would have difficulty in comprehending the phrase if he/she has no idea that the negative terms represent excessive extent. In our opinions, such a paradoxical combination would require more time for language processing.

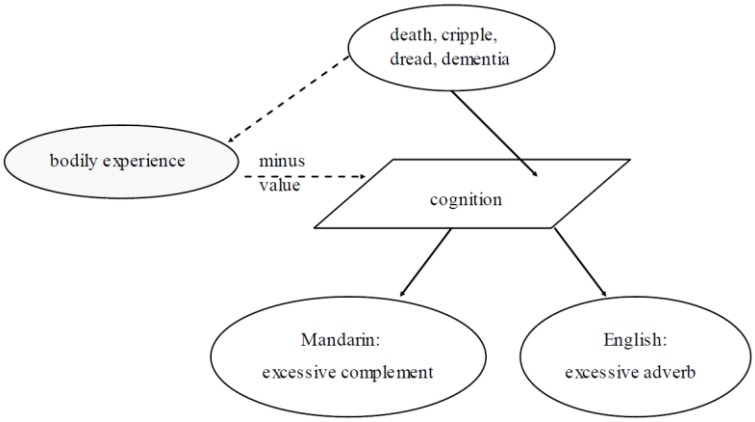
VI. CONCLUSION

[4] There is scale image in human's concept.

A language is not merely a language but reflects the cognitive system in human mind. Always, cognition is constructed based upon the experiences of the reality (real world). Nonetheless, as what is mentioned before, the relation of language to experience is not that direct but requires cognitive operations as the intermediate medium. Therefore, cognition teaching is necessary for language teaching.



Different cultures would have different experiences, which will then make differences in cognition and bring out different linguistic uses. This is language diversity. In addition to language diversities, there are language universals existing, especially those linguistic expressions regarding basic bodily experiences. Basically, language diversity and language universal complement each other to benefit foreign language learning. Language specific would help the learners to know clearly about a certain culture while language universal might decrease the burden of memorizing. The commonality shared by English and Mandarin in expressing excessive extent is found in this paper. Briefly, negative bodily experiences (i.e. death, dementia, being cripple, dread and etc.) are valued negative in human's cognition and stand for the end of a scale, which then link to excessive complements or degree adverbs in languages.



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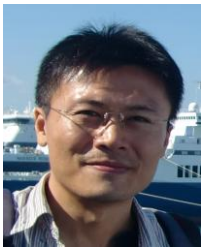

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1023-1030, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1023-1030

Radicalism in Byron's *Manfred:* A Politico-religious Study

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***Abstract*—This paper offers a politico-religious reading of *Manfred* that demonstrates how the Byronic hero is shown as the symbol of rebellion against the tyrannical government and its institutions. The paper traces the movement from symbolic presentation to Byron's rejection of resigning to supernatural powers. Byron accused his own country-men of arraying their strength in the side of tyranny and stated that freedom could be possible when the powerful obstacles, thrones and courts were removed. Ultimately the paper aims at exploring all possible political meanings of the play in the light of Byron's political and religious beliefs.**

***Index Terms*—radicalism, politico-religious, *Manfred*, tyranny**

I. Introduction

Byron stood for both personal and national liberty. His views were determined by a powerful and positive belief in the work of individual man. He resembled Blake in his condemnation of senseless cruelty and hypocrisy which it bred for its support. He was the upholder of the natural man and thought that his bodily pleasures were worthy of protection. He fought for the cause of liberty and went to Greece to support the Greeks in their struggle against tyranny. His conception of liberty was more instructive than intellectual. His love for liberty is well-marked in his works. He wrote the *Prisoner of Chillon* in the defence of liberty, and the hero Bonnivard is a votary of liberty like Byron himself. The whole oppressed Europe looked to him for salvation and he became the trumpet voice of freedom. With Byron liberty became the ruling passion, and he considered it his birth right to fight against all tyranny.

Byron remained more than other Romantics a true follower of the principles of the Romantics a true follower of the principles of the Revolution. Much more than Wordsworth and Coleridge, who after their first enthusiasm for the Revolution surrendered to caution and scepticism, more even than Keats, whose love of liberty was hardly developed to its full range, Byron wished to be free and wished the other men must be free too.

Byron was equally revolutionary in his attitude towards the evils and vices of his age. He was a social revolutionary and ruthlessly exposed and attacked, as in *'Don Juan'* the philistinism of the upper English class, the aristocracy and the monarchy. He exposed the hypocrisy, the senseless cruelty, snobbery, the fraud, the, the cant and the indolence of the upper classes in society.

The romantic revolt against social authority took as many shapes as the one against literary tradition. Most of the romantics were radical in their political views and crusaders for the emancipation of the individual. The French Revolution affected all the romantic poets though in different ways. The young Wordsworth and Coleridge were thrilled with joy at the fall of the Bastille, which signified for them the cracking of the tyrannical chains which had kept in bondage the human spirit for so long. Later, however, with the Reign of Terror, the Lake Poets (Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey) turned conservative. The later romantics—Shelley, Keats and Byron were stronger and more consistent radicals than the earlier ones. All of them devoted themselves to the cause of freedom in all lands. Byron upheld the cause of Greek freedom in his poetry and his person, not only financially and morally.

On Byron the French Revolution exerted no direct pressure. But he was a revolutionary in his own right. He was against almost all social conventions and institutions, and felt an almost morbid pleasure in violating and condemning them with the greatest abandon. In his poetry he most vigorously championed the cause of social and political liberty and died almost as a martyr in the cause of Greek Independence.

"Talk not of seventy years as age; in seven/ I have seen more changes, down from monarchs to/ The humblest individual under heaven,/ Than might suffice a moderate century through." (*Don Juan*, XI.82.1-4)

The changes which Byron refers to during these seven years were radical ones. The political powers of the monarchy and aristocracy, on which the churches had relied, were drastically reduced. The advent of plays like Victor Hugo's *Notre dame de Paris* and Beaumarchais's *Figaro's Wedding* marked the generally held disdain against the traditional privileges of the Church and the nobility. Figaro's soliloquy contained the harshest criticism against the nobility, who according to him were parasites unworthy of any privileges (Beaumarchais, 1857). A monarch was overthrown, a

republic declared, and after years of violence, a soldier of the republic declared himself the Emperor of France who was in its own turn overthrown by foreign countries. Hence, for Byron and other Europeans the events from the Revolution to the Battle of Waterloo symbolized the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of a new era.

Certainly, this sense of rapid makeovers had its implications for the literature of the period including the genre of tragedy. ''In the eighteenth century, playwrights usually staged a heroic figure who confronted a nonhuman force and finally overcame the chaos that typically marks the tragic world by finding within itself a new order for life'' (Cox, 2005, p. 412).

However, the end of the eighteenth century tradition meant that poets could no longer adhere to the principle of human surrender to the powers high above him or depict a hero that stood above the society. Writing in an era of democratic revolutions, the abolishment of hierarchies and the decline of religion, Romantic poets were "seen by many […] as incapable of producing tragedy" (ibid) in its traditional sense of the word because they could not "depict a hero or delineate a supernatural order." (ibid) *Manfred* seems to belong to this category because it is a play whose major emphasis is upon the freedom of man from the tyranny of the gods by reliance upon his own independent self. This theme has been linked by many critics to the idea of political radicalism. What follows is an attempt to explore all possible political meanings of the play in the light of Byron's political and religious beliefs.

The play is set in the Alps where Manfred, the protagonist of the play, lives in a Gothic castle. Tortured by his own sense of guilt for destroying Astarte, a girl he loved in the past, Manfred invokes six spirits of the universe, and a seventh who determines his personal destiny. None of the spirits are able to grant him what he wishes; they offer "Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days," but not what he is looking for which is forgetfulness. From now on Manfred is accused by an unknown voice of having done evil deeds and informed that a curse will be upon him which will torture him forever without ever granting his wish for death. In the next scene, Manfred attempts to kill himself by jumping from the mountains, but he is rescued by an elderly Chamois Hunter who takes him back to his cottage where Manfred confesses his love for Astarte and how this love destroyed her. Although Byron subtly avoids specifying the relationship between the two, modern critics, having the facts of Byron's life in mind, have usually described it as an incestuous relationship. After leaving the chamois hunter, Manfred summons the Witch of the Alps who promises to help him on the condition that he submits to her will. Manfred refuses and leaves for the Hall of Arimanes wherein Nemesis calls up the spirit of Astarte for him. However, the spirit only foretells Manfred that his misery will end within a day. Manfred returns to his castle feeling peaceful for a while. He is visited by the Abbot of St. Maurice who offers him the consolation of religion. Manfred refuses, although he takes the hand of the Abbott at the moment of death, saying "Old man! 't is not so difficult to die."

Not surprisingly, while reading the play, a person familiar with the facts of the poet's life cannot avoid relating the protagonist to Byron himself, and Astarte to his sister. In fact, many critics see this play as reflecting Byron's own affair with his sister, Augusta Leigh. This coincides with Hazlitt's remark that ''while reading Byron's works, Byron himself is never absent from our minds''. (2004, p. 66) However, there are critics who point to the possibility and even necessity of historical and political readings of his works. Watkins, among others, suggests "as the recent excellent editions of letters, journals and poetry […] make emphatically clear, […] there is a vitally public dimension to all of his work, one which includes a variety of political, social and historical issues." (1993, p. 149) No matter how much *Manfred* may be mixed with facts from the personal life of the poet, Watkins continues, Byron "rarely lost sight of the larger contexts […] of his particular situation," and, that *Manfred* is "about complex struggles and conflicts defining the entire Romantic Age across Europe. (p.19)

Although Byron himself was an aristocrat, he was affected by the new ideas preached against his class. In the third canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Byron presents sympathetic portraits of three of the heroes of the Enlightenment, Voltaire, Rousseau and Gibbon, whose ideas were championed by the leaders of the French Revolution. Watkins quotes David Erdman who once remarked "Byron and his heroes often appear acutely conscious of the mortality of their own class." (p. 154) He applies this assumption to the drama *Manfred* and sees Manfred's "extreme alienation and the conviction of certain defeat and death that Manfred everywhere expresses; his desperate search for some as yet untried trans-historical power to solve personal difficulties; his acute awareness of the inability of conventional actions and systems of belief to provide comfort" (p. 154) as an explicit example of an aristocrat aware of the demise of his class. However, Watkins's suggestion is useful to demonstrate that while Byron was aware of the demise of his class, he was not frightened by it. This is confirmed by a comment that he made to Leigh Hunt in which he spoke of his desire for significant political change:

When a proper spirit is manifested 'without doors' I will endeavour not to be idle within –do you think such a time is coming? Methinks there are gleams of it- & the fruit of it was a title and the loss of an enormous property, –if the old struggle comes on –I shall lose the one & shall never gain the other –but–no matter –there are things even in this world –better than either. (*BLJ* 5, p.19)[1]

II. Discussion

[1] BLJ in this paper refers to the book**:** Byron, George Gordon, Baron. *Byron's Letters and Journals*. Ed. Leslie A. Marchand. 12 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973-82.

This is common knowledge that Byron, along with Shelley, belonged to the party of political radicals; and being a radical meant lack of faith in divine providence. Their vision of the world was one which was devoid of the religious optimism that God will make things right. Rather, defying the old hierarchical system, these radicals even challenged the authority of God as an absolute monarch. They attacked Christianity and joined the party of its opponent, Satan. They saw him as the symbol of "rebellion against unjust order and tyranny of the ancient regime and its institutions." (Shocker, 2003, P. 156) Both Byron and Shelley had agreed in challenging the morality of Divine retribution. Byron felt the absurdity and injustice of God's making man in the knowledge that he would disobey Him, and then exacting a penalty for his sin. Such considerations ''put Divine revenge in a far less favorable light than the 'wild justice' of a Guiccioli''. (Kerrigan, 2006, P. 247) As a result, when the Abbot in Byron's Manfred quotes "Vengeance is mine alone!"(Forman, 1880, P. 127) Manfred replies with a boldness that reminds the reader of Byron himself. "Must crimes be punished but by other crimes?" (P. 127) Manfred asks. To Shelley and Byron God was a cruel punisher who imposed a "terrible vengeance" on Lucifer who was himself the chief and original victim of creation. Milton's Devil as a moral being, wrote Shelley: is far superior to his God as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent […] is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy. (P. 127)

Byron was also skeptical about the existence of God. His uncertainty about and detestation of the idea of an afterlife with "varieties of burning, smothering and freezing" (Clark, 1988, P. 270) reveals itself in Manfred's Hamlet-like soliloquy in Act II: "We are the fools of time and terror: Days/ Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live, / Loathing our life, and dreading still to die." (PP. 64-66) Thus, evidently, for Byron too, it was certain that the hero of Milton's *Paradise Lost* was not God but Satan. As he wrote to his former friend at Cambridge, Francis Hodgeson, "the hero of tragedy and (I add meo periculo) a tragic poem must be guilty, to excite 'terror and pity […] Who is the hero of 'Paradise Lost'? Why Satan." (*BLJ* 8:115)

Depriving himself of the consolation of an afterlife, Manfred has to bear the burden of his guilt all by himself. This mental independence, which accounts for his rejection of penitence to protect himself from divine retribution, gives him a heroic dimension. To him "remorse without the fear of hell" is enough to make a hell within him. To the Abbot he says:

Old man! there is no power in holy men,/ Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form/ Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,/ Nor agony, nor, greater than all these,/ The innate tortures of that deep despair/ Which is remorse without the fear of hell/ But all in all sufficient to itself/ Would make a hell of heaven". (III, pp. 66-73)

Manfred's remorse for his guilt feigned or not, does not in any way make him ask for forgiveness but, instead, he asks for forgetfulness which is a kind of running away from the reality of life and the past. He even seems to be pleased with his predicament for it makes him feel superior in mental power to the average men. Manfred's attitude with its emphasis on the self-sufficiency of man's conscience in the realm of morals is a distinguishing characteristic of the Byronic heroes. By rejecting the claims of the witch, the spirits of the universe, the forces of Arimanes and Nemesis, the solace of the nature, and finally the Abbott, Manfred refuses to yield to any spiritual authority, discarding pantheism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity each in its turn. In doing so, Manfred represents man in the increasingly secular world of the nineteenth century. The French Revolution, by executing the king and abolishing the authority of the Church, destroyed the hierarchical providential order of traditional tragedy which relied upon a sense of God who finally established the order of the things. ''Accordingly Byron's *Manfred* staging a world where nature spirits, the Witch of the Alps, Nemesis, Arimanes, and the God of the Abbot all inhabit the same universe'', (Cox, P. 424) implies that none of those religions is adequate to life. Talking about this aspect of *Manfred*, Richardson (2004, P. 145) argues:

Byron's heterodox mythology in Manfred –placing pagan witches, Classical Greek deities, and the Zoroastrian evil principle (from the pre-Muslim Persian religion) on the same footing as the Abbot's Christian references– implies a cosmopolitan religious skepticism […] intensified by his open dislike of priests.

Due to this lack of religious faith and his abhorrence of abstract, Byron yielded to cynicism. He brought the truth of human viciousness to light and hence was accused, he says, of "A tendency to under-rate and scoff/At human power and virtue, and all that." But he replies:

I say no more than hath been said in Dante's/Verse, and by Solomon and by Cervantes; By Swift, by Machiavel, Rochefoucault,/By Fenelon, by Luther, and by Plato/By Tillotson, and Wesley, and Rousseau,/Who knew this life was not worth a potato.(*Don Juan*, VII,p. 3-5)

Unlike such Romantic thinkers as Rousseau who accused the society of corrupting the noble nature of humankind, Byron does not believe in the essential goodness of human nature and the progress of human history. As Lockridge (1989, p. 418) suggests, "He is a poet who denies that human history goes anywhere, that human beings are noble or honest," still, in spite of all this, "he supports revolutionary causes."

Byron observes that the "lapse of ages changes all things […] except man himself, who has always been, and always will be an unlucky rascal. The infinite variety of lives conduct but to death, and the infinity of wishes lead but to disappointment." (*BL* , p.19-20) This is exactly the attitude that Manfred expresses towards human kind. Averse to life and scornful of his race he separates himself from "mortals of a dust" like the chamois hunter and says, "My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,/ Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;/ The thirst of their ambition was not mine;/ The aim of their existence was not mine;" (II, pp. 51-54) Meanwhile he does not behave toward other men with

hostility; on the contrary, on few accusations that he meets other people like the chamois hunter and the Abbot, he treats them with gentleness and consideration. This seems to be a result of his sense of pity for the inevitable doom which they all share. Recognizing the littleness of life and the mortality of man, Manfred is able to discern a truth which makes all his endeavors meaningless. This is a recognition which Manfred shares with his author. In fact, Byron's pessimism is his departure point from an idealist like Shelley. While Shelley identified poets as 'the unacknowledged legislators of the world,' (Forman, 1880:392) Byron scoffed at imagination as the worst quality of literature. As McGann (1976, p. 156) asserts:

It is the fashion of the day to lay great stress upon what they call 'Imagination' and 'Invention' [*sic*] the two commonest of qualities –an Irish peasant with a little whiskey in his head will imagine and invent more than would furnish forth a modern poem.

He had a distinguishing desire for truth which kept him on the ground at a time when Romantic poets were riding their wild Pegasus. Disparaging the highly imaginative innovations of his Romantic contemporaries in his *Detached Thoughts* he writes: "One of my notions, different from those of my contemporaries, is, that the present is not a high age of English Poetry: there are more poets than ever there were, and proportionally less poetry." (*BLJ* 9, p. 35) He believed poetry to be the reflection of the world, hence attached great importance to factual experience. In a letter to Murray he writes, "But I hate things all fiction […] there should always be some foundation of fact for the most airy fabric-and pure invention is but the talent of a liar." (*BLJ* 5, p. 203)

This tendency to realistic literature which culminated in his masterpiece *Don Juan* was reflected in his ode *To Romance*. In this poem he writes:

Parent of golden dreams, Romance!/ Auspicious Queen of childish joys,/ Who lead'st along, in airy dance,/ Thy votive train of girls and boys;/ At length, in spells no longer bound,/ I break the fetters of my youth;/ No more I tread thy music round,/ But leave thy realms for those of Truth (pp. 1-8)

In this poem, he shows his desire to see the world as it is: composed of contradictions and mysteries and dissatisfactions: "But leave, at once, thy realms of air I/ […]/ Confess that woman's false as fair/ And friends have feeling for –themselves?" (pp. 19-22)This insistence on truth, which according to McConnell, meant "candor and resolution in facing the voluminous problems of knowledge and experience," (1978, p. 362) seemed to be a quality borrowed from the Enlightenment and its demand for logicality. As a result, dissatisfied with the new poetic system of his age, in a letter to Murray, his publisher, in 1817 he writes:

With regard to poetry in general, I am convinced, the more I think of it, that Moore and all of us –Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, I– are all in the wrong –one as much the other; that we are upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system, or systems, not worth a damn in itself. (*BLJ* 4, p.169)

Even in writing the *Turkish Tales* he insisted on the authenticity of his representation of the Orient and it seems that he tried to offer a faithful portrayal of the Muslim East. (However, this is a claim recently rejected by Eastern scholars). Consequently, the idealistic attitude of some poets of the time was against his penchant for the real. About this kind of mind-set which was common among some of his contemporary poets he wrote, "I have no great esteem for poetical persons, particularly women; they have so much of the 'ideal' in practices, as well as ethics." (*BLJ* 2, p. 346) ''Shelley was one of those in search of a Utopia, who dreamt of the perfect state that humankind might one day achieve. These dreams arose partly from his reading of William Godwin's *Political Justice''*. (Hands, 2008, pp. 143-161) Byron's skepticism to Shelley's dreams reveals itself in a remark he made to Medwin on how this utopianism damaged Shelley's career: "if he were not so mystical, and would not write Utopias and set himself up as a Reformer, his right to rank as a poet, and very highly too, could not fail of being acknowledged." (Earnest, 1966, p. 235)

However, Lord Byron was himself a lover of ideal and the realization of the failure of the real to match the ideal constituted the essence of tragedy for him. Although history shows that there can be no permanent change in our bad luck, for Byron, "it is necessary to act as if there could be." (McConnell, 1978, p. 431) Despite a sense of futility which dominates the atmosphere of *Manfred*, the hero shows commitment to action and boldness in standing against the tyranny of the metaphysical forces in the world. When Manfred summons the Witch of the Alps, a beautiful spirit who is ready to help him on condition that he become her subject, Manfred refuses to swear loyalty; he likewise rejects to resign himself to Arimanes and his forces. Unlike Faust, Manfred is not willing to submit to any external authority, no matter what their nature or intention. Provoked by the Spirits which remind him of his mortality he says: "The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,/ The lightning of my being, is as bright,/ Pervading, and far-darting as your own,/ And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!" (I, pp. 154-158) This quality that Prometheus, Harold, Manfred and Cain, which were written simultaneous with Don Juan, have in common is their Byronic heroism, a superiority of spirit does not allow for an easy acceptance of the world and life as they are. The hero yearns for something beyond the limitations of his wretched existence and his tragedy starts when he realizes the fact that it is impossible to achieve the ideal by means of human wisdom and earthly conditions.

For all its sense of nonconformity, Byron's ode 'Prometheus' serves as an introduction to *Manfred* and the plays; in it he compares the Promethean rebellion, defiance and "impenetrable spirit" with man's ability to assert his element of immortality in the face of his mortality:

"Like thee, Man is in part divine,/ A troubled stream from a pure source;/ And Man in portions can foresee/ His own funereal destiny;/ His wretchedness, and his resistance,/ And his sad unallied existence:/ To which his Spirit may

oppose/ Itself--and equal to all woes,/ And a firm will, and a deep sense,/ Which even in torture can descry/ Its own concenter'd recompense,/ Triumphant where it dares defy,/ And making Death a Victory." (pp. 47-59)

The heroes of Byron's plays are committed to action; however, they are aware of the ineffectiveness of their attempts. This is the Byronic dilemma that "though history insists that there can be no permanent change in our bad luck, it is necessary to act as if there could be." (Lockridge, 1989: 431) That was the case with Byron's involvement in Carbonari uprising and the war for the Greek independence. According to Abrams (2006, p. 1608) although he was well aware of the conditions in Greece and was too skeptical of human nature to entertain hope of success'', he exclaims:

But, onward! It is now the time to act and what signifies self, if a single spark of that which would be worthy of the past can bequeathed [sic] unquenchably to the future? It is not one man, nor a million, but the spirit of liberty which must be sprea. (*BLJ* 8, p. 20)

Byron who belonged to the second generation of Romantic poets did not experience the shock of the failure of the millennial dreams which were entertained during the French Revolution. According to Trott (1999) he and his younger contemporaries could not completely give in to the idea of the failure of the liberal cause of the Revolution, therefore, they embarked on creating rebellious characters. The kind of Promethean rebellion, which reveals itself in *Manfred* and other works of the period, has been interpreted in political terms by many critics. The defiance of a Manfred against the supernatural powers is assumed to represent a satanic rebellion against God, hence is related to Milton's republicanism. In fact, the voice that condemns Manfred to eternal suffering at the beginning of the play gives a description of him which resembles that of Satan in the *Paradise Lost*.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,/ By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,/ By that most seeming virtuous eye,/ By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;/ By the perfection of thine art/ Which pass'd for human thine own heart;/ By thy delight in others' pain,/ And by thy brotherhood of Cain,/ I call upon thee! and compel/ Thyself to be thy proper Hell!/ (pp. 242-251)

Nowhere else in the play is a sound reason for this curse given to explain the evil deeds that Manfred might have committed in the past to deserve such damnation. Therefore, it seems that Byron's intention for writing this passage has only been to intensify his hero's alienation to a satanic degree, thus to arouse sympathy for him in an audience acquainted with radical ideas advocated in William Godwin's *Enquiry concerning Political Justice (1793)*. As Nicola Trott remarks Godwin in his work uses Satan to question the injustice of the current systems of government. Godwin had asked: "why did Satan rebel against his maker? It was, as he himself informs us, because he saw no sufficient reason for that extreme inequality of rank and power which the creator assumed." (Williams, 2000, p. 48) However, as Richardson (1988) argues, Byron falls back on the defiant self-torment of Milton's Satan to end his play and this defiance results in no solution for Manfred's existential problem. Nothing comes out of this action and the poet does not provide the reader with a resolution to Manfred's sufferings. The reason is that Byron was actually portraying himself and the fact that there is no resolution at the end of the play, proves his own inability to answer the questions that he raised. As Marchand says, "in his speculative dramas, […], the driving force is always the poet's desire to work out a solution to his own deepest quandaries." (1968, p. 12) Price too believed that ''Lord Byron only knew how to depict one man: himself''. (1983, p. 91) Marchand (1968) claims that we might believe that most of Byron's works grew out of his personal need for emotional release and the questions he tried to answer were his own. Moreover, he was trying to come up with sincere solutions and fake romantic optimism was not what he sought. The result was no resolution at all because in fact he did not possess any. The Promethean revolt of the Byronic hero whose emotional and intellectual capacities are superior to the average man is meant to be the way he asserts his individuality against the forces which are beyond his control. This courageous rebellion, which is presented as the hero's only means of dealing with the reality of life, not only fails to make a change in the conditions, but also costs him his life. McConnell describes Byron's dramas as "modern tragedies of existential revolt," which "only assert the value of the rebellion itself;" (1978, p. 408)

Byron himself grew dissatisfied with this heroic view of existence. In *Don Juan* he abandoned the heroic for the comic vision of "things really as they are." He was conscious of the futility of the revolt as a way to oppose the inevitable fate. His deep-seated suspicion of the abstract led him to a happy surrender to life in his satirical epic, *Don Juan*. While the plays dealt with the existential issues of life and their protagonists were heroic and committed to action and revolt; *Don Juan* deals with no lofty subject matter and its protagonist is un-heroic and passive. McConnell (1978, p. 414) believes that "Don Juan is Byron himself who disappointed by the inadequacy of man in building the ideal world yields to passivity and passes to a position beyond rebellion and even beyond choice".

Byron rejected the role of a romantic poet-prophet for a mere narrator of the realities of the world as he saw them. He had been accused of immorality in *Don Juan*. Interestingly, his answer to this accusation was another rebuff to them: "But now I'm going to be immoral, now/ I mean to show things really as they are." (*Don Juan*, 12, XL) Defending his satirical poem, he wrote to Douglas Kinnaird: "As to Don Juan […] it may be bawdy but is it not good English? It may be profligate but is it not life, is it not the thing? Could any man have written it who has not lived in the world?" (*BLJ* 6, p.232) In his wide traveling, Byron had gathered enough material to put into the frame of his satire. He was realistic enough to consent to the bitter fact that that there were no values left in the modern world; and virtue was not encouraged and rewarded by the society.

In *Manfred*, as in *Don Juan*, Byron's view of the world is a pessimistic one. The world that Byron depicts in *Manfred* is a world dominated by evil spirits which repair shattered thrones, restore dynasties, avenge men upon their enemies

and save the tyrants and traitors. In their gathering with Arimanes, their master, the spirits declare that "all that liveth, more or less, is ours,/ And most things wholly so".(II, iii, pp. 24-5) Even the existence of an afterlife is questioned by Manfred who while pondering over Astarte's fate remarks: "What is she now?-- a sufferer for my sins--/ A thing I dare not think upon-- or nothing." (II, ii, pp. 197-8) Byron himself usually wrote satirically about the immortality of the soul:

"[…]'which is best, life or death, the gods only know,' so Socrates said to his judges… it has been said that the immortality of the soul is a grand peut-être –but still it is a grand one. Everybody clings to it– the stupidest, and dullest, and wickedest of human bipeds is still persuaded that he is immortal."(*BLJ, pp.* 8:99)

In spite of all this, it seems obvious that Lord Byron could not accept the reality of life as simply as frivolous Don Juan. He had experienced a restless life of adventures, battles and sports; and he seized every opportunity to assist the helpless people around him. Therefore, the protagonist in the plays may be described as the man Byron himself desired to be, a man capable of making a stand. All of Byron's tragic protagonists recognize the necessity of commitment and therefore they act. Don Juan, on the other hand, is an uncommitted, passive anti-hero who moves easily in society and does not seem to question anything. One may conclude that a desire for ideal was more congenial to Byron's spirit than cynicism towards human endeavors. As Marchand (1968) suggests Byron was so constituted that his state of mind wavered between the ideal which was his only true love, and a melancholy realization of how disgustingly short of the ideal the real is and must always be.

As a result, in his dedication to *Don Juan*, Byron who adhered to the Whig party attacked the Lake poets for their conversion to Toryism and admiration of the king. Like Byron himself whose scandalous relationship with his sister, his radical political debates in Parliament, his attack on the great poets of his time and his later deathly involvement in liberal movements across the world constituted an uncommon kind of life for him, the superiority of Manfred resides in his ability to perform deeds which others "could not brook to dream" (II, i,p. 78) Dissatisfied with the events in England, Byron turned to Italy where there was still hope for the success of the cause of freedom. (XVI) This unchanging impulse to freedom and commitment to action despite a general sense of futility explains Manfred's persistence in defying and scorning the spirits which come to take his soul away at the end of the play. Although at the beginning of Act I Manfred shows disdain to littleness of life and human weakness in a Faustian soliloquy –"Half dust, half deity, alike unfit/ To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make/ A conflict of its elements, and breathe/ The breath of degradation and of pride,/ Contending with low wants and lofty will,/ Till our mortality predominates," (I,ii,pp. 40-6)– his final speech demonstrates him as a supreme creature whose superior knowledge, daring and strength of mind give him a supernatural air. He shows tremendousness in his fall and succeeds in meeting death with great dignity. To the spirits he says:

I do defy ye,-- though I feel my soul/ Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;/ Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath/ To breathe my scorn upon ye-- earthly strength/ To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take/ Shall be ta'en limb by limb. (III, iv, pp. 99-104)

In his *History of Western Philosophy*, Russell sets apart two kinds of revolt which were both derived from the French Revolution and the philosophers of the Enlightenment: the romantic revolt of Byron and the rationalistic revolt beginning with the French philosophers of the Revolution. He argues that ''the romantic revolt passes from Byron to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche and is afterwards practiced by Mussolini and Hitler. Among the characteristics that he numbers for Byronic revolt is the glorification of certain kinds of violence'' (2004, p. 652-7) which his admiration of Napoleon is an example of. It is evident from his poetry that compared to the tyranny of people like "Cold-blooded, smooth-faced" Castlereagh at home and abroad he prefers the tyranny of Napoleon: "Where is Napoleon the Grand? God knows!/ where little Castlereagh? The Devil can tell!" (*Don Juan*, 11, LXXVII) This is how Lockridge (1989, p. 448) defines Byron's stand against these two major aggressors of his time:

Byron does admire aggression, provided that its target is evil or ludicrous. To admire aggression indiscriminately is a dangerous sentimentality, which he, like Blake, sometimes approaches, as when he says that even evil acts are superior to inactivity (LJ IV, 162) […] The aggression of […] a Castlereagh […] is evil, that of Napoleon is of ambivalent value, showing the best and worst of qualities.

This partiality to Napoleon is due to his common characteristics with the Byronic hero which made him the Titan of his age. Byron's imagination had always been moved by Napoleon. "At Harrow he had kept a statue of him in the room and later proclaimed his wish for Napoleon's victory". (Russell, 2004, p. 678) When he heard of Waterloo he said, "I'm damn sorry for it." (ibid) However, Byron was never uncritical of Napoleon. "He had witnessed the brutality of the French aggression in Spain during the Peninsular War," says Bewley (1970, p. 405), "and his republican and anti-imperialistic convictions were revolted." (405), In 1814 he wrote his 'Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte' which contains some of the harshest criticism of Napoleon one can find in poetry:

Ill-minded man! Why scourge thy kind/who bowed so low the knee?/By gazing on thyself grown blind/ Thou taught'st the rest to see/ with might unquestioned,-power to save,-/To those that worshipped thee;/ Nor till thy fall could mortal guess/ Ambition's less than littleness. (pp. 10-17)

However, Napoleon was the child and champion of the Revolution and Byron could not share in the general reaction held against him and against the French revolution. Even when Napoleon was exiled in Elba, Douglass quotes Byron, "but I won't give him up even now, though all his admirers have, 'like the thanes, fallen from him." (2004, p. 24) Therefore, after Napoleon's escape from Elba, Byron could write, "I can forgive the rogue for utterly falsifying every

line of my Ode […] It is impossible not to be dazzled and overwhelmed by his character and career." (*BLJ* 4, p.284) Bewley (1970, p. 415) mentions that Byron "kept a gilt-framed print of Napoleon in his library in London, and, after Waterloo, once considered making a bid for Napoleon's coronation robes" and concludes that "Byron was attracted by Napoleon's Titanism –in a sense he seemed to be an embodiment of the Byronic hero– and Byron tended to identify himself with him."His treatment of Napoleon's fate in *Childe Harold* is ambivalent. On one hand he reproaches Napoleon for yielding to his whims: "Oh, more or less than man –in high or low, / Battling with nations, flying from the field;/ Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now/ More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;/ An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,/ But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,/ However deeply in men's spirits skilled,/ Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,/ Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star." (Canto iii, 38) Yet, he justifies all these imperfections by saying: "But quiet to quick bosoms is a Hell/And there hath been thy bane; there is a fire/And motion of the Soul which will not dwell/[…]/Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore./ (Canto iii, p. 42)

The appreciation of Napoleon's violence finds equivalence in Manfred's apparent lack of remorse for his crime. The fact that Manfred seeks forgetfulness shows that he feels guilty about destroying Astarte. But, he does not regret being what he is, he does not wish to change his fate with that of the chamois hunter, he does not even ask for punishment and retribution. He tries to escape the past, not pay for what he has done. The pain of his crime does not overcome his egotism. Actually, he has a sort of Narcissistic attitude to his being which makes him feel superior to the common men. Even his attraction to Astarte is due to her resemblance to himself:

She was like me in lineaments-- her eyes/Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone/Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;/But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty;/She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,/The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind/To comprehend the universe. (II, ii, pp. 199-205)

So we could say that Manfred is not remorseful of his sin, since he deems himself above the rules that govern the society. To the chamois hunter who suggests that there is comfort in "the aid of holy men and heavenly patience" he answers: "Patience and patience! Hence-- that word was made/For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;/Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,--/I am not of thine order." (II, I, pp. 35-8)

However, Byron himself cannot be accused of ever harming anyone. On the contrary, as Knight (2002: 29) argues "his generosity and kindliness, his chivalry, courtesy, humility and courage were noted by those who knew him […] and others." His Manfred, too, despite his snobbishness, denies being "black with evil." He tells the hunter, "My injuries came down on those who loved me--/On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd/An enemy, save in my just defence--/But my embrace was fatal." (II, i, pp. 85-9) So, this gentle nature must have had stronger reasons for refusing to celebrate Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo. We can find it in Byron's philosophy, which is constituted of suspiciousness to all systems. It prevents him from the optimism that the Tory poets such as Wordsworth, Scott and Southey showed towards the victory of Waterloo. Shaw (1995, p. 51) remarks that "In 1815 the significance of the battle of Waterloo had yet to be decided." He continues to say that "to figure Waterloo in terms of the national epic would be to risk alienating a war-weary public already satiated with an array of poems celebrating the virtues of British freedom." And Tory poets had done their job well in commemorating Waterloo in verse. Byron was disappointed by them as he revealed in the Dedication to Don Juan: "Europe has slaves, allies, kings, armies still,/ And Southey lives to sing them very ill." To Wordsworth Waterloo was the 'victory sublime,' but to Byron it was just 'the deadly Waterloo' where 'rider and horse –friend, foe –in one red burial blent!' (*Childe Harold*, iii, 252) Byron lacked the hot nationalism which could blind other poets to the vices of their government. He owed this open-minp.dedness to his wide traveling. "He came home a confirmed one" says Marchand (1971, pp. 99- 100) "and would always view the prejudices and dogmas of the 'tight little island' in the light of his knowledge of 'the ways and farings of many men."

Therefore, after the battle of Waterloo he could ask:

"is Earth more free?/ Did nations combat to make One submit;/ or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?/[…]/ Shall we, who stuck the lion down, shall we/ Pay the Wolf homage? Offering lowly gaze/ And servile knees to thrones? No; prove before ye praise!/ If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!/ (*Childe Harold*, iii, 164-172) He saw the indignity of a war fought against tyrants by tyrants and the recurring fact that all states fall down into 'wealth, vice, corruption, –barbarism at last'. (*Don Juan*, iv,p. 108)

III. Conclusion

According to Rawes (2004), through *Manfred* Byron tries to find an answer to Europe's sense of living under the weight of a long and violent past and in a diminished, withered present and he finds the answer not in the transcendental solutions offered by religious traditions, but in the resources within human existence. Rawes explains that while Manfred is trying to find some relief for his sufferings in the outside world and in self-oblivion, in Act III he suddenly enjoys a moment of calm and freedom from his painful memory. In contrast to the inadequacy of religion in its different shapes to answer the human problems, Byron shows the power in man to save him from his mental quandaries. Facing a Europe which was devastated by a long war, he still believes man to be able to find the path to freedom:

There is a calm upon me--
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.

If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought 'Kalon,' found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. (III,i, PP. 6-18)

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1031-1036, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1031-1036

Practical Techniques for Cultural-based Language Teaching in the EFL Classroom

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***Abstract*—The present paper concerns itself with a study of the cultural-based language teaching issue, particularly with the issue of some practical techniques for teaching culture in the EFL classroom. We want to emphasize the importance of cultural acquisition in the study of language courses, and to present a range of practical techniques that have been found to be effective and successful in cultural-based courses and a few tips that can help to make the teaching of culture a better experience for both teachers and students. The purpose of this paper is to explore effective approaches of culture communication transmission in English classroom teaching.**

***Index Terms*—language and culture, classroom teaching, practical techniques**

I. Introduction

Every language is part of a culture. As such, it cannot but serve and reflect culture needs. (Hu Zhuanglin, 1988). There is a closed relation between language and culture, which are either the matrix or the reflection of culture. The world is now increasingly opening and various cultures blend with each other. Therefore, people with different culture have more and more mutual exchange and cooperation. For this reason, In EFL teaching, it is the most important task for teachers to have a through and profound grasp of language and culture in order to cultivate students' communicative competence and to develop teaching techniques.

With the research of the relationship between culture and language teaching deepening, people have realized the necessity of teaching culture into language learning. As we know, the cultural factors become more and more important in English teaching. A lot of experts are for the opinion that teaching language means teaching culture. The purpose of language learning is to equip learners with as much knowledge as possible. Language learning is a process of developing the awareness of the world, and learning cultural knowledge is an important way for us to enrich learner's knowledge.

Teaching culture is considered important by most teachers but it has remained insubstantial and sporadic in most language classroom (Omaggio, 1993). It is clear that cultural background knowledge is necessary in language teaching. Teachers should use different methods to help students to overcome the difficulties in language learning as well as culture learning. However, it is not easy to teach culture knowledge. Teachers must be acquainted with the differences between linguistic cultures. Teachers can provide cultural information, and teach students to express themselves correctly in different occasions. The key point is how to perform different ways in teaching different cultures. This paper presents some of methods related to the cultural aspects of practical techniques that have been found to be effective in culture-based language teaching and a few tips that can help to make the teaching of culture a better experience for both teachers and students.

II. Creating Beneficial Cultural Contexts

It goes without saying that a total immersion in the culture of a native speaking country seems to be the first preference for learning its culture. But it does not follow that students cannot learn a foreign culture in the classroom in our home culture. Teachers may as well create an environment in an economic and systematic way. Through the procession of comprehensible classroom communicative activities, culture learning is gradually pushed forward.

Both language and culture teaching involve the development of a feeling for language in both written and spoken discourse. However, some approaches being complimented in our classroom have not always served to develop such responses to language or to isolate the different kinds of responses involved. On one hand, the structural approaches to ELT, with their emphasis on discrete-point teaching, "correctness" in grammatical form and repetition of a range of graded structures, restricted lexis, etc., still represents a dominant methodology hindering culture teaching. On the other hand, the teaching culture has lacked a consistent methodology of representation to non-native Chinese students. Therefore, an effective approach is badly needed where language and culture study are more closely integrated and harmonized than is commonly the case now.

With the purpose of a better cultural acquisition from language teaching, teachers can adopt an effective method on cultural texture. Oxford (1994) has used the term 'cultural texture' to describe the many aspects of culture that teachers

need to teach to their students. To achieve this texture, teachers need to vary three different parameters, i.e. information sources, activity-types and positive interactions.

A. Various Information Sources

First of all, teachers should encourage students to collect information, and they can use encyclopedias, multimedia software and the internet for the required material. Students will try every means possible to get the knowledge themselves instead of waiting for it. In addition, they will analyze the information and select what material best fits their cultural topics.

In order to get a comprehensive picture of the target culture from many angles, teachers need to present their students with different kinds of information by accumulating a great deal of courseware. The list below shows some possible sources of information which can be used as materials for teaching culture. By using a combination of visual, audio and tactile materials, teachers are also likely to succeed in addressing the different learning styles of their students.

extracts from literary	Information Sources	multimedia software
internet		DVD & CDs
films & TV		illustrations
encyclopedias		video
literature		newspapers, magazines
background information		interviews
anecdotes		photographs
fieldwork		plays & songs

The fast development of new media technologies (such as VCD, DVD, DTV, MP5, PlayStations, Visual Presenter, PowerPoint, Internet and Intranet) has begun to usher in new approaches to classroom management. The teachers have to learn to adapt themselves to this new revolution in media technologies with reference to the designing and teaching of cultural studies course.

B. Various Activity Types

The effective classroom activities can be characterized in many norms. The most common is the topic (i.e. what it is about), and the activity, (i.e. what it involves doing). In one aspect, information must be transmitted, regardless of how it is done. Participants also usually know what they are talking about. They have to ensure that they are "on topic" or "to the point". In another aspect, they exchange ritual talk in order to establish or maintain social relationships, like daily greetings. Or they are given instructions or guidance to accomplish a task. So they know what activity it is, and then act as other participants. Otherwise they would be confused, be misunderstood and embarrassed and furthermore communication would end up in failure. In a word, transmission of information is of vital importance. Here are some of the effective classroom activities below.

1. Conducting topic-oriented activity

As we all know, a topic is not a topic until it is talked about, so the teacher presents an issue where an existing element in the real world is concerned. Usually a single issue or related topic are talked about by cooperation of participants — teachers and students in the classroom. Inside or outside the classroom students take turns to talk about a topic in the sense of their cultural principles and norms. The teacher would adjust them to the target culture when he or she finds them misled by their own cultural background. The topics of issues in discussion vary considerably across cultures. In dealing with the topics, students are instructed to cross the cultural border between their own every day world and the world of the target language and follow certain social constraints and rules during participation of classroom activities, at the same time, the teacher may insert comments of a topic nature into an activity.

2. Taking activity logs

An activity log refers to the use of a notebook in which students write about experiences both in and out of classroom or record responses and reactions to cultural learning and to classroom activities. Activity logs provide students with an opportunity to reflect on learning, and are usually shared with the teacher on a regular basis but not graded. In this way, the teacher may be able to find out how the student is progressing and the students gain additional opportunities to practice writing. In teaching culture classes, activity logs may be used as a way of establishing a dialogue between teacher and student through comments, questions and reactions or a way of encouraging students to write regularly on topics of the activities.

By requiring them to evaluate class activity for interest cultural learning, students must reconsider what they have learnt. The teacher can also be provided useful feedback and each student also records his/her target for what they think they actually achieve, and their own comments on the activities. Considering the complexity of the course, it is essential for the teacher to instruct the students about activity logs. The note is also taken partly in class and partly outside class involving the different steps or periods of some topics and themes.

3. Selecting authentic materials

Selecting adaptive materials is an essential factor for students to improve their comprehension ability. A selection of authentic foreign material should be used, especially dialogues, because it's more authentic and reflects cultural

behavior followed by speakers. Authentic materials can frustrate students lacking sufficient cultural and social knowledge of the target language, and therefore teachers should carefully select suitable materials to motivate their learning interests. Teachers should explain cultural factors encountered in the material. Students now have easier access to visual aids such as films and videotapes. It is generally agreed that what helps in cultural acquisition is to be shown regularly about cultural background. Dialogue is a large proportion of authentic listening materials. It provides a wide range of western culture, such as customs, habits, social manners, life style. So it is quite necessary for teachers to give students an introduction to help them understand well native speakers and their culture.

Through multimedia and network technology the teacher can offer students not only rich sources of authentic learning materials, but also an attractive and friendly interface, vivid pictures and pleasant sounds, which to a large extent overcome the lack of authentic language environment and arouses students' interest in learning. There are many good videos and texts published concerning the classic literacy works and most teachers have access to them and the video equipment. Watching videos is simply another tool for learning and enjoyment. Frequently, when some writer and his or her works are dealt with, especially the classic ones, the students should be offered the opportunity to enjoy the video. The teacher still can make use of the chances to work out some methods to arouse the curiosity and motivation.

4. Employing prediction

Prediction is a subskill in teaching, meaning that students use their knowledge about the language, what they are provided with (e.g. title, topic area), their worldly knowledge and experiences to foretell the listening or reading text's content and then confirm or repair their predicted content so that a better and effective understanding can be achieved. Prediction is not wild guessing, but a skill that needs sufficient foundations. Appropriate background knowledge like custom, geography, history, politics and sound awareness of cultural differences between languages can contribute to reasonable predictions. Language always occurs within a cultural and social setting of some sort, and it must be interpreted in the light of this social and cultural environment.

Students should be encouraged to set up useful predictions and activated relevant concepts and experiences in their minds. Some culture-specific features of the context or of the speaker's assumptions could mean that a lack of cultural knowledge in the students would affect comprehension. If full background information concerning key contextual features is provided, students can build up their own set of 'working stereotypes' relating to the foreign culture, increasing the efficiency of their predictive skill.

Taking prediction is a way to practice students to predict what they are going to learn. As mentioned above, prediction can be a useful tool especially in quizzes, but it can be equally useful in using almost any materials. Like 'noticing', prediction can engage the students more actively. For example, if the material comes on video, the teacher can ask students to watch TV with the sound off, to predict what is being said. Alternatively, stop the tape in the middle of an act and encourage the students to predict what happens next. This technique may be more efficient if computerized control is accessible. In addition, when the students are given the title of the reading and asked to predict what they will learn, they will be forced to review their existing knowledge of the topic and raise their curiosity about whether their prediction is correct or not.

5. Doing research based learning

This is a methodology that asks students to complete a task through research. Doking research is also the study of an event, problem or phenomenon using systematic and objective methods, in order to make students understand something better and to develop interests and theories about it. "To do research, one first needs to have a 'topic'. The topic may be a problem, a study, or an area to be investigated to find out more information or to confirm or disprove existing knowledge." (Liu Renqing, 2004, p. 243). The research program can big or small; it can be completed within a month or a day according to the level of difficulty; it can be done either in groups or by one person. An example of a task with a number of components is one in which students choose a topic that combines their interests with the classroom, collect material about it by searching the internet or library to find information on any aspect of the target-culture that interests them., compile that material into a booklet and give a presentation in the following class. Students can explain to the teacher or their group what they have learned and answer any questions about it. This can lead to poster-sessions or longer projects. For some students, it can even lead to a long-term interest in the target-culture.

Besides what haven been mentioned above, some other types of activity that have been found useful include the following: games, role play, field trips, reading activities, listening activities, writing activities, discussion activities, singing and so on, but with a bit of thought, most standard EFL activities can be easily adapted for use in the culture classroom. The most important point is to ensure that the students are actively engaged in the target culture and language.

C. Positive Classroom Interactions

Second language learning is a complex phenomenon with different variables concerning the social-cultural elements of the contexts, an interactional approach can ensure that a social perspective of second language development and instruction contributes to having a positive effect on the nature and quality of language learning, which activates the autonomous learning motivation and create diversity in the learning atmosphere. Classroom interaction can provide different selling points to create a positive cultural learning environment, such as: a wide diversity of opinions, references, values, many different experiences and cultural background. As Cullen puts it, selling points for culture

means the feature of classroom teaching activities that make it attractive to students. In order to create cultural texture, teachers must be careful not to portray the culture as monolithic, nor to only teach the pleasant aspects. Activities and materials should portray different aspects of the culture. In other words, teachers need to 'sell' different views of the culture to their students. Introducing deliberate contrasts within a culture can be useful (Cullen, 2004). Some different teaching activities are contrasted below.

Attractive	Vs.	Shocking
Similarities		Differences
Dark aspects of culture		Bright aspects of culture
Facts		Behavior
Historical		Modern
Old people		Young people
City life		Country life
Stated beliefs		Actual behavior

The classroom interaction creates a positive mutual learning environment, so the rich dissimilar feedback will compel the teachers to adjust their teaching pedagogy in accordance with the students' demand and interest, evaluate students' receptive and productive competence, and develop classroom climate between teachers and students.

III. Tips on Teaching Practice

The best one of cultural learning approaches is to encourage an interactional, experiential learning concerned with the learners' own interest. To explore effective approaches of culture communication transmission in English classroom teaching, teachers are expected to help students build up the following relevant skills in culture comprehension and appreciation:

A. Activities for Personalization

Only by personalizing activities and content can teachers hope to lead students to better cultural understanding. The teacher can start off by talking about a distant country, but this will only result in stereotyping if he or she does not allow students to relate the same issues to their own lives. And as every language teacher knows, students love to talk about themselves. For instance, when discussing a new text or a topic, students can be asked to draw links to their real experiences of constructing similar events, situations and selves to make them respond to text worlds. Students can be encouraged to make use of their text-world experiences as a lens to create imaginative perspectives on their real-experiences by discussing conventional ways and then writing a true/imaginary story that might happen in their real lives. By elaborating on their real-world experiences, students discover certain beliefs and attitudes about that experience they use to interpret text-world experience (Beach, 1998). Obviously, by helping students make personal and inter-textual connections, these reader-responses methods engage them and increase the depth of their learning.

B. Students' Autonomy in Group Work

Students can learn autonomously more in group work. Throughout the activities, the students should be entirely autonomous: They decide their work partner, the topic, materials, presentation, audience involvement, etc. While working, the group members co-operate, influence, and simulate each other. There is more interaction among members because they assume different roles and share responsibilities. There is also a team spirit since they all work towards the same goal.

Each group of students decides their own presentation, which can best communicate their ideas to the class and get the whole class involve. They may present their materials through debate, lectures and short plays, simulate press conference, etc. They can use pictures, maps, charts, and video shows as visual aids. In this way, students can learn how to conduct basic interaction.

Besides, in this kind of activity, the group members must evaluate their own work by comparing their actual performance with what they prepare and expect. Then, their classmates will tell them directly their strengths and weaknesses. Lastly, the teacher should summarize the key points of the group's work. The prompt feedback not only makes the group see their problems, but also enables the other groups to become aware of the problems so they can avoid them and do even better.

C. Scientific Reading Activities

Teachers should introduce and produce cultural readers. Foreign culture acquisition cannot be achieved merely through classroom teaching. Students should have things to be read. Teachers should also prepare their lessons carefully，try to find reading materials with cultural information. There should be proper language-learning strategies — such as checking comprehension with a partner, and reading groups of words instead of word-by-word — including throughout the text to help students look at their own learning process and build a repertoire of ways to become active learners, both during and after the course.

Reading is integrated with listening, speaking and writing. For this reason activities should become more varied and

demanding. For example, students are initially asked to choose the best summary of a given story; later, they are asked to write their own summary. Here are some of the activities students can do:

Before reading	While reading	After reading
● discuss the topic ● interview their classmates ● review what they already know about the topic ● take a quiz about the topic ● predict the content of the reading	● match pictures with paragraphs ● mark the text for the topic or main idea ● find evidence for a particular point of view ● look for answers to the pre-reading quiz ● take notes or make an outline ● write captions for pictures	● react to the culture background ● check their predictions ● identify facts vs. opinions ● compare issues cross-culturally ● write or correct a summary ● look for examples that support a point

These activities help students make sense of the readings, and then encourage them to use details from the readings to discuss contemporary issues. Almost all of the activities involve either pair-work or group-work, thus maximizing student-to-student interaction. When students work alone on an activity, they follow up by comparing answers with a partner. Thus, students have numerous opportunities to communicate in meaningful ways in a collaborative atmosphere.

D. Cultural Interaction by Literature

As most students of foreign languages struggle with a language and culture with which they are unfamiliar, literature which deals with either of these themes can be relevant to them. As said, literature cannot escape its cultural implications, and literature is a response to a relationship between the culture of the students and that represented by the current readers of literature being presented (Chen Ben, 2004). In this respect, literature is one among several means of access to the foreign culture background studies.

However, interaction with a literary text depends on a reader's familiarity with the cultural assumptions in it. Literature is a facet of culture. Its significance can be best understood in terms of its culture, and its purpose is meaningful only when the assumption it is based on are understood and accepted. To solve the problem, teachers are to help students develop competence in the understanding of the readings and arouse the students' interest in thinking deeply about the ideas expressed by the selected works and to relate these to their own experience.

E. Design of Course Objectives

When we study and compare cultures, we actually begin a search for our own identity. This introductory course hopes to help students better understand the culture that has formed us in relation to "other" cultures that have found 'others' by studying how one particular culture has itself been formed. Placing cultural texts in their social environments, this course will primarily introduce students to the international perspectives of comparative cultural studies in relation to other forms of presentation. This will enable us to appreciate how a particular form of writing encodes, transmits and questions cultural values and hence to understand the forces that shape our world.

Teachers must offer direct instruction of techniques or procedures for developing a cultural class through various classroom interactions, and they also should model an enthusiasm for and curiosity about the target culture through their own behaviors and attitudes. Teachers will automatically accumulate "teachable resources" throughout the day, point out interesting words or sentences as they crop up in texts, stories, or conversation; ask students to explore ways to express the topic and meaning; and help identify colorful, descriptive ways of speaking and writing in the material.

IV. Conclusion

In summary, culture offers several benefits to language classes. It can be useful in developing linguistic knowledge, and, if duly motivated, extend students' language proficiency. Needless to say culture teaching is an essential supplement for language teaching, which enables students to experience pleasure from language learning. The learning of target-language culture can improve students' understanding of the target language, enrich their ability of understanding. Obviously learning target-language culture can reinforce students' understanding of the world and cultivate the cultural awareness.

Culture learning is informative, as well as interesting, which covers language, culture, custom, ethics, science, social issues, etc. Students are exposed to various information which appeals to their taste. And what they learn will be of great use in their daily life. As a result, their interest in learning and their motive and desire to communicate in foreign language will be aroused.

From the above illustration, we can know that an effective method and practical technique of teaching culture is very important in language teaching, so every teacher should realize its importance and necessity, and find some practical techniques to carry out culture teaching in language teaching. In a word, teachers should try their best to make good use any materials available and textures to provide students with more materials rich in cultural contents and more closely connected with their specialty.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1037-1042, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1037-1042

Metadiscursive Distinction between Persian and English: An Analysis of Computer Engineering Research Articles

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***Abstract*—The study tried to discover disciplinary distinctions between Persian and English in the academic genre. The focus was on the use of metadiscourse in the discipline of computer engineering research articles across the two languages. The selected corpus was analyzed through the model suggested by Hyland and Tse (2004). The results demonstrated that the two languages are distinct in their use of metadiscourse in the discipline studied. It was found that Persian, unlike English, relied on interactive resources more. The disciplinary distinction indicates that Persian computer engineering provides more textual elements while English language values a reader responsible trend.**

***Index Terms*—academic text, metadiscourse, English language, Persian Language, computer engineering**

I. Introduction

Discourse conventions have been shown to characterize different genres, among which Research Articles have recently come under lots of investigations. Through these discursive means scientists can acquire concepts, norms, values and ideological underpinning of a particular discipline. In fact, scientists of different fields access not only the subject matter but also a specialized form of literacy through research articles. That is, they can acquire rhetorical and linguistic practices of a particular community, rendering them distinct from one another (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991). One important discourse feature which characterizes academic communities is 'metadiscourse', through which writers of academic disciplines intrude into the texts and represent themselves and their readers in one way or another.

Metadiscourse which is a tool to organize the discourse, engage the audience, and signal the writers' attitudes has recently been considered as a part of academic rhetoric and understood to be influenced by the writers' writing culture. As a way to form a cohesive and coherent text and to increase its readability, metadiscourse also called self-referentiality technique (Ventola and Mauranen, 1991) and pre-revealing feature or metamessage (Johns, 1997) affects the personal tone and rhetorical presentation of information in texts. Thus, the degree of writer or reader responsibility, the writer's reference to their own act of thinking, writing organization or readers' act of reading and understanding is indicated by metadiscourse elements. But a great care should be taken in using them. That is, a certain amount is needed for readers to make sense of the texts. There may be some conditions in which unnecessary use of metadiscourse elements causes text redundancy sense and verbosity and too little may leave readers disoriented and confused. Though metadiscourse dose not refer to what is primarily said about the subject, it is necessary in everything written. Metadiscourse providing text linear development is the language used when the writer refers to his or her own act of thinking and writing, to the structure of what he or she writes and more importantly to his or her readers' act of reading.

Metadiscourse represents those aspects of the texts which are largely independent of propositional content but which are unavoidably local and confidentially joined to particular contexts and sometimes to particular disciplines. Although differrent according to each academic discipline convention, metadiscourse is generally used to announce what writers will do in what follows, to list the parts or steps in the presentation, to express logical connections, to show the degree of writers' certainty, or to indicate their intentions. The writers' awareness of disciplines and languages specific use of metadiscourse elements is necessary to adopt their texts into a language and discipline's norms, values and ideologies and to express their meanings so that they seem credible and convincing. In this process, writing is viewed as a social engagement and reveals how writers of different disciplines and languages position themselves within their discourse to signal their attitudes towards propositional contents and the audiences.

Metadiscourse can be viewed from two perspectives, textual and interpersonal. It can be limited to text organizing features (textual features) which help readers process the text and interpret it consistently with their epistemological understanding and genre expectations. The second point of view, which seems more comprehensive, adds the

interactive elements or interpersonal features to help express the writers' attitudes and sureness and increase the force and persuasiveness of the argument. This kind of metadiscourse helps adopt a kind of balance between informing and persuading. Thus many researchers found that argumentative writing and persuasive texts of different discourse lends itself to the use of interpersonal metadiscourse. (Williams, 1989).

Perez-Ltanada (2003) views textual and interpersonal metadiscourse from two convergent disciplines, cognitive and pragmatic. From the perspective of cognition, metadiscourse necessarily focuses on the processing of production and processes of speech. In particular, through textual metadiscourse listeners can reconstruct the organizing structure of the talk, identify the logical linkage of contents, process the flow of information more easily and activate those schemata involved in communication.

From the view of sociology and pragmatics, the focus is on the process of interaction between speakers and listeners or the speaker and his/her community. Accordingly, the interpersonal metadiscourse allows the audience to understand speakers' implicatures and presuppositions as well as speakers' stance while considering the social framework of speech act. As academic discourse seems to be a matter of how to do things with words or of knowing how to communicate successfully to other peers, the formal structure of discourse is very important and metadiscourse reifies both cognitive and pragmatic demands of academic communication.

It is shown that metadiscourse occurs within the realm of writing and its presence may be demonstrated by affixes, words, sentences, whole clauses and paragraphs. It can provide cues and indicators that both help readers proceed through text and influence readers' reception. Metadiscourse may be used as a tool to make differentiations between cultures. Texts are mentioned as one of the main means to understanding a culture (Mauranen, 2001) and considered as cultural products which represent relevant social relationship within the culture. From this perspective, English belongs to the category of writer responsible (Hinds, 1987) or low context cultures (Hall and Hall, 1990), charging the writer or speaker with the responsibility to make clear and well-organized statements and vesting mass of information in the explicit code, in comparison with French, Finnish and Polish belonging to the reader responsible (Mauranen, 1993; Duszak, 1994) or high context cultures where most of the information is already in the person and very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted message (Hall and Hall, 1990).

II. Relevant Studies

Metadiscourse in academic genre has received significant attention as an important rhetorical aspect which could affect the communicative ability of those concerned. Metadiscourse has been studied in various contexts and texts, e.g., casual conversation (Schiffrin, 1980); school textbooks (Crismore, 1989); science popularization (Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990); post–graduate dissertation (Bunton, 1999); Darwin's *Origins of the Species*(Crismore & Farnsworth, 1989); company annual reports (Hyland, 1998b); introductory course books (Hyland, 1999); undergraduate textbooks (Hyland, 2000); slogans and headlines (Fuertes–Olivera *et al.*, 2001); and metadiscourse in academic writing: a reappraisal (Hyland and Tse, 2004).

Due to the peculiarity of the metadiscursive elements, some of the studies have investigated it in different disciplines and languages, e.g., Finish–English economic texts (Mauranan, 1993), Spanish–English economic texts (Valero, 1996), a comparison of linguistics and medicine abstracts (Melander et al., 1997) and medicine, economics and linguistics in English, French and Norwegian (Breivega et al, 2002). Few of these studies on metadiscourse in different disciplines and languages are reviewed below:

As a case in point, Hyland (1999) investigated the use of metadiscourse in two corpora–textbooks and research articles in three disciplines–Biology, Applied Linguistics and Marketing. The results demonstrated that the applied linguistics texts comprised considerably more evidentials and relational markers; the biology authors favored hedges; and marketing textbooks had fewer evidentials and endophorics. Hyland showed that biology had the greatest variation in most categories of metadiscourse both across genres and disciplines. It was also indicated that marketing and applied linguistics texts were more consistent across genres and both contained large differences in hedges and connectives. There were also found significant genre discrepancies in the use of evidentials and person markers in marketing, and endophorics and relation markers in applied linguistics. In general, there were greater genre differences than disciplinary ones, and the textbooks had a propensity to show evidences of greater disciplinary diversity than the research articles.

Likewise, Dahl (2004) investigated two kinds of metadiscourse (locational and rhetorical metatext) in three disciplines (Linguistics, Economics and Medicine) across three languages (English, Norwegian and French). She stated that ‘economics displayed a somewhat higher frequency of the two types than did Linguistics for both English and Norwegian, while for French there was hardly any difference within these two disciplines; for all three languages medicine used far less metatext than the other two disciplines.’ (p., 1818). Also, medicine made the least use of metatext and its texts were presented in a highly structured format: Introduction-Methodology–Results–Discussion (Swales, 1990). She concluded that economics and linguistics in English and Norwegian showed very similar patterns, using much more metatext than French; within medicine, all three languages displayed a uniform pattern of little metatext.

The use of metadiscourse in academic articles written in English by English and Norwegian native speakers across three disciplines (Sociology, Psychology and Philosophy) has also been studied by Blagojevic (2004). Regardless of the

languages, Blagojevic noticed that Psychology writers were reluctant to use the plain ways to state or remind the readers of the parts of the material which followed or preceded. They also used less attitude markers, but philosophy writers made most of the direct comments. Blagojevic's study also showed that philosophy writers had a high degree of diversity in their writing, while psychology writers had the highest degree of standardization in writing and sociology writers were somewhere in between.

Hyland and Tse (2004) carried out a research on the use of metadiscourse in postgraduate dissertations in six disciplines: Applied linguistics, Public administration, Business Studies, Computer science, Electric engineering, and Biology. The results showed that the humanities and social science disciplines employed more metadiscourse than the non–humanities. The study showed the greater use of metadiscourse in the humanities and more inter–disciplinary balance of interactive metadiscourse but its higher proportion in the science dissertations. Also, the results indicated that boosters and engagement markers were almost equally distributed across disciplines, but hedges were over twice more common in the humanities and self–mentions almost four times more frequent. Transitions were more carefully used in the humanities, but emphatics were used more in the non–humanities especially in engineering. Although the use of evidentials, which provides support for the writers' positions, was a characteristic of the humanities, they were most used in biology to show the importance of relating the current research to the preceding work of other authors in this field.

In another study, Zarei and Mansoori (2007) investigated the metdiscursive patterns across Persian and English languages in applied linguistics and found out that both English and Persian languages emphasized text coherence over interpersonal functions of language. Also, the results revealed that Persian involved more presuppositions in the text, with a great portion of meaning left to be decided by the reader.

Although a general picture of the metadiscourse has been presented in the previous studies, due to the rhetorical importance and also dynamic character of ‘metadiscourse’ in different disciplines and languages, it seems necessary to scrutinize the issue further. The present study aims to investigate the distribution of metadiscourse in Computer Engineering across Persian and English.

III. Purpose of Study

Motivated by the fact that meatdiscourse has got an important role to play in academic genre, the present was intended to study metadiscourse in research articles to illuminate the disciplinary distinctions across Persian and English. It is hoped that the results of this study coupled with others would form a strong basis in understanding the language and discipline differences.

IV. Corpus

The corpus consisted of one discipline (Computer Engineering) and two languages (English and Persian). The discipline, Computer Engineering, was selected to represent the general stream non–humanities. The articles were selected from well–known, refereed and recently published journals (2004, 2005 & 2006). In order to investigate different writings, hence balancing out the problem of idiosyncrasy and particularity of writers' styles, the articles were chosen randomly. Articles whose authors were a native speaker of English and Persian were selected for our study. Moreover, at least one author was a native speaker or one of the members of academic staff in U.S or U.K for English articles and a native speaker of Persian for the Persian research articles. A great effort was made to select the articles as diverse in subjects as possible to be able to increase the external validity of the results. The number of the selected articles from the discipline and languages is presented in the following table:

TABLE 1
THE CORPUS USED IN THIS STUDY

Language	Discipline	No. of articles	Word count
English	Computer Engineering	5	25531
Persian	Computer Engineering	5	26181
Total	*********	10	51712

V. Data Analysis

This study used the model of analysis of metadiscourse suggested by Hyland and Tse (2004). This model was used for the purpose since it is designed to specifically capture the underlying principles of academic writing. To this end, Hyland and Tse (2004) claim that metadiscourse needs to be conceptualized as an interpersonal feature of communication, which stands in sharp contrast to Crismore’s (1989), and Williams’ (1999) views that metadiscourse contributes towards either propositional or interpersonal functions. Furthermore, unlike Mauranen (1993) and Bunton (1999) who see metatext as the writer’s self–awareness of text, Hyland and Tse (ibid) believe that ‘metadiscourse represents the writer’s awareness of the unfolding text as *discourse*: how writers situate their language use to include a text, a writer and a reader’ (p. 167). The intended model, which is presented below, is specifically named ‘a model of metadiscourse in academic texts’.

TABLE 2.
HYLAND AND TSE (2004) TAXONOMY OF METADISCOURSE

1) Interactive Resources: *They help to guide reader through the text:*
a) Transitions (T): *They express semantic relation between main clauses. Examples: in addition, thus, but, and*
b) Frame Markers (Fm): *They refer to discourse acts, sequences, or text stages. Examples: finally, to conclude, my purpose here is to*
c) Endophoric Markers (En): *They refer to information in other parts of the text. Examples: noted above, see figure, in section*
d) Evidential Markers (Ev): *They refer to sources of information from other texts. Examples: according to X/(Y, 1990)/Z states*
e) Code glosses (Co): *They help readers grasp functions of ideational material. Examples: namely, e.g., such as, in other words*
2) Interactional Resources*: They involve the reader in the argument:*
a) Hedges (H): *They withhold writer's full commitment to proposition. Examples :might , perhaps ,possible, about*
b) Boosters (Bo): *They emphasize force or writer's certainty in proposition. Examples: in fact, definitely, it is clear that*
c) Attitude Markers (Am): *They express writer's attitude to proposition. Examples: unfortunately, I agree, surprisingly*
d) Engagement Markers (En)*: They explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader. Examples: consider, note that , you can see that*
e) Self–mentions (Sm): *They explicitly refer to authors. Examples: I, we, my, your*

Note: The shortened forms of categories enclosed in parentheses will appear in the analysis

VI. Results and Discussions

Computer Engineering texts representing non–humanities were carefully analyzed to unravel the nature of disciplinary distinctions in the two different languages. As Table 3 shows, Persian Computer engineering uses interactive resources more than English computer engineering (4.82% vs. 3.41%), but English computer engineering uses interactional elements more than Persian Computer engineering (1.4% vs 1.07%). This shows that for Persian comprehensibility of text overrides the relationship that is to be established between the writer and reader. In the same vein, Persian writers' greater use of 'transitions' further supports that the coherence of text is essentially important. Moreover, Engagement markers are also more frequent in English non–humanities, one more time showing the English writers' special attention to the relationship they need to make with the readers.

Also, 'code glosses' appearing in the second position in Persian computer engineering and fifth in English, indicates that Persian writers offer more interpretations of the results. To substantiate their positions, Persian writers provide more 'boosters', that is, they speak out directly about their views, while English writers make their text more documented, and more cautious by making greater use of 'evidentials' and 'hedges'. Though the two disciplines made no specific use of 'frame', 'endophoric', 'attitude markers' and 'self–mentions'(See Table 3), the overall analysis shows that the non-humanities are distinct in both interactive and interactional components of metadiscourse in the two languages.

TABLE 3.
THE USE OF METADISCOURSE IN COMPUTER ENGINEERING ACROSS THE TWO LANGUAGES

			Metadiscourse											
L	Dis	WC	Interactive %						Interactional %					
			T	Fm	En	Ev	Co	T	H	Bo	Am	Eng	Sm	T
P	CE	26181	1.5	.8	.7	.3	1.4	4.8	.2	.4	.09	.01	.3	1.07
E	CE	25531	.8	.8	.7	.5	.5	3.4	.5	.1	.06	.2	.3	1.4
T	***	51712	2.3	1.6	1.4	.8	1.9	8.2	.8	.5	.1	.2	.7	2.47
ZT	***	****	7.2*	.1	0	3*	7.5*	8*	7.9*	14*	1.2	6.7*	1.3	3.4*

Critical level: 1.96 P<.05 * Significant

Abbreviations: L=Language; P=Persian; E=English; Disc=Discipline; CE=Computer engineering; WC=Word count; T=Total; ZT=Z-Test

VII. Conclusion

The results of this study point to the discipline and community based distinct conventions. Concerning the two languages concerned, the selected Persian articles outweighed their English counterparts, by capitalizing more on metdiscourse elements. Overall, the findings lend support to the idea that languages and disciplines rely on specific use of metadiscourse, making themselves understandable to their readership differently.

Persian proved to put premium on textuality more, relying less on the establishment of relationship with the readers, while English showed comparatively lower reliance on the metadiscursive resources, yet utilizing the interactional side of the metadiscourse slightly more. The discipline specificity uncovers the fact that academic articles demonstrate independent disciplinary visions, i.e., they develop some dynamic rhetorical forms relative to the situations serving to stabilize their experiences and also to the convictions and expectations of discoursal communities seeking to achieve certain academic goals of mutual intelligibility. In other words, the academic writers of different disciplines may be largely subjected to distinct modes of interaction leading to the conceptualization and construction of distinct worlds which are embedded in a particular culture of a particular discoursal community.

In reference to the distinctiveness of languages it needs to be stated that languages utilize certain linguistic forms and conventions which are encoded by the socio–cultural system of communication (Halliday, 1994). That is, all language use is a social and communicative act in which mutual cooperation and assistance are socio–culturally determined and provided between the producer and receiver of the language to exchange information. And it is through the lenses of the socio–rhetorical framework that some languages produce writer–based prose and some others prefer reader–oriented one (Blagojevic, 2004). In this vein, metadiscourse is not an autonomous stylistic feature of language dissociated from the broader social texture of the two languages, which can be used, reused or left unused at will by the writers. But it is an essential device which can be created out of the societal requirements, which are superordinately determined by the cultural norms of a given language, and subordinately linked to the expectations of a particular professional community. The results go contrary to the idea of the universal scientific discourse propounded by Widdowson (1979). Thus, as a case in point, Persian writers of academic articles addressing English readers, in particular native readers, may need to tone down their overuse of interactive and scale up their underuse of interactional metadiscourse elements in order to arrive at a balanced view of communication based on the target native standards. Therefore, effective writing in different cultures involves a different culture–oriented deployment of resources to represent text and reader (Hyland (2004).

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1043-1051, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1043-1051

Student Teachers' Microteaching Experiences in a Preservice English Teacher Education Program

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***Abstract*—Microteaching has been widely used in pre-service teacher education programs to enhance prospective teachers' instructional experiences. Within ELT programs, the use of microteaching offers valuable opportunities for trainee-teachers to develop effective teaching strategies. Understanding the perceptions and concerns of student teachers is crucial for promoting teacher education programs' outcomes. This study aimed at investigating the views of sixty-one female teacher trainees from the English Language Education Program in the Faculty of Education in the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) regarding the microteaching component offered in two courses of English language teaching methods. A combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques was employed for the purpose of gathering the data. Mainly, a questionnaire and a focus group interview were used as the main tools for data collection. Overall analysis of the findings indicated that prospective teachers described a variety of benefits they gained from microteaching experiences. The study ended with recommendations and directions for future studies to further examine the highlighted results.**

***Index Terms*—education, English, trainee, microteaching, preservice, method**

I. Introduction

This paper highlighted the salient benefits of microteaching as prospective teachers perceive them. It was also the purpose of this paper to show that microteaching has the potential to impact trainee teachers' beliefs and attitudes. Within the traditional 'theory/practice dichotomy', there has always been an assumption that student teachers will be able to transfer the pedagogical theories and approaches they learned in universities to their future classes in schools (Kubukcu, 2010; Fernandez and Robinson, 2007; Johnson, 2006). However, a formal practical training, such as the use of microteaching, may assist in bridging the gap between theory and practice. A microteaching program provides pre-service teacher-trainees with a simulated situation to put the theories that they have learned into practice and to develop confidence and teaching skills while conducting a mini-lesson to their colleagues. Microteaching is also intended to provide teacher trainees with additional practical experience before they start their clinical practice in real classes. Microteaching was introduced in the 1960s at the Stanford Teacher Education Program in Stanford University to prepare students for their internships (Cruickshank et al., 1996). The original model was cyclical in nature since it involved 'plan, teach, observe, critique' followed by the repetition of the same steps after the whole process was reviewed (Bell, 2007; Amobi, 2005). The microteaching model was found to help student teachers learn about and reflect upon different teaching procedures that they have been exposed to in the methods of teaching classes. Some students consider microteaching as 'fake teaching' since it does not involve real students in a real teaching situation where a teacher and students interact naturally. Bell (2007) argued that microteaching provides students with valuable teaching experiences and made them aware of the benefits and relationships between theories and practice.

Researchers recommend searching for and adopting applications and experiences that provide student teachers with opportunities to be involved in exploring pedagogical experiences, self-reflection and critical analysis of teaching (Fernandez, 2010; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Grossman and McDonald (2008) indicated that such opportunities allow student teachers to experiment with aspects of practice and then learn from that experience. Microteaching application is considered a suitable approach to meet the above-mentioned recommendations. In the present study, the microteaching application in the two methods of teaching courses was designed to provide students with practical experiences after they had been exposed to different approaches and techniques for teaching ESL classes. It was, therefore, intended to prepare students for their 'practice teaching' in elementary schools. By conducting microteaching, students would try the ideas they learned with their colleagues before they started using them in real classes. The microteaching component along with the lesson planning and self-reflection made-up 30% of the students' course grade.

II. Problem Statement

Microteaching application has gained popularity as a practical training tool in pre-service teacher education programs. Ever since its emergence in the 1960s, the practice of microteaching has rapidly widespread in different parts of the world, including the Middle East. In the present pre-service ELT teacher education program in the Faculty of Education, United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), it makes up about 30% of the total time and grade of all methods of teaching

courses. In those courses, students have to plan and conduct mini-lessons to their peers. Self-reflection and giving feedback are integral components of the microteaching practices. A number of student teachers seem to enjoy this experience while others struggle to get through the whole process of practicing to learn how to teach. Hence, it is vital to conduct a thorough investigation to find out about the learners' views about the application of microteaching in their program of study. Ultimately, the findings of this study will assist course instructors to review the program and meet students' needs and expectations.

III. Research Questions

1. How does microteaching impact ESL student teachers' views about language improvement and course satisfaction?
2. How do ESL student teachers perceive microteaching to impact their teaching competence?
3. How do ESL student teachers view microteaching in relation to their managerial and preparation skills?
4. What kind of attitude or feeling do student teachers hold about the practice of microteaching?

IV. Literature Review

The major goal of a successful teacher-training program is to expose prospective teachers to effective teaching strategies and experiences. The place of microteaching in teacher education programs has been examined for a number of years by researchers in different parts of the globe (Fernandez, 2010; Lu, 2010; Ogeyik, 2009, Seferoglu, 2006; Subramaniam, 2006; Amobi, 2005; Akalin, 2005; Higgins and Nicholl, 2003; Wilkinson, 1996). During the 1960s, microteaching was first introduced in a teacher education program in Stanford University to prepare students and get them ready for their clinical experiences (Cruickshank et al., 1996). Since its introduction in the 1960s, the practice of microteaching has rapidly expanded to other teacher education programs. Recently, many pre-service teacher education programs have introduced the microteaching component in order to orient prospective teachers and provide them with practical teaching experiences (Fernandez, 2010; Bell, 2007; Amobi, 2005). The endorsement of microteaching as a tool for learning the art of teaching attracted a number of educators and researchers to investigate its impact on prospective teachers' teaching experiences and how they perceive it as a practical learning tool.

In a relevant study, Ogeyik (2009) investigated the attitudes of 57 ELT teacher trainees at Trakya University in Turkey regarding the benefits and disadvantages of microteaching. A five-scale questionnaire was used to survey students' opinions about microteaching applications. The overall findings demonstrated the students' positive attitudes towards microteaching applications in their study program. They found microteaching to be beneficial for both their academic study and professional experience. The author concluded that the use of microteaching in a teacher-training program could promote effective teaching strategies and reflective practices among student teachers.

In a similar study, Benton-Kupper (2001) looked at prospective teachers' perceptions about the application of a microteaching component in a methodology course. After completing the microteaching sessions, student teachers in three sections of a general secondary methods course reflected on their practical experiences and provided quantitative and qualitative feedback on the use of microteaching. The findings of the study indicated that the microteaching practice is very beneficial for prospective teachers to learn about the craft of teaching. Trainee teachers indicated that they found microteaching experiences helpful in enabling them to recognize and identify strengths and weaknesses in their mini lessons. The study provided evidence that the microteaching component is an effective training tool in teachers' preparation programs.

Fernandez (2010) investigated how and what teacher trainees learn about teaching from microteaching lesson study (MLS). The researcher carried out a case study of MLS with 18 student teachers in a course of math teaching methods. Different research tools were used to collect extensive data. These multiple data sources helped in triangulating the findings. During the different phases of the study, videotape and audiotape were used to record the MLS lessons and the group discussion respectively. During the MLS experiences, students were able to explore, analyze, plan and revise their lessons; additionally they participated as learners in other students' lessons. After being exposed to the MLS, prospective teachers were able to explore patterns and develop effective strategies for teaching mathematics. The MLS was found to be an effective teaching approach because it offers prospective teachers valuable opportunities to practice and learn teaching during their initial coursework. It was indicted that student teachers were able to identify general teaching patterns and classroom management issues during the MLS lessons though they were teaching their colleagues and were acting in a "fake" situation.

In an earlier study, Fernandez and Robinson (2007) investigated the perceptions of 74 student teachers at Florida State University about MLS. Four different sections of teacher trainees in an initial course of mathematics teaching methods participated in the study. Similar to the above-mentioned study, the students in this research overwhelmingly expressed that the opportunity to apply in practice the pedagogical theories they learned in the course was extremely beneficial. They indicated that they had spent a lot of time talking about theories while they needed the chance to try the theories and get feedback on their actual performance. Within the MLS lessons, trainee teachers had an opportunity to plan lessons and try the different teaching strategies that they had been exposed to in their study in the program. At the end, student teachers appreciated other people's views and feedback about their teaching performance and they acknowledged the great benefits of reflection in learning the art of teaching.

In a study of peer coaching, Britton and Anderson, (2010) investigated the influence of peer coaching on classroom teaching practices of pre-service student teachers. The study was conducted in a high school in a southeastern region of the United States with about 1900 students from different groups in grades 9-12. Four student teachers agreed to participate in the study after they had learned peer coaching. Participants observed each other's classes, collected data and carried out conferences with one another. Findings revealed that participants had positive views about peer coaching as they saw it as a simple process to teach and easy to learn. Participants also found peer coaching useful because it provided them with opportunities to observe and communicate with their colleagues. It was found that peer coaching assisted in altering and developing teaching practices. Data also revealed that peers enjoyed this 'stress free' experience of listening to their colleagues' comments as compared to observations by university or classroom supervisors. Support for the findings of this study was reported by Lu's (2010) review of peer coaching literature from 1997-2007. Lu also reported that peer coaching was found to be beneficial in pre-service programs as it helps student teachers develop professionalism. Although not technically called microteaching, peer coaching utilizes the same strategies of learning from one's colleagues.

Microteaching experiences may not be as effective without offering prospective teachers opportunities to reflect on their performance. The goal of any successful pre-service teacher education program is to prepare effective and reflective teachers. Novice student teachers in a training program always possess preconceptions about teaching. Those students have the experience of sitting in classes for a number of years observing instructors teaching them with a variety of teaching methods. Thus, it is very crucial for teacher-trainers to listen to the preconceptions of prospective teachers and help them promote effective teaching strategies (Amobi and Irwin, 2009). The use of reflection strategies provides educators with an opportunity to correct any misconception that might interfere while student teachers are practicing effective teaching strategies. Reflective practices, such as critically observing a video-recorded lesson can offer valuable opportunities for student teachers to revisit their executed lessons and make thoughtful decisions for improvement and develop effective teaching strategies.

Amobi (2005) examined the reflective outputs of 31 secondary education pre-service teachers during a second microteaching session. The study focused on the recurrent themes of reflectivity of self- and peer-evaluations. The study featured mini lessons taught to colleagues, a videotape used to record lessons, a ready-made form used for writing feedback and oral reports on the experience. All trainees were expected to submit between one to two pages of self-reflection focusing on what they initially intended to do, what they did and how they would do it differently. During the discussion sessions, students were invited to confront their peers' feedback and comments on their mini lessons. The overall findings of the study demonstrated more defensive and passive patterns than affirmative patterns. The researcher concluded that student teachers considered microteaching as a favorable and meaningful learning experience. Evidence for their satisfaction about the usefulness of microteaching can be extracted from their recurrent detailed recollection and the comparison they tried to make between the two mini sessions.

In a study about reflection, Seferoglu (2006) examined the reflections of 176 ESL prospective teachers at Ankara's Middle East Technical University in Turkey on the methods of teaching and the clinical aspects of the English education program. A qualitative approach was employed for conducting the study. Participants were asked to write a thorough report focusing on their view regarding both the Methods of Teaching course and the practice components of the ESL teacher education program. The students' final reports showed that they had certain expectations about the structure of the training program. One of the findings highlighted students' views about the mismatch, which sometimes existed between course materials and actual teaching practice in classrooms. Trainee teachers, thus, emphasized their needs for more opportunities to practice teaching through microteaching application.

V. Methodology

A. Participants

The subjects of this study were 78 female prospective English teachers enrolled in two different courses of teaching methods of English in the Faculty of Education, UAEU. However, seventeen were excluded from the results because they were absent on the day the questionnaire was conducted. Thirty students from "Teaching Methods of English to Young Learners" (Yng) participated in the study while thirty-one students were from the 'Teaching Methods of English in Elementary Schools' (Elm). The first course (Yng) was a prerequisite for the second one (Elm) at the time of the study. The researcher taught one of the two sections from each course while the other two sections were taught by two other teachers. In each course, each student was required to prepare a twenty-minute mini lesson, teach it to their peers and reflect orally and in writing about their experience in conducting that lesson. The overall weight of the microteaching components made up about 30% of each course grade.

B. Instruments

Both a questionnaire and focus-group interview questions were developed and used to collect the required data. The final version of the questionnaire included 32 items organized into four themes in accordance with the purpose and research questions of the study. The questionnaire was developed and refereed by a number of university teachers including ESL specialists in the Faculty of Education in UAEU in order to establish its validity. It used a five-point Likert scale extending from five (strongly agree) to one (strongly disagree). The Cronbach Alpha Formula was used to

compute the reliability of the questionnaire and the value was found to be 0.91. The questionnaire initially included forty-two items, which were later revised and reduced to 32 in accordance with the referees' comments and suggestions. The focus-group interview questions were also developed and refined by the researcher with the help of other teacher trainer specialists in the Faculty of Education in the UAEU. A number of questions were first developed and submitted to some of those teachers who participated in referring the questionnaire in order to check their suitability to provide valid support for the data collected via the questionnaire. At a later stage, ten questions were chosen after they were reviewed in accordance with the referees' suggestions and comments. An open-ended question was placed at the end of the list to allow students to add more information and express their thoughts freely.

C. Data Collection

Data were collected towards the end of the fall semester of the academic year 2009-2010 from student teachers in two courses of teaching methods of English (Teaching Methods of English to Young Learners and Teaching Methods of English in Elementary Schools) in the Faculty of Education, UAEU. The reason for conducting the study near the end of the semester is that by that time students would have finished all their mini-lesson sessions and they would have gone through all the microteaching experiences in both courses. Each course included two sections, one taught by the researcher. Sixty-one questionnaires (Yng. 30 and Elm. 31) were distributed to students in the four sections during class time and collected from all participating students on the same day.

After conducting the questionnaire with students in the four sections, focus-group interview sessions were organized and conducted by the researcher with the help of some students in each section. Only students in the two sections taught by the researcher participated in the focus-group interview. The reason for choosing these two sections is that all students from these two sections (49) participated in the questionnaire (Yng. 22 & Elm.27). Students in each section were organized into focus-groups of four or five students, and a leader was assigned for each group. An intensive training session had been conducted to all group leaders to explain how to conduct the interviews with their colleagues. A mock focus-group interview session had been conducted with the group leaders to give them chance to practice the task. Later, each group leader was given a list of the questions and was asked to interview other students in the group with the help of the teacher. The reason for involving students in interviewing their peers was that prospective teachers were expected to be more open and to speak more freely if they were interviewed by their colleagues. All interviews were conducted over two classes in each section in order to give the researcher enough time to monitor the work of the group leaders. Besides the group leaders' interviews with students, the researcher interviewed two groups from each section.

D. Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were conducted in order to better understand the students' perspectives regarding microteaching applications in the two courses of methods of teaching English. In order to analyze the quantitative data collected by the five-point Likert scale questionnaire, the SPSS program was utilized to obtain different types of descriptive statistics and independent sample t-tests. A qualitative data analysis technique was used to look at the data collected via the focus-group interviews, specifically the Content Analysis Method (Ross 1989). A framework was created to categorize the data into patterns or themes consistent with the purpose and/or research questions of the study (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Following a qualitative analysis technique suggested by Patton (2002), the researcher looked at ''the details and specifics of the data to discover important patterns and themes and interrelationships'' (p. 41). The main reason for using this technique is to ensure that the obtained recurrent patterns and/or themes meet the requirements of the research questions and/or the purpose of the study. Later, those recurrent patterns and/or themes extracted from the qualitative data were utilized to support the quantitative data obtained from the five-point Likert scale questionnaire (Creswell, 2003). The analysis mainly focused on the prospective teachers' perspectives on microteaching applications.

VI. Limitations

This study dealt only with female ESL student teachers but future studies that include male participants may generate data that are more diverse. The students' responses to some of the items might have been affected by assuming that their microteaching grade could be partially based on the kind of answer they provided. In spite of the aforementioned limitations, this study made some crucial contributions to better understand and improve certain aspects of ELT teacher education programs in situations where microteaching application is considered new.

VII. Results and Discussion

The overall purpose of this study was to examine prospective teachers' perceptions regarding the application of microteaching in two courses of teaching methods of English. The results of the study were analyzed under the four research questions. Analysis to the answers of question 1 (How does microteaching impact ESL student teachers' views about language improvement and course satisfaction?) showed that students were very positive about the effect of microteaching practices on their language and on their increasing enthusiasm towards the teaching methods courses (see table 1). The focus-group interview results also confirmed students' positive attitudes towards microteaching. A number

of them (29) enthusiastically expressed their intention to continue participating in microteaching activities. The overall mean scores ranged from 4.28 to 4.61 on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree "5" to strongly disagree "1". This result indicated that students in both groups felt that microteaching experience helped them improve their language proficiency and that they appreciated the usefulness of the methods courses. Nearly half of the students in the first group (Yng) thought that microteaching offered opportunities to refine their language especially the jargon used for giving classroom instruction and/or direction. When they were asked during the focus-group interview, students from both groups indicated, *"microteaching experience helped us learn some useful words we need in the classroom for giving instruction and managing the classroom activities. We are happy that we learned these words before we take our 'teaching practice' next year. We learned some of these words in other courses or from teachers but we forgot them because we did not use them at all"*. Benton-Kupper (2001) reported results in accordance with the findings of this study. Students viewed microteaching as an effective learning tool that enabled them to discover and develop their language ability. Ogeyik (2009) also highlighted the importance of microteaching practices in developing prospective teachers' language skills. It was argued that teacher trainees might recognize and learn to use the language effectively while they were involved in conducting mini-lessons with their colleagues. Again, ESL teacher trainees are not only learning how to teach, but they are also still developing their own English skills.

Feedback and comments given by other peers in post-teaching discussion sessions might also positively contribute to the development of student teachers' language skills. In a study about the impact of peer-coaching, Britton and Anderson (2010) showed that peer coaching practice was well-liked by students who altered their pedagogical practices as a result of being involved with other trainees in a cooperative teaching activity. The t-test showed that there are not any significant differences between the mean scores of all variables under the category of 'language improvement and course satisfaction'. The mean scores for the first group (Yng) ranged from 4.23 to 4.73, while for the second group (Elm) they ranged from 4.13 to 4.61. For some variables, the difference was very close, such as the one about 'learning different teaching methods'. Both groups agreed that microteaching experience helped them learn and implement the methods they learned in the program. This result provides evidence that prospective teachers consider microteaching a valuable opportunity to try the different instructional theories they learned in different courses about teaching ESL. Thus, the benefits of microteaching justify its use and why it is well-liked by prospective teachers.

When comparing the mean scores of the two groups, results sometimes showed that there was a little difference between them. These differences might be attributed to the sequence of the two courses. For instance, the mean scores for the variable 'microteaching allowed me to apply ideas I learned from different courses' were 4.23 and 4.45 for the first and second group respectively. This difference might be attributed to the fact that the first course (Yng) is a prerequisite for the second one (Elm). Students in the second group would have taken and finished many courses by the time they were enrolled in the second course (Elm). This result indicated that students implemented ideas they learned in other courses in their microteaching experience. Data from the focus-group interview supports this result as about twelve students thought that mini-lesson experiences allowed them to practically use ideas they had previously learned in other courses. Some students from the second group (Elm) stated, *"microteaching often allows us to use information and theories we learned in the College of Education and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. We are happy to take this course because it helps us use what we learned in other courses".*

Microteaching practice was found to provide students not only with opportunities to practice and learn pedagogical strategies but also to develop language skills (Ogeyik, 2009). Again, the mean scores of the variable about 'vocabulary improvement' were 4.43 and 4.13 for the first and second group respectively. This difference may be related to the language proficiency of the two groups. Students in the second group might have already spent three or four years in the university while the first group might have spent only one or two years there. This result might be understood in relation to the amount of exposure to English language in the university where English language is the medium of instruction. During the focus-group interview, some students from the first course (Yng) stated, *"microteaching experience offered us opportunities to use the language to teach our colleagues. We also learned how to use words correctly and our colleagues sometimes helped us with this correction"*. In an earlier study within the same context of the present study, Author (2010) indicated that UAEU's students, including student teachers, face serious language problems when conducting different academic tasks in their programs of study. A grammar model was developed and used to help students promote effective language use. Similarly, microteaching experiences in the present study might provide prospective teachers with opportunities to recognize and learn how to use English language communicatively while they were conducting their mini-lessons to their peers.

TABLE 1.
LANGUAGE IMPROVEMENT AND COURSE SATISFACTION

Variables	*Overall Mean*	*Mean*		*T-test*	*Sig.*
		Yng	**Elm**		
Microteaching:					
helped me develop confidence in my speaking ability.	4.61	4.67	4.55	.786	.435
helped me learn to speak clearly.	4.48	4.60	4.36	1.38	.172
encouraged me to develop my vocabulary.	4.28	4.43	4.13	1.50	.138
allowed me to apply ideas I learned from different courses.	4.34	4.23	4.45	-1.05	.299
encouraged me to work harder.	4.67	4.73	4.61	.750	.457
raised my motivation in the present methods course.	4.46	4.43	4.48	-.26	.799
helped me to better understand different teaching methods.	4.46	4.47	4.45	.09	.936
helped me discover and fix my language problems.	4.43	4.27	4.58	-1.68	.098

*Note. *p< 0.05*

Results of question 2 (How do ESL trainee teachers perceive microteaching to impact their teaching competence?) demonstrated that students teachers believe that microteaching played a key role in promoting their teaching competence and making them aware of their pedagogical skills (see table 2). Overwhelmingly, students in both groups agreed that microteaching experience helped them discover their teaching strengths and weaknesses. The mean scores for this variable were 4.71 and 4.68 for the first and second group respectively. This result provided evidence that student teachers enjoyed the microteaching experience and found it to be beneficial as a training tool. Similarly, during the focus-group interview, nearly half of the students in each group asserted that microteaching offered them real opportunities to learn about their own strengths and weaknesses. Students indicated, *"what we like about microteaching is that it helped us discover our strengths and weaknesses. Our friends' and teacher's feedback and comments at the end of the session drew our attentions to them. Sometimes, we felt embarrassed when we were criticized in front of our friends, but we learned from it and now we like it. I think now everyone likes it"*. A similar result was reported by Benton-Kupper (2001) about students' positive perceptions towards microteaching experiences. Students indicated that microteaching experience was an enjoyable experience as it offered them opportunities to increase self-confidence in discovering and enhancing their teaching skills and language ability. Similarly, Butler (2001) reported that student teachers viewed microteaching as a highly beneficial activity, preparing them for the 'real classroom' practice. In addition, in a relevant study about the effect of microteaching application on preservice teachers' competency levels, Karckay and Sanli (2009) reported a result confirming that microteaching may affect students' teaching competency.

Observing other students teaching was considered a valuable experience for trainee teachers to learn from each other (overall mean score, 4.60). Data from the interviews confirmed that students were comfortable listening to each other's comments and feedback, and this experience helped them learn from other students. This might indicate that students feel more comfortable when they work with other students who possess nearly the same level of language proficiency and teaching experiences. Some students from both groups stated, *"we like our friends' comments and feedback very much because we feel that they are telling us how we are doing in our microteaching class. We also enjoy helping our friends and giving them more comments. Some students did not say anything about our teaching but we listened to other students' comments".* Also, this finding gave a hint that peer-coaching is a favorable learning experience. An anecdotal result in Fry & Hin's (2006) study revealed that peer coaching made prospective teachers feel more comfortable, confident and relaxed. It is appreciated by student teachers because it generates serious discussion, which is considered as a valuable source for promoting effective teaching strategies (Feiman-Nemser 2001). The practice of peer-coaching was found to be beneficial in different ways. Lu (2010) argued that peer coaching offers student teachers with the necessary support to develop their instructional as well professional skills.

TABLE 2.
TEACHING PRACTICE COMPETENCE AND AWARENESS

Variables	*Overall Mean*	*Mean*		*T-test*	*Sig.*
		Yng	**Elm**		
Microteaching:					
helped me develop awareness of my teaching competence.	4.43	4.37	4.50	-.795	.430
helped me develop the actual teaching skills I'll need later.	4.51	4.50	4.52	-.096	.924
gave me an opportunity to learn by observing others.	4.60	4.57	4.63	-.334	.739
made me aware of what makes a good teacher.	4.59	4.63	4.55	.561	.577
gave me a valuable opportunity to apply my teaching skills.	4.46	4.57	4.36	1.34	.185
encouraged me to develop autonomy.	4.00	4.30	4.07	1.29	.204
helped me discover my teaching strengths and weaknesses.	4.71	4.75	4.68	.511	.611

The analysis of question 3 results (How do ESL trainee teachers view microteaching in relation to their managerial and preparation skills?) demonstrated that student teachers felt that microteaching experiences assisted them to enhance both managerial and preparation skills (see table 3). The mean scores for the variable concerning 'the development of materials' were 4.66 for the first group (Yng) and 4. 67 for the second group (Elm). These close high mean scores demonstrated the positive impact of microteaching on students' views about their teaching competency. Also, the overall mean scores for 'lesson planning and writing performance objectives' (4.57 & 4.59) clearly demonstrated that students felt that conducting a mini lesson provided them with valuable experiences to learn to write comprehensible

lesson plans and performance outcomes. These results highlighted the importance of microteaching in providing students with opportunities to try to apply the teaching strategies that they learned in different courses. They also demonstrated students' eagerness to see how the theories can work for them when they practice the craft of teaching.

Evidence from the literature demonstrated that prospective teachers thought that microteaching was a worthwhile learning experience because it helped them bridge the gap between theory and practice, learn collaboratively, develop self-reflective strategies and appreciate colleagues' feedback (Britton and Anderson, 2010; Amobi and Irwin, 2009; Fernandez and Robinson, 2007; Benton-Kupper, 2001). Participants in Fernandez's and Robinson's (2007) study pointed out that 'microteaching lesson study' (MLS) provided them with opportunities to bridge the gap between theory and practice and to develop reflective learning strategies. In the present study, a number of students (16) stated that microteaching provided them with practical experiences to learn effective classroom management procedures, lesson planning and time management. These students stated, *"we learned about classroom management. We learned how to respond to students' questions and how to deal with noisy students during the lesson. Getting comments from the teacher about our lesson plan helped us correct our mistakes and write a good lesson plan at the end"*. A supportive evidence for this finding can be found in Fernandez's (2010) study that indicated that student teachers were able to identify general teaching patterns and classroom management issues during the MLS lessons though they were teaching their colleagues and were acting in a "fake" situation.

TABLE 3.
PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT

Variables	***Overall Mean***	***Mean***		***T-test***	***Sig.***
		Yng	**Elm**		
Microteaching:					
helped me learn to organize my time.	4.51	4.53	4.48	.295	.769
helped me learn how to manage the class.	4.51	4.57	4.45	.664	.510
offered me a practical opportunity to teach a lesson.	4.50	4.55	4.45	.646	.521
gave me an opportunity to improve my lesson planning.	4.57	4.60	4.55	.310	.757
helped me write good performance objectives.	4.59	4.60	4.58	.122	.904
encouraged me to develop teaching activities and materials	4.66	4.67	4.65	.138	.891
helped me learn how to predict classroom problems.	4.07	4.07	4.07	.011	.991
helped me learn to use technology appropriately.	4.28	4.33	4.23	.497	.621

Results of question 4 (What kind of attitude or feeling do teacher trainees hold about the practice of microteaching?) highlighted student teachers' positive views about microteaching applications in their program of study (see table 4.). Data collected from the interview sessions provided evidence that students in the methods of teaching English courses possessed positive attitudes towards microteaching applications. A large number of students (32) in both groups indicated that they appreciated the beneficial experiences that they gained from microteaching. Students from both groups asserted, *"microteaching is very useful for our career. We learned many things about teaching. We tried our ideas and we enjoyed this experience very much. We spent a lot of time preparing for our teaching assignment, but now we feel we learned from it. We won't be afraid of teaching when we do our 'teaching practice' next year with small children in schools"*. Ogeyik's (2009) findings were similar to this result as they highlighted the positive views of student teachers towards microteaching applications. Students in Ogeyik's (ibid) study asserted that they appreciate microteaching experiences because they helped them develop professional skills, self-reflection, self-confidence and material selection criteria. Other studies also reached the same findings regarding the positive views of prospective teachers towards the benefits of microteaching (Fernandez and Robinson, 2007; Benton-Kupper, 2001). The aforementioned last two studies concluded that incorporating microteaching into preservice teacher training programs is highly appreciated by prospective teachers. Student teachers in both studies indicated that the hands-on experience opportunities enabled them to develop self-reflective skills, gain knowledge and promote effective teaching strategies.

Table 4 showed two main significant results relevant to students' concerns about their microteaching task evaluation. These two results indicated that students continually think about the grades that supervisors would give for their performance in the mini lessons. The mean scores for their concerns about 'lesson planning assessment' were 3.07 for the first group (Yng) and 3.94 for the second group (Elm), while the mean scores for their concerns about 'mini lessons evaluation' were 2.70 and 3.90 for the first and second group respectively. The significant differences in these results highlight the students' anxiety and the amount of time they spent in thinking about microteaching assessment during the processes of planning and executing their mini lessons. These significant results might also be interpreted in relation to student teachers' preconceptions about their teaching and/or language competence and their microteaching grades. The number of years they spent in the program and their experiences with microteaching might have contributed to the significance differences in the views of the two groups about 'lesson planning assessment' and 'mini lessons evaluation'. Generally, students bring their academic experiences and expectations to the classroom and they are, to some extent, expecting teachers to comply with them. Initially, educators and teacher trainers should try to understand what preconceptions student teachers are bringing with them to their microteaching experiences in order to help them acquire essential instructional knowledge and enhance effective teaching techniques (Butler, 2001). Another study by Amobi and Irwin (2009) also provided evidence that students in teacher training programs have some kind of knowledge about the art of teaching gained by different means. Observing teachers teaching them for many years

allowed them to develop some conceptions about the art of teaching. Additionally, these experiences might help them start developing their identity as both students and teachers. Researchers have paid some attention to prospective teachers' experiences regarding the process and ways in which their conceptions and/or identities as teachers start to emerge and develop (Hong, 2010; Yaman, 2010; Ogeyik, 2009; Bell, 2007; McNamara, Roberts, Basit and Brown, 2002). One of Ogeyik's (2009) concluding statements was that microteaching experiences might play a key role in developing prospective teachers' professional identity in preservice education programs. Thus, student teachers developed their peculiar teaching conceptions and/or identities through their actual involvement in both executing mini lessons with their peers and observing their peers teaching.

TABLE 4.
ATTITUDES AND PERSONAL FEELING

Variables	*Overall Mean*	*Mean*		*T-test*	*Sig.*
		Yng	**Elm**		
Microteaching:					
was carried out in an artificial environment.	3.66	3.63	3.68	-.148	.883
resulted in neglecting key activities in the methods course.	3.18	3.37	3.00	1.217	.229
consumed a lot of my time.	3.26	3.23	3.29	-.194	.847
made me feel bored.	2.05	1.93	2.16	-.737	.464
forced me to do difficult tasks.	2.90	2.57	3.23	-1.913	.061
was time limited and controlled.	3.61	3.37	3.84	-1.591	.117
made me feel embarrassed when teaching my colleagues.	2.72	2.47	2.97	-1.563	.123
forced me to think of the evaluation criteria while planning.	3.51	3.07	3.94	-2.918	.005
forced me to think of the evaluation criteria while teaching.	3.31	2.70	3.90	-3.869	.000

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study's results emphasized certain key elements about the application of microteaching experience in preservice teacher training programs. Hence, a few suggestions and implications may be discussed within the framework of these results. First, the microteaching component should continue to be integrated with courses of teaching methods of English in pre-service teacher education programs in colleges and/or universities. The logic for its inclusion is that the microteaching experience is well-liked and highly appreciated by a number of student teachers taking the Methods of Teaching English courses. Second, more microteaching sessions should be organized and aligned with different teaching strategies and/or language skills. Third, teacher trainers and educators should pay more attention to students' views and concerns regarding their performance assessment for executing mini lessons. Students usually possess some preconceptions about the art of teaching and the methods of evaluation because those students have been sitting in classes for more than 14 years observing teachers using a variety of teaching methods to teach them. Finally, more research work is needed to look at issues highlighted by the results such as the issue of assessing students teachers' performance during microteaching sessions.

IX. CONCLUSION

This study looked at the impact of microteaching experiences on the views of prospective teachers in an ESL pre-service education program. It mainly focused on the salient concepts that emerged as a result of executing mini-lessons to colleagues in simulated situations. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches was utilized to collect relevant data from two groups of ESL teacher trainees who were taking two different courses in teaching methods of English. The overall results of this study demonstrated that the inclusion of microteaching in teacher training programs is viewed to have positive impact on ESL student teachers' awareness and views regarding their language and teaching competencies. The data provided clear evidence that prospective teachers appreciated the beneficial experiences of microteaching in developing effective instructional strategies. The overwhelming benefits of microteaching justify its use and why it is well-liked by prospective teachers. A significant result highlighted students' concerns about the issue of assessing their microteaching performance. This finding stressed the need for conducting further studies to investigate the issue of assessing students' performance during microteaching sessions. Future studies should specifically focus on students' preconceptions and/or predetermined criteria for assessing microteaching experiences in ESL teacher education programs.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1052-1060, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1052-1060

Validation of a Multiple Choice English Vocabulary Test with the Rasch Model

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***Abstract*—Validity is the most salient characteristic of any effective measurement instrument. This paper briefly reviews the Messickian validity framework along with its six facets. Then the Rasch model as a measurement model which yields interval scaling in the social sciences is briefly introduced. The contribution that Rasch model can make to establishing different aspects of validity from Messick's view point is discussed and as an illustrative example, the validity of a multiple-choice test of vocabulary is demonstrated using Rasch analysis. The results show that several items misfit the Rasch model. Distractor analysis showed that a few items have distracters which do not function in the intended way and need to be removed. Item-person map showed that the test was on-target and covered a wide range of the ability scale. The performance of the sample on two subsets of the test revealed that participants had identical measures on the two subsets, which is evidence of the unidimensionality of the instrument.**

***Index Terms*—validity, Rasch model, fit statistics, item-person map, unidimensionality**

I. Validity

Validity of a test has been defined in a number of ways by different scholars at different stages of time. For Kelly (1927), a valid test is a test which measures what it is intended to measure. Later on, in 1954, the American Psychological Association distinguished four types of validity: content, predictive, concurrent, and construct validity. Content validity is concerned with the extent to which the items included in a test are selected from a universe of items and the extent to which they are representative of the content intended to be tested. Predictive validity is considered as the effectiveness of a test to predict the test takers' future performance and is calculated via correlating the results of the intended test with another test given in some future time; the higher the correlation, the greater the predictive validity of the test would be. Concurrent validity is very similar to predictive validity in that it is concerned with the degree of correlation with another test, the difference being that the criterion test is given at approximately the same time. Concurrent validity is required to substitute a test for an already existing standard one due to practicality issues. Finally, construct validity is concerned with the extent to which a test is reflective of the underlying construct the test is supposed to assess. Later, predictive and concurrent validity were combined into one type of validity, namely criterion-related validity (Smith, 2001). This combination was due to the fact that both predictive and concurrent validity are computed by correlating the test in focus with another test set as a criterion. Thus, four types of validity were reduced to three main types: content, criterion-related and construct validity. Gradually, theorists began to move in the direction of unifying the three types of validity into one type which was the construct validity. For example, Cronbach (1980) mentioned that "all validation is one" (p. 99), and by "one" he meant construct validity. Finally, Messick (1989) confirming the unitary nature of validity, extended the definition of construct validity and defined it as "an overall evaluative judgment of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of interpretations and actions on the basis of test scores or other modes of assessment" (p. 288). For Messick (1989,1995), validity is a unitary concept realized in construct validity and has six facets of content, substantive, structural, generalizability, external, and consequential.

The content aspect of construct validity mainly refers to content relevance, representativeness, and technical quality. The concern of content validity is that all the items or tasks as well as the cognitive processes involved in responding to them be relevant and representative of the construct domain to be assessed. The extent to which test items or tasks are relevant and representative of the construct domain is normally determined by professional judgment of experts. Technical quality of items, referring to issues like "appropriate reading level, unambiguous phrasing and correct keying", (Messick, 1996, p. 248) is also considered to be part of the content aspect of construct validity.

Substantive aspect of construct validity may be roughly defined as the substantiation of the content aspect. It deals with finding empirical evidence to assure that test-takers are actually engaged with the domain processes provided by the test items or tasks. An obvious example is multiple choice distracter analysis which is carried out to provide

empirical evidence for "the degree to which the responses to the distracters are consistent with the intended cognitive processes around which the distracters were developed" (Wolfe & Smith, 2007, p. 209).

Structural aspect of construct validity is mainly concerned with the scoring profile. It is highly important to take into account the structure of the test when scoring it. It does not seem sound to add up the scores of the different parts of a test, when each part measures a different dimension. While one single score can summarize the performance of an individual on a unidimensional test, scores on different dimensions must be reported separately. In other words, the scoring models should be informed by the structure of the test.

Generalizability aspect of construct validity deals with the extent to which the score meanings and interpretations are generalizable to other tasks and contents which are not included in the test but are part of the broader construct domain. In other words, the generalizability aspect tells us to what extent we can depend on the test scores as broader indicators of a person's ability and not just as an index of the examinee's ability to perform a limited number of tasks included in an assessment device.

The external aspect of construct validity is concerned with the degree to which test scores are related to other test and non-test behaviors. In Messick's (1996) own words:

The *external* aspect of validity refers to the extent to which the assessment scores' relationships with other measures and non-assessment behaviors reflect the expected high, low and interactive relations implicit in the theory of the construct being assessed. Thus, the meaning of the scores is substantiated externally by appraising the degree to which empirical relationships with other measures, or the lack thereof, is consistent with that meaning. That is, the constructs represented in the assessment should rationally account for the external pattern of correlations. (p. 251)

Analyses of group differences and responsiveness of scores to experimental treatment (Messick, 1989) are considered to be two important methods which serve as important evidence for the external aspect of construct validity. If a measurement instrument shows sensitivity to changes in the test takers' levels of latent trait as a result of introducing treatment as an external non-assessment behavior, it is said to have external validity. That is, if a test is given before and after a treatment and results indicate that the test-takers did better on the test after the treatment, it is said the test has external validity. Moreover, a test is said to have external validity in case it can differentiate between those who possess the construct and those who do not or between those who possess varying levels of the construct.

The consequential aspect of construct validity, as the name suggests, deals with the intended and unintended (e.g. bias) consequences of the assessment and the implications scores meanings have for action. According to Wolfe and Smith (2007):

The consequential aspect of validity focuses on the value implications of score interpretation as a source for action. Evidence concerning the consequential aspect of validity also addresses the actual and potential consequences of test score use, especially in regard to sources of invalidity such as bias, fairness, and distributive justice. (p.244)

A simple example in which case consequential aspect of validity is violated could be a test which includes items that are biased in favor of a group of test takers and thus results in high scores for one group and low scores for the other.

II. Rasch Model Introduction

Attempts have been made to extend the current view of construct validity along with its six facets to Rasch model framework. Bond (2003), Smith (2001), and Wolfe & Smith (2007) have all attempted to point out how the analyses carried out within Rasch framework can be linked to current validity arguments.

Rasch model, named after the Danish mathematician and statistician Georg Rasch, is a prescriptive probabilistic mathematical ideal. It is highly distinguished for its two remarkable properties of invariance and interval scaling which are obtained in case the basic assumption of unidimensionality underlying the model is met, i.e. when the data fit the model.

The model is referred to as a prescriptive model because it prescribes specific conditions for the data to meet. This means that the whole research process, from the very beginning, must be in line with the model's specifications.

One of the basic assumptions of the Rasch model is the unidimensionality principle: the measurement instrument must measure only one trait at a time. Though theoretically sound, practically it is almost impossible to construct a test which measures only one attribute or to prevent the interference of extraneous factors. One may unintentionally measure language proficiency in a math test which is primarily intended to measure the test takers' mathematical ability. This is usually the case with math tests including worded problems, especially when the test is administered to non-native speakers of the test language. Moreover, in almost all testing situations, a number of extraneous factors are involved which contaminate the measurement. Henning et al. (1985) clarifies the point:

Examinee performance is confounded with many cognitive and affective test factors such as test wiseness, cognitive style, test-taking strategy, fatigue, motivation and anxiety. Thus, no test can strictly be said to measure one and only one trait. (p. 142)

As achieving this strong version of unidimensionality is impossible, a more relaxed formulation has also been advanced (Bejar, 1983). The unidimentionality with which the Rasch and IRT models are concerned is psychometric unidimensionality and not psychological. Thus unidimentionality within Rasch model means "a single underlying measurement dimension; loosely, a single pattern of scores in the data matrix." rather than "a single underlying (psychological) construct or trait" (MacNamara, 1996, p. 271).

In order for the data to meet unidimensionality condition, the response patterns should follow Guttman pattern. If items are rank ordered from easy to difficult, a person who has responded correctly to an item should reply correctly to all the easier items as well. In other words, it is not expected that a person respond correctly to difficult items, but miss the easier ones or vice versa. The more the data is Guttman-like, the more it is likely to fit the Rasch model.

Having calculated the probabilities of providing correct responses to items of specific estimated difficulties by persons of particular estimated abilities, one should check whether the model's expectations realized in the form of probabilities are consistent enough with the observed data. This is done by checking the probabilities against the real observed data which can be carried out statistically as well as graphically. It should be noted that there always exists some difference between the model's predictions and the real data since the model is a perfect mathematical ideal, a condition impossible to meet in the real world. If deviation of data from the ideal set by the model is tolerable, it is said that the data fit the model, thus enabling one to benefit from the attractive properties provided by the model. If not, the remarkable properties of the model which are in fact the properties of fundamental measurement are lost.

Although over forty fit indices have been developed by Psychometricians to check the accord between data and the model mainly two of them are implemented in Rasch software written in North America and Australia: infit and outfit statistics. While the former is sensitive to the unexpected patterns of response in the zones where the items are quite targeted to the person's abilities, the latter is highly sensitive to lucky guesses and careless mistakes. Both types of fit statistics are expressed in the form of mean square values as well as standardized values. The ideal value is 1 for mean square values and 0 for standardized ones. The acceptable range for mean square values is from 0.70 to 1.3 and for standardized ones from -2 to +2. In case the data fit the model, one can be confident that the item measures are independent of the person measures and vice versa.

Invariance of the measures can also be tested by splitting the items or persons into two halves and running independent analyses to check whether the item and person estimates remain invariant across the analyses. To be more specific, either the same test is given to two groups of people or the sample to which the test is given is divided and considered as two groups. Then, the difficulty estimates of each item, derived from two separate analyses, are plotted against each other on *x* and *y* axes. The procedure is the same for persons, but in this case of persons there are two groups of items and one group of persons. That is, two ability estimates for each person is estimated based on the two sets of items and then the ability estimates are plotted against each other. A dotted line which indicates "the modeled relationship required for invariance" (Bond & Fox, 2007, p. 72) is drawn and 95% control lines based on standard errors of item or person pairs are constructed around it. The items or persons falling between the control lines are considered to be invariant.

III. Rasch Analysis and Validity

In this part, summarizing briefly the works of Bond (2003), Smith (2001) and Wolfe and Smith (2007), the contribution that Rasch analysis can make to demonstrate different aspects of construct validity is pointed out.

A number of analyses are performed to provide evidence for the content aspect of validity within Rasch framework. Fit indices are used to check the relevance of the test content to the intended construct. Misfitting items may be measuring a totally different and irrelevant construct. Moreover, person-item map and item strata are two important criteria for checking the representativeness of the items. Noticeable gaps in the item difficulty hierarchy point to the fact that some area of the construct domain has not been covered by the test (Baghaei, 2008). Item strata, i.e. "the number of statistically distinct regions of item difficulty that the persons have distinguished" (Smith, 2001, p. 293), is another clue which is drawn upon to check representativeness. There should be at least two item difficulty levels distinguished so as to judge the items as being appropriate representatives of the intended content. Furthermore, technical quality of the test items can be assessed via fit indices as well as item-measure correlations since the former is a good indicator of multidimensionality, poor item quality or miskeying and the latter is an indicator of "the degree to which the scores on a particular item are consistent with the average score across the remaining items." (Wolfe & Smith, 2007, p. 206). With regard to the expected values of the item-measure correlations, Wolfe and Smith (2007) summarize the issue as:

Item-measure correlations should be positive, indicating that the scores on the item are positively correlated with the average score on the remaining items. Negative item-measure correlations typically indicate negatively polarized items that were not reverse- scored. Near zero item-measure correlations typically indicate that the item is either extremely easy or difficult to answer correctly or to endorse or that the item may not measure the construct in the same manner as the remaining items. (p. 206)

Person fit statistics and, in the case of multiple-choice tests, multiple choice distracter analysis are considered to be important indicators of substantive aspect of validity. Person fit statistics provide empirical clues for "the extent to which a person's pattern of responses to the items correspond to that predicted by the model" (Smith, 2001, p. 296). Person misfit may be due to factors like carelessness, guessing, etc. Distracter analysis within Rasch framework involves distracter p-valuse, choice means and distracter-measure correlations. P-values indicate "the proportion of respondents choosing each distracter" (Wolfe & Smith, 2007, p. 209). Ideally, it is expected that the distracters be equally attractive; however, this seems to be almost impossible in practice. Thus, p-values are used to detect malfunctioning as well as non-functioning distracters. Choice means represent "the average measure of respondents who choose each distracter" (Wolfe and Smith, 2007, p. 209). They indicate the discrimination power of the distracters.

It is expected that distracters be chosen by less able test takers, thus discriminating between test takers of high and low ability levels. As Wolfe and Smith (2007) put it," If a distracter does not attract less able respondents, then its validity as a measure of the underlying construct is questionable." (p. 209). Finally, distracter-measure correlations are correlations between distracters and test takers' ability measures and indicate "the degree to which each distracter is a plausible answer to the prompt" (Wolfe and Smith, 2007, p. 209). Since, again, it is expected that test takers of low ability choose the distracters (rather than a correct option), thus negative values for correlations are desired. However, since the number of test takers choosing a particular distracter may be small, it is likely that the distracter measure correlations be attenuated and consequently result in correlation values which are not considerably negative. In such cases, choice means are drawn upon to compensate for the attenuation effect.

Fit statistics are used to assure whether the test is unidimensional and guide one to decide upon the way the test should be scored. That is, in case the test is shown to be unidimensional, reporting a single score for the whole test would suffice. However, in case of multidimensionality, separate scores should be reported for each dimension, and one should be cautious not to add up the scores on different dimensions. Thus, fit statistics provide helpful evidence with regard to the structural aspect of construct validity.

Checking the invariance of item measures across different populations or over time, as well as checking the invariance of person measures across different sets of items can be employed to check the generalizability aspect of construct validity.

In the case of external aspect of construct validity, the extent to which the meanings of the scores of a test hold relations with some other related test results or non-test behaviors is usually checked via building Multitrait-Multimethod matrices. The external aspect of validity is usually checked via monotrait and heterotrait correlations which have traditionally been referred to as convergent and discriminant evidence respectively. It is expected that monotrait correlations be higher than the heterotrait ones in order to serve as evidence for the external aspect of validity. Moreover, the capacity of a test to detect within-individual changes (over time, e.g. as a result of treatment) and between-group differences, is another indicator of the external validity. This capacity can be checked via visual inspection of person-item map as well as checking the person strata index. If a test is given to a group before a treatment and the map manifests "a floor effect, and a wide dispersion of item calibrations beyond the highest person measure" (Wolfe & Smith, 2007, p. 222), the test is said to be responsive to treatment and thus capable of detecting within-individual changes. The same applies to situations where the test is used to compare different groups which undergo different experimental treatments. Person strata index which represents the number of statistically separate ability strata that the test can distinguish is another evidence for external aspect of construct validity. High values for person strata (at least 2) are needed to confirm the external aspect of validity of a test.

Rasch has not explicitly put forward a way to check the consequential aspect of validity. However, issues like item bias and examination of differential item functioning (DIF) or a close examination of the person-item map- which reveals the amount of information on the basis of which decisions for action are taken- can provide helpful evidence to decide about the consequential aspect of construct validity of a test.

In the following section the analyses discussed above are applied to a multiple-choice English vocabulary test to demonstrate its construct validity. Rasch analyses corresponding to various Messickian validity aspects are conducted to show how Rasch model is applied in practice for validation.

IV. Method

A. Participants

Sixty undergraduate English Language and Literature students at Urmia University were randomly selected. Their age ranges from 19 to 25. Gender and language background were not used in the selection procedure.

B. Instruments

A 70-item multiple choice test of English vocabulary was given to the participants. They were required to choose the best possible answer for each item. Time allowed for answering all the items was 45 minutes though some of the participants finished the test sooner.

C. Results

The data were analyzed using WINSTEPS Rasch software version 3.66.0 (Linacre, 2008). First of all, fit indices were examined closely to check the relevance of the items as part of content validity. Table 1 shows the fit indices for some of the items. The items are arranged from difficult to easy. The first column, "ENTRY Number", indicates the number given to each item in the test (ranging from 1 to 70). The second column, labeled as "TOTAL SCORE", represents the total score for each item (i.e. the number of participants who have responded correctly to that item). The number of participants who have attempted each item is given in the third column which is labeled as "COUNT". The difficulty estimates for the items are given in the fourth column labeled as "MEASURE". The fifth column, "MODEL S. E.", shows the standard error of the item difficulty measures. "MNSQ" and "ZSTD" are abbreviations for "mean-square" and "z standardized distribution" respectively, and are provided for "OUTFIT" as well as "INFIT" columns.

TABLE 1
ITEM STATISTICS: MEASURE ORDER

ENTRY NUMBER	TOTAL SCORE	COUNT	MODEL MEASURE	MODEL S.E.	INFIT MNSQ	INFIT ZSTD	OUTFIT MNSQ	OUTFIT ZSTD	PT-MEASURE CORR.	PT-MEASURE EXP.	ITEM	G
42	4	60	2.72	.53	1.09	.3	1.40	.8	.04	.20	Item 42	0
19	11	60	1.50	.35	1.20	1.0	1.26	.9	.05	.29	Item 19	0
22	13	60	1.26	.33	1.12	.7	1.27	1.1	.14	.31	Item 22	0
57	14	60	1.16	.32	1.03	.2	1.19	.8	.25	.32	Link 7	0
25	16	60	.96	.31	1.14	.9	1.28	1.3	.13	.33	Item 25	0
48	16	60	.96	.31	1.16	1.1	1.16	.8	.15	.33	Item 48	0
56	18	60	.77	.30	1.29	2.0	1.33	1.7	-.01	.34	Link 6	0
34	19	60	.69	.30	1.10	.8	1.11	.7	.22	.34	Item 34	0
69	22	60	.43	.29	1.11	1.0	1.17	1.2	.21	.35	Link 19	0
9	23	60	.35	.28	.93	-.6	.93	-.5	.43	.35	Item 9	0
61	23	60	.35	.28	1.35	3.0	1.40	2.8	-.07	.35	Link 11	0
14	24	60	.27	.28	1.01	.1	1.00	.0	.34	.35	Item 14	0
40	24	60	.27	.28	1.07	.7	1.12	.9	.26	.35	Item 40	0
18	25	60	.19	.28	1.10	1.0	1.10	.8	.24	.35	Item 18	0
31	25	60	.19	.28	1.15	1.5	1.20	1.6	.16	.35	Item 31	0
10	26	60	.12	.28	.79	-2.3	.76	-2.3	.61	.35	Item 10	0
28	26	60	.12	.28	.92	-.8	.90	-.9	.45	.35	Item 28	0
62	30	60	-.19	.28	.94	-.7	.92	-.7	.43	.35	Link 12	0
64	30	60	-.19	.28	.73	-3.2	.70	-3.1	.67	.35	Link 14	0
3	31	60	-.27	.28	1.00	.0	1.02	.2	.34	.35	Item 3	0
37	31	60	-.27	.28	.89	-1.3	.88	-1.1	.48	.35	Item 37	0
67	35	60	-.57	.28	1.13	1.4	1.11	.9	.19	.34	Link 17	0
1	38	60	-.81	.28	1.11	1.1	1.15	1.0	.19	.33	Item 1	0
47	38	60	-.81	.28	1.00	.0	1.04	.3	.32	.33	Item 47	0
5	39	60	-.89	.29	.85	-1.4	.78	-1.5	.52	.33	Item 5	0
66	39	60	-.89	.29	.76	-2.4	.68	-2.3	.63	.33	Link 16	0
36	40	60	-.97	.29	.79	-2.0	.72	-1.9	.58	.32	Item 36	0
63	40	60	-.97	.29	.91	-.8	.88	-.7	.44	.32	Link 13	0
65	44	60	-1.33	.31	.99	.0	.98	.0	.31	.30	Link 15	0
54	54	60	-2.60	.44	1.08	.3	1.35	.8	.05	.20	Link 4	0
51	58	60	-3.80	.72	.96	.2	.52	-.3	.23	.12	Link 1	0
52	59	60	-4.52	1.01	.98	.3	.53	.0	.15	.08	Link 2	0
MEAN	27.3	60.0	.00	.32	1.00	-.1	1.00	.0				
S.D.	12.3	.0	1.21	.11	.12	1.1	.20	1.1				

Acceptable values range from 0.7 to 1.3 for "MNSQ" and from -2 to +2 for "ZSTD". The "PT-MEASURE" column indicates the observed ("CORR.) as well as the expected ("EXP.) correlation between performance on each item and the ability estimates of the participants who have responded correctly to that item. Finally, the last column shows the labels given to the items by the analyst.

Table 1 shows that Item 42 is the most difficult item on the test. From 60 participants who have attempted this item, only 4 could get it right. The difficulty of this item is estimated to be 2.72 logits with the standard error of 0.53. This means one can be 95% sure that the true value for the difficulty of this item lies somewhere between 1.66 to 3.78 logits, i.e., two SE's below and above the observed measure. The infit indices are within the acceptable range. Though the MNSQ for outfit has exceeded the limit a little bit, the ZSTD is within the acceptable range, thus not causing a serious problem. There is some difference between the observed and expected correlation between the performance on this item and the participants' ability measures on the entire test which can be associated with the observed deviation in outfit MNSQ.

Table 1 indicates that items 56, 61, 10, 64, 66, and 36 should be either omitted or revised because of lack of fit to the model. These items are measuring something other than the intended content and construct. That is, they are construct-irrelevant.

Having a look at table 2, the Summary Statistics, one can investigate the representativeness of the items by checking the value given for item strata. Item strata is labeled as "SEPERATION" in the table. The minimum value for item strata is 2. The separation value given for this test is 3.38 which is an acceptable index. Thus, one can rely on the representativeness of the test items.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF 70 MEASURED ITEMS

	RAW SCORE	COUNT	MODEL MEASURE	MODEL ERROR	INFIT MNSQ	INFIT ZSTD	OUTFIT MNSQ	OUTFIT ZSTD
MEAN	27.3	60.0	.00	.32	1.00	-.1	1.00	.0
S.D.	12.3	.0	1.21	.11	.12	1.1	.20	1.1
MAX.	59.0	60.0	2.72	1.01	1.35	3.0	1.40	2.8
MIN.	4.0	60.0	-4.52	.28	.73	-3.2	.52	-3.1

REAL RMSE	.34	ADJ.SD	1.16	SEPARATION	3.38	ITEM	RELIABILITY	.92
MODEL RMSE	.34	ADJ.SD	1.17	SEPARATION	3.45	ITEM	RELIABILITY	.92
S.E. OF ITEM MEAN = .15								

Moreover, person-item map (Figure 1) can serve to provide evidence for the representativeness of the test items, that is, content validity. The map shows that the bulk of items on the right are matched to the bulk of persons on the left, indicating the test is appropriately targeted for this group of participants. Link 1, Link 2, and Link 4 (i.e. items 51, 52, and 54), though indicating good fit to the model, can be omitted since they are too easy for the participants and are in fact useless because there are not any participants at that ability level. If we had some test takers at the lower end of the scale we would need to add some more items at that difficulty level to cover the gap between items labeled Link1 and Link 4 to measure the ability of the persons in that region of the scale more precisely. There is also a gap between items 44 and 17, meaning some items are needed to cover this area of the construct domain. Omitting Link 1, Link 2, and Link 4, the rest of the items can be said to be on target. Moreover, there is no ceiling effect. There are items whose difficulty levels are above the most able participants' ability levels. Overall, the items show acceptable degree of representativeness.

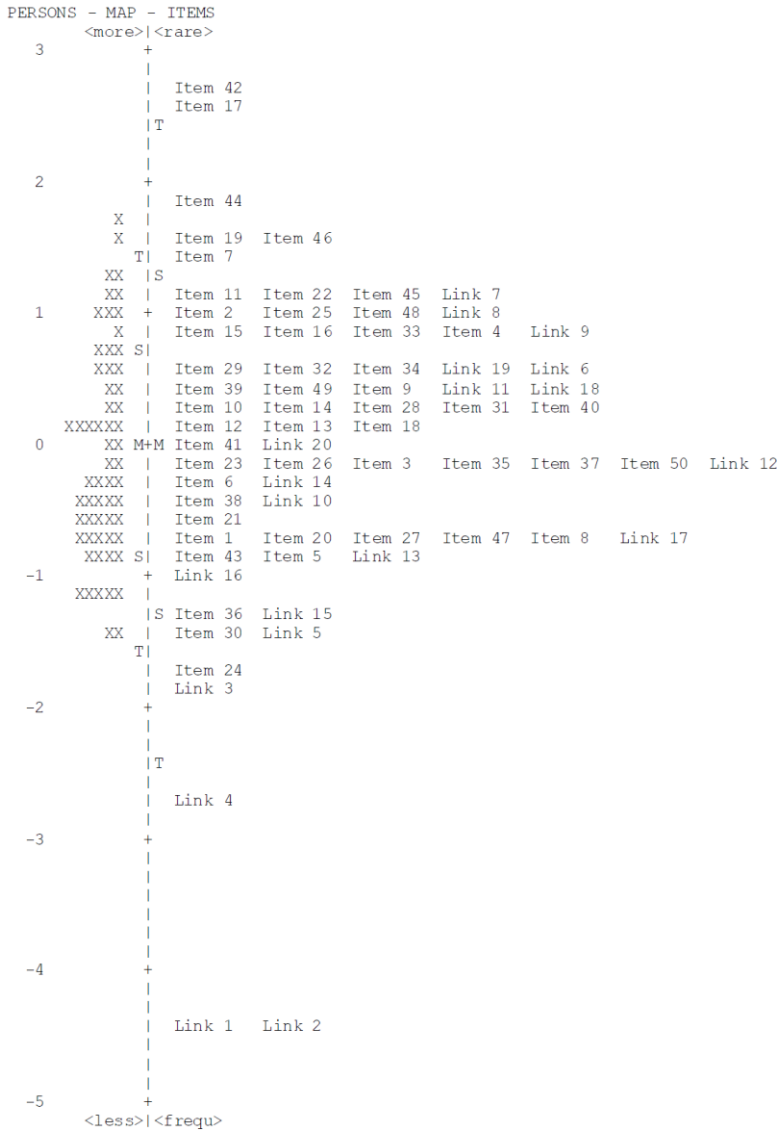

Figure 1 – PERSON-ITEM MAP

Table 3, the "Item Distracter Table" reveals helpful information regarding substantive aspect of construct validity. Item Distracter Table for 10 items is given below. The first column shows the entry number for each item. The second column, "DATA CODE", indicates the codes given to the options of the item. That is, 1 represents the first choice, 2 the second, etc. "." represents the missing values, i.e. the cases wherein none of the options was chosen. "SCORE VALUE" column shows the correct option by coding it as 1 and the other incorrect options as 0. The fourth column, "DATA COUNT", indicates the number as well as the percentage of the participants who have chosen a particular option, be it right or wrong. "AVERAGE MEASURE" or choice mean shows the mean of the ability estimates of all the participants who have chosen a particular option. It is expected that the value for average measure be the highest for the correct option and lower for incorrect options. There is an asterisk placed above the average measure for correct options in cases where this expectation is not met. This is the case with items 19, 22 and 57 as shown in Table 3. "S. E. MEAN", is

an abbreviation for standard error of the mean which is the standard error of the mean of the ability estimates of those participants who have chosen a particular option. Finally, "PTMEA CORR." shows the correlation between the occurrence and non-occurrence of each option and the ability estimates of the participants choosing a particular option.

TABLE 3
ITEM DISTRACTER

ENTRY NUMBER	DATA CODE	SCORE VALUE	DATA COUNT	DATA %	AVERAGE MEASURE	S.E. MEAN	PTMEA CORR.	ITEM
42	3	0	13	22	-.29	.25	-.08	Item 42
	1	0	8	13	-.23	.19	-.03	
	.	0	4	7	-.21	.17	-.01	
	2	0	11	18	-.18	.20	.00	
	5	0	20	33	-.10	.22	.07	
	4	1	4	7	-.06	.39	04	
17	.	0	3	5	-.51	.54	-.10	Item 17
	3	0	19	32	-.40	.18	-.19	
	5	0	5	8	-.39	.29	-.08	
	2	0	25	42	-.16	.15	.02	
	1	0	3	5	.32	.10	.15	
	4	1	5	8	.68	.34	.33	
44	3	0	11	18	-.67	.16	-.29	Item 44
	.	0	2	3	-.49	.97	-.07	
	5	0	23	38	-.27	.16	-.09	
	1	0	6	10	-.18	.36	.00	
	4	0	9	15	-.06	.15	.06	
	2	1	9	15	.59	.27	.41	
19	1	0	1	2	-1.36		.20	Item 19
	2	0	21	35	-.36	.17	-.17	
	.	0	3	5	-.09	.36	.03	
	5	0	22	37	-.06	.20	.12	
	3	0	2	3	.31	.47	.12	
	4	1	11	18	-.10*	.18	.05	
46	.	0	1	2	-1.46		-.21	Item 46
	2	0	17	28	-.50	.15	-.26	
	4	0	19	32	-.29	.15	-.09	
	1	0	4	7	-.16	.32	.01	
	3	0	8	13	-.08	.31	.05	
	5	1	11	18	.53	.26	.43	
7	2	0	9	15	-.93	.18	-.40	Item 7
	.	0	1	2	-.75		-.09	
	4	0	3	5	-.71	.21	-.16	
	1	0	10	17	-.24	.20	-.04	
	3	0	24	40	-.08	.16	.10	
	5	1	13	22	.37	.19	.37	
22	5	0	9	15	-.50	.17	-.17	Item 22
	.	0	9	15	-.48	.22	-.16	
	2	0	4	7	-.41	.26	-.08	
	4	0	15	25	-.35	.22	-.13	
	1	0	10	17	.45	.23	.36	
	3	1	13	22	.03*	.23	.14	
57	.	0	5	8	-.79	.41	-.24	Link 7
	1	0	20	33	-.34	.14	-.14	
	4	0	20	33	-.15	.17	.03	
	2	0	1	2	.34		.09	
	3	1	14	23	.17*	.25	.25	
58	1	0	11	18	-.44	.22	-.16	Link 8
	4	0	19	32	-.35	.16	-.15	
	.	0	7	12	-.15	.24	.02	
	3	0	9	15	-.11	.27	.04	
	2	1	14	23	.19	.25	.26	
2	3	0	7	12	-.59	.17	-.19	Item 2
	4	0	7	12	-.27	.36	-.04	
	.	0	5	8	-.20	.27	-.01	
	5	0	6	10	-.18	.25	.00	
	2	0	20	33	-.18	.18	.00	
	1	1	15	25	.05	.24	.17	

Although all the information provided by the table is helpful, special attention is given to average measures. Items whose correct options are marked with asterisks (as a sign of flagging unacceptable values) should be checked. Those which have good fit indices and also the average measures for their wrong options are smaller than the average measure for their correct option are kept. However, those manifesting poor fit and those with greater average measures for wrong options than the correct option should be revised or deleted. Putting aside the items which do not fit the model, items 22, 19 and 57 have the asterisk above their correct options. This means that the mean of the persons who have chosen the right option is not greater than the means of those who have chosen the wrong options. This indicates that these distractors do not function in the expected fashion.

Distracter analysis showed that the distracters of most items acted in the intended way, i.e. elicited responses consistent with the intended cognitive processes, to a great degree. This is how multiple choice distracter analysis provides empirical evidence for the substantive aspect of construct validity.

Looking at the person-item map, the test is just fairly good as far as external aspect of validity is concerned. The test is very well-targeted for the sample. Had we given this test to an untreated group, it would not have been capable of detecting changes in the high-ability persons after the treatment as the dispersion of item calibrations beyond the highest person measure is not very wide. More items would have been needed to cover the area beyond the highest person measure. Having a look at the moderate person strata value (2.50) confirms this point. However, since the test is not constructed for purposes of detecting changes after treatment, this lack of floor effect does not pose a problem.

To check the invariance of person measures and provide evidence for generalizability aspect of validity, the items are divided into two halves. Then for each person, two ability measures are estimated and plotted against each other (Baghaei, 2009). As is clear from Figure 2, all the persons are placed between the two control lines. The manifested invariance of person measures provides evidence for the generalizability aspect of construct validity.

Implications for the consequential aspect of construct validity can be drawn from the item-person map. Since there do not exist considerable gaps in the item hierarchy where the persons are located on the map, it seems that one can be somehow confident about the decisions made on the basis of this test. This is because the results are based on sufficient amount of information since the items are targeted to the ability levels of almost all the participants. This is relevant to the consequential aspect of validity.

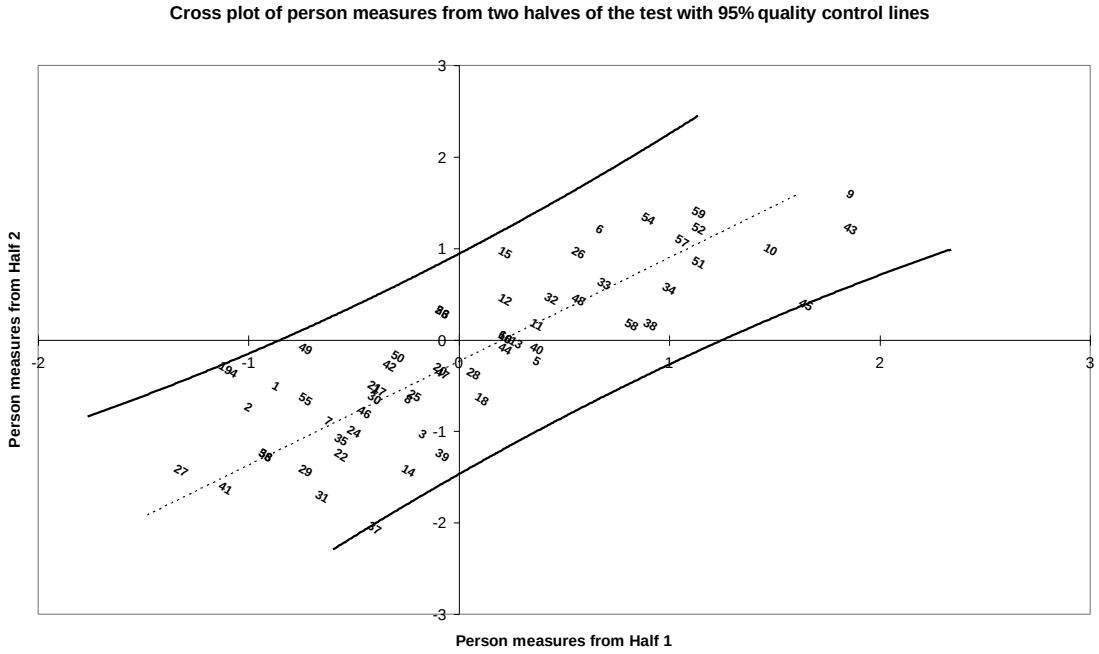

Figure 2 – Cross plot of person measures from two halves of the test with 95% quality control lines

V. Conclusion

In this paper an overview of validity from Messick's viewpoint was provided. Afterwards, the Rasch model as a new measurement theory was introduced. Rasch model, rejecting the concept of raw score, provides person and item estimates that are placed on an interval scale and thus is a more appropriate model than the classical test theory for measurement in the human sciences.

It was then indicated that it is possible to extend the Messickian view of validity to the Rasch model. Various analyses within Rasch model were mapped to different aspects of validity. The possibility of demonstrating the validity of measuring instruments makes the Rasch model a valuable tool for construct validation of tests. It was shown that it is possible to link the Messickian view of construct validity with its six facets (content, substantive, structural, generalizability, external and consequential) as defined by Messick to several analyses available within Rasch model framework. A multiple-choice English vocabulary test was used to empirically apply the Rasch model analyses for validation. The results show that Rasch model works well for establishing the validity of language tests and can routinely be used by language testing specialists to provide validity evidence for their tests.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1061-1068, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1061-1068

Negative Transfer of Chinese to College Students' English Writing

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***Abstract*—In China, in the process of college students' foreign language learning, English writing is the reflection of their integrating skills and it is also the process of rewriting based on gaining English knowledge. Meanwhile, Chinese college students' English writing is a cross-language and cross-cultural communicative behavior, and also a behavior of the transformation of thinking and cultural model. However, in the process of English writing, the negative transfer of Chinese influences students' writing. Here, according to the research to the students' writing and the relative questionnaire survey in Beihai College of Beihang University, this paper is a systematic and objective analysis on the negative transfer of Chinese to college students' English writing at the levels of lexis, sentence structure and discourse.**

***Index Terms*—mother tongue transfer, negative transfer, Chinese, college students' English writing**

I. Introduction

In the process of non-native language learning, there are many factors influencing the learners, such as the learners' internal and external factors. In this paper the focal point is the external factor, the transfer of learners' mother tongue.

Discussions of transfer begin with the work of American linguists in the 1940s and 1950s. Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired (Odlin, 1989).Yet while the work of Charles Fries, Robert Lado, and others was clearly a major catalyst for subsequent research, serious thinking about cross-linguistic influences dates back to a controversy in historical linguistics in the nineteenth century (Odlin, 1989). Odlin pointed out that negative transfer was quite possible and often probable in pronunciation, grammar, and so forth of second language learners. And Contrastive Analysis suggested that in the process of second language learning, the learners would meet the problem of mother tongue transfer. Therefore, for Chinese learners English is not their mother tongue and they will definitely meet the problem of negative transfer of Chinese.

Too few will gainsay the fact that writing is an art and that "he who has an art has everywhere a part," but too many will acknowledge that the art of writing is beyond their reach and that writing is their Achilles' heel in their academic or professional career(Xiao, 2007). According to this, we can see that writing is a key part in language learning. It is also true in foreign and second language learning.

II. Mother Tongue Transfer

A. Introduction

Odlin considered that language transfer included the influence from mother tongue to second language acquisition and the borrowing from mother tongue to second language. Odlin called the former *basic transfer*, and called the latter *borrowing transfer*. Though the research on language transfer was cross-linguistic and inter-influence, most of the researches were about the influence from mother tongue to foreign language and second language acquisition. Therefore, language transfer became the name of mother tongue transfer (Yang & Zhang, 2007).

B. The Reason of Mother Tongue Transfer

As Rod Ellis (1994) put it: The single paramount fact about language learning is that it concerns, not problem solving, but the formation and performance of habits. According to behaviorist theories, the main impediment to learning was interference from prior knowledge. Proactive inhibition occurred when old habits got in the way of attempts to learn new ones. In such cases, the old habits had to be 'unlearnt' so that they could be replaced by new ones. In the case of L2 learning, however, the notion of 'unlearning' made little sense, as learners clearly did not need to forget their L1 in order to acquire an L2, although, in some cases, the loss of the native language might take place eventually. For this reason, the behaviorist theories of L2 learning emphasized the idea of 'difficulty', defined as the amount of effort required to learn an L2 pattern. The degree of difficulty was believed to depend primarily on the extent to which the target language pattern was similar to or different from a native-language pattern. Where the two were identical, learning could take place easily through *positive transfer* of the native-language pattern, but where they were different, learning difficultly arose and errors resulting from negative transfer were likely to occur.

C. The Category of Mother Tongue Transfer

1. Negative of mother tongue transfer

L2 learners are used to their mother tongue, when contacting a new language they will turn to the help of L1. The differences between L1 and L2, as well as the interferences of L1 will produce bad effect which is called negative transfer of mother tongue. Negative transfer refers to cross-linguistic influences resulting in errors, overproduction, underproduction, miscomprehension, and other effects. Those results will become stumbling stocks in the process of learning L2.

2. Positive of mother tongue transfer

But when the relevant item, structure or the language principle of two languages is similar, or even the same, the cross-linguistic influences result in correct language production. This process is called positive transfer of mother tongue. Unlike negative transfer, positive transfer can help the second language learners acquire more L2 knowledge and make less errors and mistakes in the process of learning L2.

D. Brief Review of the Research of Mother Tongue Transfer

The research of the transfer of mother tongue originated from America in 1940s and 1950s. Looking back the historical researches of language transfer of L2 in the late 20th century, we can know that the researches focused on the influence of mother tongue in L2 acquisition. The research went through the contrastive analysis and Interlingua hypothesis. In 1957 Lado pointed out that in the process of second language learning, it was easily to learn the similarities of the L1 and L2, but difficult to learn the differences between them. In the following decades, the research about transfer of mother tongue made progress in every field and every level. On the whole, in foreign countries such researches focused on the manifestation and factors of it (Yang & Zhang, 2007). In 1983, Selinker divided the transfer into positive transfer and negative transfer. In 1989, Odlin regarded that the facilitation of mother tongue depended on the amount of errors and the learning progress.

III. Research of Negative Transfer of Chinese to College Students' English Writing

A. Quantitative Analysis

1. Introduction

With the related theories, I started a research about *the Negative Transfer of Chinese to College Students' English Writing* in Beihai College of Beihang University. In this paper, randomly I have collected 40 non-English majors in the *Department of Software Engineering* and 30 English majors' writing papers in Grade Two, and 35 non-English majors' in the *Department of Economic Management* of Grade One. These writing papers are very typical and I have kept statistics of the errors occurring in the writings on the level of vocabulary and grammar. The data is as follows.

TABLE 1

Students' level / % / Manifestations of errors	English majors in Grade 2 (30 students)	Non-English majors in Grade 2 (40students)	Non-English majors in Grade 1 (35students)
Nouns	18.2%	8.4%	8.9%
Verbs	34.4%	40.2%	46.3%
Adjectives and Adverbs	6%	13.1%	5%
Prepositions	5.3%	8.5%	8.2%
Pronouns	3%	2.5%	3.5%
Articles	3%	1.3%	3.2%
Match cases and Punctuations	0.5%	3.8%	4.5%
Spellings	25.2%	16.2%	17.4%
Others	4.4%	6%	3 %

2. Description of the data

According to table 1, it's not difficult to find that the incorrect use of verbs accounts for the most proportion of the whole errors and mistakes, no matter in Grade One or Two, or no matter to English or non-English majors. Besides, the numbers are different between English and non-English majors, and between Grade One and Two of non-English majors.

B. Qualitative Analysis

1. Introduction

Chinese and English are of two languages belonging to different language systems, so college English students make a lot of errors and mistakes in their papers. Many linguists agree that in Chinese the notion and the meaning of words and sentences are important, the form is minor. Chinese people can accept the sentence without a full structure. While in English the word form and sentence structure are important. The negative transfer of Chinese influences the college

students' English writing in many aspects. Based on the above relative theories, some analysis will be represented in this chapter.

2. Lexical errors

Chinese and English almost share the same classification of the words. There are noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition and article in the classification. However, there are many different language rules and principles in word forming and using.

(1) Spelling errors

The spellings are extremely different. In spelling, Chinese words are formed by strokes, such as 我，中，大，汉 and so on, while the English ones are formed by letters, just like the English words used here in this paper. The different order of the 26 English letters can form numerous words. So for the English learners, it is not easy to remember all the English words and write them correctly. Moreover, some words are very similar in form, such as *"there* and *their, cup* and *cap, cut* and *cat, compliment* and *complement*" and so on. Therefore, the learners will be easy to mix some words and can't remember the words accurately. In table 1, the proportion of the wrong spelling takes up a large number ranking in the second place. By comparing the English majors and the non-English majors, it is not that hard to get the English majors make more such mistakes than the non-English majors. It is because the English majors use more complex English words than the non-English majors, the latter usually use the simplest words to avoid spelling mistakes to get higher scores, but for the former, if they want to get higher scores they should not just use the simple words but also the new and complex ones. However, from the research I find that most spelling mistakes don't lead to readers' misunderstanding of the words or even the sentences. Those wrong spellings are mostly of missing or adding some English letters, so the readers will know or guess the meaning from the wrong words or the context, such as the words written by the students "*techological, desiger, accroding, somthing, ralatively, blackbood, afaid, omportant"*.

(2) Vocabulary errors

Besides different word spelling, different vocabulary also causes Chinese negative transfer to English writing. Zhonghua Yang (2009) pointed it out that the negative transfer of vocabulary reflected on the collocation and choice of words, derivative words, articles and the use of singular-plural form of words and so on. He thought that most errors were the incorrect use of choice and collocation of words. When writing, students would translate the main idea from Chinese subconsciously, so Chinese semantic transfer led to a large number of Chinese-English sentences.

In Xiaohui Li and Wen Chen's research (2006), they found that in lexical errors the wrong collocation took a proportion of 17.9%, the misuse of gender of words is 12.5%; the indiscriminate use of the words takes up 8.9%. They thought English and Chinese belonged to two different language systems and their cultural and social backgrounds were also different. In my research, I found the wrong collocation of words mostly involved the collocation with preposition. In most cases, the students used wrong prepositions or didn't use any preposition at all. In table 1, 5.3% errors and mistakes of prepositions are made by the English majors and about 8% by the non-English majors. The numbers are very near between the English and non-English majors. It shows that such errors and mistakes are common in college English writing. Because Chinese people use prepositions less than the English and there are not so many strict rules in using prepositions in Chinese. In English sentences most prepositions are fixed to certain phrases and contexts. For example, in the following Chinese sentences "我在中国旅游","我在去教室的路上", and "我在早上九点的时候学习了英语", the preposition in every sentence is"在". But if a learner translates every sentence into corresponding English sentence, the translations should be "I am travelling in China", "I am on my way to the classroom" and "I studied English at 9:00am". So the Chinese character "在"is translated into *in, on* and *at* in different English sentences. So for the English learners in China, the different uses of prepositions between the two languages will affect their English learning and acquisition. Look at those samples in the students' writing.

① The effect of exercise of our health are obvious.

② Exercise take many advantages on our health.

③ So we always do some exercises are good at our health ….

④ Now, let me show you one my memories for you.

⑤ In the party, everyone are be good sing song.

Here in the following explanation, other errors and mistakes will be ignored except the collocation misused. From the above samples, the preposition *of* in the phrase *of our health* in sample ①, *on* in sample ②, and *at* in sample ③ are misused. While in sample ④ and ⑤ the prepositions are ignored. That's because the Chinese students can't find the exact English preposition in writing. The students get used to put their known knowledge to a second language learning, they do not get a very clear idea to use prepositions in English phrases or sentences. The right prepositions in sample ①-③ in order should be *on, to and for/to*, while in sample ④ *of* should be added in front of the word *my* and in sample ⑤ *at* should be added at the back of *good*. In English, the noun *effect* should be followed by the preposition *on* to describe one thing or person. With the same reason, it is also true to many English words. And the Chinese meaning of every correct sample will be as the following:

① 运动对我们健康的效果很明显。

② 运动带给我们健康很多好处。

③ 所以我们总是做一些对我们健康有好处的运动。
④ 现在，让我为你展现我的一个回忆。
⑤ 在晚会上，每个人都善于唱歌。

With the above explanation, it is not that difficult to understand the English and Chinese sentences of every sample except sample ④. From the meanings of sample①-③, the students realize that there should be preposition in each English sentence, so they choose one, but they are affected by Chinese in which there is no exact one to match the notional words. Appearing in the English sentences, the prepositions are the replacements. While in the Chinese sentence of sample ④ there is no preposition in the second clause, the phrase *one of my memories* is understood and translated as "我的一个回忆". The words in two different languages are used differently with different language rules. Viewed from the above analysis, not only the example of preposition is used very differently, but also the part of many other words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and articles.

3. Sentence structural errors

Jiwan Bi (1994) said that in foreign language teaching, in Chinese-English translation and in cross-cultural communication the differences of Chinese and English sentence structures often became a big obstacle. Jingni Quan (2007) pointed out that someone once did a research on English learners in China about the interference from Chinese to foreign language learning. The result showed that the same sentence style of Chinese and English could enhance the understanding of the English sentence, while the different sentence styles of them would influence the learners with lower English level to the speed of understanding. Only after the learners had mastered the English sentences skillfully, could their speed of understanding be improved (Quan, 2007).

Ruifang Fang (2007) pointed it out that English was a morphological language in which the sentence was subject-predicate-oriented. Subject and predicate were in restraint of grammatical agreement. She also thought that the English sentences are enclosed. It was the same as what Wang Li had said that the western grammar was hard, not flexible, while the Chinese grammar was just the opposite, it was soft and flexible. So in English writing, students should master the English grammar skillfully, or they will make different kinds of errors and mistakes.

In the research of this paper, there are more than 90% non-English majors using simple sentence in English writing. In China, people use simple sentence much more often than complex sentence. Just take the simple pattern "S+V+O" as an example, Chinese people use this pattern very often in daily life, such as: 小黄正在写作业。你们去游览了长城。他们不愿意去找工作。The learners get familiar and master this pattern skillfully, so they use it in English writing, and the sentences with such pattern are usually correct. These sentences are samples: "*You did a lot of exercises. The exercise is good for our health. At the same time, the government should establish some relevant decrees. It will let us keep thin." and so on.* However, not all patterns between two different languages are similar, so what will happen if there are different sentence patterns?

In English, clauses and complex sentences are used widely, while in Chinese they are rarely used except the adverbial clause. Most of the learners who learn English at the very beginning haven't heard of the subject clause, object clause, predicative clause, or attributive clause. To those learners, such clause patterns are new to them, and if they want to use them in writing they should learn to master them. Because of those reasons, many errors occur in English writings. With the continuously learning English, the errors are not overcome completely, though some are overcome, especially for the non-English majors in college. As I mentioned before, more than 90% non-English majors used the simple sentences, not the complex ones in English writing. Besides the above reason, there is another reason that they don't master the complex sentence patterns, let alone using them skillfully. Here are the non-English majors' samples which are incorrect:

①*…eat something who have iron element*.
② *On one hand, doing more exercise can strengthen our body, that help us resistant the virus, let us less suffer the disease.*
③ *There are many ways can take.*
④*When you at a place was very cool…*"

The correct ones should be:

①*…eat something* ***that*** *has iron element.*
② *On one hand, doing more exercise can strengthen our body,* ***which*** *helps us resistant the viruses, letting us suffer less diseases.*
③ *There are many ways* ***which*** *we can take.*
④*When you were at a place* ***which*** *was very cool…*"

These sentences or clauses involve antecedent misuse. So even the students want to use the complex sentences in writing to get higher scores, they don't use them correctly. This phenomenon is not just happening to the non-English majors, but also to English majors. In the research, every English major uses simple and complex sentences, but there are still similar errors in using complex sentences. Some wrong sentences appear in the writings:

①*…of the product what they want to buy.*
② *For example, the fact didn't as same as which say in the adverts.*

③*…so that we can make a choice that we need to buy it or not."*

But the correct ones should be:

①*…of the product* ***which*** *they want to buy.*

② *For example, the fact wasn't as same as* ***what*** *was said in the advertisements.*

③*…so that we can make a choice* ***whether*** *we need to buy it or not."*

From the samples, the influences of different sentence patterns exist universally in English writing for Chinese college students.

4. Discourse errors

Judged from the grammar level, the lexical and sentence structural errors just occur in a single sentence. However, in a whole writing work the discourse should not be ignored. Shuhua Tong (2008, p.52) wrote: Robert B Kaplan thought that the organization and development in an English discourse were linear. That was, an English paragraph usually began with a point which was directly pointed out and then developed by the following sentences in that paragraph. In the process of pointing out the point, each sentence in the paragraph was naturally produced after the previous one. Therefore, the meaning of the paragraph was developed in a linear order, and then was filled in by details step by step. Finally, the topic was full gradually. On the contrary, the development of Chinese discourse was spiral. The topic of the discourse wasn't presented with a direct way but an indirect one. Anyway, the different thinking models between Chinese and English influence the organization of discourse in writing. Especially, the Chinese spiral thinking model will affect the English writing directly in discourse. Based on this theory, a group of numbers of the research is as follows.

TABLE 2

Students' level % Scores of the writing(full mark-15points)	English majors in Grade 2 (30students)	Non-English Majors in Grade 2 (40students)
5 points	3.33%	0
6 points	0	7.5%
7 points	30%	35%
8 points	20%	35%
9 points	10%	22.5%
10 points	10%	0
11 points	6.67%	0
12 points	16.67%	0
13 points	3.33%	0

In the research, to English majors in Grade 2 the writing topic is *The Effects of Advertising,* while to the non-English majors the topic is *The Effects of Exercise on Our Health*. And the full mark of the English writing is 15 points, and only with 9 points can the students pass the writing assignment. Besides the words and sentence structure, the organization of the discourse will affect the scores, but only the discourse is discussed here. From table 2, the scores range from 6 to 12. And the fact that only 22.5% non-English majors and 46.7% English majors get the passing grade is showed in table 2. It means that more English majors pass the assignment than the non-English majors. Though the topic is not the same, the proportion of those two groups of students is reasonable. The English majors learn English grammar in college and they pay more attention to English, so they can avoid more Chinese negative transfer in English writing. However, the students majoring in other courses don't care too much about English. Thus under the influence of the Chinese thinking model, most discourse errors in the research are about lacking coherence between sentences or between paragraphs, not emphasizing the main idea, and contradiction of the opinion and so on. Here is one of the articles form the students.

The Effects of Exercise on Our Health

Most of people like to do some exercises, the boys are better like than the girls. They are interested in exercising.

The exercise is good for our health. It can let us have a rest. After that, people can work and study good. And then, the exercise can make people stronger. So, people are not easier have a ill.

But the exercise has something bad for people. When people do some exercises, people are easy to have a harm.

In my opinion, people do some exercises, they should not do the exercises so hard. People also often want to do some exercises.

The above article is full of errors and mistakes. From the angle of discourse errors, first, the article is lack of coherence. It's because in English every sentence and every paragraph should be linked by some words or phrases, while in Chinese there are no such strict rules. Second, the structure of the whole discourse is confusing. The writer neither used the pure Chinese spiral thinking model nor the English linear thinking model, but mixed the two different thinking models. He pointed out one opinion, then turned to the other irrelative details or skipped to another opinion. So

finally, the reader didn't know whether the writer was in favor of exercise or not.

To sum up, if the English learners are not aware of the Chinese negative influence, they will make a lot of errors and mistakes in the whole discourse.

IV. Students' Attitude to the Negative Transfer of Chinese to College Students' English Writing

A. Introduction

Due to the fact that there are so many errors and mistakes appearing in college students' writing just because of the negative transfer of Chinese, I made a questionnaire survey about students' attitude to the influence of Chinese to college English writing in Beihai College of Beihang University. I handed out some questionnaires to the students whose writing works I used to analyze the negative transfer of Chinese. And I picked out 43 pieces of the feedback of the questionnaires randomly to explain certain phenomenon; the questionnaires are all from the students whose writing articles I used to do the research in chapter 3.

B. Result of the Survey

In the feedback of the questionnaire, 67.43% students thought that Chinese was helpful to college English writing, and just 11.63% thought that Chinese would influence English writing, but 2.32% thought that Chinese not only helped but also influenced the English writing. There were still 18.6% students who were not clear about whether Chinese would help English or not. But after I showed them that Chinese did influence their English writing in many aspects, 37.21% students recalled that they had tried to avoid the errors and mistakes resulted from Chinese in their writing, but 62.79% didn't realize the mistakes. Though none of them got the effective method to deal with such errors and mistakes, everyone wanted to make fewer of them and wrote a perfect article.

C. Description of the Result

Compared the errors and mistakes in students' writing with their attitude to the negative transfer of Chinese to college students' writing, it is confusing for people to see that most college students thought that Chinese was helpful to their English writing. But if it is analyzed as follows, this problem will be understood.

Nowadays, most Chinese college students are adults and they have learnt English for more than 6 years from junior middle school years. Some even learnt it from babyhood or childhood. They have learnt some basic and useful English words, sentences, discourses, and grammars and so on. However, they have mastered Chinese grammar far better than that of English because they can't avoid using it in daily life and study. They put Chinese in English learning and acquiring subconsciously. When they encounter difficulties in English learning and acquisition, they will turn to the help of their mother tongue subconsciously, so they think that their use of Chinese is helpful in English writing, ignoring the influence of it. But the fact is that Chinese influences their writing without being realized.

V. Inspirations from the Research and Strategies

A. Inspirations from the Research

Since Chinese influences college students' English writing without students' realization, it is necessary to adapt some useful strategies to arouse students' attention to the influence of Chinese to English writing and improve their writing skills. Though not all the errors and mistakes in college English writing results from the negative transfer of Chinese, to some extent, Chinese does result in some errors and mistakes. Tao Feng (2005, p.33) said, "The negative transfer of Chinese was temporary, and it could be overcome by practice. If the transfer and the condition of its effect were noticed, to some extent, the negative transfer would be reduced or even be avoided. The negative transfer would be reduced if some strategies were adapted in teaching." In language learning, writing is an output and an end of a learning period. He thought that both teachers and students should take some strategies.

As writing is an output, the input is very important, such as reading, listening. Writing is a comprehensive task to language learners. It doesn't work if the learners have only mastered the writing methods and shortcuts.

B. Strategies to the Teachers

Teachers play an introductory role in college English writing. Though the teachers know how to deal with some errors and mistakes resulting from Chinese, they can't force the students not to make such things, or help them to correct the errors and mistakes in a short time. Learning is a process, let alone the L2 learning. The students need time to improve their ability in using foreign languages.

First, teachers should tolerate students' errors and mistakes, and point out the errors and mistakes with an acceptable device. Though some people hold an idea that teachers should point out students' shortcomings and help them to correct the shortcomings, nowadays the students have a strong sense of self-esteem. Most students don't like to be told they are wrong in public. Therefore, teachers should know the students' psychological idea whether they can accept the shortcomings or not in public. Moreover, the shortcomings resulting from the negative transfer of Chinese will be overcome gradually. But the important thing is that teachers should remind the students that there is such transfer. Students need transitive period to overcome such shortcomings. Therefore, teachers should allow students to make such

shortcomings, and then courage them to correct the shortcomings.

Second, to help students to overcome the shortcomings, teachers should guide the students to reinforce the input to English writing. As it is pointed out at the second paragraph of this section, reading, listening are of the input. Teachers should make an environment for students to practice those aspects. For example, teachers can assign a task that every student should read one or two English articles, and then randomly ask one of them to retell the story and at the same time to present personal opinions. Or the teachers can turn on a computer, letting the students listen to English words, phrases, clauses, sentences or dialogues carefully, and then ask them to make up a full story or full context. No matter what form the practice or activity is, the more English full sentences and contexts the students contact, the closer they will get to their better writing. As the time passing by and with the progress of their input, the output will be stronger and stronger.

Finally, teachers also should teach students the differences between Chinese and English. In the comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences of the languages and the relevant culture, the students' knowledge can be broadened, and then they can improve their writing maximally.

C. Strategies to the Students

However, the most important factor in the process of English writing is the student. They are the main role. Chunliang Zhang (2009) said that R. Ellis regarded the transfer of mother tongue as an L2 learner's learning strategy because of the learner's lacking of the L2 knowledge. And Stern regarded the transfer and the influence of mother tongue as a foundation for foreign language learning. He also pointed it out that learners took the mother tongue as a reference object in foreign language learning. Zhang considered the use of mother tongue as learner's creative behavior, which was an important part in the Interlingua system that the learner created by themselves before they mastered the target language. Therefore, the students' attitudes and strategies are very vital in the whole process of English writing.

First of all, students should put their interest and enthusiasm to English learning. To some extent, interest and enthusiasm will give students power to overcome the shortcomings in the writing process.

Second, students should face their errors and mistakes positively. They should know that the negative transfer of Chinese can be overcome gradually in mind. Therefore, they will be confident to their English writing.

Third, students should follow their teacher and improve their abilities of reading, listening, speaking purposefully. Rome is not built in a day. Only if they continuously practice reinforcing the inputs, input will help the students with their writing. And the negative transfer of Chinese will be naturally weakened.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Summary of the Study

Viewed from the theories, in the process of English learning, it is inevitable for Chinese college students to make errors and mistakes in English writing. But under the teachers' guiding and the students' purposeful and careful learning, some difficulties resulting from the negative transfer of Chinese will be overcome gradually.

This paper mainly aims at analyzing the errors and mistakes caused by the Chinese influence on college students' English writing. The errors in the samples were divided into three categories, namely, lexical errors, sentence structural errors and discourse errors. The questionnaire aims at analyzing the students' attitudes to the negative transfer of Chinese to their English writing. Based on the theories and the data of the research, it is safe to say that Chinese does influence college students' English writing in China.

B. Limitations of this Study

The limitations of this study are as follows.

The students' writing tasks in this research are different, though the topic is almost the same, the content is very different. The number of the students' in the questionnaire is not so large, which may influence the result of the research.

The categories of the errors and mistakes are not so detailed, and the interpretation of some errors is not that complete. It is difficult to explain all the errors and mistakes appearing in the students' writing, only some examples are picked out to interpret the negative transfer of Chinese to college English writing.

C. Suggestions for Further Research

Because society is developing and human being is progressing, the old researches should be developed again by the new generation to coincide with the reality. In the fast growing global world, the language and the culture are changing in a fast pace. Some differences of the two different languages will be identified and mastered by the language learners. And the factors in negative transfer of Chinese will be changed with the development of the learners' knowledge, so the detailed, all-around and new researches about the negative transfer of Chinese are needed very much. Therefore more researches with larger samples should be done in the coming days.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1069-1079, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1069-1079

An Investigation of the Relationship between Motivation and Metacognitive Awareness Strategies in Listening Comprehension: The Case of Iranian EFL Learners

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***Abstract*—This study sets out to investigate the relationship between patterns of motivation and L2 listeners' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of strategies. A total number of 3o upper intermediate students from two English language teaching Institutes in Isfahan took part in this study. They were asked to fill in two questionnaires: (a) a questionnaire on motivation, which was developed by Vallerand et al. (1992), and (b) a questionnaire on Metacognitive awareness strategies in listening developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006). The results of the study revealed that: 1) there is no significant difference in terms of type of motivation among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners .2) In the category of mecognitive strategies, problem solving was the most frequently used strategy and planning and evaltuation was the least frequently used one. 3) Positive relationship was found between both types of motivation and use of metacognitive awareness strategies, except for mental translation and intrinsic motivation. 4) There was significant difference in mean scores of high and low motivation groups, for three categories of metacoginitive awareness strategies including planning and evaluation, directed attention, and person knowledge. This study suggested that listeners' metacognitive awareness should be cultivated and strategy instruction should be integrated into the teaching of listening.**

***Index Terms*—metacognitive awareness listening strategies, patterns of motivation, Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners**

I. Introduction

Attention in listening comprehension research is increasingly being directed at learners' self-reports of their understanding and awareness of the processes involved in listening in another language (Vandergift et al., 2006). It has been argued that awareness of strategies and other variables in learning can have positive influences on language learners' listening development (e.g., Bolitho et al., 2003; Wilson, 2003).

Motivation is also an important factor in learning a second and foreign language (Gardner, 1985b; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). It is defined as the individual's attitudes, desires, and effort (Gardner, Tremblay & Masgoret, 1997). Moreover, Ryan and Deci (2000) define motivation as concerning energy, direction, and persistence -all aspects of activation and intention. Oxford and Shearin (1996) comment that "L2 learning is a complex process in which motivation plays a major role".

The present study aims at investigating whether there is any meaningful relationship between different kinds of motivation and Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategies. In other words, the purpose is to find out whether students who are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated will choose specific kinds of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategies.

This study is to answer the following questions:

Which Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategy is the most commonly used strategy among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners?

Is there any relationship between the type of motivation (intrinsic / extrinsic motivation) and the learners' choice of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategy among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners?

Are Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners intrinsically motivated or extrinsically motivated?

Is there any realtionship between degree of motivation and the choice of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategy among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners?

The first question is descriptive and does not lend itself to hypothesis testing, but based on the other questions the following null hypotheses can be formulated:

H01: There is no meaningful relationship between the type of motivation and the choice of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategy among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners.

H02: Among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners, there is no significant difference in terms of type of motivation.

H03: There is no meaningful relationship between the degree of motivation and the choice of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategy among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners.

II. Review of the Related Literature

A. Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategies

The scope of listening strategy research has recently expanded to emphasize learners' cognitive appraisal or their metacognitive knowledge. In these investigations, listeners are asked to explicitly report their perceptions about themselves, their understanding of listening demands, their cognitive goals, their approach to the task, and their strategies. Studies have explored the impact of raising metacognitive awareness on learner listening performance and motivation (e.g., O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 2002, 2003b, 2005a).

To elicit learners' metacognitive knowledge about listening, various procedures have been used, most commonly diaries (Goh, 1997), interviews (Goh, 2002a), and questionnaires (Goh, 2002b; Vandergrift, 2002, 2005a; Zhang, 2001). Results of these studies have shown that language learners possess knowledge about the listening process, albeit to varying degrees, and that this knowledge appears to be linked to listening abilities. Furthermore, research on the effects of metacognitive instruction has provided preliminary evidence that performance, confidence, and motivation can be enhanced through classroom instruction (Goh & Taib, 2006; Vandergrift, 2003b).

Goh (2000) administered a questionnaire to elicit learners' strategy knowledge and perceived strategy use in listening comprehension and learning. She found that the more skilled listeners demonstrated a higher degree of awareness of their listening problems. Similarly, Zhang (2001) examined strategic knowledge through questionnaire reports about the usefulness of speaking and listening strategies. In the case of comprehension strategies, she found a discrepancy between perceived usefulness and actual use of strategies such as getting the overall meaning of a text, paying attention to details, and concentration on a listening task in spite of difficulty. Goh (2008) lists some of the positive effects of metacognitive strategy training on listening comprehension. She states that it improves students' confidence and makes them less anxious in the listening process. She also believes that weak listeners in particular benefit much from the training.

Listening tasks that guide students through the process of listening can help learners develop the metacognitive knowledge critical to the development of self-regulated listening. In two investigations by Vandergrift, students were guided in the use of prediction, individual planning, peer discussions, and post listening reflections. Both beginner-level elementary school students (Vandergrift, 2002) and beginner-level University students of French (Vandergrift, 2003a) exposed to such an approach found it motivating to learn to understand rapid, authentic-type texts.

Vandergrift (2005a) further explored the hypothesized relationships among metacognition, motivation, and listening proficiency. When listening test scores were correlated with student-reported levels of motivation (grounded in self determination theory) and student-reported use of cognitive and metacognitive listening strategies, an interesting pattern of increasingly higher correlations among the three levels of motivation (amotivation, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation) and reported use of metacognitive strategies emerged. Vandergrift argued that these patterns of correlation provided some evidence for the hypothesized links among self-determination theory, self-regulated learning, learner autonomy, and metacognition. Vandergrift's sequence for guided listening was adopted for teaching tertiary-level Chinese English as a second language (ESL) students; they too reported increased motivation, confidence, and strategy knowledge (Liu & Goh, 2006).

According to Vandergrift et al. (2006) there are five factors underlying the metacognitive awareness strategies while listening. The first factor (problem solving) represents a group of strategies used by listeners to inference (guess at what they do not understand) and to monitor these inferences. The second factor (planning and evaluation) represents the strategies listeners use to prepare themselves for listening, and to evaluate the results of their listening efforts. The third factor (mental translation) represents strategies that listeners must learn to avoid if they are to become skilled listeners. The fourth factor (person knowledge) represents listeners' perceptions concerning the difficulty presented by L2 listening and their self-efficacy in L2 listening. Finally, the fifth factor (directed attention) represents strategies that listeners use to concentrate and to stay on task.

Yang (2009) presented a study on the metacognitive strategies employed by English listeners in an EFL setting. The results of the study revealed that the participants used directed attention most frequently and they used monitoring least frequently. Besides, there were differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between successful and unsuccessful listeners. The differences existed in the use of directed attention, functional planning and self-management strategies. The study proposed that listeners' metacognitive awareness should be cultivated and strategy instruction should be integrated into the teaching of listening.

O'Bryan and Hegelheimer (2010) used a mixed methods approach to shed light on the development of four intermediate English students' listening strategy use and awareness over the course of one semester. Specifically, they investigated the complexities of students' listening strategy use by level of language proficiency (low intermediate to

high intermediate), the impact of repetition on listening strategies and the development of students' metacognitive awareness. Their findings indicted the important role of instruction in cultivation and development of metacogitive awareness strategies use while listening.

The present study used the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) to assess the extent to which language learners are aware of and can regulate the process of L2 listening comprehension. The design of this questionnaire is based on a theoretical model of metacognition, a construct that refers to thinking about one's thinking or the human ability to be conscious of one's mental processes.

B. Motivation

Motivation is one of the main determinants of second/foreign language (L2) learning achievement. In the last thirty years, there had been considerable amount of research done that explores on the nature and role of motivation in the L2 learning process.

Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) suggested that an individuals' motivation to learn an L2 is nurtured by both attitudes toward the L2 community and the goals, or orientations, sought through the acquisition of the L2. These researchers identified two classes of motivation. First, integrative motivation refers to a desire to learn the L2 in order to have contact with, and perhaps to identify with, members from the L2 community. This orientation can be contrasted with the instrumental orientation, which refers to a desire to learn the L2 to achieve some practical goal, such as job advancement or course credit (Noels, Pelletier, Clement & Vallerand, 2000).

Ryan, Kuhl and Deci (1997) introduced the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). According to the self-determination theory, there are two general types of motivation. Intrinsic motivation (IM) refers to motivation to engage in activity because it is enjoyable and satisfying to do and extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome.

Noels et al. (2000) categorized L2 intrinsic motivation (IM) into three types based on Self-Determination Theory and the empirical studies by Vallerand (1997) and Vallerand et al. (1992, 1993). IM-Knowledge is the motivation for learning an L2 for the feelings associated with exploring new ideas and developing knowledge; IM-Accomplishment refers to the sensations related to the attempt to master a task or to achieve a goal; IM-Stimulation is related to motivation based simply on the sensations stimulated by performing the task, such as aesthetic appreciation, fun or excitement.

Noels (2001a) investigated the relations between perception of teachers' communicative style and students' motivation. The results suggested that the teacher's behavior affects the students' generalized feelings of autonomy and competence. That is, the more the teacher was perceived as controlling, the less the students felt they were learning Spanish spontaneously and the lower the students' intrinsic motivation. Noels also found that the integrative orientation was strongly correlated with intrinsic motivation and identified regulation. However, this is not to indicate that intrinsic and integrative motivations are identical.

In terms of degree of self-determination, Three levels of extrinsic motivation have been distinguished empirically (Vallerand et al., 1992, 1993). They are classified as: (a) external, (b) introjected, and (c) identified regulation. External regulation refers to behavior that is determined through means external to the individual. Introjected regulation represents reasons for performing an activity that are more internalized than in external regulation. The third stage is identified regulation. At this point, the individual decides to perform behaviour because he or she views the activity as personally worthwhile (Deci & Ryan, 1995).

A final motivational concept proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985) is amotivation. A person is considered amotivated when she or he does not see a relation between her or his actions and their consequences, but rather sees the consequences as arising from factors beyond her or his control.

Salehi and Ziahosseini (2007) investigated the relationship between motivation and the use of language learning strategies by Iranian university students. The results of the study revealed that extrinsic motivation did not correlate meaningfully with the choice of language learning strategies. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation correlated meaningfully with the choice of language learning strategies. It was also found that Iranian learners were intrinsically rather than extrinsically motivated.

This study used the intrinsic/extrinsic dichotomy of motivation to investigate the influence of motivation on the use of metacognitive awareness strategies while listening to an oral text among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners. In simple terms, this study tried to examine whether there is any difference between those who are extrinsically motivated and those who are intrinsically motivated in the use of metacognitive awareness strategies in listening comprehension.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

A total number of 3o upper intermediate students from two different English Institutes in Isfahan took part in this study. Their age ranged between 18 and 28. They were all undergraduate university students of different majors. The sample consisted of both junior and senior students. Both male and female students were included. The number of male and female students was 11 and 19 respectively.

B. Instrumentation

The following instruments were used in this study:

a questionnaire on Metacognitive awareness in listening comprehension developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006) called Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ).

a questionnaire on motivation, which was developed by Vallerand et al. (1992), called Academic Motivation Scale (AMS),

The characteristics of each of the two questionnaires used in this study will be discussed below.

1. Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ)

MALQ, a 21 item questionnaire developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006), has been used in different contexts as a consciousness-raising tool to raise students' awareness of the process of listening, to positively influence students' approach to listening tasks, and to increase self-regulated use of comprehension strategies. The items in MALQ are related to five metacognitive factors, problem-solving (six items), planning and evaluation (five items), mental translation (three items), person knowledge (three items), and directed attention (four items) (see appendix A).

The format of the questionnaire was designed following guidelines outlined by Brown (2001), D örnyei (2003), and Gilham (2000). Students were asked to respond to items using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Point 1 means that the item does not refer to the learner at all. Points 2 and 3 indicate that the statement is a little true about the learner. The learner who marks point 4 shows that the item moderately represents their use of metacognitive awareness strategies while listening. Point 5 represents that the item corresponds a lot to the learner's metacognitive awareness and perceived use of strategies. Finally, point 6 shows that the learner exactly use the same strategy which is used in the item while listening to an oral text.

Vandergrift et al. (2006) used rigorous statistical processes to validate the items in the MALQ. The MALQ was tested several times with a large sample of respondents (N = 966) in various countries, in different learning contexts, and at different levels of language proficiency. Internal consistencies (Cronbach's alphas) were calculated for each of the multi-item MALQ factors, based on the participants' responses. Internal reliability estimates were respectable, ranging from .68 for the four items on the directed attention factor to .78 for the three items on the mental translation factor.

2. Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)

The AMS is divided into seven subscales. Three subscales designed to assess extrinsic motivation including (a) External Regulation (3 items; $\propto$= .78), (b) Introjected Regulation (3 items; $\propto$= .67), and (c) Identified Regulation (3 items; $\propto$= .79). Three distinct, unordered subscales (9 items, $\propto$= .82) designed to assess intrinsic motivation (intrinsic motivation to know, to accomplish things, and to experience stimulation). Finally, Amotivation was assessed with 3 items ($\propto$=.81) (see appendix B). Vallerand et al. reported that Cronbach's coefficient alphas for the subscales ranged from .83 to .86, In addition, test-retest reliability over a one-month period ranged from .71 to .83 for the subscales.

The instrument included a 1 to 7 scale for each item showing the extent it corresponded to the learners' reasons for learning English. Scale 1 means that the item does not refer to the learners' reasons at all. Scales 2 and 3 indicate that the reason represented by the items is a little true about the learners. The learners who mark scale 4 show that the item moderately represents their reason for studying English. Scales 5 and 6 with a little difference in degree represent that the item corresponds a lot to the students' reason for learning English. Finally, scale 7 shows that the learner has exactly the same reason mentioned in the item for learning English.

C. Procedures

1. Data Collection

The data of this study were collected in two successive class sessions. Administration procedures were similar in both institutes. In the first class session, MALQ was introduced and distributed among the participants. They were fully briefed on how to fill out the questionnaire. Participants were given ample time to complete the questionnaire. In the second class session, AMS was introduced and distributed among the participants. Again, participants were fully briefed on how to fill out the questionnaire. They were given ample time to complete the questionnaire. Both questionnaires were collected at the end of the class session. Some of them were discarded since they were not completed satisfactorily.

2. Data Analysis

The items were codified and entered into SPSS program for windows, version 16.0. A correlational analysis was used to determine whether there was a meaningful relationship between types of motivation and categories of Metacognitive awareness listening strategies. Descriptive statistics was used to determine the mean and standard deviations in both questionnaires. A paired t-test was run to determine the pattern of motivation among Iranian learners. A t-test was run to determine whether high and low motivation groups chose different kinds of language Metacognitive awareness listening strategies.

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Frequency of the Use of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategies

In order to arrive at an answer to the first research question which stated, "Which Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategy is the most commonly used strategy and which one is shunned among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners?" Descriptive statistics was used.

Comparing the means of strategies, it turned out that, though the use of metacognitive awareness strategies was not high among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners and the difference between uses of strategies was not highly significant, problem solving was the most frequently used strategy (mean=3.85on a 6-point scale) (see table 1&2). The means of the use of person knowledge and direct attention were in-between (means=3.77, 3.69 on a 6-point scale). The lowest frequency went to the mental translation and planning and evaluation (mean=3.64, 3.48 on a 6-point scale).

There is a contrast between this frequency-based strategy ranking and the one, which resulted from Yang (2009) study, where direct attention was the most frequently used category of strategies among 160 English sophomores from four intact classes at Chinese University.

However, the results coincide with those of Vandergrift et al. (2006) and O'Bryan and Hegelheimer (2010) findings that higher proficiency learners tend to use less translation strategies. In the category of metacognitive strategies, problem solving strategies were the most frequently used category of strategies. This result supports the fact that students were good at inferencing, and monitoring their inferences.

Directed attention, and person knowledge were sometimes used. This denotes that listeners, somehow, realized the importance of attention and attempt to look for more opportunities to practice listening outside the class. They also captured the difficulty presented by L2 listening and their self-efficacy in L2 listening. O'Malley et al. (1989) reported that in perceptual processing listeners used attentional strategies to maintain their concentration on the task

TABLE 1.
FREQUENCY OF THE USE OF METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS LISTENING STRATEGIES

Strategies	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
planning and evaluation	30	1.40	6.00	3.4867	.91679
directed attention	30	2.25	5.25	3.6917	.80858
person knowledge	30	2.00	6.00	3.7778	.94010
mental translation	30	1.67	5.00	3.6444	.97452
problem-solving	30	1.67	5.33	3.8500	.86697
Valid N (listwise)	30				

TABLE 2.
PERCENTAGE OF THE USE OF METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS LISTENING STRATEGIES

Strategies	N	Percentage
planning and evaluation	30	58.11
directed attention	30	61.52
person knowledge	30	62.96
mental translation	30	60.74
problem-solving	30	64.17
Valid N (listwise)	30	

As was anticipated from the literature (Vandergrift et al., 2006; O'Bryan and Hegelheimer, 2010) mental translation was the one of the two least frequently used categories of strategies. As the participants were upper-intermediate learners of English, they tend to use less mental translation strategies.

However, planning and evaluation was rarely used. As stated by Yang (2009) metacognitive strategies mirror listeners' learning awareness and learning beliefs. These results showed that problem solving, direct attention and person knowledge were conducive to successful listening in the eyes of listeners. Planning, evaluating, and monitoring were not effective enough. Alternatively, listeners had a good command of problem solving, direct attention and person knowledge and a poor mastery of planning, evaluating, and monitoring.

Before listening to some material, an instructor usually informs learners that they should attend to a listening task and ignore distractions and they should fix attention on specific aspects of the listening material by looking for key words and topic sentences. At the end of the listening class, the instructor reminds learners of more listening practice and previewing. It is natural for listeners to skillfully employ these strategies—directed attention, selective attention and self-management in their listening.

Besides, this fact showed that listeners' learning is not independent but instructor-centered. Planning, monitoring, evaluating are characteristics of self-directed language learning. The literature on self-directed language learning unanimously believes that self-direction requires learners to be able to plan, monitor and evaluate their language learning, which aims to promote learner autonomy (cf. Yang, 2009). The low means of the responses to planning and evaluation (mean=3.48) indicated that learners have not taken responsibility for their own learning and they lacked the spirit of learning independently and creatively (see table 1). Learner autonomy was absent in listeners.

B. Types of Motivation and Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategies

In order to answer the second research question and test the null hypothesis, "H01: There is no meaningful relationship between the type of motivation and language learners' metacognitive awareness listening strategies among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners", a correlational analysis was run. As table 3 shows, a positive but not high correlation was arrived at between intrinsic motivation and four categories of metacognitive awareness listening

strategies (except for mental translation strategies). In addition, a positive correlation was arrived at between extrinsic motivation and all five categories of metacognitive awareness listening strategies. However, due to the small sample of the participants, the correlation (except for extrinsic motivation and directed attention) was not statistically significant. Therefore the coefficient of determination (common variance) was run. The results confirmed the Pearson correlation coefficient (see table 3).

TABLE 3.
PEARSON CORRELATION BETWEEN INTRINSIC/EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS LISTENING STRATEGIES

		Planning and evaluation	Directed attention	Person knowledge	Mental translation	Problem solving
Extrinsic	Pearson Correlation	.216	.513**	166.	.078	.055
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.252	.004	.380	.682	.775
	Common Variance	4.66	26.31	2.75	.6	.3
	N	30	30	30	30	30
Intrinsic	Pearson Correlation	.349	.284	.346	-.013	.143
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.059	.128	.061	.944	.450
	Common Variance	12.18	8.06	11.97	-.016	2.04
	N	30	30	30	30	30

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

In the category of metacognitive awareness strategies, the correlations between planning and evaluation, person knowledge, problem solving and intrinsic motivation, though not significantly high, were more than extrinsic motivation. However, the correlation between directed attention and extrinsic motivation, in particular introjected regulation, was positively larger and statistically more significant. The reason pertains to performing an activity in response to some kind of pressure that the individuals have internalized. In other words, students try to direct their attention and concentrate on the listening task because they would feel guilty if it were not completed, or they put efforts into listening task in order to impress others with their proficiency (Deci and Ryan ,1985).

In addition, the correlation between mental translation and extrinsic motivation was positive and more than intrinsic motivation, suggesting that external factors may lead learners to use more translation strategies while listening to an oral text, as intrinsic motivation will lead to less use of mental translation strategies. As indicated in table 3, negative but small correlation was found between mental translation and intrinsic motivation.

In all, from the results of this study, it cannot certainly be concluded that there is meaningful relationship between different types of motivation and language learners' metacognitive awareness listening strategies; as correlations between different types of motivations and metacognitive awareness listening strategies, except for extrinsic motivation and directed attention, were not highly significant and large. In other words, the first hypothesis is partially confirmed and partially rejected. The reason may also pertain to the fact that students' use of metacognitive awareness listening strategies was not high, too. However, as explored by Vandergrift (2005a), students' report of the use of metacognitive awareness listening strategies will be higher, if they are highly motivated.

C. Patterns of Motivation

In order to answer the third research question and test the null hypothesis, "H02: Among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners, there is no significant difference in terms of type of motivation." a paired t-test was performed.

The null hypothesis was accepted. Although descriptive statistics (Table 4) indicted a little change in the patterns of motivation, paired t-test (Table 4.9) showed that there was not a significant difference between EFL students in terms of type of motivation.

This result was against that of the previous study (Salehi and Ziahosseini, 2007), where it was found out that Iranian learners were intrinsically rather than extrinsically motivated. This difference may be due to the fact that in previous study just English literature and English Translation students were investigated; as in this study students were taking the English course beside their major of study.

The descriptive statistics calculated for intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation types as shown in table 4 yielded the means of 44.10, 41.03 and SDS of 11.32, 6.67 for each of them respectively. The mean of amotivation was very small (5.23), so it was overlooked.

TABLE 4.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR TWO TYPES OF MOTIVATION

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
extrinsic	30	29.00	58.00	41.0333	6.67
intrinsic	30	12.00	59.00	44.1000	11.32
Valid N (listwise)	30				

As can be seen in table 5, the t-value of a paired t-test (.134>0.05) did not show a significant difference between the means of the two categories (Intrinsic Motivation and Extrinsic Motivation). Therefore, the findings of this procedure prove that there is no significant difference in terms of type of motivation among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners.

TABLE 5.
A PAIRED T-TEST FOR INTRINSIC/ EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION CATEGORIES

	Paired Difference		T	df	Sig(2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. deviation			
Extrinsic-intrinsic	-3.06667	10.88160	-1.544	29	.134

D. Total Motivation

An index, total motivation, was arrived at taking the median point into account. Two motivation groups, high and low, were considered. Using a t-test, the null hypothesis, "H03: There is no meaningful relationship between the degree of motivation and the choice of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Strategy among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners.", was tested. As shown in tables 6 and 7, this null hypothesis was rejected.

As shown in table 7, there was significant difference in mean scores of high and low motivation groups, for three categories of metacoginitive awareness strategies including planning and evaluation (P=0.005), directed attention (P=0.000), and person knowledge (P=0.050). However, no significant difference was revealed between the two groups in terms of use of mental translation (P=0.326) and problem solving (P=.100).

TABLE 6.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR TWO MOTIVATION GROUPS GROUP STATISTICS

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
planning and evaluation	high	15	.6556	.14729	.03803
	low	15	.5067	.12163	.03140
directed attention	high	15	.7000	.11594	.02994
	low	15	.5306	.09379	.02422
person knowledge	high	15	.6852	.14497	.03743
	low	15	.5741	.15239	.03935
mental translation	high	15	.6370	.15973	.04124
	low	15	.5778	.16507	.04262
problem-solving	high	15	.6852	.12930	.03338
	low	15	.5981	.14991	.03871

There is a contrast between the findings of this study and those of Salehi and Ziahosseini's (2007) study who found that although, there was a little difference in mean scores of high and low motivation groups, no significant difference was revealed between the two groups in terms of language learning strategy choice.

TABLE 7.
T-TEST FOR LOW AND HIGH MOTIVATION GROUPS RELATED TO THE CHOICE OF METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS LISTENING STRATEGY

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)
planning and evaluation	.000	.993	3.019	28	.005
directed attention	.331	.569	4.401	28	.000
person knowledge	.104	.750	2.046	28	.050
mental translation	.214	.647	.999	28	.326
problem-solving	.112	.741	1.703	28	.100

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study was to investigate the use of metacognitive awareness listening strategies, patterns of motivation as well as the relationship between motivation and L2 listeners' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of strategies among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners. A total number of 3o upper intermediate students from two English Institutes in Isfahan took part in this study. The following conclusions can be drawn from the study:

Regarding the use of metacognitive awareness strategies, some strategies are more frequently used than the others are, although the frequencies of the use was not high and the difference between uses of strategies was not highly significant. This finding necessitates prioritizing teaching sequences, with the least frequent strategies receiving as much emphasis as the most frequent ones.

In relation to the relationship between motivation and use of strategies, a positive relationship between types of motivation and use of metacognitive awareness strategies, except for mental translation and intrinsic motivation was found. However, as correlations between different types of motivations and metacognitive awareness listening strategies, except for extrinsic motivation and directed attention, were not highly significant and large, it cannot certainly be concluded that there is meaningful relationship between different types of motivation and certain types of learners' metacognitive awareness listening strategies.

Concerning patterns of motivation, the t-value of a paired t-test (.134>0.05) did not show a significant difference between the means of the two categories (Intrinsic Motivation and Extrinsic Motivation). Therefore, the findings suggested that there is no significant difference in terms of type of motivation among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners.

In terms of total motivation and use of strategies, there was significant difference in mean scores of high and low motivation groups, for three categories of metacoginitive awareness strategies including planning and evaluation (P=0.005), directed attention (P=0.000), and person knowledge (P=0.050). However, no significant difference was revealed between two groups in terms of use of mental translation (P=0.326) and problem solving (P=.100)

Finally, the fact that the use of metacognitive awareness strategies was not high among Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners suggested that listeners' metacognitive awareness should be cultivated and strategy instruction should be integrated into the teaching of listening. Teachers can use the results of this study as a guide to determine the strategies that have the potential to improve learners' motivation and learning. They can provide instruction and practice in using metacognitive awareness strategies while listening, especially in planning and evaluation, which was found to have the least frequency but positive influence on motivation. In addition, cultivating, maintaining and developing intrinsic motivation of EFL learners should be important goals pursued by all educators in the L2 field.

The major drawback of the study is the small size of the sample with 30 upper intermediate EFL learners, which may not have been a true representative of the larger population of Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, the data was obtained from only questionnaires; thus not allowing for a more exhaustive generalization about the patterns of motivation and use of metacoginitive awareness strategies. Further study can include a larger sample from different educational settings and compare students' use of metacognitive listening strategies across different levels of language proficiency.

APPENDIX A METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS LISTENING QUESTIONNAIRE (MALQ) DEVELOPED BY VANDERGRIFT ET AL. (2006)

Using the scale provided, decide how much you either agree or disagree with each statement.

Strongly agree 6 5 4 3 2 1 Strongly disagree

Type scale		Strategy or belief/perception							
Planning-evaluation	**1.**	Before I start to listen, I have a plan in my head for how I am going to listen.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Directed attention	**2.**	I focus harder on the text when I have trouble understanding	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Person knowledge	**3.**	I find that listening in English is more difficult than reading, speaking, or writing in English.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Mental translation	**4.**	I translate in my head as I listen.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Problem-solving	**5.**	I use the words I understand to guess the meaning of the words I don't understand.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Directed attention	**6.**	When my mind wanders, I recover my concentration right away	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Problem-solving	**7.**	As I listen, I compare what I understand with what I know about the topic.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Person knowledge	**8.**	I feel that listening comprehension in English is a challenge for me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Problem-solving	**9.**	I use my experience and knowledge to help me understand.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Planning-evaluation	**10.**	Before listening, I think of similar texts that I may have listened to.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Mental translation	**11.**	I translate key words as I listen.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Directed attention	**12.**	I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Problem-solving	**13.**	As I listen, I quickly adjust my interpretation if I realize that it is not correct.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Planning-evaluation	**14.**	After listening, I think back to how I listened, and about what I might do differently next time.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Person knowledge	**15.**	I don't feel nervous when I listen to English.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Directed attention	**16.**	When I have difficulty understanding what I hear, I give up and stop listening.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Problem-solving	**17.**	I use the general idea of the text to help me guess the meaning of the words that I don't understand.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Mental translation	**18.**	I translate word by word, as I listen.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Problem-solving	**19.**	When I guess the meaning of a word, I think back to everything else that I have heard, to see if my guess makes sense.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Planning-evaluation	**20.**	As I listen, I periodically ask myself if I am satisfied with my level of comprehension.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Planning-evaluation	**21.**	I have a goal in mind as I listen.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

APPENDIX B ACADEMIC MOTIVATION SCALE (AMS) DEVELOPED BY VALLERAND ET AL. (1992)

Using the scale provided, decide how much the statements correspond to you.

Corresponds completely 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Does not correspond at all

Statements							
Amotivation							
1. I don't know; I can't come to understand what I am doing studying English.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
2. Honestly, I don't know, I truly have the impression of wasting my time in studying English	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
3. I cannot come to see why I study English, and frankly, I don't give a damn.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
External Regulation							
4. In order to get a more prestigious job later on.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
5. In order to have a better salary later on.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
6. Because I have the impression that it is expected of me.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Introjected Regulation							
7. Because I would feel guilty if I didn't know English.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
8. Because I would feel ashamed if I couldn't speak to my friends from the English community in their native tongue.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
9. To show myself that I am a good citizen because I can speak English.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Indentified Regulation							
10. Because I think it is good for my personal development.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
11. Because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
12. Because I choose to be the kind of person who can speak English.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Intrinsic Motivation-Knowledge							
13. Because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English community and their way of life.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
14. For the pleasure that I experience in knowing more about English literature.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
15. For the satisfied feeling I get in finding out new things.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Intrinsic Motivation-Stimulation							
16.For the "high" I feel when hearing foreign languages spoken.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
17.For the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by native English speakers.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
18.For the "high" that I experience while speaking English.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Intrinsic Motivation-Accomplishment							
19. For the enjoyment I experience when I grasp a difficult construct in English.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
20. For the pleasure I experience when surpassing myself in my English studies.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
21. For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult exercises in English.	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1080-1085, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1080-1085

Independent English Learning through the Internet

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***Abstract*—The studies on independent learning based on the theories of constructivism and the advantages of technology propose valuable ideas for modern teaching theories and practices. With the variety of environment and method of English learning, independent English Learning through the Internet is playing a more and more important role in modern English learning. It challenges the traditional learning approach, and also is forwardness. This paper points out that independent English Learning through the Internet facilitates the improvement of the English level even more on the basis of the author's acquisition and experience, as well as explains the favorable factors and unfavorable factors of autonomy English learning on the Internet, suggesting the effective strategies of independent English learning through the Internet.**

***Index Terms*— constructivism, independent English learning, Internet, virtual English environment.**

I. Introduction

Nowadays, quality-oriented education has become the ultimate goal of our education. The core of English learning has shifted to how to develop the ability of autonomy learning anytime and anywhere. The application of internet technology has developed a new field for autonomy English learning which is becoming more and more popular at home and abroad. Learning English on the Internet can create efficient and high-quality achievement in personal or mass English learning. More and more people start to pay attention to it and study how to make a full use of it. English learning needs an English environment, but we cannot always communicate with the native speakers of English face to face. What teaching of traditional English adopted is one-way teaching mode from teacher to student, which violates the essence of language teaching that is cultivating students' language communication competence. Now, we could say that the Internet shrinks and bridges the distance between the people of the world in space, and makes a globalized communicational stage. The way using the Internet to learn English can compensate for the lack of general approach with no real English environment, which will greatly enhance English autonomy learning.

Autonomous –Learning is a modern learning theory of constructivism which means the students take charge of their own learning by caring out their own learning plans according to their own needs. It is also a student-focused learning model which emphasizes the learning environment and cooperative learning. In 1981, Holec Henry introduced the concept of "autonomous learning" in his book named *Autonomy and Foreign language learning*. After that, many scholars such as Lee (1998), Littlewood (2000), Garden and Miller(2002) studied the issue and made greater contribution to the field.

By computer-aided autonomous English learning, we mean students learn and practice English language not only in the classrooms but also computer-rooms using materials on internet, learning discs and other electronic learning tools.

However, in Asia, The efficiency of the use of Internet to autonomy English learning is low, the result is not satisfactory. What are the reasons and how to deal well with the permanent approach for the ideal goal of autonomy English learning is a must to seek for the resolution.

II. Using the Internet and Technology

With the use of the Internet and computers increasing around the world, it seems obvious that electronic means will provide the learning environment of the future. Instant messaging has been quite popular for some time and the rate of usage around the world is increasing as more people, especially in developing countries, are able to get online. Other forms of communication over the Internet include discussion boards, interactive blogs, and online forums. In addition, many English students are downloading English music, movies, and TV shows that allow them to get exposure to different accents and expressions from around the world. Other virtual environments can be used to develop language skills while also morphing the task of learning into an enjoyable hobby. Social networks such as Face book, MySpace and Second Life have the potential to create awareness about language that will drive people at a very young age to become involved in learning language.

Second Life, is a free program from the internet that allows you to create your own virtual environment where you can interact in real time through talking or typing with over 12 million subscribers worldwide. This environment, where you create a name and an avatar for yourself, enables the user to create a world where they are surrounded by stimulus

that interests them and where they can easily meet others with common interests and characteristics. While controlling your character in this world, you can go to parks, shops, and even your own living room with a group of friends. Now with the capability to use voice chat in Second Life, it is possible to use this as an effective tool for learning language. Without the pressure of having to introduce themselves in a real classroom with other students, Second Life provides an unintimidating environment where students can introduce their virtual characters and acquire information from other characters. Facebook and MySpace can help a learner present themselves and learn more about others, but unlike Second Life, they are not presented in a 3D environment and cannot be used to speak with others.

Other technological means that can be used to improve language ability are voice-chat programs such as Skype, iChat, and messenger programs such as MSN and Yahoo. These voice-chat programs allow people to talk to others around the world in real time and they are free to use. When initial connections are made through social networks on the Internet, users can then use these voice programs to call each other and practice oral skills by applying new language items learned through writing and reading. To fully take advantage of the Internet during the learning process, one should consider other on-line programs and functions such as relative readings, blogs, online quizzes, and podcasts. While many students and professionals around the world have lengthy commutes to and from school or work, downloading podcasts onto a listening device makes exposure to spoken English possible on a train, bus, or even while stuck in rush-hour traffic.

III. The Benefits of Independent Learning

For EFL/ESL students who are more introverted and concerned about privacy issues, the use of virtual worlds to encourage learning is an attractive option. Instead of sharing personal information with strangers, the learner can instead share information about their virtual character that they have created based on their fantasy and interests. This would be a great way to build both confidence and networking skills with a foreign language. Again, the merits of this approach rely on the studying goals of the learner. For example, this most likely would not improve English skills for specific purposes, such as business situations.

Especially in large EFL classrooms, there are proactive students who are motivated to learn both independently and as a group. However, others are satisfied simply with the limited exposure that they get from the class and some of these students choose not to focus during the lessons. In a 1995 research project on learner agendas, it was suggested that "while the teacher is busily teaching one thing, the learner is often focused on something else"(Nunan, 2000). It can be argued that this is amplified in Asia, where students are sometimes expected to spend twelve hours a day studying for tests or working in the office while at times juggling other responsibilities such as a family.

IV. Characteristics of the Successful Independent Learner

In David Nunan's (2000) study, he outlines common characteristics for people who successfully and dramatically improved their language skills through learning autonomously. These characteristics and requirements include: a diversity of skills, passion and enjoyment for a particular field, a focused and active approach to learning, and finally, pursuit of learning and success despite high probability of failure and public disapproval. While most learners in Japan are wary about taking these risks, there are many examples of those who do with favorable results. Nunan (2000) presents a couple success stories in Hong Kong of students who took their learning in their own hands and excelled because of it.

One student named 'Josephine' once approached Nunan to inform him of the great progress she was making with her English. When Nunan continued to give himself as the teacher credit for the improvements, Josephine countered that it was not his lesson that resulted in her improvements, but her domestic situation living with a Canadian roommate. (Nunan, 2000) In a second example, Nunan (2000) describes the language development of another student by the name of 'Siu Fun': "she loved English but she quickly came to realize that learning English in school wasn't enough so she found opportunities to practice her English out of class…Siu Fun used to hang around the tourist traps after school (to interact with foreigners in English)". (Nunan, 2000) Similar examples can be found in Japan, where students who are very keen to learn English will volunteer at tourist venues (museums, shrines, and temples) in need of an interpreter. What these learners have in common is that their attitudes were developed after they made a decision for themselves that exclusively studying in a classroom environment was not enough. While it is difficult to implant this attitude in other language students' psyche, the first step for the instructor to encourage this is to better understand the attitudes and needs of the student.

V. The Role of Instructor in Independent Learning

While examples of several exceptional students have been given, the fact remains that the average student does not possess the drive or motivation to acquire language this way. In their 2002 study, Chen, Spratt, and Humphreys conducted a large-scale study on learner autonomy at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University where they aimed to represent the students' views on responsibility, motivation, and decision making outside of the classroom. In this study, Chen et al. conclude that the vast majority of students view their instructor as playing a major role in the development of their language skills. This study has pedagogical implications, as it is argues that understanding the students'

perceptions on learning can help a teacher identify what responsibilities can be transferred to the student. (Chen et al., 2002)

This is quite similar to the case in Japan, where a lot of pressure is placed on students to succeed which in turn discourages one from taking learning into their own hands. It appears safer for the student to follow the lead of the instructor. While language learners in Asia are exposed to studying language at a very young age as a means to pass an entrance test, this has really resulted in a spoon-feeding education system where the student needs to focus on the material presented in class in order to pass a test that will ultimately determine the university they attend and the career options that may be presented to them after graduation.

VI. Favorable Factors of Independent English Learning through the Internet

Independent English learning on the Internet is one of the most important learning approaches which mostly reflects the main part and individual-orientation of students' study. According to one's conditions, a person can choose the learning materials, methods and the depth of study; arrange study on one's own schedule. As we all know, different people have different background knowledge, study ability and cognitive ability on study. In class, teachers always have no time to focus on the different acceptance specially. So, there is not efficient. While it is extremely different in the approach of autonomy English learning on the Internet, which always offers the great initiative on study, rich variety of choices, typical individual character of study, notional flexibility for arrangement and pleased dynamic interaction. Of course, there are some relatively unfavorable factors of autonomy English learning on the Internet, for example, appearing poor ability of learner's autonomy English learning, negative impact of English learning motivation and other external environmental impact. It is a considerable issue to find the resolution to overcoming how to approach the former and avoid the latter. All in all, autonomy English learning on the Internet depends on the learners' internal factors. Adding to teachers' supervision, assistance and guidance, the subjective willing of the learners is the key to the goal of learning English on the Internet well.

VII. Requirements for Efficiency of Independent English Learning through the Internet

A. Promoting Self- monitoring Ability

Self-monitoring ability is to play full the enthusiasm of learners and the initiative of learning, and gives the main body of individual the fundamental recognition. The self-monitoring level of students is the key factor to success in autonomy English learning in the relatively free-loose Internet environment. The Cognitive Constructivism School believed that autonomy learning was actually the learning of cognitive monitoring, and the process those students actively adjust learning strategies and effort based on their learning abilities and learning tasks. Learning strategies mean the various actions and steps students take in order to effectively study and develop themselves. In order to really realize promoting self-monitoring ability, the followings are additional. First, learners should establish a good learning goal. Second, learners should formulate feasible study plan. Third, learners should optimize the self-evaluation for his learning process, confidence and effects.

B. Strengthening Cooperation

In the situation of all mass organizations, random and disorder, which easily lead to "information Trek" and "information overload", and at the isolation between students and teachers, which always leads the role of teacher and teaching management weakening at learning on the Internet, it is very practical for the present learners to strengthen and develop the strong awareness of cooperation among the mass of autonomy English learners on the Internet. Most students in the personal autonomy English learning on the Internet are generally lack of stamina. The development of autonomy English learning ability on the Internet should not be blindly optimistic. First all, they need realize that fact that teachers are the most direct and important guide, partners and supervisors for providing a good environment, helping students strengthen their autonomy consciousness and develop independent learning behaviors, so as to enhance the capacity of autonomy learning, specifically to manifest in learning strategies, to ensure the implementation of the plan, to build a learning platform for students and timely to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills and many other help; to direct students formulate learning goals, to encourage more cooperation between the learner groups and supervise the realization of self-evaluation

C. Optimizing of Network Configuration

There are many elements to influence the quality of English learning network, such as, the restriction of builders' purpose, foreign languages level, technology. As well as, the laws and regulations to protect the copyright of network is imperfect at present. The contents of the website are seriously challenged. We should establish a sense of innovation and appeal to professionals joining in the building of websites for the stabile team of building sites. Sites builders' occupation, education philosophy, English degree, the level of modern educational technology, and interest can influence the quality of websites. Voices of English as an example: because site builders are experts of foreign language teaching and network education, its website has these advantages: positioning clear, distinctive features, abundant resources, rational design and high interactive. Excellent English language learning websites should reflect the

advanced teaching philosophy. The development of English-language websites ultimately depends on English educators of their own efforts.

English teachers are familiar with the teaching and learning process and education regulation that should become the major force of the construction of sites. Measures should be taken to guide and encourage English teachers learning multimedia and network technology, and actively participate in the construction of English learning websites, so that they can establish a number of high-quality sites to meet the growing demands of English learners and promote network process of China's English Learning. At the same time, we should encourage dialogues between English teachers and computer or network professional and technical personnel to cooperate in the development of sites, in order to form a specialized and diversified construction site team for the whole soul and heart to serve the learner on Internet.

VIII. Approaches of Independent English Learning through the Internet

A. English Learning Website

As we all know, the content and knowledge in class are limited, and are impractical. The application of Internet technology has greatly broken the limitations of space and time in class. Autonomy English learning on the Internet can spread the knowledge from in class to out of class. Of course, websites cannot take the place of library, but it has its own special functions while the library has not, such as, speed of search, immediate information, etc. Some sites provide large amount of English language learning and information, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, testing, and background knowledge. That information, including some audio and visual information can be downloaded. It has been recommended two foreign English language learning websites as following:

1) http://eleaston.com/english.html

2) http://www.eslcafe.com/

If you want to visit more pages, you can use the search engine, such as: Yahoo. You can type: "TESL", "ESL", "TEFL", "EFL", "English learning"," English Study", or "Distance learning", you will get what you want.

*B. EX*CHANGE: An ESL Web Magazine*

In an initial attempt to implement language learning resources on the Web, Li and other graduate students at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign founded the ESL web magazine EX*CHANGE(Shetzer, 1995; Zhao, Li & Hegelheimer, 1995). Their purpose was to explore ways in which high-quality ESL learning resources could be accumulated, organized and presented on the Web.

C. English Learning Discussion Group by E-mail

It's a more economic way to subscribe by e-mail. There are many English learning discussion groups on the Internet, such as, the intensive English forum, science and technology English forum, the English Writing forum and teaching discussion forum. I recommend three abroad discussion groups. 1) "English writing forum": you should send an email to the address: listerv@listserv.net. You should write "SUBSCRIBE ECOMP-L" on letter body. 2) "English learning lover": you should send an email to the address: Majordomo@coe.Missouri.edu. Besides, you should write "subscribe English-L" on letter body. 3) "BBC": you should send an email to the address: Majordomo@listserv.bbc.uk and you should write "subscribe BBC-ELT" on letter body.

There are different methods to subscribe to the different thematic discussion groups. Generally speaking, when one sends these e-mails to reserve some topics of discussion groups, will receive two letters. One is that you have been notified to accede to the forum; the other is to introduce something about it, such as the aims, using method, managers and competent units of the name and address. Some enable you to reply upon its requirements, and some let you read the group's charter and regulations. After agreement, you have to reply a signed e-mail to two important addresses. One is sent to all members of topics discussion group, where you can ask questions or raise your points of view on the issues of others. If the group includes 1,000 people, all of them can see your issues and perspectives. The other is sent to the person in charge of the group. If you have any technical problems or you want to withdraw from this group, you can send an e-mail to this address with much care.

D. English Chat Room

In order to develop oral English, many people take oral class, chat with foreign teachers, or participate in English corners on campus. However, they still find it little effective. The key reason is that their confidence is not enough. And the next is their package of abundant practice.

Now, you can invite foreign teachers to your home and talk with native speakers anywhere and anytime. That makes the best use of the communication function of the Internet and brakes limitation of time and space. English chatting needs quick reflection. So, it's a very good promotion to virtual communication. Chatting on the Internet, you can understand different country's cultural connotation and background. Meanwhile, it can stimulate the interest in oral or write, and improve the level step by step.

E. Foreign Pen Pals on Internet

We can communicate with foreign pen pals via e-mail on the Internet. There are several websites to making pen pals. In these pages, you can see the dating ads by people from various countries to make friends. You can choose to make your friends, or you could play your own Personal ads, soon you will receive the e-mail from your friends. I recommend three pen pal web sites:

(1).http://www.wfi.fr/volterre/keypals.html

(2). http://deil2.lang.uiuc.edu/penpals/

(3) http://www.linguistic-funland.com/addapal.html

If you want to visit more friends' websites, you can search them through engines. You can type "pen pal" and "key pal", you will find more websites.

F. Online Electronic Bulletin Board System

Electronic bulletin boards system (BBS) also is called 'forum'. We can participate in online electronic bulletin board system to English study and discussion. Electronic bulletin boards system like a big bulletin board, you can paste the issue of English learning to the above, and advocate the problems in the process of learning English. You can exchange of experience and discuss with your friends to find the best answer on it. Firstly, you have to conduct user registration in the relevant forums, such as the English forums of Sohu educational channel (http://learning.sohu.com/), and then enter into the bulletin board. If you want to visit more electronic bulletin board system, you can type "BBS" to conduct searches.

G. About Computer-room Learning Materials

Some ESL teachers in China (2010) carefully reviewed and previewed software; they want learners to use to ensure an appropriate fit with their lesson objectives.

H. The Web-sites Teacher Chose for Students Were:

(1)About computer knowledge and skills: www.ask.com/, www.ajkids.com/, www.encarta.msn.com/, www.google.com, www.about.com/, and www.demoz.org/.

(2)About English language: http://languagetrade.com, http://how-tolearn-any-language.com/e/index.html, www.yeword.net/, http;//www.mylanguageexchange.com/, www.learningenglish.org.uk/, www.chompchomp.com/, www.hua.umf.maine.edu/, www.chinatoday.com/, www.index-china.com/, www.chaos.umd.edu/, and www.art-bin.com/, www.chinavista.com/

(3)About culture: http://69.93.14.237/index.cfm, http://spankmag.com/(worldwide site focusing on youth issues).

(4)About dictionary: www.dictionaries.com/, www.rootsweb.com

I. An Amazing Tool to Explore EFL/ESL Learners' Words: Thanks Microsoft

Click the following link, download, install and see the magic of word:

http://download.cnet.com/WordWeb/3000-2279_4-10003201.html?part=dl-WordWeb&subj=dl&tag=button

WordWeb is an international English dictionary and thesaurus program for Microsoft Windows and iPhone. Available for download online, the program is partly based on the WordNet database.

The program is activated by holding down CTRL and right-clicking on a word in almost any program. This opens the WordWeb main window, with definitions and other help.

The program usually resides in the tray, and has a low system footprint.

- Phrase guessing - for example, CTRL + right-clicking on the 'Princeton' in 'Princeton University' will show the meaning of the combined entity rather than only 'Princeton'.
- Words from pictures - CTRL + right-clicking on a word within an image (for example, the 'Free' in the Wikipedia logo) will ask WordWeb to guess the word. (Note that right-clicking 'Encyclopedia' in the same logo returns 'Emyrlnpewa').

WordWeb 5 added the ability to list entries from three web sources: Wikipedia, Wiktionary, and WordWeb Online. These details are presented in three separate tabs, which are built into the client application. Version 6 added audio pronunciations and support for third-party Oxford and Chambers add-on dictionaries.

IX. Conclusion

A paper of this length cannot completely cover the topic of internet-based language learning. In the end, it has been uncovered that the approach of independent English learning through the Internet is completely different from the traditional one. Learners obtain knowledge on the Internet instead of lonely dependence on teachers and books. Learning resources from the Internet not only are very colorful, but also multi-channeled, multi-perspective, multi-leveled and multi-formed. In addition, it is very quick and timely. We can choose learning materials from the extensive resources we need on the Internet, thus which easily aroused keen interest in learning initiative. It can fully move the initiative and enthusiasm and improve the learning efficiency. Although independent learning on the Internet can bring so much benefit and convenience to us, it's no enough to be used. If we really make the best use of it, our English learning will be expected and successful. Independent English learning through the Internet will be popular with everybody fully in the future. Moreover, in attempts to promote a higher level of learner autonomy in Asia, it is

important for the instructor to encourage and organize team activities and homework assignments that will force students to explore realms and means that could ultimately pique a greater interest in autonomous learning. As English instructors, it becomes our responsibility to not only teach a language, but to also inform and instruct how to study outside the classroom. This will be accomplished by presenting tasks that inspire the learner to take learning into their own hands. Everyone will develop and strengthen the ability of Independent English learning through the Internet, so that we can acquire the skill of life-long learning to serve ourselves and the whole society better.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1086-1098, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1086-1098

How to Improve Pronunciation? An In-depth Contrastive Investigation of Sound-spelling Systems in English and Persian

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***Abstract*—This study is a contrastive investigation between English and Persian sound-spelling systems in which the problematic areas for both English and Persian learners have been identified. Firstly, the researcher has determined the common base between the two languages, i.e. the structural phonology, and has postulated it as the *tertium comparationis* of the study. Through an in-depth examining of the sound-spelling characteristics of each language, the study has gone through the *description* stage. After that, the comparable features have been identified in the *juxtaposition* stage. Then, in the *comparison* stage, the detailed comparison and contrast of the two languages have been made in terms of the juxtaposed sound-spelling features. Finally, the EFL learners' pronunciation problems have been analyzed for the *prediction* stage. The results have indicated that there are a number of regularities and irregularities which can be problematic for both English and Persian learners, especially for non-native speakers learning English. Moreover, this study has some implications in TEFL for teachers to know and consider such problematic areas and teach the students these inconsistencies so as to reduce such preventative factors in their learning.**

***Index Terms*—contrastive analysis, pronunciation, sound, spelling**

I. Introduction

Pronunciation involves far more than individual sounds. Word stress, sentence stress, intonation, and word linking all influence the sounds of spoken English, not to mention the way we often slur words and phrases together in casual speech. "What are you going to do?" becomes "Waddaya gonna do?" English pronunciation involves too many complexities for EFL learners to strive for a complete elimination of accent, but improving pronunciation will boost self esteem, facilitate communication, and possibly lead to a better job or at least more respect in the workplace. Effective communication is of greatest importance, so one must choose first to work on problems that significantly hinder communication and then refer to features in terms of accuracy. One should remember that the students also need to learn strategies for dealing with misunderstandings, since native pronunciation is for most an unrealistic goal.

Therefore, the English spelling system has both regularities and irregularities which can be problematic for non-native speakers learning English. But it is possible for the teachers to know them and teach the students the inconsistencies. This paper tends to have a survey on the similarities and differences between English and Persian sound-spelling and identifies the problematic areas for both English and Persian learners.

Objective of the Study

This study is a contrastive investigation between English and Persian sound-spelling systems, in which, first, the sound-spelling system of each language has been described separately, and second, a number of both consistencies and inconsistencies between the Persian and English sound-spelling systems have been explored. Moreover, through this investigation, the study has analyzed some problematic areas of pronunciation in Iranian EFL learners pronouncing a number of pre-determined vocabularies, containing some inconsistencies in the sound-spelling features, so as to specify the sources of such pronunciation problems, and therefore, to be helpful for both EFL learners and teachers. In particular, the following questions have been answered through the present study:

1. What are the characteristics of the Persian sound-spelling system?
2. What are the characteristics of the English sound-spelling system?
3. What are the consistencies and inconsistencies between the English and Persian sound-spelling systems?
4. What are the sources of pronunciation problems in Iranian EFL learners at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels?

II. Literature Review

A. Contrastive Analysis and Phonology

In human language, a phoneme (from the Greek: φώνημα, phōnēma, "a sound uttered") is the smallest posited linguistically-distinctive unit of sound. Phonemes carry no semantic content themselves. In theoretical terms, phonemes are not the physical segments themselves, but cognitive abstractions or categorizations of them. A morpheme is the smallest structural unit with meaning.

In effect, a phoneme is a group of slightly different sounds which are all perceived to have the same function by speakers of the language in question. An example of a phoneme is the /k/ sound in the words "kit" and "krill." (In transcription, phonemes are placed between slashes, as here.) Even though most native speakers do not notice, in most dialects, the "k" sounds in each of these words are actually pronounced differently: they are different speech sounds, or phones (which, in transcription, are placed in square brackets). In our example, the /k/ in "kit" is aspirated, [k^h], while the /k/ in "krill" is not, [k]. The reason why these different sounds are nonetheless considered to belong to the same phoneme in English is that if an English-speaker used one instead of the other, the meaning of the word would not change: saying [k^h] in "krill" might sound odd, but the word would still be recognized. By contrast, some other sounds could be substituted which would cause a change in meaning, producing words like "frill" (substituting /f/), "grill" (substituting /g/) and "shrill" (substituting /ʃ/). These other sounds (/f/, /g/ and /ʃ/) are, in English, different phonemes. In some languages, however, [k^h] and [k] are different phonemes, and are perceived as such by the speakers of those languages. Thus, in Icelandic, /k^h/ is the first sound of "kátur" meaning "cheerful", while /k/ is the first sound of "gátur" meaning "riddles."

In many languages, each letter in the spelling system represents one phoneme. However, in English spelling there is a very poor match between spelling and phonemes. For example, the two letters "sh" represent the single phoneme /ʃ/, while the letters "k" and "c" can both represent the phoneme /k/ (as in "kit" and "cat"). Phones that belong to the same phoneme, such as [t] and [t^h] for English /t/, are called allophones. A common test to determine whether two phones are allophones or separate phonemes rely on finding minimal pairs: words that differ by only the phones in question. For example, the words "tip" and "dip" illustrate that [t] and [d] are separate phonemes, /t/ and /d/, in English, whereas the lack of such a contrast in Korean (/t^hata/ is pronounced [t^hada], for example) indicates that in this language they are allophones of a phoneme /t/.

In sign languages, the basic elements of gesture and location were formerly called "cheremes" (or cheiremes), but general usage changed to phoneme. Tonic phonemes are sometimes called "tonemes," and timing phonemes "chronemes" (Crystal, 2003). Some linguists, such as Roman Jakobson (1987), Morris Halle (1986), and Noam Chomsky (1991), consider phonemes to be further decomposable into features, such features being the true minimal constituents of language. Features overlap each other in time, as do suprasegmental phonemes in oral language and many phonemes in sign languages. Features could be designated as acoustic (Jakobson, 1987) or articulatory (Halle, 1986; Chomsky, 1991) in nature.

B. Contrastive Analysis, Orthography, and Phonological Processing Skill

Spelling is the writing of a word or words with all necessary letters and diacritics present in an accepted standard order. It is on of the elements of orthography and a prescriptive element of language. It makes lots of problems even for educated people. Snow et al. (2005) describes the importance of spelling by saying, "Spelling and reading build and rely on the same mental representation of a word. Knowing the spelling of a word makes the representation of sturdy and accessible for fluent reading." Most of the European languages use Latin script and they may differ in pronunciation of some letters such as /r/ and /l/. These differences show themselves more when it comes to non-Roman alphabets such as Japanese, Arabic and Persian. Spelling of the words has an important role in reading and writing and consequently in meaning understanding. In addition, word identification and spelling depends on skills such as orthographic processing and phonological skills.

Phonological processing skill has a great to do with the child's procedural knowledge about grapheme-to-phoneme correspondence rules. They provide the ability to form, store, and access the orthographic representation of words or meaningful parts of words (Stanovich and West, 1989). In reading process, children firstly depend on sound letter correspondence and when there is inconsistency with the letter and its representative sound, it makes difficulty for them, but later on, in the text stages, children learn to use phonological information to read words (Arab Moghaddam and Senechal, 2001).

Hanna et al. (1966) counted the probability of spelling a word correctly if one applies the letter string that most often correspond to the phoneme. When getting repeated exposure to the written word people begin to develop an orthographic representation in memory that contains the words' spelling as a kind of code.

C. The Effect of Orthographic Complexity

The effect of orthographic regularity has been widely studied (Sprenger-Charolles, Siegel, Béchennec, and Serniclaes, 2003; Waters, Bruck, and Seidenberg, 1985). Orthographic regularity refers to the way in which a language associates letters to sounds. To learn how to read and write, the child must acquire detailed orthographic representations of regular

and irregular words and access them globally (Frith, 1985, 1986). Regular words have straightforward relationships between graphemes and phonemes, like camera = /kamera/. They can be read and/or written correctly by applying analytic grapho-phonological conversion mechanisms. Irregular words require global processing and can only be read or written by accessing orthographic representations. To acquire irregular words, the child has to be aware of certain spelling peculiarities, e.g. the "e" in "femme" is pronounced /a/ (/fam/) instead of /e/. In the present study, we also investigated whether the processing of these orthographic peculiarities constitutes a cognitive load in handwriting production during written language acquisition. Bloemsaat, Van Galen and Meulenbroek (2003) have shown that orthographic irregularity slows down performance when typewriting Dutch words. There was an increase in preparation time and typing time. In line with this study, we hypothesized that when acquiring irregular words, orthographic irregularities constitute a supplementary processing load that results in an increase in movement time at the location of the irregularity. In our study, the orthographic irregularity was located at the beginning, middle or end of words acquired early or late. If the child is familiar with the word, he/she can write it down by recovering information from the corresponding orthographic representations. In this case, the processing of irregular and regular words should be the same and yield no duration differences for words acquired early. A different mechanism operates when writing unfamiliar. The child applies a phonological recoding mechanism that works successfully when writing regular words. But, when the child has to write an unfamiliar irregular word, he/she has to memorize the spelling of the whole word and remember the identity and location of the orthographic irregularity. This operation constitutes a supplementary cognitive load that results in an increase in production time. We expected orthographic irregularity to affect first graders more than second graders. Second graders have been more exposed to written language than first graders, so they should have more spelling information stored in memory and therefore recover the spelling of regular and irregular words globally rather than analytically (Share, 1995, 1999).

D. Error Analysis

Error analysis, offered as an alternative to contrastive analysis, has its value in the classroom research. Whereas contrastive analysis, which may be least predictive at the syntactic level and at early stages of language learning (Brown, 1994), allows for prediction of the difficulties involved in acquiring a second language (Richards, 1974); error analysis emphasizing "the significance of errors in learners' interlanguage system" (Brown, 1994) may be carried out directly for pedagogic purposes (Ellis, 1995; Richards et al., 1993).

Because of the fact that contrastive analysis does not predict all learner difficulties and differences, Corder (1971) and Selinker (1972) considered L2 as a distinct system called "interlanguage." In addition to this, the idea of L1 interference on L2, has given rise to many studies of interlanguage phonology (Jenkins 2000). Brown, Deterding, and Low (2000), for example, investigated a range of differences between Singaporean and British English, including discourse intonation, pitch range, and lexical stress. Hung (2000, 2002) uses a contrastive methodology to specify his phonology of Hong Kong English. Deterding and Poedjosoedarmo (1998) is a research-based reference work for teachers, determining both details of the segmental and suprasegmental features of a wide range of different Southeast Asian languages and English (Jenkins, 2004).

Although there are so many studies on error analysis and interlanguage phonology, such studies are few when it comes to the English used by Persian students. Only a few works are available, such as Yarmohammadi's (2000; 2002) two books: The first one aiming at contrasting the phonological systems of English and Persian for pedagogical purposes (2000), and the second one, which is more complete, investigating the sources of syntactic, lexical, and phonological problems of Iranian English learners through a contrastive analysis of Persian and English (2002). However, the paucity of such research is obvious in an EFL context like Iran where there is no exposure to English native speakers.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

The main participants of the present study were three Iranian speakers of English as a foreign language at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels from Navid Institute.

Also, during the investigation of the study, the researcher has consulted two professors at Shiraz University, one instructor at SULC (Shiraz University Language Center), and two instructors at Navid institute. It should be mentioned that the very two professors teach Contrastive Linguistics at Shiraz University and are somewhat experienced in this field. Also, the above-mentioned instructors are very much familiar with contrastive linguistics and they have passed some courses in this field.

B. Instruments

- Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2004);
- Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2005);
- A Dictionary of English Affixes and Combining Forms (Badie, 2006);

- A corpus-based list of English vocabularies; the types of vocabularies in these lists were selected randomly based on the model of Awedyk (1974); this model is a syntagmatic phonological model of contrastive linguistics which contains the following structures, based on which different types of vocabulary were selected:
  - Structures of nuclei
  - Structure of the onset
  - Structure of the coda
  - Structure of the interlude
- Three beginner, intermediate, and advanced short passages.
- A sound-recorder set for recording the pronunciations and interviews of the participants.

C. Procedures

1. Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected through an interview with three Iranian EFL learners which consisted of four parts. First the learners were asked to introduce themselves briefly. Then, they were asked to read aloud a number of English words, phrases, and sentences in line with their level of proficiency, chosen randomly from a corpus-based list based on Awedyk's (1974) syntagmatic phonological model. In the next part, they were given a short passage to be read silently in five minutes and to give a summary of that passage. Finally, they were asked to read the passage aloud. Therefore, the sample contains both spontaneous speech and reading aloud pronunciation.

2. Data Analysis Procedure

First of all, in cross-language comparisons, the choice of *tertium comparationis* is a determining factor in establishing similarities and differences between the phenomena compared (Lipinska, 1975; Fisiak *et al*., 1978). In terms of phonological and lexical contrastive studies, the type of tertium comparationis is substantive insofar as it is connected with the material substance outside language, with which language is joined through its phonological interface, on the one hand, and through its semantic interface, on the other (Hjelmslev, 1961). Therefore, based on this and also on the basis of what Krzeszowski (1990) states, in the case of the present study, acoustic, articulatory, and, in principle, auditory phenomena provide the substantive tertium comparationis.

Moreover, the general sketch or the blue print of this study is based on the four classical steps in contrasting two language systems (Yarmohammadi and Rashidi, 2009): description, juxtaposition, comparison, and prediction.

According to Krzeszowski (1990), contrastive studies must be founded on independent descriptions of the relevant items of the languages to be compared in the same theoretical framework. Therefore, the present study has first described the sound-spelling system of the Persian and English languages separately within the descriptive framework of structural phonology, leading to specifications of a number of Persian-specific and English-specific features for juxtaposition, in which some of these features were selected to be compared. Then, in the comparison stage, the actual comparison and contrast of the sound-spelling systems in Persian and English were performed based on the very features selected in the juxtaposition stage, explicitly illustrating several similarities and differences between Persian and English.

Finally, on the basis of such comparison and contrast, further analyses were performed on the very three EFL learners' pronunciation errors observed in their interviews in order to determine the sources of such errors, so as to reach the last stage of contrastive analysis, i.e. the prediction stage. In this last stage, based on the specified sources, the study has made some predictions in the process of EFL pronunciation learning along with some implications and suggestions for EFL learners and teachers in the form of a trouble-shooting manual, which is actually in line with what Fisiak (1975) stresses regarding the relevance of contrastive studies to pedagogical purposes, i.e. they should be pedagogically oriented. Therefore, the analysis of this study consists of five parts:

1) Persian sound-spelling description;
2) English sound-spelling description;
3) Juxtaposition of Persian and English sound-spelling features;
4) Comparison and contrast of Persian and English sound-spelling juxtaposed features;
5) Analyzing the pronunciation errors of the EFL learners at the three levels of beginner, intermediate, and advanced.

a. Persian Sound-Spelling System

History and Origins of Persian (Farsi) and Dari-Persian language

Farsi or Persian is spoken today primarily in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, but was historically a more widely understood language in an area ranging from the Middle East to India. Significant populations of speakers in other Persian Gulf countries include Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Republic of Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates as well as large communities around the world.

Total numbers of speakers is high: about 55% of Iran's population consists of Persian speakers; about 65% of the Tajikistan's population includes Tajik-Persian speakers: over 25% of the Afghanistan's population refers to Dari-Persian speakers; and about 1% of the population of Pakistan deals with Dari-Persian speakers as well.

Linguistic Affiliation

Persian is a subgroup of West Iranian languages that include the closely related Persian languages of Dari and Tajik; the less closely related languages of Luri, Bakhtiari and Kumzari; and the non-Persian dialects of Fars Province. Other

more distantly related languages of this group include Kurdish, spoken in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran; and Baluchi, spoken in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. Even more distantly related are languages of the East Iranian group, which includes, for example, Pashtu, spoken in Afghanistan; Ossete, spoken in North Ossetian, South Ossetian, and Caucusus of former USSR; and Yaghnobi, spoken in Tajikistan. Other Iranian languages of note are Old Persian and Avestan (the sacred language of the Zoroastrians for which texts exist from the 6th century B.C.).

West and East Iranian comprise the Iranian group of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family of languages. Indo-Iranian languages are spoken in a wide area stretching from portions of eastern Turkey and eastern Iraq to western India. The other main division of Indo-Iranian, in addition to Iranian, is the Indo-Aryan languages; a group comprised of many languages of the Indian subcontinent, for example, Sanskrit, Hindi/Urdu, Bengali, Gujerati, Punjabi, and Sindhi.

Linguistic Variation

Scholars recognize three major dialect divisions of Persian: Farsi, or the Persian of Iran, Dari Persian of Afghanistan, and Tajik, a variant spoken Tajikistan in Central Asia. We treat Tajik as a separate language, however. Farsi and Dari have further dialectal variants, some with names that coincide with provincial names. All are more or less mutually intelligible.

Dari Persian, mainly spoken in Afghanistan, until recently, deferred to the Tehran standard as its model, and although there are clear phonological and morphological contrasts, due partly to the influence of neighbouring Turkic languages, Farsi and Dari Persian remain quite similar. The dialectal variation between Farsi and Dari has been described as analogous to that between European French and Canadian French. Dari is more conservative in maintaining vowel distinctions that have been lost in Farsi.

Luri and Bakhtiari, languages in the southwest part of Iran, are most closely related Farsi, but these are difficult for a speaker of the Tehran standard to understand. While speakers of Luri regard their speech as a dialect of Persian, speakers of Farsi do not agree. Judaic Persian, written in Hebrew characters and used by Jews throughout Iran, is close to the Persian standard in its written form. However, many Iranians of Jewish descent have left the country and no longer form a significant portion of the population.

Orthography

Persian in Iran and Afghanistan is written in a variety of the Arabic script called Perso-Arabic, which has some innovations to account for Persian phonological differences. This script came into use in Persia after the Islamic conquest in the seventh century. A variety of script forms: Nishki is a print type based closely on Arabic; Talik is a cultivated manuscript, with certain letters having reduced forms and others occasionally elongated in order to produce lines of equal length; and Shekesteh is also a manuscript, allowing for a greater variation of form and exhibiting extreme reduction of some letters.

Linguistic Sketch

The richly inflected morphological system of Old Iranian has been drastically reduced in Persian. The language has no grammatical gender or articles, but person and number distinctions are maintained. Nouns are marked for specificity: there is one marker in the singular and two in the plural. Objects of transitive verbs are marked by a suffix. The morphological features of Arabic words are preserved in loans, thus Persian shows "broken" plural formations, that is, a word may have two different plural forms.

Verbs are formed using one of two basic stems, present and past; aspect is as important as tense: all verbs are marked as perfective and imperfective. The latter is marked by means of prefixation. Both perfective and imperfective verb forms appear in three tenses: present, past and inferential past. The language has an aorist (a type of past tense), and has three moods: indicative, subjunctive, counterfactual. Passive is formed with the verb 'to become', and is not allowed with specified agents. Verbs agree with the subject in person and number. Persian verbs are normally compounds consisting of a noun and a verb.

Word order in Persian is Subject-Object-Verb although modifiers follow the nouns they modify and the language has prepositions. Persian distinguishes short and long vowels. Words are stressed on the last syllable.

Detailed descriptions of Persian orthography can be found in Khanlari (1979) and Baluch (2005). Persian language is transcribed by a modified version of the Semitic Arabic script. There are six spoken vowels in Persian. Three of the vowels are transcribed by actual letters of the alphabet (like English) and in the case of most words, they appear as a fixed part of the word's spelling (rather like English handwriting). The other three vowels are conveyed by diacritics placed above or below the word's spelling (see Figure 1 for examples of Persian words with vowel letter and with diacritic vowel). Persian, in its fully vowelized spelling in the direction of grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences, is very transparent (similar to Serbo-Croatian or Italian). Persian children learn to read and spell words in their fully vowelized format only in their first and second year textbooks. In practice, as can be seen in Figure 1, the diacritic vowels are almost always omitted from the word's spelling. Thus, one could identify a significant number of words in written Persian that have a consonantal spelling only. An illustration of this for a reader of English is the word dig spelled with dg. Of course, contrary to the significant graphic change to the spelling of dig without /i/, in the case of Persian, the only noticeable difference is removing a small diacritic from the top of a word's consonantal spelling. This is the situation with a significant number of words in Persian, henceforth referred to as opaque words because there are

no vowels. In contrast, words in which the vowel is conveyed by the vowel letter(s) as a fixed part of the word spelling are referred to as transparent words.

An important point to note here is that in the Semitic scripts of Hebrew and Arabic, some vowels may also be omitted from print (see Koriat, 1984). However, contrary to both Hebrew and Arabic in which morphological rules help readers to decide on how the word may be pronounced (see Abu-Rabia, 1997; Koriat, 1984), Persian readers can resort mainly to contextual cues for disambiguation of such words. This is due to the fact that Persian has an affixal morphological system (see e.g., Baluch, 2005; Kashani, 1992). In view of the latter feature, a consonant only spelling in Persian may convey more than one totally unrelated meaning depending on different diacritic assignment. As an analogy, the English consonant string shp could be read as ship or shop. At other times, however, there is only one valid diacritic vowel that would give a correct pronunciation to the consonantal spelling. In the present study, only the latter type of words was used (i.e., consonant words with a unique possible pronunciation and meaning).

b. English Sound-Spelling System

English spelling should not be confused with the English language. English spelling is our traditional way of representing the English language in written form; there is no necessary connection between the spelling system and the language system. We spell English as we do because of a long history of decisions made by writers and printers. If the history of English-speaking society had been different, its spelling system would be different. The spelling of a sound is used to bring to mind the sound of a word. When <ee> is seen in print in the word *three*, the sound /i/ comes to the mind. Learning to read, in the earliest stages, is the same as learning to associate particular spellings with particular sounds (Note that it was said *particular spellings* rather than *particular letters;* this is because not all sounds are spelled with single letters).

The English spelling system is an **alphabet**. An alphabet is a writing system in which the written symbols represent the phonemes (the word-building sounds) of the language, rather than, say, its syllables. For instance, the symbol <p> in English spelling represents the sound /p/, not a syllable such as /pa/ or /po/ (the main writing system of Japanese uses symbols to represent syllables like 'ma' or 'ko' rather than individual phonemes. Such a system is called a syllabary, not an alphabet.

Every writing system consists of an inventory of **graphemes**. A **grapheme** is a one of the set of symbols used to represent sounds -- it is a **spelling** of a particular sound. Each grapheme of a writing system is used to represent a unit of the language being written. In a syllabary, the graphemes stand for syllables; in an alphabet, the graphemes stand for phonemes. As seen above, English has numerous graphemes for the /i/ sound: *me, see, seat, receive, machine, people*.

The 26 letters of the English alphabet are the raw material used to create graphemes, which in turn are used to represent the phonemes of the language. For instance, the two letters <s> and <h> are combined into a digraph <sh> to represent a single phoneme, the first sound of shoe, the middle sound of washer, etc. Letters themselves are not graphemes; they are the raw material for making graphemes. Don't let the fact that many English graphemes consist of one letter mislead you on this point. English has several grapheme types that go by traditional names in, for example, phonics instruction. These **grapheme types** are:

- **Single-letter graphemes:**
  - ***Vowel letters:*** a e i o u, as in *bat, set, fit, pot, nut*
  - ***Consonant letters:*** b c d f g h j k l m n p q r s t v w x y z as in *ace, kit, moon, home, etc.*
- **Double-letter graphemes:**
  - ***Vowel letters:*** ee, oo as in *beet, cool*. a, i, and u are only doubled in names derived from other languages such as *Haas.*
  - ***Consonant letters:*** all consonants are frequently doubled except h, j, k, q, x, and y. Examples: apple, summer, toss, dizzy, etc.
- **Letter-combination graphemes:**
  - ***Digraphs:*** Use of two different letters to spell a single sound, e.g., <th> for the first sound of three; <ch> as in chum, etc. In this case, the two letters make up a single grapheme, since they spell the sound together.
  - ***Blends:*** Two letters that represent two sounds in sequence, as <qu> in *queen* (<q> represents /k/ and <u> represents /w/; <bl> as in *black*, etc. In this case, two graphemes are present: <b> represents the /b/ of *black*, while <l> represents its /l/.

Silent letters, such as the <e> of *time*, the <k> of *knee*, and the <gh> of *sight*, are letters which appear in a word, but do not in themselves represent a sound. Most silent letters were pronounced at an earlier stage of the history of English, but then, though the sound was lost from the word, the spelling did not change. Many critics of English spelling decry the retention of these letters, but they do serve a purpose. In some cases, they differentiate one word from another in spelling, for instance *knot* vs. *not.* Other silent letters participate in what are called *spelling patterns*: they make up for the shortage of vowel symbols we suffer (English has about 16 vowel phonemes, but we use only 5 letters to represent these). This value of silent letters is discussed below.

People often speak of the frustrations and seeming chaos of English spelling, but it is in fact more systematic than meets the eye. English spelling does have many irregularities that are the product of history, but sometimes these help us see the meaning relation between words (as between *sign* and *signature*). The following paragraphs present just a few examples of sub-regularities in English spelling.

• <c> represents two sounds: /s/ and /k/ (both are present in <accent>). <c> represents /s/ when it precedes <e>, <i>, or <y>; usually it represents /k/ in other positions, e.g.: <cent>, <city>, <cyst> vs. <cat>, <cut>, <close>, <cream>.

• The /k/ sound can be spelled in various ways: <k> as in <kid>, <c> as in <cat>, <ck> as in <back>, <ch> as in <ache>, <q> as in <quite>. One regularity in this variety of spellings is that <ck> cannot be used at the beginning of a word, but only in the middle or at the end. We find words such as <tackle> and <back>, but not *ckat. (The asterisk * means that the word it precedes violates a rule and is impossible within the system.)

• A double consonant is most often a cue to the pronunciation of a preceding vowel, especially in words of more than one syllable. Consider the pair <comma>, <coma>. The double <m> in the first word tells you that the <o> is pronounced /a/; the single <m> of the second tells you it is pronounced /o/. The pair <tapping>, <taping> illustrates the same principle, as do <super>, <supper> and <biter>, <bitter>. Also, double consonants preserve the pronunciation of the vowel of a base word when a suffix is added: doubling the <p> of <tap> when *-ing* is added to produce <tapping> preserves the pronunciation /æ/; if <p> were not doubled, we would read <taping>. One other regularity about double consonants is that, while they <u>often</u> appear in the middle or at the end of a word, they <u>never</u> appear at the beginning; compare sta<u>ff</u>, ba<u>ss</u>, ta<u>ll</u>, ha<u>mm</u>er, a<u>pp</u>le with <u>f</u>ine, <u>s</u>oap, <u>l</u>ate, <u>m</u>ust, <u>p</u>ole. Spellings such as *mmust or *ppole do not occur.

• Single consonants also provide cues to vowel pronunciation when contrasted with the use of a single consonant followed by silent <e>. Consider these pairs:

tap vs. *tape*
mat vs. *mate*
pip vs. *pipe*
grim vs. *grime*
met vs. *mete*
mop vs. *mope*

Although the final <e> is not pronounced and therefore might seem useless, it is actually an important cue that tells us how to pronounce the preceding vowel.

• Silent <gh> and <g> also signal how to pronounce the vowel in a word; compare <fit>, <fight>, <mit>, <might>, <sit>, <sight>, <sin>, <sign>.

This is a very brief description of how English spelling works. More can be found in Dechant (1969) and other books on "phonics."

c. Juxtaposition of Persian and English sound-spelling features

As James (1980) maintains, "the first thing we do [before actual comparison] is to make sure that we are comparing like with the like: this means that the two or more entities to be compared, while differing in some respect, must share certain attributes" (cited in Yarmohammadi and Rashidi, 2009). Therefore, according to what James (1980) alleges and also on the basis of the sound-spelling descriptions above related to each language, i.e. Persian and English, the following features have been juxtaposed based on which the actual comparison and contrast between the sound-spelling of the Persian and English languages have been performed in the next stage, i.e. the comparison proper:

1. Letter-sound correspondence
2. Base word pronunciation
3. Symbols in writing system
4. Spelling as a separative factor
5. Silent letters
6. Different position, different sound
7. Different spelling of the same sound
8. Criteria for spelling
9. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
10. Sounds are more than letters
11. Spelling style

Now that in this section the juxtaposition has been done, i.e. the specification of "what is to be compared with what," the comparison proper can be performed.

d. Comparison and contrast of Persian and English sound-spelling systems based on the juxtaposed features

Feature 1: *<u>letter-sound correspondence</u>*

The first thing we can begin is that English writing system is an alphabetic one, that is, there is a correspondence between letters and individual sounds. But several of letters in English can have more than one sound value. So there is not always a strict one-to-one correspondence. Some letters are of single value such as (d, p, and m). Some of them can have two or more values like c as in cat and city. Persian writing system also is an alphabetic one and there is a correspondence between letters and individual sounds. However, there are some letters which represent the same sound as "ث. ص.س" which stand just for /s/.

Feature 2: *<u>base word pronunciation</u>*

In English spelling system, a root or base is always spelt the same, e.g. in "sign" and "signal" the root is the same, but their pronunciations are different. In pure Persian there are a few roots and most of the roots we see are entered into

Persian from Arabic such as: سلیم.سالم.سلامت.سلام. They are pronounced according to their structural rules (e.g. subject, object) but the roots have unique spelling.

Feature 3: *symbols in writing system*

Some of the symbols used in the writing systems are combinations of two or more letters from alphabet e.g. "ph ' represents the sound /f/as 'fish' (like phase) –'th-' speaks for two sounds as in 'thick' and 'there' are pronounced. In Persian regarding [وا] in خواهر (xaahar) (sister) and خواستن (xaastan) (to want) just [ا] has the sound value.

Feature 4**:** *spelling as a separative factor*

Two words which are unrelated and different in meaning tend to be ' separated' visually for reader by their spelling even if they sound the same such as 'rough' and 'rough' or 'son' and 'sun'. In Persian we have گزاردن (as in نماز گزاردن, to pray) and گذاردن (to put, to let) that are read /gozaardan/ or خواستن (to want) and خاستن as in برخاستن (to rise) pronounced as /xaastan/.

Feature 5: *silent letters*

Some symbols are used to signal something about another symbol. They have no sound value themselves when they are functioning in this way. The clearest example is the letter 'e' at the end of a word. However, it tells the reader something about the value of the preceding vowel letter. In word 'fete' the last 'e' is silent it shows that the first 'e' sounds /I/ as in 'feet'. In Persian there are 3 long vowels ا ای او that are sometimes used as a base to represent their short equivalents. In words like خوش /khosh/ و is pronounced a short vowel /u/. Other examples are: خوشحال.خوشبو.احرام (ehraam), اهرم (ahrom), اقیانوس (oghyaanoose).

Feature 6: *different position, different sound*

Position and surrounding are extremely important in English system. 'GH' can represent the sound /f/ if only it is at the end of the word. /Wh/ can come at the beginning of the word and '-ng-' at the end. In Persian this feature can exist only for a few letters and sounds such as ی and و in examples .یعنی (ya?ni), یابو (yaaboo), وقتی (vaghti). In different positions they sound different.

Feature 7: *different spelling of the same sound*

There are lots of different spelling for the same sound, e.g. 'k' can be spelled with several different letters and letter combinations, such as k (king), c (cat), ck (back), qu (queen), ch (chorus), and que (boutique). In Persian we have (سالم) س (healthy), (صابون) ص (soap), and (ثابت) ث (fixed) for /s/.

Feature 8: *criteria for spelling*

English words are spelled according to both their sounds (phonemes, such as /b/) and their meaningful parts (morphemes such as dict). In contrast, Persian uses single, consistent letters and letter combination for sounds. It is much stick to phonology representation. It seems easy to learn Persian, but if you come to a new word you can not get the meaning. In English, however, when there are Latin roots, you can find words like credible, credit, incredulous, and incredulity with the same underlying meaning of root, 'to believe'. However, they are different in sounds.

Feature 9: *phoneme-grapheme correspondence*

Speech sounds are spelled with single letters and/or combinations of up to four letters. The sound-symbol relationship is known as phoneme-grapheme correspondence. Graphemes may be composed of one to four letters, e.g. /a/ in cradle, may be, feign, weigh. In English we have just 26 letters to work with but about 40 phonemes and 250 graphemes. In Persian we have at most, two letter combinations to represent one sound such as [وا] in خواستن (to want).

Feature 10: *sounds are more than letters*

English has much more sounds than letters and these sounds may change according to context and influence each other. There are letters that have no corresponding sound in certain contexts as 'g' in 'sign'(sain), and 'though'. Or some of them transfer only a signal, not a sound e.g. double consonant. There are different words that can be categorized in this feature:

A) Letters that usually shorten the preceding vowel:

(Though-bought-brought), (نگهبان-خود)

B) Words with silent letters:

(gnat-gnaw), (know-knee-knit), (isle-aisle-island), (should-could-would), (debt, doubt), (listen, soften-castle)…(خواستن-خواهر)

C) Words that look the same but are pronounced differently:

wind /wind/ (=moving air outdoors)…wind /waind/ (=twisting motion),

tear /tir/ (=drop of eye)…tear (t3r/ (=become torn),

جنگ /jang/ (=war)…/jong/ (=miscellany),

نقل /naghl/ (=transfer, quotation)…/noghl/ (=suger-plum),

مهر (mehr=affection; name of month)…(mahr=wedding gfit)…(mohr=sign)

D) Words that look and sound the same but mean differently:

can (be able) (container)

lie (lie down) (don't tell lie, tell the truth)

شیر(milk; tap; lion)

مهر(mehr=affection; name of a month)

خان(inn; khan)

E). Words that have the same sounds but are spelled differently:
byte, bite, bight
here, hear
Their, they're, there
Err, heir, air
خوان /khaan/ (= table), خان (=khan)
خرد /khord/ (=small), خورد (=ate)
Feature 11: *spelling style*

English has both printing and writing, with capital and small letters. But Persian has only writing and letters always connect to each other. There is no capital letter in Persian but it can have as 4 different shapes, according to the place of occurrence, e.g. [غ] in "غصه", "زیغ" , "تغییر","باغ".

e. Analyzing the English pronunciation errors of the EFL learners at the three levels of beginner, intermediate, and advanced

This section actually supports the last stage of the present contrastive study, i.e. the prediction stage, which determines and predicts the type of English pronunciation errors that EFL learners make, along with the prediction of the sources of such erroneous pronunciations. In fact, error analysis, offered as an alternative to contrastive analysis, has its value in the classroom research. Although contrastive analysis, which may be least predictive at the syntactic level and at early stages of language learning (Brown, 1994), and does not take a distinct system called "interlanguage" into account, so that does not predict all learner difficulties and differences (Corder, 1971; and Selinker, 1972), it allows for prediction of the difficulties involved in acquiring a second language (Richards, 1974); and therefore, error analysis emphasizing "the significance of errors in learners' interlanguage system" (Brown, 1994) may be carried out directly for pedagogical purposes in contrastive studies (Ellis, 1995; and Richards *et al.*, 1993).

So, this part of the study will show those problematic areas and features described, juxtaposed, and compared and contrasted in the preceding sections of the study in practice in the form of "error analysis." Therefore, the results of this section can be very helpful for both EFL learners and teachers to take into consideration.

The pronunciation problems are analyzed in five respects; problems with vowels, consonants, consonant clusters, stress, and intonation. Then each pronunciation problem is diagnosed. In the diagnosis phase, the following factors are taken into consideration as possible sources of the problems:

1. Momentary mental overload, distraction, fatigue, and haste which result in mistakes or performance lapses.
2. Mother Tongue Interference:
a) Negative Transfer
b) Positive Transfer
c) Non-existent linguistic Items: Items which exist in L2 but not in L1
3. Loan Words
4. Inherent Difficulties of the Target language:

The pronunciation, for example, we have:
chemist pronounced as /kemist/
chief pronounced as /či:f/
chef pronounced as /šef/

The "ch" letters in all the three words are pronounced differently.

5. The Model: The teacher may not be a good model with regard to the ay s/he speaks.
6. The Method: The teaching method may be at fault by overemphasizing one aspect of the language and neglecting the other.
7. The Materials: Materials which have teaching items sequenced in a certain way or which lack organization could lead to errors.
8. Inadequate Exposure to the Target Language: Students who live in a country where English is taught as a foreign language obviously do not have adequate exposure to the target language.
9. Overgeneralization: Overgeneralization covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the target language.
10. Indeterminacy: It refers to an inconsistency or uncertainty in handling a linguistic item.
11. Medium Transfer: This is a term used by Tench (1983) for the learner's undue reliance on either the spoken or the written form of a word when the other medium is being used. If a pupil pronounces a word according to its spelling, then medium transfer has taken place (spelling pronunciation).
12. Communication Strategies: "A systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty" because of his "inadequate command of the language used in the interaction." (Corder, 1981, p. 103, cited in Mohideen). Some of these strategies are as follow:
a) Avoidance: Learner's avoidance leads to replacement of erroneous items.
b) Prefabricated patterns
c) Appeal to authority
d) Approximation

e) Word coinage
f) Circumlocution
g) Language switch

IV. Results and Discussions

The results indicated that Persian learners who are learning English may encounter with lots of difficulties learning English spelling as it is represented the language at two levels at the same time, the level of units of meaning and the level of sounds. The sounds in the words do not correspond to their representative letters. On the other hand, English learners have to learn a completely new writing system as Persian is non-Roman language. Moreover, the results maintain the fact that English spelling is not purely 'phonetic'. If 'regularity' is defined as a direct and invariable one-to-one correspondence between symbol and sound, then it is not completely regular. But regularity can be looked at in another way- the regular and unique representation of any of the units of a language. Furthermore, it illustrated the fact that Persian has a regular spelling system in the sense of one-to-one correspondence between sound and symbol. Therefore, based on the results of the comparison proper stage, it can be concluded that Persian learners may face spelling problems in the following areas:

- When one sound is represented by more than one letter as in /s/ and س, ص, ث .
- The symbols which are considered as a base for short vowels and do not have the sound value in themselves as in قائم.
- Some letters are written but have no sound value as in خواهر.
- Short vowels are written and they should be guessed in context.

Also, English learners may have spelling difficulties in following parts:

- Some letters are written but have no sound value, e.g. brought.
- There is not much correspondence between the sounds and their representative letters, e.g. rough.
- Silent letters, e.g. sign, know.
- Sounds which have various letters and letter combinations in different contexts such as /f/ in fish and rough.
- One vowel sound can have different written forms: /ey/ in rain, may, etc.

One of the strategies which have been taken into account with regard to coping with such problematic areas deals with "Phonics" and "Phonograms." Phonics is a method for teaching English spelling which exploits various factors: (a) what regularities there are in the English spelling system; (b) what is known about how children handle reading and writing cognitively (for instance, that children may not have mastered certain sounds upon beginning reading instruction, and that they focus more strongly on the beginnings of words than the ends). Phonics proceeds in a sequence intended to make the complex subregularities of English spelling easier to handle for both student and teacher. Phonics must be distinguished from *phonetics/phonology*, which is a scientific attempt to analyze the English *sound system*, not its *spelling system.* Phonics does not strive so much for *scientific accuracy* as it does for *finding regularity in the system for representing sounds with letters, and presenting those regularities in a scope and sequence that make it easier for a learner to master.* Therefore many of its practices, such as distinguishing long from short vowels, are not phonologically accurate (length does not differentiate English vowel phonemes from one another; tongue height does). There was a time in the English language (ca. A.D. 500 to around A.D. 1500) when length did differentiate vowel phonemes, and the spelling system indicated this. But because English pronunciation continued to change after its spelling system became relatively fixed from 1200 to 1500 A.D., the spelling reflects the earlier period of English pronunciation. The phonics description of English spelling reflects the pronunciation of English in 1300 CE more accurately than it does today's pronunciation.

Finally, in the last stage of the study, i.e. the prediction stage, some certain deviant phonological structures and pronunciation errors, which were expected to be produced by the three EFL learners, were analyzed meticulously in order to find the sources of such sound-spelling problems. Having a look at the lists of the sources of pronunciation problems of these Persian learners of English, we notice that the three factors of 'The Model', 'The Method', and 'Inadequate Exposure to the Target Language' are present in the diagnosis of almost all of them. This fact can lead us to one of the most important results that can be taken from this research; that is, in a country like Iran where English is considered as a foreign language, the teacher, the method, and the educational atmosphere play vital roles in teaching this language. In other words, since Persian learners of English are out of contact with native speakers, teachers, methods, and educational systems are responsible for bridging this gap.

'Mother Tongue Interference' and 'Overgeneralization' are two other important factors observed frequently among the sources of the problems. 'Mother Tongue Interference' mostly appeared in the shape of non-existent linguistic items; that is items which exist in English but not in Persian. This shows that the influence of non-existent linguistic items on the emergence of pronunciation problems overweighs the influence of negative and positive transfer from the L1.

Another point which is worth mentioning here is that by comparing the problems in different parts of the sample, we notice that performance lapses are more visible in the summary and reading aloud sample. For example, the learners can easily produce /w/, /ŋ/, and /θ/ sounds respectively in 'watched', 'interesting', and 'thin' when they are pronounced in isolation. But when it comes to producing the same words or words containing these sounds in either spoken or written

contexts, the learners produce those Persian sounds which are 'close enough' and easier for them to produce. Therefore, they pronounce /w/, /ŋ/, and /θ/ as /v/, /ng/, and /t/ respectively.

As Kenworthy (1990) argues, those problems that are vital for intelligibility and their occurrence impedes communication, need to be given high priority. In general, the areas of rhythm, word stress, and sentence stress are high priority areas for all learners. Other problems which do not affect intelligibility can be given low priority. The last groups of problems are those which, may contribute to a very noticeable foreign accent, will usually do not lead to intelligibility problems. This group can be given optional attention.

For Persian speakers of English, the priorities could be as follow:

High Priorities

1. Rhythm
2. Sentence stress
3. Word stress
4. Consonant clusters and sequences as in 'stop'.
5. Problems with vowels which do not exist in Persian and their mispronunciation causes confusion. Examples are
- /I/ in 'ship' which could be pronounced as /i:/ in 'sheep', and
- /^/, /a:/, /o:/ in 'cut', 'cot', 'caught' that if are used interchangeably, can cause difficulty.
6. Problems with consonants which do not exist in Persian and their mispronunciation causes confusion. For example /θ/ in 'thick' which might be pronounced as /s/ in 'sick'.
7. Intonation, especially in tag questions.

Low Priorities

1. Sounds which are slightly different in Persian and English, like /r/, /l/, /ŋ/, etc.
2. Diphthongs

Optional Attention

1. Linkage in connected speech
2. /ð/ as in 'that'

V. Conclusion

As for the first research question, the Persian sound-spelling system was described in detail. Also, as the answer to the second question, the English sound-spelling system was described fully. Therefore, the first section of the study dealt with the description stage of contrastive studies in general. According to the description stage, the study concluded that different languages have different orthographic systems; some of them are more similar such as Roman alphabet in languages like English, German, and French. The others have much greater difference in writing system such as Roman vs. non-Roman as in Arabic and Persian. Therefore, the description section of the study indicates that all the languages, including Persian and English, are rule-governed in terms of spelling along with a number of exceptions. Learning the rules with their exceptions can decrease misspelling. Reading in context can be helpful in diagnosing the meaning. But yet, there are some irregular words that just can be internalized by rote learning.

Moreover, in order to answer the third research question, the juxtaposition and comparison stages were performed in which, firstly, those comparable features were identified and then the comparison proper was done.

On the basis of the results of the comparison proper, the study concluded that the Iranian EFL learners as well as teachers must take these features into account, so that they do not face any sound-spelling problems. Furthermore, with regard to English learners of Persian language, the study concluded some sound-spelling features that they may encounter with.

Finally, regarding the last research question related to the prediction stage of the present contrastive study, it was concluded that the sources of the pronunciation problems of Persian learners of English as a foreign language mainly lie in the pedagogical system through which this language is taught. Factors like 'Mother Tongue Interference' and 'Overgeneralization' certainly result in pronunciation problems but when it come to teaching English in a country like Iran, where it is considered as a foreign language, other factors such as 'The Model', 'The Method', and 'Inadequate Exposure to the Target Language' will become more perceptible as the sources of pronunciation problems. Since intelligibility is the most sensible goal of pronunciation, problems like those which occur in the areas of rhythm, word stress, and sentence stress, and those problems with vowels, consonants, consonant clusters, and intonation which interfere with the process of communication and cause unintelligibility should be given a higher priority than the others. To avoid pronunciation problems, both learners and particularly teachers should expose themselves to the target language as much as possible through the mass media. Teachers should create an English atmosphere in which learners are able to think in English.

VI. Pedagogical Implications

According to the results of the present study, the following implications are drawn in the form of a trouble-shooting manual to reduce the number of pronunciation problems committed by our Persian learners of English as a foreign language:

1. Students should be advised to listen to good English from what available source_ radio, television, native speakers, and good local speakers of the language. They should listen for correct pronunciation and understanding.

2. Students can record their speech, compare it to that of a native speaker in terms of vowels, consonants, consonant clusters, stress, intonation, etc., find their problems in each area, and practice the correct pronunciation.

3. Teachers must frequently remind their students that when they speak in English, they must think in the target language so that they do not bring in any feature of their mother tongue.

4. English is not an easy language to master. Teachers of English should advise their students to persevere in studying English. There are no short cuts to learning the language. When they are sufficiently exposed to target language, the possibility of making pronunciation errors is minimized.

5. Teachers need to keep themselves abreast of current issues by reading books and journals related to our profession.

6. Teachers should make sure that there is all round language development. They should not spend too much time on one area of language to the detriment of others.

7. Teachers should encourage students to speak in English with their fellow students in school or on campus and create an atmosphere in class that is conductive to learning the language.

8. The teacher should provide an explanation with regard to the possible source or cause of error to bring about an awareness of what could be the potential contributory factor.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1099-1110, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1099-1110

A Survey on the Self-regulation Efficacy in DUT's English Blended Learning Context

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***Abstract*—A new trend of teaching modality of blended learning (BL) has emerged with the fast development of modern technology of communications and the application of the technology in education. Despite the popularity of BL among social researchers, relatively few studies have been conducted in respect of students themselves. A survey was conducted on the current situation of students' self-regulation efficacy in English learning in a BL context in Dalian University of Technology (DUT); and the results indicate show that students in DUT do not possess strong self-regulatory ability in English learning in the BL context, while the outcome also implies that postgraduates' self-regulatory ability is stronger than that of undergraduates. The outcome also supports the argument that students' self-regulatory ability can be enhanced through teaching, learning and practice. Several empirical suggestions are provided that may be helpful for the English teaching instructors in order to enhance students' self-regulatory ability in English learning in a BL context based on the findings.**

***Index Terms*—blended learning, self-regulation, survey, suggestions for teaching**

I. Introduction

A. Research Background

With the development and optimization of modern communication system of the computer and the Internet, the use of the computer and the Internet in higher education has greatly increased in recent years. The widely adoption of modern technologies of information and communications in the education field has exerted a great impact on the traditional structure of teaching and also has brought new ideas about teaching and learning. This new change in the education field is accepted by most researchers as Blended Learning (BL), or Hybrid Learning (as some scholars call it). BL, a new modality of teaching combining the traditional teaching method and online learning, which was first emerged from the process of training employees in enterprises, has gained growing attention. Blended Learning has been widely applied to elementary and higher education and has become a constant heated topic for social workers, especially those concerning education.

Compared with the traditional face-to-face teaching-learning method or e-learning mode, BL gains great advantages for it is the hybrid of the two. Regarding to its advantages, many universities in China have also introduced this new teaching modality to their faculties and students in order to achieve better performance in students' learning. As a result, a great number of essays on the definition, structure, advantages and effectiveness of BL have emerged during the past few years. Scholars have universally recognized the significance and necessity to adopt and promote BL in teaching activities. Nevertheless, comparably few studies have been undertaken on the self-regulation efficacy in respect of students, which is a fundamental factor for BL since BL emphasizes on the self-regulation and self-learning (which is the basis for the realization of BL). Therefore, the paper intends to probe into the students' self-regulation efficacy in a blended learning context.

B. Research Purpose

American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) has listed BL as one of the ten most important emerging trends in the knowledge dissemination industry. Besides, in its final report based on meta-analysis of more than one thousand empirical studies of online learning (BL in this paper) from 1996 to 2008, the US Department of Education pointed out that BL is the most effective way of learning compared with face-to-face teaching or e-learning,. Meanwhile many other studies by scholars from both home and abroad have also confirmed the necessity of applying BL in higher education. What is urgent at present is how to better apply BL and improve its effectiveness in higher education, which makes the study of the current situation of the application of BL on campus critical. In recent years, Chinese scholars have conducted quite a number of experiments and studies in order to explore how to improve the design of a curriculum, i.e. the percentage of traditional learning and online learning in a course, to get better results. Achievements

have been made on the basis of those studies. Nevertheless, more studies of BL focusing on students should be carried out to achieve more. This paper is composed out of this concern. The author intends to provide a comprehensive illustration of the current situation of students' self-regulation efficacy of English learning in a BL context in Dalian University of Technology (DUT) and offer some empirical suggestions on the improvement of English teaching on this campus based on an investigation of the students and the outcome of the survey. The analysis and suggestions may be helpful for English instructors to improve students' self-regulation efficacy in English learning in a BL context in future teaching activities.

II. Literature Review

A. Blended Learning

1. Definition of Blended Learning

In recent years, BL has been a hot topic in employee training programs, as well as in formal education. Despite its popularity among enterprises and social researchers, the definition of BL has long been in dispute. Different scholars may give different definitions or descriptions of BL focusing on different aspects.

Richard Lynch and Myron Dembo pointed out that "blended education is a form of distributed education, utilizing both distance and face-to-face modalities to deliver instruction" (Lynch & Dembo, 2004). Jessica S. Ayala defines BL as the purposeful integration of traditional (i.e. face-to-face) and online learning in order to provide educational opportunities that maximize the benefits of each platform and thus more effectively facilitate student learning. (Ayala, 2009) Anita Pincas & Gunter Saunders mentioned in their paper "blended courses" are "part face-to-face and part distance or online). (Pincas & Saunders, 2003) Margaret Driscoll provided four different concepts for the term Blended Learning as follow: ①to combine or mix modes of web-based technology (e.g. live virtual classroom, self-paced instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio, and text) to accomplish an educational goal; ②to combine various pedagogical approaches (e.g. constructivism, behaviorism, cognitivism) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology; ③to combine any form of instructional technology (e.g. videotape, CD-ROM, web-based training, film) with face-to-face instructor-led training; ④to mix or combine instructional technology with actual job tasks in order to create a harmonious effect of learning and working. (Driscoll, 2002) He Kekang holds that BL is the result of combination the advantages of both traditional leaning method and e-learning (i.e. digital or web-based learning) and BL thus can emphasize the guiding role of professors and cultivate the initiation of students at the same time. (He, 2004)

Based on all the definitions offered by researchers from home and abroad, the author defines BL in this paper as a teaching and learning modality that combines traditional face-to-face teaching method and any form of instructional technology (e.g. videotape, CD-ROM, web-based materials) in order to maximize both the guidance of professors and the initiation of students.

2. Advantages of Blended Learning

As the definition of BL suggests, BL is blended on the basis of elaborate evaluation of all factors concerning learning like time, place, instructors' teaching style and individual differences of students instead of simply mixing the traditional and online learning. Thus the adoption of BL has several advantages over traditional face-to-face learning or mere e-learning (or online learning).

First, students can have more choice and control over their study but under the guidance and instruction of their instructors at the same time, which will undoubtedly cultivate the creative and initiative spirits of students. Second, in a BL context students can make use of the abundant materials on the Internet and have a better understanding of the substantive materials with the help of professors in a face-to-face classroom. (Cui, 2005) Third, a BL context can provide students a greater opportunity to interact with each other and with their professor and thus form a stronger sense of community. (Rovai & Jordan, 2004) Last but not least, on average, students in a BL context would perform better than those take mere face-to-face classes or online classes, i.e. BL is the most effective way of learning among the three modalities. (Means et al, 2009) This has been proved by the US Department of Education in its final report based on meta-analysis of more than one thousand empirical studies of online learning from 1996 to 2008.

3. Determinants of Blended Learning

There are many factors that may affect the effectiveness and results of BL. First, since BL makes use of modern technology of communications, there is a high demand for the access to the computers and the Internet. Second, the right teaching method can better inspire students. (Li, 2008) Third, the design of the course should be considered carefully. The proportion of the face-to-face part and online part may greatly influence the effectiveness of BL. (Ayala, 2009) Fourth, students are the centre of learning activities. Compared with the instructor-centered traditional teaching modality, the self-regulation of students seems more significant. (Lynch & Dembo, 2004) What is more, most Chinese students have been used to relying on their instructor in the process of learning, which requires strengthening and improving students' ability of self-learning for the success of BL. Being the core component of self-learning, self-regulation is one of the most elements to achieve a success in a BL context, especially from the learners' own respective. In summary, even though a number of elements seem important to the learning outcome, a successful learning can only be achieved by fulfilling all of the affecting factors.

4. Study and Practice of Blended Learning

Since its first emergence in corporation employee training programs in 1990s, BL has been a continuously heated research focus in secondary and higher education. Numerous studies have been conducted concerning its effectiveness and advantages over traditional teaching approach, as well as course designs. According to the final reports of the US Department of Education's meta-analysis of more than one thousand empirical studies of online learning from 1996 to 2008, no less than 99 studies had been conducted using an experimental or quasi-experimental design and objectively measured student learning outcomes between the year 1996 and 2008, not to mention those focusing on the theory construction and improvement. (Means et al, 2009) Besides, a rough search in the database of China National Knowledge Internet can result in more than 170 papers on BL, most of which also focusing on the refinement of the theoretical framework of BL, its effectiveness or the design of courses.

Overwhelming research results have proved the effectiveness of BL and its advantages over traditional face-to-face learning or e-learning. Many researchers also provided some practical suggestions about the course design in a BL context. Despite the fact that all previous studies have greatly benefited the implement and improvement of BL in education, relatively little attention has been paid to the agent of learning, i.e. learners themselves. Only a handful of papers were conducted in respect of students' motivations, learning strategies or sense of community in a BL context. More and further studies on learners themselves are in necessity.

B. Self-regulation

1. Definition of Self-Regulation

Zimmerman defined academic self-regulation as the degree to which learners are meta-cognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active in their learning process. (Zimmerman, 1989) He also pointed out that self-regulation is "the self-directive process by which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills" and the notion of self-regulation "refers to self-generated thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are oriented to attaining goals". (Zimmerman, 2002) Lynch and Dembo argued that "self-regulated learners are active, adaptive constructors of meaning who control important aspects of their cognition, behavior, and environment in attaining their learning goals. (Lynch & Dembo, 2004) Dong Qi and Zhou Yong, two Chinese scholars, defined students' self-regulation as students constantly plan, regulate, check, evaluate, reflect, control and adjust themselves in the whole process of learning in order to improve learning efficiency and achieve learning goals. (Dong & Zhou, 1994) In general, self-regulated learner would use specified strategies including adjust their internal feelings and external environment in order to achieve their academic goals on the basis of self-efficacy perceptions in the whole process of learning.

2. Significance of Self-Regulation in Learning

Learning is an extremely complicated system comprising a number of correlated and interactive elements. These elements include students' own factors like individual intelligence, learning ability, learning style, motivation and characters, as well as the environmental factors like learning tasks, materials, place, time, instructors and classmates. A successful learning activity can be achieved only when all these factors are properly and efficiently interacted, which requires constantly active and scientific control and adjust of these factors, i.e. self-regulation. (Dong & Zhou, 1994) Many related studies have proved the fact that students with high self-regulatory abilities can achieve more and better in learning. Therefore self-regulation is a critical factor determining the learning outcome.

Furthermore, just as Zimmerman mentioned, a major function of education is the development of lifelong learning skills. (Zimmerman, 2002) After finishing higher education and entering society, formal or informal learning will never decease. Learning important skills related to one's job is crucial to the success of one's career. Thus the self-regulatory ability is an indispensable one to one's career and also to the realization of one's values.

3. Features of Self-Regulation

Different learners have different learning styles and learning habits. However, it is generally accepted that self-regulated learners do share some common characteristics despite their individual diversity. Several main traits possessed by all self-regulated learners are listed below.

Self-regulated learners have high self-awareness of their self-regulation in the whole process of learning. They are different from those who are not self-regulated in that the control and adjust of themselves are always self-initiated instead of being forced by external factors. (Dong & Zhou, 1994)

First, they show a high sense of academic self-efficacy and a high desire for achieving certain learning goals. They are also more capable of controlling and modifying them to the requirements of the task and of the specific learning situation.

Second, they can properly assign the time and efforts to be used to fulfill the task, choose a favorable environment for study.

Third, they are familiar with and know how to use a series of cognitive strategies in accordance to specific task and situation in order to improve the efficiency of learning and to achieve all the goals of learning.

In summary, all self-regulated learners view themselves as agents of their own behavior and learning, believing learning is a proactive process. They are self-motivated and can adopt efficient strategies to achieve desired academic results. (Montalvo & Torres, 2008)

4. Determinants of Self-Regulation

Based on a review of literature, five self-regulatory attributes were highlighted as main determinants of the success of

learning: motivation, meta-cognition, time and environment management, help seeking and Internet self-efficacy. Each of these attributes is important to the efficiency of self-regulation in learning and they are also correlated and interactive. The definition and description of these five attributes also compose the theoretical framework of self-regulation for the questionnaire adopted in this survey.

a. Motivation

Motivation for learning stems from students' beliefs about learning. A universally received theory of motivation is Printrich's expectancy-value model, which is comprised of three motivational components: expectancy component, value component and affective component. The expectancy component involves students' beliefs that they are able to perform the task and that they are responsible for their own performance. The value component involves students' goals for learning and their beliefs about the importance and interest of the task. The affective component concerns students' affective or emotional reactions to the task, which is always referred to as test anxiety. (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990) In this study the first two components are taken into consideration. Thus motivation in this study mainly concerns two components: self-efficacy and intrinsic goal.

Self-efficacy is defined by Zimmerman as perceptions about one's capabilities to organize and implement actions necessary to attain designated performance of skill for specific tasks. (Zimmerman, 1989) Pintrich pointed out students with high self-efficacy can better adopt self-regulatory strategies to achieve learning goals and thus self-efficacy has a reciprocal relationship with learning outcomes. He defined goal orientation as a learner's perception of the reason why taking this course and his or her general goals or orientation toward a course. Intrinsic goal orientation is defined as "the degree to which the student perceives herself to be participating in a task for reasons such as challenge, curiosity, and mastery". (Pintrich et al, 1991) Numerous studies show that students who have setting goals usually adopt more cognitive strategies and show higher levels of persistence in the learning process.

Motivation, comprising self-efficacy and intrinsic goals in this study, is a key element of self-regulated learning since highly motivated students show better mastery of cognitive strategies and have better learning outcomes, which has been proven in the survey by Wenyu Liu and Ji-an Zha (2009).

b. Meta-cognition

Meta-cognition is usually simply defined as the awareness of and knowledge about one's own thinking. Pintrich defined meta-cognition as "the awareness, knowledge and control of cognition". (Pintrich et al, 1991) However, the notion of meta-cognition contains far more than that. According to Flavell, meta-cognition consists of both meta-cognitive knowledge and meta-cognitive experiences. (Flavell, 1987) Meta-cognitive knowledge refers to acquired knowledge about cognitive processes, knowledge that can be used to control cognitive processes. Meta-cognitive experiences involve the use of meta-cognitive strategies which are sequential processes that one uses to control cognitive activities, and to ensure that a cognitive goal could be met. (Livingston, 1997) According to Pintrich, there are three general processes that make up meta-cognitive self-regulatory activities: planning, monitoring and regulating. (Pintrich et al, 1991) Whichever analysis of meta-cognition it is, meta-cognition is a preliminary element of adopting effective learning and self-regulatory strategies and thus plays a critical role in successful self-regulated learning.

c. Time and Environment Management

Studies show that students who use their time efficiently can perform better and achieve more goals in learning process. Therefore Zimmerman pointed out that a self-regulated learner must manage one's time and use one's time efficiently. (Zimmerman, 2002) Pintrich proposed that time management involves scheduling, planning and managing one's study time. (Pintrich et al, 1991) Zimmerman regarded environmental self-regulation, which involves arranging a quiet study area for completing task, as one of the three elements of the triadic self-regulatory functioning. (Zimmerman, 1989) So in the analysis of learners' self-regulatory ability, the capability of time and environment management is indispensable.

d. Help Seeking

Another important element affecting study efficiency is the support of others. According to Pintrich, support of others includes help from both peers and instructors. (Pintrich et al, 1991) Good self-regulated learners knew when and how to seek help from others when they are in difficulty.

e. Internet Self-Efficacy

Internet self-efficacy is generally referred to as the belief of one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of Internet actions required to produce given attainments. (Li, 2004) As in a blended learning context, the use of Internet is crucial. So there is a reciprocal relationship between Internet self-efficacy and self-regulation. Students with high Internet self-efficacy have few problems facing tasks related to computer and Internet. Thus it is also a key factor to measure one's self-regulatory ability in a blended learning context.

5. Study and Practice of Regulation

The concepts and perspectives of education have undergone great changes during the past 30 years and learning is conceived of as an active, cognitive, constructive, significant, mediated and self-regulated process. Most scholars agree that education should help students to be aware of their own thinking, to be strategic and to direct their motivation toward valuable goals. (Montalvo & Torres, 2008) Thus self-regulated learning has become a current focus for research since the publication of *Self-Regulated Learning and Academic Achievement: Theory, Research, and Practice*. (Zimmerman, 1989) Later, Zimmerman and Schunk published several other papers on self-regulation of learning in

succession to further probe into this area. Other scholars like Pintrich also showed great interest in self-regulation and did a number of studies on it like *Handbook of Self-Regulation*. Therefore, a socio-cognitive perspective of self-regulation of learning gradually formed on the basis of scientific research and study. Under such a theoretical framework of self-regulation, further empirical experiments were also conducted by scholars from both home and abroad and several general received measure instruments of self-regulation, such as the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire by Pintrich and his colleagues and Self-Regulated Learning Interview Schedule by Zimmerman and his colleagues etc., were developed as well. Currently the study on self-regulation has achieved a lot through decades' hardworking. However, investigation in self-regulation in BL, especially related empirical research, has been rare. Further study on learners' self-regulatory ability should be conducted and measures to improve such ability should be provided through scientific research.

III. Methodology

In this section, guided by the theoretical framework of BL and self-regulation, a questionnaire adapted from the Motivated Strategy for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) was used to conduct a survey on self-regulation efficacy of students learning English in a BL context. All the respondents are students having English classes that contain online learning at present on the campus of Dalian University of Technology (DUT). The questionnaire used in this survey, whose construct validity and reliability was tested by a preliminary survey, consists of two sections, including the basic individual information section and 40 items containing six subscales. In the process of analyzing the data, the statistical software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used. Results analysis and suggestions were offered on the sound foundation of a theoretical framework and an empirical survey.

A. Subjects

On the campus of DUT, all English instructors have adopted the modality of Blended Learning in delivering the English course for non-English majors, despite the variance of the proportion of face-to-face part and computer operating part. So the author selected 570 students who are taking an English course at present in DUT as the respondents of this survey. Considering their different language learning backgrounds, all the respondents are majored in science or technology, excluding those who are majored in arts and literature.

In order to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire used in this survey, a preliminary survey was conducted, in which 120 questionnaires were distributed to undergraduates from four classes taking the course of College English this term and 102 valid and feasible questionnaires were collected.

In the formal survey afterwards, 450 questionnaires were distributed, in which 230 pieces to undergraduates and 220 to postgraduates (either master or doctor degree candidates). In the end, 203 questionnaires answered by undergraduates and 179 pieces by postgraduates, all together 382, were collected. What should be pointed out here is that non-English major students taking an English course in DUT are mostly from grade one or grade two, which leads to the fact that almost all the respondents are grade one or two students (undergraduates as well as postgraduates).

B. Instrument

As mentioned above, motivation and some self-regulatory strategies have a reciprocal relationship with self-regulated learning and therefore learning in a BL context. Besides, students' motivations change from course to course for different reasons and thus their self-regulatory and learning strategies may also vary depending on different courses under different situations. The Motivated Strategy for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) was just designed within such a theoretical framework and it is different from other measure instruments in that it is designed to measure college students' motivation and self-regulated learning in a specific course. Therefore the author selected MSLQ as the original script to make her own questionnaire.

1. The Motivated Strategy for Learning Questionnaire

MSLQ was developed by Pintrich and his colleagues over three years and the final version underwent 10 years of development, during and after which time it was used by numerous researchers in related studies. Moreover, it has been translated into more than 20 different languages, among which the Chinese version has undergone formal assessment of validity and reliability.

MSLQ is designed to assess college students' motivational orientations and their use of different learning strategies for a college course. It contains 81 items in two sections, a motivation section and a learning strategies section. The motivation section consists of 31items that assess students' goals and value beliefs for a course. These items can be further divided into six subscales: intrinsic goal orientation, extrinsic goal orientation, task value, control of learning beliefs, self-efficacy for learning and performances, and test anxiety. The learning strategies section is composed of 50 items in nine subscales: rehearsal, elaboration, organization, critical thinking, meta-cognitive self-regulation, time and study environment management, effort regulation, peer learning, and help seeking. (Pintrich et al, 1991)

2. Structure of the Questionnaire in This Survey

The survey instrument used in this study consists of 49 items in two sections. Section one includes nine items to collect the basic individual information of the respondents like gender, grade, average time used for the course and so on. Section two is composed of 35 items adapted from the MSLQ to assess learners' motivation and learning strategies

and 5 items adapted from an Internet Self-Efficacy Scale (Liu, 2005) to assess learners' Internet self-efficacy. Based on the theoretical framework of self-regulation discussed above, the second section can be further divided into six subscales: intrinsic goal orientation, self-efficacy for learning and performance, meta-cognition, time and study environment, peer learning, and Internet self-efficacy. Each subscale contains 4, 8, 12, 8, 3, and 5 items respectively.

3. Scoring of the Questionnaire in This Survey

Students rate themselves on a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (*not at all true of me*) to 7 (*very true of me*). Thus the score for one item ranges from 1 to 7. Scores for each subscale is computed by taking the mean of the items that make up the subscale. Five items within the questionnaire are negatively worded and must be reversed before a student's score is computed. Ultimately, the overall score summing all the six subscales represents the positive wording of all items and higher scores indicate higher levels of self-regulatory ability. (Artino, 2005) The highest score for each subscale is 28, 56, 84, 56, 21 and 35 respectively, and the highest final score (or the full mark) of the whole questionnaire is 280 (as the table 1 shows in detail).

TABLE 1.
SCORING OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

subscale	items contained in each subscale	number of items	Score of each subscale
Intrinsic goal orientation	1,6,9,10	4	4-28
Self-efficacy for learning	2,3,4,5,7,8,11,12	8	8-56
Meta-cognition	13,16,17,19,23,24,25,26,27,31,33,34	12	12-84
Time and study environment	15,18,22,28,29,30,32,35	8	8-56
Help seeking	14,20,21	3	3-21
Internet self-efficacy	36,37,38,39,40	5	5-35
total	1-40	40	40-280

4. Construct Validity

Since the instrument used in this study was adapted and developed on the basis of two questionnaires, the validity and reliability were tested in a preliminary experiment of 102 feasible answer sheets. The data were analyzed with the help of the statistical software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

The KMO and Bartlett's test shows that the KMO measure of sampling adequacy is 0.784 and the significance is 0.000, which proves the component analysis feasible. Therefore the author selected the universally received approach of principal component analysis to test the construct validity. Six factors whose eigenvalues are greater than 1.5 are extracted and consistent with the hypothesized construct. The communality of every variable is above 0.30 and the cumulative variance of the six factors is 54.645%, which shows each factor contributed a lot to the question investigated (Table 2). In summary, all the data prove the questionnaire has relatively high construct validity.

TABLE 2.
TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED

Component	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	11.587	28.968	28.968	4.320	10.801	10.801
2	2.842	7.104	36.073	3.944	9.860	20.661
3	2.406	6.016	42.089	3.910	9.776	30.437
4	1.801	4.503	46.592	3.446	8.614	39.051
5	1.677	4.193	50.785	3.441	8.604	47.655
6	1.544	3.860	54.645	2.796	6.990	54.645

5. Internal Reliability

The internal reliability of the questionnaire was tested adopting the method of Cronbach Alpha with the help of SPSS. All the six subscales demonstrate great internal reliability value, among which four are between 0.71 and 0.88 with the lowest two are also above 0.58. The overall internal reliability value is 0.90 (Table 3). Therefore, the questionnaire used in this survey shows a relatively high internal reliability.

TABLE 3.
RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Subscale	Cronbach's Alpha
Intrinsic goal orientation	0.713
self-efficacy for learning and performance	0.884
meta-cognition	0.744
time and study environment	0.598
peer learning	0.583
Internet self-efficacy	0.824
overall	0.904

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the results of the survey will be represented in detail, including the illustration of the basic individual

information of the respondents, the overall situation of students' self-regulatory ability in English learning reflected by data of this survey, the correlations of gender etc. with the final scores of the students' self-regulatory questionnaire, and the situation of the undergraduates' and postgraduates' self-regulation respectively. Detailed and thorough discussion and analysis of these data will follow the presentation of the results.

A. Basic Individual Information of the Respondents

The survey shows that 22.73% of all the respondents have taken 2 to 4 courses this term, 21.14% 5 to 6 courses, 29.01% 7 to 8 courses and 26.12% more. While nearly half of the respondents averagely spend 2 to 4 hours after class on English learning, almost a quarter just learn English in class, and 20.92% spend 5 to 7 hours. In general, most students spend 0 to 7 hours on English learning after class.

The questionnaires distributed have listed ten different possible reasons why students take this course and each reason is independent from the others. The respondents were asked to give a *yes* or *no* answer to each of the ten reasons listed as follow. The data analysis shows that the most popular reason for students' to choose this course is that it is the requirement of their disciplinary setting. Other reasons, for example the course is interesting, useful for other courses, helpful to improve academic skills, and helpful for job seeking, are also significantly popular, as is stated in Table 4.

TABLE 4.
REASONS TO TAKE THIS COURSE

reasons to take this course	frequency (%)
disciplinary requirement	91.7
the course is interesting	73.2
useful for other courses	75.6
easy to acquire credits	30.9
helpful to improve academic skills	70.4
compulsory courses	73.5
recommended by friends	21.6
recommended by instructor	16.1
helpful for job seeking	68.8
class time is suitable	71.2

B. Scores of All Respondents

According to the mean scores of the six subscales, which are relatively low, especially that of the subscale of meta-cognition, the overall ability of DUT students' self-regulation on English learning in a BL context is not very strong. Furthermore, the mean of all respondents' final score is 186.46, which is not high compared with the full mark of the whole questionnaire. This has undoubtedly supported the conclusion drawn through the total score that the self-regulatory ability of DUT students in English BL is not quite strong. Meanwhile, the histogram of the frequency of the total score (Fig. 1) indicates that most respondents' total scores are between 150 and 200, and either extremely high or low scores are rare. This suggests that students' overall self-regulatory ability in English BL is similar.

TABLE 5.
SCORE OF ALL RESPONDENTS

item	full mark of each subscale	mean	mode	Std. Deviation
Intrinsic goal orientation	28.00	20.11	22.00	4.74
Self-efficacy for learning	56.00	39.65	46.00	9.57
Meta-cognition	84.00	53.43	55.00	9.89
Time and study environment	56.00	35.89	35.00	6.44
Help seeking	21.00	12.00	12.00	4.01
Internet self-efficacy	35.00	25.39	35.00	7.31
total	280.00	186.46	157.00	31.63

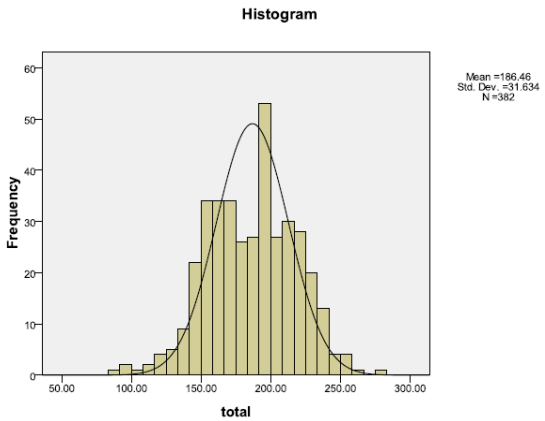

Figure 1. Histogram of the Frequency of All Respondents' Total Score

C. Correlations between Gender / Number of Courses / Time / Reasons and Total Score

In order to investigate whether there are significant correlations between gender / number of courses this term / time spent on this course / reasons taking this course and the total score, the author conducted correlation analysis with the help of SPSS. The output of the analysis shows that none of the correlation coefficients of these items reached 0.40, which is the critical point of correlation. The conclusion that elements like gender, number of courses this term, average time spent on this course, or reasons taking this course have little correlation with students' self-regulatory ability in English BL is drawn.

TABLE 6.
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN GENDER / NUMBER OF COURSES / TIME / REASONS AND TOTAL SCORE

items	Pearson Correlation with total score
gender	0.033
how many courses this term	0.225
average time spent on this course	0.085
disciplinary requirement	0.031
the course is interesting	-0.331
useful for other courses	-0.137
easy to acquire credits	-0.051
helpful to improve academic skills	-0.242
compulsory courses	-0.016
recommended by friends	-0.075
recommended by instructor	-0.048
helpful for job seeking	-0.070
class time is suitable	-0.338

D. Score of Undergraduates

Comparing the scores of the undergraduate respondents with those of all, it is easy to find that undergraduates' mean score of every subscale is lower than that of overall respondents, which suggests that undergraduates' self-regulatory ability is weaker than the average standard. The mean of the total score of undergraduate respondents is 175.20, also lower than the average one. Similar to that of all respondents, the histogram of the frequency of undergraduates' total score (Fig. 2) shows the distribution of undergraduates' total scores are centralized, which indicates undergraduates' self-regulatory ability in English BL on the campus of DUT is close to each other.

TABLE 7.
SCORE OF UNDERGRADUATES

item	full mark of each subscale	mean	mode	Std. Deviation
Intrinsic goal orientation	28.00	18.73	18.00	4.67
Self-efficacy for learning	56.00	37.26	46.00	9.88
Meta-cognition	84.00	50.48	52.00	9.28
Time and study environment	56.00	34.20	33.00	5.66
Help seeking	21.00	11.32	14.00	3.85
Internet self-efficacy	35.00	23.21	35.00	7.52
total	280.00	175.20	157.00	29.74

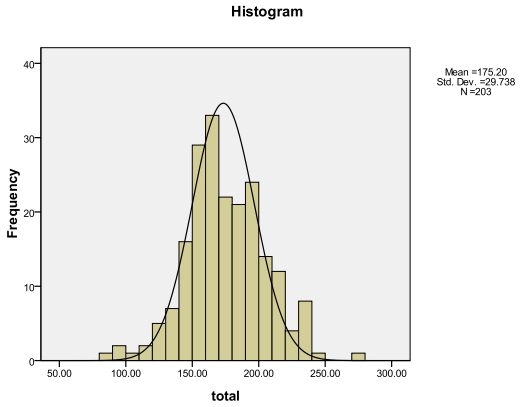

Figure 2. Histogram of the Frequency of Undergraduates' Total Score

E. Score of Postgraduates

According to the three tables of score (table 5, 7, 8), the postgraduate respondents' means of scores of all subscales and the total score as well are all lower than those of undergraduates and those of all, which suggests that the

postgraduates have stronger self-regulatory ability in English BL than undergraduates. The centralization of postgraduates' total score reflected by the histogram of the frequency (Fig. 3) also verifies that postgraduates' average self-regulatory ability is stronger than that of undergraduates.

TABLE 8.
SCORE OF POSTGRADUATES

item	full mark of each subscale	mean	mode	Std. Deviation
Intrinsic goal orientation	28.00	21.67	24.00	4.34
Self-efficacy for learning	56.00	42.37	46.00	8.44
Meta-cognition	84.00	56.77	55.00	9.52
Time and study environment	56.00	37.80	35.00	6.75
Help seeking	21.00	12.77	12.00	4.05
Internet self-efficacy	35.00	27.85	35.00	6.22
total	280.00	199.23	196.00	28.80

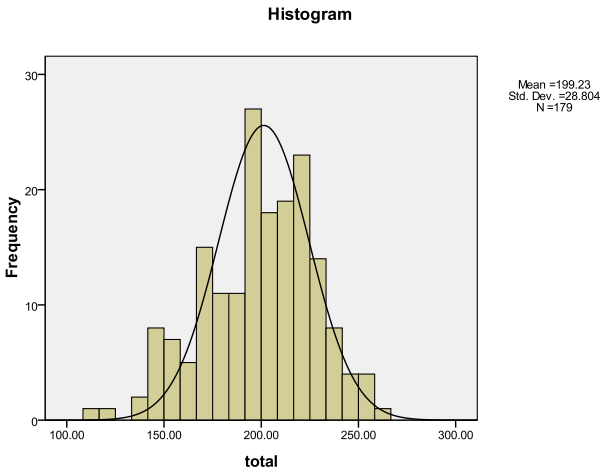

Figure 3. Histogram of the Frequency of Postgraduates' Total Score

F. Contrast of Self-regulatory Ability of Undergraduates and Postgraduates

According to the score tables of undergraduates and postgraduates, there is difference of the subscale and the total scores between undergraduates and postgraduates. In order to verify whether the difference is obvious or not, an Independent-Samples T Test was conducted with SPSS. The 2-tailed significance of the means of all subscales and the total scores is 0.000, and 0 is not included in the 95% confidence interval of the mean difference. Therefore, a conclusion that the difference of undergraduates' and postgraduates' scores is significant can be reached. In other words, the self-regulatory ability of the undergraduates and postgraduates is distinctly different.

TABLE 9.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T TEST

items	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Intrinsic goal orientation	1.595	0.207	-6.351	380	0.000	-2.941	0.463	-3.852	-2.030
Self-efficacy for learning	9.722	0.002	-5.448	379.635	0.000	-5.108	0.937	-6.951	-3.264
Meta-cognition	0.132	0.717	-6.526	380	0.000	-6.283	0.963	-8.175	-4.390
Time and study environment	11.452	0.001	-5.617	348.934	0.000	-3.607	0.642	-4.871	-2.344
Help seeking	0.629	0.428	-3.584	380	0.000	-1.451	0.405	-2.247	-0.654
Internet self-efficacy	11.591	0.001	-6.604	378.487	0.000	-4.643	0.703	-6.025	-3.261
total	0.121	0.728	-7.999	380	0.000	-24.033	3.005	-29.940	-18.125

G. Possible Reasons for the Difference between Undergraduates and Postgraduates

According to the analysis of all the research data, there exists an obvious difference of self-regulatory ability in English BL between undergraduates and postgraduates on the campus of DUT. A number of reasons, among which three may be particularly significant, can lead to this result.

First, comparing the scores of the subscales of intrinsic goal orientation and self-efficacy for performance, one can easily find that postgraduates outscore undergraduates in this sector, i.e. motivation. Thus postgraduates may be more motivated than their counterparts in English learning, which can help adopt better learning strategies and achieve better results. The positive motivation of postgraduates may result from their clear awareness of the significance of English learning in academic study and future job seeking as well.

Second, as to the subscales of meta-cognition and time and place environment management, which are important self-regulated learning strategies, generally the postgraduates have gained higher scores. This may imply that through two or three more years' learning and practice, postgraduates may have accumulated more self-regulated learning strategies skills and thus are better at self-regulation.

Third, postgraduates achieved better than undergraduates in the subscale of Internet efficacy, which suggests that most postgraduates have a better mastery of computers and the Internet. Two or more years' adoption of modern technologies of computer and Internet in learning may help students strengthen their self-efficacy and mastery of computer use.

In summary, more years' learning and practice will enhance learners' self-regulatory ability in BL, which is one major reason to justify the fact that postgraduates have stronger self-regulatory ability in English BL.

H. Suggestions to Improve Students' Self-regulatory Ability

By comparing the research results of the undergraduates and postgraduates, it's concluded that more years' learning and practice will enhance learners' self-regulatory ability in a BL context, as mentioned in the former part. Hence some empirical suggestions are provided for both instructors and students to improve learners' self-regulatory ability in BL through years of teaching and learning on campus.

In order to figure out what effective measures can be taken in course learning, several points of guiding principles should be highlighted. Foremost, the instructors should help students fully understand their leading role in learning. This is extremely significant in that traditional teaching have overly emphasized the role of the instructors in learning, which has led to students' undue independence on their instructors. Accordingly, it is crucial for students to establish and enhance the awareness of learners-centered teaching and learning modality. Measures to improve students' self-regulatory ability can only be effective and efficient on the basis of this keen awareness. Second, after acquiring the awareness of students-centered teaching and learning, students have to gain the knowledge of self-regulation: its meaning, connotation, implication and significance, for one can only truly master a skill or craft after knowing what it is. Understanding how self-regulation is composed, students can purposefully take actions to improve themselves. Third, it will be better if instructors set examples or models to explain specific self-regulatory strategies since examples and models can provide students a clearer and more concrete comprehension rather than a mere abstract concept. Fourth, the process of the improvement of one's self-regulatory ability always extends a relatively long period, say two or three years or longer. In addition, it is also an unbroken and progressive process which can not be completed without efforts and setbacks. Thus it requires both instructors and learners to be patient and persistent in the long term. Fifth, constant interactions between instructors and students can provide instructors more opportunities to be familiar with their students and students' problems. So instructors should try their best to create opportunities to communicate with students, making full use of various tools including modern technology of communication. Ultimately, timely feedback is an indispensable element which can help students find out their own shortcomings and weaknesses and thus better direct their subsequent efforts accordingly.

Keeping the general principles in mind and considering the specific situation on the campus of DUT, the author offers following suggestions to enhance students' self-regulated ability. First, instructors of English courses may more explain to their students the importance and necessity of English learning in academic study and future career as well. As a result, students can be more motivated in English learning. Second, more interactions between instructors and students in class can make the English courses more interesting and attracting. Activities, like debates on related themes, short plays of given scenarios, prompt speeches on hot issues, to name a few, can greatly liven up the atmosphere of class. Meanwhile, these activities can also cultivate cooperation and teamwork of students and thus promote peer learning among classmates. Third, instructors can hold some English learning experience exchange meetings wholly in English. On one hand, students can have an opportunity to practice their spoken English. On the other hand, students can acquire some helpful English learning and self-regulatory strategies. In addition, instructors can directly teach their students the components and application of common learning strategies. Fourth, instructors and students may constantly share information about useful and helpful English learning websites and software to strengthen students' self-efficacy in computer and Internet.

In summary, both instructors and students should establish a keen awareness of students-centered teaching and learning modality in the first position in a BL context. In addition, instructors can increase students' interest in English learning by enrich the content and form of English courses. Furthermore, self-regulatory learning strategies should be continually emphasized during the whole process of English learning. Ultimately students' self-regulatory ability can gradually be enhanced.

V. Conclusion and Implication

A. A Theoretical Framework of Self-regulation in Blended Learning

Despite the fact that Blended Learning has become a research focus in higher education, studies on students' self-regulation in a BL context are rare. Based on former studies and theories concerning BL and self-regulation, the author rearranged and generalized a theoretical framework of self-regulation in English learning in a BL context for her survey.

BL is a teaching and learning modality that combines traditional face-to-face teaching method and any form of instructional technology (e.g. videotape, CD-ROM, web-based materials) in order to maximize both the guidance of professors and the initiation of students. One of the most significant determinants of the outcome of BL is self-regulation regarding to the features of BL. Five self-regulatory attributes, i.e. motivation, meta-cognition, time and environment management, help seeking and Internet self-efficacy, are the main determinants of the success of learning in a BL context. With this theoretical framework of self-regulation in BL, the author constructed a questionnaire adapted from Pintrich's *Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire* (MSLQ) to assess the self-regulatory ability of students in English learning in DUT.

B. Status Quo in DUT's BL Context

The analysis of the data collected in this survey using the statistical software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) indicates that students in DUT do not have relatively strong self-regulatory ability in English learning in the BL context. Meanwhile, the outcome also implies that postgraduates' self-regulatory ability is stronger than that of undergraduates. The outcome also supports the argument that students' self-regulatory ability can be enhanced through teaching, learning and practice. Therefore, the author suggests that measures should be taken to increase students' motivation for English learning, self-efficacy for the Internet, and what's more, learning strategies like meta-cognition and management of time and place by enriching the content and form of English courses, directly teaching learning strategies, sharing useful English learning websites, enhancing awareness of peer learning and teamwork, increasing interactions between students and instructors, etc. With years of learning and practice, students can undoubtedly strengthen their self-regulatory ability, which will not only improve their academic skills but also benefit their future career.

C. Recommendations for Further Study

This study addresses the overall situation of students' self-regulatory ability in English learning in a BL context on the campus of DUT, instead of students' mastery of specific learning strategies or efficiency of course design. Subsequently the outcome is merely a rough panorama of the current situation. Therefore, studies of what learning strategies are better mastered by students, what should be strengthened, and how to design the English courses may be conducted. In addition, the instrument of this study is mere one questionnaire, which has a lot limitation on reflecting the reality and details. Further studies can be conducted using more complex measures such as structured interviews, teacher judgments, or a measure process combining these three methods in order to get detailed, refined and accurate results.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1111-1115, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1111-1115

SMS: Tool for L2 Vocabulary Retention and Reading Comprehension Ability

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***Abstract*—Mobile phones are the new addition to the information and communication technologies (ITC) for learning. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of SMS on vocabulary retention and reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. Forty university students were assigned into experimental and control groups. The participants in experimental group received English words as well as definitions and example sentences through SMS in a spaced and scheduled pattern of delivery three times a week throughout 16 sessions while those in control group were taught new words though conventional board and paper technique for the same period. The participants were assessed biweekly. Results of t-test analysis indicated that participants in SMS group could significantly outperform those in control group. The results of this study can also provide pedagogical implications for utilizing SMS as an effective and flexible learning tool.**

***Index Terms*—Short Message Service (SMS), Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), vocabulary retention**

I. Introduction

Mobile phones are particularly useful mini-computers that fit in student's pocket, are always with them, and are nearly always on (Prensky, 2005). Whereas the introduction of mobile phones in different parts of the world such as Middle East region keeps climbing and short message service (SMS) is being widely used by youth today as a means of communication, not many researchers have explored the application of the short message service in second language. As Beasley (2009) maintains "Text messaging has become a way of life for many in the 21st century" (p. 89).

In most Asian countries where English is a foreign language, EFL learners face the challenge of lacking exposure to English since for the majority, the class is the only occasion to use English. In addition, there are only limited hours per week for the English course in most schools and universities. In such conditions, teachers should make difficult choices about how to use this limited time to promote language learning. Here, there seems an urgent need to find an effective self-study approach for the students to develop their communication skills as well as enlarge their vocabulary size.

An abundance of evidence from some researches suggest that mobile learning (m-learning) has potential in providing EFL learners with large exposure to the target content as learners can do self-learning anytime and anywhere with the assistance provided by mobile technology (Thornton and Houser, 2005; Chinnery, 2006). A wealth of research has documented the strength of the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension ability. Given the close relationship between ESL/EFL learners' vocabulary command and their ability to understand English readings, many researchers have been searching for ways to effectively enhance students' acquisition and retention of new vocabulary knowledge. As Thornbury (2004) indicated, two factors determine retention: first those words that are easy to learn are better retained. Second, those words that are learned over spaced learning sessions are retained better than words that are learned in concentrated burst.

The researchers in this study believe that SMS can help extend learners' opportunities in meaningful ways and provides better conditions for learning vocabulary. With that in mind, they tried to examine the effect of SMS, benefits from personal, informal, situated and context-aware learning on vocabulary retention and its relation to reading comprehension ability of Iranian lower-intermediate EFL learners. They also investigated the participants' attitudes toward learning vocabulary via SMS.

II. Review of Literature

A. Technology Enhanced Language Learning

As Chabra and Figueiredo (2002) maintain, m-learning is the ability to receive learning anytime, anywhere, and on any device. Learning through SMS resides in m-learning and can be considered as a part of the world of e-learning. SMS also refers, as Anohina (2005) believes, to the use of technology for learning in a broad sense. He also adds that

SMS "encompasses educational processes carried out in compliance with different theoretical models pursued using different educational methods and is, normally, based on activities that take place via any electronic medium" (p. 94). It is also claimed that employing mobiles for learning can assist students' motivation, encourage a sense of responsibility, help organizational skills, act as reference tools, and help track students' progress and assessment (Smith and Kent, 2003).

Rozgein (2008) stated that technology enhanced language learning (TELL) motivates students by letting them decide about their study time, the conditions they will run the tasks, and organize their study process regardless of whether the other participants of the course follow the same line. As Thornton and Houser (2005) claim, "mobile phones enhance regular study, lead to more exposure to the target words and more vocabulary gains than the detailed presentation of the lessons do" (p. 216). Their findings are in accordance with the empirical evidence in the cognitive psychological research proposing hat constant and distributed practice have a more beneficial effect on memory and learning than massed practice.

Cavus and Ibrahim (2009) investigated the use of wireless technologies in education with particular reference to the potential of learning new technical English language words using SMS. The system, developed by the authors and called mobile learning tool (MOLT), was tested with 45 1st-year undergraduate students. During the experiment, new words and their meanings were sent to students throughout the day in half hourly intervals and their learning abilities were assessed by performing on tests before and after the experiment. The results showed that students "enjoyed and learned new words with the help of their mobile phones" (p. 89).

In another research, Lu (2008) examined the effect of SMS vocabulary lessons of limited lexical information on the small screens of mobile phones. As he reports, the participants recognized more vocabulary during the post-test after reading the regular and brief SMS lessons than they did after reading the relatively more detailed print material. In a similar program developed for Italian learners in Australia, Levy and Kennedy (2005), found that sending English words and idioms via can enhance the participants' recall of the given words. Also, in an innovative project on using mobile phones to teach English at a Japanese university, Thorton and Houser (2004) focused on providing English vocabulary instruction by SMS. The results indicated that the students in SMS group learned over twice the number of words as the students in web and paper groups.

B. Merits of SMS in Education

Lomine and Buckingham (2009) listed a series of advantages of employing SMS in educational contexts. As they insert, SMS:

- is quick, discrete, to the point, and inexpensive.
- improves students' motivation and retention and involve them more actively
- requires little or no familiarization or training.

Cavus (2009) also maintains that learners' interest in using mobile phones can help them learn new words. He adds that one of the reasons could be the joy they get from using SMS as a "flexible tool into their learning" (p. 76). Meanwhile, he believes that the increase in vocabulary retention via mobile phone-based teaching systems can be due to the positive attitude toward learning vocabulary via SMS.

To achieve the goals of the present quasi-experimental study, the following research question was posed:

Q1. Does short message service (SMS) have any effect on vocabulary retention and reading comprehension ability of Iranian lower-intermediate EFL learners?

To come up with reasonable results on the basis of the aforementioned research question, the following null hypothesis was proposed:

HO1. SMS does not have any significant effect on vocabulary retention and reading comprehension ability of Iranian lower-intermediate EFL learners.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants were selected from 90 lower-intermediate EFL adult learners who took general English course at Sama College, affiliated to Islamic Azad University (IAU) of Mashhad, Iran. Due to the gender segregation rules in Sama College, only female students participated in this project. The participants' age ranged from 19 to 25. Having administered a test of homogeneity, the researchers could finally select 40 students for the purpose of this study. The participants were randomly assigned to two experimental and control groups. It should be stated that all participants attended the course regularly but six students (three in each group) missed the final exam. Hence, scores for 34 subjects were taken into statistical analysis.

B. Instrumentation

To collect the required data, several instruments were employed in this study:

(1) Nelson Test. In order to make sure that all participants were homogeneous and truly at the same level of language proficiency, the Nelson Test (100A) developed by Fowler, W.S. & Coe, N. (1976) was administered. The test contained 50 items. The reliability index of this test was estimated through Cronbach's Alpha as .824.

(2) Researchers-Made Test Battery. In order to assess the participants' level of achievement throughout the study, an English general proficiency test battery was developed by the researchers including vocabulary (10 items) and reading comprehension (20 items) subtests. The participants took the test before and after the treatment as the study pretest and posttest. The vocabularies were selected from among those practiced during the course. The reading section of the test included four authentic passages inserted with the words practices in the study. This test battery was piloted with a group of similar test-takers at the Islamic Azad University, Mashhad branch. Cronbach's Alpha formula for multiple choice items and Kuder-Richardson formula 21 (KR-21) for binary items were calculated; the results showed a reliability index of .818 and .712, respectively.

Procedures

To ensure the homogeneity of the participants at the outset of the study, a Nelson Test was administered to 90 female students studying at different majors in Sama Collage, Mashhad, Iran. Having analyzed the data, the researchers selected forty participants (N = 40) for the purpose of this study. When asked for their attitudes toward learning through SMS, all participants expressed neither positive nor negative opinions about learning vocabulary via SMS. Therefore, they were randomly assigned into two experimental (N = 20) and control (N = 20) groups.

In the next phase of the study, the participants in both groups took a pretest. During 16 sessions of treatment, 50 English words followed by definitions and example sentences were presented to the participants in experimental group through SMS. These messages were delivered in a spaced and scheduled pattern of delivery: three times a week on even days at 9.00 p.m. Each message contained three to four words as well as synonyms and examples. Totally, 16 messages were sent during five weeks of treatment. The sent descriptions and examples were as short as possible so that the recipients could read these messages on their small screens without having to scroll down many times. In control group, the participants were given a list of words on paper followed by definitions and example sentences three times a week. It is worth mentioning that due to personal problems five participants (three in control group and two in experimental group) dropped the course. To remove the participant effect from the study in experimental group, one student's score was randomly removed from the final results of the study. Having finished the treatment (five weeks, 16 sessions), the participants in both groups (N=34) sat for the posttest. The researchers administered the pretest as posttest to see the effects of the treatment throughout the study.

IV. Results and Discussions

Having collected the required data based on the mentioned data collection instruments and procedures, the researchers conducted the analysis of data and tested the hypothesis formulated for the present study.

A. Results of Nelson Test as the Homogenizing Instrument

To check the homogeneity of the total participants (N=90), the Nelson Test, version (100A) was administered. Table 1 illustrates the descriptive statistics of participants' scores.

TABLE 1:
RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR NELSON AS HOMOGENIZING TEST

Test	Mean	SD	N
Nelson	22.72	6.17	40

As the results in Table 1 show, mean is 22.72 and the standard deviation is 6.17. Here, only participants (N=40) whose scores fall within one standard deviation below and above the mean, i.e. between 16.55 and 28.89 were found valid to be included as the subjects of this study in control and experimental groups. The other participants (N=50) were found missing and were excluded from the study. Meanwhile, to ensure true homogeneity of the participants (N=40) in control (N=20) and experimental (N=20) groups, an independent-sample t-test was conducted, (see Table 2).

TABLE 2:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR NELSON AS HOMOGENIZING TEST

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Cont.	20	22.72	1.72	1.56	38	.12
Exp.	20	21.91	1.54			

As the results of Table 2 shows, there is no statistically significant difference [t (38) = .1.56, p = .12 (two-tailed)] between control (M = 22.72, SD = 1.72) and experimental (M = 1.91, SD = 1.54) groups with regard to language proficiency which confirms the homogeneity of the participants at the outset of the study.

B. Results of Researchers-made Reliability

To ensure that the researchers-made test is reliable, an analysis was done employing Cronbach's Alpha to estimate the reliability indexes of vocabulary and reading comprehension sections of the pretest. As Table 3 indicates, both sections of the pretest enjoy a relatively high reliability (α=.818 for vocabulary and α=.815 for reading comprehension).

TABLE 3:
RESULTS OF RELIABILITY OF PRETEST

Test Section	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Vocabulary	.818	10
Reading Comprehension	.815	20

C. Results of Study Pretest

To compare the participants' performances on the researchers-made test in control and experimental groups at the outset of the study, an independent-sample t-test was conducted, (see Table 4).

TABLE 4:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR STUDY PRETEST

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*p*
Exp.	17	9.00	3.82	1.02	32	.31
Cont.	17	7.78	3.08			

As Table 4 shows, participants in both experimental (SMS) group (M = 9.00, SD = 3.82) and control (paper) group (M = 7.8, SD = 3.08) have achieved low means in pretest, indicating that they were unfamiliar with words used in the vocabulary and reading comprehension sections of the test. In addition, the results reveal no significant difference [t (32) = 1.02, p = .31 (two-tailed)] between the two groups, showing that both experimental and control groups are similar before the treatment begins.

D. Results of Study Posttest

As mentioned in instrumentation, participants in control and experimental groups took the same pretest as the study posttest. A t-test analysis was conducted to compare their scores. Table 5 shows the results for this analysis.

TABLE 5:
RESULTS OF T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR STUDY POSTTEST

Groups	N	M	SD	t	df	*P*
Exp.	17	28.76	3.84	9.24	32	.00
Cont.	17	17.17	3.45			

As Table 5 reveals, participants in experimental (SMS) group (M = 28.76, SD = 3.84) significantly outperformed [t (32) = 9.24, p = .00 (two-tailed)] those in control (paper) group (M = 17.17, SD = 3.45) in vocabulary retention and reading comprehension. The results also indicate that the vocabularies acquired through SMS can also affect the improvement of reading comprehension ability of Iranian lower-intermediate EFL learners.

V. CONCLUSIONS

As the findings of this study demonstrate, mobile phones as tool and SMS as an application can facilitate certain forms of learning. Since the text messages can be easily sent at predetermined times and intervals, they can be stored systematically and accessible for later retrievals. According to the results of this study, participants in SMS group could significantly outperform the ones in conventional/paper group, confirming the results found by Lu (2008) and Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) stating mobile phones can be an effective medium for self-learning L2 vocabulary. The obtained results also showed that acquiring vocabularies sent through SMS can be effective in improving learners' reading comprehension scores.

Besides, the findings of this study may have some hints for English teachers and educators. EFL teachers can be encouraged to employ SMS as a supporting learning tool to facilitate vocabulary instruction. More studies, however, are required to determine the role of mobile phones inside and outside of the classrooms such as their role in developing interactive communications between the teacher and the learners. In case SMS is used properly, teachers can devote the constrained class time to other productive skills such as listening or writing. The results of this and similar studies imply that from now on the teachers will not have to begin their teaching with "Please switch your mobiles off"; instead, they can begin with "Switch your mobiles on, please".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on the earlier draft of this paper.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1116-1121, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1116-1121

Study Habits and Attitudes of Freshmen Students: Implications for Academic Intervention Programs

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***Abstract*—The substantive aim of this study was to investigate the favorable and unfavorable study habits and study attitudes of the freshmen students and determine its implications in formulating academic intervention programs. The Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes (SSHA) instrument developed by Brown and Holtzman (1969) was used to assess the study habits and attitudes of the students. Results show that students generally do not approve teacher methods and classroom management, and have inefficient time management. Favorable and unfavorable study habits and attitudes of the students were also revealed. Implications of these findings were discussed and the theory of confluent education was considered in designing a framework of academic intervention programs among HEIs.**

***Index Terms*—study habits, study attitudes, study orientation, academic achievement, academic intervention programs, confluent education**

I. Introduction

A great deal of research literature provides an evidence that study habits and study attitudes are both significant variables which determine the academic performance of students [3, 5, 9, 12, 15].Yet, in spite of the perceived importance of study habits and study attitudes to educational achievement, very little attention were given by academic institutions to improve these factors. This is manifested from the very low understanding level and the equally poor and deteriorating knowledge of many students which is still a great concern of educators, parents and governments [15].This problem is pointed out by Hurlburt, et.al [8] as contextual and systemic: it is rooted in the educational process shared by students and schools.

Consequently, the need to improve student's study habits and attitudes is deemed necessary to improve student's academic achievement. Accordingly, it is essential for schools to determine factors which affect these characteristics adversely propose remedial measures and employ strategies for the development of good study habits and study attitudes [9].This is further supported by Hurlburt, et.al. [8] from their study which suggested that a confluent educational philosophy (systemic and holistic) and using confluent educational strategies (through which students' social-emotional and personal empowerment needs are met) may enhance the school experience, improve study habits and attitudes, and ameliorate the high dropout rate among the students.

The premise that improving study habits and attitudes will lead to academic success, this study is conducted. It aimed to provide comparison data on the study habits and attitudes of the high achievers and underachievers and consider the implications of these findings in designing academic intervention programs. This will lead to the identification of negative study habits of students which may affect their educational achievement. Understanding these negative characteristics will help lay the foundation of developing academic intervention programs as implications of confluent educational strategies that will help develop good study habits and study attitudes among the students [15].

Very few studies have compared the study orientation (study habits and attitudes) possessed by different groups of college students, such as those with high GPAs versus low GPAs. The study of Proctor, et. al [14] signified the importance of this line of research for several reasons. They pointed out that identifying characteristics that differentiate among groups of students would be helpful to know in which areas certain groups of students are likely to require remediation. In addition, acknowledging all of the variables that differentiate between high- and low-performing students furthers theoretical understanding of why some students succeed in college while others fail. Accordingly, this expanded understanding of all the factors that contribute to college success (and failure). This is important for the purposes of prediction (e.g., of who is likely to succeed in college) [5, 12], identification (e.g., of students in need of intervention), and remediation (e.g., of skills that can be improved and have been linked to academic success) [14].

A review of literature reveals methods that will improve student's study habits and attitudes. Table 1 presents these strategies which congruently describes approaches to confluent education.

TABLE 1
FAVORABLE STUDY ORIENTATION AND ACADEMIC INTERVENTIONS

Authors	*Variables*	*Findings that and recommendations to improved student's study orientation*
Hussain (2006)	study attitudes, study habits and academic achievements	Guidance services related to students': 1) educational problems, 2) problems related with heads and teachers, 3) problems related with school, 4) personal and social problems, 5) problems related with parents, family and relatives
Boehler, et. al. (2001)	Study habits, study attitudes, academic achievement, group study	Collaborative learning or group study
Riaz, Kiran, Malik (2002)	Educational achievements; Schedule of study; Study habits	Following a schedule of work, writing back the classroom material and taking class notes
Patrick, Furlow, Donovan (1988)	Academic intervention programs, retention, high risk students	Academic intervention programs have included the provision of remediation courses, study skills and reading comprehension courses, academic learning centers, orientation programs, academic advising, and personal counseling.
Wai-yung and Lailing (1984)	Study skills, academic achievement	*Learn how to study course*
Awang and Sinnadurai (2010)	study orientation skills, study habits, study attitudes, academic performance	Study Orientation Skills training
Keller (1978)		Institutional or environmental factors such as university and divisional requirements, faculty teaching and examination procedures, residence hall atmosphere, background in English, and the quality of academic advising.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory of confluent education is a vital consideration in determining strategies to improve student's study habits and study attitudes. Confluent education as described by Hackbarth [7] is the type of learning intended to produce a sense of wholeness in people and society. Literature suggests that, as cited in the study of Hurlburt, et.al. [8], confluent education holds promise as an educational philosophy that can address issues of identity, self-worth, interpersonal relationships, and societal pressures. The said authors describes this as systemic in orientation, meaning, students should not be regarded as objects to be molded into predetermined forms; rather students and teachers should work together to achieve a mutually empowering learning experience. This implies that students should be educated as a whole person in all aspects which includes his intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal development [5].

Moreover, literature suggests that, as cited in the study of Crede and Kuncel [5], study habits and study attitudes are multidimensional in nature [6]. This means that effective studying requires not only that the students possess knowledge of appropriate studying techniques and practices (study skills), but also sustained and deliberate effort (study motivation), self-regulation, ability to concentrate, self-monitoring (study habits), and sense of responsibility for and value in one's own learning (study attitude) [5]).

With this premise, this paper considered the implications of the study habits and study attitudes of the students to confluent education to provide a valuable note in designing a framework for academic intervention programs among HEIs.

III. METHOD

Stratified random sampling was used to determine the 313 student respondents. They represented the different freshmen students taking different courses (nursing, engineering, accounting, commerce, IT, education, etc.). Respondents were classified as high achievers (90 and above GPA) and low achievers (82-below GPA).

The Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes (SSHA), Form H developed by Brown & Holtzman (1969) was used to measure student's study habits and study attitudes. The questionnaire consists of 100 items with 25 items on each SSHA scales namely; delay avoidance, work methods, teacher approval, and education acceptance. As defined in the study of Hurlburt, Koeker and Gade [7], the seven educational values in the SSHA instrument are defined as follows:

a) Delay Avoidance- a measure of the degree to which a student is prompt in completing assignments and is efficient in time management.

b) Work Methods- a measure of effective study skills.

c) Teacher Approval- a measure of student opinions about teacher classroom behavior and methods.

d) Educational Acceptance- a measure of student approval of educational objectives, practices, and requirements.

e) Study Habits- a combined score of the Delay Avoidance and Work Methods scales.

f) Study Attitudes- a combination of the scores of the Teacher Approval and Educational Acceptance scales.

g) Study Orientation- an overall measure of a student's study habits and attitudes.

Means, frequency count and normative percentile ranks on each of the seven scales were used to compare the study habits and study attitudes of the high, average and low achievers and the positive and negative study orientation of the respondents.

IV. Results

Of the 313 freshman students, 18 students are high achievers and 295 are low achievers. This suggests that only few numbers of students excel in their academics in the university.

Table 1 compares the means and standard deviations of the high and low achievers on study orientation. The result shows that the mean score of the high achievers on study orientation is higher compared to the low achievers. This implies that the high achievers have better study orientation than the low achievers. Furthermore, the high achievers have better score on all subcategories; study habits, study attitudes, delay avoidance, work method, attitude towards teacher and attitude towards education as depicted in Table 2.

TABLE 2
MEAN SCORE AND STANDARD DEVIATION ON SSHA SCALES

Scale	HIGH ACHIEVERS			LOW ACHIEVERS		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
Delay Avoidance	18	20.2222	7.36091	295	15.6644	6.61676
Work Methods	18	27.2222	10.03263	295	17.0407	7.51043
Teacher Approval	18	20.6111	7.35758	295	15.0136	6.29975
Educational Acceptance	18	27.3333	9.39962	295	17.5695	7.40388
Study Habits	18	47.4444	16.63173	295	32.7051	12.89246
Study Attitudes	18	47.9444	15.76098	295	32.5831	12.45724
Study Orientation	18	95.3889	30.72485	295	65.2881	23.58704

Table 1 further shows that students scored higher in work methods and educational acceptance compared to the other two scales (delay avoidance and teacher approval). This implies that students exert more effort in their study skills (work methods) and favors educational objectives and practices (educational acceptance).

In contrast, students obtained lower mean score on the scales delay avoidance and teacher approval. This connotes that generally the students are not prompt in completing their requirements and do not have efficient time management and do not favor teacher classroom behavior and methods.

TABLE 3
PERCENTILE SCORES ON SSHA SCALES

Scale	High Achievers			Low Achievers		
	Mean Score	Percentile Rank	Interpretative Value	Mean Score	Percentile Rank	Interpretative Value
Delay Avoidance	20.2222	50-60	Average High	15.6644	35-45	Average Low
Work Methods	27.2222	65-75	Average High	17.0407	35-45	Average Low
Teacher Approval	20.6111	25-30	Below Average	15.0136	10-20	Below Average Low
Educational Acceptance	27.3333	50-60	Average High	17.5695	10-20	Below Average Low
Study Habits	47.4444	50-60	Average High	32.7051	25-30	Below Average
Study Attitudes	47.9444	35-45	Average Low	32.5831	10-20	Below Average Low
Study Orientation	95.3889	35-45	Average Low	65.2881	20-Oct	Below Average Low

There are some significant revelations in the study habits and attitudes of the high and low achievers as revealed in Table 3. The table illustrates the mean scores under the different SSHA scales and compared to the percentile norm found in the SSHA manual. Under Delay Avoidance, the high achievers scored between 50^{th} and 60^{th} percentile which indicates an average level while the low achievers scored between 35^{th} and 45^{th} percentile that signifies an average low level. There were large differences in the percentile ranks between the high and low achievers under Work Method scale, with the former scoring on the average high level (65^{th} to 75^{th} percentile) and the latter at the average low level (35^{th} to 45^{th} percentile). On Teacher Approval, both high and low achievers do not approve teacher's classroom management and methods as revealed in their very low percentile rank of 25^{th} to 30^{th} and 10^{th} to 20^{th} respectively. There is also great discrepancy on the Educational Acceptance of the high and low achievers with the former scoring on average level (50^{th} to 60^{th} percentile) and the latter on below average low level (10^{th} to 20^{th} percentile).

The study habits of the high achievers scored on average high while the low achievers on below average. This means that the high achievers have better study habits than the low achievers. However, the study attitudes of both high and low achievers do not show good implication as revealed in their scores of average low and below average low level respectively. Moreover, the study orientation of both groups does not reveal promising results. The high achievers scored on the average low level and the low achievers scored on below average low level. This implies that generally both groups do not have favorable study orientation.

Some significant revelations were found from the favorable and unfavorable characteristics of the freshmen. Favorable attitudes most noted were students utilizing their vacant hour so as to reduce evening work; taking few minutes to review answers before passing their examination paper; working hard to make a good grade even if they don't like the subject, studying three or more hours per day outside of class; organizing their work at the beginning of their study to utilize the time most effectively; giving special attention to neatness on reports, assignments and other work to be turned in among others.

Unfavorable study habits and attitudes were mostly found under delay avoidance, work methods and teacher approval. Among the noted negative or unfavorable study habits of the low achievers under delay avoidance were: sometimes quitting or studying only the easier parts of the lesson; sometimes distracted about daydreaming and future plans, wasting too much time talking, reading magazines, listening to the radio, watching TV, going to the movies, etc. for the good of their studies. On work methods, low achievers frequently memorize grammatical rules, definition of technical terms, formulas, etc. without really understanding them, have difficulty in expressing themselves and have trouble with the mechanics of English, skip figures, graphs and tables in a reading assignment and hesitate to ask the teacher for further explanation on an assignment that is not clear to them. On teacher approval, the low achievers think that their teachers like to exercise their authority too much; feel that teachers are too rigid and narrow-minded; believe that their teachers fail to give sufficient explanation; feel that teachers are arrogant and conceited among many others.

V. Discussion

The study reveals that among the freshman respondents a significant number belongs to the underachievers. Riaz, et al. [15] and Patrick et al., [13] describes this as a prevailing situation characterized by students with low understanding level and accompanied by discouraging achievements. Further, the study shows that the high achievers have better study habits and attitudes as compared to low achievers. Similar results have been described by Sarwar, et al. [16], Crede and Kuncel [5], Hurlburt, et al. [8], Riaz, et al. [15].

Based on the results, one of the most marked problems was in the area of teacher approval. This is in accordance with the study of Hurlburt, Koeker and Gade [8] where most of the Native Indian students were generally less positive on opinions about teacher classroom behavior and method. This finding demonstrates the presence of poor teacher-student relations and reveals that students do not approve teacher methods and management. This result was significant. The meta-analysis on study habits conducted by Crede and Kuncel [5] pointed out that academic anxiety was found to be an important negative predictor of performance. This means that the students are generally affected by the academic requirements given by teachers which in turn affect their academic achievement. This problem emphasizes the role of the teacher in improving student's academic success. Wai-yung and Lailing [18] cited that teachers are inclined to tell students what to learn but generally neglect to instruct students about how to learn.

Another negative area was under the scale of delay avoidance. It implied that most of the respondents are not prompt in submitting their assignment and are not efficient in their time management. Same results were discussed in the study of Nourian, et al. [11] and Stark [17] were time management was one of the marked problems. Low achievers in this study indicated that they prefer to study alone than with others. In the study of Boehler, et al [2], students who studied in groups performed significantly better than those who were not. In addition, low achievers seemed to have trouble with the mechanics of English. This is consistent with literature as cited in the study of Patrick, et al [13] where academically underprepared students have deficiencies in basic academic skills like English, Mathematics and reading.

Collectively, literature suggest that effective studying requires not only that the students possess knowledge of appropriate studying techniques and practices (study skills), but also sustained and deliberate effort (study motivation), self-regulation, ability to concentrate and a sense of responsibility for and value in one's own learning [5]. Hurlburt, Koeker and Gade [8] proposed that personal relationships and relevancy of subject matter, rather than concern for specific study habits, maybe key factors in addressing low academic achievements. As reported by the same author, confluent education can play a vital role in addressing this problem of student's deteriorating knowledge. Confluent education they say, should be understood as systemic in orientation, meaning, students should not be regarded as objects that can be formed into predetermined forms; rather students and teachers should work together to achieve a mutually empowering learning experience. Confluent education recognizes that educating the whole person in all of his facets encompasses intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal development [4]. Literature suggest that peer group mentoring, symbolic and allegorical tales and cooperative group exercise revolving around real life issues contributes to a context where students are empowered and challenged according to their own individual developmental stages and learning styles. Research studies on confluent education as cited by Hurlburt, Koeker and Gade [8], suggested that confluent education improves educational climate, interpersonal relations and attitudes towards learning.

Hence, there is a need for learning institutions to direct their attention to the creation and implementation of strategies and other similar activities that would help students develop good study habits and positive attitudes towards learning. Institutions need to embrace the concept of a "learning community" by encouraging and institutionalizing parental, instructional, and peer-mentoring programs to develop good study habits and positive learning attitudes among high school students. This would involve the creation, implementation, and monitoring of the learning community and peer mentoring program, which will, in turn, establish such program as an integral part of the curriculum [1].

VI. Implications for Practice

The present study provides merit for comprehensive academic interventions to improve the study habits and attitudes of the students. Consequently, improving student's study orientation leads to academic success. In view of confluent education, an integral academic foundation must be designed to create an environment that provides opportunities that encourage the development of highly motivated, self-directed, lifelong learners.

From the findings of this study, academic intervention programs based on the theory of confluent education can be drawn. Provisions of remediation courses, academic learning centers, academic advising, personal counseling, academic and career skills can be regarded as helpful in improving students study habits and attitudes (Patrick, et al., (1988). Figure 1 illustrates the proposed framework for confluent academic intervention programs.

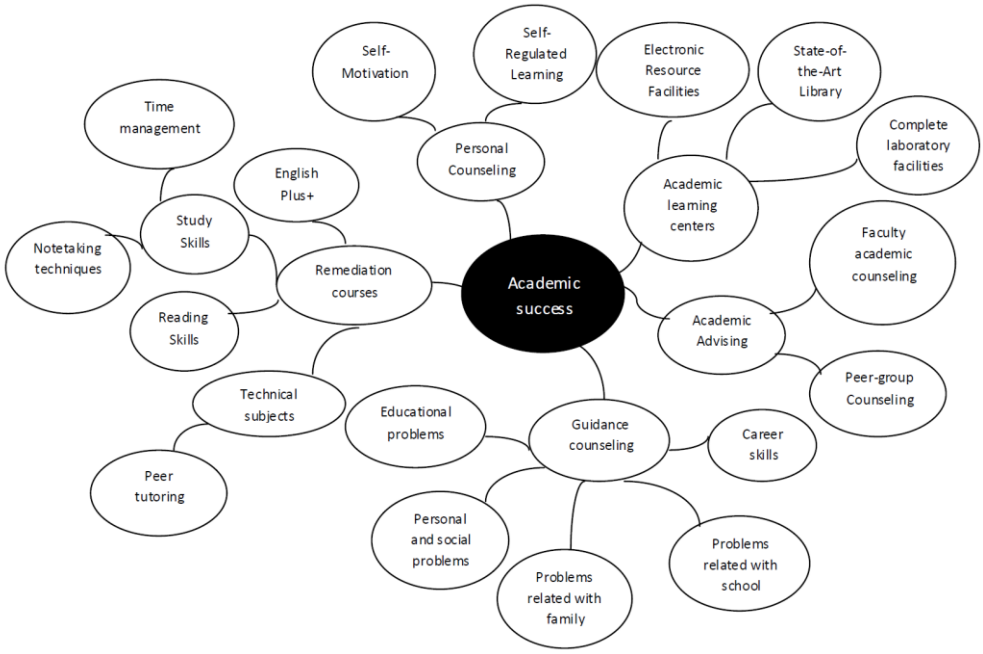

Figure 1. Confluent Academic Intervention Programs

First and foremost, classroom environment must be conducive for learning. Student's approval of teachers' methods and management are crucial to attain maximum classroom learning outcomes. In a practical sense, teachers need to consider adjusting his teaching strategies to suit to the learning styles of the students. Moreover, teachers should recognize the influence of student habit and attitude have on learning outcome with a view of monitoring and determining individual student learning problem for appropriate action. The responsibility of teachers goes beyond using appropriate teaching strategies and instructional materials in imparting knowledge. They also need to work towards enhancing the development of some personality factors (e.g. motivation) that have direct influence on the academic achievement of students. Students can be screened for level of academic self-efficacy or study habit or attitude at the beginning of a term. If they are low in the domain, teachers in conjunction with the guidance counselors can work with such students to promote and enhance their self-efficacy or study habit/attitude. The assumption is enhancing the constructs early will lead to better academic achievement and good success and retention rates.

It is recommended that guidance services where affective behavior of students can be properly monitored and worked on to all freshmen students to established a better academic foundation and facilitate the achievement of the objective of the universal basic education.

Academic departments must enforce academic advising among their teachers. Provisions on compulsory academic counseling for underachievers must be imposed. Academic departments or student organizations may consider giving more remedial actions to improve student's reading and study skills, time management, English and Mathematics aptitude, and or review classes on their technical subjects. Activities to motivate students to make personal counseling could also be considered.

Literature suggests that academic learning centers are vital in creating conducive learning environment. Thus, the institution should ensure contemporary academic learning centers like state-of-the-art libraries, complete electronic resource centers (e.g. internet, multimedia facilities), and all-inclusive laboratory facilities.

Finally, future research is needed to investigate how this learning environment that integrates the proposed framework for confluent academic interventions affects students' learning behavior and enhances students' educational development. Moreover, it is noted that the findings of this study are derived from a single cohort of students from the institution. Thus, the extent to which results are generalizable to other content areas, therefore, furthers future investigation.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1122-1129, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1122-1129

The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Burnout among Iranian EFL Teachers

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***Abstract*—This study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and burnout among 104 Iranian EFL teachers. In addition, teachers' differences on EI and burnout were examined with respect to demographic variables. The participants were administered EI and Burnout questionnaires. The results obtained through using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation showed that there were significant negative correlations between EI and burnout, burnout, teaching experience and age and positive correlations between teachers' EI, teaching experience, and age. Finally, using T-Test, the researchers found no significant differences in teachers' EI and burnout with respect to gender. Implications of the study are discussed, and suggestions for further research are made.**

***Index Terms*—emotional intelligence, burnout, EFL teachers**

I. Introduction

Teaching profession has historically been viewed as the labor of love and kindness. It has many intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for people entering the pedagogical arena. However, teaching is not without its inherent problems. Problems associated with job related stress remain at the top of many teachers' list. In recent years, it has become a global concern, considering that about as many as a third of the teachers surveyed in various studies around the world reported that they regarded teaching as highly stressful (Borg, 1990). The amount and degree of stress a teacher experiences may be related to his negative self-perception, negative life experiences, low morale, and the struggle to maintain personal values and standards in the classroom (Worrall & May, 1989). Kyriacou (2001) stated, "the stress experienced by a particular teacher will be unique to him or her, and will depend on the precise complex interaction between his or her personalities, values, skills, and circumstances" (p. 29). According to Milstein and Farkas (1988), while the stressors (e.g. students' misbehaviors and discipline problems, students' poor motivation for work, heavy workload and time pressure, role conflict and role ambiguity, conflicting staff relationships in school management and administration, and pressure and criticisms from parents and the wider community) are found to be quite common across settings in the teaching profession, teachers do not react identically to these common stressors. Specifically, some teachers might develop psychological symptoms of varying severity, ranging from mild frustration, anxiety, and irritability to emotional exhaustion as well as psychosomatic and depressive symptoms (Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985). In this connection, burnout is seen as a distinct negative manifestation of chronic stress (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

Burnout phenomenon is considered to be most prevalent among human service professionals whose primary role is to help and interact with others in emotionally demanding contexts over time (Maslach, 1982). Given that teachers are the main provider of emotionally challenging and intensively interactive human service work in schools, it is not unusual that teachers have been a popular subject pool in the burnout literature (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Teacher burnout has been defined in a variety of ways throughout the history of the phenomenon (Gold, 1984). Although there is yet to be universally accepted definition for the term, researchers have often chosen to describe and operationalize teacher burnout in the same manner meant by Maslach and other scholars (e.g., Gold, 1996; Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987; Schwab, Jackson & Schuler, 1986). That is, the three dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment are generally used as the basis for any discussion on teacher burnout, along with the MBI, or its more recent teacher-specific version (MBI-ES) as the standard measurement tool (see Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

Burnout might have serious negative repercussions not only on the teacher's wellbeing but also on the teaching-learning processes in which he or she is immersed. Prior studies show that burnout negatively influences student 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). Therefore, teachers should be helped to manage occupational stress to avoid burnout. Apropos of this issue, a question may be raised as to why some teachers succeed in surmounting high levels of

occupational stress, while others cannot meet expectations imposed on them and tend to collapse under the burden of everyday stress, the chronic level of which may render burnout. One reason might be teacher emotional intelligence as a personal coping resource.

According to Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer (2000), individuals differ as to their abilities to practice effective control over their emotional lives. Such individual differences are now thought of as differences in emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Oginska-Bulik (2005) held that the ability to effectively deal with emotions and emotional information in the workplace assists employees in addressing occupational stress and retaining psychological health. Also a study conducted by Gohm, Corser, & Dalsky (2005) revealed that emotional intelligence was associated with relatively lower reported stress levels.

Mayer and Salovey (1997) held that emotional intelligence consists of specific competencies that orchestrate skills in perceiving emotions, facilitate thought, understand emotions and manage emotions. Also according to Bar-On, Brown, Kirkcaldy and Thome (2000) emotional intelligence includes a range of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that have an impact on one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures. Therefore, it could be extrapolated that the integrated operation of these competencies and skills might establish a moderately protective shield for teachers against burnout phenomenon.

A review of the scholarly literature has revealed that definitions of emotional intelligence widely vary. Some researchers view EI as an ability, which can be measured most accurately by a performance test (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The skill sets which are included in this explanation of EI are using emotion to facilitate thinking, understanding emotion, managing emotion, and perceiving emotion. Other researchers view EI as a mixed model, incorporating both ability and dispositional traits (Goleman, 1995). Still, other mixed models take into consideration the factors of mood, motivation, social skills and well being to define emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2007). In fact, Bar-On credits, Darwinism, Thorndike's theory of social intelligence, Wechsler's observation of non-cognitive factors, and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, and others as major influences on his model (Bar-On, 2007).

To assess individuals' emotional intelligence, Bar-On developed a 133-item self-report Emotional Intelligence test. The Bar-On EI test, called the emotional quotient inventory (EQ-I), is a self report measure of emotionally and socially intelligent behavior that provides an estimate of emotional-social intelligence (Bar- On, 1997). This test includes five major scales and 15 subscales which contribute to the emotional energy and self motivation required to cope with daily environmental demands and difficulties as follows (see also Bar-On, 2000):

(1) Intrapersonal: managing oneself, the ability to know one's emotions.

(a) Emotional self-awareness (the ability to be aware of, recognize and understand one's emotions).

(b) Assertiveness (the ability to express one's feelings, beliefs, thoughts and to defend one's right).

(c) Self-regard (the ability to be aware of, understand, accept and respect oneself).

(d) Self-actualization (the ability to realize and reach one's potential).

(e) Independence (the ability to be self-directed and self-reliant in one's thinking and actions and to be free from emotional dependency).

(2) Interpersonal: managing relationships with others.

(a) Empathy (the ability to understand and appreciate others' feelings).

(b) Interpersonal-relationship (the ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships that are characterized by emotional closeness and intimacy and by giving and receiving affection).

(c) Social responsibility (the ability to demonstrate oneself as a cooperative, contributing and constructive member of one's social group).

(3) Adaptability: ability to adjust to change.

(a) Problem solving (the ability to effectively solve problems).

(b) Reality testing (the ability to validate one's feelings and thoughts by assessing the correspondence between what is subjectively experienced and what objectively exists).

(c) Flexibility (the ability to adjust one's feelings/thoughts to change).

(4) Stress management: controlling stress

(a) Stress tolerance (the ability to manage one's strong emotions, adverse events, and stressful conditions by positively coping with problems).

(b) Impulse control (the ability to control one's emotions and resist an impulse to act).

(5) General mood: the ability to be optimistic and positive as well as to enjoy life.

(a) Happiness (the ability to feel satisfied with life and to have fun).

(b) Optimism (the ability to look at the brighter side of life and maintain a positive attitude in the face of problems).

Within the few last decades, numerous theoretical and experimental studies have been done on EI. EI has been related significantly and positively to increased adapted behavior such as: overall relationship satisfaction and stability (Gottman, et al., 2001), higher quality social life (Lopes, et al., 2003), more academic achievement (Nelson & Nelson, 2003; Parker et al., 2004), longer retention in the educational system (Parker, et al, 2006), more satisfaction in life (Bastin, et al. , 2005) and the use of better adjusted coping strategies (Gohm & Clore, 2002; Matthews et al., 2006).

Moreover, there has been some research carried out to investigate teachers' EI, especially that of EFL teachers. Moafian and Ghanizadeh's (2009) study investigated the relationship between perceived EI and self-efficacy among

Iranian EFL teachers in private institutes. Findings revealed that there was a positive relationship between EI and self-efficacy, also three subscales of emotional intelligence - emotional self-awareness, interpersonal-relationship, and problem solving – were found to be potent predictors of teacher self-efficacy. In another study,

Iordanoglou (2007) examined the relationship between EI, leadership, job commitment and satisfaction among 332 primary education teachers in Greece. Results showed that EI had a positive effect on leadership effectiveness and is also strongly related to teachers' commitment and satisfaction. The findings suggested that besides cognitive abilities, the selection criteria in education should also include emotional competencies to ensure adequate performance of educators.

Finally, Mendes (2002) utilized an early form of the MSCEIT, known as the MEIS, to measure emotional intelligence in order to evaluate correlations and build models of prediction between EI and burnout in school teachers. The results showed no significant correlation between any of the MEIS emotional intelligence subscales and the MBI-ES burnout scales. However, it was concluded from a subset of school teachers (n = 15) who had a high level of emotional exhaustion that managing emotion was negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion (r = -.53, p < .05). Also, there was a significant negative correlation among personal accomplishment and managing emotions (r = -.65, p < .05) for that subset of school teachers. Furthermore, it was observed that teachers who reported a low level of personal accomplishment (n = 36), had a positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and managing emotions (r = .34, p < .05). Finally, Mendes determined from a hierarchical regression analysis that none of the predictor variables (identifying emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions) accounted for a significant proportion of variability in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, or personal accomplishment.

However, the available literature is admittedly slim on empirical research on the relationship between burnout and emotional-social construct of EI as introduced by Bar-On (1997), especially in the context of teaching a foreign/second language. As such, the scarcity of research in this area necessitates undertaking a rigorous study into examining the role of EI in teacher burnout in a foreign language context. To this end, the present study aims to; first, investigate the relationship between EI and burnout, and the relationship between these two constructs and teachers' age and teaching experience, second, to investigate whether there are any differences in teachers on EI and burnout scores with respect to gender.

II. Methodology

A. Participants and Procedure

The participants in this study consisted of 104 EFL teachers (52 females and 52 males) aged between 20 and 47 years old (M= 28.45, SD= 5.15) with a range of between 1 and 19 years of teaching experience (M=6.57, SD=3.99). The participants were selected from 5 private language institutes in Tehran. The institutes were chosen based on accessibility.

The study was carried out at October 2010. The participants took the questionnaires home, filled them in and submitted it to the researchers within a week. To receive reliable data, the researchers explained the purpose of the study to the participants, and assured them that their information would be confidential.

B. Instruments

An anonymous self-report questionnaire, comprising 2 scales and a subject fact form, served as the research tool in this study. The 2 scales measured teachers EI and burnout and the fact form enquired about participants' demographic information including age, gender and years of teaching experience.

1. EI scale

To evaluate language teachers' EI, the researchers employed ''Bar-On EI test" (Bar-On, 1997). This test employs a 5-point response scale with a textual response format ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. It includes 5 major factors and 15 subfactors or components (discussed in the introduction section). In this study, a Persian version of the EI test with 90 items was utilized. According to Samouei (2003), the questionnaire has generally good internal consistency, test–retest reliability, and constructs validity. To analyze the questionnaire in Iran, Samouei chose a group of 500 university students (aging from 18 to 40) in Tehran and analyzed the norms of the test. As he stated, the questionnaire has generally good internal consistency, test–retest reliability, and construct validity. With the adapted version in Iran, the Cornbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.93 and the reliability index gained through odd-even, split-half method was [0.88].

2. Burnout scale

Teacher burnout was measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator's Survey (MBI-ES) (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). The scale 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. In this study the original English version of the scale was utilized, and reliability estimates were α = 0.91 for EE; α = 0.78 for DP, α = 0.89 for PA subscales.

III. Results

A. Correlation between EI, Burnout, Age and Years of Teaching Experience

In order to test the relationships between teachers EI, burnout, age and years of teaching experience, a series of Pearson Product-Moment Correlations was run. The results indicated that there were significant positive correlations between EI and Age (r = 0.25, p □ 0.01) and EI and years of teaching experience (r = 0.38, p □ 0.01), and significant negative correlations between EI and Burnout (r = - 0.64, p □ 0.01), Burnout and Age (r = - 0.34, p □ 0.01) and Burnout and Years of teaching experience (r = - 0.37, p □ 0.01) (see Table 1).

TABLE 1
THE RESULTS OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN EI, BURNOUT, AGE AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

	Burnout	Age	Years of teaching experience
EI	- 0.64**	0.25**	.38**
Burnout		- 0.34**	-.37**

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

To analyze the data further, Regression Analysis was conducted. The results indicated that teachers' total score of EI was a negative predictor of the dependent variable (teacher burnout). In this part of the research R2 = 0.41 (β = -.64, t = -8.55, p < .01, F (1,103) = 73.13), indicating that 41% of the variance in burnout is explained by the independent variable, EI (see Table 2).

TABLE 2
REGRESSION ANALYSIS SUMMARY FOR EI PREDICTING BURNOUT

Predictor	R	R^2	F(1, 103)	B	SEM	Beta (β)	t
	.64	.41	73.13**				
EI				134.03	12 .04	- .64	- 8.55**

**p < .01

Also it was found that, all of the 15 components which compose the total EI test had significant negative correlations with teachers' burnout. Among these components, Self actualization and happiness were found to have the highest negative correlations with burnout as follows: burnout and (1) self-actualization (r = - 0.58, p □ 0.01) and (2) happiness (r = - 0.62, p □ 0.01) (see Table 3).

B. Teacher Differences on EI and Burnout with Respect to Gender

To explore whether there were significant EI and burnout differences among teachers with respect to gender, a series of independent t-test analyses was conducted. The results indicated that, with respect to gender, teachers were not significantly different on their scores r on EI (t =.28, df =102, p □ .05) and burnout (t = 1.65, df = 102, p > .05) (see Table 4).

TABLE 3
THE RESULTS OF CORRELATION BETWEEN COMPONENTS OF EI AND TEACHERS' BURNOUT

	Burnout
Emotional self-awareness	- 0.42**
Assertiveness	- 0.27**
Self-regard	- 0.41**
Self-actualization	- 0.58**
Independence	- 0.31**
Empathy	- 0.50**
Interpersonal relationship	- 0.52**
Social responsibility	- 0.55**
Problem solving	- 0.27**
Reality testing	- 0.45**
Flexibility	- 0.45**
Stress tolerance	- 0.42**
Impulse control	- 0.28**
Optimism	- 0.49**
Happiness	- 0.62**

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

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS AND T-VALUES OF TEACHERS ON THEIR EI AND BURNOUT SUBSCALES SCORES BY GENDER (N=104)

	Male (N=52)		Female (N=52)		
Scales	M	SD	M	SD	t
EI	344.44	47.18	342.47	31.68	.28 [a]
Burnout	28.76	18.34	34.69	18.24	1.65 [a]

[a] Non-significant

IV. DISCUSSION

As stated earlier, the purpose of the present study was to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher burnout among EFL teachers in private language institutes. Furthermore, differences in EI and burnout scores were examined with respect to demographic variables. The results indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between EI and teacher burnout. The size of this correlation indicates that the higher the teachers' EI, the less likely they are to experience burnout in their profession. The findings also showed that EI was a potent negative predictor of burnout. This is in accordance with previous theoretical and empirical studies on the role of emotional intelligence in burnout, though these are limited where teachers are concerned, and quite sparse in the foreign/second language context altogether. Those who score high on emotional intelligence skills are more likely to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressures connected to occupational stress and health outcomes than those who enjoy less EI (Mendez, 2002). A study conducted by Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, and Mayer (1999) discovered that individuals who are able to regulate their emotional states are healthier because they "accurately perceive and appraise their emotional states, know how and when to express their feelings and can effectively regulate their mood states" (p. 161). This suggests that there is a direct connection between emotional intelligence skills and physical as well as psychological health (Tsaousis & Nikolaou, 2005). Emotionally intelligent individuals can cope better with life's challenges and control their emotions more efficiently (Taylor, 2001). Harrod and Scheer (2005) also held that emotional intelligence is the driving force behind the factors that affect personal success and everyday interactions with others.

As indicated earlier, among the EI components, self-actualization and happiness were found to have the highest negative correlations with teacher burnout. One explanation for this finding is that "there is a strong connection between the level of our self- actualization and our general well-being and health" Bar-On (2006, p.94). Self-actualization, the inclination to actualize one's capacities (Maslow, 1943), necessitates a certain amount of emotional energy to sustain the motivation needed for setting and achieving goals (Bar-On, 2006). Therefore, teachers experiencing burnout due to gradual reduction of their emotional resources may feel less self-actualized. Thus, they can no longer give themselves to students as they once could.

One possible explanation for the high negative correlation between happiness and teacher burnout is that happiness offers distance from the source of stress (Sultanoff, 1994) and can be regarded as a protective shield against stressful classroom situations for teachers. Sultanoff (1994) found that feelings of depression, anxiety, and anger were eliminated temporarily when people experienced joy. If stress can lead to burnout and happiness can neutralize stress, then happiness may be a coping mechanism to assuage teacher burnout.

The results also indicated a positive correlation between EFL teachers' EI and years of teaching experience, as well as age. In other words, teachers' emotional experience tends to increase over time and with every year of teaching. This is consistent with previous research that indicated EI is acquired and developed through learning and repeated experience, in contrast to IQ, which is considered relatively to be stable and unchangeable (Goleman, 1995). Bar-On (2000) also posited that EI develops over time and that it can be improved through training, programming and therapy.

Somewhat unexpectedly, regarding the influence of gender on teachers' EI, it was found that there was no significant difference between emotional intelligence of male and female teachers. These findings confirmed the results reported by Hopkins and Bilimoria (2008) while in conflict with the findings of Ciarrochi, Chan and Bajgar (2001) which indicated that there were significant differences between females and males, with females reporting higher EI levels. However, one plausible reason for this conflict may be related to cultural and environmental factors. Another reason for this lack of gender difference is that female teachers might underrate their competence or men might overrate theirs or both. Whether there were no real gender differences, or the real gender differences could not be detected by self-report questionnaires in the present findings has to await further studies.

Further, findings of the present study indicated a significant negative correlation between EFL teachers' age and their burnout, i.e. teachers' burnout tends to decline over time. This is consistent with previous research that demonstrated that age is an important factor in predicting teacher burnout. Substantial evidence has shown that younger teachers have a higher propensity to experience burnout (Farber, 1984). One explanation for these results can be based on Huston's (1989) additional finding that younger teachers, due to their age and lack of effective skills, feel entrapped with few alternative possibilities. Due to lack of experience, these teachers might get demoralized in a demanding situation. Consequently, their level of burnout might increase.

Regarding teaching experience, it was found that the more years of teaching experience EFL teachers enjoyed the lower levels of burnout they sustained. These findings were in line with those reported by Capel (1987) while in conflict with the findings of Friedman (1991) which contended that older and experienced teachers were more prone to the accumulated effects of stress, and therefore, may suffer higher levels of burnout than the younger workforce. Regarding the findings of the present study, one explanation is perhaps experience cures nervousness, disorganization, and various stressors associated with novice teaching in an EFL context, which is replete with anxiety and feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt and apprehension for both teachers and learners. Further, more experienced teachers may have a comfort in what they do and, therefore, feel less negative and chronic stress that may lead to burnout.

Moreover, it was found that there was no significant difference between burnout levels of male and female EFL teachers. These findings are in accordance with those of Farber (1984) and Gold and Bachelor (2001). It suggests that

regardless of age, teaching experience and other factors male and female teachers are almost equally well at addressing stress, thereby suffering approximately the same level of burnout.

V. Conclusion

The yielded results of the current study lead to the conclusion that enhancing teachers' EI and self efficacy might have a buffering effect on their burnout. This in turn may lead to amelioration of teachers' well-being, motivation and teaching effectiveness and accordingly students' achievement. The findings also indicate that EFL teachers, particularly experienced ones, would do well to take a closer look at their own emotional skills and to systematically reassess these skills through an emotionally intelligent lens. Despite some limitations, this study extends past findings on teacher burnout and EI and contributes to better understanding of these phenomena and how they are related. Based on the results of this study, school-based social and emotional learning programs should be developed for EFL teachers. Kremenitzer (2005) stated: ''an increase in a teacher's emotional intelligence significantly impacts on student learning in a powerful way both in academic and interpersonal domains" (p. 6). Greenberg (2002) also argued that emotionally intelligent teachers are less vulnerable to stress and might easily retrieve healthy information and action tendency within emotions, and avail themselves of this information to better react to stressors as well as to inspire adaptive action.

The findings also underlie the importance of establishing some courses for EFL teachers especially young and less experienced ones to focus particularly on raising teachers' awareness of stress levels and learning judicious strategies for surmounting chronic stress. This may prove to be an effective means of burnout prevention.

The lack of diversity among the participants in the present study creates difficulty in generalizing to other settings. Therefore, it is recommended that the present study be replicated with a larger and more representative and diverse sample of the EFL teacher population, among middle, and high school level teachers. This may identify differences in emotional intelligence and burnout among different teaching levels. Also for obtaining a more precise estimate of teacher EI and burnout, future research should combine self-reporting measures with other measures based on objective performance.

Acknowledgements

The authors are particularly grateful to Miss Fallah and Ms. Khiabani who helped them during data collection process, and to principals and teachers of 5 private language institutes who participated in the research.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1130-1135, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1130-1135

Reanalysis of English Middle Construction and Formation Conditions

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***Abstract*—The semantic function, to attribute the non-agent subject, motivates the selection of this "mismatched" argument structure of middle construction; meanwhile, it derives some restrictions on the construction as a whole as well as each of the grammatical constituents. Pre-existence makes the non-agent nominal to be a legitimate subject, but there's no qualified argument to undertake volition in middle construction.**

***Index Terms*—middle construction, semantic function, conditions, attributee, pre-existence, volition**

I. Introduction

Due to its unique and complex syntactic and semantic features, Middle Construction (MC) has been a hotly studied and debated topic in recent decades. However, as Oosten (1986) points out, "all the mysteries about the constraints on this construction are far from solved" (p. 164). The present study aims to reanalyze the conditions of English Middle Formation (MF).

The sentences below are the so-called middles in literature:

a. The book sells well.
b. This pen writes smoothly.
c. The lake fishes well.
d. Boca burgers cook like real meat, but they're meatless.
e. No Latin text translates easily.

All these sentences take active verb morphology but passive-like argument structures. It seems that the subjects and the predicates in such sentences conflict with each other according to the traditional active/passive dichotomy. So MC is intricate in nature though it's superficially simple in the sense that it usually consists of only three components, namely a subject, a predicate and an adverbial. Therefore, a thorough understanding of this paradoxical language phenomenon is of high practical as well as theoretical value.

II. Literature Review

Numerous studies on MC have been made from various perspectives based on different theoretical backgrounds. Concerning the focus of the present study, the essential points of various constraints on English MC available in literature can be summed up as follows.

A. Constraints on Subjects

In literature, the first influential constraint on English MC is affectedness (Hale &Keyser, 1987; Roberts, 1987; Fagan, 1988; Pinker, 1989; Hoestra & Roberts, 1993), according to which only the verbs with affected objects can license MC. In other words, the subject in MC must be affected by the predicate verb. This constraint, however, is either too wide or too narrow. On one hand, some middles are unacceptable though their subjects are surely affected. On the other, some others can be perfectly grammatical in spite of no affectedness to their subjects. The two-fold weakness of the affectedness constraint can be illustrated in (2) and (3).

(2) a. *The car hits easily.
b. *The door kicks with difficulty.
(3) a. I don't photograph very well.
b. Your film screens well.

Considering the inadequacy of the affectedness constraint, He (2004) puts forward the responsibility condition. That is, "the subject referent of MC has to be able to be construed as possessing properties which significantly facilitate, enable (or, as the case may be, impede) the unfolding of the process in question" (Yoshimura & Taylor, 2004). Oosten

(1986), Chung (1995) together with some other scholars hold a similar idea. It's easy to see that the certain properties of *I* and *your film* contribute much to the process of *photographing very well* and *screening well* respectively, but it's hard to reason what kind of contribution either *the car* or *the door* makes to the process of *hitting* and *kicking*. The different acceptability between (2) and (3) lies in whether the subject can be construed to be responsible for the process denoted by the verb or not.

B. Constraints on Predicate Verbs

As for the constraints on verbs, the aspectuality condition is the one recognized most widely (Fagan, 1992; Roberts, 1987; He, 2004). It allows the activities and accomplishments to enter MC, while excluding the states and achievements.

(4) a. The truck drives easily. (activity)
b. This vase breaks easily. (achievement)
c.*Tom believes easily. (state)
d.*The dirtiness of the street notices easily. (achievement)

However, the aspectuality condition fails to account for the unacceptability of (5)

(5) a.*Small towns destroy easily.
b.*Kidnappers do not murder easily.

Though both verbs in (5) satisfy the aspectuality condition, the middles they form are not acceptable. According to Gao (2008), MC is semi-autonomous. As a result, strong agentive verbs are incompatible with MC.

Though Gao's proposal sounds convincing, it lacks of operability for it's hard to judge whether a certain verb is too agentive or not to be licit to enter MC due to the notion of agentivity being an abstract matter of continuum. Therefore, a reliable and practical criterion or test is of great moment if Gao is on the right track.

C. Constraints on Adverbials

It is widely noticed that MC obligatorily requires an adverbial unless another device (negation or emphasis) is applied (Jackendoff 1972; Ernst 1984; Fellbaum 1986; Oosten 1986). Without an adverbial modification, MC couldn't contain adequate new information to satisfy Grice's conversational maxim (Goldberg & Ackerman, 2001; Yoshimura & Taylor, 2004).

(6) a. The car drives like a boat/ easily/365 days a year/only in the summertime.
b. *The car drives.
c. That car doesn't drive.
d. These red sports cars DO drive, don't they?

It is our default assumption that cars can be driven, middle *b* doesn't convey any new information. So MC needs adverbial modification in most cases. However, not all adverbials are eligible for English MC.

(7) a.*The novel sells proudly.
b.*Polyester cleans carefully.

Jakendoff (1972) and Fellbaum (1986) point out that those manner adverbs that are agent-oriented are incompatible with English MC. And the adverbials in MC should be in the final positions (Hale & Keyser, 1987).

So the adverbial in MC is restricted manywise, including its semantic orientation and position.

Up till now, the key points available in literature have been made clear. However, all those constraints mentioned above can not guarantee acceptable middles.

(8) a. English teaches easily.
b. *English learns easily.

In (8), it's absolutely plausible to construe that certain properties of *English* contribute much to initiating and facilitating the process of *teaching* as well as *learning*. And the verbs *teach* and *learn* are closely related in semantics. They can be considered to be the same in terms of aspectuality and similar in agentivity if not the same. Furthermore, the same adverbial *easily* is used at the same position. That is, both middles meet all the constraints discussed above, and share much in common, but differ a lot in acceptability. So the following sections aim to make a further exploration on the issue of English MF conditions.

III. Theoretical Framework: the Proto-roles Hypothesis

Dowty (1991) puts forward the Proto-Roles Hypothesis which treats role types as cluster concepts rather than discrete categories. Though arguments may have different degrees of membership in a role type, only two role types are sufficient to describe argument selection efficiently, namely PROTO-AGENT and PROTO-PATIENT. After generalizing possible verbal entailments about the argument in question, Dowty offers the preliminary lists of properties that characterize these two role types as below:

(1) Contributing Properties for the Agent Proto-Role:
a. volitional involvement in the event or state
b. sentience (and/or perception)
c. causing an event or change of state in another participant

d. movement (relative to the position of another participant)
e. exists independently of the event named by the verb
(2) Contributing Properties for the Patient Proto-Role:
a. undergoes change of state
b. incremental theme
c. causally affected by another participant
d. stationary relative to movement of another participant
e. does not exist independently of the event, or not at all

Dowty points out that combinations of certain P-entailments correspond to the familiar role types.

AGENT is volition + causation + sentience + movement.

EXPERIENCER is sentience without volition or causation.

INSTRUMENT is causation + movement without volition or sentience.

THEME is most typically change + incremental-theme + dependent-existence + causally-affected.

SOURSE and GOAL are not really defined by any P-entailments, and they are obliques in many cases. In other words, oblique roles are neutral in terms of the features of Proto-Roles.

According to Dowty's argument selection principle, the argument for which the predicate entails the greatest number of Proto-Agent properties will be lexicalized as the subject of the predicate.

Though there are some verbs that entail subject existence but have none of a-d, there are apparently no verbs having any of a-d without entailing existence (for their subject) as well. In simple words, for an argument to be used as subject, it is the prerequisite to "exist independently of the event named by the verb".

IV. Reanalysis of MF Conditions

As mentioned already, the most salient feature of MC is that though the predicate is active in morphonology, it takes a non-agent NP as its subject. In other words, there is a superficial mismatch between the grammatical subject and the predicate. According to our study, the key to this paradox lies in three aspects: what motivates this kind of argument structure, what makes such a "mismatch" eligible and what makes it unique from others.

A. Semantic Function Related Conditions

1. The Attributee Condition

It's widely accepted that MC describes the inherent property (or properties) of the grammatical subject rather than states a certain event. Fagan (1988) notes that "middles are not used to report events, but to attribute a specific property to some object" (p.200). Condoravdi (1989) points out that MC has a generic interpretation where it predicates an inherent characteristic property of the subject meanwhile downgrading the agent. Many other scholars hold the same proposal (Fellbaum, 1986; Langacker, 2001; Yushimura & Taylor, 2004; He, 2004; Gao, 2008).

So it is the semantic function that motivates MC to select a non-agent thematic role to be its subject, leading to such a "mismatched" argument structure. Schlesinger (1995) claims that the grammatical subject of MC should be regarded as Attributee. Based on this observation, a semantic condition for MF can be stated as:

The Attributee Condition: The subject nominal of MC must be well attributed.

The examples below illustrate how this condition works:

(9) a. *This dress fastens.
b. This dress buttons.
(10) a. *The wall hits/kicks easily.
b. The wall hits/kicks down easily.

In (9), *b* is acceptable because it describes how a particular *dress* is fastened, i.e., it is newsworthy to say that a dress is *buttoned* rather than zipped shut or fastened in any of the other ways dresses are typically secured, but *a* fails to attribute a specific property, for it's our default assumption that all dresses can be *fastened*. As for the contrasts in (10), without the participle *down*, it's difficult to interpret the sentence as describing a certain characteristic of *the wall*. While owing to the presence of *down*, certain property (being prone to collapsing) of *the wall* is manifested clearly.

2. By-product conditions

The Attributee Condition requires MC as a whole must attribute something to the grammatical subject, so all the constituents should contribute to this semantic function integratively. Anything against it should be filtered out. Further examination in this line shows that all the constraints discussed in literature review are just some by-products of the Attributee Condition.

a. The Attributee Condition and the constraints on adverbials

It's widely noticed that adverbials are obligatory. However, *This dress buttons* shows that as long as the grammatical subject can be attributed properly, the adverbial is not a must albeit no other syntactic device is applied. Of course, adverbials are necessary in most cases, but agent-oriented ones absolutely contradict with MC for MC focuses onto attributing the non-agent subject, naturally suppressing or backgrounding the role of the agent.

In fact, the same adverbial in different positions may induce different interpretations (Jakendoff, 1972). The adverbial at final describes the process manner; by contrast, the one in initial modifies the entire predicate (clause), thus

suggestive of the result of an event. English MC expresses the facility of initiating an event instead of the result of the event (Gao, 2008). Adverbials in MC must occupy the final positions.

b. The Attributee Condition and the responsibility condition

The event employed to attribute a nominal should be the one in which the referent of this nominal contributes much. If the referent plays a so trivial role in an event, it's surely not a proper case to reveal its attribute. In a sense, the Attributee Condition and the Responsibility Condition are mutual in spite of inverse perspectives. That can be illustrated by (11).

(11) a. The chamomile cures well.

b. *The scalpel cures well.

In the process of *curing* a patient, medicine (*the chamomile*) contributes much more than *the scalpel* does. Correspondingly, in the same process, *the chamomile* can be attributed well, but *the scalpel* not.

c. The Attributee Condition and the aspectuality condition

According to the Attributee Condition, MC must be able to depict the inherent and constant property of the subject referent. That is, the Attributee Condition also entails MC into a generic interpretation. Middles "state propositions that are held to be generally true […] they do not describe particular events in time" (Keyser & Roeper, 1984, p.384). So Roberts (1987) claims that "middle formation is a process of stativization" (p.196). In other words, MF undergoes a process of imperfectivization. Of course only perfective verbs can be imperfectivized. Since state and achievement verbs are already imperfective, they can not be further imperfectivized. So the so-called aspectuality condition is subject to the Attributee Condition in essence.

d. The Attributee Condition and the agentivity condition

As analyzed already, due to the semantic function, MC backgrounds the role of the agent semantically, in fact suppresses it syntactically usually. As a result, strong agentive verbs should be filtered out. The operable criterion to test whether a certain is too agentive to enter MC will be figured out later.

It's clear that all those MF conditions proposed up till now are just some requirements for each constituent in MC to work compatibly to realize its semantic function as a whole. All of them are subject to the Attributee Condition in nature. But the Attributee Condition only presents the motivation to select such a "mismatched" argument structure, leaving the question what makes it grammatical and unique untouched. The next section aims to unravel such mysteries mainly based on the Proto-Roles Hypothesis.

B. Subjecthood Related Conditions

1. The Pre-existence Condition

Many scholars (Fagan,1992; Gao 2008; Oosten 1977,1986; Voorst 1988. Yushimura & Taylor 2004) argue that the non-agent subject of MC appears to play an agent-like role in the sense that this nominal, due to its prominent properties, can be construed to be responsible for the occurrence of the event involved. According to Lakoff (1977), responsibility "is the most central … of all the agent properties that typically pair with subjecthood" (p.249).

The term *responsibility* functions the same as one of Dowty's Contributing Properties for the Agent Proto-Role, "causing an event or change of state". Though causation is an important and prominent feature of subjecthood, it's not the basic one. That's why the responsibility condition proves to be untenable.

According to Dowty (1991), what is vital for a non-agent nominal to be the qualified subject is independent existence. Similarly, Manabu Kusayama (1998) concludes that pre-existence is the basic one among various features of the Agent. The notion of pre-existence overlaps with Dowty's independent existence. It's theoretically safe to take pre-existence as the basic and vital feature of subjecthood. Thus another MF condition can be assumed as bellow:

The Pre-existence Condition: The referent of the MC subject must be pre-existent prior to the event named by the main verb.

Typically, the objects created do not exist until the process of creating. Just as Fellbaum (1986) notices "the verbs referring to the creation of the object denoted by the patient NP can not be employed in middles" (p.17).

(12) a. *This house builds easily.

b. *This poem writes easily.

The domain of 'existence' relevant to the notion of pre-existence is not limited to a physical one; instead, it can be extended to the metaphorical or abstract.

(13) a. French teaches easily.

b. *French learns easily.

(14) a. The books sell well.

b. *The books buy well.

Such data are hardly accounted for and known as notorious pairs in literature. But the differences between each pair are apparent when the notion of pre-existence in abstract domain is applied. Because what is learned is commonly regarded as coming into existence in the learner's domain of knowledge after the action of learning. Similarly, what is bought is not coming into existence in the buyer's domain of possession or ownership until the transaction of buying. In each pair, the latter's failing to satisfy the Pre-existence Condition leads to unacceptability.

But it should be noticed that the Pre-existence Condition imposes unbalanced effects on MF in the generic and specific contrasts, as shown in (15) and (16) respectively:

(15) a. *This wool sweater knits easily. (specific)
b. *This bridge builds easily. (specific)
(16) a. ?Wool sweaters knit easily. (generic)
b. ?This type of bridge builds easily. (generic)

For the specific sentences in (15), the Pre-existence Condition works forcefully. But for the generic counterparts in (16), different scholars have different judgments. Fellbaum (1986) regards them unacceptable. However, in the eyes of Achema & Schoorlemmer, they are unproblematic. A natural question is why the generic ones are more acceptable though they all contradict the Pre-existence Condition literally.

According to He (2004), the concept of blueprint or schema works here. The generic ones are comparatively easier to activate the relevant blueprints which in turn facilitate the interpretation of such sentences. That is, the Pre-existence Condition is satisfied with the schematic knowledge of the same categorical referents in our mind. In contrast, it's not so easy for sentences with specific subjects, which refers to entities only coming into existence as a result of the very action in question. So we argue that the Pre-existence Condition surely exists there linguistically though world knowledge impacts our grammatical judgments substantially.

2. The Strong Volitional Condition

According to Dowty, all the arguments in the subject position of MC are of certain degree of the resemblance to Proto-Agent, some possess more features of Proto-Agent, and some others fewer. But it doesn't mean that they are Proto-Agents themselves. Then what after all makes them distinguishable?

With a thorough comparison between the features of Proto-Agent and the ones of all other non-agent roles, it would be clear that all but one contributing property of Proto-Agent can be possibly shared by other non-agent roles. That is the "volitional involvement in the event or state". So the grammatical subjects of MC do not qualify to undertake the property of volition.

Furthermore, it's widely accepted that the agent is implicit or depressed in MC. All these facts show that there is no argument that is capable of taking on the property of VOLITION in MC. If a verb in MC necessarily entails strong volitional involvement of agent, it is ungrammatical. So another condition for MF goes like this:

The Strong Volitional Condition: Any verbs necessarily entailing strong VOLITION are incompatible with MC.

Of course, most verbs, except for unaccusatives, have the potential to entail volition. For example, *John is being polite to Bill/ is ignoring Mary*. Then, how can we make a judgment whether a certain verb can meet the Strong Volitional Condition or not? What is the criterion or testing method?

Admittedly most verbs are possible to entail volition, we argue that only the ones necessarily entailing strong VOLITION can not enter English MC. Agents must be always involved volitionally in the events denoted by such verbs, no volition involved, no such events would happen, for the volition is a prominent aspect of such verbs' inherent semantics. So for a sentence with a strong-volition verb, it surely indicates that the agent carries out the event deliberately or intentionally, or engages in it carefully or cautiously no matter such an adverbial modification exists explicitly or not. It would be very odd or unreasonable if a sentence simultaneously takes a strong-volition verb and an adverbial indicating no or weak volition. For example:

(17) a. ??The enemy destroyed our cities without intention.
b. ??The politicians carelessly murdered President Lincoln.

Based on such an observation, it is concluded that if a verb is semantically incompatible with an adverbial indicating weak or no volition, it can be regarded of strong volition, in turn, it's incompatible with MC. Thus the Strong Volitional Condition of MF is much more operable though it's related to the agentivity condition in a sense.

V. Conclusion

In this article, we have attempted to solve two interweaving problems about English MC, to reanalyze the MF conditions and unravel the mysteries about the paradoxical argument structure from three perspectives: what motivates such a "mismatched" argument structure, what licenses it and what makes it unique from others.

First, MC as a whole functions to characterize a non-agent argument, naturally this construction downgrades the role of the agent, so the superficially mismatched argument structure is selected. In order to manifest this semantic function, the subject referent must be attributed well, and all the constituents in MC have to contribute to it cooperatively. And this semantic function also entails MF into a process of imperfectivization. Thus all the conditions discussed in section II come into being which are subject to the Attributee Condition in nature.

Second, pre-existence is the basic and vital property for non-agent arguments to be qualified subjects. The Pre-existence Condition is there to make this "mismatched" argument structure linguistically legitimate.

Third, it is volition that distinguishes the grammatical subject of MC from other agent subjects. MF should meet the Strong Volition Condition to exclude verbs which semantically clash with its subject.

To sum up, the semantic function selects the argument structure; in turn it derives some specific restrictions on the construction as a whole as well as the individual lexical items in it. The Proto-Roles Hypothesis enlightens us much as to the paradoxical language phenomenon. "Middles involve a complex interplay between syntax, semantics and lexicon, and thus provide a rich source of data with which theories of grammar can be tested" (Fagan,1992, p.4).

Of course, the proper characterization of the verbs that can undergo middle formation, the question what exactly

makes these verbs different from those that are not eligible for this process, are notoriously difficult questions (Ackema & Schoorlemmer, 2005). We are not to say the present study can solve all the mysteries about this superficially mismatched argument structure completely, however, it does shed light onto the nature of MC, especially in terms of MF conditions.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1136-1145, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1136-1145

Feedback in ESL Writing: Toward an Interactional Approach

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***Abstract*—The role of feedback on writing involves complex issues and needs to be considered within the total context in which the feedback is given. The reason studies examining feedback effects are so inconsistent may be a function of the fact that these studies consider feedback issue from a single perspective. To deal with this problem, feedback is first defined from different perspectives, then different aspects of feedback are discussed and after that a discussion of the factors that affect the influence of feedback on second language writing follows and finally a model where all the factors interact to influence feedback practices in second langue writing is presented.**

***Index Terms*—feedback, second language writing, feedback variables, learner variables, instructional variables**

I. Feedback: Definitions

Before reviewing the research in this area, it is necessary to define two terms: errors and feedback. Our understanding of the word error itself can explain much of the disagreement that is to be found regarding its treatment. From a behaviorist viewpoint, errors were seen as bad habits which needed to be overcome through learning. For contrastive analysis, the counter part of bad habits was negative transfer. When elements from the student's L1 differed greatly with structures in the L2, the possibility of interference was seen as great (Larsen –Freeman & Long, 1991)

With the Chomskyian inspired view of acquisition as rule driven, errors came to be seen as indicators of elements not yet fully acquired or plain lapses in performance. Put simply, errors presented a failure in linguistic competence (Svartvik, 1973). For the L2 student, errors most often represented an inadequate knowledge of rules. With the study of interlanguage, errors came to be interpreted as dialectal and not erroneous. In this continuum moving from the L1 to the target language, a student's evolving interlanguage seemed to follow a built –in syllabus that, in the absence of fossilization, would lead to something resembling the L2 without intervention (Corder 1978). In the seventies, Burt & Kiparsky (1974) distinguished global errors from local errors. Global errors were those that showed up frequently in student production whereas local errors were one time occurrences. With more communicative views of language acquisition, errors were recognized as listener defined (Esmondson, 1993). Only those elements that caused confusion on the part of the listener warranted correction. The treatment of errors or the teacher response to errors is more commonly referred to now as feedback.

Feedback is the general heading for various techniques that are currently used in many L2 courses to respond to student writing. Feedback is defined as any procedure used to inform a learner whether an instructional response is right or wrong (Lalande, 1982).

Overall, three broad meanings of feedback have been examined (Kulhavy and Wager, 1993). First, in a motivational meaning, some feedback, such as praise, could be considered a motivator that increases a general behavior (e.g., writing or revision activities overall). This piece of the definition came from the research that tried to influence the amount of exerted effort through motivation (Brown 1932; Symonds and Chase, 1929). Second, in a reinforcement meaning, feedback may specifically reward or punish very particular prior behaviors (e.g., a particular spelling error or particular approach to a concluding paragraph). This piece of the definition came from the Law of Effect (Thorndike, 1927). Third, in an informational meaning, feedback might consist of information used by a learner to change performance in a particular direction (rather than just towards or away from a prior behavior). This piece of the definition came from information-processing theories (Pressey, 1926, 1927). In the context of writing, all three elements may be important, although the informational element is particularly important.

II. Historical Perspective

The importance of feedback emerged with the development of learner-centered approaches to writing instruction in North American L1 composition classes during the 1970s. The process approach gave greater attention to teacher –

student encounters around texts and encouraged teachers to support writers through multiple drafts by providing feedback and suggesting revisions during the process of writing itself, rather than at the end of it. The form feedback took was extended beyond the teacher's marginal notes to include oral interaction involving the teacher or the students themselves. The focus moved from a concern with mechanical accuracy and control of language to a greater emphasis on the development and discovery of meaning through the experience of writing and rewriting.

Feedback practices and issues were also increasingly influenced by interactionist theories, which emphasized the significance of the individual reader rather than the dialogic nature of writing. Rather than asking students to write for an idealized general audience, the interpretation and response of a specific reader was seen as important in giving meaning to text and assisting writers to shape their texts for real people. This perspective places a high value on reader response and encourages the use of peer feedback and multiple feedback sources to provide a real rather than a visualized audience.

More recently, feedback has been seen as a key element of students' growing control over writing skills in genre-oriented approaches, where sociocultural theories of scaffolded instruction and learning are important. Here feedback is important in providing students with the rhetorical choices central to new academic or professional literacy skills and as a way of assisting students in negotiating access to new knowledge and practices.

III. Feedback Aspects

A. Sociocultural Aspect

Providing feedback is a an activity in which there is interaction between learners and their peers or their teacher, where the purpose is to encourage student writers' development or at least to encourage positive changes in subsequent writing. Now the question is what role this interaction might play in that development. From an interactionist point of view the answer is suggested by recent work in second language learning, which has shifted attention away from mentalist models of linguistic development to interactive ones. This has meant a shift away from terms such as linguistic competence, the linguistic environment (Long, 1996), comprehensible input, and I +1 (Krashen, 1985) –terms which emphasize learners' internal cognitive processes, to those which highlight interactions among speakers: communicative competence, negotiation of meaning, and comprehensible output. The last of these is key to the "output hypothesis", which was proposed by Swain (1985) to account for the finding that children in immersion language programs who has spent many years surrounded by meaningful L2 input and attained high levels of spoken fluency, nevertheless failed to reach similarly high levels of linguistic accuracy. Swain proposed that these learners needed not just opportunities to produce the L2, which they had in abundance, but that they also needed to be pushed to modify their speech (for example to an apparent breakdown in communication). As learners modify their linguistic output towards greater comprehensibility, their awareness of grammatical form is heightened, and they move from semantic to syntactic processing (Swain, 1995). With its obvious relevance to classroom L2 learning, the output hypothesis has provided theoretical grounding for a number of recent studies in focus of form (for example. Doughty & Williams, 1998) and corrective feedback (for example, Lyster & Ranta, 1997) that have reevaluated the place of grammar within communicative teaching methodologies. Although these developments have asserted a more prominent role for interaction in second language learning, they have maintained an essentially mentalist orientation in that constructs like comprehensible output are seen as external mechanisms for internal language acquisition process.

The role of interaction can also be examined from a sociocultural perspective (Lantolf, 2000). Foundational to the sociocultural theory is the developmental theory of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who maintained that psychological phenomena must be understood not only ontogenetically (that is, as unfolding internal processes), but also in terms of their cultural and historical evolution (Kozulin, 1986). In contrast to Piaget, Vygotsky posited that speech originates in interpersonal communication during a period in which the child is wholly oriented towards the physical environment and the adults in it. Eventually, the child begins to engage in egocentric (private) speech, which is uttered aloud but not intended as communication with others. Finally, egocentric speech becomes fully internalized as inner speech, which is a cognitive tool of the mature adult (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky also posited that learning is neat, linear process, that it is not evolutionary but revolutionary, often occurring in fits and starts rather than clear stages (Kozulin, 1986). Moreover, learning is enhanced when the child's cognitive resources are expanded through assistance from more able others, peers or teachers. Vygotsky used the concept of "zone of proximal development" (ZPD) to describe the conceptual space that enables children to make cognitive leaps beyond their own independent problem-solving skills when they are working with an adult or more mature peer (Vygotsky, 1986). One way of conceptualizing movement within ZPD, which is relevant to discussion feedback provision, has been Wertsch's (1979a, 1979b) categorization of stages of regulation, or control over intellectual actions. Wertsch has proposed that, in the transition from interpsychological to itrapsychological activity, the learner moves from other regulation to complete self regulation. When other regulated the learner can perform with assistance from others. The learner achieves self regulation when, in the course of ZPD interactions, he can take control of external actions and is capable of independent problem solving. Because assistance in the ZPD is extended as long as other regulation persists but is removes once the learner can function independently, it has been metaphorically conceived as a form of scaffolding.

However, interactionist theories stand in sharp contrast to sociocultural theories in terms of the role assumed for the interaction. In interactionist theories of learning interaction is seen merely as a means of modifying input for the learner.

In these theories, the learner takes from social interaction what is of benefit and processes that information alone. Long (1983) claims that through interaction, learners notice mismatches between their interlanguages and the target language. From a sociocultural perspective, in contrast, social interaction (with both humans and artifacts participating dialogically) is internalized, the external –dialogic becomes the internal –dialogic, and a socially constructed dialogic mind emerges.

B. Cognitive Aspect

Many principles of learning theory have been applied to language learning (Leki 1992; Silva 1993; Zamel 1985). One major principle has been the idea that for something to be learned it must be noticed (Ellis 1995; Schmidt 1994; Swain &Lapkin 1995). In second language L2 acquisition studies noticing the gap has become a popular term used to explain that learners must notice the difference between their interlanguage grammar and that of the target language. The noticing hypothesis (Schmidt 1990) states that language input cannot be available for acquisition unless the learner consciously attends to it. Through noticing input becomes intake. The act of noticing and the quality of that noticing applies to L2 writing as well as to second language acquisition in general (Barestone, 1996; Cohen, 1987; Izumi &Bigelow 2000; Polio, Fleck, &Leder, 1998; Qi &Lapkin, 2001; Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1990). The idea of noticing becomes particularly important in the process approach, where learners write multiple drafts with revisions. Teachers often intervene in this process to help learners notice problems in writing by giving different type of feedback. Research has shown that there is success in developing noticing skills (Cohen,1987; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Qi &Lapkin, 2001) via feedback.

The role of feedback on writing involves complex issues and needs to be considered within the total context in which the feedback is given. Literature on variables affecting effectiveness of feedback suggests that these variables can be categorized into three groups: learner variables, feedback variables, and instructional variables. Studies examining the effectiveness of feedback have mainly looked at the issue restricting their focus on just some of the variables from the above mentioned categories. To get the full picture a feedback model that takes into account all three groups of the variables and the interaction between them is needed. First we present our proposed model and then we will examine the effect of the variables in each category and the interaction between them.

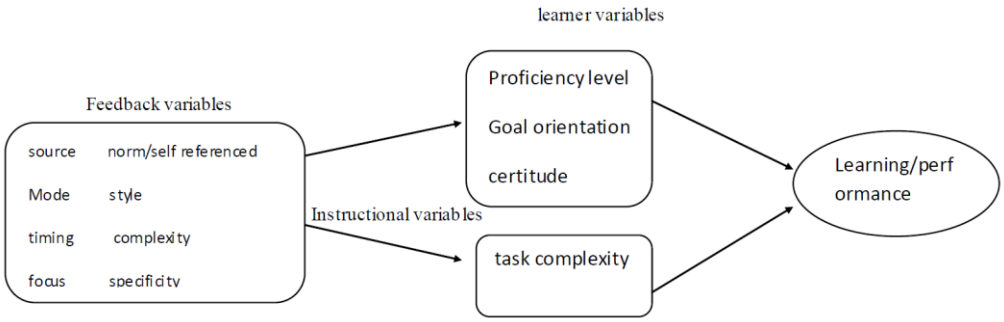

Figure 1. the interactional model of factors affecting feedback application to second language writing

IV. Feedback Variables

A. Source of Delivery

One of the most common approaches for investigating the role of feedback in second language writing has been to examine the source of that feedback – that is, whether the feedback is provided by teacher or by another student.

1. Teacher feedback

Survey of students' feedback preferences indicate that ESL students greatly value teacher written feedback and consistently rate it more highly than alternative forms such as peer feedback. (Leki, 1991; Saito,1994; Zhang,1995). Particularly those from cultures where teachers are highly directive, generally welcome and expect teachers to notice and comment on their errors and may feel resentful if their teacher do not do so. Despite students' positive view about teachers' feedback its contribution to students' writing development is still unclear. Ferris (1997), for instance, found that although three quarters of substantive teachers' comments on drafts were used by students, only half of their revisions in response to these could be considered as improvements and a third actually made matters worse. A similarly mixed success rate emerged from Conrad and Goldstein's (1999) study of the revisions of three case study subjects. The 1960s brought a greater awareness of writing as a meaning – centered and collaborative process of generating ideas, drafting end revising. The agency of the student was increasingly valued, and concomitantly, criticisms of teacher feedback began to be voiced (Silva, 1991)

2. Peer feedback

Peer feedback has become a widespread practice in both L1 and L2 composition classrooms (F. Hyland, 2000; McGroarty & Zhu, 1997). Some of the benefits claimed for this method include fostering a sense of audience (Keh, 1990; Lockhart&Ng, 1994), developing students' critical reading and analysis skills(Allaei & Connor, 1990; Mendonca

& Johndon, 1994), receiving scaffolded support (Guerrero & Villamil, 1994,2000), as well as gaining a deeper understanding of the communicative nature of the writing process (Allaei & Connor, 1990; Porto, 2001) –all within a learner- centered environment that increases student motivation and independence (Chaudron, 1984) and does not penalize the students for errors (Diaz, 1991). By using peer revision, students receive immediate feedback, instead of days or weeks later, when solving their writing problems is no longer such a pressing matter (Frankenberg-Garcia, 1999). However, as is the case with teacher feedback, peer feedback has also had its fair share of criticisms. Stanley (1992), for example, reports that students, who are used to reading professionally – crafted prose, are not sufficiently critical of their peers' work, as they read for global meaning, use their schemata to fill in cohesive gaps, and infer information even when the writer has failed to prove the necessary background to authorize such as inferences. Jacobs (1989) similarly contends that students lack the necessary sophistication and objectivity needed to respond to a piece of work. Other students may become defensive when receiving peer feedback (Amores, 1997), or they may feel that their peers are not qualified to critique their work and hence distrust or ignore their comments (Mangelsdorf, 1992; Nelson& Carson, 1998; Nelson & Murphy, 1993; Sengupta, 1998)

Feedback is a complex process, and any evaluation of the relative efficacy of feedback needs to take other variables in the same category and other categories of the proposed model into account. For example regarding the efficacy of each feedback source among other variables, the pedagogical context, individual preferences, and the assignment at hand (Ferris, 1997; Goldstein, 2001) should be taken into account. For example, in single –draft classrooms stressing grammatical accuracy, it is not surprising that students may pay little attention to teacher feedback: the essay, the final product, is submitted for a grade and there are no further opportunities for revision. However, in multiple –draft classrooms, students may take teacher feedback more seriously because it enables them to rethink and revise their assays (and thus perhaps raise their grades) (Ferris, 1995). Due to the interaction of feedback variables with each other and with variables from other categories "any effort to establish the superiority of one over the other is…. Misguided" (Tsui& Ng, 2000).

However, we still do not have a solid understanding of the relationship between feedback source and writing quality. One reason can be the confounding interaction of the variables involved in each situation such as those concerning feedback mode, timing of feedback, and the type of assessment procedure researcher used to assess the impact of feedback source.

B. Feedback Mode

As suggested above any comparison of teacher written feedback and peer oral feedback will be problematic in that it fails to tease apart two important variables, feedback source and feedback mode.

Literature on feedback have mainly investigated the efficacy of feedback delivered orally; canned (audiotaped) (Anson, 1997; Boswood & Dwyer, 1995; Cryer & Kaikumba, 1987; Johnson, 1999; McAlpine, 1989; Yarbo & Angentivine, 1982) and writing conferences (Keh, 1990; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997) among others) and written teacher feedback. Johnson (1999) claimed that recording comments about a student's writing onto a tape allows teachers to provide more detailed comments as they are not constrained by the space limitations involved in writing comments in margins, more comprehensible comments, and more personable comments as they are no longer impersonal graders but rather writing coaches.

More commonly, researchers have made the argument for oral feedback by advocating the use of one to one teacher student conferences. Such researchers have asserted that conferences are more effective than traditional written methods because, in conferences, the teacher –reader is a live audience, and thus is able to ask for clarification, check the comprehensibility of oral comments made, help the writer sort through problems, and assist the student in decision making (Keh, 1990). Other researchers have invoked Vygotsky's theories on social interaction and scaffolded help(e.g., Patthey –Chavez &Ferris, 1997; villamil& Guerrero,1996). According to Vygotsky (1978), knowledge is social in nature; thus, the process of interacting with a more knowledgeable other (e.g., the teacher) allows the learner to internalize both linguistic and cognitive abilities, including writing skills (Hedgcock &Lefkowita, 1992; Lockhart&Ng, 1995a). Finally, it has been noted that in oral feedback sessions, nonverbal communication, such as differences in intonation and facial expressions, can serve to mitigate criticism and thus encourage a more collaborative stance between the reviewer and the writer. Although many studies found the positive effect of different modes of feedback, the findings are not conclusive, and more studies are needed to compare the effect of different modes and control for the effect of the interaction between the variables in the proposed model.

Recently, researchers have also begun to investigate the effectiveness of online electronic feedback (e-feedback) (Tuzi, 2004). E-feedback, which possesses characteristics of both oral interaction (such as an informal, conversational tone) and written (such as the fact that the feedback must be typed, the lack of nonverbal and intonational cues, and the distance between rediever), refers to forms of response provided in written form and transmitted via the web. MacLeod (1999) argued that because the reviewers do not have to face the writers while proviking feedback, they can provide more honest feedback. In a similar vein, DiGiovanni and Nagaswami 2001) noted that since students do not have to be concerned with responding immediately to the writer in real time, they can reflect on their ideas rehearse their response, and respond at their own pace.

C. Feedback Focus

Form-focused and content focused feedback

'Fluency first' approaches which prioritize the development of the student's voice over grammatical accuracy have argued against providing feedback on form.

Truscott (1996), for example, has argued that feedback on form is ineffective, time –absorbing, and potentially harmful in that it diverts attention from organization, and logical development of ideas, deflates student motivation, and encourages the writer, now fearful of the red pen, to rely on simpler, safer sentence structures. Criticizing Truscott, Ferris (1999) claimed that Truscott ignored the mounting research evidence supporting the use of certain kinds of grammar correction, and that and that Truscott instead based his conclusions on limited, dated, incomplete, and inconclusive evidence. Ferris (1995) found that students in single draft classrooms expressed a preference for form focused feedback and students in multiple draft classrooms indicating that they valued content focused feedback. This finding is similar to that reported in Hedgcock and Lefkowits (1994, 1996), who found that ESL students in process oriented classrooms where students were required to submit multiple drafts valued both meaning level and surface level feedback, while FL students in product oriented classrooms (where the students typically submitted only one draft of a given assignment paid more attention to form. However, the majority of L2 writing studies investigating feedback focus have not reported results which are strongly supportive of feedback on form.(e.g., Frantzen, 1995; Kepner,1991; Polio et al., 1998; Semke, 1984; Sheppard, 1992).

In a form/content comparison study, Fazio (2001) compared the effects of three types of feedback content only, form only, and a combination of form focused and content focused feedback on grammatical accuracy (subject verb agreement and noun adjective agreement) of journals produced by native and non native speakers of French. Fazio found that neither the native nor the non native speakers in any of the three conditions made any significant changes in the number of agreement errors over four the months. Some researchers believe that discussions of feedback should go beyond focus on form or content (Ferris, Pezone, Tade,&Tniti, 1997), and rather we should know that both focus on form and focus on content have got a place in L2 writing classrooms but the timing (when to provide feedback on form and when to provide feedback on content) of provision of each type should be different. For example, it has been argued that form and content feedback should not be used simultaneously, as students may not know which one deserves higher priority (Zamel, 1985). Instead teachers are encouraged to provide feedback on the content of the students' writings first, saving comments on form for later drafts, when students are in the final stages of polishing their drafts.

D. Feedback Style

In addition to the feedback variables discussed so far, feedback style is a strand in feedback research. Feedback style refers to the linguistic and pragmatic characteristics of the feedback, including the illocutionary force of feedback (e.g.,whether teacher uses questions, suggestions, or commands) and the explicitness of the feedback(e.g., whether codes or explicit corrections are provided). One in which feedback style has been addressed is to examine the illocutionary force of feedback. Researchers investigating this issue have sought to determine which feature(s) best promote student noticing and use of feedback. For example, it may be the case that students may not perceive the corrective intent of a question; likewise, they may be more inclined to revise their writing after having received a command rather than a politely hedged request.

To examine the issue, Ferris (1997) examined the textual and pragmatic characteristics of one teacher's written feedback to a class of freshmen ESL university composition students. He found that the students' revisions in response to the teacher's questions were often unsuccessful, and he cautioned teachers to be careful when using questions, as students may not be able to glean from the question what change they should make or exactly how to go about making that change.

Directness is another way in which feedback style has been investigated. This broad category includes studies examining the differential effect of explicit corrections, implicit feedback (such as codes or question marks which indirectly indicate that the learner's text was in some way problematic), and reformulations on students' writing. Lalande (1982) found that coded feedback is superior to explicit feedback, as the former encourages the students to take an active problem solving role in correcting their own errors. Rob,Ross and Shortreed (1986) found that the assumption underlying overt correction – that more correction results in more accuracy –was nor convincingly demonstrated. Ferris and Roberts (2001) reached a similar conclusion. In their study they found that even though the feedback group outperformed the non feedback group, there were no significant difference between groups receiving coded feedback and those with non coded feedback, leading them to conclude that more explicit feedback is not necessarily beneficial.

Reformulation is another area of investigation related to feedback explicitness. There have been few empirical studies which have compared reformulated feedback with other types of feedback, and those that have done so have either been small scale descriptive studies studies (e.g., Allwright et al., 1988; Cohen, 1983a, 1983b, 1989; Sanaoui, 1984) or have found no significant difference Mantello, 1997 noted that reformulated feedback seemed to be more appropriate for advanced students in her study. Coded feedback, inasmuch as it identified the exact location and nature of the error, was reported to be more beneficial for the weaker students.

E. Feedback Specificity

Feedback specificity is defined as the *level of information* presented in feedback messages (Goodman, Wood, & Hendrickx, 2004). Several researchers have reported that feedback is significantly more effective when it provides

details of how to improve the answer rather than just indicating whether the student's work is correct or not (e.g., Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991; Pridemore & Klein, 1995). Feedback lacking in specificity may cause students to view it as useless, frustrating, or both (Williams, 1997). It can also lead to uncertainty about how to respond to the feedback (Fedor, 1991) and may require greater information-processing activity on the part of the learner to understand the intended message (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991). Uncertainty and cognitive load can lead to lower levels of learning (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Sweller et al., 1998) or even reduced motivation to respond to the feedback (Ashford, 1986; Corno & Snow 1986).

F. Feedback Complexity

In studying the role of feedback a related dimension to consider is length or complexity of the information. Schimmel (1983) performed a meta-analysis on feedback as used in computer based instruction (CBI) and programmed (scripted) instruction. He analyzed the results from 15 experimental studies and found that the amount of information (i.e., feedback complexity) was *not* significantly related to feedback effects. Kulhavy, White, Topp, Chan, and Adams (1985) similarly examined the feedback complexity issue. The main finding was that complexity of feedback was *inversely* related to both ability to correct errors and learning efficiency (i.e., the ratio of feedback study time to posttest score). Specifically, Kulhavy et al. showed that more complex versions of feedback had a small effect on students' ability to correct their own errors, and the least complex feedback (i.e., correct answer) demonstrated greater learner benefits in terms of efficiency and outcome than complex feedback.

G. Feedback Timing

1. Delayed vs immediate

Similar to the previously mentioned feedback variables (e.g., complexity and specificity), there are also conflicting results in the literature relating to the timing of feedback Some researchers have argued for immediate feedback as a means to prevent errors being encoded into memory, whereas others have argued that delayed feedback reduces proactive interference, thus allowing the initial error to be forgotten and the correct information to be encoded with no interference (for more on this debate, see Kulhavy & Anderson, 1972). The superiority of delayed feedback, referred to as the delay-retention effect (DRE), was supported in a series of experiments by Anderson and colleagues (e.g., Kulhavy & Anderson, 1972; Surber & Anderson, 1975), comparing the accuracy of responses on a retention test with the accuracy of responses on an initial test. Schroth (1992) presented the results from an experiment that investigated the effects of delayed feedback and type of verbal feedback on transfer using a concept formation task. The finding is that although delayed feedback slowed the rate of initial learning, it *facilitated transfer* after the delay.

Supporters of immediate feedback theorize that the earlier corrective information is provided, the more likely it is that efficient retention will result (Phye & Andre, 1989). The superiority of immediate over delayed feedback has been demonstrated for the acquisition of verbal materials, procedural skills, and some motor skills (Anderson, Magill, & Sekiya, 2001; Brosvic & Cohen, 1988; Corbett & Anderson, 1989, 2001; Dihoff, Brosvic, Epstein, & Cook, 2003). Corbett and Anderson (2001) have been using immediate feedback successfully in their programming and mathematics tutors for almost two decades For instance, they used their ACT Programming Tutor to examine differential timing effects on students' learning. This study demonstrated that immediate error feedback helped with immediate learning. A preliminary conclusion derived from both the Schroth (1992) and Corbett and Anderson (2001) findings is that *delayed feedback* may be superior for promoting transfer of learning, especially in relation to concept-formation tasks, whereas *immediate feedback* may be more efficient, particularly in the short run and for procedural skills (i.e., programming and mathematics). Mathan and Koedinger (2002) reviewed various studies on the timing of feedback and concluded that the effectiveness of feedback depends not on the main effect of timing but on the nature of the task and the capability of the learner. Another variable reported to have such interaction with feedback timing concerns task difficulty. That is, if the task is difficult, then immediate feedback is beneficial, but if the task is easy, then delayed feedback may be preferable (Clariana, 1999). This is similar to the ideas presented earlier in the Formative Feedback as Scaffolding subsection.

H. Normative Feedback

According to research cited in Kluger and DeNisi (1996), when feedback is provided to students in a norm referenced manner that compares the individual's performance with that of others, people who perform poorly tend to attribute their failures to lack of ability, expect to perform poorly in the future, and demonstrate decreased motivation on subsequent tasks. McColskey and Leary (1985) examined the hypothesis that the harmful effects of failure might be lessened when failure is expressed in self-referenced terms—that is, relative to the learner's known level of ability as assessed by other measures. They found that, compared to norm referenced feedback, self-referenced feedback resulted in higher expectancies regarding future performance and increased attributions to *effort* (e.g., "I succeeded because I worked really hard"). Attributions to *ability* (e.g., "I succeeded because I'm smart") were not affected. The main implication is that low-achieving students should not receive normative feedback but should instead receive self-referenced feedback—focusing their attention on their own progress.

V. Learner Variables

A. Learner Level

As alluded to in the Timing subsection of this article, some research has suggested that low-achieving students may benefit from immediate feedback, whereas high-achieving students may prefer or benefit from delayed feedback (Gaynor, 1981; Roper, 1977). Furthermore, when testing different types of feedback, Clariana (1990) has argued that low-ability students benefit from receipt of correct response feedback more than from try again feedback. Hanna (1976) also examined student performance in relation to different feedback conditions: verification, elaboration, and no feedback. The verification feedback condition produced the highest scores for high-ability students and elaborated feedback produced the highest scores for low-ability students. There were no significant differences between verification and elaborated feedback for middle-ability students, but both of these types of feedback were superior to no feedback.

B. Response Certitude

Kulhavy and Stock (1989) examined feedback and response certitude issues from an information-processing perspective. That is, they had students provide confidence judgments ("response certitude" ratings) following each response to various tasks. They hypothesized that when students are certain their answer is correct, they will spend little time analyzing feedback, and when students are certain their answer is incorrect, they will spend more time reviewing feedback. The implications of this are straightforward; that is, provide more elaborated feedback for students who are more certain that their answer is wrong and deliver more constrained feedback for those with high certitude of correct answers. Although their own research supported their hypotheses, other studies did not replicate the findings. For instance, Mory (1994) tried to replicate the response certitude findings and found that although there were differences in the amount of feedback study time, there was no significant learning effect for feedback tailored to response certitude and correctness.

C. Goal Orientation

Davis, Carson, Ammeter, and Treadway (2005) reported the results of a study testing the relationship between goal orientation and feedback specificity on performance using a management decision-making task. In short, they found that feedback specificity (low, moderate, and high levels) had a significant influence on performance for individuals who were low on learning orientation (i.e., high feedback specificity was better for learners with low learning orientation). They also reported a significant influence of feedback specificity on performance for persons high in performance orientation (i.e., this group also benefited from more specific feedback). The findings support the general positive effects of feedback on performance and suggest the use of more specific feedback for learners with either high-performance or low-learning goal orientations.

VI. Instructional Variables

Task complexity

Kluger and DeNisi (1996) examined and reported on the effects of feedback interventions (FIs) on performance from multiple perspectives and spanning decades of research—back to Thorndike's classic research in the early 1900s. The of results from Kluger and DeNisi's (1996) large metaanalysis of FI studies suggest that FIs in the context of complex tasks yield weaker effects than for simpler tasks. Mason and Bruning (2001) reviewed the literature on feedback in relation to student achievement level, task complexity, timing of feedback, and prior knowledge. The general recommendation they have drawn from the framework is that immediate feedback for students with low achievement levels in the context of either simple (lower level) or complex (higher level) tasks is superior to delayed feedback, whereas delayed feedback is suggested for students with high achievement levels, especially for complex tasks.

VII. Conclusion

As Shute (2008) suggests the reason studies examining formative feedback effects are so inconsistent may be a function of individual differences among motivational prerequisites (e.g., intrinsic motivation, beliefs, need for academic achievement, academic self-efficacy, and metacognitive skills). Another reason may be the type of assessment procedure researcher used to assess the impact of feedback source. Still another more important reason be the interactions among task characteristics, instructional contexts, and student characteristics that potentially mediate feedback effects that remains uninvestigated.

In general, and as suggested by Schwartz and White (2000) cited earlier, we need to continue taking a *multidimensional view of feedback* where situational and individual characteristics of the instructional context and learner are considered along with the nature and quality of a feedback message. Narciss and Huth (2004) noted, that function, content, and mode of feedback presentation are important facets and should be considered separately as well as interactively with learner characteristics and instructional variables. And as Shute (2008) suggests there is no "best" type of feedback for all learners and learning outcomes.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1146-1155, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1146-1155

Integrating Multiple Intelligences and Technology into Classroom Instruction to Transform Instructional Practice in Malaysia

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***Abstract*—Approaching curriculum content through multiple entry points and integrating technology into classroom instruction which will help the educational system achieves the National Philosophy of Education to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Thus, there is a need for a procedural model that could help teachers modify their lesson to address the student's intelligence by integrating multiple intelligences and instructional technology into classroom instruction. This paper provides an overview of the POMAT approach that gives due attention to a lesson's procedure includes instructional activities, objective or learning outcome, materials, assessment, and instructional technology in classroom instruction. It involved a step-by-step process of modifying the existing lesson and integrating multiple intelligences and technology into instruction. The process breaks up the lesson plan process into five steps that require teachers to think about how well their lesson maps out. Using this approach, teachers should look at a lesson's procedure first, and then maps back through the objective, materials, assessment, and technology to determine a consistency of purpose. The actual flow of a lesson should nicely match the objective, materials, assessment and technology. The entire procedure is designed to examine a lesson's consistency within the context of the eight intelligences.**

***Index Terms*—instructional technology, multiple intelligences, instructional practice, classroom instruction**

I. Introduction

Many initiatives have been implemented to transform Malaysian educational system, in line with and in support of the nation's effort to fulfil Vision 2020. The Vision aims for sustained, productivity-driven growth which will be achievable only with a technologically literate, critically thinking work force prepared to participate fully in the global economy of the 21st century. At the same time, Malaysian National Philosophy of Education calls for developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balance and harmonious. According to *Malaysian Smart School Conceptual Blueprint* (1997), this massive transformation includes individualizing the education, approaching curriculum content through multiple entry points and integrating technology into classroom instruction which will help the educational system achieves the Vision 2020 and National Philosophy of Education, while fostering the development of a work force prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Thus, there is a need for a procedural model that could help teachers modify their lesson to integrate multiple intelligences and instructional technology into classroom instruction.

II. Theory of Multiple Intelligences in Transforming Malaysian Educational System

Transforming the present educational system entails changing the culture and practice of Malaysian primary and secondary schools. The transformation will move away the educational system from memory-based learning, designed for the average students to an education, which stimulates thinking, creativity and caring in all students, caters to individual abilities and learning styles, and is based on more equitable access. Furthermore, the new educational system requires students to exercise greater responsibility for their own education.

Such transformation also demands the teachers to review their style of teaching and to integrate technology into their classroom instruction. Nowadays, instructional technology particularly the use of computer, software, and internet application has became so widespread in schools and their uses have expanded dramatically that many teachers now think about its implications on instructional practices. Instructional technology has brought about changes in the instructional methodologies. In teaching a second language such as English Language and Mandarin, any language support is helpful

for language acquisition. Language students need a variety of language experiences. They need to hear language, write language, speak language and read language. Computers, software and internet application are believed can play an integral part in providing the language students with valuable and diverse language experiences. Thus, instructional technology can be an asset to transform instructional practice in Malaysia.

In addition to that, transforming the present educational system calls for integrating multiple intelligences that reflects so much of Gardner's (1993, and 2004) multiple intelligences theory into instructional practice. Multiple intelligences teaching approach (MITA) provides teachers an opportunity to teach in a variety of ways and reach students all the way regardless of students' different abilities and interests (Shearer, 2009). Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (MI) confirms so much of the work teachers have already done in the classroom (Mckenzie, 2005). In fact, good teachers have been instinctively catering to different intelligences without even knowing of the multiple intelligences model (Mckenzie, 2005).

In many ways, the lessons which are designed to incorporate multiple intelligences and technology do meet the needs of various learning styles (Rosen, 1997). Furthermore, teaching through intelligences has been found to increase interest and achievement in classroom assessment (Campbell & Campbell, 1999; Greenhawk, 1997; Kornhaber, Fierros, & Veenema, 2003). In addition to that, teaching with technology has been found to improve vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and grammar skills (Case & Truscott, 1999; Lewis, 1997). Most of the instructional activities based on multiple intelligences theory had a good effect on the students and improved their achievement (Yilmaz & Fer, 2003). Multiple intelligences theory has positive effects on students and teachers and helped teachers recognize that all students have different intelligence profiles and improved classroom environment and students achievement (Saban, 2000).

III. Modifying Existing Lesson

In order to transform the present instructional practice, teachers should consider modifying the existing lesson. Teachers should revise their instructional practice such as the use of textbooks. For the last half-century, teachers have relied on textbook that put together pre-packaged curriculum instructional programs and serves as primary source of knowledge to classroom instruction. Teachers are accustomed to having a textbook in place that they can borrow from and refer to as needed. Having a textbook is convenient and it saves teachers' time to produce instructional and learning materials too. Moreover, it is familiar after five decades and it is comfortable. However, simply using a textbook, which is assumed by many teachers to be an appropriate instructional material for instruction, could be questioned of its effectiveness in teaching and learning process nowadays (Mckenzie, 2005).

Multiple intelligences theory on the other hand recognizes the unique nature of each individual student. Developing lessons based on this theory requires a blend of the teacher's personal instructional style with the particular combination of student multiple intelligences profiles present in any given class. Undeniably some teachers, who are interested incorporating multiple intelligences theory into their instruction, have some uncertainty of whether they have to revise their objectives, or how they could decide on which intelligences to employ in their lesson, or whether they have to incorporate all the intelligences into a lesson (Mckenzie, 2005).

Definitely there is no one right answer to each question. However, teachers should edit and revise existing lessons with the idea of maximizing the number of intelligences accommodated. This should not be an exercise in documenting the intelligences that the lessons already address. To simply categorize existing lessons by the intelligences they accommodate is to spend time revising the lessons teachers intend to change. Making modifications based on multiple intelligences is to take lessons teachers already know and love and improve them by making additional connections for all their students.

Yet teachers should understand what it means to accommodate, stimulate, or employ the intelligence in a lesson. In this context, exercising the intelligence means that an activity utilizes that intelligence for the explicit purpose of instruction. For example, students talk with one another while completing a writing assignment does not demonstrate that they are exercising their interpersonal intelligence. This is because talking while doing the assignment does not support the instructional objective. On the other hand, having students work together to brainstorm possible solutions as part of a creative problem-solving activity contributes to the learning outcome of the lesson. It is by definition an accommodation of the interpersonal intelligence. An apparent example is in Gardner's humorous anecdote when he visited a kindergarten classroom, where he observed children crawling on their hands and knees, yelping and howling (Mckenzie, 2005). When he asked the teacher about the activity, Gardner was informed that the children were exercising their kinaesthetic intelligence. Unimpressed, Gardner responded that the activity did not stimulate kinaesthetic intelligence. In fact, the children were merely crawling on the floor and howling like wolves.

Teachers should bear in mind that it is not necessary or even advisable to try to accommodate all the intelligences in any one lesson (Mckenzie, 2005). Trying to work all intelligences into a single lesson usually results in an unnatural learning environment, with students unable to benefit from saturation of inputs and experiences. Instead, teachers should expect to integrate not more than three to five intelligences into one lesson (Mckenzie, 2005). The most appropriate intelligences to target will become more evident as teachers work with an existing lesson and should flow naturally from the content of their plan. This is important because students need to see natural, obvious connections between the intelligences if they are going to truly benefit from teachers efforts. If a lesson tries to force a musical connection that just does not flow with the rest of the lesson, it will throw students off rather than help them understand. In short, if

the introduction of a new intelligence into an existing lesson does not fit naturally and easily into the plan, teachers should omit it.

Designing a multiple intelligences lesson that incorporates technology into classroom instruction requires teachers to start with a clear educational objective as proposed in Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives for cognitive domain (see Table 1) which later had been revised as a new version (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Benjamin Bloom has introduced six progressively complex steps of cognitive development. He offered teachers a rubric for developing instructional objectives at increasingly advanced levels of higher-order thinking. The taxonomy is considered among the most practical theories of instructional and learning (Tomei, 2003). Creating instructional objectives requires teachers to identify specific objectives for learning outcomes. For example, teachers may note the learning outcome as by the end of the Science lesson as, students should be able to define photosynthesis. Teachers may shift the level of cognitive development from the first level of knowledge to the highest level of creating from one lesson to another lesson (see Table 1).

Teachers should continually refer back to the objective to make sure that they are staying on their primary objective as they build the rest of the lesson. For an existing lesson, this may mean modifying the original objective slightly to make room for additional learning outcomes. With a clear objective in place, teachers could then identify the intelligences they want to include in their lesson. There should be an obvious, natural connection between any intelligence that they choose to include and the objective. Besides, teachers should use the objective and list of intelligences to determine the technology that they would like to employ in the lesson. Not every lesson will benefit from the use of instructional technology, and knowing when it is and is not appropriate comes with practice and experience. As teachers start the process of modifying lessons, their purpose is to help students reach the stated objective by incorporating technology that stimulates the target intelligences.

In integrating technology into instruction teachers should carefully consider which instructional technology (see Figure 1) might be the most appropriate to be incorporated into their lesson. Technology should only be chosen if and when it enhances student learning. In Malaysian context, the technology varies from modules for computer-assisted instruction, tools, network-based, to application software (Ministry of Education, 1997). For instance, animation software clearly encourages spatial intelligence. If teachers wish to bolster the visual element in their lesson, animation software will be a good choice. Spreadsheet software is great for stimulating the logical intelligence and for making connection to the spatial intelligence with a graph or chart. If teachers would like to reinforce the spatial and logical intelligences, spreadsheet program is clearly a good choice. Presentation software makes excellent use of the verbal, spatial, and interpersonal intelligences. Teachers can also bring in the musical intelligence, if that is appropriate for their students. In short, teachers are the one who can determine the most pertinent instructional technology for their lesson (See Figure 1).

Anyway teachers have to emphasize on the context for their lesson to determine the technology that is right for them (Mckenzie, 2005). They can decide either not to use technology to keep the lesson finite and circumscribed, or to add non-technological tasks including oral presentation, or a discussion to the lesson to stimulate additional intelligences. They can use animation software or spreadsheet software to enhance the lesson objective, or to use multimedia presentation software to extend the lesson without changing its primary focus, or to choose an online collaborative project and develop a lesson to be in a completely new direction that opens it up to a variety of intelligences.

IV. Using POMAT Approach

To make it easier to move from theory to practice, the POMAT approach, a procedural model for modifying existing lessons was developed by Walter Mckenzie (2005). This approach gives due attention to a lesson's procedure includes instructional activities, objective or learning outcome, materials, assessment, and instructional technology in classroom instruction. Teachers might find that after creating a few lessons in this way it is easy to fall into a pattern of using similar-sounding objectives with familiar intelligences and appropriate technology applications, lesson after lesson. The POMAT process breaks up the lesson plan process into five steps that require teachers to think about how well their lesson maps out. This approach is a step-by-step process of modifying the existing lesson and integrating multiple intelligences and technology into instruction.

Using this approach, teachers should look at a lesson's procedure first, and then maps back through the objective, materials, assessment, and technology to determine a consistency of purpose. The actual flow of a lesson should nicely match the objective, materials, assessment and technology. If the lesson is inconsistent in any of its critical components, the POMAT process will identify gaps and weakness that teachers can address later. The entire procedure is designed to examine a lesson's consistency within the context of the eight intelligences.

The POMAT process involves five steps. First of all, without looking at any other part of the existing lesson, teachers should go directly to the lesson's procedure and make some notes on each prescribed activity and the intelligences it accommodates. For example, if students are asked to listen to a short story, teachers may note the verbal-linguistic intelligence on the POMAT chart (see Table 2). If students are then asked to draw a mind map, teachers may note on the POMAT chart that this stimulates the visual-spatial intelligence. Teachers should complete this process for the entire lesson's procedure, noting any and all intelligences that are accommodated (see Table 2).

The next step is teachers should go to the beginning of the lesson plan and examine their stated objective or learning outcome (LO). Teachers will note on the POMAT chart which intelligences seem to fit this learning outcome. For in-

stance, if the learning outcome states that by the end of the lesson, students should be able to write a plot of the short story in five paragraphs in groups, teachers may note that it will accommodate the verbal-linguistic and interpersonal intelligences. However, teachers must make sure that they note only the intelligences the learning outcome clearly accommodates.

Then, with the procedure and learning outcome reviewed, teachers should now look at the list of materials they have generated for the lesson and identify which intelligences these materials stimulate. Teachers may note on the POMAT chart that the text book, graphic organizer and mind map may stimulate verbal, visual spatial and logical-mathematical intelligences.

After that, teachers should look at their assessment plan. It should be consistent with the procedure, learning outcome, and materials in the intelligences it utilizes. There should be a clear agreement between procedure, learning outcome, materials, and assessment in terms of the intelligences addressed. In the case of testing students' understanding of the plot of the short story, quiz is the best of choice. It is practical and relevant for the lesson. If the assessment matches well with the objective and the intelligences that have been identified throughout the lesson, teachers are on the right track.

Finally, teachers should review the POMAT chart that they have created and determine which technology, if any, should be included in the lesson. Most likely teachers are already employing certain instructional technology in the lesson. Since teachers intend to integrate technology into classroom instruction, they might think of digital technology to be included in the lesson. They may project a slide on the wall and decide that it will be an appropriate use of technology. Or teachers might use a desktop publishing programme so that the class can work on a creative writing and produce a brochure. With sufficient planning, teachers can even invite other classes to participate in a competition to meet the learning outcome, and compare results. The lesson which fits in the overall curriculum will determine which uses of technology are most appropriate and effective.

An advantage of analyzing the existing lesson using the POMAT method is it will help teachers quickly identify areas of strength in their lesson. Teachers could see a clear intelligence dimension to the learning task, learning outcomes, materials, assessment and instructional technology. Eventually, the lesson will cater differing needs and abilities of all students in the class. Besides, if it happened that teachers have a significant number of students who are dominant in certain intelligences, they may consider modifying the learning outcome and procedures accordingly. Teachers may do so easily and at once by using the POMAT method.

V. Implication of Integrating Technology into MI Classroom Instruction

With the implementation of new instructional strategies, teachers should not simply rely on the textbook. It becomes their main priority now to design instructional materials that take into account students' multiple intelligences. These materials will accommodate students differing needs and abilities, resulting in fuller realisation of their capabilities and potential, and allow students to take greater responsibility for managing and directing their own learning. To ensure that all materials are fit to be used teachers should refer to conceptual selection and evaluation guidelines for teaching and learning materials (see Table 3) that cover five main criteria namely instruction adequacy, technical adequacy, curriculum adequacy, cost effectiveness, and cosmetic adequacy (Ministry of Education, 1997) (See Table 3).

Furthermore, teachers should consider diverse individual student intelligence profiles in designing and recommending instructional methods and technology (see Table 4) for the whole class (Armstrong, 2000; Ministry of Education, 1997). For example, for students who are strong in verbal linguistic, teachers could design a lesson that incorporates creative writing and ask them to produce a brochure using a desktop publishing programme (See Table 4).

However, conventional media, commonly used in today's educational settings, can still feature in the lesson (Ministry of Education, 1997). Basically, it is classified into three main categories namely printed media, 3D objects, and audio visual media (see Table 5). On the other hand, there is no harm if teachers want to use conventional media in an integrated manner with technology as long as it will help teachers achieve their learning outcome (See Table 5).

Integrating technology into classroom instruction seeks the teachers to acquire teaching and learning materials from a wide range of sources, and will no longer be limited by resources within schools (see Figure 2). In addition to libraries, businesses, homes, government departments, other sources of teaching and learning materials include edunet, internet and classified printed directories (Ministry of Education, 1997). In this case, teachers can surf the internet to get teaching and learning materials and adapt or adopt it to match it with their learning outcome and their students' differing needs and abilities (See Figure 2).

VI. Conclusion

If teachers believe that technology is just another tool for instruction, then it is worth no more than any other piece of equipment in their classrooms. The true potential of instructional technology could only be seen if teachers are willing to let go of their preconceived notions and traditional ideas. Thus, teachers need to allow technology to transform their classrooms for the Information Age. It will never too late for teachers to consider accommodating several intelligences through different instructional technology and media in their lesson. However, to integrate multiple intelligences and technology into instruction, teachers must aspire to become a techno-constructivist (Mckenzie, 2005). As for a techno-

constructivist, technology is not merely an instructional tool in fact it is a way to transform the classroom into a new and vital learning environment for students. Only at this level teachers could truly realize the full potential of every student in their charge.

In a nutshell, integrating technology and multiple intelligences into English classroom instruction not only individualizes the education and approaches curriculum content through multiple entry points but also encourages students to take control of their own learning and persuades teachers to be a techno-constructivist which would transform the present instructional practice in Malaysia.

APPENDIX:

TABLE 1:
REVISED VERSION FOR BLOOM'S TAXONOMY OF COGNITIVE DOMAIN

LEVEL	DEFINITION	SAMPLE VERBS	SAMPLE OBJECTIVES
REMEMBERING	Student recalls or recognizes information, ideas, and principles in the approximate form in which they were learned	Write List Label Name State Define	Students should be able to define the 6 levels of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain
UNDERSTANDING	Student translates, comprehends, or interprets information based on prior learning	Explain Summarize Paraphrase Describe Illustrate	Students should be able to explain the purpose of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain
APPLYING	Student translates, comprehends, or interprets information based on prior learning	Use Compute Solve Demonstrate Apply Construct	Students should be able to write an instructional objective for each level of Bloom's taxonomy
ANALYZING	Student distinguishes, classifies, and relates the assumptions, hypotheses, evidence, or structure of a statement or question	Analyze Categorize Compare Contrast Separate	Students should be able to compare and contrast the cognitive and affective domains
EVALUATING	Student appraises, assesses, or critiques on a basis of specific standards and criteria	Judge Recommend Critique Justify	Students should be able to judge the effectiveness of writing objectives using Bloom's taxonomy
CREATING	Student originates, integrates, and combines ideas into a product, plan or proposal that is new to him or her	Create Design Hypothesize Invent Develop	Students should be able to design a classification scheme for writing educational objectives

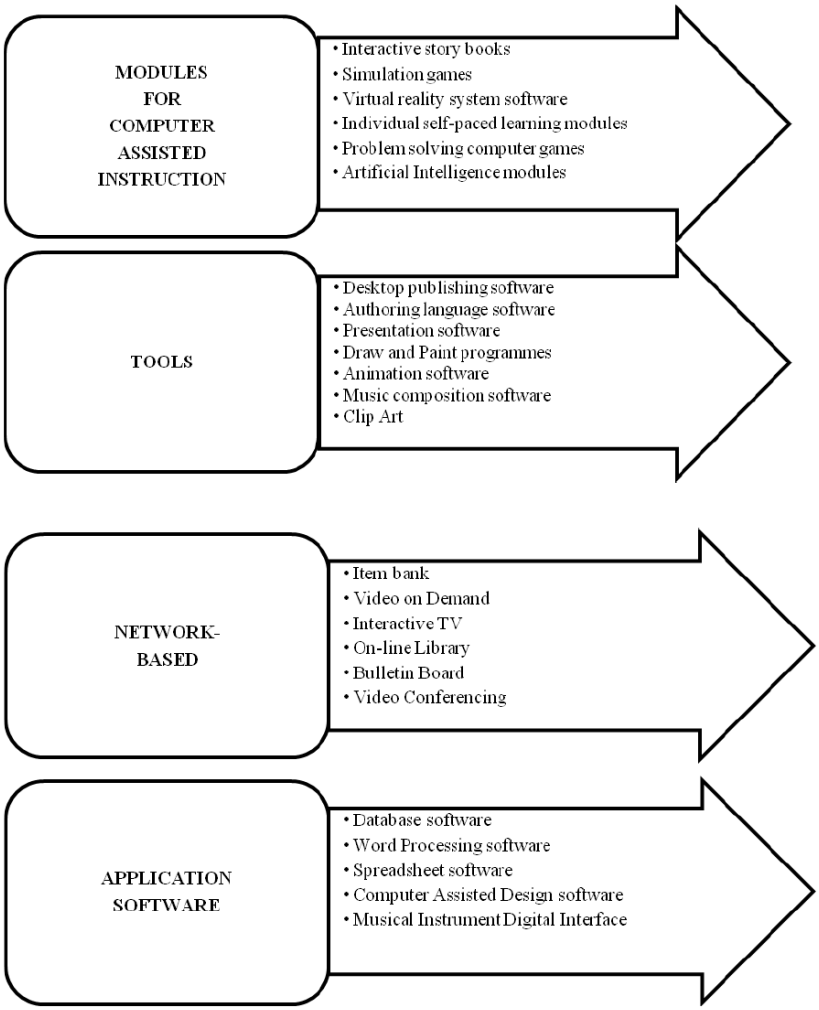

Figure 1: Instructional Technology

TABLE 2:
THE POMAT CHART

Intelligences	Procedure	Objective	Materials	Assessment	Technology
Linguistic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Logical-Mathematical			✓	✓	
Spatial	✓		✓	✓	✓
Musical					
Interpersonal	✓	✓			✓
Intrapersonal					
Bodily-Kinaesthetic					
Naturalist					
NOTES	Read the story, Listen to the story, Draw a mind map, Present to class Work in groups	Write a plot of the story in five paragraphs	Text book, Mind Map, Graphic Organ-izer	Quiz	Microsoft Power-Point, Microsoft Word

TABLE 3:
COMPONENTS OF QUALITY MATERIAL

CRITERIA	FEATURES
INSTRUCTION ADEQUACY	• Promotes vertical and horizontal integration • Considers different capabilities of students and teachers • Suitable for a variety of learning environments • Well designed interface • Professionally done • Adaptable to different instructional-learning styles
TECHNICAL ADEQUACY	• User-friendly • Clear and comprehensive manuals and guides
CURRICULUM ADEQUACY	• In-line with curriculum specifications • Promotes values, skills (especially thinking skills), knowledge, and language across the curriculum • Consistent with instructional-learning objectives • Content is accurate and up-to-date • Content is relevant to student's environment • Assessment is built-in
COST EFFECTIVENESS	• Value for money
COSMETIC ADEQUACY	• Graphic quality • Video quality • Animation quality • Voice & sound quality • Layout quality • Colour and fonts quality

TABLE 4:
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND TECHNOLOGY

INTELLIGENCE PROFILES	INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS	INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY
VERBAL/LINGUISTIC	• Reading • Vocabulary • Formal Speech • Journal/Diary Keeping • Creative Writing • Poetry • Verbal Debate • Impromptu Speaking • Humour/Jokes • Storytelling	• Word processing programmes • Typing tutors • Desktop publishing programmes • Electronic libraries • Interactive storybooks • Word Games
LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL	• Abstract Symbols/Formulas • Outlining • Graphic Organisers • Number Sequences • Calculation • Deciphering Codes • Forcing Relationships • Syllogisms • Problem-Solving • Pattern Games	• Mathematical skills tutorials • Computer programming tutors • Logic games • Science programmes • Critical thinking programmes
VISUAL/SPATIAL	• Visualisation • Active Imagination • Colour Schemes • Patterns/Designs • Painting • Drawing • Mind-mapping • Pretending • Sculpture • Visual Pictures	• Animation programmes • Draw and Paint programmes • Electronic chess games • Spatial problem solving games • Electronic puzzle kits • Clip Art programmes

		• Geometry programmes • Graphic presentations of knowledge
BODY/KINESTHETIC	• Folk/Creative Dance • Role Playing • Physical Games • Drama • Martial Arts • Body Language • Physical Exercise • Mime • Inventing • Sport games	• Hands-on construction kits that interface with computers • Motion-simulation games • Virtual-reality system software • Eye-hand co-ordination games • Tools that plug into computers
MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC	• Rhythmic Patterns • Vocal Sounds/Tones • Music Composition/Creation • Percussion Vibrations • Humming • Environmental Sounds • Singing • Tonal Patterns • Music Performance	• Music literature tutors • Singing software (transforms voice input into synthesiser sounds) • Composition software • Tone recognition and melody memory enhancers • Musical instrument digital interfaces (MIDI)
INTERPERSONAL	• Giving Feedback • Intuiting Others' Feelings • Co-operative Learning Strategies • Person-to-Person Communication • Empathy Practices • Division of Labour • Collaboration Skills • Receiving Feedback • Sensing Others' Motives • Group Projects	• Electronic bulletin boards • Simulation games
INTRAPERSONAL	• Meditation Methods • Meta-cognition Techniques • Thinking Strategies • Emotional Processing • "Know Thyself" Procedures • Mindfulness Practices • Focusing/Concentration Skills • Higher-Order Reasoning • Complex Guided Imagery • "Centring" Practices	• Personal choice software • Career counselling software • Any self-paced programme

TABLE 5:
CONVENTIONAL MEDIA

PRINTED	3D OBJECTS	AUDIO/VISUAL
• Books	• Globes	• Slide-Tapes
• Encyclopaedias	• Puppets	• Filmstrips
• Magazines	• Models	• Radio Programmes
• Newspapers	• Mock-ups	• TV Programmes
• Documents	• Collections	• Motion-picture
• Flat Pictures	• Specimens	• films
• Drawings/Paintings		• Microfilms/
• Maps		• Microfiches
• Graphs/Charts/		• Audio Cards
• Diagrams		• Audio Tapes
• Posters		
• Cartoons/Comics		

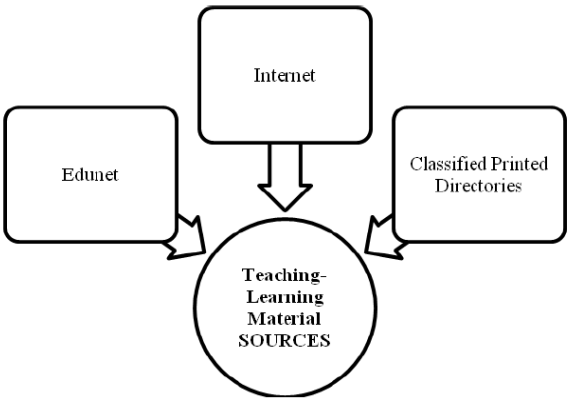

Figure 2: Teaching and Learning Material Sources

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1156-1161, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1156-1161

The Relationship between Language Learning Strategies, Language Learning Beliefs, Motivation, and Proficiency: A Study of EFL Learners in Iran

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***Abstract*—Since the emergence of strategy research in the 1970s many issues have been examined. One of these areas which has been favored in recent years is related to answering questions like 'what variables are related to the choice and the use of learner strategies?' and 'How strong is the influence of a certain variable?' As thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between strategy use on the one hand and three other variables (motivation, proficiency, and learners' beliefs) on the other hand. The participants of this study were homogenized in terms of age, gender, and major and were required to fill out three questionnaires and complete a TOEFL test. The first was the Strategy-Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) developed by R. Oxford (1990) to identify the general strategies ESL/EFL learners use. The second was the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by Horwitz (1988). This study also adopts Schmidt and Watanabe's (2001) model of language learning motivation. Finally, the Coefficient-Correlation was estimated to identify the relationship between the aforementioned variables in relation to strategy use. The results indicate that Persian students do use a number of language learning strategies, but that they show distinct preferences for particular types of strategies. The findings also reveal a positive relationship between strategy use and motivation, proficiency, and language learning beliefs. These results may be used in the future to inform pedagogy.**

***Index Terms*—language learning strategies, language learning beliefs, proficiency, language learning motivation**

I. Introduction

This study was conducted at the University of Isfahan in Iran. English is a foreign language taught to Iranian students from guidance school onto university. In spite of the amount of exposure to English its use in daily life is limited and the proficiency of the students does not meet expectations of the instructors. Although English is a prerequisite for higher education, most Iranian students cannot speak English fluently. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore variables that may contribute to an improvement in Iranian learners English. This study aims to identify the language learning strategies used by Iranian students and the relationship between the former variable in regards to language learning beliefs, motivation, and proficiency. This study is a response to a need for more language strategy research with students from different cultural backgrounds.

II. Literature Review

A. Language Learning Strategies

Second language strategy research dates back to the year 1975 (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007). According to Cohen & Macaro (2007), 'if there is one article which can be seen to have announced the birth of language learner strategy research, it was *what the good language learner can teach us* by Joan Rubin in 1975'. Since then, various theorists have contributed to the definition of language learning strategies (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007). Various classification systems have sought to group individual strategies within larger categories. From them, the most frequently cited and applicable definitions of learning strategies to date is that of Rebecca Oxford (1990) who described learning strategies as 'specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and

more transferable to new situations' (p.8). Oxford (1990) in her Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) prescribes six categories namely: Memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. Oxford's classification has been selected for this study because it is comprehensive, detailed, and systematic (Vidal, 2002).

B. Beliefs about Language Learning

Since the mid 1980s, learner beliefs have become a topic of research interest and have received an increasing amount of attention (Barcelos, 2003). Learner beliefs refer to "beliefs about the nature of language and language learning" (Barcelos, 2003, p. 8). They also seem to "have direct relevance to the understanding of student expectations of, commitment to, success in, and satisfaction with their language classes" (Horwitz, 1988). Learner beliefs connect naturalistically to learners' use of language learning strategies. Students' description of language learning strategy use, for instance, was found to be consistent with their stated beliefs about language learning (Wenden, 1987). Horwitz's system of beliefs about language learning, as reflected in the *Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory* (BALLI), which is the most widely used questionnaire for investigating learner beliefs (Barcelos, 2003) consists of the following five major areas: (a) beliefs about the difficulty of language learning, which concerns the general difficulty of learning a second language as well as perceptions of the difficulty of a specific target language; (b) foreign language aptitude, which concerns the existence of aptitude and opinions about the kind of individuals who possess it; (c) beliefs about the language learning process, which concerns student ideas about "what it means to learn a language and how to go about it" (Horwitz, 1999, p. 565); (d) beliefs about how to communicate; and (e) motivation and learner expectations (Horwitz, 1988, 1999). The present study adopts this system and adapts specific items in the *BALLI*.

C. Language Learning Motivation

Motivation comes from the Latin verb *movere*, which means to move (Pintrich, 2003). Motivation theories attempt to answer questions about "what gets individuals moving" and toward what activities or tasks (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). In second language research, "motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning in the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 65). This present study adopts Schmidt and Watanabe's (2001) model of language learning motivation.

D. Language Proficiency

Language proficiency has been defined by various researchers. Some ways of determining proficiency include: self-ratings (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989); language achievement tests (Phillips, 1991); entrance and placement examinations (Mullins, 1992); language course grades (Mullins, 1992); years of language study (Watanabe, 1990). In this study, the proficiency of the learners has been determined based on the results of a TOEFL test which was completed by the participants.

III. Research Questions

1. What type of language learning strategies do the Iranian participants use?
2. What is the relationship between language learning strategies on the one hand and their beliefs, motivation, and language proficiency on the other hand?

IV. Method

A. Participants

The participants for this study were selected from the Department of English at the University of Isfahan. They were all female under-graduate students majoring in Applied Linguistics and were in their early twenties. A total number of 80 students, selected based on a random sampling method, participated in this study.

B. Instruments

A version of the SILL (50-item version 7.0 for ESL/EFL) was used to collect data on the type and frequency of strategies used by the participants. The items on the questionnaire were required to be answered based on a Likert scale response using a five-interval scale of 'never of almost never true of me', 'usually not true of me', 'somewhat true of me', 'usually true of me', and 'always or almost always true of me'. The BALLI was used to identify the participants' beliefs in regards to language learning. In order to identify the students' level of motivation Schmidt and Watanabe's (2001) model of language learning motivation was adopted in this study. The proficiency level of the participants were determined based on an IBT TOEFL test extracted from 'How to prepare for the TOEFL IBT' book written by Pamela J. Sharp. The TOEFL is a standardized test for ESL/EFL students. It has proven to be a reliable and valid test used throughout the world to assess students' English proficiency. The instruments were piloted before data collection in order to identify and resolve any ambiguity if there was any. According to the results of the pilot test there was no need to translate any of the instruments used in this study.

C. Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from senior students majoring in applied linguistics. Before gathering the data, permission was received from their instructors. Students were also notified that they would be participating in a study and would be required to complete a TOEFL test and fill out three questionnaires. Two class sessions were dedicated for gathering the data. In the first session the 80 participants were required to complete the TOEFL test. In the second session they were required to fill out the SILL, BALLI, and the language learning motivation questionnaire. The students were reassured that there was no right or wrong answer, and that their responses would not affect their final grades.

D. Data Analysis

After piloting the instruments used in this study, the reliability of each instrument was calculated. The SILL questionnaire had an alpha reliability coefficient of 0.91, the BALLI an alpha reliability coefficient of 0.85, and Schmidt and Watanabe's (2001) questionnaire had an alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82. The mean and standard deviation of the SILL questionnaire was estimated in order to identify the frequency of language learning strategies employed by Iranian learners. Following that the Pearson Correlation was estimated in order to identify the relationship between language learning strategies on the one hand and language learning beliefs, motivation, and proficiency on the other hand.

V. Results

From the result of the SILL questionnaire it can be understood that the EFL students reported on using all six strategies. The table below shows the mean of the overall strategy use of the participants.

TABLE 1:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY

Strategy	Mean	Degree	Rank	N
Cognitive	3.81	Generally used	1	**80**
Metacognitive	3.39	Sometimes used	2	**80**
Compensation	3.18	Sometimes used	3	**80**
Memory	3.03	Sometimes used	4	**80**
Affective	3.00	Sometimes used	5	**80**
Social	2.88	Sometimes used	6	**80**

According to the results the participants reported on using all the six categories of language learning strategies. The most frequently used strategy being the cognitive strategy (Mean=3.81) and the least frequently used strategy being the social strategy (Mean=2.88). According to Oxford's index for interpretation of the LLS, the result of the questionnaires revealed that the participants *sometimes* used social, affective, compensation, metacognitive, and memory strategies. Cognitive strategies were *generally used* based on the results of the SILL questionnaire.

The results of the Pearson Correlation between language learning strategies and the other three variables under study showed a positive relationship in all three cases. The tables below reveal the strength of the relationship.

TABLE 2:
CORRELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING BELIEFS

		strategy	reading
strategy	Pearson Correlation	1	.581
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
reading	Pearson Correlation	.581	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

TABLE 3:
CORRELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY AND MOTIVATION

		motivation	strategy
motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.589
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	80	80
strategy	Pearson Correlation	.589	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	80	80

TABLE 4:
CORRELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

		strategy	reading
strategy	Pearson Correlation	1	.220
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	80	80
reading	Pearson Correlation	.220	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	80	80

VI. DISCUSSION

This study showed that Iranian EFL learners were familiar with language learning strategies and this might imply them being active strategic users. The cognitive strategy was the most frequently used strategy in this study (M=3.81). After cognitive strategies, the second most frequently used strategy was metacognitive strategy (M= 3.39). Compensation strategy ranked third (M= 3.18). The fourth strategy from the top was the memory strategy (M= 3.03). The least language learning strategy reported on by the participants were the social and affective strategies.

The students in this study indicated a low level of preference for Socio-affective strategies. This is similar to the results of studies such as those by Chamot and Kupper (1989), Goh and Kwah (1997), and Magogwe and Oliver (2007). It may be that like students in Oxford's (1993) study, students in Iran are largely unaware of the potential of socio-affective strategies.

Of course, there are many studies which have resulted in different findings from the aforementioned studies (e.g. Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Oxford, 1990; Sheorey, 1999). One possible explanation for the different findings found in the studies mentioned above and many others might be related to the context of learning situation, which could have a strong influence on learners' choice of language learning strategies (Chamot, 2005; Cohen, 1998; Zhang, 2008). Some studies argue that the strategies frequently used by proficient language learners in an Asian FL (foreign language) context differ drastically from those in the North American SL (second language) context (Gu, 1996; LoCastro, 1994; Takeuchi et al., 1999; Takeuchi & Wakamoto, 2001). The use of different types and numbers of strategies may also depend on the learner and setting in which learning occurs and the language task to be completed, suggesting a need for more studies on different learners in different settings. Some studies have indicated that Asian students showed reluctance to try new learning techniques and did not respond well to strategy training. Such differences led Politzer and McGroarty (1985) to conclude that many accepted "good" language-learning strategies may be based on ethnocentric assumptions, namely Western, about effective language learning. Further, when compared to learners in other cultural settings it is apparent that the combination of strategies preferred by the Iranian students is not the same as other learners.

The current study found a strong relationship between the participants' beliefs concerning language learning and their language learning strategies. Regarding motivation the findings of this study were in line with previous studies. There is now considerable support for the association between students' motivation and use of learning strategies (Elliot, McGregor, & Gable, 1999; Lens, Simons, & Dewitte, 2002; Pintrich, 1999; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Schiefele, 1991). In terms of language learning strategy and language proficiency, in a large number of studies a positive relationship between the two aforementioned variables has been reported (Bruen, 2001; Glenn, 2000; Park, 1997; Sheorey, 1999). Oxford (2003) reports on multiple studies that have used her Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to measure the relationship between strategy use and proficiency. Most have found the relationship to be of either a linear (e.g., Green & Oxford, 1995; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995) or curvilinear nature (e.g., Phillips, 1991). Overall, "In most but not all instances, the relationship is linear, showing that more advanced or more proficient students use strategies more frequently" (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995, p.10).

VII. CONCLUSION

The results of this study were consistent with the general findings of previous language learning strategy studies (Green &Oxford, 1995; Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; O'malley & Chamot, 1990). Like previous research conducted outside the Iranian context, this study found more overall use of language learning strategies by more proficient and motivated students. At the same time the more positive their language learning beliefs, the more strategies they reported on using.

One of the limitations of this study was that data was only collected from one source with students majoring in the same field. As thus, generalization of the findings is limited. A more significant limitation was examining the participants as a whole and not making a distinction between the proficient and less proficient.

In terms of pedagogical implications, the results could imply the need for classroom pedagogy to explicitly integrate strategy instruction and to address the motivational aspect of learning for the purpose of motivating student involvement and enhancing learning effectiveness.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1162-1167, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1162-1167

Conversational Implicature in English Listening Comprehension

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***Abstract*—Some English learners find it hard to understand a sentence when they are given a piece of listening material although they have a good master of vocabulary and grammatical rules. In order to improve the ability of listening comprehension, it's necessary for English learners to introduce some basic Pragmatics theories. Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory is one of the most important contents of Pragmatics. The theory focuses its attention on the phenomenon of conveying more than what is said. Therefore, the English listeners can and should master the theory of Grice's Conversational Implicature, learn how to infer implicature to guide their learning and lead in such theories in listening comprehension. This thesis attempts to examin the relationship between them and state the roles played by the conversational implicature in listening comprehension.**

***Index Terms*—conversational implicature, cooperative principle, listening comprehension**

I. Introduction

Sometimes, some English listeners who have a good mastery of vocabulary and grammatical rules may find it hard to understand a sentence when they are given a piece of listening materials, so English listening comprehension concerns the total understanding and application of language a lot besides vocabulary and grammatical structures. Nowadays, although English listeners have changed their learning methods and listening materials in order to improve their listening ability, the listening ability of many English listeners is still deficient. The training of listening still confronts many problems. Hence, how can we efficiently improve the competence of listening comprehension and then cultivate the ability to apply language? As Geoffrey Leech (1983) argues "*we cannot really understand the nature of language itself unless we understand pragmatics.*" (p34) Thus, melting the theory of pragmatics with the listening comprehension is the key step to improve the ability of listening competence.

Pragmatics deals with the study of language in use in different contexts. It didn't appear as an independent branch of linguistics until 1960s and 1970s. As a branch of pragmatics, the theory of conversational implicature experienced a long history and can be traced back to relations with Semiotics and the Theory of Deviation. However, in 1967, the theory of conversational implicature was formally suggested by Herbert Paul Grice, an American linguistic philosopher. From then on, the theory of conversational implicature has been growing quickly with the spreading of pragmatics.

This thesis attempts to state the relationship between the conversational implicature and listening comprehension, find out how Grice's theory of conversational implicature contributes to listening comprehension.

II. Literature Review of Conversational Implicature and Listening Comprehension

A. What is Conversational Implicature

Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory is one of the most important contents of Pragmatics. So before mastering this theory, it's necessary to get a general idea of it, including its history, characteristics and contents.

1. The Development of Conversational Implicature

Conversational Implicature: Implicature is a special case of situations in which the perceived meaning extends beyond the literal meaning. Conversational implicature is, therefore, something which is implied in conversation, that is, something which is left implicit in actual language use. (William James Lecture)

The notion of conversational implicature is one of the most important ideas in pragmatics. An implicature is something meant, implied, or suggested distinct from what is said. The term "implicature" is derived from the word "implicate" whose primitive form "implicates" appeared first in Latin around 1530-1540 and whose primitive meaning was "intervene, entangle, involve". Other than the literal meaning, implicature described the implicit meaning or the meaning implied. H. P. Grice, who coined the term "implicature," and classified the phenomenon, developed an influential theory to explain and predict conversational implicature, and describe how they are understood. The "Cooperative Principle" and associated "Maxims" play a central role. Other authors have focused on principles of politeness and communicative efficiency. Herbert Paul Grice was the first one to systematically study the cases in which what a speaker means differs from what the speaker says. Grice's Theory of Conversational Implicature occupied a great part in the linguistic field.

2. Grice's Theory of Conversational Implicature

The Theory of Conversational Implicature was first proposed by Herbert Paul Grice, who is an American linguistic philosopher. H. P. Grice delivered three speeches in his William James lectures at Harvard University in 1967. Among these, the second lecture entitled "Logic and Conversation" came out in 1975 in Syntax and Semantics. There, he presented the theory of "Cooperative Principle" and "Conversational Implicature."

In order to understand comprehensively and thoroughly the purpose and the significance of the proposition of "cooperative principle" and "conversational implicature," we should figure out some ideas of Grice's basic theory about "meaning," which can be divided into natural meaning and non-natural meaning. Natural meaning refers to the meaning of the utterance that can be generally gained by the conversational participants. While the meaning refers to the intended meaning conveyed by the speaker and must be inferred by the receiver in particular contexts. On the base of it, Grice proposed the key ideas of conversational implicature in 1967. If the participants both have the expectation to achieve a successful conversation, they must cooperative with each other, and speak sincerely, sufficiently, relevantly and clearly. To put it another way, they must observe the co-operative principle and the maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relevance and Manner. If someone who participate the conversation flouts the co-operative principle and any of the maxims, he must have intended to do so. And the receiver can infer the speaker's intended meaning in particular contexts. For example:

A: Do you know when John left the pub last night?

B: Eleven o'clock. And he went to Mary's apartment instead of his own.

According to quantity maxim, the contribution should not be more informative than is required. In this way, in the example, as the answer to A, generally, "Eleven o'clock," is enough. However, B adds the later sentence, provides some information that seems not necessary and violates the quatntity maxim. We infer that B wants to tell A that John might have some special relationship with Mary.

3. Characteristics of Grice's Conversational Implicature

In Grice's opinion (1975)，conversational implicature has five characteristics

1). Cancellability

Conversational implicaures are cancelable or defeasible if we add some other premises to the original ones. For example:

2). Non-detachability

The conversational implicature is attached to the semantic content of what is said, not to the linguistic form used. Therefore it is possible to use a synonym and keep the implicature intact. In order words, the implicature will not be detached, separated from the utterance as a whole, even though the specific words may be changed.

3). Calculability

The conversational implicature of an utterance is different from its literal meaning. There is no direct link between the two. So if it is to succeed as the speaker intends to, there must be ways for the hearer to work it out.

4). Non-conventionality

Conversational implicature is an extra meaning, not inherent in the words used. One cannot find conversational implicature listed in the dictionary. To work out the conversational implicature of an utterance, one needs to know its conversational meaning and the context in which it is used. In other words, a conversational implicature is the adding up of the conventional meaning and the context. The context changes, the implicature will also change.

5). Indeterminacy

An expression with a single meaning can give rise to different implicature on different occasions, and indeed on any one occasion the set of associated implicature may not be exactly determinable.

B. Cooperative Principle

Cooperative principle is the main branch of Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory. To achieve a successful conversation, participants must be co-operative with each other.

1. Definition of cooperative principle

In 1975, the philosopher of language Grice, H. P. pointed out that both the speaker and the addressee have to follow certain pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic rules in order to communicate effectively. They have to co-operative. Grice's Cooperative Principle consists of several maxims that appear very simple, straightforward, and common-sensual at first sight. Grice (1967) observed that conversations, like other human interactions, are governed by a cooperative principle:" make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged". In other words, the participants should be co-operative, and then their utterances can be relevant to each other. Only in this way can the participants infer what the other one really means in their conversation. And this principle is known as the Cooperative Principle or CP for short.

2. The four maxims of CP

Maxims of conversational is Grice's second theory. It is essentially a theory about how people use language. In the theory, he developed the concept of conversational implicature. To Grice, conversational implicature is realized through the four maxims under general principle of conversation.

The cooperative principle is furthered by four maxims, and each has their own regulations respectively:

The maxim of Quality

(i) Do not say what you believe to be false:

(ii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Obviously, the two conditions are both subjective and make up a general condition that people should be sincere about what they speak out.

The maxim of Quantity

(i) Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange;

(ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

The effect of the maxim is to add to most utterances a pragmatic inference to the effect that the statement presented is the strongest, or more informative, that can made in situation.

The maxim of Relevance

(i) Make your contribution relevant

This maxim is the easiest one, pointing out that participants center about the same topic and avoid asserting something irrelevant.

The maxim of Manner:

(i) Avoid obscurity

(ii) Avoid ambiguity

(iii) Be brief

(iv) Be orderly

The regulations cover many aspects that a standard sentence calls for.

3. Violation of the Maxims

There are cases when a speaker fails a maxim or several maxims in conversation in order to convey additional meaning. He appears to infringe the maxims deliberately in appearance, and the speaker will assume that he is still adhering to the maxims at a deeper level, and that he infringes the maxims because he want to draw the hearer's attention, so that the hearer can get particular inferences and understand the particular inferences.

C. Literature Review of Listening Comprehension

The definition, nature and importance of listening comprehension will be stated as follows:

1. The Definition of Listening Comprehension

ILA (International Listening Association) describes listening as "the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages." According to Vandergrift (1999), listening is anything but a passive activity. It is a complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance. Coordinating all of this involves a great deal of mental activity of the part of the listener. Rost(2002) defines listening, in its broadest sense, as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says; constructing and representing meaning; negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding; and creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy. Although these definitions differ in words, one thing is agreed upon, that is, listening is a complex active process of interpretation in which listeners matches what they hear with what they already know.

2. The Nature of Listening Comprehension

On the basis of research work by many scholars, the nature of listening comprehension is presented to us. Just as William Littlewood (1981) states that the nature of listening comprehension means that the learner should be encourage to engage in an active process of listening for meaning, using not only the linguistic clues but also his nonlinguistic knowledge. O'Malley and Chamot state according to their study that listening comprehension is an active and conscious process in which the listener constructs meaning by using cues from contextual information and existing knowledge, while relying upon multiple strategic resources to fulfill the task requirement.

It has been generally agreed that listening comprehension is an active, complex, and constructive process, and listeners play a very active and important role in constructing the meaning of the speaker.

3. The Importance of Listening Comprehension

Listening is a vital skill of human communication and contributes much to our understanding of Second Language Acquisition. According to Feyten, more than forty-five percent of our total communication time is spent in listening. Listening has emerged as an important component in the process of second language acquisition.

As Rost (2002) points out, listening is vital in the foreign language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, learning cannot begin. It is also closely related to the development of spoken language proficiency. Spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Because learners must interact to achieve understanding, access to speakers of the language in essential. Moreover, learners' failure to understand the language they hear is an impetus, not an obstacle. It is now generally recognized that listening comprehension plays a key role in facilitating language learning.

D. The Current Problems of Listeners

Although learners give more and more consideration to the listening comprehension ability of language, there still

exist many barrens which prevent these learners from performing well in the listening process.

1. Problems of Traditional Learning Method

Although the listening proficiency directly influences the improvement of the whole level of English, some people still pay little attention to it. In the traditional way of doing listening, people usually first get the exact means of the new words in the listening material, figure out the background, or get some questions to draw our attention to, or simply without these steps, and then plays the tape for themselves to listen and do the exercises. After finishing listening, they just check our answers. Actually they benefit little from such kind of method. Many listening comprehension exercises demands no response until the end of very long stretches of speech, so that when it comes, this response is very largely a test of memory rather than of comprehension. Therefore, some of them become passive listeners because of the lack of participation.

2. Problems of Listening Materials

Many listening comprehension exercises used today are still based on formal spoken prose, that's the reason why learners are unable to understand what is being said when she or he first visits a foreign country in spite of years of language study at school. They usually choose the listening materials which are often made up of passages originally composed as written texts recorded onto the tape. This kind of practice does not provide any realistic preparation for the real-life listening.

3. Failure of Using Conversational Implicature in Listening Comprehension

Nowadays English learners still benefit little from targeted focus on pragmatic comprehension. They still have no idea on how native English speakers express themselves pragmatically, not just linguistically. When people are given a piece of listening material, they can't focus on both pragmatic and linguistic meaning.

Secondly, besides the above-mentioned Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature, people are still not encouraged to have a dip in other linguistic theories such as Principle of Politeness and the Speech Act Theory to help them to do better jobs in inferring the conversational implicature in their listening comprehension.

III. Conversational Implicature in Listening Comprehension

A. Listening Comprehension: A Pragmatic Perspective

A sentence has its semantic meaning. When the sentence is uttered, it also has its pragmatic meaning.

For example, when listeners hear the sentence "It is hot", they could not know exactly what the speaker really means by decoding its semantic meaning. So what does on earth the speaker mean by uttering "it is hot?" According to different situations, we can get different meanings. (i) When you enter an office and hear your boss say "it is hot," you may infer that your boss's real meaning is to ask you to open the air condition for him or her. (ii) When a boy utters "it's hot" before his mother in the morning, his real meaning is to ask his mother to let him dress fewer. (iii) When a girl is going to eat her soup and hears her mother say "it's hot" on the dinner table, she knows that mother is warning her that she should wait for a moment. So the meaning of the sentence "it's hot" depends on the context it is utter. Thus scholars have noted the importance of investing listening comprehension is from a pragmatics point of view. The native person normally encounters spoken language in a context of situation.

Language philosopher Paul Grice is the first to claim that utterance interpretation is a sort of inferential process, developed to attribute to explain a higher-order speakers meaning. He has designed his Cooperative Principle and maxims. This attribution of meaning is a sort of predictive behavior in which listeners engage to be able to infer all possible meanings. According to Grice, the implicit meaning of an utterance is inferred and the explicit meaning is just decoded. Thus the existence of the implicit content and the inferential process of interpreting it have become the main focus of pragmatics. And the inferential aspect of comprehension has largely been recognized in the listening comprehension study.

B. The Significance of Applying the Conversational Implicature in Listening Comprehension

Many English learners have difficulty understanding implications of English conversations as there tends to be gap between what is said and what is implied. How to overcome this problem is an important aspect in the improving of English listening comprehension.

For the English major students, one of their difficulties in listening is that they sometimes can understand the meaning of the sentences of the conversation but as far as the questions are concerned, they just cannot figure out the correct answers. When it comes to the passage, some of them will totally be at a loss. Some gradually lose their enthusiasm and motivation and become the passive listeners. At last, some of them even believe that tests cannot improve their listening competence.

For the non-English major English learners, some of them still center around the theoretical discussion on the implicature interpretation. They often focus their attention on the textbooks and the preparation for CET4&CET6; they think the last mark doesn't stand for their real listening competence.

Based on the problems both the English majors and non-English majors encounter with, we figure out that it's necessary to work out some ways to improve the listening comprehension. For several reasons, the application of the Theory of Conversational Implicature to the improving listening comprehension is an efficient way. Firstly, Grice's theories enable one to explain how native speakers work out the implied meaning of their utterance. Secondly, speakers

rely heavily on the cooperative principle when interpreting utterances that involve implicature. The speaker assumes that the listeners will be able to work out the implied meaning according to Grice's Maxims. Thirdly, a reliance on the CP and its Maxims is a strategy that must be learned by non-native speakers if they are to be "discourse competent."

C. The Role of Conversational Implicature in Listening Comprehension

Being different and refreshing is what English-speaking people pursue. English speaking people often make use of conversational implicature in conversation for different purposes, such as showing off one's eloquence, avoiding taboos, being polite, etc. After continuous refinement, conversational implicature have perfected to an advanced level and more and more go into conversations. We could take Grice's cooperative principle as the example to do some concrete form analysis in listening comprehension. The violation of the Maxims can give us more inspiration of conversational implicature.

(1) Violation of Quantity Maxim

For example:

A: Do you know when John left the pub last night?

B: Eleven o'clock. And he went to Mary's apartment instead of his own.

According to quantity maxim, the contribution should not be more informative than is required. But from this we can infer that B wants to tell A that John might have some special relationship with Mary.

(2) Violation of Quality Maxim

For example:

A: What will you do if you fail the exam?

B: I'll eat my hat.

Obviously, "hat" cannot be eaten. The words can be inferred that: I will not fail this exam definitely. So words can be expressed with irony and metaphor.

(3) Violation of Relevance Maxim

For example:

A: Whoa! Has your boss gone crazy?

B: Let's go get some coffee.

The context of the conversation is that: when the man is entering the woman's office he notices that she has many works to do. The woman did not answer the man's question according to the maxim of relevance, from the answer we can get that there are reasons that the woman cannot answer the question directly: (i) The woman didn't want to talk about her boss. (ii) Maybe the boss is nearby.

(4) Violation of Manner Maxim

For example

A: Let's get the kids something.

B: Okay, but not I-C-E-C-R-E-A-M

The two people are discussing to buy something for the kids. By violating the maxim of manner, he didn't speak out ice cream directly but spelt it word by word, his propose if very clear, that is, not to make the kids understand what he said.

From the above analysis, it's easy to draw such a conclusion that conversational implicature is of special importance. Such kind of knowledge must be given to learners.

IV. Conclusion

As what have discussed in the above chapters, for many years, people have been trying to improve their listening comprehension abilities. Therefore, the factors influencing listening, no matter the linguistic or non-linguistic factors have been greatly attracting people's attention. Grice's Conversational Implicature theory influences listening comprehension deeply, especially in understanding conversations. In this thesis, it emphasizes on using the Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory to guide the English listening comprehension. Both the non-English learning majors and the English majors can and need to learn the necessary linguistic theories to guide their English listening comprehension, the pragmatic theory can help learners better understand implicated meaning in English listening.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1168-1174, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1168-1174

The Relationship between Self-efficacy and Stress among Iranian EFL Teachers

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***Abstract*—This study investigated the relationship between self- efficacy and stress among 108 EFL teachers in Iran. The participants were administered self-efficacy and stress questionnaires. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression analyses were used. The results indicated significant negative correlation between self efficacy and stress. Also it was found that both dimensions of self-efficacy, namely, classroom and organizational efficacies, either collectively or separately, could predict stress among EFL teachers. Implications of the study are discussed.**

***Index Terms*—stress, self-efficacy, EFL teachers, organizational efficacy, classroom efficacy**

I. Introduction

Teacher stress has increasingly been recognized as a widespread problem in different educational settings (e.g., Boyle, Borg, Falzon, & Baglioni, 1995; Dick & Wagner, 2001; Kyriacou, 2001). Compared to the general population, teachers are at risk for higher levels of psychological distress and lower levels of job satisfaction (Travers & Cooper, 1996; Schonfield, 1990). Borg (1990) also reported that up to one third of teachers perceive their occupation as highly stressful.

Although the reasons may differ, all teachers may experience stress in their job (Jennett, Harris & Mesibov, 2003). However, even encountering similar work stress, some teachers may be less vulnerable to stress than others. Therefore, it seems natural that one should raise the question as to why some teachers could be less vulnerable to stress than others in the face of similar work stress. In this connection, an examination of personal resources in coping and managing one's affective experience seems advisable. One personal coping resource that is the concern of the present study is self-efficacy. Bandura (1995) stated that people with high efficacy beliefs persisted with the task in the face of difficulty and achieved higher results with lower levels of stress. Besides, self-efficacy beliefs can augment human accomplishment and well-being in numerous ways (Pajares, 2002). This is particularly true when it comes to professions such as teaching, with its emotionally challenging nature, high levels of affective involvement, complexity and constant interaction. However, a review of the related literature reveals that self efficacy has not received attention in the study of teacher stress in the realm of EFL teaching. Definitely, the scarcity of research in this area provides a convincing rationale to undertake further investigation into examining the relationship between EFL teachers' self-efficacy and their stress.

II. Literature Review

A. Teacher Stress

Stress is usually considered to be the effect or the response to a stimulus **(**Jenkins & Calhoun 1991). Among the individual affective factors, stress has been cited as one of the most important variables and this concept has gradually become common in our discourse about life and health (Jepson & Forrest 2006). Some researchers defined stress in terms of the level of pressure and demands made on an individual. Other researchers have defined the term by means of the degree of mismatch between the demands made upon an individual and the individual's ability to cope with these demands (Kyriacou, 2001).

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) described teacher stress as a response syndrome of negative affect (such as anger and depression), usually accompanied by physiological changes (such as increased heart rate) resulting from aspects of the teacher's job and mediated by the perception that the demands made upon the teacher constitute a threat to his or her self-esteem or well being. In identifying sources of teacher stress, different investigators in different settings have come up with a diversity of stressors that include students' misbehaviors and discipline problems, students' poor motivation for work, heavy workload and time pressure, role conflict and role ambiguity, conflicting staff relationships in school

management and administration, and pressure and criticisms from parents and the wider community (see Dunham, 1992; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Like teachers in other fields, nowadays, EFL teachers have heavier responsibilities than before. Innovations in the field of education and language teaching have created a rather new role for teachers. Teachers are no longer considered as the mere transferors of knowledge, but as individuals who are required to communicate and engage with students more than before and to care for their inner worlds (Arnold 1999).

EFL teachers should empathize with learners, try to keep them motivated and encourage them to participate in classroom activities. However, 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 might have positive or negative encounters with parents, colleagues, administrative authorities and students, all of which can affect them psychologically (Mousavi, 2007). The combination of all factors such as these may make the individual teacher feel more accountable than before, yet more confused, and arguably less supported (Claxton 1989).

Several experimental studies have been conducted on teacher stress. Travers and Cooper (1997), for example, surveyed 800 teachers in England and France about stress and found substantially different responses. 22% of sick leave in England, as opposed to 1% in France was attributed to stress. 55% of the English teachers as opposed to 20% of the French sample reported recently considering leaving teaching. Interestingly, there was substantial agreement between the English and French teachers as to the sources of pressure, both groups citing classroom discipline, low social status and lack of parental support. However, English teachers reported more problems with long hours, overwork and political interference.

Pithers and Soden (1998) has 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 et al, 1997) conducted a study of 1000 student teachers. The results revealed that classroom management was their second greatest sources of anxiety, the greatest being evaluation apprehension. Of all the stressors reported, classroom management anxiety was the only one that did not decline following teaching practice.

Finally a study of a group of EFL teachers showed that the main sources of stress were lack of sufficient time, unwanted classroom observations and poor relations with colleagues (Bress 2006).

B. Self-efficacy

1. Sources of Self-efficacy Beliefs

Perceived self efficacy, i.e., ''beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required producing given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3), can be developed by four main sources of influence. Bandura (1997) postulated these sources of efficacy expectations as: mastery experience, also called enactive self-mastery, vicarious experience, also called role-modeling, social or verbal persuasion, and arousal or physiological and emotional states.

The first source, enactive mastery experiences, is the most influential and is comprised of all the successes one has experienced in specific environments. An individual's frequent successes, especially those accompanied with overcoming adversity, build robust self efficacy beliefs that fine tune abilities to better control events (Bandura 1997). Secondly, vicarious experiences are gained through observation of events that have been modeled by others. They enable the observer to appraise his own capabilities in relation to the attainments of others (Bandura, 1997). Of course, the effects on self efficacy vary with the skill of the modeler, but watching someone with capabilities similar to the observer raises the self-efficacy beliefs of the observer. Observing modeled behavior convinces the observer that the achievement outcome will be the same. On the contrary, observing similar people who fail lowers the individual's confidence and subsequently undermines their efforts (Bandura, 1997). The third source of influence is social or verbal persuasion received from others. Successful persuaders foster people's beliefs in their capabilities, while at the same time, ensure that the visualized success is achievable. Negative persuasion, on the other hand, may tend to defeat and lower self-beliefs. The most contributing effect of social persuasion pivots around initiating the task, attempting new strategies, and trying hard to succeed (Pajares, 2002). Psychological and affective states, such as stress, anxiety, and excitement also provide information about efficacy perception and boost the feeling of proficiency. Hence, trying to reduce an individual's stress and anxiety and modify negative debilitative states to positive facilitative states plays an influential role in amending perceived self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997).

2. Teacher's Self-efficacy

Teacher efficacy is 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 et al., 1998, p. 22).

Friedman and Kass (2002) developed a new conceptualization of teacher self-efficacy, named Classroom and School Context (CSC). It is multi-faceted and detailed, and relates to a wide range of teacher functioning. According to the

CSC conceptualization, the teacher's functioning within the school is comprised of two basic domains: (a) the classroom, where the teacher works with students, and (b) the school, where the teacher functions as a member of an organization. The importance of the Friedman and Kass (2002) model for the purpose of this study is that, besides classroom considerations, such as, teacher's functioning as an educator and flexibility within the classroom and nurturing social relations among the students it contains an organizational efficacy component, which was not found in other definitions of teacher efficacy as proposed by other scholars. The organizational domain of the teacher functioning at school has a markable effect on the teacher as an employee (Cherniss, 1993).

As an organizational person the teacher may possibly seek influence and active involvement in performing organization-related tasks (involvement in decision making, confidence in functioning in the organizational domain, and ascending the school hierarchy), as well as establishing positive relations with colleagues and members of the administration, assertiveness and social integration, and affording a sense of belonging and security.

With reference to the educational setting, self-efficacy has been found to positively correlate with academic achievement. Research findings have established that students' self-efficacy beliefs are correlated with other motivation constructs and with students' academic performance and achievement (see, Ashton and Webb, 1986; Lent and Hackett, 1987). Several studies have also established that teachers with a strong sense of efficacy tend to exhibit greater levels of planning, organization, and enthusiasm. They persist when things do not go smoothly and are more resilient in the face of setbacks. They tend to be less critical with students who make errors and work longer with a student who is struggling (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Coladarchi, 1992, Gibson and Dembo, 1984; Tschanhen–Moran and Woolfolk 2001). A strong sense of teacher's self-efficacy promotes a firm commitment to the profession and collaborative relationships with colleagues and parents (Coladarci, 1992), contributing fruitfully to the promotion of a rich and stimulating learning environment. Ross (1994) reviewed 88 teacher efficacy studies in pre-college settings and identified potential links between teachers' sense of efficacy and their behaviors. He reported that teachers with higher levels of efficacy are more likely to learn and use new approaches and strategies for teaching, provide special assistance to low achieving students, and persist in the face of student failure.

Grau, Salanova and Peirò (2001) found that self-efficacy could moderate work- related stress. Professional self-efficacy was found to be negatively associated with burnout. Chwalisz, Altmaier and Russell (1992) examined the extent to which teachers' causal attributions of their sense of job stress and perceived efficacy to manage stressors affected their style of coping, and the different types of burnout reactions. They found that perceived occupational inefficacy was an important mediator of burnout.

III. Purpose of the Study

As noted earlier, much research has been conducted on self-efficacy (e.g., Ross, 1994; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998) and on stress (e.g., Boyle, Borg, Falzon, & Baglioni, 1995; Dick & Wagner, 2001), but little has been carried out or reported on the relationship between these two; however, those studies are mainly limited to the L1 environment. Since these two factors, teacher self efficacy and stress, are of current concern in all levels of education (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998) and since increasing self efficacy and lowering stress contribute to teaching effectiveness (Pajares, 1992), it seems that some research should be carried out in EFL context to examine if and how these two factors are related. In summary, the present study seeks to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their stress in private institute context. To this end, the present study seeks; first, to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' self-efficacy and stress, second, to investigate which dimension(s) of teachers self-efficacy can contribute to the prediction of stress among EFL teachers.

IV. Methodology

A. Participants and Procedures

The participants in this study consisted of 108 EFL teachers (52 females and 56 males) aged between 20 and 47 years old (M= 28.43, SD= 5.12) with a range of between 1 and 19 years of teaching experience (M=6.52, SD=3.93). Sixty teachers held BA degree, forty four MA and four had PhD degree in one of these fields: English Language Teaching, English Translation and English Literature. The participants were chosen from 6 language institutes in Tehran.

The study was carried out at the beginning of the summer semester, 2010. The participants took the questionnaires home, filled them in and submitted it to the researchers within a week. To receive reliable data, the researchers explained the purpose of the study to the participants, and assured them that their information would be confidential.

B. Instruments

Two questionnaires measuring EFL teachers self-efficacy and stress along with a subject fact form enquiring about teachers' demographics, namely, age, gender and teaching experience served as the research tools in the present study.

1. Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI)

Teacher stress was measured using the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI). The TSI was developed by Fimian (1984) to measure teachers' perception of stress as it relates to their occupation. The TSI includes 49 items on a 5 point Likert scale, and it covers 10 factors which are broken down into stress factors and stress manifestations. The five stress source

factors are Time Management, Work-Related Stressors, Professional Distress, Discipline and Motivation, and Professional Investment. The five stress manifestations factors are Emotional Manifestations, Fatigue Manifestations, Cardiovascular Manifestations, Gastronomic Manifestations, and Behavioral Manifestations. The reliability estimate of the scale for the present study was $\alpha = 0.91$.

2. Self-efficacy Scale

Reviewing the existing measures on teacher's self-efficacy (such as, the Webb Efficacy Scale developed by Ashton, Olejnik, Crocker and McAuliffe (1982), including seven items; the teacher efficacy scale by Gibson and Dembo (1984), including 30 items on a 6 point Likert scale; Bandura's teacher efficacy scale, 1997, comprising 30 items on a 9 point scale; Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), the researchers decided to utilize Friedman and Kass's (2002) Teacher Self Efficacy Scale. The rationale for utilizing this scale is twofold: First, it contains several aspects of efficacy beliefs, thus providing a higher resolution of this concept. Secondly, it contains an organizational aspect of teacher functioning, which was found to be an important factor in explaining stress (Cherniss, 1993). The Teachers Self efficacy Scale is based on Classroom and School Context (CSC) model of teacher self-efficacy, as introduced by Friedman and Kass (2002). The scale includes 33 items. As mentioned before, 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 and the school context subscale includes 14 items. The response options for the items ranged from 1 (never) through 6 (always). In this study the reliability estimates for subscales were $\alpha = 0.89$ for classroom context (classroom efficacy dimension) and $\alpha = 0.87$ for school context (organizational efficacy dimension).

V. Results

A. The Relationship between Teacher Self-efficacy and Stress

In order to test the relationships between teachers' self efficacy and stress, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was run. The result indicated that there was significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and stress (r = - 0.47, p □ 0.01)(see Table 1). To clarify further, Scatter Plots also showed that the higher teachers' self-efficacy, the lower their stress level (see Figure 1).

TABLE 1:
THE RESULTS OF CORRELATION BETWEEN TEACHERS STRESS, AGE AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

	Stress
Self-Efficacy	- 0.47**

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

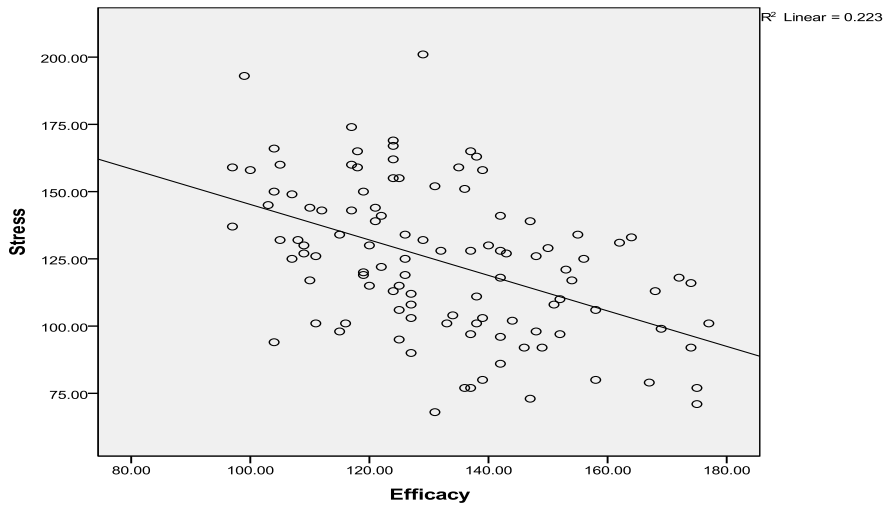

Figure 1: The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Stress

B. Contribution of the Two Dimensions of Teacher Self-efficacy to the Prediction of Stress

To determine which dimension(s) of Self efficacy can predict stress in EFL teachers, a multiple regression analysis was run. In this analysis, $R^2 = .22$, F (2, 107) = 15.11 and p □ .01, indicating that 22 % of the variance in stress is explained by the combination of the independent variables, namely, Classroom efficacy and Organizational efficacy (see table 2).

According to the results displayed in table 2 above, each of the independent variables made significant individual contributions to the prediction of Stress as follows: Classroom efficacy (β = .32, t = 3.59, p □ .01) and Organizational efficacy (β = .27, t = 3.04, p □ .01).In this analysis the correlation between the predictive variables was 0.26 (p < 01).

TABLE 2:
REGRESSION ANALYSIS SUMMARY FOR SELF-EFFICACY VARIABLES PREDICTING STRESS

Predictors	R	R^2	F(2, 107)	B	SEM	Beta (β)	t
	.47	.22	15.11**				
Classroom Efficacy				-.64	.18	-.32	-3.59**
Organizational Efficacy				-.67	.22	-.27	-3.04**

**p □ .01

VI. DISCUSSION

Since changing the educational system is no easy task it is necessary to deepen our understanding of individuals' coping resources that may mediate the appearance of stress. To this end, the present study sought to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and stress among EFL teachers in private institutes.

The results indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between teachers self efficacy and stress. The size of this correlation indicates that the higher the teachers' self- efficacy, the less likely they were to experience stress in their profession. This is in accordance with previous theoretical and empirical studies on the role of self-efficacy in stress, though these are limited where teachers are concerned, and quite sparse in the foreign language context altogether. Efficacy beliefs influence the amount of stress and anxiety individuals experience as they engage in an activity (Bandura, 1997). As pointed out by Bandura (2000) people with high confidence in their capabilities handle stress related factors effectively and approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. The results of a study conducted in Spain revealed that teachers with a higher self efficacy were less stressed and more motivated and satisfied in their profession (Betoret, 2006). In addition, Cadiz (1989) suggested that teachers benefit from having strong self-efficacy to cope better with stress.

The results also revealed that both dimensions of self-efficacy, classroom and organizational efficacies, either collectively or separately were potent predictors of teacher stress. However, it was shown that classroom efficacy was a better predictor of stress among the participants.

By the nature of the construct of organizational efficacy, 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 related stress. The findings of the present study corroborate Cherniss's (1993) assertion that the organizational domain of the teacher functioning at school has a remarkable 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). Eventually, these cumulative effects will manifest themselves in professional stress and burnout (Byrne, 1994).

However, one plausible explanation for the higher strength of classroom efficacy in predicting stress is that **t**eachers with a low sense of classroom efficacy, more specifically instruction efficacy, tend to become mired in classroom problems, are stressed and angered by student misbehavior, pessimistic about student potential to improve, and focus more on subject matter than student development. Teachers with high sense of organizational efficacy believe that unmotivated students can be taught, given the extra effort and appropriate techniques; that family support can be enlisted; and that negative community influences can be overcome through effective teaching (Gibson and Dembo, 1984). This can either help buffer the deleterious effects of job stress, or directly improve teacher's well-being.

VII. CONCLUSION

In essence, the yielded results of the current study lead to the conclusion that enhancing teachers' self-efficacy tends to have a positive influence on diminishing their stress. This in turn may lead to amelioration of teachers' well-being, prosocial behavior, motivation and teaching effectiveness and accordingly students' achievement. Thus, the findings underline the importance of establishing some courses for EFL teachers to focus particularly on Bandura's (1997) four strategies for increasing efficacy providing opportunities for mastery experiences, physiological and emotional arousal, vicarious experience, and social persuasion. Also group-centered in-service training or peer coaching directed at strengthening teachers' self-efficacy beliefs may prove to be an effective means of stress reduction (Stein & Wang, 1988).

Based on the finding of the present study, EFL teachers should develop skills in monitoring their stress levels. Research by Cockburn (1996) concluded that the first step for teachers in reducing stress is to develop their awareness of stress levels. Only when a teacher understands and monitors his or her stress levels can steps be taken to control the

level of stress. Also teachers and school administrators should collaborate to discuss the sources and consequences of teacher stress as well as ways to alleviate it. Some sources of teacher stress have been documented in the literature, but each school context is likely to have unique sources of stress, specific to that context that need 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).

The findings of the current study, however, must be treated with caution. To the researchers' best knowledge, this is the first attempt to explore the relationship between EFL teachers' self-efficacy and their stress. Thus, this study should be replicated with more numbers of participants to find out whether similar results can be obtained elsewhere. Also to obtain a more precise estimate of teacher self efficacy and stress, future research should combine self reporting measures with other measures based on objective performance.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1175-1179, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1175-1179

The Role of Metonymy in the Formation of Euphemism in Chinese and English

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***Abstract*—Euphemism is a widespread language phenomenon and indispensable lubricant in language communication. It is an expression, which can show politeness, ease the tone and coordinate the personal relationships. It can be found out that many English and Chinese euphemisms are generated in the framework of conceptual metonymy in daily life. The study of euphemisms from the perspective of cognitive metonymy enjoys its significance in language learning, cross-cultural communication and translation of euphemisms.**

***Index Terms*— euphemism, metonymy, generating mechanism**

I. Introduction

As a common language phenomenon, euphemism has been studied from different perspectives. With the development of cognitive linguistics, metonymy was introduced to the formation of euphemism. Some cognitive theories like conceptual metonymy, advocated by Lakoff, paved the way for further study on metonymy and the formation of euphemism. The current studies on euphemism are mainly built on traditional semiotic semantics and pragmatics. Due attention still has not been given to the euphemism and its generating mechanism in the scope of metonymy. Yet, using euphemism properly is still a difficulty for English learners. Thus, the author of this paper intends to further explore the role metonymy plays in the formation of euphemism both in English and Chinese.

II. The Relation between Euphemism and Metonymy

The word "euphemism" was first put forward by George Blunt in 1580s. Derived from Greek, euphemisms are words of "good omen" or "good speech" literally. Up to date, there is no universal agreement about the definition of euphemism. Generally, euphemism is often defined as "substituting an inoffensive or pleasant term for a more explicit, offensive one, thereby veneering the truth by using kind words" (Neaman & Silver, 1983, p.4).

With the naissance and development of cognitive linguistics, conceptual metonymy has been emphasized by linguists. As stated by Lakoff (1987), metonymy is one of the basic characteristics of cognition. It is extremely common for people to take one well-understood or easy-to-perceive aspect of something and use it to stand either for the thing as a whole or for some other aspect or part of it. In addition, metonymy is a situation in which some subcategory or member or sub-model is used (often for some limited and immediate purpose) to understand the category as a whole, that is, there are cases where a part (a subcategory or member or sub-model) represents the whole category in reasoning, recognition, etc. Metonymy is not random or arbitrary occurrence, it is systematic. For these cognitive features and functions of metonymy, there is no difficulty associating conceptual metonymy with the formation of euphemism.

With the understanding of definition, functions and characteristics of euphemism, we can find that many euphemisms are generated in the framework of conceptual metonymy in our daily life. According to cognitive linguistics, the generation manifests itself in two ways: within the same cognitive domain, whole and part metonymic relationship and part and part metonymic relationship. What's more, there also exists other ways to generate euphemism, such as lexical device, pragmatic device, and grammatical device.

III. Metonymic Approach to the Generating Mechanism of Euphemism

The vagueness and indirectness of euphemism rely on conceptual metonymy. The explanation of the relation between euphemism and metonymy gives us a clear understanding that metonymic mechanism works on the basis of contiguity or relevance between things. There are mainly two types of metonymic approaches to the generating mechanism of euphemism, that is, whole and part metonymic relationship and part and part metonymic relationship.

A. Whole and Part Metonymic Relationship

From the angle of cognitive linguistics, the whole and part metonymic relationship is applied to things related. Here are two variants: the whole stands for the part and the part replaces the whole.

The whole stands for the part: generally, people tend to use euphemism to avoid embarrassment. When referring to the organ, they prefer to broaden the conception of organs, for example, "the chest", "the bosom" are often used for "breast", and they use "rear end", "back parts", "behind" and "posterior" to replace "buttocks". Concerning sex, people may feel uncomfortable, in this sense, "the fact of life" usually stands for "the knowledge of sex" and "having sexual relationship with someone" can be replaced by "going to bed with someone". In Chinese, "他在外面有女人"(he has a woman outside), which really means "he has a mistress". Here the conception of "woman" is broadened, replacing the sensitive word "mistress".

In the case of metonymy the part for the whole, there are many parts that can stand for the whole. "Which part is picked out determines which aspect of the whole we are focusing on" (Lakoff &Johnson, 1980, p.36). On public occasions, it is polite to say "cloakroom" or "powder room" to refer to the lavatory, which could make people feel eased. People tend to say "he is lazy bones" instead of "he is a lazy person". "we don't need any green hand", the "green hand" refers to a person who lacks experience. For another example, "we need some good heads", "the good heads" here refers to intelligent people. In analyzing the cases above, "the point is not just to use a part to stand for a whole, but rather to pick out a particular characteristic of the person" (Lakoff &Johnson, 1980, p.36).

B. Part and Part Metonymic Relationship

Metonymies are not random or arbitrary occurrence to be treated as isolated instances. It serves as a bridge to link two things. Metonymic concepts are also systematic, as can be seen in the replacement of the place for the event, the material constituting an object for the object, producer for the product, object used for user, institution for person responsible, and the place for the institution.

The metonymic relation by using a place to stand for an event is pervasive, particularly in the case of death. Death is simply a natural process that will come to anyone. Euphemisms for death both in English and Chinese are universal. In western countries, "the place of God", "heaven" generally refers to death. In the case that "he is knocking on heaven's door", "he is called to home", or "he is asleep in the arms of the God", are euphemisms in a polite mood, showing respect for the dead. While in China, deeply influenced by the Taoism or Buddhism, death is usually associated with "the west" or "western paradise". Death simply means that the flesh and blood turns into spirit, which can be called "归西"(go to the west), "极乐世界"(free from all worries).

Close to our daily life, the relationship of the material constituting an object for the object is pervasive. For instance, "poppy" stands for "opium", which is made from poppy; and "bamboo" for "opium pipe", which is made of bamboo. In Chinese, "一掊土"(a pile of soil) is for "坟墓"(tomb), "寿木"is for "棺材"(coffin) , which is visual for understanding.

Similarly, the relationship of replacement of producer for the product can be supported with the example of "the Ford" for the car produced in Ford Company.

The replacement of object used for user, we find that English and Chinese euphemisms are somewhat similar in expression. In English, instead of saying "he is fond of wine", people may use "he is fond of bottles". Similarly in Chinese, we employ "enjoy bottles"(贪杯) to mean "like drinking" euphemistically. For bottle and wine has the contiguity, the usage of bottle in place of wine has the purpose of diverting people's attention.

With regard to the place for the institution, "White House", "Wall Street", "Hollywood" and the like are typical examples. In the replacement, the place cannot equal the institution, for they belong to different conceptual domains. However, human beings' subjective initiative does a lot in expressing euphemistically.

Apart from those relationships mentioned above, there also exists the replacement of the characteristics for the thing itself, which cannot be ignored. Fear of diseases and disability has led us to use a number of euphemisms to replace them. For instance, "inconvenient" is used to substitute "lame". In English, "the disabled", "the handicapped", "the inconvenient", "the invalid", "auditory impaired", "hard of hearing" or "talk with one's fingers" are widely used. In Chinese, we use "physically disabled"(生理上有缺陷) instead of "crippled"(残废), "low children"(智障儿童) instead of "stupid children"(弱智儿童).

IV. METONYMIC DEVICES OF GENERATING EUPHEMISM

Apart from the metonymic approach to the generating mechanism of euphemism, there also exist microscopic aspects: the generating devices of euphemism, including lexical device, grammatical device and pragmatic device.

A. Lexical Device

In the level of lexical device, euphemisms can be mainly divided into three types: borrowed words, abbreviation and vague words.

a. Borrowed Words

One of the generating devices of euphemism is borrowed words that come from the other languages such as Greek, Latin, French, Italian, etc. There are a large number of foreign words to replace the tabooed or sensitive words in one's native language to form euphemism both in English and Chinese. Those foreign words and the native ones are equivalent in meaning. Because of people's relative unfamiliarity with a certain foreign language, foreign words can

bring about a certain sense of mildness and implicitness, so as to avoid embarrassment. Psychologically, borrowed words can produce certain distance between symbols and tabooed referents (Lu, 2006).

English vocabulary has the quality of receptiveness and its speed of receiving foreign components is fast, the same with English euphemism. In English, borrowed euphemisms come mainly from French and Latin. Euphemism like "euceinte" is from French replacing pregnancy, "micturition" or "urination" from Latin to stand for piss. We have examples such as "euthanasia", which borrowed from Greek, and now become popular in China. In addition, borrowed euphemisms in Chinese are generally from English. For instance, "the water closet" for WC, and nowadays, young people tend to say "I love you" instead of saying in mandarin "我爱你".

The borrowed words from foreign languages reflect the psychology of people in pursuing new things, and importantly achieve the euphemistic effect.

b. Abbreviation

Borrowing words from other countries is the characteristic of euphemism. Abbreviation is another method. Abbreviation is a short form of a word, which can be further divided into three types: clipping, acronym and initialism, and blend.

Clipping, or cutting, is a part of a longer word. Clipped words seem to be casual but very useful. "Gents" for "gentlemen's room", "lav" for "lavatory", both are the toilet in an implicit way, which is the principle of euphemism to be pleasant.

Acronym and initialism are abbreviations that are formed using the initial components in a phrase or a name. Fears of some diseases, people tend to say the diseases in this way, there is no difficulty for us to set examples. "TB" is used to stand for tuberculosis; cancer is replaced with "C". There are also euphemisms for occupation, especially in English. In western countries, one's occupation is an indicator of his economic or social status, particular for those who have low-paid and humble occupation. They are sensitive to their occupational status in society. For the sake of their faces, initialism and acronym are widely used. For instance, garbage man is often called "G-man", which can avoid offending them.

A blend is a combination of parts of two words to form a third word which contains some of the meaning of each part. Euphemisms both in English and Chinese contain some sensitive words, which could cause embarrassment. By using blend words, it does a lot in personal communication. There is no wonder that blend words are universal. For example, "chexting" is a blend of "cheating" and "texting". "sexcapade" is a blend of "sex" and "escapade".

c. Vague Words

Vague words and expressions can blur the undesirable associations of tabooed words and produce euphemistic effect. "Hyponymy, as one of the ways of using vague words, refers to a paradigmatic relation between one or more specific or subordinate lexical terms and a general or super-ordinate lexical term" (Lu &Kong, 2006, p.19). For example, "animal" stands for pig and "lily" is for flower. In these cases, hyponyms are the direct expressions and their super-ordinates are their euphemisms. It has achieved the effect of vagueness for weakening the sense of unpleasantness. In English, there are many euphemisms of this kind, such as the "economic things" for economic crisis or economic depression, "in difficulty" for poor, "a growth" for cancer, "full-bodied", "king-sized" for fat etc. It is true for Chinese and English. Chinese vague expressions such as "have another one"(有外遇), "the third party"(第三者) are used to replace "have illegal relationship" euphemistically. In English, similar meanings are expressed vaguely like "have affair with someone", "to work late at the office" etc.

The use of pronoun is another way of using vague words. For instance, the words "it" and "that" are of a high degree of vagueness. They are featured with generality and ambiguity. Similarly in Chinese, the pronoun "it" or "that" (那个) can refer to almost all the tabooed behaviors.

B. Grammatical Device

Euphemisms are not restricted to the lexicon. Besides, there are grammatical ways of toning something without changing the content of the message. Such grammatical device includes tense, negation and ellipsis.

a. Tense

Tense and modal words are two pervasive methods for the creation of English euphemisms, which cannot be realized in Chinese. Past tense, past progressive tense and modal words like "should", "would" are often used in communication to make sentences sound more polite. Besides, the continuous tense, passive voice, interrogative sentences and subjunctive mood all play vital roles in euphemism of English and Chinese.

The past tense indicates that the action happened in the past and distant from the moment of speaking. And distance becomes the key of past tense, which contains the distance in time, reality and psychology. In this way, the hearer does not feel embarrassed because of the distance. So the euphemistical effect is attached. For example, "I wondered if you could give me a hand with the painting" actually implies the meaning of "help me with my painting". Both sentences convey the same meaning, yet the former includes the past tense seems milder and more euphemistic than the simple tense.

The continuous tense attaches importance to the temporariness. In other words, the speaker's intention is only a temporary and inadequately-considered thought. Thus, if the hearer refuses, it does not threaten faces of both sides (Li, 2004). For example, "I'm waiting to see you" is a euphemistic way of expressing "see you".

The passive voice used in sentence becomes much milder and more euphemistic. In passive voice, subject of a sentence is the receiver of the action and stresses the objectiveness, thus avoiding the agent of action.

The interrogative sentences both in English and Chinese are much milder and more euphemistic than those in imperative sentences. Therefore interrogative sentences play a vital role in the use of euphemisms. When we say in imperative, it gives us the sense of toughness and order; in contrast, interrogative sentences are refraining from the strength. In comparison the sentence "Go and do you housework." with "Would you go and do you housework?" the latter one is more polite and euphemistic. In Chinese, "Are you not considerate of your parents"(难道你还不体谅父母) is the euphemistic way of expressing "You must be considerate of your parents"(你必须体谅你父母).

b. Negation

Negation is one of the ways of conveying the euphemistic meaning. In English, for euphemistic purpose, the word "not" is often used before words such as "think, believe, suppose, expect, imagine and appear" etc, to form transferred negation. For instance, "I don't think he is right" conveys the same meaning of "I think he is wrong". The tone of transferred negation sounds milder and can make expressions more implicit, thus lessening the offense to the listeners and strengthening the euphemistic effect.

In Chinese, negative prefixes can also work in this aspect. We often use "not tall"(不高) to stand for "short"(矮), "not beautiful"(不漂亮) for "ugly"(丑). Similarly, "be not well"(不舒服) to replace "be sick"(有病) or "get sick"(生病). In this way, euphemism effect is achieved and faces of the listeners saved. Apart from those negative prefixes, there are also some negatives such as "not too much"(不很), "not necessary"(不必) and "be unlikely to"(未必), often employed to make sentences implicit. As seen in the sentence "It is not necessary to buy the coat", which conveys the meaning of "don't buy the coat", this kind of negative expression softens the tone of the sentence and achieves the euphemistic effect.

c. Ellipsis

Ellipsis is the act of leaving out a word or words from a sentence deliberately, when the meaning can be understood without them. It is also a good way to form euphemisms in English and Chinese. In order to strengthen euphemistic effect, we can leave out the unpleasant words. Because of its familiarity in our daily life, it is without difficulty for us to set examples. "She is expecting" stands for "she is expecting a baby", here the word "baby" being omitted. And "have relations with someone" is in place of "have sexual relation with someone". Similarly in Chinese, we use "have"(有了) to refer to "pregnant"(有了身孕). Moreover, in Chinese, signs like "xxx" are often seen in literary works, which are regarded as the symbols of omission. Generally, the vague or unpleasant words are omitted to achieve euphemism.

C. Pragmatic Device

In the use of language, euphemistic effect is dependent on the situational context which, sometimes, plays an important part in expressing euphemism. As seen in the dialogue between the two persons: "What do you think of this dress?" "Oh, it's nice weather today", we know that the answer is not related to the question. What the answer really conveys is that the dress is not so good. The context is important to the construction of the euphemistic meaning (Lu & Kong, 2006). When talking about the topics such as criminal in Chinese, we say "he is in"(他进去了).What we want to convey is that "he is in prison"(他进监狱了). Referring to extramarital affairs, love affairs, we often use the prefix "that"(那个) to stand for illegal sexual relationships.

In order to achieve the euphemistic effect, speakers may use interrogative sentences instead of imperative sentences. It is typically a pragmatic device. For instance, the sentence "Can you pass me the salt?" literally a question about the hearer's ability to pass the salt, pragmatically, a request is made indirectly so as to produce the euphemistic effect.

V. Conclusion

As a common language phenomenon, euphemism has a great significance in language learning and plays an increasingly important role in communication. The formation of English and Chinese euphemisms is vital in the framework of conceptual metonymy. From the perspective of linguistics, euphemism and metonymy are closely related. Metonymy plays a vital role in the formation of euphemism. With the use of conceptual metonymy, people tend to replace the tabooed or sensitive words with euphemisms generated by conceptual metonymy. With the help of conceptual metonymy, euphemistic effect is strengthened, and embarrassment is avoided.

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ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1180-1191, September 2011

doi:10.4304/jltr.2.5.1180-1191

The Effects of Output Task Types on Noticing and Learning of English Past Modals: A Case of Intermediate Persian Adult Learners of English

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***Abstract*—The noticing function of output has been investigated by a number of researchers in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (e.g. Izumi, S., 2002, Izumi, S., Bigelow, M., 2000, Izumi, S., Bigelow, M., Fujiwara, M., Fearnow, S., 1999, Song and Suh, 2008). Still, the nature of such noticing and its effect on subsequent learning of English grammar has not been thoroughly investigated. The present study investigated the effect of output and the relative efficacy of two different output task types (reconstruction task and picture-cued writing task) on the noticing and learning of English past modals. Ninety four subjects remained to participate in our experiment. The results of the study offered some evidence that output task types better promote both the noticing and learning of the target structure. The positive effect of output demonstrated in this study is consistent with the hypothesized function of output in SLA.**

***Index Terms*—output, noticing, grammar teaching, task types, English past modals**

I. Introduction

Whether grammar should be a primary focus of language instruction, should be eliminated entirely, or should be subordinated to meaning-focused use of the target language is still a matter of controversy among the scholars in SLA (Pica, 2000). Over the past few decades, there have been some arguments against grammar teaching and some in support of it. Current research in SLA has reconsidered the role of grammar in the L2 classroom and has re-evaluated the grammar as a necessary component of language instruction (Nassaji and Fotos, 2004).

Arguing against Krashen's Input Comprehensible Hypothesis, Swain (1985) proposed a hypothesis and termed Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, claiming that comprehensible output (CO) is the output that extends the linguistic repertoire of the learner as he or she attempts to create precisely and appropriately the meaning desired (p. 252). Besides, she argued that the role of learner production of CO is independent in many ways of the role of comprehensible input, claiming that CO is also an essential mechanism which helps SLA in many ways. In proposing the Output Hypothesis, Swain (1985) argued that producing the target language (TL) may serve as "the trigger that forces the learner to pay attention to the means of expression needed in order to successfully convey his or her own intended meaning" (p.249).

Of the four functions of output specified in the current version of the Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1993, 1995, 1998), one is the noticing function. The noticing function of output posits that learners may notice the gap in their interlanguage (IL) knowledge in an attempt to produce the TL, which then prompts them to solve their linguistic deficiency in ways that are appropriate in a given context (Izumi, 2002, p.545).

In the same line, the present study is founded on the basis that L2 learners need to attend to the language input for acquisition. Hence, this research will be an attempt to investigate whether different output ask types can function as an important trigger that directs learners' attention to the linguistic items while processing for meaning.

We replicated the study done by Song and Suh (2008). This study was done in Korea and with a small number of participants (fifty two). The linguistic structure under analysis in that study was the past counterfactual conditional. In this study, we investigated English past modals with a higher number of participants (ninety four). In fact, the researchers were motivated to carry out the replication of this study in order to find out the effects of the two output task types (picture-cued writing task and reconstruction task) Son and Suh (2008) made use of in their study on the noticing and learning of English past modals in another EFL context (Iran) with another group of participants and in two dimensions of learning (recognition and production). We did this research to see whether different contexts have any effects on the findings of the study, hoping to come up with new findings.

II. Review of Literature

A. Attention and Noticing

Considering the assumption that attention plays a crucial role in language learning, much of SLA research has focused on investigating the types of tasks that promote learners' attention to a specific linguistic target. Recent research in cognitive psychology and SLA has also investigated the role of attention in mediating input and learning. Findings of such studies indicate that attention is necessary for learning to take place (see Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1990, 1995, 2001; and Tomlin & Villa, 1994). Schmidt (2001) has simply stated that "people learn about the things that they attend to and do not learn much about the things they do not attend to".

Most of the studies on input enhancement (Rutherford and Sharwood Smith, 1985; Sharwood Smith, 1993), focus on form (Doughty, 2001; Doughty and Williams, 1998; Long, 1991; Long and Robinson, 1998), and the noticing function of output (Izumi, 2002; Izumi and Bigelow, 2000; Izumi et al., 1999) are based on the assumption that directing learners' attention to form during meaning-oriented learning activities helps them to acquire both form and meaning.

B. Output and Noticing

There seems to be a global consensus, over decades of research in SLA, that input plays a significant role in learners' acquisition of an L2. Current SLA research, however, goes beyond the provision of just comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985), which is taken to be a necessary but insufficient prerequisite for learning to take place (Ellis, 1994; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; and Long, 1996, for reviews). Rather, it seeks to obtain a more precise understanding of how learners process, or interact with, input to develop their IL competence (Izumi, 2002).

Since the time Swain proposed the Output Hypothesis (1995, 1998, 2000, 2005), output has been considered not only as an end product of learning, but also as a significant factor to promote L2 learning (e.g., Izumi and Bigelow, 2000; Swain and Lapkin, 1995).

Swain (1993, 1995, and 1998) specified four functions of output: developing automacity in language use; hypothesis-testing function; metalinguistic function; noticing/triggering function. Of the four mentioned functions, the focus of the present study is related to the noticing function. The noticing function of output states that while learners are producing the target language, they might ''notice that they do not know how to say (or write) precisely the meaning they wish to convey" (Swain, 2005, p. 474), which that time might focus their attention on their linguistic deficiency and consequently, try to work out a solution.

To investigate this issue, Izumi and Bigelow (2000) and Izumi et al. (1999), in a two-stage study, focusing on the English past hypothetical conditional, compared an experimental group that was given output opportunities and subsequent exposure to relevant input and a control group that was exposed to the same input first and then asked to answer comprehension questions on the input. The output tasks were a reconstruction writing task and an essay-writing task. Noticing was done by underlining. The two studies were the same in every aspect except in the order of the two output tasks in the two phases. In Izumi et al. (1999), the reconstruction task was given in phase 1 and one week after phase 1, an essay-writing task was given in phase 2, whereas in Izumi and Bigelow (2000), the order of tasks was reversed to examine if task ordering plays any role in accounting for the results.

The effects of output in promoting noticing of the form were not substantiated in the two studies, perhaps because of the nature of the comprehension questions, individual variation, and type of target form (Izumi et al., 1999; Izumi and Bigelow, 2000). The studies revealed contrasting findings: Izumi et al. (1999) found the experimental group made a greater improvement on the production test (after the second phase treatment) than did the control group, while Izumi and Bigelow (2000) found no advantage for the experimental group on any of the post-tests. No clear-cut differences between the two groups were posited to be due to the impacts of the input flood and the true–false comprehension questions used for the control group (Izumi and Bigelow, 2000).

On the other hand, Izumi (2002) lent support to the attention-inducing function of output in a more controlled study. Building on the earlier studies, he aimed to investigate whether and how output (reconstruction task), visual input enhancement, together or separately, promote noticing and acquisition of English relativization. This study involved one control group and four treatment groups who differed in respect of output requirements and exposure to enhanced input. From the study, it was found that the participants engaged in the output treatments outperformed the subjects exposed to the same input for the purpose of comprehension only in learning the target form, although they did not outperform them in noticing the target form.

In the comparison of the two studies mentioned above, Izumi and Bigelow (2000) found that the experiment group learners' essays showed greater individual variation than did their text reconstructions. They argued that comparatively greater freedom given in the essay-writing task leads different learners to attend to varied aspects of the input subsequently provided, whereas the reconstruction task that targets the specific grammatical structure has an advantage in promoting noticing the gap. Instead of using an essay-writing task, whose task type seems to make it difficult for learners to attend to a specific form, the present study is going to employ another type of output task – a picture-cued writing task, which will be designed to provoke learners' attention to form as well as to give learners more flexibility than reconstruction, and compares the two tasks in their effect on noticing and learning of a targeted form.

In a recent study, Song and Suh (2008) also investigated the role of output and the relative efficacy of two different types of output tasks (reconstruction and pictured-cued writing task) in noticing and learning of the English past counterfactual conditional. They found that more acquisition occurred for those who had an opportunity to produce an output than those who did not, though none of the tasks they used resulted in a greater noticing and learning of the

linguistic target. In fact, they found differences between those who had output opportunities and those who did not, but did not find any differences in the relative efficacy of the two output tasks.

Among these studies, a research issue which has received relatively less attention from researchers and has produced mixed results is whether output tasks better promote noticing and learning of a target linguistic form than non-output tasks. More specifically, research on the effects of output in comparison with comprehension task (Izumi, 2002) and the relative efficacy of different output tasks and input comprehension task has produced completely different results (Izumi and Bigelow, 2000; Izumi et al., 1999). Therefore, more research needs to be done to investigate what the suitable means of getting learners to focus on form are.

III. Research Questions

To shed more light on our insights of the impact of output on noticing and learning in SLA and of the possible efficacy of different task types on SLA, this study investigated the relative effectiveness of two different types of output tasks and a non-output task. The research questions were as follows:

Do Different output task types (a picture-cued writing task and a reconstruction task) better promote noticing of the targeted structure than a non-output task (a reading comprehension task)?

Do Different output task types better promote learning regarding the recognition of the targeted structure than a non-output task?

Do Different output task types better promote learning regarding the production of the targeted structure than a non-output task?

Based on the above questions the following null hypotheses were made:

$H_0$1. Different output task types and a non- output task type are not different in promoting ***noticing*** of the targeted structure.

$H_0$2. Different output task types and a non-output task type are not different in promoting ***learning regarding recognition*** of the targeted structure.

$H_0$3. Different output task types and a non-output task type are not different in promoting ***learning regarding production*** of the targeted structure.

IV. Method

A. Participants

This study was conducted with 136 intermediate English language learners (aged 18-25) studying at an English language center in Esfahan. These 136 students happened to have already passed 6 courses in general English, which lent credence to their being at an intermediate level. All these 136 students participated in an Oxford Placement Test (OPT). 121 of them were chosen on the basis of their scores on the OPT to ensure that they were homogeneous regarding their knowledge of English grammar. Those who received extreme scores (one Standard Deviation above and below the mean) were excluded from our analyses. After a full week, the pretest was administered. Of these 121 participants 105 participated in the pretest. After a month, when all the treatments had been done, only 94 participants remained to take part in our posttest. Our final pool, however, consisted of 94 participants. 30 of them were in our control group, 34 of them were in our first experimental group (picture-cued writing) and finally 30 of them were in our second experimental group (reconstruction).

B. Linguistic Structure under Analysis

The target linguistic structures going under investigation were two types of past modals used for giving opinions or suggestions about actions in the past (i.e. *should/ought to + have+ past participle of the main verb*).The rationale for the selection of this type of structure was threefold:

First of all, students at the third grade of this English language center had not been exposed to this kind of linguistic item during their instruction until then. Hence, by selecting a structure with which participants were totally unfamiliar prior to the study, we could make sure that whatever happened after the investigation might have been the results of our treatment.

Secondly, this linguistic item constitutes one part of the curriculum developed for the English learners who want to receive a TOEFL or an ILETS degree .In other words, those who are making themselves prepared for such formal tests are expected to be able to distinguish between these two structures and some other similar modals and know how to use these structures communicatively.

Finally, these two structures were used for investigation because Iranian learners seem to have difficulty in distinguishing between these and some other similar structures like *must +have + P.P*. They are said to have problems both in understanding the meaning of the sentences in which such structures are used and communicating themselves using them.

C. Instrumentation

1. English Proficiency Test

The grammar section of an OPT was utilized in order to gain a perception of the grammatical knowledge of the participants and in order to make sure that they are homogeneous regarding their knowledge of English grammar. This test consisted of 100 (multiple-choice) items to which our participants answered.

2. Pre and Post Test on Past Modals

There were two types of pre- and post-tests (see Appendix 1 for sample questions of these tests): (1) a recognition test, designed to assess the participants' receptive knowledge of the target structure, and (2) a written production task, designed to assess their use (i.e., produced output). Both were administered in a paper- and pencil format. Reasoning that the interval length (1 month) between the pre-test and the post-test was long enough that the learners could not remember the questions, the same form was utilized in administering both pre- and post-tests**.**

The recognition test consisted of 30 items, of which 23 used the target structures and 7 served as distractors. To avoid drawing the participants' attention to the target features during the pre and post-testing, which in turn would jeopardize the validity of the treatment, some distractors, all grammatical, were included in the test

Of these 23 items, 12 used the target form *'should have past participle*', of which 8 were correct and 4 incorrect. Eleven out of 22 items used the target form *' ought to have past participle'* of which 8 were correct and three incorrect. They were instructed to make a judgment whether or not each sentence was correct and, if incorrect, to underline the incorrect part and correct it.

The production test (see Appendix 2 for sample questions) included 2 sets of contexts, each of which was designed to elicit 4 sentence items calling for the target structure. Each context was explained in Farsi and a few words were given. A prompt (e.g., He should…or She ought to ….) under each item was written to ensure the participants produce the target forms.

D. Procedure

An overview of the experimental procedure for this study can be seen in Figure 1 below. The experimental sequence of the study was carried out over a period of approximately one month. First, an OPT was administered to all of the participants. Then, six intact classes were randomly assigned to three groups: picture-cued writing (EG 1); reconstruction (EG 2); non-output or comparison (CG). One week prior to the first treatment session all the participants took the pre-test which consisted of a recognition test and a written production test (see Appendix 2 for questions of the pre-test). Then, the three groups underwent different treatments. The experimental treatment consisted of three sessions. The second treatment session took place a full week after the first treatment session. The third treatment session also took place a full week after the second treatment session. The third treatment session was followed by a post-test a week later. In an attempt to control for outside exposure to the target form, after completing the post-test, the learners were asked whether they had consulted with anyone or anything about the target form. The data from those who reported having done so were all discarded. The data from those who were absent from any of the three treatment sessions or did not take the post-test were also discarded. Before excluding some participants to control for outside exposure to the target form, there were thirty five participants in each group. For these reasons, the size of each cell turned out to be different. There were 30 participants in the reconstruction task condition, 34 in the picture-cued writing task condition, and 30 in the non-output condition.

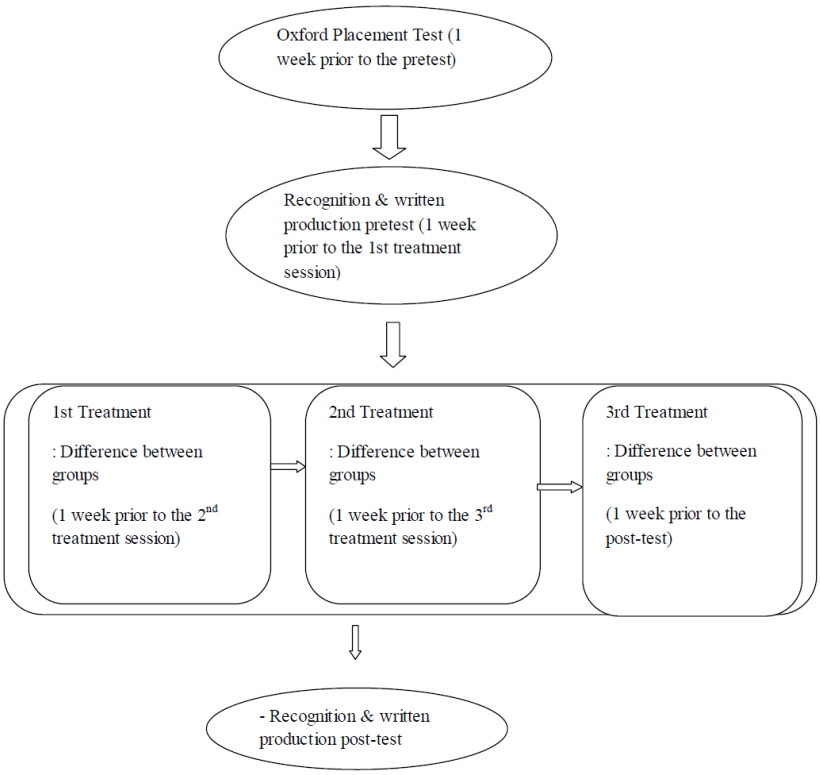


Figure 1: An Overview of the Experimental Procedure

E. Treatment

Figure 2 below shows an overview of the sequence of one treatment session for each group. The treatment conditions differed in terms of whether or not the participants were asked to produce output (+/-O), and +O condition was further controlled with output task type: picture-cued writing (EG 1); reconstruction (EG 2). The other two treatment sessions were exactly the same as the first treatment except the content of reading texts. At the beginning of each treatment session, all group participants were informed of the task that they were going to do. They were asked to read the text with approximately 70% of sentences containing the past modals (should have past participle and ought to have past participle) and to underline the parts that they felt were necessary for the subsequent task. They were not allowed to look back at the text while completing their subsequent tasks. After reading the given text, the reconstruction group was asked to reconstruct the input passage they had just read as accurately as possible on a sheet of paper. A general picture relevant to the text they had just read with a few vocabulary prompts were provided in the output sheets considering there is a possibility that reconstruction may place a heavy cognitive burden on the learners (see Appendix 3). The picture cues were believed to lessen the memory load of remembering a story for EG 2. EG 1 participants were given picture and vocabulary prompts designed to elicit the targeted contexts, and completed a short guided writing based on them. The learners were encouraged to use the words written below each picture to write one sentence. Appendix 4 contains a sample picture prompt. Without looking back at the input text, the non-output group answered comprehension questions. The rationale of inclusion of the comprehension questions was to ‘‘prevent inadvertently drawing the learners’ attention to form (Izumi et al., 1999, p. 448)”. The participants in all three groups were shown the same text a second time. EG 1 and EG 2 received a second reconstruction opportunity and a second picture-cued writing opportunity respectively, and the CG answered the same questions regarding the content of the text.

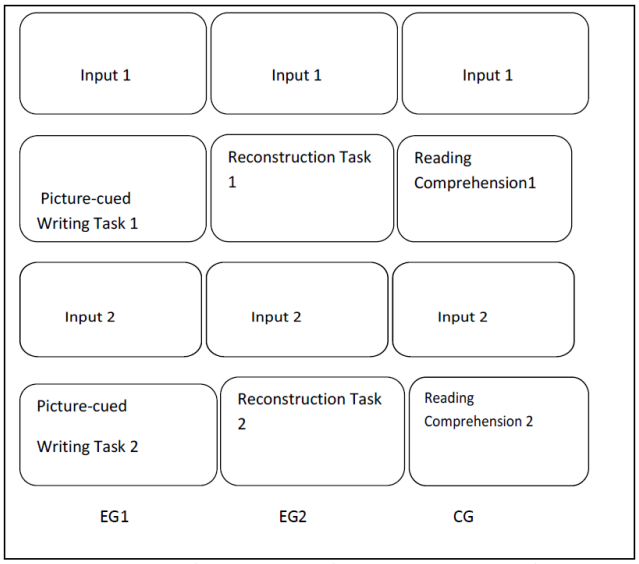


Figure 2: An overview of the sequence of one treatment session for each group

V. Coding of the Data

A. Underlining Scoring

To examine noticing of the target form, underlines made on the first input of the first session and the second input of the third session were scored by counting total items underlined and then by obtaining a percentage of past modal (*should have past participle and ought to have past participle*) related underlined items. The following words or morphemes contained in past modal sentences were considered as past modal-related: modal verbs (should, ought to), the aspectual auxiliary (have), copula in the past participle ending (-ed and -en). The underlines were scored by one of the researchers and a second rater. Ten percent of the data were randomly selected and coded by both the researcher and a second rater. Inter-rater agreement was 92% for identification of past modal related items.

B. Coding of Recognition Test Scores

All the test items that were not answered were excluded from scoring. One point was given for each correct target response. A half point was given when the learners made a correct judgment whether each sentence was correct and underlined the incorrect part. Zero point was given when the learners made an incorrect judgment about each sentence. Test scores were calculated for each participant by dividing the total correct scores by the total number of the items answered. Finally, the score were converted in percentage for the sake of simplicity in doing statistical analyses.

C. Coding of Written Production

The production data obtained from pre- and post-tests were coded using a target-like use (TLU) analysis. It was carried out by dividing the number of target-like past modal sentences the learners produced by the total number of the target sentences attempted. The TLU analysis was utilized to examine target-like performance of each sentence. After a training session on 10% of the production data, the researcher and a second rater coded approximately 10% of the production data, achieving inter-rater agreement at 93%.

VI. Statistical Analyses and Results

A. The Language Proficiency Test

In order to build up three rather homogenous groups as to the language proficiency level, the descriptive statistics, i.e., the means, standard deviations, and the standard error of the means of the proficiency test scores were calculated. It was proved that all three groups were similar regarding their English proficiency. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and Table 2 indicates the results of the ANOVA.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE PROFICIENCY TEST

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM
CG	30	51.13	4.51	.82
EG1	34	50.73	4.33	.74
EG2	30	50.40	4.65	.84

TABLE 2
ANOVA RESULTS FOR THE PROFICIENCY TEST

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.088	2	4.044	.200	.819
Within Groups	1839.284	91	20.212		
Total	1847.372	93			

As can be seen in Table 2, the observed F is not significant because the level of significance is .81 which is higher than .05. Therefore, the three groups of the study are almost similar regarding their knowledge of English grammar and we can be sure that the three groups are homogeneous.

B. Noticing

The noticing issue has been investigated by first subtracting the noticing scores gained from the second input in the third session (last input) from the noticing scores gained from the first input in the first session (first input). In this way, the amount of change between the first input and the last input was calculated. As a result, three sets of scores were gained, one for each group (CG, EG1, and EG2). Table 3 reveals the descriptive statistics for these scores.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE NOTICING SCORES

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM
CG	30	.65	2.65	.48
EG1	34	26.99	14.03	2.40
EG2	30	17.30	10.29	1.87

The above table shows that the three means are different. In order to find out whether or not the difference is significant, a one-way ANOVA was run. Table 4 presents the results of this ANOVA.

TABLE 4
ANOVA RESULTS FOR THE NOTICING SCORES

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11207.433	2	5603.716	52.148	.000
Within Groups	9778.654	91	107.458		
Total	20986.087	93			

As can be seen in Table 4 the amount of F-observed is significant (F= 52.148, p= .000). Then a Scheffe post hoc test was employed to determine the exact area(s) of the difference(s). Table 5 depicts the results of the post hoc test.

TABLE 5
POST-HOC SCHEFFE TEST FOR NOTICING

Group	Group	Mean Difference	Sig.
CG	EG1	-26.34706*	.000
	EG2	-16.65333*	.000
EG1	CG	26.34706*	.000
	EG2	9.69373*	.002
EG2	CG	16.65333*	.000
	EG1	-9.69373*	.002

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

As can be seen in Table 5, both experimental group 1 (picture-cued writing task) and experimental group 2 (reconstruction task) outperformed the control group. However, EG1 had better results in comparison with EG2. This means that output task types performed better than a non-out task type in promoting the noticing of the targeted structure. Furthermore, picture-cued writing task also outperformed the reconstruction task in promoting noticing of the targeted structure. Therefore, the first null hypothesis stating, "output task types are not different in promoting ***noticing*** of the targeted structure" can safely be rejected.

C. Learning

In this study, the learning issue was considered in two different dimensions, namely, the recognition of the linguistic target, and the production of the target from. The recognition and production scores gained from the pretest and the posttest were compared. The descriptive statistics of the scores from the pre and posttests are shown below in Table 6.

TABLE 6
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PRE AND POSTTESTS

Groups	Pretest recognition	Posttest recognition	Pretest production	Posttest production
CG	N= 30			
	Mean= 51.16	Mean= 51.65	Mean= 50.39	Mean= 50.87
	SD= 5.6	SD= 5.8	SD= 23.71	SD= 22.03
EG1	N= 34			
	Mean= 52.05	Mean= 70.13	Mean= 51.60	Mean= 64.52
	SD= 9.54	SD= 11.86	SD= 22.69	SD= 19.26
EG2	N= 30			
	Mean= 49.33	Mean= 69.20	Mean= 43.53	Mean= 59.53
	SD= 13.5	SD= 17.32	SD= 21.43	SD= 20.92

In fact, the production scores of the posttest were subtracted from the production scores of the pretest, and the same thing was done for the recognition scores of the pretest and posttest. Then a score for each individual in each group was obtained which was the result of this computation.

1. Learning regarding Recognition

To determine the effects of different output task types and a non-output task type on learning regarding the recognition of the targeted structure, the sets of scores which were obtained with regard to recognition were compared through applying a one-way ANOVA. Table 7 indicates the descriptive statistics for these sets and Table 8 shows the results of the ANOVA.

TABLE 7
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE LEARNING REGARDING RECOGNITION SCORES

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM
CG	30	.48	1.74	.31
EG1	34	18.08	13.34	2.28
EG2	30	19.87	13.74	2.50

TABLE 8
ANOVA RESULTS FOR LEARNING REGARDING RECOGNITION

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6994.534	2	3497.267	27.819	.000
Within Groups	11440.165	91	125.716		
Total	18434.699	93			

As can be seen in Table 8, the amount of F-observed is significant (F- 27.819, p= .000). In other words, the three groups performed differently on the recognition test. In order to find out which groups were different in this regard, a Scheffe post hoc test was run. Table 9 reveals the results of this Scheffe test.

TABLE 9
THE RESULTS OF THE SCHEFFE POST-HOC TEST FOR LEARNING REGARDING RECOGNITION

Group	Group	Mean Difference	Sig.
CG	EG1	-17.59931*	.000
	EG2	-19.38767*	.000
EG1	CG	17.59931*	.000
	EG2	-1.78835	.817
EG2	CG	19.38767*	.000
	EG1	1.78835	.817

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

As Table 8 shows, the two experimental groups outperformed the control group in promoting learning regarding recognition. However, EG1 and EG2 were not statistically different. That is, although both of the output task types (picture-cued writing task and reconstruction task) had an effect on promoting learning regarding recognition, they did not differ in their effects on learning regarding recognition. Therefore, the second null hypothesis stating "different output task types and a non-output task type are not different in promoting learning regarding the recognition of the targeted structure" can safely be rejected.

2. Learning regarding Production

To determine the effects of different output task types and a non-output task type on learning regarding the production of the targeted structure, the sets of scores which were obtained with regard to production were compared through applying another one-way ANOVA. Table 10 reveals the descriptive statistics for these sets and Table 11 indicates the results of the ANOVA.

TABLE 10
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE LEARNING REGARDING PRODUCTION SCORES

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM
CG	30	.48	13.38	2.44
EG1	34	12.09	13.54	2.32
EG2	30	16.00	13.13	2.39

TABLE 11
ANOVA RESULTS FOR THE LEARNING REGARDING PRODUCTION SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4090.753	2	2045.376	11.452	.000
Within Groups	16253.568	91	178.611		
Total	20344.321	93			

As can be seen in Table 11, the amount of F-observed is significantly high enough to claim that the three groups under investigation acted differently on the test of production (F= 11.452, p= .000). Once again, to find the exact place(s) of difference(s), a second Scheffe post hoc test was employed. Table 12 presents the results of this post hoc test.

As Table 12 shows, the two experimental groups outperformed the control group in promoting learning regarding production. However, in this test again the difference between EG1 1 and EG 2 was not statistically significant. That is, although both of the output task types (picture-cued writing task and reconstruction task) had an effect on promoting learning regarding production, they did not differ in their effects on learning regarding production. As a result, it is safe to reject the third null hypothesis stating "different output task types a non-output task type are not different in promoting learning regarding production of the targeted structure".

TABLE 12
POST-HOC RESULTS FOR LEARNING REGARDING PRODUCTION SCORES

Group	Group	Mean Difference	Sig.
CG	EG1	-12.44329*	.002
	EG2	-15.52467*	.000
EG1	CG	12.44329*	.002
	EG2	-3.08137	.656
EG2	CG	15.52467*	.000
	EG1	3.08137	.656

*The mean difference is significant in the .05 level

VII. DISCUSSION

The first research question addressed the effect of different output task types and a non-output task type on noticing of the targeted structure. In response to this question, the data confirmed that different output task types, whether picture-cued writing task or reconstruction task better promote noticing of the target structure than a non-out put task type. In addition, our results indicated that the picture-cued writing task also promoted noticing more than the reconstruction task (see Table 5). Thus, it can be claimed that the noticing function of output has been supported in this study.

Comparing these two output task types, the learners who were given the picture-cued writing task type noticed the structure better than the learners who were given the reconstruction task type. This might be due to the amount of attention participant paid to this task. In the reconstruction task, participants had to reconstruct the text and during this reconstruction they might have been distracted by some other structures in the input provided for them. By contrast, those participants who were engaged in doing the picture-cued writing task might have focused their attention on the targeted structure. Nearly all the details of the texts were shown in the pictures so the chance of getting distracted by other structures seemed to be less than the chance of getting distracted by the reconstruction task.

The second question focused on the effects of different output task types and a non-output task types on learning regarding recognition of the target structure. In response to this question, our data confirmed that those participants who produced output (+O) outperform those who do not (-O) in learning regarding recognition of the target structure (see Tables 7 and 8). Therefore, it can be claimed that Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis is partly supported. According to this hypothesis better noticing leads to better learning. Both of our experimental groups who produced output better noticed the targeted structure than the control group and subsequently learned it.

However, our two experimental conditions did not yield different results. That is, although both of the output task types (picture-cued writing task and reconstruction task) had an effect on promoting learning regarding recognition, they did not differ in their effects on learning regarding recognition. This finding seems to be against Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis. Although EG1 better noticed the targeted structure than EG2 and should have learned the structure better, it seems that the amount of noticing has been high enough for EG2 to learn it as well as EG1.

Finally, the third research question aiming to address the effects of output task types and a non-output task type on learning regarding production of the target structure found positive results. In response to this question our data confirmed that output task types better promote learning regarding production of the target structure (see Tables 10 and 11). As Table 12 shows, our two experimental groups, those learners who had an output opportunity, outperformed the control group, those learners who did not produce output, in promoting learning regarding production. However, in this test again the difference between EG 1 and EG 2 was not statistically significant. That is, although both of the output task types (picture-cued writing task and reconstruction task) had an effect on promoting learning regarding production, they did not differ in their effects on learning regarding production. This finding can also be accounted for by the tenable explanation given above for learning regarding recognition.

The positive effect of output demonstrated in this study is consistent with the hypothesized function of output in SLA. Based on previous research (Izumi et al. (1999), Izumi and Bigelow (2000), Izumi (2002), Song and Suh (2008)), that indicates insufficiency of comprehensible input in driving L2 development and on research that points to the importance of attention in learning, it was hypothesized that learners' attention somehow needs to be drawn to the critical features of input to promote their learning. Output was considered to be one means to achieve this goal by prompting the learners to find problems in their IL by attempting to produce the target structure. Furthermore, it was assumed that, on exposure to relevant input immediately after their production experience, the heightened sense of problematicity would lead them to pay closer attention to what was identified to be a problematic area in their IL. In short, pushed output can induce the learners to process the input effectively for their greater IL development.

In terms of the total amount of noticing, it was revealed that our study and Song and Suh's (2008) had the same results. In other words, in both of the studies, output opportunities promoted significantly greater noticing of the target form than did the non-output condition. Furthermore, the picture-cued writing task was more effective in drawing learners' attention to the target form than the reconstruction task.

The result that all three groups were different in the noticing gain is not consistent with the general trends observed in the previous studies (e.g., Izumi and Bigelow, 2000; Izumi et al., 1999) where the output conditions did not result in greater noticing of the counterfactual conditional than did the non-output condition. In this vein, this outcome coincides with the hypothesized effects of 'pushed' output (Swain, 1995) in triggering noticing.

VIII. Limitations and Future Research

Acknowledging some limitations throughout the accomplishment of different phases, several suggestions can be made for future research. Most of all, this study failed to control time-on-task. The time-on-task needed for picture-cued writing, reconstruction, and reading comprehension might to have been equal in this study. Other studies are recommended to control this factor since the result of the study cannot be accounted for because of the difference between output and nonoutput but due to the fact that more time leads to better learning.

Next, future studies are expected to gather the data from a greater number of participants in an experimental design, rather than in a quasi-experimental design, to enhance external validity or generalizability.

Finally, the current study was done as an experiment with EFL learner participants at intermediate level. Students at other levels, elementary and advanced, were not studied in the present study. It is recommended that other studies be done with higher levels, too.

IX. Application and Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study are expected to have implications for the design of output tasks in educational settings and provide teachers and methodologists with new insights into designing varied task types in EFL classrooms. The results of this study are expected to indicate that output practice is more effective on noticing of a target form when learners are presented with opportunities to engage in the syntactic processing without posing a high cognitive burden to attend to the content words or other functional words.

Appendix 1: Recognition Test (Sample questions from the pre-/post-test)

This coffee tastes awful. I'll complain to the waiter about it. ***Yes/No***
John failed the test. He should have studied harder. ***Yes/No***
He should asked me before he took my bike. ***Yes/No***
We ought to taken a taxi when it rained. ***Yes/No***
The cashier gave me too much money. I should have said something. ***Yes/No***

Appendix 2: Contextualized Production Test (Sample questions from the pre-/post-test)

با در نظر گرفتن شرایط قید شده در متن جملات پیرو هر متن را به انگلیسی کامل کنید

Ali's old car broke down on the highway late one night. He left the car on the side of the road and walked home.
یک شب دیروقت ماشین قدیمی علی توی یه اتوبان خراب شد. او ماشینو کنارجاده گذاشت وپیاده رفت خونه.
1. He should…….. (stop a stranger's car to ask for a ride).

مبایستی دست میگرفت برا یه ماشین تا برستوندش
2. He ought to……..……
(walk to the nearest pay phone and call a tow truck).
مبایستی پیاده تا نزدیک ترین باجه تلفن میرفت وبرا یه جرثقیل زنگ میزد.

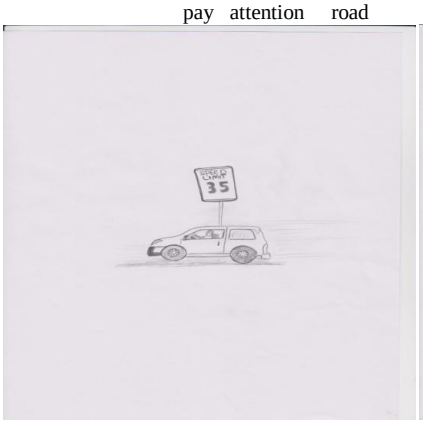
APPENDIX 3: PICTURE CUES FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION (AN EXAMPLE FROM THE FORM USED IN THE 1ST TREATMENT SESSION)

He was in a hurry and had an accident. He regrets the following things. Write as many sentences as you can.

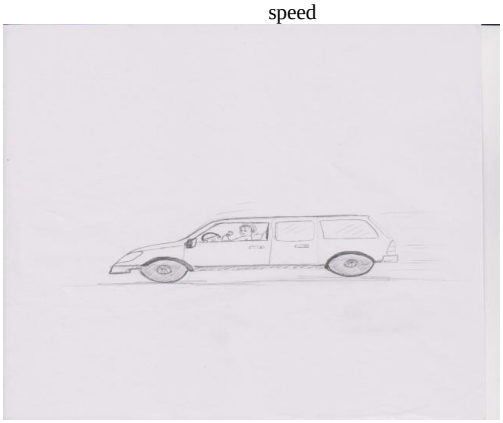
APPENDIX 4: PICTURE PROMPT FOR THE PICTURE-CUED WRITING (EXAMPLES FROM THE FORM USED IN THE 1ST TREATMENT)

He was in a hurry and had an accident. Now, he regrets the following things. Write a sentence under each picture using the words.

pay attention road



speed



APPENDIX 5: INPUT PASSAGE FOR THE NON-OUTPUT GROUP (AN EXAMPLE FROM THE FORM USED IN THE 1ST TREATMENT)

Many years have passed since that dreadful day, the day my life changed forever, and looking back at things, I shouldn't have been speeding. I was late for work and all I could think about was getting there on time. I shouldn't have run the red light. The next thing I remember was the sound of the windshield shattering and people gathering all around me. I ought to have paid more attention to the school crossing sign. I should have paid more attention to the road. I was thinking about my work when I should have paid more attention to my driving. I ought to have followed the traffic rules. Now it's too late.

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