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Characteristics of Japanese Language Learners and Their Perceptions of Error Feedback

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***Abstract*—The studies in this article attempted to establish cross-validation of learners' perceptions of error feedback in both writing and oral activities by integrating educational psychological theories. Various factors could influence the effectiveness of error feedback in second language learning environments. Although the mode of feedback (i.e., oral or written) is also one of the factors influencing the effectiveness of error feedback, considerable research of both a descriptive and experimental nature has been done to examine the effects of error feedback on oral production (Russell & Spada, 2006). Therefore, this article reports the statistical analysis results of an examination of the relationship between characteristics of learners and their perceptions of error feedback during both oral and writing activities, from social and individual learning perspectives. The study's findings could help teachers of Japanese as a second language develop appropriate methods of error feedback from students with different characteristics.**

***Index Terms*—error feedback, learning styles, epistemological beliefs, classroom activities, writing activities**

I. Introduction

Historically, studies on foreign language learners' errors and different types of error feedback have been discussed using contrastive analyses, error analyses, and performance analyses. All of these studies attempted to reveal learners' transfer processes from their native languages to their target languages or to detect their fossilization and find the reasons for the stabilization of structures and error making in the learning processes (Han & Selinker, 1999). It has been pointed out that these analyses are limited from the psychological perspective. Recently, some researchers have examined teachers' perceptions of learners' responses to error feedback accurately and learners' noticing of their error feedback by recording learners' interaction and conducting a stimulated recall interview immediately after the completion of the task activities. However, learners' perceptions about the same classroom event differed considerably (Allwright, 1984; Slimani, 1989). Yet, individual student differences in response to error treatment have not received much attention though findings of this investigation could help teachers understand why some students make substantial progress whereas others respond less to feedback (Ferris, 2002).

Furthermore, learners' perceptions of error feedback seem to be influenced by the types of error feedback (e.g., Panova & Lyster, 2002) during oral activities, implicating individual student variation in response to error correction; however, error feedback has not been seriously investigated in terms of writing activities (Ferris, 2002). Ellis (2008) pointed out the limitation of quantitative approaches, which do not provide researcher with detailed observation of learners in language-learning settings to examine individual differences. On the other hand, qualitative research method did not succeed in revealing learners' psychological states or learning strategies (Cohen, 1984; Rubin, 1975). Therefore, researchers prefer to use self-reports or triangulation (the use of several means to collect data and obtain reliable results). Nevertheless, only few qualitative studies have investigated individual difference because these studies are time consuming. This study attempted to provide an overview of learners' preferences for error correction methods using a larger number of subjects to establish higher reliability from quantitative research perspective.

Various factors could influence the effectiveness of error feedback in second language learning environments. These factors include not only the type, amount, and source of correction, but also learners' characteristics, such as attitudes towards correction, aptitude, motivation, and anxiety. Although the mode of correction (i.e., oral or written) is also one of the factors that affect the effectiveness of error feedback, considerable research of both a descriptive and experimental nature has been done to examine the effects of error feedback on oral production (Russell & Spada, 2006). The studies in this article were conducted based on the hypothesis that learners' perceptions of error feedback in writing activities should be related more to individual learning factors (which could elicit learners' preferences, tendencies, and habits while accounting for individual differences in learning) than to learning styles (which identify learners' preferences for interacting with peers and the instructor in classroom settings), though individual and social perspectives are not completely independent in classroom learning settings (see the next section). This article reports two studies on learners perceptions of error feedback during both oral and writing activities assessing (a) the degree to which learning styles, epistemological beliefs, and demographic information influence learners' perceptions of error feedback and (b) the relationships between learners' characteristics and their attitudes toward error feedback.

II. Perception of Error Feedback in a Social vs. Individual Entity

Two studies reported in this article examined whether learning style characteristics influences learners' perceptions of error feedback more during oral compared to writing activities, which involve more internal preferences and learning processes. According to the social learning theory, the social situation can influence individual learners, though the degree of active social mediation varies from situation to situation. According to the individual learning theory, others can facilitate individuals' learning through participating in the collective learning. It is important to understand how individual and social learning relate to one another. The combination of the first theory of learning (focusing on individual learning in the socially mediated situation) and the second theory of learning (focusing on individual participation in the learning of a collective) builds a "reciprocal spiral relationship" (Salomon & Perkins, 1998).

Ellis (1994) described three sets of variables, (a) individual leaner differences, including beliefs about language learning, affective states, and general factors, (b) learners' strategies, and (c) language learning outcomes, all of which are interrelated in the process of learning. As Ellis claimed, one of the goals of research with regard to individual differences is to identify the nature of these interrelationships, to identify each learner's style and beliefs about learning, and to consider factors (e.g., individual learning systems or social constructions) that influence the classroom, thus helping teachers to solve problems effectively. Therefore, Japanese language classes for non-native speakers should benefit from identifying individual learners' dispositions, including learning styles and beliefs about learning, and examining the relationship between various styles and beliefs.

Some studies have shown that learning styles affect the learners' perceptions of error feedback in the classroom. For example, Crichton (1990) revealed that peer correction turned out to be problematic. In his study, problems arose when peer correction caused humiliation, resulting in a crisis at the elementary proficiency level. This situation tends to occur if the majority of learning styles in a class are competitive. In the two studies discussed in this article, the Grasha-Riechmann Student Learning Style Scales (GRSLSS) (1994), namely (a) Independent, (b) Avoidant, (c) Collaborative, (d) Dependent, (e) Competitive, and (f) Participant, were used to identify learning styles in the classroom. The participants in their study responded 60 questions—10 questions assessing each learning style—measured on a five-point Likert scale. This instrument, developed based on a large number of informal observations of how students approached classroom tasks (Grasha, 1972), has been used in higher education for more than two decades (Grasha, 1996). The original formulation of the six learning styles suggested that Competitive-Collaborative, Avoidant-Participant, and Dependent-Independent were bipolar or represented three pairs of dichotomies. However, Grasha (1996) reported that using the Grasha-Riechmann Student Learning Style Scales showed that only the Avoidant-Participant dimensions represent a dichotomy [$\underline{r}$=-.69 to -.75] but not Competitive-Collaborative and Dependent-Independent dimensions [$\underline{r}$=-.22 to -.33].

To identify learners' multidimensional beliefs about the acquisition of knowledge, Shommer (1998a) used the epistemological beliefs questionnaire, which elicits learners' preferences, tendencies, and habits, and accounts for individual differences in learning, was used. Schommer (1989) developed a questionnaire designed to reveal whether the subjects are naïve or sophisticated learners based on the five epistemological components that, in her hypothesis, affected learning. Naïve learners believed that most knowledge is absolute and that the remainder of knowledge is temporarily unknown. In contrast, sophisticated learners are more skeptical when soliciting information. In her 1989 study, Schommer examined differences between junior-college students and university students in their beliefs about learning. The results of this study showed that university students were more likely to believe in innate ability and that junior-college students were more likely to believe in simple knowledge, certain knowledge, and quick learning. In 1990, Schommer analyzed the same data using factor analysis. In this analysis, simple knowledge and quick learning had a strong effect on their beliefs. None of the variables surveyed predicted belief in certain knowledge. This result also suggested that exposing students to more advanced knowledge facilitated a change in belief systems with regard to the uncertainty of knowledge. Thus, studies on epistemological beliefs could identify some critical sources of the problem and guide researchers, educators, and learners in modifying instruction to make it more suitable for learners' varying ways of acquiring knowledge (Schommer-Aikins, 2001). The results of some studies showed statistically significant relationships between epistemological beliefs and conceptions of learning (e.g., Chan, 2007). Schommer's epistemological beliefs questionnaire consists of 63 questions categorized into 12 subsets of items: (a) seek single answers, (b) avoid integration, (c) avoid ambiguity, (d) depend on authority, (e) knowledge is certain, (f) don't criticize authority, (g) ability to learn is innate, (h) can't learn how to learn, (i) success is unrelated to hard work, (j) learn the first time, (k) learning is quick, and (l) concentrated effort is a waste of time. The responses are measured on the same five-point scale as the GRSLSS.

III. Purposes of the Studies

The two studies discussed in this article were conducted for the following purposes:

1. To investigate the relationships between learners' characteristics (learning styles and epistemological beliefs) and their attitudes towards error feedback during both oral and writing activities.

2. To examine whether learning style characteristics on class structure influence learners' perceptions of error feedback more during oral activities than during writing activities, which involve more internal preferences and learning processes.

3. To recommend to teachers of Japanese as a second language appropriate methods of providing error feedback to students with different learning characteristics when engaging in both speaking and writing activities.

IV. Study One

The first study examined learners' perceptions of error feedback during oral activities. The following section reports the design of the study, data analysis and results.

A. Participants and Procedure

Students enrolled in all levels[1] of Japanese language courses at eight universities in the United States participated in Study 1. Two-hundred-fifteen questionnaires were statistically analyzed. It was expected that the characteristics of teachers affect learners' perceptions in the classroom; therefore, only universities where native Japanese instructors teach were selected to make the participant sites homogeneous. The students participating in this study volunteered to participate and completed a demographic questionnaire (reporting demographic information such as gender and major) and three instruments. All participants were provided with explicit directions on how to respond. The instructors participating in this study were notified that they should allow approximately fifteen minutes for the completion of the survey. After the completion, the questionnaires were returned to the investigator for analysis.

B. Survey Instrument

To investigate the relationship between learners' characteristics and their perceptions of error feedback, the survey instrument comprised four parts, corresponding to four different learning characteristics: (a) demographic information (Gender, Race, School year, Major, Native language, Proficiency level, Japanese class size), (b) attitudes toward error feedback (Appendix A), (c) GRSLSS (learning style questionnaire), and (d) Schommer's epistemological belief questionnaire.

The survey on attitudes toward error feedback that investigates learners' perspectives toward error treatment during oral activities was developed based on the review of studies on error treatment. The first question revealed the learners' preference for error correction during oral activities in the classroom overall. The second question attempted to find the preference for error correction source among teachers, peers, or individual selves and confirmed some research findings that peer correction and self-correction were problematic because error treatment involves socio-cultural factors, such as social strain, embarrassment, humiliation, or confusion in a classroom (Breen, 2001; Crichton, 1990; van Lier, 1988). The third question examined learners' attitudes toward self-correction without considering interactions with peers. Language learners, especially at the lower proficiency level, need "other-regulation" to reach the automatized self-regulation level. However, this "other-regulation" refers to the teacher, not to the peer, because peer correction involves problems, such as the ambiguity of error treatment (Crichton, 1990). Vygotsky's "zones of proximal development(ZPD) and the effect of reformulation (Nobuyoshi & Ellis, 1993) have supported the importance of self-regulation. Vygotsky showed that self-regulation develops gradually with the support of a tutor in the notion of ZPD. Nobuyoshi and Ellis also showed that their experimental group, which received requests for clarification every time they produced an incorrect utterance of the specific learning grammatical item, produced fewer errors.

The fourth question sought to determine whether the learners preferred to receive the error treatment immediately after making an error or after finishing a conversation during oral activities, though pedagogical consideration has been given to the question of when errors should be corrected and when they should be ignored. The choices to the fifth question, which asked participants on what kind of classroom activity they wanted to receive the error correction most, were made based on a continuum between discrete-point and global and between discrete-point and integrative axes (Savignon, 1983). According to the two-dimensional plot based on Savignon's classification, four activities, (a) pronunciation practice, (b) grammar practice, (c) skit, and (d) free conversation (pronunciation practice and grammar practice are more discrete-point activities, whereas skit and free conversation are more integrative and global activities), were selected to investigate the relationships between learners' individual factors (their styles and beliefs of learning) and types of classroom activities (discrete-point/integrative or discrete-point/global).

The sixth question asked what kinds of error learners think should be corrected in class. This question categorized errors into intelligible, acceptable, and correct, paralleling van Lier's (1988) classification of errors. Preferences for one kind of error treatment were examined in light of the learners' beliefs (e.g., tolerance of ambiguity) toward learning. The seventh question investigated for what grammatical items learners wanted to receive the error correction. Based on Savignon's (1983) model used for the fifth question, five grammatical items, (a) pronunciation, (b) particles, (c) conjugation of verbs or adjectives, (d) usage of words, and (e) logical coherence (pronunciation, particles, and more conjugation of verbs or adjectives are more discrete-point items, whereas usage of words and logical coherence are

[1] Low (107 students, 50%), Intermediate (63 students, 29%), High (45 students, 21%). Proficiency levels were not assessed. The categorization of proficiency levels were determined based on hours that learners were given in class; i.e., Low (less than 150 hours), Intermediate (between 150 and 300 hours), and High (more than 300 hours).

integrative and global items), were selected to investigate the relationships between learners' individual factors (their styles and beliefs of learning) and types of grammatical items (discrete-point/integrative or discrete-point/global). The eighth question examined what kind of correction learners prefer to receive after making their errors. The choices to the eighth question were based on four types of error treatment in Carroll and Swain's (1993) experiment. They were (a) explicit metalinguistic information, (b) inaccurate information without any explanations, (c) a model of the response with implicit negative evidence, and (d) a confirmatory check.

C. Data Analysis

The survey data was statistically analyzed in two parts.

Part 1: The first analysis identified the learning styles and the epistemological beliefs of participants in Study 1 using factor analyses.

Part 2: The second part examined the relationship between learners' characteristics and their perceptions of error feedback using logistic regression analyses[2] and correlation analyses.

D. Results

Study One Part 1: Learning Styles.

A principal factor extraction with promax rotation generated six factors that had a factor loading greater than or equal to .35 or less than or equal to -.35. The six learning styles found in this study were (1) Avoidant, (2) Collaborative, (3) Competitive, (4) Independent, (5) Diligent, and (6) Dependent. The five factors (Avoidant, Collaborative, Competitive, Independent, and Dependent), except Diligent learning style factor, are named after five of the Grasha-Riechmann's (1994) six learning styles.

Study One Part 1: Epistemological Beliefs.

The data collected from the epistemological beliefs questionnaire were analyzed using factor analysis. A principal factor extraction with promax rotation generated four factors with factor loadings greater than or equal to .35 or less than or equal to -.35. The four epistemological beliefs found in this study were (1) Building-Up Ability, (2) Quick Learning, (3) Certain Knowledge, and (4) Simple Knowledge. Three out of four factors in the present study were identical to the Schommer's (1989) five epistemological dimensions[3]. Although Schommer originally named the Quick Learning, Certain Knowledge, and Simple Knowledge factors, the Building-Up Ability factor concerns beliefs, which contradicts Schommer's Innate Ability factor. That is, the Building-Up Ability factor does not reflect the abilities that are fixed at birth; instead, it is a new dimension found in this study.

Study One Part 2

The second half of the statistical analysis revealed that (a) survey respondents' perceptions of learning can be examined both as a social entity and separately as an individual entity and that (b) the degree of dependence of learning style characteristics on class structure influences learners' attitudes towards error feedback, whereas the degree of dependence of these beliefs on class structure does not affect students' attitudes.

Social constructions in the classroom that influenced more heavily the relationship between various factors relating to different learners and responses to error feedback questions are shown in Table 1. In this study, Questions 1-8 (examining learners' perceptions of error feedback) were influenced by social constructions in the classroom (Questions 1-3 and 5) and by internalized processes in individual learning (Questions 4 and 6-8). The results of this study showed that social learning styles, as measured by GRSLSS (1994), relate more closely to students' perceptions of social aspects of classroom activities than to epistemological beliefs (1989) (see Table 1).

First, the findings revealed an overall positive attitude toward error feedback. Ninety-nine percent of the survey participants self-reported positive attitudes toward error feedback. However, additional examination revealed that the competitive learning style correlated negatively with learners' attitudes toward error feedback ($\underline{r}$=-.15, $\underline{p}$<.05) (Question 1). The majority of the learners exhibited a preference for error correction by instructors (Instructor=79%; Fellow students=7%; Yourself=14%). Statistical analysis showed no difference between subjects who preferred error correction by instructors and those who preferred self-correction in learning styles. However, correlation analysis and logistic regression analysis comparing the six learning styles and error correction by fellow students revealed that the

[2] The dependent variables of the error correction survey are dichotomous or polytomous nominal variables; thus, logistic regression analysis rather than other types of regression analyses was performed.

[3] The difference between Schommer's consistent results of factor analyses and those of the present study might be produced by different characteristics of the samples or different calculation methods of factor score coefficient. Schommer has suggested that this epistemological questionnaire was only applicable if the sample was similar to the sample of people who participated in Schommer's earlier studies. Yet, because of the nature of Japanese language classes, not only white students but also students from other racial heritages, especially Asian, were enrolled in these classes in all universities that participated in this study. Another reason for the discrepancies between the results of Schommer's studies and this study was that Schommer used *a priori* subsets of belief dimensions as original variables, whereas this study used individual items as original variables.

TABLE 1
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS' FACTORS RELATED TO LEARNING (LEARNING STYLES AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS) AND ERROR FEEDBACK QUESTIONS DURING ORAL ACTIVITIES INFLUENCED MORE BY SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Error Correction Question	*Significant Result*	
	Learning Style	Epistemological Belief
Q1: Do you usually want to receive consistent correction of your errors? (Yes 99%, No 1%)		
	-[b] Competitive	
Q2: When your errors are corrected, from whom do you generally prefer to receive the error correction? (Instructor 79%, Fellow students 7%, Yourself 14%)		
Fellow Students	- Dependent	
Q3: After your instructor states that your utterances were incorrect, do you want to correct them by yourself? (Yes 86%, No 14%)		
	+[a] Competitive	
	+ Independent	
	+ Diligent	
Q5: During what kind of classroom activity do you most want to receive the error correction? (Pronunciation practice 17%, Grammar practice 52%, Skit 7%, Free conversation 24%)		
Pronunciation	- Dependent	
Grammar	+ Diligent	+ Building-Up
	+ Dependent	
Skit	+ Collaborative	
Free Conversation		- Building-Up

Note. +a indicates positive attitudes. -b indicates negative attitudes.

dependent learning style correlated negatively with error corrections made by fellow students ($\underline{r}$=-.15) at $\underline{p}$<.05 (Question 2). Correlation analysis showed three positive relationships between competitive, independent, and diligent learning styles and the preference for self-correction ($\underline{r}$=.16, $\underline{p}$<.05; $\underline{r}$=.17, $\underline{p}$<.05; $\underline{r}$=.21, $\underline{p}$<.01, respectively), although, for Question 2, the results revealed no relationship between learning styles and a preference for self-correction (Question 3). Question 5 sought to determine how learners react to a social entity. The results revealed that learners who had a belief in building-up ability, which is one of the epistemological beliefs found in this study, preferred error correction during discrete-point classroom activities (e.g., grammar practice)($\underline{r}$=.19, $\underline{p}$<.01, 2.2 times higher odds [Q_w =5.334, $\underline{p}$<.05]) and disliked receiving correction during global and integrative activities (e.g., free conversation)($\underline{r}$=-.22, $\underline{p}$<.01, 3.0 times lower odds [Q_w=7.611, $\underline{p}$<.01]). This result can be interpreted that learners who have the building-up ability belief are willing to receive grammatical error correction and develop their linguistic accuracy though they do not like receiving error feedback during free conversation. Learners with the dependent learning style did not prefer to receive error correction during pronunciation practice ($\underline{r}$=-.13, $\underline{p}$<.05, 2.5 times lower odds [Q_w=5.014, $\underline{p}$<.05]), whereas those who had the diligent and dependent styles showed positive attitudes towards error correction during grammar practice ($\underline{r}$=.14, $\underline{p}$<.05 [Diligent]; $\underline{r}$=.20, $\underline{p}$<.01, 2.5 times higher odds [Q_w=5.871, $\underline{p}$<.05 [Dependent]).

Study 1 showed that Schommer's epistemological beliefs questionnaire provided a more effective measurement of individual dispositions about how to acquire knowledge rather than social construction (responses to Questions 4 & 6-8 are affected by learners' beliefs) (see Table 2). The proportion of learners preferring immediate correction (77%) exceeded that of delayed correction (23%); however, correlation analysis or logistic regression analysis did not find statistical significance (Question 2). Both correlation analysis and logistic regression analysis showed that collaborative learners preferred to receive correction for incomprehensible errors ($\underline{r}$=.19, $\underline{p}$<.01, 2.7 times higher odds [Q_w=11.639, $\underline{p}$<.001][Collaborative]). On the other hand, students with the collaborative learning style do not prefer to receive correction when errors are acceptable and comprehensible but ungrammatical ($\underline{r}$=-.22, $\underline{p}$<.01 [Collaborative] 3.4 times lower odds [Q_w=14.19, $\underline{p}$<.001] [Collaborative]). The relationship between learning styles and the kinds of errors (incomprehensible errors, unacceptable errors, and ungrammatical errors) for which learners wished to be corrected was contradictory. Learners who possessed the collaborative learning style wished to be corrected when the errors were incomprehensible but acceptable and comprehensible although ungrammatical. The three kinds of targeted errors in Question 6 that students feel are acceptable become gradually more distinct; in other words, the first choice, that is, incomprehensible errors, is the least precise choice while the last choice, that is, ungrammatical errors, is the most precise choice. Therefore, the result (i.e., learners with the collaborative learning style want their incomprehensible and ungrammatical errors corrected, but they do not want to receive unacceptable error correction) is unreasonable. The

TABLE 2
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS' FACTORS RELATED TO LEARNING (LEARNING STYLES AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS) AND ERROR FEEDBACK QUESTIONS DURING ORAL ACTIVITIES INFLUENCED BY INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS' INTERNALIZING PROCESSES

Error Correction Question	*Significant Result*	
	Learning Style	Epistemological Belief
Q4: When do you want to receive the error correction?		
(Immediate correction 77%, Delayed correction 23%)	No findings.	
Q6: What kinds of errors do you think should be corrected in class?		
(Incomprehensible 46%, Unacceptable 31%, Ungrammatical 23%)		
Incomprehensible	+[a] Collaborative	
Unacceptable		+ Certain
Ungrammatical	+ Collaborative	
Q7: For what grammatical items do you want to receive the error correction the most?		
(Pronunciation 13%, Particles 13%, Conjugation 27%, Word usage 13%, Logical coherence 34%)		
Pronunciation	+ Avoidant	+ Certain
	-[b] Collaborative	
	- Diligent	
	- Dependent	
Particles	No Findings.	
Conjugation		+ Certain
Logical coherence	- Collaborative	- Certain
Q8: When your errors are corrected, what kind of correction do you want to receive?		
(With an explicit explanation 73%, Without an explicit explanation 10%, Simply stating incorrect 8%, Confirmation check 9%)		
With explicit	+ Diligent	
	+ Dependent	
Without explicit	- Collaborative	+ Certain

Note. +a indicates positive attitudes. -b indicates negative attitudes.

students who believe in the building-up ability prefer to receive feedback only for unacceptable errors (Positive [$\underline{r}$=.15, $\underline{p}$<.05], 1.8 times higher odds [Q_w=3.541, $\underline{p}$<.05]), even if those errors are comprehensible (Question 6).

In Question 5, it was found that students with the learning styles that were more dependent on teachers preferred to receive error feedback during discrete-point classroom activities, whereas more collaborative and diligent learners did not want their errors corrected during global and integrative activities, such as fee conversation. Regarding the types of errors for which the learners wanted to receive feedback, the results of the correlation analysis and the logistic regression analysis pertaining to Question 7 showed a positive correlation between the avoidant learning style and error feedback for pronunciation ($\underline{r}$=.20, $\underline{p}$<.01) and negative correlations between three learning styles (Collaborative, Diligent, and Dependent) and error feedback for pronunciation ($\underline{r}$=-.15, $\underline{p}$<.05 [Collaborative]; $\underline{r}$=-.16, $\underline{p}$<.05 [Diligent]; $\underline{r}$=-.22, $\underline{p}$<.01 [Dependent]). In addition, there was a negative correlation between the collaborative learning style and error feedback for logical coherence (1.8 times lower odds [Q_w=14.19, $\underline{p}$<.001]). However, this result contradicted the assumption that different learning styles change learners' preferences for receiving error correction for discrete-point items or for more integrative and global items because the collaborative learning style was negatively correlated negatively with both error feedback for logical coherence (an integrative and global item) and error feedback for pronunciation (a discrete-point item). The relationship between learners' epistemological beliefs and grammatical items that learners wished to have corrected showed that a gradual development of beliefs from absolute to tentative changes the learners' preferences for receiving error feedback from more discrete-point items, such as pronunciation (Positive [$\underline{r}$=.14, $\underline{p}$<.05] [Certain]), to more integrative and global items, such as logical coherence (Negative [$\underline{r}$=-.15, $\underline{p}$<.05], 2.1 times lower odds [Q_w=5.185, $\underline{p}$<.05][Certain]) (Question 7).

The proportion of respondents who preferred error feedback with an explicit explanation versus the proportion of those who prefer other types of error feedback (With an explicit explanation=73%, Without an explicit explanation=10%, Telling incorrect=8%, Confirmation check=9%), the majority of learners wanted to receive explicit explanations when they received error feedback. Comparing error feedback without explicit explanation and error feedback with explicit explanation revealed that error feedback with explicit explanation is better because learners can internalize the concept with the explanation, facilitating the development of their language abilities. Study 1 showed that students with the diligent learning style and the dependent learning style preferred error feedback with explicit explanation ($\underline{r}$=.15, $\underline{p}$<.05 [Diligent]; $\underline{r}$=.16, $\underline{p}$<.05 [Dependent]). It was also found that learners who had the collaborative learning style did not prefer to receive error feedback without explicit explanation ($\underline{r}$=-.20, $\underline{p}$<.01, 2.2 times lower odds [Q_w=4.1211, $\underline{p}$<.05]). Although correlation analysis and logistic regression analysis showed a positive relationship between certain knowledge belief and error feedback without explicit explanation ($\underline{r}$=.15, $\underline{p}$<.05, 3.0 times higher odds [Q_w=3.046, $\underline{p}$<.05]), they did not show statistically significant relationship between the building-up ability belief and confirmation check (Question 8).

V. STUDY TWO

Study 2 was conducted for the purposes of (a) investigating learners' perceptions of error feedback in writing activities, replicating the scope of Study 1 regarding oral activities and (b) examining whether writing activities involve more internal preferences and learning processes rather than oral activities.

A. Participants and Procedure

Students who were enrolled in all levels[4] of Japanese language courses in a Mid-west university in the United States participated in Study 2. Ninety-nine questionnaires were statistically analyzed following the same procedures as in Study 1.

B. Survey Instrument

To investigate the relationship between learners' characteristics and their perceptions of error feedback during writing activities, the same types of questionnaires were used as in Study 1. They included (a) demographic information (same information was asked as Study 1), (b) attitudes towards error feedback (Appendix B), (c) GRSLSS (learning style questionnaire), and (d) Schommer's epistemological belief questionnaire.

The same as the error correction survey in Study 1, the questionnaire on attitudes toward error feedback, which investigates learners' perspectives toward error feedback in writing activities, was constructed based on previous studies. The first, second, third, and eighth question in Study 2 were the same as the first, second, sixth, and eighth question in Study 1, respectively. They compare learners' perspectives of error feedback during oral activities versus writing activities. The fourth question in Study 2 parallels the fifth question in Study 1. The choices of the fourth question that sought learners' preference for error correction on the two-dimensional plot based on Savignon's (1983) classification resembled the fifth question in Study 1. Spelling and punctuation are more discrete-point items, whereas word usage and logic are more integrative and global items. The fifth question in Study 2 measured the degree of learners' abilities of self-regulation, similar to the third question in Study 1, developed based on Kubota's (2001) study that investigated strategies used for self-correction. The choice "ask teacher for help" indicates that learners rely on "other-regulation" whereas the choice "check a dictionary" or "check a textbook" indicates a higher degree of "self-regulation." The sixth and seventh questions sought learners' preferences for coding systems based on previous studies, which examined the effectiveness of the coding system and the existing error correction in writing practices (e.g., Kubota, 2001; Lee, 1997, 2004). In Study 2, Question 2 was the question seeking how learners react to social aspects, whereas responses to Questions 1 and 3-8 were questions affected by internalized processes in individual learning.

C. Data Analysis

As in Study 1, the survey data was statistically analyzed in two parts.

Part 1 of Study 2 used factor analysis to identify the learning styles and epistemological beliefs of participants.

Part 2 of Study 2 examined the relationship between specific characteristics of learners and their perceptions of error feedback using logistic regression [1] and correlation analyses.

D. Results

Study Two Part 1: Learning Styles.

A principal factor extraction with varimax rotation generated six factors that had a factor loading greater than or equal to .35 or less than or equal to -.35: (a) Collaborative, (b) Avoidant, (c) Competitive, (d) Diligent, (e) Independent, and (f) Dependent. The characteristics of these six learning styles are as follows. Collaborative learning style learners are concerned with a cooperative manner and like to learn by interacting with others. Avoidant learning style learners participate in class unwillingly and dislike learning in general. Learners with the competitive learning style believe that it is necessary to compete with other students for rewards. Diligent learning style learners possess a serious attitude towards the completion of any work. Independent learning style learners prefer to learn the content that they themselves feel is important and prefer to work alone. Learners who have the dependent learning style believe that learning should rely on their teacher and peers. These learning styles and bipolar relationships among learning styles were consistent with the results of Study 1 in terms of error feedback during oral activities.

Study Two Part 1: Epistemological Beliefs.

The data collected from the same participants using the epistemological questionnaire were analyzed using factor analysis that used a principal factor extraction with promax rotation with a .35 factor loading cutoff point. Four epistemological beliefs were found in this study: (a) Building-Up Ability, (b) Fixed Ability, (c) Profound Knowledge, and (d) Certain Knowledge. The dispositions of four epistemological beliefs are as follows. Learners who have a belief in building-up ability believe that knowledge builds up through complex processes over a long period. Fixed Ability belief is relatively similar to "Innate Ability" originally named by Schommer (1989), which is a belief that abilities are determined at birth. Learners who possess a belief in fixed ability believe that knowledge and ability are fixed from the birth. Learners with a profound knowledge belief believe that knowledge is acquired profoundly and is not characterized as knowing isolated facts. Learners with a belief in certain knowledge believe that knowledge is certain

[4] Low (76 students, 77%), Intermediate (14 students, 14%), High (9 students, 9%). Proficiency levels were not assessed. The categorization of proficiency levels was determined using the same method as described in Note 1.

and absolute. Two out of the four factors were the same as in the study regarding oral activities. Study 1 examined quick learning and simple knowledge beliefs whereas Study 2 examined fixed ability and profound knowledge beliefs.

Study Two Part 2: The Relationship between Learning Styles and Learners' Perceptions of Error Feedback.

Correlation analyses and logistic regression analyses examined the relation between learning styles and learners' perceptions of error feedback, revealing three findings (see Table 3 and 4).

First, the findings revealed an overall positive attitude toward error feedback (Question 1). There was a significant difference in preference for error correction between Yes (97%) and No (3%) responses. However, the result of the logistic regression showed that the avoidant learning style variable was significant at 0.05 significance level with a Wald statistic of Q_w=4.12. The odds ratio indicated that subjects with avoidant learning styles are have 10 times lower odds of preferring consistent correction of errors. This finding indicates that students who are not enthusiastic about learning content and attending class do not like receiving error correction, though most students expressed preferences for consistent correction.

Second, characteristics of learning styles affected some results directly. For example, the results of correlation and logistic regression analyses showed that subjects with collaborative learning styles prefer peer and self-correction, judging from the result that those with the collaborative learning style prefer being corrected by "Instructor and Peer" (r=.26, p<.05; Q_w=4.34, p<.05—285.6 times higher odds), "Instructor, Peer, and Yourself" (r=.20, p<.05, Q_w=3.99, p<.05—7.8 times higher odds), and "Yourself" (r=.25, p<.05), but not "Instructor" (r= -.32, p<.01). On the other hand, those with the diligent learning style prefer self-correction (r=.22, p<.05) (these findings concern Question 2).

Third, the finding revealed a problem regarding the use of a correction code. The correction code is usually made by a grammatical item list (e.g., noun, particle, pronoun, preposition, etc.), encouraging students to correct errors themselves. The result of correlation analysis showed that those with the diligent learning style prefer receiving error correction by coding system (r=.23, p<.05) (Question 6). Those with the avoidant learning style, however, do not prefer receiving grammar correction by coding system, as revealed in the correlation analysis (r= -.23, p<.05). Those with the collaborative learning style do not prefer grammar (Q_w=4.42, p<.05—2.9 times lower odds) and particle corrections (r= -.23, p<.05; Q_w=4.22, p<.05—2.2 times lower odds) but like correction for Kanji (Chinese characters) errors (r=.23, p<.01; Q_w=5.58, p<.05—9.2 times higher odds). These results indicate that it might be easy for learners to correct characters such as Kanji (Chinese characters) but difficult to correct errors marked by a coding system, except

TABLE 3
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS' FACTORS RELATED TO LEARNING (LEARNING STYLES AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS) AND ERROR FEEDBACK QUESTIONS DURING WRITING ACTIVITIES INFLUENCED MORE BY SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Error Correction Question	*Significant Result*	
	Learning Style	Epistemological Belief
Q2: When your errors are corrected, from whom do you generally prefer to receive the error correction? (Instructor 87%, Instructor and Peer 4%, Instructor and Yourself 1%, Instructor, Peer, and Yourself 7%, Yourself 1%)		
Instructor	-[b] Collaborative	
	-Avoidant	
Instructor & Peer	+[a] Collaborative	
Instructor & Yourself	No Findings	
Instructor, Peer & Yourself	+Collaborative	
Yourself	-Collaborative	
	+Diligent	

Note. +a indicates positive attitudes. -b indicates negative attitudes.

TABLE 4
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS' FACTORS RELATED TO LEARNING (LEARNING STYLES AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS) AND ERROR FEEDBACK QUESTIONS DURING WRITING ACTIVITIES INFLUENCED BY INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS' INTERNALIZING PROCESSES

Error Correction Question	*Significant Result*	
	Learning Style	Epistemological Belief
Q1: Do you usually want to receive consistent correction of your errors?		(Yes 97%, No 3%)
	-[b] Avoidant	-Fixed
Q3: What kinds of errors (incomprehensible, unacceptable, or ungrammatical) do you think should be corrected?		
(Incomprehensible 42%, Unacceptable 19%, Ungrammatical 39%)		
	No findings	
Q4: Which kinds of errors do you prefer to correct by yourself?		
(Spelling 45%, Punctuation 23%, Word usage 15%, Logic 17%)		
Spelling	- Collaborative	
Punctuation		+[a] Fixed
Word usage	No findings	
Logic		+Certain
Q5: When you need to correct your own errors, how do you correct them?		
(Teachers 13%, Dictionary 13%, Textbook 70%, Deletion 0%, Other 4%)		
Teachers	No findings	
Dictionary	No findings	
Textbook	No findings	
Deletion	No findings	
Other	+Collaborative	
Q6: Do you think it is helpful to be provided with coding system such as Sp (spelling error) and T (tense) when your errors are detected? (Yes 86%, No 14%)	+Diligent	
Q7: For what item do you most strongly want to receive error correction by coding system?		
(Grammar 67%, Particle 14%, Missing words 3%, Vocabulary 6%, Kanji 10%)		
Grammar	-Avoidant	-Fixed
	-Collaborative	
Particle	-Collaborative	-Building-up
Missing words	No findings	
Vocabulary	-Independent	+Fixed
		-Certain
Kanji	+Collaborative	
Q8: When your errors are corrected, what kind of correction do you prefer to receive?		
(With an explicit explanation 78%, Without an explicit explanation 12%, Simply stating incorrect 4%, Confirmation check 5%, Other 1%)		
With an explicit explanation	No findings	
Without an explicit explanation	No findings	
Simply stating incorrect	No findings	
Confirmation check		+Certain
Other	No findings	

Note. +a indicates positive attitudes. -b indicates negative attitudes.

for those who have diligent learning style. Some previous studies also pointed out the problems of using a coding system to provide error feedback. For example, Berry (1995) found a big gap between teachers and learners' knowledge of metalinguistic terms. Lee's study (1997) showed that students' ability to describe errors using appropriate grammatical categories was limited. Lee's study (2004) also found that 91% of secondary school students indicated that their teachers used error codes to mark their writing even though a number of students did not always fully understand the codes. These research findings suggest that teachers need to carefully observe students' analytical abilities regarding grammar when a coding system is used to provide error feedback.

Study Two Part 2: The Relationship between Epistemological Beliefs and Learners' Perceptions of Error Feedback.

The results of previous studies on epistemological beliefs revealed that beliefs about learning are "linked to persistence in the face of difficult tasks, anticipated time investment for problem solving, comprehension, metacomprehension, overall attitude toward the benefits of an academic education, and coping with everyday life" (Schommer, 1998b, p. 136). The epistemological belief questionnaire elicits the learners' preferences, tendencies, and habits while accounting for individual differences in learning. On the contrary, the questionnaire items in the Grasha-Riechmann Student Learning Style Scales (1994) identify students' learning styles, attitudes, and feelings towards the classroom climate. The findings also revealed that aspects of learners' individual differences in acquiring processes of knowledge rather than social aspects affected by the classroom environment influence the relationship between epistemological beliefs and learners' perceptions of error feedback (see Table 3 and 4).

First, as mentioned in the previous section, the study found an overall positive attitude toward error feedback (Question 1). However, the fixed ability belief variable was statistically significant, with a significance level of 0.05 and a Wald statistic of Q_w=4.03. For the fixed ability belief, lower odds of 100 indicates that subjects who had the fixed ability epistemological belief were 100 times less likely to prefer consistent correction of errors. Considering four epistemological belief categories, this result can be interpreted that only students who believe that knowledge and ability are fixed from the beginning do not like receiving error correction.

The second finding regarding the relationship between epistemological beliefs and error feedback shows the consistency of learners' perceptions across oral and writing activities. A finding of the relationship between learners' epistemological beliefs and their perceptions of error feedback during oral activities revealed that learners with building-up ability prefer receiving error correction during grammar practice in Study 1. In terms of writing activities, the correlation and logistic regression analyses revealed that learners who have the fixed ability belief do not prefer grammar correction (r= -.26, p<.01, Q_w=6.03, p<.05—3.7 times lower odds). In contrast to the fixed ability belief, the building-up ability belief contradicts the belief that abilities are fixed at birth. Both of these results support the belief that it is possible to acquire indefinite, complicated, and uncertain knowledge through long-term learning experiences, might be required for accepting error feedback regarding grammar and for an eagerness to learn the language.

Third, different phenomena of learners' perceptions in terms of epistemological beliefs were observed depending on the type of activity (i.e., oral or writing activity). For example, Study 1 showed that certain knowledge learning style learners prefer error feedback without explicit explanations during oral activities more compared to those who had other epistemological beliefs. Correlation and logistic regression analyses showed that learners who have certain knowledge belief would like to receive a confirmation check during writing activities (r=.23, p<.05; Q_w=3.88, p<.05--8.2 times higher odds). These results could indicate that learners who believe that they can learn certain knowledge with an effort might want to correct errors after receiving a confirmation check during writing, but might not like to be corrected without explicit explanations during oral activities. The difference between the spontaneous nature of oral activities and the long period involved in the planning, drafting, and editing process of writing activities might have affected these results. Another difference in their preference of error correction styles between oral and writing activities could be attributed to a higher degree of cognitive process involved in writing activities compared to oral activities. In writing activities, students can actually read what they wrote and review the written feedback. This visual aid should ease the students' understanding of the feedback and correcting their own errors easier.

Study Two Part 2: The Relationship between Learners' Demographic Information and Learners' Perceptions of Error Feedback.

In Study 2, the relationship between learners' demographic information and learners' perceptions of error feedback revealed two primary findings (see Table 5 & 6).

First, demographic information relates more to learners' perceptions of error feedback in writing activities as compared to oral activities (Table 7 & 8). The relationship between demographic information and learners' perceptions of error feedback found in Study 1 shows that proficiency levels influence the learners' preferences for error feedback. This finding supports previous studies on the effects of error feedback in the classroom (e.g., Day, Chenoweth, Chun, & Luppescu, 1984; Flick, 1980; Salo-Lee, 1991). In Study 1, higher levels of learners' proficiency correlated negatively with preferences for self-correction and positively with peer-correction. In addition, higher proficiency levels of learners are associated with preference for error feedback during more global and integrative classroom activities, whereas the lower proficiency levels are associated with preference for error feedback during more discrete point activities.

In Study 2, which investigated preference for error feedback with regard to writing activities, ethnicity and major were more likely to relate to learners' perceptions of error feedback (Table 5 & 6). For instance, white ethnic learners had a negative perception of receiving error feedback only for incomprehensible errors or for errors that are unacceptable even if they are comprehensible. This means that white ethnic learners might want to receive feedback for ungrammatical errors even if those errors are acceptable and comprehensible, and such learners are strictly concerned about grammatical accuracy (Question 3). Chi-square tests revealed that Asian ethnic learners perceived error feedback provided using the coding system positively (χ^2=4.60, p<.05). As mentioned previously, it is a cognitively demanding

TABLE 5
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS' DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND ERROR FEEDBACK QUESTIONS DURING WRITING ACTIVITIES INFLUENCED MORE BY SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Error Correction Question	*Significant Result* Demographic Information
Q2: When your errors are corrected, from whom do you generally prefer to receive the error correction? (Instructor 87%, Instructor and Peer 4%, Instructor and Yourself 1%, Instructor, Peer, and Yourself 7%, Yourself 1%)	
Instructor	+[a] Class-Freshman
	+ Major-Humanities
	+ Major-Social Science
	-[b] Ethnicity-Black
Instructor & Peer	No Findings
Instructor & Yourself	No Findings
Instructor, Peer & Yourself	- Major-Humanities
Yourself	- Major-Others [c]
	- Ethnicity-Black

Note. +a indicates positive attitudes. -b indicates negative attitudes.
Major-Others c indicates students' majors other than Humanities, Social Science, Engineering, and Sciences.

task to understand and correct errors marked by coding; however, this result indicates that Asian ethnic learners have an ability to understand metalinguistic terminology and a tendency to make an effort at corrections (Question 6).

Second, the correlation analysis of the present study showed that higher proficiency levels of learners are associated with their preference to correct errors by themselves using dictionaries (r=.20, p<.05). This result could suggest that learners with higher proficiency levels are accustomed to using dictionaries.

VI. Discussion

A comparison of learners' perceptions of error feedback in writing activities with learners' perceptions of error feedback in oral activities revealed three significant findings.

First, the findings support the hypothesis of this study. Error feedback concerning writing activities had a greater relationship with factors affected by learners' background and beliefs, which influence how individuals understand the nature of cognitive tasks and decide their strategies to deal with them (Kitchener, 1983), rather than with learning styles that would be affected by such social aspects as interaction with peers and the instructor in the classroom. Based on the results of correlation and logistic regression analyses of learners' perceptions of error feedback during oral activities, the number of relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and learning styles, which reached the statistical significance level, was three times greater than the number of relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and epistemological beliefs. In contrast, regarding writing activities, the number of statistically significant relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and learning styles was two times greater than the number of statistically significant relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and epistemological beliefs. Furthermore, demographic information, which describes learners' educational and cultural backgrounds, related more to learners' perceptions of error feedback than did epistemological beliefs and learning styles in writing activities (Table 7 & 8).

Second, the study revealed that different environmental natures of oral and written activities influence some results. For instance, more students preferred to receive correction for unacceptable errors only during oral activities rather than during writing activities (31% and 19%, respectively), whereas more students preferred to receive correction for ungrammatical errors during writing activities instead of oral activities (39% and 23%, respectively. This result suggests that learners believe that writing tasks are more likely to emphasize accuracy, whereas oral activities are more likely to emphasize communication flow.

Third, similar results for oral and writing activities were also found. Many studies revealed that both teachers and students prefer comprehensive error correction focused on grammar, regardless of whether or not it has long-term significance. A preference for consistency of grammatical error correction for both oral and writing activities was shown (99% and 97%, respectively). In addition, the dominant preference was receiving error correction for grammar (grammar practice during oral activities: 52%; grammar by coding system during writing activities: 67%).

TABLE 6
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS' DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND ERROR FEEDBACK QUESTIONS DURING WRITING ACTIVITIES INFLUENCED BY INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS' INTERNALIZING PROCESSES

Error Correction Question	*Significant Result* Demographic Information
Q1: Do you usually want to receive consistent correction of your errors? (Yes 97%, No 3%)	
	+[a] Ethnicity-Asian
Q3: What kinds of errors (incomprehensible, unacceptable, or ungrammatical) do you think should be corrected? (Incomprehensible 42%, Unacceptable 19%, Ungrammatical 39%)	
Incomprehensible	-[b] Ethnicity-White
Unacceptable	-Ethnicity-White
	-Class-Freshman
	-Proficiency level-Intermediate
Ungrammatical	No findings
Q4: Which kinds of errors do you prefer to correct by yourself? (Spelling 45%, Punctuation 23%, Word usage 15%, Logic 17%)	
Spelling	- Major-Social Science
Punctuation	No findings
Word usage	-Class-Master
	-Major-Social Science
	-Major-Engineering, Sciences
	+Ethnicity-Hispanic
Logic	-Proficiency level-High
Q5: When you need to correct your own errors, how do you correct them? (Teachers 13%, Dictionary 13%, Textbook 70%, Deletion 0%, Other 4%)	
Teachers	- Ethnicity-Black
	- Ethnicity-Hispanic
Dictionary	+ Class-Master
	+ Proficiency Level
Textbook	No findings
Deletion	No findings
Other	No findings
Q6: Do you think it is helpful to be provided with coding system such as Sp (spelling error) and T (tense) when your errors are detected? (Yes 86%, No 14%)	
	+Ethnicity-Asian
Q7: For what item do you most strongly want to receive error correction by coding system? (Grammar 67%, Particle 14%, Missing words 3%, Vocabulary 6%, Kanji 10%)	
Grammar	No findings
Particle	No findings
Missing words	No findings
Vocabulary	-Class-Freshman
	-Ethnicity-White
Kanji	-Ethnicity-White
Q8: When your errors are corrected, what kind of correction do you prefer to receive? (With an explicit explanation 78%, Without an explicit explanation 12%, Simply stating incorrect 4%, Confirmation check 5%, Other 1%)	
With an explicit explanation	- Class-Doctorate
	+ Major-Engineering, Sciences
Without an explicit explanation	- Major-Social Sciences
	- Major-Engineering, Sciences
Simply stating incorrect	- Class-Freshman
Confirmation check	+Class Level
Other	-Major-Others

Note. +a indicates positive attitudes. -b indicates negative attitudes.

TABLE 7
NUMBER OF LEARNERS' CHARACTERISTICS SIGNIFICANTLY RELATED TO PERCEPTIONS OF ERROR FEEDBACK IN ORAL ACTIVITIES

	Perceptions by Social Aspects[a]	Perceptions by Individual Aspects[b]	Total
Learning Styles	11 (52.4%)	10 (47.6%)	21 (53.8%)
Epistemological Beliefs	2 (2.9%)	5 (7.1%)	7 (18.0%)
Demographic Information	7 (63.6%)	4 (36.4%)	11 (28.2%)
Total	20 (51.3%)	19 (48.7%)	39 (100%)

aNumber of learners' characteristics significantly related to perceptions of error feedback affected by social aspects. The results of Questions 1-3 & 5 (refer to the questions in Table 1 & 2) are included in this column.
bNumber of learners' characteristics significantly related to perceptions of error feedback affected by individual learning aspects. The results of Questions 4 & 6-7 (refer to the questions in Table 3-6) are included in this column.

TABLE 8
NUMBER OF LEARNERS' CHARACTERISTICS SIGNIFICANTLY RELATED TO PERCEPTIONS OF ERROR FEEDBACK IN WRITING ACTIVITIES

	Perceptions by Social Aspects[a]	Perceptions by Individual Aspects[b]	Total
Learning Styles	6 (46.2%)	9 (20.0%)	15 (25.9%)
Epistemological Beliefs	0 (0%)	9 (20.0%)	9 (15.5%)
Demographic Information	7 (53.8%)	27 (60.0%)	34 (58.6%)
Total	13 (22.4%)	45 (77.6%)	58 (100%)

[a]Number of learners' characteristics significantly related to perceptions of error feedback affected by social aspects. The results of Question 2 (refer to the questions in the paper) are included in this column.
[b]Number of learners' characteristics significantly related to perceptions of error feedback affected by individual learning aspects. The results of all questions except Question 2 are included in this column.

VII. Pedagogical Implications

The ultimate goal of this study is to recommend to foreign language instructors, especially instructors of Japanese as a second language, suitable methods of providing error feedback to students with different backgrounds, learning styles, and epistemological beliefs. Instructors should not claim that one universal approach to error feedback solves problems for all learners; therefore, these studies were pedagogically motivated to identify the learners' characteristics and their perceptions of error feedback and to find the error feedback method tailored to each individual.

The suggested pedagogical issue is to identify educational and cultural backgrounds of students, their learning styles, and their beliefs about learning. Instructors can then select which error feedback methods to use for their students. The present study showed that the manner in which learners' factors (learning styles, epistemological beliefs, and demographic information) relate to learners' perceptions of error feedback can be explained using error feedback questions that explore both how learners react to social aspects in class settings and how perceptions would be affected by learners' beliefs regarding the acquisition of knowledge. Table 8 lists learners' factors, such as learning styles and epistemological beliefs, which were significantly related to perceptions of error feedback in writing activities. It shows that the relationship between learning styles and learners' perceptions of error feedback shows that learning styles rather than epistemological beliefs are more closely related to perceptions of error feedback affected by social aspects; however, epistemological beliefs and learning styles are equally related to their perceptions of error feedback affected by individual learning aspects. Moreover, Table 8 shows that demographic information is the most influential factor of how learners perceive error feedback in writing activities. Although the same numbers of learning styles and epistemological beliefs are related to learners' perceptions as are influenced by aspects of individual learning, the number of relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and learning styles during oral activities, which is statistically significant, is three times greater than the number of relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and epistemological beliefs (Table 7). In contrast, regarding writing activities, the number of statistically significant relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and learning styles is two times greater than the number of statistically significant relationships between learners' perceptions of error feedback and epistemological beliefs (Table 8). These findings suggest that it is necessary for instructors to select error feedback methods based on the types of activities involved while considering that social aspects, individual aspects, or learners' original backgrounds influence these activities.

VIII. Conclusions

These studies attempted to cross-validate learners' perceptions of error feedback in writing and oral activities by integrating psychological theories. Pedagogically, the findings of two studies in this article could suggest ways for foreign language teachers, especially teachers of Japanese as a foreign language, to develop appropriate methods of error feedback for students with different backgrounds, learning styles, and epistemological beliefs, both for oral and writing activities. Furthermore, the findings of these studies could suggest two steps involved in finding a solution to error feedback problems, though the real classroom settings are not dichotomously separated by individual and social variables as mentioned previously. The first step is to identify students' characteristics regarding their dispositions of learning as well as their demographic information. The second step is to consider whether the problematic issues exist in individual learners or in the social construction of the classroom. However, this investigation was conducted mainly from learners' perspectives of feedback. Therefore, further studies could explore error feedback strategies from instructors' perspectives and analyze long-term effectiveness of each error feedback strategy.

Appendix A Questionnaire Part Two—Learners' Perceptions of Error Feedback During Oral Activities

1. Do you usually want to receive consistent correction of your errors? Please circle one.
   Yes No
2. When your errors are corrected, from whom do you generally prefer to receive the error correction? Please circle one.
   Instructor Fellow students Yourself
3. After your instructor states that your utterances were incorrect, do you want to correct them by yourself? Please circle one.
   Yes No
4. When do you want to receive the error correction? Please circle one.
   Immediately after making an error After finishing a conversation
5. During what kind of classroom activity do you most want to receive the error correction? Please circle one.

Pronunciation practice Grammar practice
Skit Free conversation

6. What kinds of errors do you think should be corrected in class? Please circle one.
   a. All incomprehensible errors
   b. If the errors are unacceptable, even if they are comprehensible.
   c. If the errors are ungrammatical, even if they are acceptable and comprehensible.
7. For what grammatical items do you want to receive the error correction the most? Please circle one.
   Pronunciation Particles Conjugation of verbs or adjectives
   Usage of words Logical coherence
8. When your errors are corrected, what kind of correction do you prefer to receive? Please circle one.
   a. Receiving a correct utterance with an explicit explanation
   b. Receiving a correct utterance without an explicit explanation
   c. Simply stating that your utterance was incorrect
   d. Receiving a confirmation check by repeating your incorrect utterance with rising intonation

APPENDIX B QUESTIONNAIRE PART TWO—LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ERROR FEEDBACK DURING WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Do you usually want to receive consistent correction of your errors?
   Yes No
2. From whom do you want to receive error correction?
   Instructor Peer Yourself
3. What kinds of errors (incomprehensible, unacceptable, or ungrammatical) do you think should be corrected?
   a. incomprehensible errors
   b. unacceptable errors
   c. ungrammatical errors
4. Which kinds of errors do you prefer to correct by yourself?
   Spelling Punctuation Word usage Logic
5. When you need to correct your own errors, how do you correct them?
   a. ask teacher for help
   b. check a dictionary
   c. check a textbook
   d. delete sentences which contain errors
   e. other
6. Do you think it is helpful to be provided with coding system such as Sp (spelling error) and T (tense) when your errors are detected?
   Yes No
7. For what item do you most strongly want to receive error correction by coding system?
   Grammar Particle Missing words Vocabulary Kanji
8. When your errors are corrected, what kind of correction do you prefer to receive?
   a. an explicit explanation
   b. without an explicit explanation
   c. simply stating "incorrect"
   d. a confirmation check
   e. other

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Integrating Computer Mediated with Face-to-face Communication and EFL Learners' Vocabulary Improvement

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***Abstract*—Studies in Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) have shown its potentiality to help enhance language learning. The present study investigates the effects of integrating synchronous and asynchronous CMC with Face-to-Face Communication (FFC) on vocabulary improvement among EFL learners. The 88 participants of the study were divided into one comparison, FFC, and two experimental, CMC and Integrated CMC (ICMC), groups. Two tests and a questionnaire were administered for collecting the data. The results revealed that the students in the comparison group had no significant improvement in their vocabulary scores. In contrast, both experimental groups did much better in the post-test. The results implied that the ICMC group outperformed the CMC one, meaning the superiority of the ICMC group over the other groups.**

***Index Terms*—Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), synchronous, asynchronous, email, blog, chat**

I. Introduction

Nowadays, computers have become an inseparable part of everybody's life. By far, their roles in education, especially in language learning and teaching, have expanded so drastically that no language instruction can ignore them in its curriculum. With the advent of the internet, as Warschauer and Healey (1998) believe, the role of computers as a tool for information processing and display has changed into a tool for information processing and communication. Not only can the internet be used to develop access to resources, it is also used to enhance communication between individuals and groups (Levy, 1997). Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) has been considered as a facilitator in developing communication among learners themselves and between learners and instructors, thereby the processes of language teaching and learning have, to a large extent, improved.

Herring (1996, p. 1) defines CMC as "communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers." With the help of CMC and the internet, learners of a language can communicate quickly with other learners or speakers of the target language all over the world. This communication can be either synchronous, i.e., when all users are logged on and chat at the same time or asynchronous, that is, when a delayed message system such as electronic mail is the medium of communication. In order to benefit from these innovations, many studies have been conducted. On the other hand, learners feel more at home when teachers are mostly willing to develop a Face to Face Communication (FFC) with them. Therefore, it seems necessary to investigate whether integrating CMC with FFC can improve students' language learning. The present study gears towards investigating the effect of this integration in enhancing the knowledge of vocabulary among a number of Iranian EFL learners.

II. Literature Review

A. Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)

Communicating using the computer is often referred to as CMC and encompasses communication by email, bulletin boards, and chatlines. Hiltz and Turoff (1978) coined the term CMC although they had a very limited idea about computers at that time. Murray (2000, p. 398) asserts that "their use of the term being confined to this mode of electronic communication. Other researchers include communication via e-mail, bulletin boards, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), e-mail discussion lists, chat rooms, and the World Wide Web." Beatty (2003) holds that CMC refers to a situation in which computer-based discussion may take place but without necessarily involving learning. He adds that "opportunities for learning are inherently present, especially in situations in which learners need to engage in negotiation of meaning with native speakers of the target language or even with peers of non-native proficiency" (Beatty, 2003, p. 62).

CMC, also called Computer-Assisted Class Discussion (CACD) or Computer-Mediated Discussion (CMD) has been increasingly integrated and used in educational instruction and language learning (Chun, 1994) because it provides opportunities for language learners to practice their language while communicating with people with the mediation of computers (Chanrungkanok, 2004). CMC allows computer users to connect and communicate via the internet with individuals around the world (De la Fuente, 2003).

In CMC, referring to text-based communication, participants interact with each other by typing a message on the keyboard of one computer which is to be read by others on their computer screens, either immediately or after a particular time (Herring, 1996). In this electronic discourse, two or more people can communicate without having to be Face to Face (F2F) and without limitations of time and space (Yang, 2006).

B. Types of CMC

Even though the field of CMC is relatively new, it has been approached by many language researchers and instructors who support the use of computer technology and its potential to extend language teaching within and outside the classroom (Lage, 2008). CMC can be divided into two communicative modes. One is real-time or Synchronous CMC (SCMC), such as Internet Relay Chat (IRC), Instant Messaging as in Yahoo or MSN Messenger, Multi-user domain Object-Oriented (MOO) and audio/video conferencing. The other is delayed time or Asynchronous CMC (ACMC), such as email, web blog, Scientific Interest Groups (SIGs) listserves, newsgroups, and bulletin board.

Synchronous CMC (SCMC). Synchronous or real-time CMC is represented by chatting, audio/video conferencing, and MOOs. According to Anderson and Garrison (2004) synchronous communication is a form of communication where both the sender and receiver of the message are physically or virtually present. Typically, SCMC refers to chat which is defined as "the online interactive exchange of information between two or more participants simultaneously logged on to a computer" (Chanrungkanok, 2004, p. 14).

Synchronous communication is place-independent but not time-independent because participants must be logged on at the same time to communicate with each other (Paulus, 2007). Within educational settings, SCMC creates a less stressful learning environment for shy and anxious students (Yang, 2006), provides more equal participation (Warschauer, 1996), increases students' monitoring of their own and the others' language usage and is not subject to the turn-taking rules of F2F discussion (Warschauer, 1996). People who participate in SCMC discussions not only create more language (Abrams, 2003) but also more complex sentences (Coniam & Wong, 2004). Furthermore, SCMC can be an excellent medium for prewriting work (Warschauer, 1996) and beneficial for EFL learners to master their language skills as well as their social interaction skills (Chun, 1994). The use of synchronous tools (especially chatting) in educational environments has been investigated by several researchers (Abrams, 2001; Coniam & Wong, 2004).

Asynchronous CMC (ACMC). The other mode of CMC is Asynchronous CMC (ACMC), such as email, weblog, newsgroups, discussion groups and bulletin boards. This mode of CMC which is delayed time gives the participants the opportunity to communicate with each other by posting their messages. Although with the advent of internet both synchronous and asynchronous CMC have been widely used for communication, in educational settings asynchronous tools are more dominant than synchronous ones (Hsu, Wang, & Comac, 2008) and have been researched more thoroughly (Paulus, 2007).

Asynchronous tools have been viewed as affording greater opportunity for reflection on one's own ideas, as well as on comments made by others (Paulus, 2007). It has been suggested that ACMC (e.g. email and bulletin boards) promotes the production of more syntactically complex language and more words (De la Fuente, 2003; Abrams, 2003; Zapata & Sagarra, 2007).

C. Integration of CMC with FFC

As Bull and Zakrzewski (as cited in McCarthy, 1999) indicate learning technology is not effective unless it is properly and thoughtfully integrated into the curriculum. Reviewing the literature, Lee (2007) indicates that integrated learning is better and more effective than the traditional classroom type of instruction and individual forms of E-learning technology alone. Also, Meskill and Anthony (2005) suggest that CMC should not serve as a replacement for live instruction, but as a complement to it. As they state "instructor-orchestrated CMC may enhance F2F learning by providing an additional venue to practice and reinforce F2F instruction" (p. 90).

The integration of technology in teaching English as a second/foreign language has been increasing since the 1980s (Warschauer and Whittaker, 2002). Integration of technology into language learning programs needs some ingredients. The five key ingredients in a blended (integrated) learning program identified by Carman (as cited in Lee, 2007) include live events (instructor-led instruction), self-paced learning and assessment, collaboration, and performance support materials.

Warschauer and Whittaker (2002) present some guidelines for teachers who plan to integrate computer technology in their classroom. Theses pedagogical principles include goals, integration, technical support, and learner-centered teaching. As the first thing, they suggest teachers to clarify their goals. Once the instructors had specified the goals and aims, they can design appropriate tasks and activities. In the case of integration, they propose that computer-based activities be integrated into the course curriculum as a whole. In order to avoid problems of technical nature in the classrooms, Warschauer and Whittaker (2002) suggest teachers to provide sufficient technical support for their students. Finally, they state that teachers should provide a learner-centered environment by involving learners throughout the

entire instructional process.

III. The Present Study

The present study intends to investigate the possible existence of difference between CMC and ICMC groups, on the one hand, and FFC and ICMC groups, on the other hand, as far as vocabulary language learners' improvement is concerned. For the purpose of this study, the quantitative research methodology was selected to find answers to questions concerning integration of CMC with FFC. Because of the difficulty encountered when attempting to form groups by random assignment, the researcher utilized groups which already existed in classes. Due to the use of pre-formed groups, the design of this study is quasi-experimental in nature. The present study seeks answer to the following questions.

A. Research Questions

1) Is there any significant difference between CMC and ICMC groups with respect to language learners' vocabulary improvement?

2) Is there any significant difference between FFC and ICMC groups with respect to language learners' vocabulary improvement?

B. Method

Participants. The participants in this study consisted of 88 Iranian EFL learners divided into one comparison and two experimental groups. Twenty-nine participants of the comparison group, called FFC group, selected from among intermediate students of language institute in Tabriz, a city in northwest of Iran, only participated in traditional F2F interactions with teacher supervision in the classroom. Upon inclusion in the program, the participants were at the intermediate level. Their proficiency had been determined via the placement test usually administered at the institute. The other option for getting to this level was passing previous levels of English courses usually offered in the institute. It could be inferred that the participants were of the same, or very similar, general English proficiency.

The experimental group consisted of two groups: CMC and Integrated CMC (ICMC) groups. The CMC group was selected from members of online English learning websites. Twenty nine male and female members of online language learning groups took part in this study. Their connection with English was only through online language learning groups and had no F2F interactions. The participants of ICMC group (n=30) were recruited from male and female students at the language institute and benefited from both FFC in the classroom and CMC via language learning websites and groups.

Instruments. Instruments used for collecting data in this study included two tests of lexical knowledge and a questionnaire. All participants of the three groups took two parallel but not identical standardized vocabulary tests which formed a pre-test and a post-test. The two sets of tests included vocabulary items very close in the level of difficulty, number, content, and table of specifications the students had already covered in their language courses. The tests covered a wide range of English words selected and adapted from the intermediate book of *Nelson English Language Tests* (Fowler & Coe, 1976) with regard to their frequency in other vocabulary tests and with special attention to include all kinds of parts of speech: verb, noun, adjective, and adverb. Every effort was made to make the two sets of vocabulary tests as similar to each other as possible. Both tests included two sets: 15 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) and 5 completion-type items in which the students were required to write synonyms in the spaces provided.

The participants were also requested to fill in a background questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from Warner's (2004) student survey to induce information about the students' access to computer/internet and their experience with CMC and was used to assign the students to comparison and experimental groups. It provided useful information about the student's familiarity with communication technology, how well they assessed their computer knowledge and typing abilities, and was used to select the students who had equal access to the internet and equal familiarity with online communication (e.g.: email, blogs, and chatrooms).

Reliability and validity. The current experiment required a pre-test, a post-test and a questionnaire. As with all types of assessment, these tests needed to be reliable and valid. The reliability of the tests were calculated using KR-21 method which equals a modest index of 0.66 for both the pre-test and the post-test. The questionnaire was administered just to collect background information about the participants and was not subject to reliability analysis. Moreover, its reliability had already been established.

In order to examine the validity of instruments, expert review and factor analysis technique was used. To neutralize and reduce the effect of teaching and therefore validating the tests, expert review was used for the tests. Two instructors of intermediate level in the institute were requested to check and confirm the appropriateness of tests for intermediate level and whether there were any items included in the students' course books. In addition, factor analysis was run to examine the construct validity of tests. The results from principal component analysis with varimax rotation method for pre-test showed that factor 1 explained 15.436% of the total variance, factor 2 explained 11.089% of the variance, factor 3 explained 9.581% of the variance, and factor 4 explained 8.610% of the variance.

Likewise, the results of principal component analysis for the post-test showed that factor 1 explained 15.866% of the total variance, factor 2 explained 10.744% of the variance, factor 3 explained 9.817% of the variance, factor 4 explained 8.727% of the variance and factor 5 explained 7.703% of the variance.

Procedure. The study started at the beginning of the 2008 winter semester and ran for six weeks. At the second session of the semester, the pre-test and the background questionnaire were administered at the three branches of the institute. The pre-test was administered to identify who would qualify to participate in the study. In fact, the pre-test acted both as a criterion and base-line for selecting the students who were approximately at the same level of vocabulary knowledge and as a reference for their improvement after the treatment.

After collecting the data, based on the results of the background questionnaire the students were assigned to either the comparison or the experimental groups. The classes whose students had more access to computer and internet with more experience of working with synchronous and asynchronous CMC were assigned to ICMC group. In the same way, the researchers tried to include the students with little or no access to computer and internet, either at home or elsewhere, in the comparison group. As there were three different branches in different parts of the city, it could be assumed for sure that no contact, whatsoever, existed among the three groups of participants.

In an introduction session, the ICMC participants were familiarized with the project. The initial meeting was organized at each of the three branches focusing on technical training in order to give all participants the opportunity to visit the related websites and chatrooms, to register in the sites and to make their own blogs. The students were told to chat with their peers approximately 15 minutes a day outside the classroom and to contact with their friends via email and their blogs. All participants were encouraged to register in free online English learning websites and to make their own blogs in order to get to know each other, to contact with native and non-native speakers of English and to be acquainted with the synchronous and asynchronous environments.

Having finished the last session of the semester, the participants got ready to take the post-test. The post-test was administered to determine which words were learned after the treatment. The vocabulary items in the post-test were identical to the words in the pre-test with a difference in question form. The reason to choose the same words was to assess how much CMC could assist in the students' learning of those words.

Data analysis. A One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run to analyze the average scores of the three groups' pre-test scores to show group homogeneity. In order to compare the results of the pre-test with those of the post-test, paired samples t-tests were conducted for each group. Independent samples t-tests were also performed to compare the results of the post-test: one between the CMC and ICMC groups and the other between FFC and ICMC. As stated earlier, to examine the construct validity of the tests, expert review and factor analysis techniques were employed for both tests.

IV. Results

A. Group Homogeneity

In order to assess the effect of training among the groups of learners, first it was important to establish that the groups started out at more or less the same place (McBride, 2007). The first question to look at in the present study to check homogeneity or what McBride calls "the group equivalence" (p. 122) is whether the pre-test scores of the three groups were more or less similar to each other. To compare the comparison group and the experimental groups, the pre-test scores were subjected to a one way ANOVA. The results of the ANOVA (see Table 1) revealed that the differences among the means were not significant [F (2, 85) = 1.841, p = 0.165] and the three groups can be said to be, to a large extent, homogeneous. As a result, the study went on safely with these three groups.

TABLE 1
RESULTS OF ANOVA FOR PRE-TEST AMONG THE THREE GROUPS

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	17.374	2	8.687	1.841	.165
Within Groups	400.990	85	4.718		
Total	418.364	87			

B. Investigation of Research Question 1

Research question 1 asked whether there is any significant difference between CMC and ICMC groups regarding their vocabulary improvement. At the first step, a paired samples t-test was carried out to compare the results of the pre-test and the post-test in CMC group. This showed a significant difference [t = -2.592, p = 0.015]. Next, another paired samples t-test was carried out between pre-test and post-test results of the ICMC group. Comparison of means in the t-test, again showed a significant difference [t = -5.125, p = 0.000]. Table 2 indicated the summary of the findings.

TABLE 2
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR CMC AND ICMC

Tests	Groups	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest – posttest	CMC	-1.17241	2.43588	-2.592	28	.015*
pretest – posttest	ICMC	-2.03333	2.17324	-5.125	29	.000*

The descriptive statistics (presented in table 3) for the two groups indicated that both groups improved in vocabulary knowledge. The participants in the CMC group raised their mean score from 12.06 in pre-test to 13.24 in post-test and those in the ICMC group improved from 12.70 to 14.73.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR CMC AND ICMC

Groups	Tests	Mean	N	SD
CMC	pretest	12.0690	29	2.46303
	posttest	13.2414	29	3.06658
ICMC	pretest	12.7000	30	1.96784
	posttest	14.7333	30	2.40593

In the second step, the post-test scores of CMC and ICMC groups were compared with each other to investigate any difference between the two groups. To accomplish this, an independent samples t-test was conducted. The comparison between post-test scores showed a significant difference between the two groups [t = 2.083, p = 0.042]. Comparing the mean of the two groups in pre-test and post-test, and calculating the gain score of the two groups (1.18 for CMC and 2.03 for ICMC) resulted to the conclusion that ICMC group outperformed the CMC one after the treatment. In addition, it is worth noting that in the post-test, ICMC group, with a standard deviation of 2.40, performed more homogeneously than CMC group (SD = 3.07). (Table 4).

TABLE 4
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR CMC AND ICMC

Test	Groups	N	Mean	SD	F	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
posttest	CMC	29	13.2414	3.06658	2.282	2.083	57	.042
	ICMC	30	14.7333	2.40593				

C. Investigation of Research Question 2

In order to investigate the research question 2 it was hypothesized that there is no significant difference between FFC and ICMC groups with respect to their vocabulary improvement. The procedure for investigating and answering this question was similar to that in research question 1. First, paired t-tests were run to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of FFC and ICMC groups. The results of the paired t-test comparing pre-test and post-test scores showed no significant difference (p > 0.05) in the performance of FFC participants [t = -2.006, p = 0.055] although they made some gains in their post-test scores (a mean of 0.82 points from 11.62 to 12.44). However, as it was discussed in the case of research question 1, in ICMC group significant p value (p = 0.000) indicated that there is statistically significant difference between the scores of this group in the two sets of observations. The comparison of paired t-tests between the two groups is presented in tables 5 and 6.

TABLE 5
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR FFC AND ICMC

Tests	Groups	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest – posttest	FFC	-8.2759	2.22115	-2.006	28	0.055
pretest – posttest	ICMC	-2.03333	2.17324	-5.125	29	0.000

TABLE 6
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR FFC AND ICMC

Groups	Tests	Mean	N	SD
FFC	pretest	11.6207	29	2.06006
	posttest	12.4483	29	2.32358
ICMC	pretest	12.7000	30	1.96784
	posttest	14.7333	30	2.40593

After estimating the differences between the pre-test and the post-test scores of the two groups independently, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare and investigate any differences between the two groups in post-test scores. This showed significant difference (p = 0.000) between the two groups in post-test favoring the ICMC group. Given the gain scores of ICMC (14.73-12.70 = 2.03) and FFC groups (12.44-11.62 = 0.82), it can be concluded that ICMC outperformed FFC. So, the null hypothesis Ho2 can be rejected again safely. It is worth noting that although FFC group did not improve their vocabulary knowledge significantly, they performed more homogenous (SD=2.32) than the participants in the ICMC group with a standard deviation of 2.40. (Table 7)

TABLE 7
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR FFC AND ICMC

Test	Groups	N	Mean	SD	F	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
posttest	FFC	29	12.4483	2.32358	.004	-3.709	57	.000
	ICMC	30	14.7333	2.40593				

V. Conclusions and Discussions

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of integrating CMC with FFC on vocabulary improvement. In order to investigate the impact of the treatment, first it was necessary to establish that the three groups began from basically the same starting point. The results of ANOVA comparing the three groups demonstrated that differences among the groups were not significant, meaning that the groups were equivalent to begin with. After a six-week period of treatment and the administration of the post-test, in order to explore the effect of CMC integrated with FFC on the participants' vocabulary improvement, the results of pre-test and post-test scores of the comparison and experimental groups were compared. To investigate the existence of any difference between the CMC and ICMC groups, the results of the pre-test for both groups were compared with their post-test scores. It demonstrated that after the six-week treatment, both experimental groups made some gains in their vocabulary scores. But, the comparison of post-test scores of the two groups, and calculating their gain scores showed that the ICMC group made better progress on the post-test score and outperformed the CMC group after the treatment. In addition, in the post-test the ICMC group participants performed more homogeneously than the CMC group.

As to assessing the differences between the ICMC and the FFC groups, the participants' pre-test and pot-test scores were compared. The findings suggested that, although FFC participants made some gains in their post-test scores, there was no significant difference in their performance, meaning that they had not improved their vocabulary significantly. Against the FFC group, ICMC participants showed statistically significant improvement in their performance in the two sets of observations. As it was expected, the comparison of the post-test scores clearly showed significant difference between the two groups in post-test favoring the ICMC group. Calculations of the gain scores of the two groups again proved the superiority of the ICMC group over FFC group.

Traditionally, education has always been best realized when the two sides, i.e., the teacher and the students, are feeling the presence of each other. In this context, the teacher can easily and directly monitor the students' improvement and guide them step by step towards perfection. On the other hand, the students find it quite convenient to ask the questions they have from the teacher. This face-to-face atmosphere throughout centuries has brought about good results. However, shortly after computers' entering into human life, firstly as a calculation or computation medium and later as a communication mediator, they found their way in educational settings easily. In a sense, educational systems showed very little resistance due to the convenience of computers. After the advent of internet, computers became an indispensible part of approximately all education centers. Little by little, every individual found it a must to benefit from this new technological advancement.

As far as the employment of computers is concerned, language teaching/learning has never been an exception. Experts started their investigations to delve into the advantages and disadvantages of computers, to see if computer mediated communications can be employed to facilitate teaching a language and to enhance its learning. The present study is more justifiable in that it investigates the combination of so-called traditional method, i.e., face to face interactions between the teacher and the students, and modern computer-mediated communication. As it was hypothesized, it was found that those students who had been using both FFC and CMC were more successful in improving their vocabulary knowledge. This signifies the fact that the integration of the two aforementioned approaches could result in students' better achievement.

Findings of this research support the idea that integration of technology in general and CMC in particular into language teaching environments can assist language learners and teachers in the process of learning and teaching. CMC can be utilized as a tool to enhance communication of learners with native and non-native speakers all around the globe. This communication which leads to negotiation of meaning induces more input and output which consequently leads to more and better learning.

The reasons for this better achievement can be:

1. Language learners find the opportunity to benefit from extracurricular activities besides their regular classroom. They have both the FFC, in which they can communicate with their teachers and peers, and CMC, in which they go beyond classroom boundaries.

2. Through CMC, necessary grounds are provided for language learners to develop interactions with native speakers of English. In that case, they learn the meanings of words in a better way. Moreover they find an opportunity to grasp the true sense of vocabulary items in communications.

3. Those language learners whose learning styles, e.g. introverts, act as a barrier in the process of learning when they are in a classroom situation and find FFC rather difficult in developing communication can benefit from the virtual environment of CMC in expressing themselves and thereby they set out to learn more.

4. When CMC is combined with FFC, it is possible for the learners to resolve their problems they face in CMC within the FFC environment.

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Screen Interface Design for Mobile-assisted Language Learning in EFL Context: A Case Study in Japan

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Abstract—**Mobile Technology is constantly evolving and offering new capabilities for supporting higher data transmission, storage, and multimedia formats that can be beneficial for Language Acquisition. Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) publications have been reviewed for two main perspectives: The Content -based approach and the Design- issues approach. This study focuses on understanding these approaches and identifying their main challenges specific to MALL activities. Mobile-based e-learning applications and learning possibilities are tied to the physical attributes of the device, graphical user interface, and the cost of services, collaboration tools, Internet access, and computation capabilities. This article reports extensively on the results of a focus group-oriented study undertaken using an IPod- based English learning application for five advanced (graduate) EFL (English as foreign language)-based students in a Japanese technical university. Results from this pilot analysis were reported towards exploring the design of the IPod interface and how it contributes towards mobile assisted language learning. Results indicate that students are mostly comfortable using handheld devices and completed tasks with reasonable success and efficiency. However, they faltered with few steps mainly due to complexity of the screen interface (lack of on-screen guidance), transition within and between steps, and unresponsive system. The qualitative analysis focused mostly on the design of the graphical user interface, its delivery methods, and user preference and information access patterns. Several recommendations are made for both the design of the interface and how content should be structured.**

Index Terms—**mobile-assisted language learning, education, IPod, interface design, content approach**

I. Introduction

Today elearning is envisioned as a feasible option, as well as a unique opportunity to reduce educational costs and use teaching resources more efficiently (Ruth, 2010). Added to e-learning, the increasing use of mobile technologies and wireless communication is opening a new field of research where the main focus becomes the use of mobile devices in education, also known as mobile learning (m-Learning). This strategy is seen as the next step of the e-Learning paradigm and will extend the meaning and dimension of "Anytime, Anywhere" education (Song, 2008). Mobile assisted language learning (MALL) is relatively new in Japan and there is still much research to be done about the scope of its design and application. However, research has already shown its tremendous potential in a tech-savvy country like Japan. Naismith et al. (2004) refer to the fact that a web-based Japanese system for English language learning – *Pocket Eijiro* – receives more than 100 000 hits per day. This system was designed for access via WAP-enabled mobile phones.

One such mobile assisted language-learning device is the IPod. In Kukulska-Hulme and Traxler's (2005) study of mobile learning, iPods were used to aid language learning, wherein they function as digital voice recorders or camcorders to produce interviews and make audiovisual presentations. Chinnery (2006) briefly mentions iPods in the context of a new area that he names MALL or: Mobile Assisted Language Learning, an outgrowth of the more established Computer Assisted Language Learning or CALL. In this study, we will try to explore the importance of IPod for language learning a little differently. The primary purpose of this study is to explore the extent to which the IPod touch screen interface could be designed successfully towards language learning and/or acquisition, and deliver content in a way that supports EFL (English as foreign language) learning contexts. What are the units of focus (e.g., curriculum design, assessment mechanism, content delivery, content management, content and interface design etc) when designing such on-screen language-learning applications in IPods? Is the handheld-based language learning

applications different in complexity, functionality, interactivity, adaptability, and accessibility (when compared to its desktop counterparts)? Overall, how are such applications designed?

II. Background Motivation

While many successful research projects have worked on developing rules to guide the design and implementation of interfaces for desktop machines and their applications, the design of mobile device interfaces is still relatively unexplored and unproven (Gorienko and Merrick, 2003; Tarasewich et al., 2007). With numerous design challenges that are yet to be explored and solved for hand held applications, the problem is certainly compounded when non-native users of English use mobile devices as a language learning platform. This article is an open exploration, trying to explore the world of mobile assisted language learning and the interface design issues that promotes or impairs the process of understanding hand held devices as a platform for language acquisition. While in-class observations have adequately demonstrated the multiple uses of mobile devices and portable dictionaries for word search, translation, meanings etc, it is not entirely clear the extent to which users might find it reasonable to use their handheld devices for self-paced language acquisition. With limited motivation and time for English language study in a Japanese context, it is obvious that the efficacy of the user interface might play a big role in making the user feel welcome and comfortable in the world of mobile assisted language learning.

III. Focus and Significance

This study is significant because it explores the usability of IPod screen interface as a language-learning medium. It makes an attempt to understand how users perform through different learning modules, where they succeed and falter, how they navigate, what motivates and frustrates them and their overall reaction to the task.

Major Research Question: As there is not much previous research on this topic, the major research question examined here is the extent to which relatively advanced EFL learners in Japan with reasonable experience in handheld devices like mobile phones and IPod might follow along and complete short tasks using an IPod-based English interface.

The primary research question addressed in this study is:

a) When using a latest generation mobile device, such as the iPod touch, what issues related to device interaction are challenges in a Japanese EFL context?

The answer to the major research question will also shed some light on the following questions.

■ What aspects of the user interface can facilitate the learning activity?

■ Using an application that follows the principles of the design issues approach, what aspects of pedagogy benefit or constrains the learning activity?

IV. Literature Review

MALL is an approach to language learning that is enhanced through the use of a mobile device (Keiman and Aizawa, 2004). In general, the most common devices considered for MALL are cell phones, MP3/MP4 players, PDA's and smart phones (Thornton and Houser, 2004). The "mobility" dimension of the approach is what makes these devices attractive for learning, as they can extend the paradigm to "anytime, anywhere". Another important dimension towards its efficient functioning and acceptability is its user interface design. Ben Shneiderman provides a complete, current, and authoritative introduction to user-interface design. The user interface is the part of every computer system that determines how people control and operate that system. When the interface is well designed, it is comprehensible, predictable, and controllable; users feel competent, satisfied, and responsible for their actions (Shneiderman & Plaisant, 2009).

MALL Design Approaches

Research (Kukulska-Hulme and Shield, 2008) suggests that there are two main approaches utilized in the development of MALL activities. These categories relate to formal and informal structures for mobile content access and are a possible indicator that suggests how the content and interface should be designed.

Content -based approach: This approach focuses on content delivery. The most frequent delivery method uses mobile phones and is text-based, through text messaging or email and quizzes and surveys for vocabulary teaching (Ruth, 2010). Another example is the use of MP3 players like iPods for audio content in assignments.

Design- issue approach: This approach is related to informal (anytime and anyplace) learning activities specifically for mobile devices, where learners have more flexibility in choosing content, time, and work-flow. Informal learning might be equally rich in content, but the difference is rather in the way the content is accessed by the student.

The activities are fragmented as small tasks, designed to be completed within short time frames (Song, 2008). Research (Morita, 2003) suggests that flexibility of use is more oriented to making use of spare time rather than being restricted only to classroom activities. Moreover, the strategy does not assume any previous preparation in order to

perform the learning. Research (Ghazvini et al., 2009) provides several examples of cell-phone games, and SMS as part of the informal learning strategies. In the first example, SMS and email are used to teach English to government employees. The second example is implemented as a mobile game for primary children for them to practice spelling and learn new vocabulary in the Farsi language. The third example is a mobile game used to teach technical English vocabulary to university students in computer science.

The initial point of any web-based course design is to analyze the precise learning needs, the target learners and then formulate a course objective, before selecting the most suitable design approach (Horton, 2000).

With the content -based approach, the aim of the activities is to have more formal learning or classroom-based activities, similar to instructor-led activities. The objectives can be defined as, but not limited to, preparation, reinforcement, and evaluation. The preparation activities can include the design and delivery of new content integrated into the class. Reinforcement activities take into consideration the materials reviewed in class and stimulate content retention; an example is vocabulary review, through SMS/MMS, language practice via video/audio, etc. The evaluation activities should measure the effectiveness of the learning through quizzes and exercises.

The intent of the design-issues approach is to create self-paced, asynchronous and, therefore, more learner-led activities. There are four factors that need consideration for both approaches during course design. These include the following:

a) Mobility. Innovative activities should be oriented to take advantage of the mobility aspect as suggested in (Kukulska-Hulme, 2009). According to Kukulska-Hulme (2009) study, the use of mobiles should enrich the learning process and bring forth new possibilities that cannot be achieved through traditional and stationary means.

b) Collaboration. It is important to be able to differentiate between activities that are designed around collaborative versus those designed around individual activities. For example, collaborative versus simpler quiz activities (group vs. individual) could be considered and planned accordingly.

c) Re-Usability. It is important to select content formats that are compatible with different mobile platforms due to the existing diversity of devices to avoid restricting learner options.

d) Connectivity. This factor relates to course access. During the design, how the activity will be accessed by the learner is important and should be identified. For example, the activities might need to be completed online, meaning that constant Internet access is required, either through 3G or Wi-Fi. Another consideration might be to allow users to download content or certain features of a course to work offline and then submit once Internet access is available.

Addressing Key Learner Considerations

According to Horton (2000), ideal learners should have the following specific characteristics: "a) learns independently and views learning positively; b) Self-disciplined, manages time well, enjoys working alone; c) Able to express [oneself] clearly in written [format]; d) Have basic computer skills and value the role of technology in business and learning; e) Need to acquire new knowledge, but cannot easily attend traditional training." Most of these characteristics apply to mobile courses with the exception of (d,) where it is not only necessary to have computer skills because the mobile activity is similar to a typical online course, but also, because it is key to be familiar with the mobile devices and services required to complete the actual learning activity.

Also, interface adaptability to learning styles is important. Each learner has different preferences and needs. Therefore, it is very crucial to provide the different styles of learners with different learning environments that are more preferred and more efficient to them (Cha et al., 2006; Wolf, 2003).

Moreover, it is also important to understand the kind of learner the reader is, and adopt the screen task accordingly. However, few existing systems have the ability to adapt to student or user's learning style (Paredes and Rodriguez, 2002). Currently, many researchers agree on the importance of modeling and using leaning styles, however there is little agreement in aspects of learning style are worth modeling, and what can be done differently for users with different styles (Brusilovsky, 2001). Moreover, the relationships between leaning styles and possible interface settings are still an unclear area (Brusilovsky, 2001).

User Interface Design: Designing the GUI Interface

Interface design is one of the most important aspects of mobile design. There are five main User Interface Design principles: User familiarity, Consistency, Minimal Surprise, Recoverability, and User Guidance (Sommerville, 1995). To explain the different types of possible interaction for mobile applications, we used the guidelines for iPhone development, which utilizes a comprehensible approach to user-centered design (Apple developer, see reference).

There are three user interface factors that must be considered during the content and structure design of a mobile course:

a) Include only the essential task. Considering the compact size of the mobile device, this design should only include the elements that are essential to the task; otherwise the interface can be confusing for the user.

b) Have sequential access. Tasks should be designed sequentially, so the user can see only a single screen at a time. This is one of the main differences between a handheld and a PC User interface. A task can be divided into a sequence of screens when that task requires several steps.

c) Providing minimal on-screen help. Mobile users tend to spend less time using an application than PC users do. Hence, an interface should be as intuitive as possible and follow a clear and logical flow to complete the task. This factor strongly relates back to the principles of user familiarity, consistency and minimal surprise.

In any mobile course, the user will interact with the learning material through direct manipulation of on-screen objects instead of using an intermediate object like a mouse. Therefore, there is an advantage when engaging the learners in the task, because there is more control of the activity, and better understanding of the action result. As an example, for iPhone application interfaces, user interactions are described with metaphors (Apple developer, see reference) that represent actions like 1) Tapping controls, 2) Dragging, flicking, or swiping objects in a game, 3) Sliding On/Off switches, 4) Flicking through pages of photos, and 5) Spinning picker wheels to make choices.

How does MALL Support EFL-based Training?

Mobile technology is currently a feasible approach for overcoming many of the obstacles found in the current methods of EFL reading instruction. Mobile- assisted language learning (MALL) has the capability to provide an EFL learner with the same opportunities for independent and targeted reading practice and immediate corrective feedback as does CALL (Lan et al, 2007). In recent years, various studies have explored new methods of language learning actually made possible by the unique features of MALL, including portability, social interactivity, context sensitivity, connectivity, individuality, and immediacy [Attewell & Webster (2004); Chinnery (2006); Klopfer et al., (2002); Soloway et al., (2001)]. Recently, Poodle, a mobile-based course management system, was designed to facilitate the deployment of educational materials to mobile phones. This application supports ubiquitous polls, quizzes, wikis, forums, and flash cards (Houser and Thornton, 2005).

The same study in Japan (Houser and Thornton, 2005) has shown that 71% of the subjects preferred receiving their English lessons (vocabulary) on mobile phones rather than on their PCs. Of this group, 93% felt this deployment to be a valuable teaching method. In the study, thirty-one Japanese college sophomores evaluated the site, using video-capable mobile phones, found few technical difficulties, and rate its educational effectiveness highly. Another study (Thornton and Houser, 2004) demonstrated the importance of mobile applications for language training in Japan. The research (Thornton and Houser, 2004) presents three projects in mobile learning. They polled 333 Japanese university students regarding their use of mobile devices and 100% reported owning a mobile phone, 99% sent email on their mobile phones, exchanging some 200-email messages each week.

Using IPods for Educational Purposes

Since the release of the first iPod in 2001, the device has developed many educational uses. Part of the attraction of the iPod as an educational device is the fact that it contains easily accessible audio and visual content in an attractive and conveniently sized package. Recent iPod models have become progressively more versatile, and the availability of their educational content is growing exponentially. Universities across the United States have also recognized the value of the iPod as an educational tool for college students and have begun issuing free iPods to incoming freshmen (Read, 2005). Duke University became one of the first higher education institutions to distribute iPods to freshmen in 2004 (Dean, 2004).

Several questions regarding iPod educational applicability remain unanswered and that is what this article attempts to do within its restricted scope. How do we know exactly what a user finds to be user-friendly, how do users navigate, what kind of errors do students commit, how do students search and retrieve information for mobile applications, what are the overall design issues (icons, layout of the site, colors, etc)? How do these issues both help and impede the mobile-assisted language learning process?

V. Research Methodology

One of the most important conditions to reach the successful design of a product is the early participation of potential users of that system. This section describes an exploratory MALL-based design analysis in a focus group that reported on the end-user interaction with an IPod, designed to complete a specific set of MALL-based language learning activities through self-paced modules. The testing focused on task workflow, interaction with the application and the device, the experience of the user, the learning outcome, and the learning style (Winckler et al., 2007 edited).

Reasons for deciding on a focus group analysis: Focus groups are effective ways to explore new research ideas, explore a topic that is difficult to observe, collect concentrated data over a short period of time, and gather solid preliminary data [Catterall and Maclaran (1997); Asbury (1995)].

Procedure

As part of this focus-group analysis, a scenario-based evaluation method was followed. Through observing the descriptions of scenarios, everyone had an equal opportunity to propose his/her suggestions and criticisms to discover the real needs of users, a critical step to draw out the final appearance of the system (Carroll, 2000).

The conversational English learning module had multiple lessons from which to choose. During the observation segment, participants were required to complete six of seven tasks for one particular lesson (No. 7), the same for all participants. They were instructed to follow a task order from 1 -7, except for Task 4. They each followed the same

sequence, and each lesson had a series of tasks. The chosen lesson was similar to other lessons in terms of user interface design, pattern of sequencing, and levels of difficulty (content complexity) within and between the tasks.

The usability study was performed through an observation of the task steps and the interviews. Each participant took around 45 minutes to complete the IPod application, and then answered the questions asked by the interviewer in detail. The interviewer noted each step/activity as each participant completed it. The notes mainly related to where the users tapped on the screen, their levels of comfort with the keypad, their levels of comfort with the audio/video output, and whether the instructions were followed adequately, whether the navigation was seamless, where transition from one step to another was obvious or confusing, and finally, any points where the participants needed help. As the participants interacted, they were asked to think aloud and respond to any specific queries that the interviewer had. Guidelines on performing the task were provided, and participants were allowed to take as much time as they needed to complete the tasks. They were also asked to follow the task sequence suggested by the application.

After completion of the tasks, the participants were interviewed and asked to answer a set of questions about their impressions of the activity. The interview was performed on the basis of a written survey questionnaire that acted as a reference for the interviewer. The interview covered five areas: Task workflow, interaction with the application and device, experience of the user, learning outcome, and learning style. A retrospective think-aloud protocol was also part of the interviewing session, whereby participants could re-visit the application, interact with it freely, and voice their opinions about the activity and the questions being asked by the interviewer. Figure 1 shows screenshots to explain how the participants proceeded from one task to the next. The screenshots are not necessarily in the order of access, but do provide an overall idea of the possible navigation patterns.

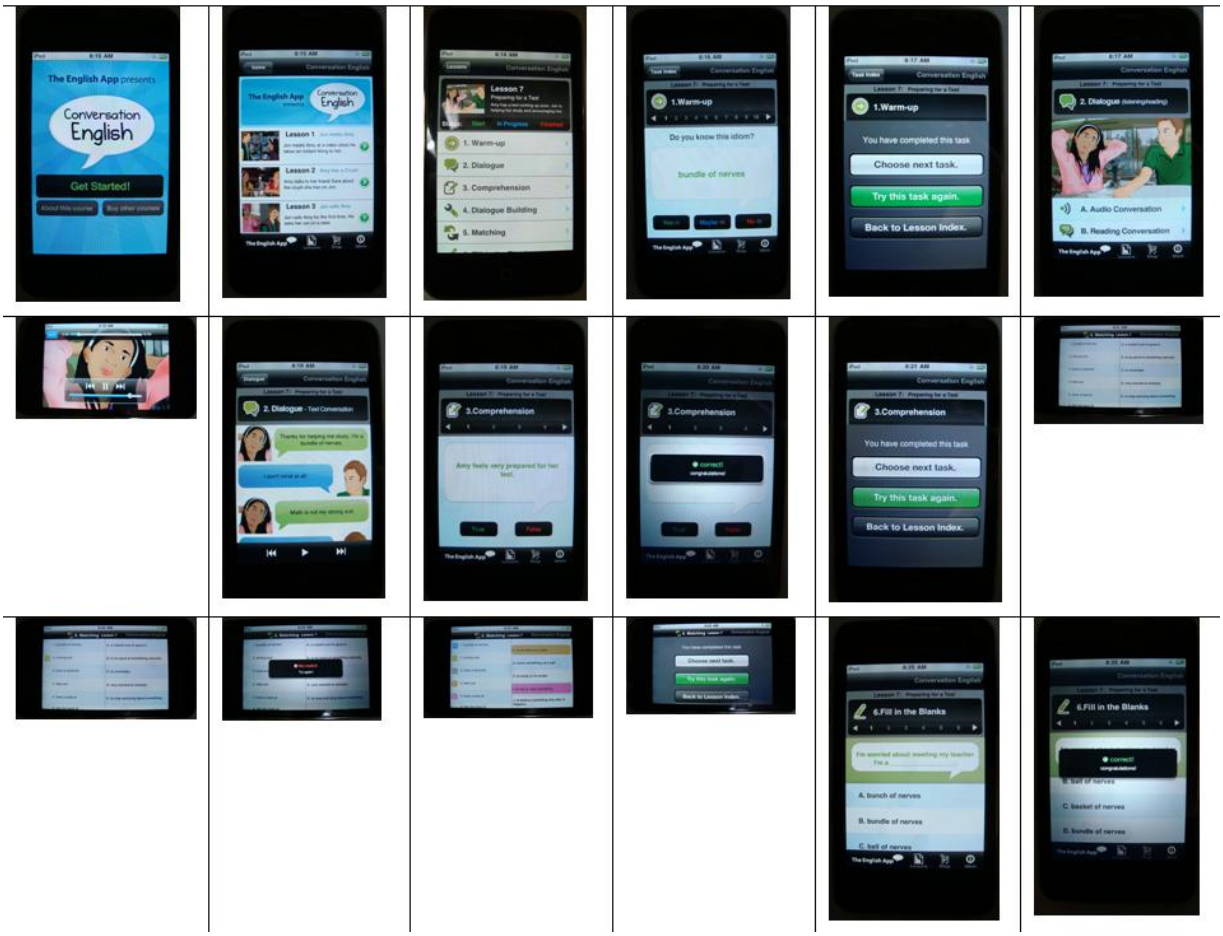

Fig1. Screenshots showing how the lessons were interacted with and navigated by the participants

Figure 2 shows an example of the instructions in the interview on that questionnaire that each participant had to follow.

The objective of this activity is to test a mobile application to learn English. In this test we are using the iPhone/ iPod application "Conversational English".

Guidelines

1. Select each task following the numerical order given by the application.
2. You have to skip Task 4. Dialog building.
3. Continue with Task 5 until you complete all the tasks

After completing the activities you will be asked to answer some questions.

Thank you for your participation in this test.

Fig2. Instructions Given to Participants

Figure 3 shows the different categories and related questions in the post-test survey. The survey was not handed out to the participants. Rather, the questions acted as a guideline for the interviewer to ask questions to the participants and elicit more specific answers with clarifications, wherever necessary.

TASK COMPLETION:
1. How long did it take you to complete the task?
2. Did you need any specific help when completing the task?
- More explanation about the activity. - Location of text / image / button- Assistance with the application (interaction in the screen). - Assistance with the device. - Other. Explain
3. Was the task easy or difficult to complete? Explain.
4. Was the sequence of the activity easy to follow? (Likert Scale Used)

INTERACTION WITH SCREEN / DEVICE:
5. What kind of problems did you face during the testing of the application? Explain.
6. Do you think you made any mistake while completing the task? (Likert Scale Used)
7. Did the information on the screen was clear enough to work on the task? (Likert Scale Used)
8. Did the interface respond to your actions as you expected? For example, scrolling the information, screen transitions (back and forth), input text, selecting actions. (Likert Scale Used)
9. Did you have difficulties while entering text? Explain.
10. Did you have any problem operating the device? Like tapping buttons, selecting information, etc. (Likert Scale Used)

EXPERIENCE OF THE USER:
11. How often do you use a portable device like iPod, iPhone, iPad? (Likert Scale Used)
12. How would you rate this learning experience with an application in laptop / desktop computer? (Likert Scale Used)
13. Do you feel comfortable using this type of portable device for learning comparing similar activities using a laptop? Explain.

LEARNING AND USE:
14. What did you learn from the application? Be specific.
15. Do you think the application helped you to learn something new about the English language? (Likert Scale Used)
16. Do you think you would be able to remember the information that you learnt from this application? (Likert Scale Used)
17. After this experience, do you feel motivated to use a similar mobile application to learn English by yourself? (Likert Scale Used)

INTERACTION/LEARNING STYLE:
18. How do you feel more comfortable learning English?
19. Do you prefer feedback from instructor while completing an English assignment, why?
20. Do you think a portable device like IPod is capable of promoting social interaction? (Likert Scale Used)
21. What kind of learner do you think you are? (Visual, Auditory, Reading /Writing, Tactile/Kinesthetic)
22. What kind of learning is best supported by an IPod? (Closed - Use Likert Scale)

Fig3. The different categories and related questions in the post-test survey

It is important to mention in this context that the items and questions used for the post-test interview was based more on the standard guidelines and items used for any usability interview session, and for analyzing most user interfaces. However, in the current scenario the following reference articles and books (Horton, 2000; Nielson and Molich, 1990; Hackos and Redish, 1998) were used and the following relevant and important items were selectively used to understand how users completed the task.

Task Steps and Their Sequence: The following chart shows the sequence of steps that were followed by the participants (in most cases) when completing the task.

TABLE 1:
STEPS SEQUENCE - OBSERVATIONS

1.	**Select Warm-up activity.**	Yes / No	Specific Observation (if any?)
2.	Answer if they know the idiom. (Yes/Maybe/No)		
3.	Tap on Choose next task.		
4.	**Select Dialog.**		
5.	**Select Audio conversation.**		
6.	**Select Reading Conversation.**		
7.	Play the audio button and read, while listening to the conversation.		
8.	**Select the Dialog button.**		
9.	Select Task Index button.		
10.	**Select Comprehension task.**		
11.	After each answer tap on message button.		
12.	Tap on Choose next task.		
13.	**Select Matching task**		
14.	Tap on left side list		
15.	Tap on right side list		
16.	Tap on message (Match/No match)		
17.	Tap on Choose next task		
18.	**Select Fill in the Blanks Task**		
19.	Scroll over the answers and Tap one		
20.	Tap on message (Correct /Wrong).		
21.	Tap on Choose next task		
22.	**Tap on View Lesson Idioms**		
23.	Tap on the Arrow button of the idiom		
24.	Tap on the sound icon		
25.	Tap on button (Yes/Maybe/No) to acknowledge Idiom understanding		
26.	Tap on Next Idiom		
27.	Select "Go to Lesson 7" after reviewing all the idioms.		

The observer noted down whether participants followed the sequence, how much time they spent with each step, and if there was any specific additional/remedial action undertaken (e.g., going back to a previous step, scrolling down, clicking patterns etc) when completing a step or transitioning from one step to the next. Table 1 shows the list of specific activities and their sequence.

Test Instruments

In this focus group design analysis, we were interested in a preliminary analysis that is generalizable across most MALL-based devices and for a large section of the EFL population.

Reasons for choosing the application:

a) The participants in the current study are those using English as foreign language with moderate knowledge of English. The purpose of the application is to improve the usage of Idioms in every day conversation, being suitable for the sample we will be testing.

b) The vocabulary acquisition is through language in context, by introducing the new idioms in a Dialog and a Dictionary with example phrases showing its usage.

c) The application follows Design issues approach, and lessons are well organized in short tasks that user has to complete to learn idioms vocabulary.

d) Other aspect considered is to have a variety of content delivery, such as video, audio, reading, and writing. The application incorporates all of these resources to make the learning more interactive.

e) The cost of the application is very accessible (600 yen).

f) "Conversation English" is an iPhone application, which is also compatible with iPod Touch being the device used for our experiment. The iPhone is a very popular device in Japan. Therefore, we started with the possibility that users will already be familiar with the application interface, thereby making experiment guidelines easier to follow.

g) Collaboration aspect is not included in the application. This feature could be later incorporated without much variation on the interface and the previous activities, as an additional module to practice the lesson materials. This is one of the challenges of the current applications.

How the application follows the design issues and NOT the content-based approach? The aim of the design issues approach is to allow the user to learn through a self-paced set of activities. The activities should be designed to accomplish three main objectives: content acquisition, reinforcement and evaluation. The major activities for the application are as follows - Warm -up, Dialog, Comprehension, Dialogue Building, Matching, Fill in the blanks, View Lesson Idioms etc (20 lessons in total).

One of the aspects that characterize the Design Issues approach is that the activities are designed to make use of the users' spare time. Therefore, it doesn't require much preparation to complete the activities. The application is compliant with this principal. The tasks were designed with a suggested order, but the user can switch between them without losing the flow of the learning process, with exception of Task 2, which is content acquisition, because the reinforcement activities are based in the Dialog Task. The application allows for flexibility to adapt to user preferences for language acquisition. The user can decide whether to learn the idiom vocabulary in context by completing first the Dialog Task 2, or by moving to Task 7 and review the meaning. The Warm-up, gives an overview of the idioms that will be learned in the lesson, but it doesn't give information on the meaning. By completing this activity, the student can have a quick grasp of the new or already known idioms to be studied in the lesson.

The activities are designed to be completed during a short time frame, which is also another important aspect of focusing on spare time. The Dialog video lasts between 1-1:30 minutes, and the activities are designed to be completed in less than 5 minutes. The longest task is number 4, in which the time depends on user skills to remember the order of the conversation. The application also provides a way to remember which lessons the user has to complete by providing a status marker. (Green= started, Blue = in progress, Red = Finalized). This feature is not available for keeping the status of the task within a lesson, which it could also be considered as an improvement point. Even though the lesson has been completed, the user can repeat as many times each of the tasks.

The Participant Sample

For this study, we obtained participants by personally contacting five volunteers to join a focus group. The study focused on Japanese students using English as a foreign language and having moderate English language ability in writing and reading comprehension. Fluency of spoken English was not a criterion for selection of the participants. These participants (advanced computer science students at graduate level) were observed separately during other in-class assignments to ensure that their variations in ability with respect to the following skills (mobile usage, IPod usage, ability to process English text, and listening) were within reasonable limits.

VI. Results and Findings

Overall, majority of participants could complete the task with reasonable efficiency. However, this section focuses on the specific issues during interaction, where they needed help, committed mistakes, the system failed to respond, and where the interaction was easy to handle.

Interactions during the Task Completion Process

Participant 1 had little experience with a similar device, but required guidance to clarify the task sequences; finally he completed 93% of the expected steps. He seemed to have difficulty interacting with the application, especially when he was trying to go back to menus or tapping buttons. During the Selection of Reading Conversation (Step 6), he tapped on the Lessons button and thus went back to the main menu by mistake. After completion of the activity, he tapped The English application button by mistake and had to reload the lesson to this point again (Step 9). During the Fill- in –the- Blanks task (Step 20) he tapped the Lessons button by mistake again and went back to the main menu twice. This mistake might have been caused by the Tab bar design for the application. While reviewing the idioms (Step 24), the participant tapped on the sound image, but the application closed and thus had to be reloaded up to the task again. During the next step for the same task (Step 25), the participant tried to confirm comprehension of only one Idiom. However, the application did not respond (even after multiple tapping), and thus it was skipped to access the rest of the Idioms.

Participant 2 had little experience with a similar device. He was able to complete 81% of the expected sequences. Most of the guidance provided was to help him locate the buttons on the screen. On the Warm- up activity, he had to confirm whether he knew the idiom (Step 2). Instead of answering that question directly, he jumped to the Idiom dictionary. After reviewing the Idiom, he moved to the English app information screen. Then he closed the application by mistake and had to reload it again (step 3). In the Dialog task, instead of selecting Reading conversation (step 6), he tapped the Idiom button and opened the Idiom dictionary by mistake. From this point forward, he had difficulties going back to the activity and needed help to select the right options to go back. After completing the listening part (Step 8), he required guidance to select the options to return to the lesson Task Menu. While taking the Idioms review, he did not try the sound icon or tap the confirmation buttons.

Participant 3 had no experience with a similar device, but she was able to complete 96% of the expected sequence, and required very little guidance. In the Dialog task (Step 7), she required some additional time to play the audio while reading the conversation. This requirement for additional time was also observed in the Comprehension task,

where she needed additional time to figure out that it was necessary to tap on the message button (Step 11) to move forward. This behavior was similar on each new interaction she had with the application (Steps 14, 15) which was probably related to her lack of previous experience with a similar device. While completing the task, Fill in the Blanks, she tapped on the Shop button and had to reload the application (Step 20). At this point, she did need some guidance to use the device and go back to the application we were testing. During the last task, Idioms review (Step 24), the application closed when she tried listening to the sound and this step was skipped after the first trial. Similarly, she tapped the button to confirm Idiom understanding, but when she didn't receive any response from the application, she ignored it.

Participant 4 appeared to be (and even reported) as being very familiar with a similar device, the iPhone. She completed 89% of the expected steps. At the beginning of the activity, she needed additional information about the tasks to be performed and the sequence of those tasks. During selection of Reading conversation (Step 7) she didn't use the audio feature to listen to the dialog while reading the conversation. During the last task, Idioms review (step 24), she didn't try the sound, and this step was skipped after a first trial. Similarly, she tapped the button to confirm Idiom understanding, but since the system did not respond, it too was ignored (Step 25).

Participant 5 is familiar with a similar device, the iPhone. She completed 74% of the expected steps, and although the interaction was not a problem, she required more guidance on the task sequence and the English. During the Dialog task (Step 7), she took some time to play the conversation and read along with it. Also, she had some difficulties finding the button to go back to the dialog (Step 8), and so she asked for help to continue the activities. After the comprehension task, she chose a different option than expected to go back to the lesson main menu (Step 12). In the Matching activity, she also took some time to understand how the interaction worked (Step 15). For the task Idioms review, the audio option was skipped (Step 24), and she tried to acknowledge the understanding of the idiom, but since there was not a response from the application, this step was stopped (Step 25). In the same task, she experienced some difficulties in moving forward with the idioms. The following figures demonstrate the issues experienced during user interaction with the application. Figure 4 shows the percentage of accurate responses for each participant.

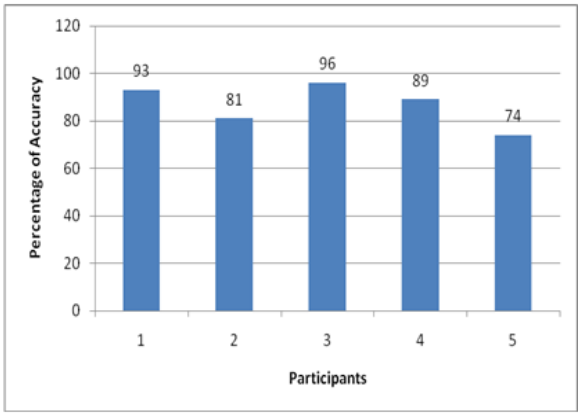

Fig4. Percentage of Accurate Responses

Figure 5 shows the frequency of mistakes committed by each participant during interaction with the on-screen application. Figure 6 explains the number of times the system did not respond during interaction. Figure 7 shows the frequency of difficulty and required guidance during on-screen interaction.

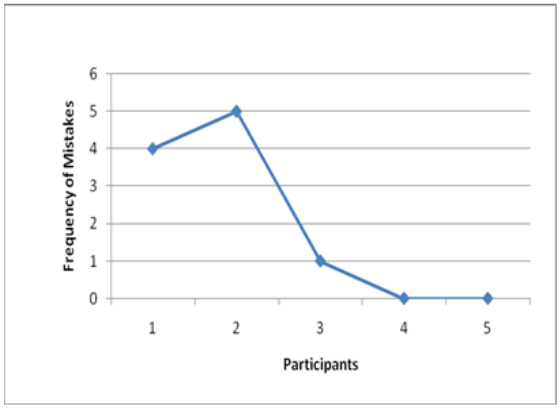

Fig5. Frequency of Mistakes

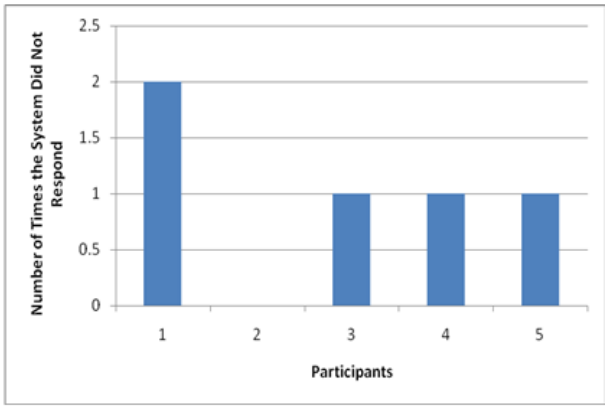

Fig6. Number of Times the System did not Respond

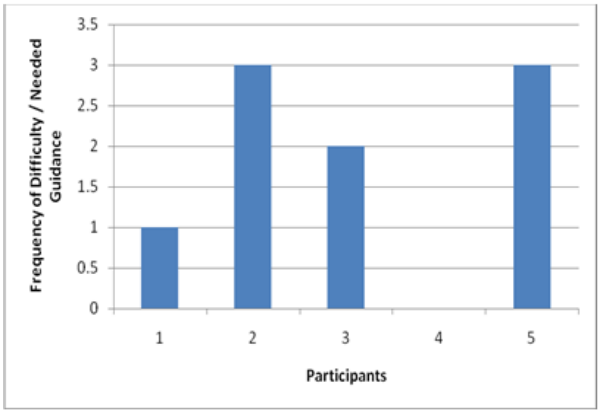

Fig7. Frequency of Difficulty and required guidance during on-screen interaction

Figure 8 provides an overview of the type of difficulties and guidance needed for specific actions.

Participant	Difficulty / Guidance Required
1	Going back to the main menu
2	Help locating buttons on screen
2	Select option to go back to the activity
2	Select option to go back to lesson task menu
3	Use of keypad
3	Going back to the application
4	None
5	Guidance on task sequence
5	Guidance on English content
5	Finding the button to go back to the dialog
5	Moving along the idioms

Fig8. Steps / activities where participants needed guidance and faced difficulties

Figure 9 demonstrates the steps where readers had trouble.

Participants	Steps
1	3, 7, 12, 17, 21, 24, 27
2	7, 24, 27
3	2, 3, 6, 23, 25
4	6, 9
5	27

Fig9: Steps where readers faltered and /or had trouble

Issues with the Application

All the participants had difficulty completing Step 24 caused by an error in the application. After tapping the sound icon of the idiom, very often the application closed down and the application had to be reloaded. The buttons for the Tab bar were very small and it was easy to tap on them by mistake. During Step 25 of this task, the application displayed three buttons to confirm the understanding of the idiom and visually suggested that any one of the buttons could be tapped, but there was no response from the application or a summary to measure the comprehension percentage.

Interview Findings

After completing the task, the participants answered 22 questions about their learning experience while completing the MALL tasks. The interviewer used a survey response to question the participants and helped them answer the question, by clarifying the question and its scope. These findings are classified in five areas of discussion as described below.

Task Completion: The time taken to complete the task was between 20 to 25 minutes for 80% of the participants. Only one person took 10 minutes, but she had experience using an iPhone. All of the participants required additional help either to follow the task sequence or return to the task if by mistake the application was closed. Also, most reported that the task was easy to follow, but three found it difficult to understand the English. Some also pointed out that following the suggested sequence of the application allowed them to comprehend the idioms better. Figure 10 demonstrates self-reports on the ease with which the task was completed. Primarily, the self-report answers the extent to which the sequence of activity was easy or difficult to follow on a likert scale.

Participant	Was the sequence of task easy to follow?
1	Somewhat
2	Somewhat
3	Somewhat
4	To a great extent
5	Somewhat

Fig10. Task Completion

Interaction with the Screen and the Device: Interaction with the devices was mostly positive, except for situations when the system did not respond, sometimes even after repeated tapping. This unresponsive state, however, was not misconstrued as lack of their participant's ability to complete the task. They were perceived as issues with the application, or the participant not being familiar with the device. According to their ratings, the application provided enough information to indicate the task flow and responded to their actions as expected, in most cases, even though some of the participants were not very familiar with the device. These responses suggest that the intuitive nature of the IPod application helped with the sequence of activities. However, one participant thought the screen size was too small, especially for cases when he had to complete matching tasks (the answers were not clearly visible and not easy to pick out when presented in a list). Another participant pointed out that when a sequence was somehow missed and the main index revisited, the application was not intuitive enough to jump steps. Another participant pointed out that for people without experience using IPod apps, they should have the option of reading extra steps to understand where to tap, scroll, and transition between screens. Figure 11 identifies the issues related to the interaction with screen interface and what participants thought about the interaction.

Participant	Mistake while completing task?	Information Clarity on screen	Did the interface respond to action?	Any problem operating the device? Example: tapping buttons, selecting information, etc.
1	Very Little	Somewhat	Somewhat	Somewhat
2	Somewhat	To a great extent	Somewhat	Very Little
3	Very Little	To a great extent	Somewhat	Not at all
4	Very Little	To a great extent	To a great extent	Not at all
5	Somewhat	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Little

Fig11. Interaction with screen interface

Experience of the User: Three participants had some first-hand experience with a similar device, although they were not using it constantly and for the purpose, as evidenced during the testing session. One owned an iPhone, and the last one had no experience at all before the test. All had a positive impression of the learning experience with the mobile device. As reasons for that liking, they indicated the portability aspect, such as size, made it convenient for this type of activity. Another aspect that was suggested was their similarity with games they often played using their mobile devices, which they perceived as fun. Apparently, they found this interface similar. However, that did not necessarily mean there was any similarity in the nature and context of such use. Figure 12 identifies how users rated the experience with the IPod and handheld devices in general.

Participant	Experience of using handheld device for learning purposes	Compare handheld vs. Laptop / Desktop learning experience
1	Seldom	Handheld experience was interesting
2	Never	Handheld experience was interesting
3	Sometimes	Handheld experience was interesting
4	Always	Handheld experience was interesting
5	Seldom	Handheld experience was interesting

Fig12. Experience of the user

Learning and Use: Most of the participants pointed out that they learned the English Idioms, as per the objective of the application, and also one participant stated that he could develop a new learning strategy for himself from the process and sequence that was guided by the application. All the participants agreed with a positive review that they were able to acquire new knowledge during the testing session and also were positive about the long- term retention of the Idioms in their memory and then applying them in conversations. Another participant said she liked practicing listening and pronunciation using native speakers. One participant stated he found it easier to learn the phrases in their context of use (as in sentences), rather than as isolated words with dictionary meanings only. The participants also were motivated to try a similar application again for their self-study. Figure 13 explained what participants responded about IPod usage for English language acquisition.

Participant	Did the application help learn something new about English language	Would it be possible to remember information learnt in this application?	After this experience, I feel motivated to use a similar mobile application to learn English by myself.
1	To a great extent	Somewhat	Agree
2	To a great extent	To a great extent	Agree
3	Somewhat	To a great extent	Agree
4	To a great extent	To a great extent	Agree
5	To a great extent	Somewhat	Agree

Fig13. Learning and use

Learning Style: One of the concerns for MALL is whether it is possible to promote collaboration among students. We were interested in getting a preliminary opinion from the participants based on their experience and personal learning styles. The majority of them stated they feel more comfortable having interaction with a group and yet retain the option to learn individually, depending on specific learning modules. Two indicated they feel more comfortable with individual learning. Four out of five participants mentioned that instructor feedback on the activities were important. The capability of a portable device as a means of social interaction, combined with MALL-based activity, was rated differently. For three, it was positive, considering that tools like chat can be made available, but might not be tied to any specific activity, and two participants stated that MALL-based devices might not be suitable for

promoting such interaction. Regarding the learning styles, diverse opinion existed for all of them, but the majority identified as visual learners. The perception of a device that supported a particular learning style leaned toward the visual and auditory. Figure 14 identified the reader preference and learning styles of the user.

Participant	How do you prefer to learn English?	Do you prefer feedback from instructor when completing assignment?	Is IPod capable of promoting social interaction?	What kind of learner are you?	What kind of learning is best supported by IPod?
1	Comfortable learning English individually as well as in a group	Yes; almost always	To a great extent	Reading-writing	Visual
2	Comfortable learning English individually as well as in a group	Yes; for pronunciation and speaking mistakes	To a great extent	Tactile/Kinesthetic learner – prefer to learn via experience (moving, touching, doing)	Auditory
3	Comfortable learning English individually as well as in a group	Yes; feedback will help correct the mistakes and improve things overall	Somewhat	Visual Learner (is easier to learn from pictures; visual aids such as overhead slides, diagrams, handouts, etc.)	Visual
4	Comfortable learning English individually.	Not necessary	Somewhat	Auditory learner (best learn through listening)	Auditory
5	Comfortable learning English individually.	Yes; Prefer feedback from instructor led activity or from the application.	Not at all	Visual learner (is easier to learn from pictures; visual aids such as overhead slides, diagrams, handouts, etc.)	Reading / Writing

Fig14. Interaction / learning style

The above data is inconclusive (because of the limited design of the current study), but provides some preliminary indication about user interaction in this specific learning context.

VII. Recommendations for Future Applications

We have had some interesting preliminary observations from the collected data and based on that, we can make some fairly generalized design recommendations.

Interface-Based Recommendations

1. Allow the interface to be intuitive enough, so that users of the application can skip steps and come back as and when they want to. Even when the activity is sequential, allow the interface to maintain a trail of activities as completed and attempted. This action might be reserved for the corner of the screen as an optional pop-up (Antoniou and Varadan, 2007).

2. Recent advances in touch screen technology have increased the prevalence of touch screens and have prompted a wave of new touch screen-based devices. Include accessibility features in the screen, where page size/text size could be zoomed-in directly on the touch screen through finger flexing (Ahmed et al., 2010).

3. Maintain a geometrical proportion between the numbers of text options shown for a matching task in an English exercise and how much of that text is visible on the screen without having to zoom-in. Adjust content accordingly. Objective results showed that there was little difference in reading performance above 6 point, but subjective comments from participants showed a preference for sizes in the middle range. We therefore suggest, for reading tasks, that designers of interfaces for mobile computers provide fonts in the range of 8-12 point to maximize readability for the widest range of users (Darroch et al., 2005).

4. Users do get frustrated with unresponsive systems. Even when a system closes down abruptly, the application should be programmed to include a "Restore Session" button. This recommendation is consistent with research findings suggesting that touch and multi-touch technologies have generated a great deal of excitement. Such research has focused on addressing the fundamental limitations associated with the use of touch as the primary input mechanism (Benko & Wigdor, 2010).

5. New users of high-function application systems can become frustrated and confused by the errors they make in the early stages of learning. The language learning application must include user orientation sessions where novice users are given guidance on how to use the application on hand-held devices. Examples of short task completion should be provided. Creating a training environment from the basic function of the system itself can afford substantially faster learning coupled with better learning achievement and better performance (Carroll and Carrithers, 1984).

Content-based Pedagogical Implications

1. For any EFL context, the content should be simple. Research suggests that a mobile language course should definitely include survival phrases and dialogues in the form of games/crosswords/puzzles, listening and reading activities as well as the matching word activity and fill in the missing word activity. Research projects have stressed the critical importance of lower-order skills in the vocabulary acquisition of beginning level learners. Bottom-up

processing, is an essential element of word knowledge that must be mastered before higher-order skills can be developed (Taraszow et al., 2010).

2. For MALL-based applications, readers preferred a more relaxing and flexible schedule where tasks were shorter and could be completed relatively easily without additional assistance. Content should be designed accordingly. Designers must know the difference between choosing content that might be a supplementary activity versus content that is a main activity (depending on the context of its use). Research suggests that for MALL-based language learning, readers prefer regular practice in short bursts (Traxler, 2007)

3. Readers might not be overwhelmingly in favor of group collaboration when completing MALL-based applications. This might be a result of the need for synchronous communication in group collaboration (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). It is possible for users to see MALL applications more as a way to upgrade their language skills individually, rather than learning from each other. So, it would be wise to compartmentalize the information and access accordingly. Allow users to switch between group and individual modes for the same content, but allowing different on-screen activities. The activities should allow for a choice between individual and group access. Content designers might want to strike a balance between the complexity of the content, the learning objectives in a learning module, its communication goals, and the extent to which group-based effort is warranted.

4.The way readers used the application in this study, it appears that extraordinary complexity in content and its design might not be well accepted and might indeed lead to user frustration, especially in an EFL context (although this viewpoint might be true for English as first language users too). Frustration might not be a result of users' language capability, but expectation about how they want to use a device. The extent to which a serious classroom-based, graded assignment could be incorporated as part of MALL is still debatable and requires more research and for a wider context of use.

The recommendations here are consistent with what Donald Norman (1988) suggested about ensuring a high degree of visibility, providing adequate feedback, presenting a good conceptual model, and offering good mapping to make sense of any product design and its purpose.

VIII. Conclusion

The optimal combination of content, complexity, and interface design is still a challenge that needs to be researched more intricately and even more so in an EFL context with moderate levels of language proficiency. In Japan, the results have shown some success in this specific context with computer science majors in this study, but a lot more testing is needed before any conclusive remarks can be made. This study was a small-scale one with a focus group and designed to initiate a model for testing both content and application interface further. It also was designed to raise awareness of issues that need suitable and additional consideration. The combination of current 3G services and latest handset devices capabilities shows that technologically it is possible to overcome most of the MALL challenges. Nevertheless, the key for MALL success is to create activities based on clearly stated pedagogical approaches that suit and take advantage of the full technical possibilities of 3G and learning needs.

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Investigating the Linguistics Features of Bayza Dialect

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***Abstract*—Bayza is a dialect spoken in the southwest of Iran in Fars province. This paper examines phonetic peculiarities, morphological system and vocabulary of this dialect. The dialect of Bayza has not yet been studied and described by either Iranians or non-Iranians researchers. Bayza is a region in Fars province and is located 50 kilometers northwest of Shiraz. This region is considered as one of the most ancient centers of Iran. Its Elamite-Achaemenian name is Anzan or Anshan. During Sassanid period, it was called "Darespid" and later on it was changed to Bayza by Arabs. Bayza is a fertile region with a mild and pleasant climate. Its population is around 45000, and the main job of its people is farming and animal husbandry. The Bayza dialect is among the dialects associated with the southwest Persian languages. In this paper, Bayza dialect is studied at the level of phonemics, phonetics, morphology and vocabulary.**

***Index Terms*—west Persian languages, southwest Persian languages, Bayzai, phonetic system, morphology, vocabulary**

I. Introduction and Background

Bayza is located in the northwest of Shiraz, Iran. In terms of country divisions, it is under the control of Sepidan Township. It is about 60/000 hectares in area and between 1220 to 1580 meters above the sea level. The Bayza plain is surrounded by mountains from three directions: the west, the north and the south. It has semi-dry climate, long summers and cold winters. Bayza plain has no constantly-running river and is irrigated by Kanats and deep wells. Its population is about 45000. The main job of its people is farming and animal husbandry. Bayza is considered as one of the most important centers of agriculture in Fars province in Iran.

The name "Bayza" belongs to the Islamic era and it has, for the first time, been mentioned in the early centuries of the advent of Islam. The first source which has cited the name of Bayza is "Tarikh-e-Tabari" in the fourth century A.H (Tabari, 1983 p. 581). Ibn-e-Balkhi's Farsnameh and Hamdollah-e-Mostofi's Nozhat -al-Gholub have argued that the name of Bayza has been chosen because of its white soil. The former name of Bayza, as quoted by Ibn-e-Hughal, was "Daresfid" (Ibn-e-Hughal, 1987), which according to Kalman Hovar, was translated "Bayza" by the Arabs (Hovar, Kalman , 1996: p.141).

Harrold Bailey has also written a detailed article in this regard and translated "Daresfid" as "wite Palace" (Bailey, Harrold, 2002: pp. 644-756).

Before Darisfid, Yaghut expressed the idea that the name of Bayza was Nisa, which means "the place of rest, or camp" (Bailey, Harrold, 2005: pp.644-756). On the basis of archeslogical excavations carried out by William Sumner in 1968-1978, it was made clear that "Malian hill" in Bayza region is the very "Anshan or Arzan", one of the two capitals of Elamiate (Sumner, 1988: a) and (Reiner, 1973) by the occupation of which Achemenian could stabilize their position in Fars.

The current dialect in Bayza is Bayzai, but people also speak in Lori as well as Lori-Bayzai, in the west northwest regions and Turkish and Turkish-Bayzai in some villages of the eastern regions or accents.

Although Bayza has not so far been listed as a Persian dialect regarding the phonetic changes of this dialect, we should consider it as one of the local dialects of Fars province which itself is a branch of southwest Persian dialects. Accordingly, this dialect is a relative of Sarvestani, Zarghani, Sabunati, Fasai, Jahromi, Neyrizi and Bavanati dialects. This classification is on the basis of a combination of family- language relations, geographical neighboring, ethnic identity and phonetic and vocabulary system.

The collection of southwest Persian dialects is within the larger collection of western Persian dialects.

The data of this research was collected in Bayza region during a few years. (2001-2003)

II. Research Questions

1. What are the differences between Bayzai dialect and the standard Persian dialect?
2. Do the description and analysis of Bayzai dialect contribute to the description and recognition of unknown aspects of standard Persian Language?

A. Phonetic Changes

1.1 vowels

The Bayzai dialect, like Standard Farsi, has 3 short vowels o, e, a, and 3 long vowels i, u and a. It has also 4 diphthongs ey, ow, āy and oy. The mentioned cases can be considered as diphthongs only from the phonetic, but not phonemic aspect because actually each of them consists of one simple vowel and one of the semi-vowels "w , y".

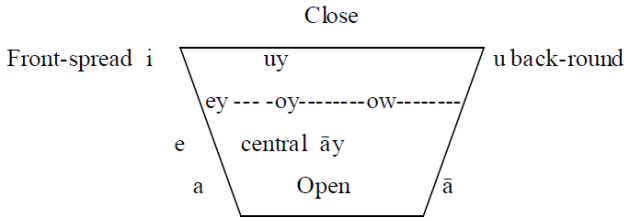

Figure: The vowels of Bayzai dialect

1.2. phonemic description of vowels

1.2.1. /a/ front, low, spread, open

1. /a/-/o/ : sar /sær/ *[head]* – sor / ɔ / *[slippery]*
2. /a/-/ā/ : xar /khær/ *[donkey]* – xār /khar/ *[thorn]*
3. /a/-/e/ : kar /kær/ *[deaf]* – ker /ker/ *[hidden, corner]*

1.2.2. /ā/ : back, low, spread, open

1. /ā/-/a/ : borrā /bɔrra/ *[winner]* – borra /bɔrrə/ *[harvester]*
2. /ā/-/e/ : xār /khar/ *[thorn]* – xer /kher/ *[throat]*
3. /ā/-/u/ : zār /zar/ *[deplorable (sad)]* – zur /zʊr/ *[force]*

1.2.3. /e/ : front, central, spread

1. /e/-/i/ : lem /lem/ *[manner]* – lim /līm/ *[harmful]*
2. /e/-/i/ : ker /ker/ *[hidden]* – kor /kɔr/ *[child]*
3. /e/-/u/ : del /del/ *[heart]* – dul /dʊl/ *[leather bucket]*

1.2.4. /i/ : Front, high, close, spread

1. /i/-/e/ : pir /pīr/ *[old]* – per /per/ *[ears of wheat]*
2. /i/-/o/ : dim /dīm/ *[edge]* – dom /dɔm/ *[tail]*
3. /i/-/o/ : šir /ʃīr/ *[milk]* – šur /ʃʊr/ *[salty]*

1.2.5. /o/ : back, round, half –open

1. /o/-/u/ : šor /ʃɔr/ *[flow of water]* – šur /ʃʊr/ *[salty]*
2. /o/-/a/ : pol /pɔl/ *[bridge]* – pal /pæl/ *[braid]*
3 ./o/-/e/ : kot /kɔt/ *[root]* – ket /ket/ *[edge]*

1.2.6. /u/ : Back, high, round, close

1. /u/-/o/ : buna /bʊnə/ *[pretext]* – bona /bɔnə/ *[temporary place of living]*
2. /u/-/ā/ : sul /sʊl/ *[information]* – sāl /sʌl/ *[year]*
3. /u/-/e/ : ruz /rʊz/ *[day]* – rez /rez/ *[vine]*

1.3. The Phonetic process of vowels

One characteristic of Bayzai dialect which distinguishes it from Standard Persian is using final vowel "a" instead of the final vowel "e" in Standard Persian

Example:	**Bayzai**	**Standard Persian**	
	āmoxta	āmuxte	learned
	rafta	rafte	gone
	xuna	xune	house

TABLE 1:
OTHER VOWEL CHANGES OF BAYZAI DIALECT IN COMPARISON WITH THE STANDARD FARSI ARE

Standard Persian		**Bayzāyi**		
[e]		[i]		
šeš	/ʃeʃ/	šiš	/ʃīʃ/	Six
kelid	/kelīd/	kilil	/kīlīl/	key
konjed	/k ndʒed/	konjit	/kɔndʒīt/	sesame
[e]		[o]		
gereftan	/gereftæn/	geroftan	/gerɔftæn/	to take
šemordan	/ʃemɔrdæn/	šomordan	/ʃɔmɔrdæn/	to count
emru	/emrʊ:/	omru	/ɔmrʊ:/	to count
emsāl	/emsʌl/	omsāl	/ɔmsal/	this year
[a]		[ā]		
arus	/ærʊs/	āris	/arīs/	
ammā	/æm /	āmā	/ama/	but
amu	/æmu:/	āmu	/amʊ/	uncle
[a]		[o]		
aždahā	/æʒdæha/	ožhā	/ɔʒdæha/	
abrišam	/æbrīʃæm/	abrišom	/æbrīʃɔm/	silk
kadu	/kædʊ:/	kodi	/kɔdī/	
[ā]		[o]		
āyene	/ajənə/	oyna	/ɔjnə/	mirror
pāyiz	/pajīz/	poyiz	/pɔjīz/	autumn
tapāle	/tæpalə/	tapola	/tæpɔlə/	dung
[ā]		[e]		
barādar	/bærʌdær/	beredar	/beredær/	brother
sāye	/sʌjə/	seya	/sejæ/	shadow
[u]		[i]		
balut	/bælʊt/	balit	/bælīt/	oak
xun	/khʊn/	xin	/khīn/	blood
mu	/mʊ:/	mi	/mi:/	hair

2.1. Consonants

By using the substitution method, the consonants of the dialect can be categorized as:

2.1.1./p/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, aspirated, plosive, oral, bilabial.
1./p/-/b/ : pa:r /par/ *[to weed out]* – ba:r /bar/ *[draw]*
2./p/-/m/ : kap /kæp/ *[novel]* – kam /kæm/ *[few (little)]*
3./p/-/t/ : par /pær/ *[feather]* – tar /tær/ *[wet]*

2.1.2./b/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, plosive, oral, bilabial.
1./b/-/p/ : bus /bʊs/ *[kiss]* – pus /pʊs/ *[skin]*
2./b/-/m/ : bāl /bal/ *[wealth]* – māl /mal/ *[property]*
3./b/-/d/: *[pretext]* – *[seed]*

2.1.3./f/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, fricative, oral, labio- dental
1./f/-/v/ : safā /sæfa/ *[serenity]* – savā /sæva/ *[morning]*
2./f/-/s/ : kaf /kæf/ *[floor]* – kas /kæs/ *[person]*
3./f/-/č/ : fāl /fal/ *[omen]* – čāl /tʃal/ *[nest]*

2.1.4. /v/: pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, fricative, oral, labio–dental
1./v/-/b/ : vaxt /væght/ *[time]* – baxt /bækht/ *[fortune]*
2./v/-/r/ : vā /va/ *[open]* – rā /ra/ *[day]*
3./v/-/n/ : vaxša /vækhʃə/ *[sneeze]* – naxša /nækhʃə/ *[map]*

2.1.5./t/ : pulmonic – outward, tense, voiceless, aspirated, passive, oral, alveo – palatal
1. /t/-/p/ : tenja /tendʒə/ *[sprout]* – penja /pendʒə/ *[finger]*
2. /t/-/d/ : tar /tær/ *[wet]* – dar /dær/ *[door]*
3. /t/-/k/ : kol /kɔl/ *[slow]* – tol /tɔl/ *[hill]*

2.1.6. /d/ : pulmonic, outward, voiced, plosive, oral, alveo – dental
1. /d/-/t/ : dir /dīr/ *[far]* – tir /tīr/ *[arrow]*
2. /d/-/n/ : dār /dar/ *[tree]* – nār /nar/ *[pomegranate]*
3. /d/-/g/ : del /del/ *[heart]* – gel /gel/ *[flower]*

2.1.7. /s/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, fricative, oral, alveo-dentel
1. /s/-/z/ : sir /sīr/ *[garlic (satisfied)]* – zir /zīr/ *[under]*
2. /s/-/d/ : sar /sær/ *[head]* – dar /dær/ *[door]*
3. /s/-/š/ : si /si:/ *[for]* – ši /ʃi:/ *[slope]*

2.1.8. /z/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiced, fricative, oral, alveolar
1. /z/-/s/ : za:rā /zæʔra/ *[zahra]* – sa:rā /sæʔra/ *[desert]*
2. /z/-/l/ : gāz /gaz/ *[a kind of nail]* – gāl /gal/ *[loose]*
3. /z/-/r/ : gāz /gaz/ *[a kind of nail]* – gār /gar/ *[end]*

2.1.9. /š/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, oral, alveo – palatal
1. /š/-/s/ : šāl /ʃal/ *[show]* – sāl /sal/ *[year]*
2. /š/-/x/ : šow /ʃɔʊ/ *[night]* – xow /khɔʊ/ *[sleep]*
3. /š/-/č/ : šow /ʃɔʊ/ *[night]* – čow /tʃɔʊ / *[rumor]*

2.1.10. /ž/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, fricative, oral, alveo – palatal[1]
1. /ž/-/r/ : možda /mɔʒdə/ *[glad tidings]* – morda /mɔrdə/ *[dead]*

2.1.11. /y/ : semi–vowel, pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, approximant, oral, velar
1. /y/-/d/ : ya /jæ/ *[one]* – da /dæ/ *[other]*
2. /y/-/p/ : yala /jælə/ *[oblique]* – pala /pælə/ *[foolish]*
3. /y/-/t/ : yorɣa /jɔrghə/ *[trot]* – torɣa /tɔrghə/ *[a kind of bird]*

2.1.12. /č/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, fricative, plosive, oral alveo – palatal
1. /č/-/d/ : čuɣ /tʃʊgh/ *[wood]* – duɣ /dʊgh/ *[yogurt drink]*
2. /č/-/j/ : čarg /tʃærg/ *[tresses]* – jarg /dʒærg/ *[branch]*
3. /č/-/k/ : čika /tʃīkə/ *[leakage]* – tika /tīkə/ *[piece]*

2.1.13. /j/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, fricative, plosive, alveo- palatal
1. /j/-/g/ : jerow /dʒerɔʊ/ *[socks]* – gerow /gerɔʊ/ *[bet]*
2. /j/-/č/ : juɣ /dʒʊgh/ *[brook]* – čuɣ /tʃʊgh/ *[wood]*
3. /j/-/r/ : jud /dʒʊd/ *[year]* – rud /rʊd/ *[good child]*

2.1.14. /k/ : Pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, aspirated, plosive, oral, palatal
1. /k/-/p/ : kuza /kʊzə/ *[jar]* – puza /pʊzə/ *[cape (prow)]*
2. /k/-/d/ : kār /kar/ *[work]* – tār /tar/ *[dark (cord)]*
3. /k/-/g/ : kend /kend/ *[hip]* – gend /gend/ *[knot]*

2.1.15. /g/ : pulmonic, outward, plosive, oral, palatal
1. /g/-/k/ : gerd /gerd/ *[round]* – kerd /kerd/ *[the root of the past – tense verb "go"]*
2. /g/-/d/ : gard /gærd/ *[dust]* – dard /dærd/ *[ache]*
3. /g/-/q/ : gabr /gæbr/ *[guebre (zoroastrian)]* – qabr /ghæbr/ *[grave]*

2.1.16. /x/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, fricative, oral, palatal
1. /x/-/k/ : xār /khar/ *[thorn]* – kār /kar/ *[work]*
2. /x/-/h/ : xiz /khīz/ *[jump]* – hiz /hīz/ *[lecherous]*
3. /x/-/q/ : xows /khɔʊs/ *[sleep]* – qows /ghɔʊs/ *[arc]*

2.1.17. /ʔ/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, plosive, oral, glottal[2]
1. /ʔ/-/b/ : abr /æbr/ *[cloud]* – babr /bæbr/ *[tiger]*
2. /ʔ/-/k/ : orsi /ɔrsi:/ *[shoes]* – korsi /kɔrsi:/ *[chair]*
3. /ʔ/-/m/ : ašk /æʃk/ *[tear]* – mašk /mæʃk/ *[leather bottle]*

2.1.18. /m/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, bilabial, nasal
1. /m/-/b/ : moz /mɔz/ *[wage]* – boz /bɔz/ *[goat]*
2. /m/-/p/ : menj /mendʒ/ *[fog]* – penj /pendʒ/ *[toe]*
3. /m/-/n/ : jum /dʒʊm/ *[clothes]* – jun /dʒʊn/ *[soul]*

2.1.19. /n/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, alveo-dental, nasal
1. /n/-/t/ : nar /nær/ *[male]* – tar /tær/ *[wet]*
2. /n/-/b/ : nana /nænə/ *[mother]* – bana /bænə/ *[mountain almond]*
3. /n/-/d/ : nun /nʊn/ *[bread]* – dun /dʊn / *[……]*

2.1.20. /l/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, lateral, alveolar
1. /l/-/r/ : gel /gel/ *[cloy]* – ger /ger/ *[pretext]*
2. /l/-/k/ : leštan /leʃtæn/ *[to put]* – keštan /keʃtæn/ *[to plant]*
3. /l/-/q/ : lem /lem/ *[made]* – qem /ghem/ *[funnel]*

2.1.21. /h/ : pulmonic, outward, tense, voiceless, fricative, oral, glottal

1. In Bayzai dialect, the existence of consonant (t) cannot be proved by using the minimal pairs, but there are some original words in which there exists the consonant /ž/, like: oždahā [dragon], hažda [eighteen].
2. ɣ and q are the different allophones of one phoneme. When they come before or after a consonant, they are considered as phoneme. When /ʔ/ comes at the beginning of a word , its presence or absence makes no signifact change and it is just an arbitrary (Najafi, Abu-al-Hasan, 1995, pp. 69 - 78)

1. /h/-/x/ : hār /har/ *[rabid]* – xār /khar/ *[thorn]*
2. /h/-/q/ : holla /hɔllə/ *[club]* – qolla /ghɔllə/ *[crest of mountain]*
3. /h/-/d/ : havā /hæva/ *[air, sky]* – davā /dæva/ *[drug]*

2.1.22. /q/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, plosive, oral, palatal

1. /q/-/k/ : qulak /ghʊlæk/ *[small ghoul (giant)]* – kulak /kʊlæk/ *[shoulder]*
2. /q/-/h/ : qiz /ghīz/ *[jump]* – hiz /hīz/ *[lecherous]*
3. /q/-/g/ : qowda /ghɔʊdə/ *[bunch]* – gowda /gɔʊdə/ *[hollow]*

2.1.23. /r/ : pulmonic, outward, lax, voiced, trill, oral, alveolar

1. /r/-/l/ : rās /ras/ *[right]* – lās /las/ *[dog]*
2. /r/-/m/ : rā /ra/ *[way]* – mā /ma/ *[moon]*
3. /r/-/z/ : bor /bɔr/ *[group]* – boz /bɔz/ *[goat]*

TABLE 2:
CONSONANTS OF BAYZAI DIALECT

place of articulation / Manner of articulation	bilabial	labio-dental	dental	alveolar	alveo-palatal	velar	uvular	glottal
Plosive (stop)	p, b		t, d			k, g	q	δ
Fricative		f, v		s, z	žš,		x	h
Fricative-plosive					j č,			
Trill				r				
Nasal	m			n				
Approximant				L		y		

2.2. phonetic process of consonants

In Bayzai dialect, as opposed to Standard Persian, some conversions have occurred.

TABLE 3:
SOME EXAMPLES OF PHONETIC PROCESS OF CONSONANTS ARE:

		Bayzai			**Standard Persian**		
1	d < t :	došak	/dɔʃæk/	<	tošak	/tɔʃæk/	Mattress
2	t < d:	maččet	/mætʃtʃet/	<	masjed	/mæsdʒed/	mosque
3	ss < st :	ossā	/ɔssa/	<	ostād	/ɔstad/	master
4	x < ɣ :	ossoɣun	/ɔssɔghʊn/	<	ostoxān	/ɔstɔkhan/	bone
5	x < q :	farx	/færkh/	<	farq	/færgh/	difference
6	q < x :	qiz	/ghīz/	<	xiz	/khīz/	jump
7	ɣ < g :	teɣerg	/tegherg/	<	tagarg	/tægærg/	hail
8	y < g :	diya	/dīæ/	<	digar	/dīgær/	other
9	f < b :	tanāf	/tænaf/	<	tanāb	/tænab/	rope
10	m < b :	kesm	/kesm/	<	kasb	/kæsb/	acquiring
11	v < b :	dovāla	/dɔvalə/	<	dobāre	/dɔbarə/	again
12	b < v :	dib	/dīb/	<	div	/dīv/	beast
13	m < n :	ambār	/æmbar/	<	anbār	/ænbar/	storehouse
14	L < n :	Lifa	/līfæ/	<	nife	/nīfə/	roof
15	n < m :	bun	/bʊn/	<	bām	/bam/	chicory
16	š < s :	kāšni	/kaʃnī/	<	kāsni	/kasnī/	chicory
17	š < j :	moštabā	/mɔʃtæba/	<	mojtabā	/mɔdʃtæba/	proper name
18	l < r :	zanjil	/zændʒīl/	<	zanjir	/zændʒīr/	chain
19	r < l :	šekāl	/ʃekal/	<	šekār	/ʃekar/	hunt
20	r < l :	taraktol	/tæræktɔl/	<	terāktor	/teraktɔr/	tractor
21	x < h :	bextar	/bekhtær/	<	behtar	/behtær/	better
22	b < y :	gerba	/gerbə/	<	gerya	/gerjə/	cry
23	r < y :	šur	/ʃʊr/	<	šuy	/ʃʊj/	wash
24	d < y :	hamsāda	/hæmsadə/	<	hamsāya	/hæmsajə/	neighbor
25	x < y :	morx	/mɔrkh/	<	morɣ	/mɔrgh/	hen
26	q < ɣ :	qorbat	/ghɔrbæt/	<	ɣorbat	/ghɔrbæt/	life in exile
27	l < d :	kilil	/kīlīl/	<	kelid	/kelīd/	key
28	d < t :	yord	/jɔrd/	<	yurt	/jʊrt/	camp
29	t < d:	konjit	/kɔndʒīt/	<	konjed	/kɔndʒed/	sesame
30	ss < st :	bassa	/bæsə/	<	baste	/bæstə/	close
31	ss < st :	dassak	/dæsæk/	<	dastak	/dæstæk/	handle
32	x < q :	boxča	/bɔkhtʃə/	<	bpqče	/bɔghtʃə/	bundle
33	q < x :	masqara	/mæsghæræ/	<	masxare	/maskhære/	ridiculous
34	ɣ < g :	Laɣat	/læghæt/	<	Lagad	/lægæd/	kick
35	y < g :	aya	/æjə/	<	agar	/ægær/	if
36	f < b :	jārruf	/dʒarʊf/	<	jārub	/dʒarʊb/	broom
37	m < b :	kamutar	/kæmʊtær/	<	kabutar	/kæbʊtær/	pigeon
38	v < b :	ševet	/ʃevet/	<	šebet	/ʃebet/	
39	b < v :	hombār	/hɔmbar/	<	hamvār	/hæmvar/	flat
40	m < n :	ambor	/æmbɔr/	<	anbor	/ænbɔr/	a pair of tongs
41	L < n :	Lilufar	/līlʊfær/	<	nilufar	/nīlʊfær/	morning glory
42	š < s :	šātir	/ʃatīr/	<	sātur	/satʊr/	chopper
43	š < j :	paštā	/pæʃta/	<	panjtā	/pændʒta/	five
44	l < r :	balg	/bælg/	<	barg	/bærg/	leaf

In Bayzai dialect, in respect of syllable structure of the words, some phonetic changes could be observed in some separate cases. This change is: the conversion or omission of one consonant in the paired consonants in the middle and at the end of the words:

1. consonant "t" in group "s" →

xassa /khæsə/	<	xaste /khæstə/	tired
ossā /ɔssa/	<	ostād /ɔstad/	master
dāsun /dasʊn/	<	dāstān /dastan/	story
rās /ras/	<	rāst /rast/	right

2. consonant "d" in group "rd , zd , nd":

ārbiz /arbīz/	<	ārdbiz /ardbīz/	sieve
bolan /bɔlæn/	<	boland /bɔlænd/	high
moz /mɔz/	<	mozd /mɔzd/	wage
ruxuna /rʊkhʊnə/	<	rudxune /rʊdkhʊnə/	river

3. consonant "m, n" in group "sm, ns":

čiš	<	češm	<	čašm	eye

biši	<	binšin	seat

4. consonant “y” in group “ry”:

čēra /tʃerə/	<	čarxa /tʃærkhə/	cycle

The omission of the consonants after the short and long vowels:

omru	>	emruz	today		eye
a	<	az	from	seat	
zā	>	vāz	> bāz	open	
engā /enga/	<	engār /engar/		as	
doxta /dɔkhtə/	<	doxtar /dɔkhtær/		girl	
ya /jə/	>	yak /jæk/		one	

In Bayzai dialect, the consonant “h” is added before the vowel at the beginning of some words:

hešār /heʃar/	<	ešāra /eʃarə/	Hint (pointing at)
hassom /hæsɔm/	<	assom /æsɔm/	skimmer
hafi /hæfĩ/	<	afˇi /æfĩ/	viper
helāj /heladʒ/	<	elāj /eladʒ/	cure

Sometimes “h” is omitted from the end of the words:

mā /ma/	<	māh /mah/	moon
pi /pī/	>	pih /pīh/	tallow
ko /kɔ/	>	kuh /kʊh/	mountain
čā /tʃa/	<	čāh /tʃah/	well
ru /rʊ/	<	ruh /rʊh/	spirit
jāgā /dʒaga/	>	jāygāh /dʒajgah/	position

The “h” consonant is also omitted from the middle of some words and because of which the word has compensatory extension.

ko:na /kɔnə/	>	kohne /kɔhnə/	old
ba:ra /bæʔra/	>	bahre /bæhrə/	profit
da:na /dænə/	>	dahane	opening
sa:rā /særa/	<	sahrā /sæhra/	desert
za:rā /zæʔra/	>	zahrā /zæhra/	Proper name

The omission of the consonant “h” from the middle and the end of the Arabic loanwords occurs according to the phonetic rules of Bayzai dialect example:

ma:mud /mæʔmʊd/	>	mahmud /mæhmʊd/	(Proper name)
mobā /mɔba/	>	mobāh /mɔbah/	permissible
ta:vil	>	tahvil	delivery
e:yānan /eʔjanæn/	>	ehyānan /ehjanæn/	by any chance
towfa /tɔʊfə/	<	tohfe /tɔhfə/	gift
mo:kam /mɔʔkæm/	>	mohkam /mɔhkæm/	firm
ma:kum /mæʔkʊm/	>	mahkum /mæhkʊm/	Convicted criminal
na:r /næʔr/	>	nahr /næhr/	stream

a) Consonant distribution

All the consonants of Bayzai dialect can occur at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of a syllable, except “h” which can be omitted from the end of the syllable, e.g. “feqh” (Islamic jurisprudence) which is pronounced “feq” and “čāh” (well)- čā, “rāh” (way, road) – rā , “māh” (moon) – mā , “ruh” (soul , spirit) – ru.

b) Vowel distribution:

All the vowels of Bayzai dialect can occur at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of a syllable.

1-3-1- Phonetactics and Syllable construction

In Bayzai dialect, like standard Farsi, no word has consonant cluster. In the beginning position many words of this dialect have 2-consonant cluster in the beginning or middle position, but 3- consonant clusters are not common in this dialect. For example, the word "tambar" [postage stamp] is pronounced so in Persian, but "tambar" in Bayzai dialect

Different kinds of syllables in this dialect are: cv , cvc , cvcc , like: pā (foot) , pir (old), pors (ask).

B. Word Formation (Morphology)

2.1. Male and female: In this dialect, there is no gender distinction for nouns. But according to the farm husbandry nature of the region, there are different names for different kinds of male and female animals. For example for different kinds of "cow", the following words there exit.

Male → jonga /dɔʒngə/, varzow /værzɔʊ/, toxmi /tɔkhmī/

female → šangod /ʃængɔd/, [cow] mādagow /madegɔʊ/

2.2. singular and plural

The plural is constructed by adding the suffixes "un" and "-hā" in which "h" is omitted: men , women , trees

2.3. Definite and indefinite

The definite suffixes are "-u" and "-a", like:

Bilâ (that shovel), the same as Burjani, Māsarmi and Samghani dialects.

And "-u" like: doxtaru /dɔkhtærʊ/ (that girl), like most of the dialects of Fars province as well as the Shiraz dialect.

The indefinite mark is "-i" (with or whitout "one")

Morqi /mɔrghī/ (a hen), ya deraxti /derakhtī/ (one tree)

Sometimes phonetic change is accompanied by adding a go-between consonant:

Ya mardey /mærdej/ (a man), ya bačey /bætʃej/ (a child)

2.4. Pronouns

2.4.1. Disjunct personal pronouns are:

mo /mɔ/ (mā) {I,we}, to /tɔ/ (you), u /ʊ/ (he/she),

mā /ma/ (we), šomā /ʃɔma/ (you), unā /ʊna/ (they), inā /īna/ (they)

2.4.2. Conjunct personal pronouns are:

-om /ɔm/ (my), et /et/ (your), eš /eʃ/ (aš) {his/her}

-emun /emʊn/ (our) , -etun /etʊn/ (your) , -ešun /eʃʊn/ (their)

2.4.3. Demonstration pronouns:

i /ī/ (this), u /ʊ/ (that), hami /hæmī/ (this one), hamu /hæmʊ/ (that one).

2.4.4. Interrogation pronouns:

ki /kī/ (who), key /kej/ (when), siče /sītʃe/ (why)

2.4.5. Indefinite pronouns:

Diya /dījə/ (other), hama /hæmæ/ (all)

2.5. Number

Generally, the numeral system of this dialect is the same as Farsi but some interesting cases are:

Doyyom /dɔjjɔm/ (second), seyyom /sejjɔm/ (third)

Just in these 2 cases, "yyom" is used. In other cases, only "om" is used:

2.6. verb

2.6.1. In using simple past, present prefect, past continuous, past perfect, subjunctive past (past subjunctive), present indicative, present subjunctive, and imperative, apart from phonetic changes. Bayzai dialect is the same as Standard Persian. Conjugation of a verb is based on 2 verb substances: past substance and present substance.

Examples for the simple past are: singular: raf, raft, raftam (he/she/I/you went)

Plural: raftand, raftin, raftim, (they/you/we went)

Examples for the present indicative: singular: mire, mirey, miram (he she is going, you're going, I'm going), plural: miran, mirin, mirim (they/you/we are going).

The verb "must" in singular third person in the auxiliary verbs is used a "ba": mibā rafta bāše →s/he must have gone.

The verb "Dadan" (give) is conjugated without "h" in present tense: singular: mide, midim, midam (s/he gives, you / I give)

Plural: midem /mīdem/, midin /mīdīn/, midim /mīdīm/ (they / you / we give)

2.6.2. verb prefixes

There exit 2 types of verb prefixes:

1. continuous prefixes "mi" (both for present continuous and past continuous):

migi /mīgī/ (you say): migofti /mīgɔftī/ (you were saying)

2. full prefix (for subjunctive and imperative) which is in from of be, bo, bu, bi:

bezan /bezæn/ (hit), bokoš /bɔkɔʃ/ (kill), budun /bʊdʊn/ (know), biyow /bījɔʊ/ (come).

2.6.3. verb suffixes:

The suffixes of present indicative and present subjunctive are:

2.6.3.1. Indicative

Singular: 1.am (om) 2. i/ey 3. a(e) plural: 1. im (eym) 2. in (eyn) 3. en (an)

2.6.3.2. In singular second person of past intransitive verbs, "t" disappears

Singular: raftom /ræftɔm/ (I went), rafti /ræftī/ (you went), raf /ræf/ (he/she went)

Plural: poxtom /pɔkhtɔm/ (I cooked), poxti /pɔkhtī/ (you cooked), pox /pɔkh/ (s/he cooked)

An example of conjugating verb is:

Singular: kerdom /kerdɔm/ (I did), kerdi /kerdī/ (you did), ker /ker/ (s/he did)

Plural: kardim /kærdīm/ (we did), kardin /kærdīn/ (you did), karden /kærden/ (they did)

The verb "hasten" (being) in singular third person is in the from of "he"

Singular: hesom /hesɔm/ (I am), hesi /hesī/ (you are), he (s) /hes/ (s/he is)
Plural: hesim /hesīm/ (we are), hesin /hesīn/ (you are), hesen /hesen/ (they are)
And its negative from is:
Singular: nisom /nīsɔm/ (I'm not), nisi /nīsī/ (you're not), ni /nī/ (s/he is not)
Plural: nisim /nīsīm/ (we're not), nisin /nīsīn/ (you're not), nisen /nīsen/ (they're not)
2.7. derivation:
2.7.1. The most important derivative suffixes are:
- i → Make adjective from mass noun e.g.
howlaki /adj, hɔʊlækī/ (hastily), bixod /adj, bīkhɔd/ (of poor quality),
- ak which is a relative pronoun suffix meaning similarity:
āssak /asæk/ (mill), toxmak /tɔkhmæk/ (roasted seed)
-aki: which is relative suffix → maidenhood , bovine (pertaining to cow)
-uk: which is relative adj → the male of a plant, ivy
-ka which makes noun: tofka /tɔfkæ/ (spit), bālaka /bʌlækæ/ (niche)
2.8. syntax
Generally, the syntax of Bayzai is the same as Farsi's.
The Bayzai vocabularies are divided into 3 groups:
3.1. The Arabic and Turkish loanwords which come to this dialect through the standard language:
" talab [claim] , sarf /særf/ [consuming] , ra:m /ræm/ [composition] , qassam /ghæsæm/ [oath]" are same examples of Arabic loanwords and words "il [a nomadic tribe], ordu /ɔrdʊ/ [camp], qešlāq /gheʃlagh/ [winter quarter], yeylāq /jejlagh/ [summer quarter], qoroγ /ghɔrɔgh/ [forhidden]" are some Turkish loanwords.
3.2. There are some words which are common in both Bayzai dialect and standard Farsi:
šow /ʃɔʊ/ [night], ruz /rʊz/ [day], āsemun /asemʊn/ [sky], bača /bætʃə/ [child], koh /kɔh/ [mountain], del /del/ [heart]
3.3. words which are exclusive to this dialect, or at least are not used in standard Farsi anymore and which even do not exist in the comprehensive encyclopedias such as Dehxoda Encyclopedia. Therefore, these words can be listed as the exclusive vocabularies of this dialect. The number of these vocabularies is very large, so just some examples are given here:
ārg /arg/ [Palate], axiya /ækhījə/ [rumination], bārizi /barīzī/ [a gift from bridegroom to the bride], bošma /bɔʃmə/ [hedge], bogol /bɔgɔl/ [a cylindrical container to keep flour and salt], pāxtan /pakhtæn/ [cutting back branches], tabru /tæbrʊ/ [re-growing of the plants], bāhenda /bahendə/ [bird], xāg /khag/ [egg], rašt /ræʃt/ [ash], regā /rega/ [separate], sener /sener/ [it's a kind clay to build a wall], kotorom /kɔtɔrɔm/ [sick], koč /kɔʃt/ [chin], korpa /kɔrpə/ [not grown], kener /kener/ [pick], kijik /kīdʒīk/ [button], got /gɔt/ [great], gaštan /gæʃtæn/ [to bite], gener /gener/ [knot], gowān /gɔvan/ [a kind of skirt], hilu /hīlʊ:/ [endurance (swing)], yakābas /jækabæs/ [excellent], digna /dīgnə/ [yesterday], doxtan /dɔkhtæn/ [to milk], tandār /tændʌr/

III. Discussion

There is no considerable difference between Bayza dialect and standard Persian. The observable quantitative differences are naturally the continuation of phonetic evolution of Bayza dialect. There is no qualitatively marked difference between the phonologic and phonetic systems of Bayza and standard Persian. For example:
Y→g or X→q or ss→st or d→t
The evolutions are not that effective to lead speakers of two dialects to have a difficalty interacting. The description and analysis of Bayza dialect can be effective and helpful due to the recognition of some unknown aspects of Persian. Fot example, in terms of investigating the phonetic evolution of r→y and also comparing the Bayza word شستن ،شور 'shostan', 'shoor' respectively with the word 'شوي' 'shooy' in standard Persian, we historically come to this point that the root of this word has involved the final consonant and the same origin of its Avestan equivalent 'šuθra:
Examining the phonetic evolution of m→n and comparing the word ambar in Bayza dialect with the word anbar in Persian showed that the consonant /n/ in standard Pertion is the next evolution of the prefix 'ham' in Old Persian and the consonant /m/ still exists in Bayza dialect.
Nevertheless, some of the words that still exist in Bayza dialect are nowadays dead in standard Persian and can help us identify some of the verbs and nouns in standard Persian. Verbs like 'باختن' 'Bakhtan' or nouns like tandār, sener, gowan do not exist in any published dictionary or glossary.

IV. Conclusion

1. Bayzai dialect, is a branch of southwest Iranian dialects.
2. In this dialect there exist 3 short vowels, 3 long vowels and 4 diphthongs.
3. There is no difference in the pronunciation of the short and long vowels in Bayzai dialect and standard Farsi.

4. Bayzai tense or lax consonant makes no meaning distinction in this dialect.
5. Hamze/?/ has just a distinctive role and its presence or absence makes no meaning distinction.
6. Always voiceless consonants are in contrast with the voiced consonants.
7. In this dialect, no syllable begins with a consonant cluste.
8. In terms of structure, Bayzai dialect is similar to Farsi, but it preserves its phonetic dependence and differences.
9. Plural morphemes in this dialect are ān and hā, in which h is sometimes omitted.
10. Ezafe suffix (mark), like Farsi, is e
11. Indefinite suffixes are "ey" and "i" which come after noun and "u" is the definite suffix.
12. The object identifiers are "na" or "a" which come after noun
13. There is no grammatical gender in this dialect.
14. Bayzai vocabularie's have been disappeared (died) by passing the time and given their place to the new ones.
15. In using Bayzai vocabulary and idioms, many words have been preserved in the tradition and costume of the people life.
16. Many of these vocabs are not used in standard Farsi any more, so they can be regarded as a great treasure for future studies.

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Defosilization of /æ/ Phoneme Pronunciation of Non-native EFL Teachers

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***Abstract*—The literature asserts that when a foreign language is learned after puberty, the fossilized pronunciation problems of adult FL learners cannot be remedied. However, to the best of knowledge there was no empirical evidence to support this belief. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate whether or not non-native English teachers' fossilized pronunciation mistakes on /æ/ vowel phoneme of the British English language can be cured through treatment. First, a diagnostic test as a pre-test was used before the treatment phase to identify participants' pronunciation problems and the same test was repeated after treatment to check out any difference. As the data revealed from repeated measurements, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used and the results displayed a significant difference ($z= -3.527$, $p< .05$). That is, the application of the cure programme developed using the audio-articulation method facilitated participant teachers to cure their pronunciation problem on /æ/ vowel phoneme of the British English. In brief, this study has proved this case and cured non-native English teachers' problem. All in all, this study recommends non-native language teachers to improve language teaching materials with explicit pronunciation exercises especially for adult learners using similar methods.**

***Index Terms*—fossilized mistakes, pronunciation errors, mistake eraser, fossilization.**

I. Introduction

The hypothesis that there is a critical or sensitive period for first language acquisition plays an important role in the field during the last 50 years. The critical period for learning is defined in biology by Colombo (1982) as "a time during the life span of an organism in which the organism may be affected by some exogenous influence to an extend beyond that observed at other times" (p. 261). During this period, there seems to be sensitivity to stimuli and after this period there is a non-linear decline in sensitivity. That is, the first few years of life is the crucial time in acquiring the first language if the needed input is provided. Lenneberg (1964) asserted that the crucial period of language acquisition begins at age two and completed around puberty. And if no language is learned before this age, it could never be learned in a normal functional sense. For instance, "the wild child" Genie has always been an extreme example. As she was found, she was thirteen years old and appeared to be entirely without language. The theory was tested but she was unable to acquire her first language completely. Actually, this evidence makes the issue more complicated for adult foreign language learners since first they have passed the critical period and second they do not have the chance to share the same acquisition/learning setting when compared to first language learners.

Since the 1960s much research has been also done on the age factor in foreign language learning. Nevertheless the results were contrary to the common misbelieve and supported the generalization that adults in a formal learning setting learn faster than children. It does not appear applicable to the pronunciation, however. Despite the fast progression in grammar, adult learners rarely achieve a native-like accent. Selinker (1972) goes further and asserts that once language learners have passed the critical period, their pronunciation becomes inevitably fossilized. This belief is supported by an extreme but widely accepted Kissenger effect sample. It is known that although Henry Kissenger, German-born American political scientist and diplomat, had magnificent and fluent control on the English language, he had a German accent while speaking English.

Assertions such as Selinker's and extreme samples like Kissenger effect has set ground for many researchers' ideas as it is too difficult or impossible to change pronunciation once a certain age of pronunciation has been reached. However they are not able to put on view the impossibility of defosilization. That is, although it is very hard to change learners' pronunciation after the critical or sensitive period, it does not mean that there is no rehabilitation for this deficiency. For example Acton (1984) states that pronunciation deficiencies frequently seem to be rigid or inflexible. Nevertheless, he suggests teachers some patience and learners a concerted effort. Since, the learner, learners' FL learning setting and the source of the pronunciation problem need to be analysed in depth to desuggest this kind of inhibitions. In brief, learners should not only be prepared to rehabilitation but also encouraged to make a concerted effort.

One of these pronunciation problems for non-native adult learners of English language is the English contrasts "ash" /æ/ and wedge /ʌ/ vowel phonemes. Both the phonetic symbol /ʌ/ and the sound are commonly referred to as either a wedge, a caret, or a hat. It is an open mid-back unrounded vowel phoneme as in the words cub /kʌb/ and dub /dʌb/. The

English “ash” /æ/ vowel phoneme, on the other hand, is a front open low unrounded short vowel as in the well-known words bad /bæd/ and cat /kæt/. This phoneme is problematic to pronounce in many wide spoken languages such as Turkish, however (see Figure 1).

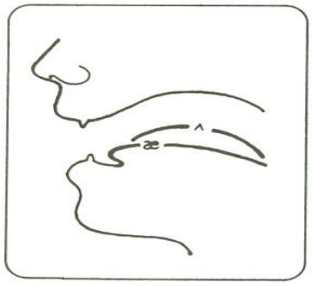

Figure 1: Aspiration of “ash” /æ/ and wedge /∧/ vowel phonemes

Therefore most Turkish adult learners of English language articulates /æ/ vowel phoneme like /e/ as in pan /p*e n/ and not as / pæn/ (see Figure 2).

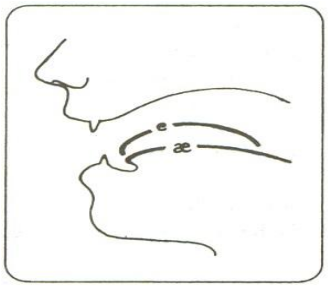

Figure 2: Aspiration of “ash” /æ/ and /e/ vowel phonemes

Nevertheless, a rehabilitation method is required to verify the effectiveness of these assumptions. Although the rareness of such methods makes the situation harder, the audio-articulation method by Demirezen (2003) seems to be a valuable pronunciation teaching method which asserts to cure fossilized mistakes of adult learners, especially of Turkish learners of English language. This kind of problem does not only harm the communicative competence of Turkish adult learners but also teacher trainees, novice teachers and teachers-on-the-job. For example mispronunciation causes sometimes serious interpretation and therefore interaction problems. To avoid such troubles, pronunciation rehabilitation cures need to be applied to such learners and teachers. Therefore, in this study, /æ/ and /∧/ vowel phoneme articulation problems of Turkish FL teachers will be examined and a remedy will be produced by the Audio-articulation Method to cure such problems on pronunciation.

II. Method

A. Participants in the Study

The study was carried out in the FL department at a Turkish university by participating of 16 lecturers. Five males and eleven females enrolled in the cure programme which lasted a total course hour. The age of participants varied from 25-32 and their teaching experience two to nine years. They all have scored 85 and above on foreign language proficiency examination for state employees. Finally, all of the lecturers are graduates of ELT departments in Turkish universities and they have never been in an English speaking country to improve their language skills.

B. The Problem of the Study

The English contrasts “ash” /æ/ and wedge /∧/ vowel phonemes are crucial articulation problems for Turkish teachers and learners who have learned the target language after the critical age period. That is, as stated earlier, especially the “ash” /æ/ phoneme is challenging Turks and therefore most Turkish adult learners of the English language articulates /æ/ vowel phoneme like /e/ as in pan /p*e n/ and not as / pæn/. This kind of articulation problem requires specific attention especially in teacher training since these mistakes harm the validity and professional status of the FL teachers.

C. Research Design & Data Analysis

In the field of ELT diagnostic tests are designed to recognize specified aspects of a language. That is, with a narrow scope of analysis, these tests aim to identify a specific condition or problem. For example, as it is in this case, a test in pronunciation can diagnose the phonological features of the English language and offer the researcher to pinpoint the pronunciation problems of non-native FL teachers. In the same line of thinking, participants in this study were directed to read aloud a passage titled “Fat Pat” while they were tape-recorded (see Appendix). The passage used in this study as

a diagnostic test contained 43 /æ/, 5 /∧/ and 14 /e/ vowel phonemes to check whether participants could identify and pronounce the phonemes in an accurate way. After the articulation problems had been recognized, a treatment phase was applied to cure or defossilize participants' pronunciation problems (see the treatment phase). That is, a fossilized mistake eraser called the audio-articulation method was implemented to remedy the fossilized pronunciation mistake on /æ/ vowel phoneme of the British English language which lasted only a total class hour to see the immediate effects. Two weeks after the treatment, the passage used as a diagnostic test was directed to the participants for the second time to see the effects of the treatment phase.

In conclusion, the performances of the participants, i.e. the correct pronounced phonemes, were evaluated and scored by a native speaker of the English language. As the form of data is quantitative, the method of analysis is statistical and the manner of data collection is experimental, the scores got from the pre- and post tests are compared statistically to see whether there is any significant difference. Since the case was repeated measurements on a single sample to assess whether their population means differ, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to display the significance of the study.

III. An Application of the Audio-articulation Method

One of the important problems in foreign and second language classes has been to apply the construct of motivation. It is not our present issue but it is very important to take learners' attention on the subject matter. So, the motivation and warm-up section should take a couple of minutes. Later on, a variation on Audio-Lingual Method teaching is based in the procedure most often referred to as 3P approach which stands for Presentation, Practice, and Production. Shortly explained by Harmer (2001), in this procedure the teacher introduces the language to be taught, the students practice the language using accurate reproduction techniques such as individual or choral repetitions. Later the learners, using the new language, make sentences of their own.

A. Preparation of a Corpus

In accordance with the principles of the audio-articulation method, the researcher prepares a corpus about 100 words pertaining this fossilized problem-causing phoneme and develops all of his/her exercises from this corpus.

The words cited in the corpus listed by Nielsen and Nielsen in 2010 are generally exhibiting /æ/ and /∧/ sounds phonemically. According to Demirezen (2006) the researcher's exhortations of the words in the corpus and his employment of the other drilling techniques like minimal pair contrasts, chain drills, substitution drills, repetition drills, inflection drills, replacement drills, restatement drills, completion drills, transposition drills, expansion drills, contraction drills, transformation drills, integration drills, rejoinder drills, restoration drills, question-answer drills, language games and many other creative exercise types, are all of great help in this respect.

The researcher does exhortations on the corpus words and gets them to be repeated without boring the students, bearing the time limitation in mind.

The Corpus

cab /kæb/ - cub /k∧b/
nab /næb/ - nub /n∧b/
stab /stæb/ - stub /st∧b/
dad /dæd/ - dud /d∧d/
calf /kæf/ - cuff /k∧f/
hag /hæg/ - hug / h∧g/
slag /slæg/ - slug /sl∧g/
drag /dræg/ - drug /dr∧g/
clang /klæŋ/ - clung /kl∧ŋ/
sang /sæŋ/ - sung /s∧ŋ/
pack /pæk/ - puck /p∧k/
tack /tæk/ - tuck /t∧k/
rapture /ræptʃə/ - rupture/r∧ptʃə/
shrank /ʃræŋk/ - shrunk /ʃr∧ŋk/
ma'am /mæm/ - mum /m∧m/
ham /hæm/ - hum /h∧m/
cram /kræm/ - crumb /kr∧m/
fan /fæn/ - fun /f∧n/
task /tæk/ - tusk /t∧sk/
cap /kæp/ - cup /k∧p/
bass /bæs/ - bus /b∧s/
dank /dæŋk/ - dunk /∧ŋk/
ran /ræn/ - run /r∧n/
hatch /hæntʃ/ - hutch /h∧tʃ/
dab /dæb/ - dub /d∧b/
grab /græb/ - grub /gr∧b/
bad /bæd/ - bud /b∧d/
mad /mæd/ - mud /m∧d/
half /hæf/ - huff /h∧f/
jag /dʒæg / - jug /dʒ∧g /
snag /snæg/ - snug /sn∧g/
tag /tæg/ - tug /t∧g/
slang /slæŋ/ - slung /sl∧ŋ/
tang /tæŋ/ - tongue /t∧ŋ/
track /træk/ - truck /tr∧k/
stack /stæk/ - stuck /st∧k/
plaque /plæk/-pluck /pl∧k/
sank /sæŋk/ - sunk /s∧ŋk/
cam /kæm/ - come /k∧m/
slam /slæm/ - slum /sl∧m/
swam /swæm/ - swum /sw∧m/
pan /pæn/ - pun /∧n/
gal /gæl/ - gull /g∧l/
damp /dæmp/ - dump /d∧mp/
mass /mæs/ - muss /m∧s/
flank /flæŋk/ - flunk /fl∧ŋk/
tan /tæn/ - ton /t∧n/
match /mæntʃ/ - much /m∧tʃ/
flab /flæb/ - flub /fl∧b/
tab /tæb/ - tub /t∧b/
cad /kæd/ - cud /k∧d/
gassed /gæsd/ - gust /g∧sd/
bag /bæg/ - bug /b∧g/
lag /læg/ - lug /l∧g/
rag /ræg/ - rug /r∧g/
hang /hæŋ/ - hung /h∧ŋ/
rang /ræŋ/ - rung /r∧ŋ/
branch /bræntʃ/ - brunch /br∧ntʃ/
sack /sæk/ - suck /s∧k/
bank /bæŋk/ - bunk /b∧ŋk/
staff /stæf/ - stuff /st∧f/
mask /mæk/ - musk /m∧sk/
dam /dæm/ - dumb /d∧b/
ram /ræm/ - rum /r∧m/
ban /bæn/- bun /b∧n/
span /spæn/ - spun /sp∧n/
gravel/grævəl/ - grovel /gr∧vəl/
lamp /læmp/ - lump /l∧mp/
patter /pætə/ - putter /p∧tə/
plank /plæŋk/ - plunk /pl∧ŋk/
sadden /sædən/ - sudden /s∧dən/

sand /sænd/ - sunned /s∧nd/	stand /stænd/ - stunned /st∧nd/
dance /dæns/ – dunce /d∧ns/	badge /bædʒ/ - budge /b∧dʒ/
rabble /ræbəl/ - rubble /r∧bəl/	ramble /ræmbəl/ - rumble /r∧mbəl/
paddle /pædəl/ -puddle /p∧dəl/	bangle /bængəl/ -bungle /b∧mgəl/
jangle /dʒængəl/ - jungle /dʒ∧ngəl/	ankle /ænkəl/ - uncle /∧nkəl/
clamp /klæmp/ - clump /kl∧mp/	ramp /ræmp/ - rump /r∧mp/
stamp /stæmp/ - stump /st∧mp/	adder /ædə/ - udder /∧də/
pamper /pæmpə/ - pumper /p∧mpə/	flatter /flætə/ - flutter /fl∧tə/
graph /græf/ - gruff /gr∧f/	gash /gæʃ/ - gush /g∧ʃ/
hash /hæʃ/ - hush /g∧ʃ/	lash /læʃ/ - lush /l ∧ʃ/
flash/flæʃ/ - flush /fl∧ʃ/	slash /slæʃ/ - slush /sl∧ʃ/
mash/mæʃ/ - mush /m∧ʃ/	rash /ræʃ/ - rush /r∧ʃ/
brash/bræʃ/ - brush /br∧ʃ/	crash /kræʃ/ - crush /kr∧ʃ/
thrash /θræʃ/ - thrush /θr∧ʃ/	back /bæk/ - buck /b∧k/
shack /ʃæk/ - shuck /ʃ∧k/	lack /læk/ - luck /l∧k/
spank /spæŋk/ - spunk /sp∧ŋk/	drank /dræŋk/ - drunk /dr∧ŋk/

B. Practicing the Topic

The pronunciation problem-causing /æ/ and /∧/ is practiced in class by getting the tongue twisters repeated by the students individually or chorally. The researcher prepares tongue twisters from the corpus or searches the well-known ones from the internet and does necessary techniques mentioned earlier in single or group repetition without boring the learners.

There are many effective exercises to implement the tongue twisters as stated earlier; however, the researcher preferred the expansion drills and recognition exercises. Since the expansion drills provide learners with an idea of the order of occurrence of the words in a sentence and how the sentences could be built up by help of the related sounds and the recognition exercises help learners to identify words by their appearance and improve their pronunciation. In the treatment phase, the researcher makes the necessary corrections in the wrong articulations without boring and demoralizing the participants.

Expansion drills.

1. cab
   flabby cab
   Don't dab the flabby cab
2. the cubs
   the cubs on the cabs
   the cubs on the cabs are lined up
3. nab
   nabbed my apple
   he suddenly nabbed my apple
4. batter
   butter in the batter
   put real butter in the batter

Recognition exercises.

Researcher: Dear colleagues, I'm going to give you some words now, if you hear the /æ/ sound you say one, or if you hear the sound /∧/, you say two. Here is an example:

R: Derya, which sound do you hear in the word "clamp"?

Derya: One!

R: Good. Thank you, Derya. Fatih, tell me, which sound do we hear in the word "huff "?

Fatih: Two.

R: Very good, Fatih. Burcu, which sound is heard in the word "ran "?

Burcu: Two!

R: Well done, Burcu, thank you. (Practice goes on as the time limit allows.)

Part two:

R: Dear friends, now I'm going to give you two words. If you hear the /æ/ sound you say one, if you hear the sound /∧/, you say two, or you say three if you here the /e/ sound. Here is an example:

R: Fatma, which sounds do you hear in the words "dad", "ded" and "dud"?

Fatma: One-three-two!

R: Correct, thank you Fatma. Seval, "gust","guest" and "gassed"?

Seval: Two -three -one!

R: Very Good, Seval. Tuba, "stab", "stub" and "step"?

Tuba: One-two-three!
R: Well done, Tuba, thank you. (The practice goes on in accordance with the time limit.)

C. Giving the Rule

The vowels on Figure 3 are so-called primary cardinal vowels and these are the vowels that are most familiar to the speakers of most European languages. For example, cardinal vowel no. 1 has the symbol [i], and is defined as the vowel which is as close and as front as it is possible to make a vowel without obstructing the flow of air enough to produce friction noise. However, cardinal vowel no. 5 has the symbol [α] and is defined as the most open and back vowel that it is possible to make.

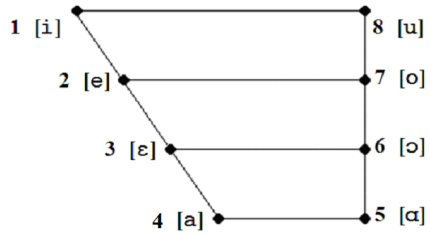

Fig. 3: Primary cardinal vowels

When many learners hear these vowels, they find that they sound strange and exaggerated however, it must be remembered that they are extremes of vowel quality. When we are familiar with these extreme vowels, then we have learned a way of describing, classifying and comparing vowels. For example, as seen in Figure 4, we can say that the English ash vowel /æ/ (the vowel in 'cat') is front, but not quite as open as cardinal vowel no. 4 [a]. The lips are slightly spread.

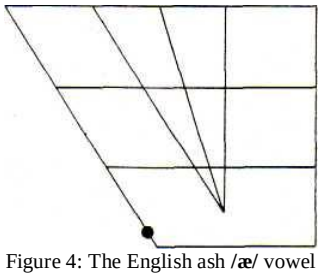
Figure 4: The English ash **/æ/** vowel

On the other side, the wedge vowel /∧/ (in 'but' and 'some') is a central vowel, and figure 5 shows that it is more open than the half-open tongue height. The lip position is neutral.

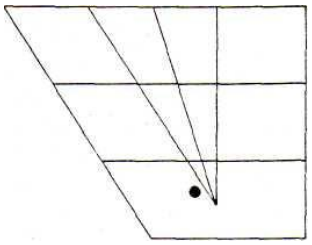
Figure 5: The English wedge /∧/ vowel

D. Doing Further Exercises

Using minimal sentences. The researcher's exhortations on the following statements are crucial, and he must get them to be repeated by the students in form of single or in unison without boring the students.

- I called her BACK/BUCK.
- It is a BRANCH /BRUNCH.
- It's not MAD/MUD.
- It's not my DAD/DUD.
- Hang the CAP/CUP on the hook.
- Don't step on that BAG/BUG.
- It was a real SLAM/SLUM.
- It was hard to catch that BASS/BUS.
- It was one of the elephant's TASKS/TUSKS.

Using sentences with contextual clues. The researcher's exhortations on the correct articulation of the following sentences raise the consciousness of the students towards the problem-causing sound.

- Cause of the GUST Hans was GASSED
- Don't JANGLE in the JUNGLE
- PACK the PUCK in the SACK
- BUDGE the BADGE
- Follow the TRACK with your TRUCK
- TUCK the TACK in the BAG
- My HAT is in that HUT.
- The city DUMP is often DAMP.
- Ducks PADDLE in this PUDDLE.
- She makes RUGS from old RAGS

Using problem-sound concentrated exercises. The following sentences are used as exhortations by the researcher, and learners repeat them individually or chorally. If there are videoed or tape recorded repetitions of them, it is even better if they are shown to the students. The researcher tries to use meaningful tongue twisters and related exercises in this respect since, asserted rightly by Linse (2003), using non-meaningful tongue twisters are full of fun.

- Don't RANG the ring of my UNCLE who HAD a HAT AND a CAB.
- My DAD said THAT my MA'AM CAN RAN.
- He HAD a SUDDEN heart ATTACK, BUT HADN'T SADDENED me.

The researcher ends the lesson by directing them to make as much practice as they can do in front of the mirror or listening foreigners on TV.

E. Giving Assignments

The Teacher can give the following issues as homework:

1. Restudy all of the exercises.
2. Prepare 3 clear-cut tongue twisters as exemplified.
3. Prepare 5 minimal sentences.
4. Prepare 3 sentences with contextual clues.
5. Prepare 3 problem-related exercises, tape, and bring them to class.
6. Write a dialogue including the /æ/ and /∧/ vowel phonemes.
7. Write a paragraph (in 200 words) by using the words given in the CORPUS.

IV. Findings and Results

In this study, it was aimed to compare non-native English teachers' articulation performances through a diagnostic test carried out before and after treatment. Their performances were evaluated and scored by a native speaker of the English language before and after treatment to test the results statistically. As known, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test is a non-parametric statistical hypothesis test used when comparing two related samples or, as it is in this case, repeated measurements on a single sample to calculate whether their population means differ (i.e. it's a paired difference test). As seen in tables 1 & 2, there is a significant relationship or difference between the performances of the participants when compared before and after treatment ($z = -3.527$, $p < .05$). That is, the cure programme applied in the treatment phase affected participants' pronunciation in a positive way and help them to rehabilitate their articulation problem.

TABLE 1
WILCOXON SIGNED RANKS TEST

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
postscore – prescore	Negative Ranks	0(a)	,00	,00
	Positive Ranks	16(b)	8,50	136,00
	Ties	0(c)		
	Total	16		

a postscore < prescore
b postscore > prescore
c postscore = prescore

TABLE 2
TEST STATISTICS(B)

	postscore – prescore
Z	-3,527(a)
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000

a Based on negative ranks.
b Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

The critical period hypothesis asserts that there is a biologically-determined period to acquire a language and after this period language acquisition becomes much more difficult. Although, there is no empirical proof for this argument, the study of accent in second language acquisition seems to be strong evidence especially in explaining why most of the older learners could not reach a native-like accent. For example, the well-known Kissenger effect is an important sample since Kissenger had a German accent while speaking English but had also a magnificent and fluent control on the English language.

However, although it is very hard to change learners' pronunciation and teach them a native-like accent after such a biologically-determined period, it does not mean that there is no cure for deficiencies in pronunciation. For that reason, this study does not have the aim to attack or assault the critical period hypothesis, but rather suggest the re-examination of the well-known belief. That is, this negative belief needs to be reconsidered since this study has investigated the pronunciation problems of older language learners such as Turkish teachers of English language on-the-job and evidenced that the pronunciation deficiencies can be rehabilitated and cured. As asserted rightly by Acton (1984), people who are going to work with the language at an advanced level as teachers or researchers need a deeper understanding provided by the studies of related areas of linguistics especially the study of phonetics and phonology.

Doubtlessly, since most teachers and teacher trainees are aware and agree that explicit pronunciation is an essential part of teacher training, as Demirezen (2005) has also mentioned, the theoretical and practical material in similar studies is necessary for anyone who needs to understand the principles regulating the use of sounds in spoken English. Additionally, under the light of the in-class activities submitted throughout this study, the impression is that the fossilized sort of errors can be cured by means of the peculiar method put forth by Demirezen. Therefore, this paper, first of all, suggests such cure programs for Turkish teachers on-the-job, to teacher trainees and finally to material developers and publishers, and recommend highly to enrich the language teaching materials with explicit pronunciation exercises for adult learners using this and similar cure programs.

Appendix

Diagnostic Test

Fat Pat

Pat was so fat that she made a bet with Lenny the vet. She bet him that she could get a fat cat and a wet rat under her hat. Unfortunately, the fat cat was not Fat Pat's pet, and it sat on the rat. The rat naturally ran away. Poor fat pat. She lost her bet.

Lenny was a vet and one day he met Fat Pat's wet rat. The rat had been sat upon by Pat's fat cat while it was under Pat's hat. That rat was in bad shape. Lenny had to let that rat have a little nap.

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Factorial Validation of a Writing Self-regulation Scale: With and without Acceptably Cross Loading Items

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***Abstract*—This study explored the factorial validity of a writing self-regulation scale (WSRS) by administering it to 125 learners of English language preparing to sit for the writing module of the IELTS examination in Tehran, Iran. The submission of the written responses elicited on the WSRS to the Principal Axis Factoring and Varimax rotation of the data resulted in extracting five factors, i.e., i.e., *Instructions*, *Editing*, *Semantic Revision*, *Accessing Samples*, and *Syntactic Revision* explaining 53% of total variance in the scale. The reliability and correlational analyses showed that not only the WSRS but also its extracted factors were highly reliable and strongly related to each other. The inclusion of positive and acceptably cross loading items (ACLIs) in both the WSRS and factors, however, increased their reliability and inter correlations even higher suggesting that the ACLIs should be reported in factorial studies and included in exploring the inter relationships among the factors. It is suggested that the ACLIs be employed in investigating the relationship of the WSRS with external measures of ability such as scores obtained on language proficiency tests.**

***Index Terms*—factorial validity, self-regulation, writing ability, cross loading items, language proficiency**

I. Introduction

Self regulation is defined by Kanfer (1970) as controlling one's manner and behavior without considering external reinforcement or punishment contingencies. According to Baumeister and Vohs (2007), however, self-regulation boosts the adaptability and flexibility of human behavior so to adapt their deeds to a broad range of social and situational requirements. In other words it deals with the human capacity to take these requirements as their priority and change their responses accordingly (Polivy, 1998).

Leventhal and Cameron (1987) identified self-regulated persons as active problem solvers who employ their available abilities in order to increase their performance in whatever goals they set for themselves. Those who self-regulate themselves fulfill their tasks completely and successfully because they do their outmost to fill the gap between their present status and goals. Self- regulated learning for these people is therefore an active constructive process whereby they "set goals for their learning and monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features of the environment" (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002, p. 64).

Since it deals with learning, self regulation has gained an interdisciplinary status and been employed in fields as diverse as sports, psychology and teaching English as a foreign language and referred to as self-control, self-management, self-reinforcement, and self-instruction. Depending on the type of learners' needs, various types of questionnaires have been developed to measure self regulation. As an example, in sports, self-regulation skills are employed to measure performance differences when athletes encounter possibilities normally referred to as life demands and threats. They are based on the premise that self-regulation is fundamental for free will and socially desirable behavior and contributes to many sought-after outcomes, among which task performance, school and work success, social popularity, mental health and adjustment, and good interpersonal relationships are of great importance (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1994; Duckworth & Seligman, 2005).

Baumeister and Vohs (2007) explored several criteria involved in self-regulation i.e., motivation; standards, monitoring, and self-regulatory monitoring. They believe that motivation is not lauded in self-regulation theories though it is an indispensable part of not only human but also animal self-regulation. They are, nonetheless, closely related because self-regulatory power is needed as a filter to control and moderate motivation and stop undesirable impulses in various situations. Self-regulation is mostly self-stopping in the sense that a dieter eschews eating, a convalescing addict stops using drugs, and a drunk refrains drinking. Much of self-regulation is, therefore, used for constraining one's motivation in order to serve the goal of being accepted by others and pursuing progressive self-interest over naïve and myopic self-interest. Motivation is deep-seated in life, but it also needs to be controlled by self-regulatory power to obtain the best result.

Kim, Deci and Zuckerman (2002) developed a Self-Regulation of Withholding Negative Emotions (SRWNE) questionnaire and examined its reliability and validity in three different studies. In the first study, they found that the SRWNE was distinct from emotional regulation measures and could thus be appropriate to measure styles of self-regulation and to elucidate the negative affect-health relation. In the second study, test-retest reliability of scores on the SRWNE subscales was examined as was the empirical validity of the SRWNE on coping strategies and health. The results showed that the SRWNE was significantly related to the self-report of health and might be employed to foretell how people cope with stress. The last study compared two contexts: Korean and American and suggested construct comparability of the SRWNE across cultures and genders. The elements comprising the SRWNE questionnaire were optimism, social anxiety, awareness, and mistrust of others, external focus, psychosomatics, problem-focused, support-seeking, denial, rumination and acceptance.

By employing the 56-item self-regulation questionnaire designed to test Kuhl and Fuhrmann's (1998) model, Barkhoff, Heiby and Pagano (2007) studied the level of self-regulation skills between two groups of roller skaters, i.e., elites or professionals and training champions, to determine the extent to which the use of self-regulation skills preceding a competition accounts for differences in the performance of professional and amateur skaters. Both skaters took the questionnaire at two different intervals, one before five competitions and the other before nine competitions. They found that the professional skaters had a low level of volitional inhibition- self-control, higher level of self-discipline and life demands, and also a tremendously higher level of threats compared to the amateur skaters. Also both skaters generally had a higher level of self-regulation competency and self-discipline in their earlier competitions than their later events.

McCullough and Willoughby (2009) believed that many of the connections of religiousness and health, well-being and social behavior might be because of religions' impacts on self-control and self regulation. By using Carver and Scheier's (1998) theory of self-regulation as a framework to organize their empirical research, McCullough and Willoughby introduced six propositions: (a) that religion can promote self-control, (b) that religion impacts how goals are chosen, pursued, and organized, (c) that religion helps boost self-monitoring, (d) that religion nourishes the development of self-regulatory strength, (e) that religion prescribes and fosters proficiency in a suite of self-regulatory behaviors, and (f) that some religions' influences on health, well-being, and social behaviors may stem from their impact on self-control and self-regulation. The evidence obtained by the researchers *generally* confirmed all the propositions.

Wilde (2010) carried out a research on self-regulation and the response to concerns about food and beverage marketing to children in the United States. The results showed that while self-regulated children had a healthier consumption of food and beverages, pinpointing the fact that media and advertisement had not had much influence on them, less self-regulated children were more at risk of unhealthy food and beverages if they were left with their parents' supervision. The researchers, therefore, concluded that it is the responsibility of government to take care of this issue and develop self-regulated citizens.

Magno (2009) hypothesized that when students are asked to write a composition in any given second language, they use specific approaches to learning and experience self-regulatory processes. To test the hypothesis, Magno administered the Academic Self-Regulated Learning Scale (A-SRL-S) and the Revised-Learning Process Questionnaire (R-LPQ-2F) to 294 college students majoring in English, communication arts, literature, mass communications, and journalism from different universities in the Philippines. The former addressed concepts like memory strategy, goal setting, self-evaluation, seeking assistance, environmental structuring, responsibility and organizing whereas the latter tapped into concepts like intrinsic motivation, commitment to work, relating ideas, understanding, fear of failure, aim for qualification, minimizing scope of study, and memorization. The results showed that only deep approach, i.e., actively and mentally engaging one's self with a given task (Kember, Biggs, & Leung, 2004), correlated significantly with the factors of self-regulation except for environmental structuring and demanding help. Although deep approach and surface approach, i.e., memorization of the material that doesn't require understanding (Entwistle, McCune, &Walker, 2001), correlated highly with each other, only the deep approach increased the variance in all self-regulation components. The latter, however, only boosted the variance in memory strategy.

Matuga (2009) explored self-regulation, goal orientation and academic achievement of 40 secondary students studying online university courses in the sciences by administering the Motivation Strategies for Learning Questionnaire. Each course was taught by two instructors, i.e., a university professor and school teacher, in six weeks. The results showed that teaching the courses by two professors was a success. They also indicated that goal orientation is affected by taking online university courses. The learners engaged in those courses with a performance goal orientation were worried to get good grades and therefore took part in activities that would help them achieve the grades. Furthermore, a positive and significant interaction effect was found between learners' achievement level and pre- and post- measures of motivation. Self-regulation subscales indicated a deeper and more sophisticated view of learners' skills and abilities to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning of the university curriculum.

Porath, Ngara, Lai, Fogel and Lupart (2010) explored the relationship between self-regulation and children's understanding of teaching. They identified the genius students aged between six and seventeen and asked them how they would like to be taught core academic subjects. By using grounded theory, i.e., open coding, constant comparison, and theoretical integration of data to interpret results (Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003), and neo-Piagetian cognitive

development theory, the data were analyzed and five levels of understanding were articulated that shaped a developmental trajectory in which young children saw teaching as an action-based and concrete process focused on helping them do things right. The data showed that by middle childhood, understanding of fundamental principles of teaching and learning were evident, then consciousness of the interdependence of teaching and learning. In early adolescence, emergent philosophical ideas and views on the very nature of knowledge were expressed through using self-regulatory power. Some adolescents also took advantage of self-regulation strategies and demonstrated personal philosophies of learning by focusing on growth, mutual partnership, and excitement of learning.

Rothschild and Klingenberg (1990) criticized the assessment and evaluation of writing in the ESL classroom as the teacher's prerogative and tried to bring them into the classroom by having the learners evaluate themselves and their own writing within the class ambiance. The students were trained to adopt an evaluation scale and use it to evaluate not only their own writing but also their peers'. The researchers then tested the effects of self-and-peer assessment and evaluation on the participants' performance on writing task at the end of the term. The results showed that the students assessed the writings totally differently from their teachers, i.e., they employed a self-regulation scale. Since they were involved not only in the writing process itself but also in its assessment, the learners developed a positive attitude towards writing.

Arsal (2010) explored the effects of 60 preservice science teachers' diaries on self-regulation strategies. After assigning the teachers into control and experimental groups, Arsal employed Pintrich's self-regulation model consisting of three strategies, i.e., cognitive, metacognitive or self-regulatory, and resource managing. It was found that only the experimental group had utilized the self-regulatory strategies and completed the diary-report form for fourteen weeks. Compared to the control group, they had gained much higher academic achievement.

Hamman (2005) administered three measures of academic writing beliefs, self-regulatory behaviors, and epistemological beliefs to pre-service teachers to explore their relationship with academic writing tasks. While both self-regulation and knowledge of cognition were found to be positively related to writing excitement and enjoyment, knowledge of cognition showed negative relations with beliefs of ability as a fixed entity. Self-assessment and self-regulation were, however, directly related to the enjoyment of the writing process and its learnability. Hamman concluded that the teachers who were more self-regulated believed they could *learn* to improve their writing. Their beliefs and emotions about leaning and writing, therefore, played a pivotal and complex role in their self-regulation behaviors.

While the studies cited above deal with self-regulation in general, the present study is developed on the premise that a single self-regulatory scale such as the checklist designed by Hashemi, Khodadadi, and Yazdanmehr (2009) [referred to as HKY09 henceforth] can be utilized to help English language learners achieve the goal of writing for proficiency tests such as the IELTS for which they sit in preparations courses in Iran. Since the checklist contains items which direct the learners towards the attainment of a given Goal, i.e., performing well on writing examinations, as all self-regulatory scales do (e.g., Zimmerman, 2000), this study aims to find out whether it is a valid ***Writing*** Self-Regulation Scale and whether the factors extracted in this study meet the criterion of reliability and show significant relationships with each other.

II. Methodology

A. Participants

Seventy one male (56.8%) and 54 female (43.2%) learners of IELTS took part voluntarily in the presents study. Their age ranged between 22 and 52 (mean = 31.31, SD = 6.41). Eleven (8.8%), 24 (19.2%), 18 (14.4%), 23 (18.4%), 14 (11.2), 14 (11.2) and 21 (16.8%) were studying at Arianpour, Kish, Mojtame Fani Tehran, Safir, Shoukuh, Tehran Oxford and Vazir institutes, respectively in Tehran, the capital of Iran. These seven institutes were among the most famous IELTS centers where one of the researchers taught the IELTS and could thus encourage both the teachers and learners to participate in the study. Eighty one (64.8%), 42 (33.6%) and 2 (1.6%) of learners were holding BA/BSc, MA, MSc., and PhD degrees, respectively. With the exception of only one learner who had studied English just for one year, 45 (36%), 38 (30.4%), 27 (21.6%), and 14 (11.2) had been studying it for two, three, four and five years or more, respectively. Sixty four (51.2 %) were studying IELTS in order to pursue their higher education in English speaking countries and 60 (48%) needed it for immigration purposes. Only one was learning the IELTS as part of professional development for his job.

B. Instrument

The instrument used in this study consisted of two parts. The first part required the participants to provide the researchers with the information related to their age, gender, the educational degree obtained, and the years and purpose of studying the English language. The second part contained the 20-item checklist designed by HKY09 and employed as a Writing Self-Regulation Scale (WSRS) in this project. The items require the participants to choose from among four alternatives developed on a Likert scale, i.e., not at all (0), a little (2), adequately (4), and to a great extent (6). The items were divided by HKY09 into two parts, i.e., task prompt and task procedures, consisting of nine *logical* factors, i.e., goal, authenticity, topic, instruction, pre-writing, draft-writing, revising, editing, and publishing. (The WSRS as well as its descriptive statistics are given in Appendix.)

C. Procedure

After having the biodata part and WSRS printed, the researchers took and gave them to almost all the instructors of writing module of the IELTS in Arianpour, Kish, Mojtame Fani Tehran, Safir, Shoukuh, Tehran Oxford and Vazir institutes in person. Upon explaining the purpose of the research and its relevance to what they taught, thirty instructors volunteered to administer them in the last session of the course provided they were supplied with the results of the study. Adequate number of copies were then made of the scale and taken to these instructors one session before the last and one of the researchers attended the session if the relevant instructor wished so. The researchers collected the responses the day after the administration if the teachers themselves administered the WSRS.

D. Data Analysis

The descriptive as well as inferential statistical analyses were carried out by utilizing the SPSS version 19.0. The reliability of the WSRS was estimated via Cronbach Alpha. The Principal Axis Factoring method was employed to extract rotated factors. Similar to Khodadady (2009), Kaiser criterion, i.e., eigenvalues higher than 1, was used to determine the number of factors extracted in this study. Following Khodadady and Hashemi (2010), the unrotated factor matrix was skipped and all correlation coefficients with their frequency and magnitudes were estimated and reported. By employing Khodadady's (2010) findings and suggestions the WSRS was factorially analysed two times, i.e., first *with* the factors having positive and acceptably cross loading items (ACLIs), i.e., 0.30 and higher, and then with the factors *without* ACLIs to test the following three hypotheses:

H1. The twenty items comprising the WSRS will show strong interrelationships with each other.

H2. The twenty items comprising the WSRS will load on nine logical factors.

H3. The WSRS and the extracted factors *with* ACLIs will show higher inter correlations with each other than the factors *without* ACLIs.

III. Results and Discussion

In order to determine whether running a factor analysis will be acceptable or not, the data were submitted to Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and the value .83 was obtained. According to Kaiser (1974), KMOs in the .80s are "meritorious," (cited in DiLalla & Dollinger, 2006, p. 250) and the factors extracted can thus be comfortably accepted as underlying variables of WSRS. Furthermore, the significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, i.e., $X^2 = 1.260$, df = 190, $p < .001$, indicated that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix.

Table 1 presents the ordered initial and extracted communalities obtained via Principal Axis Factoring from the twenty items comprising the WSRS. As can be seen, the initial communalities range between 0.68 and 0.43. These results are compatible with those obtained by Khodadady (2010) whose initial communalities also ranged between .68 and .33. He challenged MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang and Hong (1999) who believed that selecting small samples would be all right if item communalities were consistently high, i.e., .80 or above. Since his sample was as large as possible, i.e., 1469, and educationally homogenous, i.e., only high school students, he concluded that his obtained range must be normal as is the case in this study, too.

TABLE 1
ORDERED COMMUNALITIES EXTRACTED VIA PRINCIPAL AXIS FACTORING

Item	Initial	Extraction	Item	Initial	Extraction	Item	Initial	Extraction
12	0.68	0.68	16	0.62	0.62	1	0.52	0.51
3	0.66	0.49	18	0.62	0.51	7	0.52	0.41
6	0.66	0.86	14	0.60	0.53	10	0.48	0.43
8	0.64	0.71	13	0.59	0.52	11	0.46	0.34
19	0.64	0.58	2	0.56	0.42	5	0.44	0.40
20	0.62	0.50	9	0.54	0.53	4	0.43	0.37
15	0.62	0.64	17	0.54	0.52			

Along with those of Khodadady (2010), the communalities presented in Table 1 support Costello and Osborne's (2005) suggestion for the approximate range of .40 to .70 in social sciences. Not only do the communalities of .80 rarely appear in applied linguistics but also the inter correlations among the items comprising scales such as the WSRS seldom reach that magnitude as shown in Table 2. As can be seen, the highest correlation coefficient obtained among the items comprising the WSRS is 0.58. Although its size is noticeably lower than the highest correlation found by Khodadady (2010), i.e., 0.69, both are smaller than 0.80. However, out of 190 coefficients, 58.4% correlate significantly at 0.37 ($p < .01$) and higher with each other, indicating that the majority of items comprising the WSRS are well interrelated. These results support the first hypothesis that *the twenty items comprising the WSRS will correlate highly among themselves*.

TABLE 2
THE FREQUENCY (F), PERCENT (P) AND CUMULATIVE PERCENT (CP) OF 1080 CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS (CC) OBTAINED AMONG THE 20 ITEM COMPRISING THE WSRS

CC	F	P	CP	CC	F	P	CP	CC	F	P	CP
0.58	1	0.5	0.5	0.43	8	4.2	34.7	0.28	1	0.5	82.1
0.57	1	0.5	1.1	0.42	7	3.7	38.4	0.27	3	1.6	83.7
0.56	1	0.5	1.6	0.41	2	1.1	39.5	0.26	6	3.2	86.8
0.55	2	1.1	2.6	0.40	6	3.2	42.6	0.25	7	3.7	90.5
0.54	3	1.6	4.2	0.39	9	4.7	47.4	0.24	2	1.1	91.6
0.53	7	3.7	7.9	0.38	8	4.2	51.6	0.23	3	1.6	93.2
0.52	4	2.1	10	0.37	13	6.8	**58.4**	0.22	3	1.6	94.7
0.51	4	2.1	12.1	0.36	5	2.6	61.1	0.20	2	1.1	95.8
0.50	2	1.1	13.2	0.35	10	5.3	66.3	0.18	3	1.6	97.4
0.49	9	4.7	17.9	0.34	7	3.7	70	0.17	1	0.5	97.9
0.48	2	1.1	18.9	0.33	5	2.6	72.6	0.13	2	1.1	98.9
0.47	6	3.2	22.1	0.32	4	2.1	74.7	0.11	1	0.5	99.5
0.46	3	1.6	23.7	0.31	3	1.6	76.3	0.05	1	0.5	100
0.45	9	4.7	28.4	0.30	4	2.1	78.4	**Total**	**190**	**100**	
0.44	4	2.1	30.5	0.29	6	3.2	81.6				

The results presented in Table 2 are also compatible with Khodadady's (2010) in a different way. After comparing the correlation coefficients (CCs) obtained among the 47 items forming the CEELT with the 34 items comprising the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by Horwitz (1985, 1988) he found that while the CEELT produced a large number of high CCs, the BALLI failed to do so. The findings of this study, therefore, provide further evidence for Khodadady's observation that the more conceptually related the items comprising a given questionnaire are, the higher the inter correlations among them and thus "the fewer the number of factors extracted" (p. 56) will be.

Table 3 presents the rotated factor matrix obtained via Principal Axis Factoring, Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. As can be seen, all twenty items comprising the WSRS load "acceptably" (Khodadady & Hashemi 2010, p.18), i.e. .30 or higher, only on five factors. These results disconfirm the second hypothesis that *the twenty items comprising the WSRS will load on nine logical factors.* For example, item three, i.e., *to what extent did the task help you to apply classroom learning to the real world*, is dubbed as *authenticity* by HKY09. This item, however, loads on two factors in this study and thus shows the test takers' tendency to relate *authenticity* to the ***instructions*** given and ***editing*** rather than treat it as a single factor.

TABLE 3
ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX OF 20 ITEMS COMPRISING THE WSRS

Item	Factors					Item	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1	*	*	.55	.39	*	**11**	.37	*	*	*	*
2	.51	*	*	*	*	**12**	.31	.35	.61	*	*
3	.33	.48	*	*	*	**13**	.43	.34	.33	*	*
4	*	*	.56	*	*	**14**	*	*	.33	*	.52
5	*	*	*	*	.44	**15**	*	.55	*	.39	*
6	.87	*	*	*	*	**16**	*	*	*	*	.72
7	*	.51	*	*	*	**17**	*	.59	*	*	*
8	.32	*	*	.70	*	**18**	*	.36	*	.49	*
9	*	.52	.32	*	.30	**19**	.41	.40	*	*	.35
10	.52	*	*	*	*	**20**	*	.41	*	.44	*

* Loadings less than .30

The results presented in Table 3 are in line with Khodadady's (2010) findings in that no factor could be found in the matrix upon which the items forming other factors did not cross load acceptably. Similar to what he found, 14 items (70%) cross loaded on at least one other factor in the present study and thus questioned the factorial validity of studies in which similar patterns were not found.

Table 4 presents the eigenvalues as well as the variance explained by the five rotated factors extracted in this study. (The table presenting the total variance explained by all factors is not given to save space.) As can be seen, each of the five factors enjoys an eigenvalue higher than one and together they explain almost 53% of variance in the WSRS and thus provide further support for the necessity of establishing the factorial validity of the WSRS. None of the 20 items forming the nine logical factors established by HKY09, however, load ***exclusively*** on any of the nine and thus question their conceptualization factorially.

TABLE 4
EIGENVALUES OF ROTATED FACTORS THE VARIANCE EXPLAINED BY EACH AND ALL

Factors Extracted	Logical factors (HKY09)	Items	Eigen-value	Variance explained (52.73%)	Cumulative %
Instructions	Authenticity, Draft-writing, Goal, Instructions, Pre-writing, Publishing, Revising	2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19	2.558	12.789	12.789
Editing	Authenticity, Editing, Instructions, Pre-writing, Publishing, Revising	3, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20	2.487	12.436	25.225
Semantic Revision	Editing, Goal, Pre-writing, Revising, Topic	1, 4, 9, 12, 13, 14	1.885	9.427	34.652
Accessing Samples	Editing, Goal, Instructions, Publishing	1, 8, 15, 18, 20	1.813	9.064	43.715
Syntactic Revision	Editing, Pre-writing, Publishing, Topic	5, 9, 14, 16, 19	1.804	9.018	52.733

One of the greatest advantages of establishing the factorial validity of a given scale such as the WSRS is dispensing with certain vague and personal views and finding a common thread among the items which constitute a certain factor. As can be seen in Table 3 and 4, for example, even when ACLs are removed from the factor analysis, the three logical factors of HKY09, i.e., Goal, Revising, and Topic load on a single factor called *Semantic Revision* in this study. Item 12, i.e., *did you revise your jotted down ideas to make sure of their sensibility and accurateness to the reader*, has the highest loading on this factor (0.61) and thus helps the researchers understand that the goal in item 1, *Was the overall goal of the task clear and void of ambiguity to you as a learner*, with a loading of 0.55, is in fact understood by the test takers in terms of ***ideas*** expressed in item four dubbed as the topic, *Was the topic of the task stimulating and appropriate to your age and educational level* (loading = 0.56)?

Ideas, goals and topic of a given writing task are expressed in the *semantic* words forming the task i.e., adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs. Khodadady (2000), for example, developed a vocabulary test on the semantic words comprising the passages of the reading comprehension section of TOEFL and administered it along with the reading comprehension test to both native and non-native speakers of English. His results showed that the knowledge of these contextual semantic words is the best predictor of both speakers' reading comprehension ability. Future research must, therefore, show whether the third factor extracted from the WSRS in this study, i.e., *Semantic Revision*, shows stronger relationship with the reading comprehension ability of test takers than the other factors.

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of the WSRS and its five factors along with their inter correlations. As can be seen, the five factors with positive ACLIs are all more reliable than those without ACLIs. This is particularly true for the factors upon which fewer items load. The reliability of *Syntactic Revision*, for example, drops from 0.79 to 0.68 simply because the number of items upon which they load acceptably drops from five to three. The very acceptance of ACLIs, however, increases not only the constituting number of the WSRS from 20 to 35 but also the reliability of the SWRS as a whole, i.e., 0.96 compared to 0.92.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF WSRS, ITS FACTORS WITH AND INTER CORRELATIONS OF THE WSRS AND ITS FACTORS WITH ACCEPTABLY CROSS LOADING ITEMS (ACLIS) AND WITHOUT ACLIS

Factors Extracted	# of Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Alpha	WSRS	Factors ***with*** ACLIs			
						1	2	3	4
WSRS	35	152.26	46.348	.96	1				
1 Instructions	9	38.42	13.024	.88	.94*				
2 Editing	10	43.23	14.221	.89	.97*	.88*			
3 Semantic Revision	6	26.82	8.390	.81	.92*	.81*	.86*		
4 Accessing Samples	5	22.22	7.393	.81	.88*	.79*	.86*	.75*	
5 Syntactic Revision	5	21.57	7.115	.79	.86*	.76*	.80*	.81*	.64*
Factors Extracted	**# of Items**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Alpha**	**WSRS**	Factors ***without*** ACLIs			
						1	2	3	4
WSRS	20	87.62	25.290	.92	1				
1 Instructions	6	25.34	8.994	.84	.90*				
2 Editing	5	22.35	7.269	.79	.87*	.70*			
3 Semantic Revision	3	13.70	4.444	.70	.76*	.60*	.61*		
4 Accessing Samples	3	12.98	4.923	.75	.83*	.67*	.66*	.57*	
5 Syntactic Revision	3	13.25	4.563	.68	.75*	.59*	.54*	.48*	.60*

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

As it can also be seen in Table 5, the rotated factors extracted from the WSRS show very strong correlations not only with the WSRS itself but also among each other. *Syntactic Revision*, for example, shows correlations of 0.89 and 0.81 (p<.01) with the WSRS and the *Semantic Revision*, respectively, indicating that this factor alone explains 79% and 66% of variance in the scale and factor three, respectively. However, the coefficients and variances explained drop to 0.75 and 0.48 (p<.01), 56% and 23%, respectively when their ACLIs are removed. These results thus confirm the third

hypothesis that *the WSRS and the extracted factors with ACLIs will show will show higher inter correlations with each other than the factors without cross loading items*.

IV. Conclusion

The checklist designed by Hashemi, Khodadadi and Yazdanmehr (2010) was treated as a Writing Self Regulation Scale (WSRS) in this study because similar to all types of self-regulation questionnaires its twenty items involve actions and thoughts planned for the attainment of a specific goal, i.e., obtaining an acceptable score on an English language proficiency test such as the IELTS (e.g., Zimmerman, 2000). The application of Principal Axis Factoring method to the responses of 125 learners studying the writing module of the IELTS in Iran and Varimax rotation of data resulted in the extraction of five factors in this study, i.e., *Instructions*, *Editing*, *Semantic Revision*, *Accessing Samples*, and *Syntactic Revision*.

The WSRS and its factors were subjected to both reliability and correlational analyses with and without positive and acceptably cross loading items (ACLIs). The results showed that the inclusion of the ACLIs increases not only the reliability but also correlations among the factors and results in having a scale which is longer in length and higher in reliability. These findings thus necessitate the reporting of ACLIs in the validation of all psychological and social measures in the literature. Future research projects must show whether having high correlations among the factors with the ACLIs extends to having high correlations with external measures such as actual scores the learners obtain on the IELTS and its reading and writing modules. In other words, future studies must show whether the empirical or external validity of the WSRS and its five factors will be as strong as their internal as well as factorial validities.

Appendix

Writing Self-Regulation Scale and its item descriptive statistics (N = 125)

Item	Not at all	A little	Adequately	To a great extent	Mean	SD
1. Was the overall goal of the task clear and void of ambiguity to you as a learner?	4	10	28	83	5.04	1.558
2. Was the task appropriate to your current English proficiency level?	7	16	37	65	4.56	1.789
3. To what extent did the task help you to apply classroom learning to the real world?	9	17	31	68	4.53	1.903
4. Was the topic of the task stimulating and appropriate to your age and educational level?	9	19	36	61	4.38	1.896
5. To what extent was the topic familiar to you and related to your background knowledge?	7	13	37	68	4.66	1.756
6. To what extent were the instructions clear and concise?	12	17	31	65	4.38	2.011
7. Were the target reader and the features of the expected response (e.g. word/time limits, register) clarified in the instructions?	10	14	33	68	4.54	1.907
8. Were any sample texts provided for you either by the teacher or the textbook?	13	18	33	61	4.27	2.037
9. Did you spend time on brainstorming, gathering information or outlining before starting to write?	7	21	25	72	4.59	1.884
10. Did the teacher familiarize you with techniques such as listing or clustering the ideas, or ask you to share your ideas in groups?	16	21	23	65	4.19	2.191
11. Did you go through the second stage of putting ideas into sentences or paragraphs without concern for mechanics such as spelling or punctuation?	15	15	31	64	4.3	2.095
12. Did you revise your jotted down ideas to make sure of their sensibility and accurateness to the reader?	14	21	24	66	4.27	2.13
13. Did you receive feedback on content from the teacher or perhaps a peer in this stage?	17	12	39	57	4.18	2.095
14. To what extent did you edit your writing for grammar and structure?	14	13	35	63	4.35	2.033
15. To what extent did you edit your writing for word spelling?	14	23	24	64	4.21	2.138
16. To what extent did you edit your writing for punctuation, before submitting it?	13	19	33	60	4.24	2.042
17. Did you receive feedback on form from your teacher in this stage?	14	10	33	68	4.48	2.022
18, Did you read out your texts finally to the class or your peers?	15	23	37	50	3.95	2.071
19. Was the teacher's feedback on the completed piece of writing motivating?	11	35	39	40	3.73	1.94
20. To what extent did the task performance occur outside classroom environment (e.g. in a library or language lab)?	10	12	24	79	4.75	1.912

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The Past, Present, and Future of Reading Diagnosis and Remediation

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***Abstract*—Reading remediation has dramatically changed since its beginnings approximately 100 years ago. Research into causation of reading difficulties has progressed from cognitive deficit models to learning styles and back to brain functionality. Classroom teachers and teacher educators alike must refine their practices to meet the ever-changing needs of their students. The instructional delivery methods and strategies used today must match the 21st century needs of students in the age of digital literacy. A brief history of the past, present, and future trends of reading diagnosis and remediation is explained.**

***Index Terms*—reading, causation, remediation, readers, struggling, digital literacy**

I. History

As it approaches 100 years since the term *remedial reading* was coined (Smith, 2002), it seems appropriate to examine those practices taken towards reading improvement throughout history, what approaches are currently in use today, and what the future may hold for reading diagnosis and remediation. Students began to be labeled as having reading disabilities in 1896 with British ophthalmologist Pringle Morgan's diagnosis of a 14-year-old boy who had not learned to read, but was otherwise intelligent (Harris, 1967). Although limited research occurred prior to the 1900s in various countries, it was not until the 1910s that the use of norm-referenced tests to measure silent and oral reading proficiencies prevailed in the United States. Debates of the importance of silent reading versus oral reading competency began. In addition, the idea that the reading of words and the comprehension of text were two separate entities began to take prominence. Thorndike (1917) explained, "It appears likely that a pupil may read fluently and feel that the series of words are arousing appropriate thoughts without really understanding the paragraph" (p. 331). He furthered:

Reading is a very elaborate procedure, involving a weighing of each of many elements in a sentence, their organization in the proper relations one to another, the selection of certain of their connotations and the rejection of others, and the cooperation of many forces to determine final responses. (p. 323)

Batteries of diagnostic assessments were created to identify students who had reading disabilities and in turn, needed special types of remedial instruction. "When standardized reading tests became readily available about 1915, school systems were then able to measure the reading ability of their students" (Smith, 1965, as cited in Harris, 1980).

In 1925, the *24th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* was published, which contained a highly influential chapter on diagnosis and remedial work. Shortly thereafter, Arthur Gates, an early leader in diagnostic and prescriptive techniques, authored, *The Improvement of Reading* (1927), concluding that reading problems were a result of not learning fundamental skills or failing to learn them correctly. Within the first 30 years of recognizing students were having difficulties in reading, research efforts led to the creation of assessment, diagnosis, and remediation techniques that schools could utilize to improve their students' reading abilities and comprehension. Large scale remedial programs began to surface within public school systems in the 1930s. Research and development flourished, with some investigators focusing their attention to a machine approach for diagnosis (eye movement cameras) and remediation (reading pacers). Psychotherapy and the study of emotional problems were often included in reading remediation, as psychologists focused their research on causation rather than instruction in what was known as the *mental hygiene movement* (Cohen, 1983).

In 1938, Luella Cole projected that reading laboratories would be developed to serve as a place where students could be assessed, diagnosed, and given remedial instruction. In the state of New York, unemployed college graduates were briefly trained and assigned to work with small groups of retarded readers in public schools (Harris, 1967). Colleges and universities foresaw mutual benefits stemming from housing reading laboratories, as graduate reading educators studying to become specialists could refine their practices while developing the skills of struggling readers. An expansion of organized reading clinics in the 1940s emanated. Remedial reading programs spread from elementary to secondary schools and in turn, published materials were created especially for remedial use. Public schools employed additional remedial teachers to combat their students' reading difficulties.

The early 1950s marked the popularity of language-experience approaches to reading instruction, which began in the 1930s. Language-experience approaches are based on activities and stories developed from personal experiences of the learner (McCormick, 1988). Students' emotional disturbances were believed to be underlying causes of reading difficulty, as psychotherapy was recommended in many instances. The publication of Rudolph Flesch's *Why Johnny*

Can't Read (1955) marked a philosophical change in approaches to reading instruction. Flesch argued that American schools and how they were teaching children to read was the cause for many students' failures in reading development. He urged educators to return to a phonics-based approach to reading, rather than continue with their whole word method of memorizing what words look like.

Physiological disabilities, such as brain damage, were still blamed for a majority of reading difficulties in the 1960s. In response linguistic approaches that included consistency in letter patterns (i.e. "that fat cat sat on the mat") were believed to provide the missing foundational knowledge to struggling readers. Others thought visual-motor problems were causing reading difficulties. Getman (1965) proposed oculo-motor training so students could more proficiently follow moving targets with their eyes. Researchers began studying cognitive development and doing more field-based research in the classroom. Children were given assessments to determine their strongest modality: visual, auditory, etcetera. Word learning practice and comprehension were focal points of instruction.

The *Elementary and Secondary School Act of 1965* was passed to assist schools in the acquisition of resources, texts, and instructional materials for students. Of particular attention were problem readers at schools whose incomes were below the national average. Materials based on linguistic principles included those that were programmed as well as predetermined tutoring programs. Meanwhile, scientists conducted laterality studies on the left and right sides of the brain based on the theory that each specialized for different purposes—the left side processes written and spoken language while the right side processes spatial relationships between objects (Springer & Deutsch, 1989).

Although studies like Guthrie's (1973) investigation of assembly versus system models of reading comprehension ensued, the 1970s marked a shift towards practical applications and instructional improvements. LaBerge and Samuels (1974) coined the term *automaticity*, as the concept of fluency became a major goal of intensive reading interventions. Remediation was often given in small groups pulled out from regular classrooms in the 1980s. One-to-one instruction given to struggling first grade readers by a specialized teacher to supplement classroom instruction was central to the Marie Clay's *Reading Recovery* program. It aimed squarely to develop accuracy of print and then return students to their regular classrooms as average achievers as quickly as possible, once the child's reading acquisition improved to the current grade level. Ironically one-to-one instruction was also sometimes provided by paraprofessionals or volunteer tutors who had limited training and were unsupervised at times. Many schools continued implementing these programs through the 1990s, until concerns developed in regard to funding and research-based evaluation.

Concurrently, the whole language movement began in 1976 and gained popularity in the 1980s (Stahl, McKenna, & Pagnucco, 1994). It stressed children learned to read and write, as they were exposed to a literate environment and as it related to real-world experiences. Focus was placed on meaning and strategy usage rather than phonics-based approaches, which resulted in critics proclaiming that whole language programs undermined the fundamental skills necessary for students to become proficient readers.

With the advent of the *Reading Excellence Act* (1997), early reading instruction was again based on phonics-based approaches. It was not until the 21st century that reading remediation expanded to include writing and thinking skills. Early intervention was still valued, but problems were recognized with pull-out programs such as the incongruence between remedial and general education teachers, lost instructional time due to transition from general classroom to place of remediation, and a negative connotation of the label "reading disabled." Some students were unfortunately pulled out during regular class's reading instruction.

II. Present

The *Reading First* program of the *No Child Left Behind Act* increased federal financial support for reading education from $300 million to over $900 million in 2002, and allocated a total of over $5 billion through 2006; however, these funds could only be designated to methods of reading instruction that were scientifically proven (Ortlieb, 2008). As a result: 1) reading education became center stage and nationally recognized as a prerequisite to learning and success in every subject area, and 2) schools receiving *Reading First* monies selected remediation techniques directly related to the findings of the National Reading Panel's (2000) report, *Teaching Children to Read*. With an emphasis on higher accountability, data-driven instruction was linked to measureable outcomes based on standards.

The prevention of reading difficulties through early intervention has also been highlighted in *Reading First*. Early intervention is defined as identifying and providing services to children who are at risk for developing specific reading disabilities (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). One of its goals was to provide more early intervention in hopes of greatly reducing the need for remedial programs. Alongside early intervention is the notion of differentiated instruction. Classroom teachers are expected to provide the accommodations and adaptations necessary for all children to reach their potential. Through adopting practices from gifted education like differentiation, ability grouping, and curricular modification, teachers can remediate students in whole-class settings (Renzulli, 1994; Tomlinson, 1995, 1999). Tomlinson (2001) suggests that teachers should be prepared to address the wide diversity of students in schools through flexible grouping, ongoing assessments, and varying expectations/requirements (Baumgartner, Lipowski, & Rush, 2003; Gallagher, 2004; Lawrence-Brown, 2004).

Although the aim is commendable, its facilitation is not fostered to the extent that it is envisioned. As a result, specialists and supplementary reading instruction are still needed to provide additional instruction that struggling readers need. Yet, fewer reading specialists are found in schools today. Their roles have changed from providing small

group reading remediation to being *reading coaches*. Their duties primarily consist of assisting classroom teachers with their reading instruction, individualization, and instruction. University-based reading clinics have become less popular as well, as universities face the reality of economic hardships and time commitments from their directors. Departments struggle to keep reading clinics afloat, even though the community-based demand is as high as ever.

Participants in remediation programs at elementary schools spend less time reading texts during instruction than do nonparticipating peers (Johnston & Allington, 1984) as schools cannot always schedule remediation sessions during elective time. As a result, classroom teachers who are ultimately held accountable for their students' success are sometimes uneasy having students participate in pull-out programs. Inevitably, all students will have to take the end-of-the-year standardized tests.

Although it is universally accepted that comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading, fluency development is overwhelmingly popular with schools that utilize tests like Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills **(**DIBELS). Several areas of reading can be measured using DIBELS, but those related to the accuracy and speed at which a child can verbalize sounds, letters, and words are heavily utilized. Instructional procedures usually include teacher modeling appropriate reading of texts and using repeated readings. Meanwhile, comprehension instruction has taken a backseat in popularity all the while school systems place uncanny emphasis on standardized tests and annual yearly progress—both offspring from acts of legislation at all levels of government.

There remains a disconnection between teachers' educational practices and the deficits underlying reading problems identified through research, including: writing and thinking skills crucial elements of remedial instruction, visual-processing, phonological and semantic decoding, short-term memory, contextual use, language deficiency, and metacognitive deficiency. Meanwhile, acts of legislation guide instruction and the financial support that accompanies them have an enormous influence on what is taught and how teachers remediate students' difficulties in reading.

III. Future

While refraining from making futuristic predictions of flying cars, reminiscent of *The Jetsons* animated television sitcom, I will set forth some conjectures of what will be encompassed in reading remediation based on current practices, research, and trends of today.

Inclusionary practices will continue to prosper as special educators and regular educators will combine their skill sets to address the needs of all students. Pull out programs will be kept to a minimum as virtually all resources will be structured for in-class instruction and remediation. Those seeking additional remediation can venture to university-based reading clinics, which will gain popularity with the transition of the old classroom of pens, pencils, and papers to that of computers, the Internet, and facilitation. These reading clinics will function as digital literacy hubs.

Technology will no longer be integrated into the curriculum if and when applicable; it will be the primary vehicle for how curriculums are presented and learned. Instead of outlawing many lines of communication in the classroom, the advantages of devices like a cellular telephone, texting device, two-way video camera, conferencing equipment, computer, and the Internet will be fully utilized in the futuristic classroom. The teacher's role will also dramatically shift to instructing in small groups, as students are given portions of the lesson through computer-based tutorials. Those who need to see the skill modeled twice can re-watch the video, seek online guidance, or buzz the teacher for individualized assistance. This advancement will better utilize master teachers, as students can watch videos of 'what to do when they get to unknown words' for example. These word attack skills can be learned through powerful video tutorials, rather than having hundreds of thousands of teachers spending countless hours of time repeating these processes every year with sometimes less effective results. A teacher's function is related to consulting and remediating, spending concentrated amounts of time with students who need additional guidance. Fostering small group and individualized instruction will be standard procedure, as students can progress at their own pace with defined requirements of performance.

A. Research

Reading remediation will advance alongside experimental research. More refined scope and sequences will be created for the remediation of difficulties in reading, and the individualization of instruction will become eased with the advent of preselected programs for types of learners. For instance, students identified as word callers could be put in research-proven programs of remediation. Teachers will select the best option from those available, and have the ability to modify as necessary.

Literacy hubs (reading clinics) will also become enhanced, especially those affiliated with large research universities. Those in rural areas will benefit through tele-tutoring and web-based instruction as satellite Internet connectivity develops to provide the same speed of web access regardless of geography; however, they will struggle to compete with their urban counterparts by continuing to have difficulties related to financial, structural, and professional support. Brain research will further depict causations of many deficits that lead towards reading difficulties/disabilities. Eden and Moats (2002) state, "Functional brain imaging studies of skill acquisition and practice-induced plasticity have paved the way toward a better understanding of the neural mechanisms of normal reading development (Schlaagar et al., 2002) and reading remediation" (Simos, et al., 2002). Similar scanning equipment will allow researchers to further link

neurological function to specific activities related to reading. The drastic difference is that educational systems will take notice of these newfound findings, and adopt policies related to these discoveries years later.

B. Practice

Being integrated with real world applications, digital literacies will continue to flourish as the passive acquiring of knowledge will take a backseat to the active construction of information schema. Digital literacies involve locating, organizing, understanding, evaluating, and creating information. However, the act of teaching students to become digitally literate will become increasingly difficult, as the amount of data exposure will be incredible. Independent pursuits of learning will become mandatory for student success. Discriminating between fact and opinion will be paramount, as the line between the two will become vague at times. Normally one can look at the source such as a text, refereed article, and so on, but the electronic medium as a whole will swell, as it becomes not only the primary source for acquiring information but virtually the only one.

Digital classrooms will follow as schools begin to appropriate funding for electronic resources rather than printed materials. The following is an example of a futuristic second grade classroom:

When the electronic equipment fails, using printed handouts with pen and paper will seem archaic. Interactive books on laptops will be sorted by level, interest, genre, and/or skill, so that students will have more appropriately-geared texts from which to read and learn. While students sit at their desks, their laptops are equipped with stereo headphones, a microphone, and voice recognition software. As each student reads aloud a story during their language arts block, the software detects accuracy of word recognition from each student reading aloud the story. The computer program selects appropriate follow-up activities based on whether the student needs practice in word recognition, expression, pacing, or a host of other subareas of reading. Assessments are completely computer-based as well. Once students have read a number of texts, the software adjusts the level of texts from which to select, and even adjust the readability on future pages of a text as needed, so as to scaffold their learning. Some curricular objectives are even completed through using virtual worlds and global communities like Quest Atlantis' *Teacherville*.

Just as schooling at every level (elementary, middle, high, and college/university) is already available online in its entirety, its popularity will inevitably control a larger minority of the market. Students from around the globe will become more connected through Internet-based classrooms, but remediating the difficulties of readers will take a different course. It will not become more difficult, because of the advancements that will coincide with the digital revolution. Two-way webcams, voice communication technology, and chat applications will become the norm and be embedded within learning modules. Programmed virtual worlds and global communities will allow students to interact with others to solve real-world problems through completing content-based activities. Management systems for online and hybrid learning should become more user friendly and enriched with options that allow seamless transitions through a scope and sequence with expanded programming manufacturer competition. More personalized sessions of web-based tutoring and remediation will be available live and/or by appointment.

Literacy remediation will remain a focus both within and outside the confines of the classroom. Locating reading materials will occur much less frequently at libraries and in turn, the function of libraries will shift dramatically as resources shift from print to online. Digital library resources are already available, but will continue to become enhanced with multimedia and instructional content. Children will be taught how to use technology from the beginnings of their development. This meshing of learning and technology will have a negative outcome on printed materials, as they become dated and neglected archives of information.

Many believe that books are already dead because they are without the means of being updated or revised. This is especially relevant as non-fiction print is becoming ever-more popular in schools because of its integrated content. Richard Charkin (2006), former CEO of MacMillan Publishing, said that people currently spend more time reading on the Internet than reading printed materials. He summarized that books have characteristics that will lead to their cessation, including having a one-way relationship with the reader, too lengthy, expensive to produce, subject to gatekeepers, not searchable, not linkable, have no metadata, and carry no conversation.

University libraries like the one at Cushing University in Massachusetts are getting rid of their books and reference desks to make room for learning centers with e-readers, flat-screen televisions, and a coffee shop (Prescott, 2009). University-based reading laboratories and clinics will also utilize technology in their approaches to literacy advancement. Digital monitoring equipment already allows professors and students to monitor, record, and study their practices for reflection, study, and advancement. It also enables the professor to monitor multiple sessions simultaneously. Global communities will also be used to link others who can assist with remediation assistance.

As research becomes available depicting the positive outcomes of using technology in teacher development and reading remediation, more university-based reading clinics will follow suit. In these settings, teacher candidates and struggling readers will regularly use software, websites, and e-books to remediate reading difficulties. This will allow preservice teachers to learn these new approaches and as they become incorporated into schools as classroom teachers, they can foster change and professional development to their colleagues. These technology enrichments have not been as readily available in the past, as they are in the 21st century. As a result, publishing companies have created numerous reading series available online with subscriptions. With increased focus on digital literacy, more thorough programs will surface for adoption by schools and universities alike.

IV. Conclusion

Although hosts of technological devices are already in use today, their widespread use will dominate as the predominant means of learning in classrooms. Rather than passively receiving information from a teacher, learning will consist of mastering digital literacies, including the seeking out and integrating of information into one's schema. As a result, the role of a teacher and a student will change drastically. Remediating difficulties in literacy acquisition will change in turn to meet the altering demands of educational progression. Printed texts will be outdated and literacy educators must continue to advance their skill sets in research, technology utilization, and curricular development if they are to provide their students opportunities for success.

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Issues Affecting Item Response Theory Fit in Language Assessment: A Study of Differential Item Functioning in the Iranian National University Entrance Exam

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***Abstract*—This study aimed at examining the issues affecting the use of IRT models in investigating differential item functioning in high stakes testing. It specifically focused on the Iranian National University Entrance Exam (INUEE) Special English Subtest. A sample of 200,000 participants was randomly selected from the candidates taking part in the INUEE 2003 and 2004 respectively. The data collected in six domains of vocabulary, grammar, word order, language function, cloze test and reading comprehension were analyzed to evaluate the applicability of item response theory (IRT; Embretson & Reise, 2000), including the use of IRT for assessing differential item functioning (DIF; Zumbo, 2007). Substantial model-data misfit was observed in calibrations using PARSCALE and BILOG MG software (Scientific Software International, 2004). Additional analysis through Xcalibre and Iteman 4 (Assessment Systems Corporation, 2010) suggested that item response theory, including IRT-based DIF analysis, is not applicable when the test administered is noticeably beyond the participants' level of capability, when the test is speeded, or if students are penalized for their wrong answers.**

***Index Terms*—IRT, DIF, Iranian National University Entrance Exam**

I. Introduction

Item Response Theory (IRT), also called latent trait theory, is the most popular modern test theory which has attracted lots of attention and is considered as an active area of research in the world of assessment and testing. Item response theory is a mathematical model that specifies the relation of trait levels and item characteristics to a person's item response (Embretson & Riese, 2000). Hambleton et al, (1991) state that:

IRT rests on two basic postulates: a) the performance of an examinee on a test item can be predicted (or explained) by a set of factors called traits, latent traits or abilities; and b) the relationship between examinees' item performance and the set of traits underlying item performance can be described by a monotonically increasing function called an item characteristic function or item characteristic curve (p.7).

IRT is more complex than its classical counterpart, classical test theory (CTT), since it requires more assumptions and the use of special software, not many of which are adequately user-friendly for the majority of those interested in assessment and testing. However, it can explain a lot of things for which the classical test theory has either no explanation or provides weaker and less accurate justifications. CTT is based on the assumption that a test-taker's observed score is a combination of his true score and the error score. It requires weaker assumptions and therefore is relatively easy to interpret. Because of that it is still very common in the world of testing.

However, IRT offers many important advantages over CTT. Henning (1987) mentions the advantages as: sample-free item calibration, test-free person measurement, multiple reliability estimation, identification of guessers and other deviant responders, potential ease of administration and scoring, economy of items, test tailoring facility, test equating facility, item banking facility, reconciliation of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced testing, item and person fit validity measures, score reporting facility, the study of item and test bias, and the elimination of boundary effects in program evaluation. Although some of these features are also present in CTT, IRT provides a better index of each of these. Through IRT one can also compare different test takers who have taken different versions of a test (Hambleton & Swaminathan, 1985).

IRT is based on a number of assumptions. First of all, it assumes uni-dimensionality; that is, the test measures only one latent trait which is usually referred to as 'ability,' denoted by θ. An entwined assumption is the concept of local independence; that is the item responses are assumed to be independent of one another. The assumptions of

unidimensionality and local independence are related in that; "items found to be locally dependent will appear as a separate dimension in a factor analysis" (Reeve 2003, p. 12). Besides factor analysis, model fit can provide evidence that this assumption is satisfied.

The second assumption is that the probability of a certain response to an item is a function of θ, and can be mathematically modeled. There are numerous mathematical models available, both for dichotomous (correct/incorrect) data and polytomous (rating scale or partial credit) data. An evaluation of model-data fit is essential for providing evidence that this assumption is satisfied.

The invariance assumption is the third assumption, which states that the item parameters are not influenced by the sample characteristics. This means that unlike classical test theory where parameter estimates and statistics vary across samples, item parameters are considered invariant to group membership in IRT. This is a great advantage of IRT. "The property of invariance of ability and item parameters is the cornerstone of IRT. It is the major distinction between IRT and classical test theory" (Hambleton, 1994, p. 540).

There are three IRT models in widespread use for dichotomous data, all of which require the above-mentioned assumptions. The simplest IRT model is a one-parameter logistic (1PL) model, a version of which is also known as the Rasch model. It is based on the item parameter *b* (item difficulty). The difficulty is the value of ability when a person has a 50% probability of answering an item correctly. Usually, the difficulty is standardized and ranges from -3 to +3 with higher values indicating more difficult items. This model assumes that all the items are equally discriminating. The two-parameter model is an extension of the 1PL as it adds an item discrimination parameter (*a*) to the model. The discrimination parameter determines how well an item discriminates between persons with high and low ability. This parameter affects the steepness of the item characteristic curve (ICC); as its value increases the slope of ICC increases. Usually, the discrimination parameter ranges from 0 to 2. The three-parameter logistic (3PL) model extends the 2PL model by including a pseudo-guessing parameter. This parameter estimates the probability of answering an item correctly for persons having very low ability. Adding this parameter to the model results in the lower asymptote of the ICC being nonzero, typically 1/*k* where *k* is the number of item options. This differs from the 1PL and 2PL models where persons of very low ability have a zero probability of answering the item correctly.

The potential of IRT for solving different kinds of testing problems is considerable, provided that there is fit between the model and the test data. IRT is applied to the investigation of many issues, including DIF & item bias analysis, test linking and equating, adaptive testing, program evaluation and assessment testing, and test assembly.

The present study is related to the use of IRT in studying DIF in high-stakes tests. IRT can provide a theoretically useful tool for DIF analysis since DIF can be modeled through the use of estimated item parameters and ability. In fact, DIF is very often studied in the context of item response theory. DIF occurs when the responses provided by students of approximately equal ability are significantly different based on students' membership in a particular subgroup. In other words, respondents with similar ability levels from different populations, have a different probability of responding to an item (Camilli & Shephard, 1994).

Differential item functioning methods allow one to judge whether items (and ultimately the test they constitute) are functioning in the same manner in various groups of examinees. In broad terms, this is a matter of measurement invariance; that is, is the test performing in the same manner for each group of examinees? (Zumbo, 2007, p. 1).

DIF items are usually considered as serious threats to the validity of the instruments measuring the ability levels of individuals from different groups. Such instruments cannot be considered as sufficiently valid for between-group comparisons, as their scores may be indicative of a variety of attributes other than the ones the scale is intended to measure (Thissen, Steinberg, & Wainer, 1988). Thus DIF detection is a crucial step for all testing situations. It becomes "intimately tied" to test validation to establish the inferential limits of the test; that is, whether the inferences made on the test scores are valid for a specific group (Zumbo, and Rupp, 2004; and Zumbo, 2007). In case of high-stakes tests, DIF analysis is of higher importance and becomes compulsory (Pae & Park 2006).

IRT methods of studying DIF are based on comparing the ICCs between groups (Embretson & Reise, 2000). This is the same as comparing the item parameter estimates for persons of matched ability. There are several IRT approaches for DIF detection. For example, some use the area between the ICCs (e.g., Raju, 1988); some use statistical testing of the equality of the ICC parameters (e.g., Lord, 1980); and others use statistical testing of the model fit (e.g., Thissen, Steinberg, & Wainer, 1988).

Analyses based on the one-parameter logistic IRT model, or the Rasch dichotomous model, investigate DIF in the threshold or location parameter *b*. They test whether the reference and focal groups have a different probability of answering an item correctly after controlling for group differences on the latent variable? This method has strict requirements for the Rasch model to keep its elegance (e.g., sum score sufficiency). Any item that differs from the other items in its ability to discriminate among respondents is considered a misfitting item to the Rasch model (Smith, 1991). Thus, if an item has different estimated slopes (i.e., discrimination ability) between the reference and focal groups, the item is considered misfit and is usually eliminated.

Some researchers (e.g., Angoff, 1993; Camilli & Shepard, 1994) believe that investigation of DIF in the framework of Rasch measurement is limited. Exclusion of the discrimination power or pseudo-guessing as the possible sources of DIF will result in undetected DIF items and may hence lead to the removal of the most useful items in a measure (Angoff, 1993). Therefore, applications of the Rasch models limit our understanding of the group differences in

responding to items. As such, IRT models that allow the discrimination parameter to vary from item to item describe the data more accurately than the ones that limit the slope parameter to be equal across items.

For binary data, the two-parameter logistic IRT model studies DIF in relation to the item's threshold parameter b, slope parameter a, or both parameters. DIF in the slope parameter represents an interaction between the underlying measured variable and group membership (Teresi, Kleinman, & Ocepek-Welikson, 2000). The degree to which an item represents the underlying construct depends on the group being measured.

The 3-parameter model allows for the investigation of DIF in the discrimination parameter, threshold parameter, and the pseudo-guessing parameter.

II. Iranian National University Entrance Examination

The Iranian National University Entrance Exam (INUEE) is designed to screen candidates for studying at higher education. It is given to high school graduates who intend to continue their studies at the university level. The INUEE consists of two parts. The first part, the general part, is designed to measure applicants' general academic ability, and focuses on subjects such as Islamic studies and culture (theology), Persian language and literature, Arabic language, and one elective foreign language (English, French, German, Italian, or Russian). It is believed that these subjects play a disproportionate role in applicants' overall academic ability; hence the scoring system which is used is a weighted one in the sense that e.g. a correct response to an item of Islamic studies and culture is considered more important than a correct response to an item of the Arabic language. The general part of the INUEE includes 100 MC items with 25 items dedicated to each subject area. This part of the test is the same in the subjects, number and form of the items for all the applicants independent of their high school majors. However, the content of the items usually differs.

The second part of the test, the special part, focuses on subjects related to the four high school majors of the applicants in mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, and arts. Students are admitted to different fields of study in higher education depending on their score in the first and second part of the test altogether. This part includes 70-150 MC items depending on students' major in high school. The subject areas and the content of the items are also determined according to the majors. Like the first part, a weighted system is used to score the items in each subject area. The INUEE is a competition test and the best candidates are selected for the limited number of vacancies available for each field of study in different universities.

The applicants are ranked on the basis of their total scores on both parts and admitted to the universities in the majors they had requested. If an applicant's score is not high enough to be admitted to their requested discipline, the applicant can be admitted to other disciplines. Although many applicants are not accepted in their majors of interest, they may still continue because in addition to the social desirability of getting into universities, male students are exempt from compulsory military service (Farhady & Hedayati, 2009, p.136).

The second part of the test is administered in 5 subtests over three days, with each subtest being administered in half a day. Four subtests are related to the four high school majors in Iran (mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, and arts) and the fifth subtest is specially designed for those applicants whose intended university major is English or other foreign languages. Each high school graduate can sit for up to 3 subtests to earn acceptance in different fields of studies in universities. Applicants can take only one of the subtests related to the mathematics, natural sciences and humanities major. They are also allowed to sit for the other two versions related to the arts and foreign languages if they like.

III. Purpose of the Study

The present study aimed at finding the issues affecting the use of IRT models in investigating differential item function in high stakes test. It specifically focused on the INUEE Special English Subtest.

IV. Methodology

A. Participants

The data for this study came from 200,000 participants randomly selected from among more than 500,000 high school graduates who sat for the Special English Subtest of the Iranian National University Entrance Exam in 2003 and 2004 respectively. There were 270,201 examinees in 2003 and 284,079 examinees in 2004; 100,000 were selected from each sample.

B. Instrument

Iranian National University Entrance Exam (Special English Subtest)

The foreign language subtest of this test that taps candidates' knowledge of grammar and lexicon as well as general reading comprehension has two parts. The Special English Subtest, plays a more important role in applicants' admission to universities in foreign language studies and that is why it was selected for investigation in the present study. This test consists of 70 MC items in six areas of language: structure (10-12 items), vocabulary (20 items), word order (4-5 items), language function (4-5 items), cloze test (15 items), and reading comprehension (15 items).

C. Data Collection Procedure

The data of this study was collected through the kind cooperation of the Center of Educational Measurement. It provided the researchers with the answer sheets of all the participants taking the INUEE Special English Subtests 2003 and 2004.

D. Data Analysis

The data of the study were subjected to CTT analysis using *Iteman 4* and IRT analysis using PARSCALE and *Xcalibre*, including DIF detection using PARSCALE and BILOG. Because the test consists of multiple choice items, the three-parameter model (Embretson & Reise, 2000) was utilized.

V. Results and Discussion

The classical analysis of the items using *Iteman 4* indicated that the test had adequate reliability but was quite difficult. Tables 1 presents the summary statistics of the 2003 test, for all the items, and for each domain (content area).

TABLE 1:
SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR DIFFERENT DOMAINS OF THE INUEE ENGLISH SUBTEST (2003)

Score	Items	Mean	SD	Var.	Min Score	Max Score	Alpha	Mean P	Mean r_{pbis}
All items	70	25.636	12.389	153.488	0.00	69.00	0.912	0.481	0.293
Domain 1 (Voc.)	10	3.676	1.957	3.829	0.00	10.00	0.455	0.432	0.221
Domain 2 (Gram,)	20	8.650	4.635	21.486	0.00	20.00	0.834	0.536	0.349
Domain 3 (W.O.)	5	2.431	1.487	2.210	0.00	5.00	0.648	0.584	0.324
Domain 4 (Lg Func)	5	1.762	1.362	1.856	0.00	5.00	0.495	0.460	0.313
Domain 5 (Cloze)	15	5.084	2.962	8.775	0.00	15.00	0.678	0.466	0.239
Domain 6 (R.C.)	15	4.032	3.027	9.164	0.00	15.00	0.680	0.430	0.304

As indicated in this table, the reliability coefficient was 0.912, but the mean score was 25.636 out of 70 (36.61%) and the mean *P* was 0.481, which is very low performance for a national test. Note that the mean score is a better representation of test difficulty because the mean *P* does not include omitted responses. This low performance is observed in all the six domains. The best performance is seen in domain 3 (48.62%) and the lowest performance is seen in domain 6 (26.88%). The level of performance for the other four domains are as follow: domain 1: 36.76%, domain 2: 34.25%, domain 4: 35.24%, and domain 5: 33.89%. Figure 1 depicts the same results more clearly by displaying the distribution of the total number correct scores.

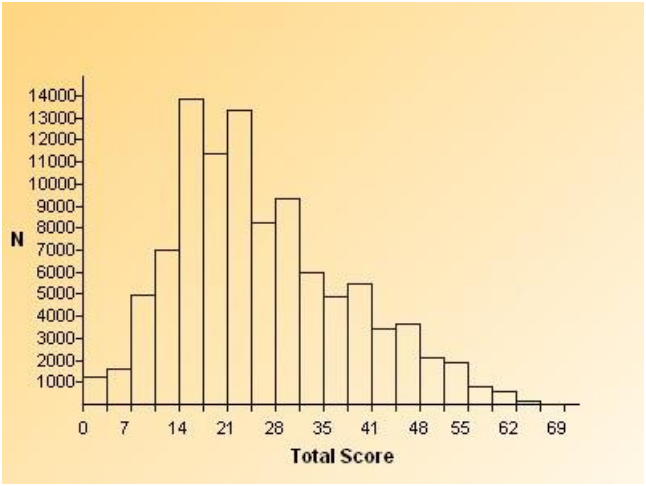

Figure 1: Total scores for different domains of the INUEE English Subtest (2003)

Table 2 presents the summary classical statistics of the 2004 test, and confirms the results of Table 3. Here again it is found that while the reliability is 0.901, the overall performance is very low with the mean of 21.63 (30.91%), which is even lower than the performance on the test 2003. The best performance is seen in domain 4 (language function with 35.84%, accuracy) and the lowest performance is seen in domain 6 (reading comprehension with 28.71%.accuracy). The accuracy level of performance for the other four domains is as follows: domain 1 with the accuracy of 33.77%, domain 2 with the accuracy of 30.15%, domain 3 with the accuracy of 32.5%, and domain 5 with the accuracy of 30.03%.

TABLE 2:
SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR DIFFERENT DOMAINS OF THE INUEE ENGLISH SUBTEST (2004)

Score	Items	Mean	SD	Var.	Min Score	Max Score	Alpha	Mean P	Mean r_{pbis}
All items	70	21.636	11.757	138.233	0.00	67.00	0.901	0.445	0.271
Domain 1 (Voc.)	10	3.377	2.190	4.796	0.00	10.00	0.591	0.426	0.273
Domain 2 (Gram,)	20	6.030	3.738	13.974	0.00	20.00	0.720	0.416	0.256
Domain 3 (W.O.)	5	1.625	1.206	1.453	0.00	5.00	0.370	0.446	0.331
Domain 4 (Lg Func)	5	1.792	1.270	1.612	0.00	5.00	0.420	0.516	0.216
Domain 5 (Cloze)	15	4.504	2.964	8.783	0.00	15.00	0.685	0.437	0.246
Domain 6 (R.C.)	15	4.307	3.435	11.796	0.00	15.00	0.755	0.481	0.313

Figure 2 displays the results presented in the first row of Table 2 more clearly. It displays the distribution of the total number correct scores.

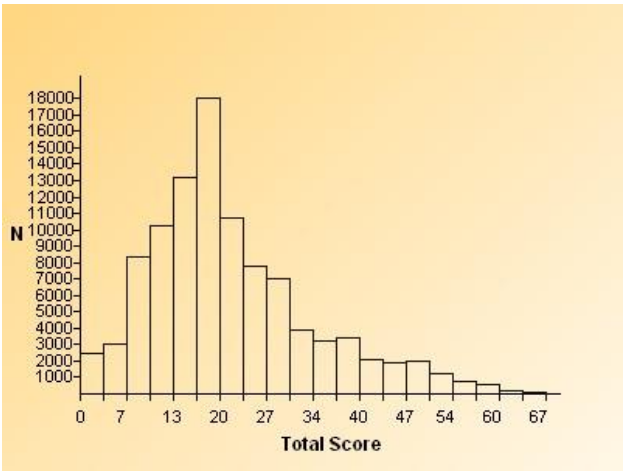

Figure 2: Total scores for different domains of the INUEE English Subtest (2004)

Both tests were calibrated with the three-parameter logistic IRT model (3PL). With the 3PL, the probability of an examinee with a given θ correctly responding to an item is (Hambleton & Swaminathan, 1985, Eq. 3.3):

$$P_i(X_i = 1 | \theta_j) = c_i + (1 - c_i)\frac{\exp[Da_i(\theta_j - b_i)]}{1 + \exp[Da_i(\theta_j - b_i)]} \quad (7)$$

where
a_i is the item discrimination parameter,
b_i is the item difficulty or location parameter,
c_i is the lower asymptote, or pseudoguessing parameter, and
D is a scaling constant equal to 1.702 or 1.0.

The *a* parameter ranges in practice from 0.0 to 2.0, with a higher value indicating more discriminating power. The *b* parameter typically ranges from -3 to +3, as it is indicative of the examinee ability level for which the item is appropriate on a scale that is analogous to the standard normal scale. The *c* parameter is typically near 1/*k*, where *k* is the number of alternatives to a multiple choice item. The INUEE test is composed of four-option items, so this value can be expected to be approximately 0.25 on average.

IRT calibrations were completed with both PARSCALE and *Xcalibre*. Detailed results are presented in Appendices A and B, while summary results are presented in Table 3. As with classical analysis, items had strong discriminations but were extremely difficult. The mean *b* parameters were 1.38 and 1.03 with PARSCALE, and 1.31 and 1.55 with *Xcalibre*, all of which imply that the average item is appropriate for a student in the top 15% of the population. This result is even more notable when considering that more than 25% of the responses were omitted in 2003 and more than 32% in 2004; had examinees been required to answer each question, items would appear even more difficult.

TABLE 3:
SUMMARY STATISTICS OF IRT CALIBRATION

	PARSCALE			Xcalibre						
Statistic	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	*R*	*P*	r_{pbis}	Omit
2003 mean	0.90	1.38	0.21	1.11	1.31	0.23	4.53	0.45	0.27	25650
2003 SD	0.50	3.80	0.16	0.55	1.06	0.10	7.51	0.16	0.14	11870
2004 mean	0.97	1.03	0.20	1.27	1.55	0.25	3.29	0.45	0.27	32198
2004 SD	0.40	1.61	0.08	0.49	0.95	0.08	4.62	0.16	0.14	12652

While IRT provides many advantages in test development and analysis, an essential criterion to its application is acceptable model fit. Finally, a likelihood-ratio -statistic for each item is computed by

$$\chi 2\, j = 2\sum_{h=1}^{H} r_{hj} \ln \frac{r_{hj}}{N_{hj} P_j(\theta_h)}$$

where H_j is the number of intervals for item j and r_{hj} is the observed frequency for interval h in item j. The degree of freedom is the number of response categories minus 1; since all items on the INUEE are dichotomously scored, this is always 1. *Xcalibre*, in contrast, standardizes the residual. Therefore, a value greater than 1.96 indicates a rejection of fit with a significance of 0.05.

Item fit statistics were quite poor. Every single item on both tests was rejected with PARSCALE's chi-square fit statistics. With *Xcalibre's* standardized residual fit statistics, 61 items were rejected for the 2003 test and 45 items for the 2004 test. The average residuals are reported in Table 3; average chi-square statistics from PARSCALE could not be calculated because many were too large to be included in output. Some of the worst fitting items were eliminated in an iterative attempt to improve the data-model fit, but most items continued to be rejected.

Such extensive misfit is likely caused by additional variables affecting the process of responding to items; IRT assumes that the probability of correctly responding is a function only of θ. Three factors were speculated for such a misfit two of which are related to the substantial number of omitted responses seen in Table 3. First, the test could have been too speeded; examinees did not have sufficient time to respond to items according to their ability. Secondly, students were penalized for their wrong answers; every three wrong answers will cancel a correct answer on this test. This correction for guessing on the INUEE discourages many students from responding to all items, and as such their performance is underestimated. Finally, such misfit could be due to the fact that the items were too difficult for the target population, leading to the skewed raw score distributions in Figures 1 and 2.

The model misfit substantially inhibited the investigation of DIF using IRT. PARSCALE, like BILOG-MG, characterizes DIF as different item parameters for relevant groups. It then calculates two significance tests for the comparison, the more conservative of which is a chi-square test. For this study, the *a* and *c* parameters were held constant, and the *b* parameter allowed to vary, which evaluates whether there was differential difficulty between the two gender groups. As seen in Appendices C and D, most items were rejected for DIF, and nearly every item that was not was a case where PARSCALE was not able to estimate parameters and a *b* parameter of 0.00 was supplied instead. It is unlikely that nearly every item would be rejected for DIF, suggesting that the fit issues prevented the application of IRT to investigate DIF.

Using other DIF detection softwares did not solve the problem either. BILOG MG was used to see whether the IRT models would fit the data. BILOG MG provides a large-sample test of the goodness-of-fit of individual test items in the analysis. Almost all the items indicated misfit no matter which IRT model was used.

VI. Conclusions

This study was designed to evaluate the presence of DIF on different years of the INUEE English Subtest. It however, became a study of the factors affecting item response theory fit in language assessment after IRT calibrations displayed substantial misfit. The use of IRT models indicated a high level of misfit for almost all the items, precluding effective DIF analysis. This was the case for both PARSCALE and BILOG MG software. Analysis of the results led the researchers to instead evaluate possible causes of this misfit in a 70-item test with a large sample (100,000 students). Plausible causes were speculated to be the difficulty of the test, the speededness of the test, and a scoring penalty for guessing. The existence of the three speculations were confirmed through further analysis. Unfortunately, the existence of all three issues prevents the isolation of any as the cause for misfit. Future research is necessary to investigate this further.

Overall, the study can lead one to conclude that although in many applications IRT is preferable to its counterpart, CTT, it can turn out to be quite inefficient under certain conditions. The present study concluded that it cannot be used for DIF analysis (though it is the most preferred method in the literature) when the test administered is noticeably beyond the participants' level of capability or when the test is speeded, when some students are not able to finish the test on time. A similar problem is present if students are penalized for their wrong answers and this may mean that tests which allow for guessing are preferable to tests in which guessing is suppressed.

Within the context of large-scale language assessment, these results have important implications regarding application of IRT for test development or analysis. It is recommended that the test developers ensure that the effect of speededness is minimized, to ensure that the test is a power test. Additionally, a guessing penalty is likely to inhibit the application of IRT because it violates the unidimensionality assumption of IRT, so it is recommended that such penalties not be applied.

APPENDIX A: 2003 IRT PARAMETERS AND STATISTICS

	Parscale			Xcalibre						
Item	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	*R*	*P*	r_{pbis}	Omit
1	0.12	-0.54	0.53	1.78	2.74	0.39	2.03	0.40	0.02	21721
2	1.51	0.80	0.28	1.37	0.75	0.28	1.29	0.51	0.41	9258
3	1.51	2.45	0.37	1.67	2.24	0.37	3.09	0.40	0.11	12324
4	0.83	1.84	0.41	1.28	1.81	0.44	4.25	0.50	0.18	13529
5	0.63	0.50	0.26	0.70	0.99	0.31	1.01	0.57	0.30	22251
6	0.80	0.87	0.14	0.76	0.89	0.12	5.88	0.43	0.35	13899
7	0.39	-0.84	0.05	0.48	0.09	0.19	2.60	0.66	0.25	16298
8	0.84	1.86	0.20	1.58	2.52	0.14	8.91	0.16	0.10	18966
9	0.36	3.24	0.12	0.47	3.00	0.15	2.23	0.25	0.14	12505
10	0.94	0.94	0.20	0.94	0.87	0.20	1.52	0.45	0.36	7845
11	1.53	2.17	0.16	1.53	2.16	0.16	4.69	0.21	0.19	23153
12	0.75	0.31	0.28	0.78	0.40	0.29	1.54	0.62	0.33	11292
13	2.41	2.61	0.31	2.35	2.29	0.30	3.72	0.32	0.07	10683
14	0.54	0.08	0.07	0.56	0.68	0.13	3.86	0.54	0.31	21537
15	1.46	0.78	0.16	1.43	0.74	0.16	1.30	0.45	0.48	16083
16	1.31	-0.59	0.20	1.44	-0.54	0.20	2.67	0.77	0.39	8002
17	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.64	-0.68	0.13	4.13	0.78	0.25	14916
18	0.65	-0.14	0.05	0.81	0.38	0.11	4.98	0.60	0.36	26099
19	0.22	-2.19	0.00	0.46	0.84	0.06	6.63	0.49	0.24	22243
20	1.69	1.48	0.12	1.57	1.65	0.12	2.68	0.25	0.40	32162
21	1.17	0.60	0.22	1.14	0.77	0.22	1.04	0.53	0.42	26160
22	1.15	1.25	0.17	1.08	1.22	0.17	1.65	0.36	0.39	14718
23	0.49	0.38	0.12	0.64	1.02	0.18	2.56	0.53	0.30	31302
24	0.91	-0.27	0.09	0.92	-0.04	0.09	5.66	0.65	0.39	17460
25	1.43	0.39	0.20	0.20	3.00	0.41	39.77	0.57	0.49	21013
26	0.57	1.07	0.15	0.66	1.33	0.17	1.13	0.43	0.31	23657
27	1.43	0.54	0.27	0.20	3.00	0.41	35.12	0.57	0.46	19468
28	1.16	-0.52	0.13	1.19	-0.35	0.15	4.16	0.74	0.39	13258
29	0.93	0.01	0.22	1.06	0.51	0.27	1.82	0.66	0.40	31237
30	1.19	0.11	0.27	1.25	0.16	0.26	1.62	0.66	0.41	15892
31	0.73	-0.32	0.09	0.82	-0.13	0.09	5.63	0.65	0.35	13805
32	1.17	-0.13	0.23	1.17	0.01	0.23	2.24	0.69	0.41	17395
33	1.06	2.30	0.18	1.19	2.33	0.18	0.82	0.24	0.18	31856
34	1.01	-0.08	0.15	1.08	0.04	0.15	4.34	0.65	0.41	17035
35	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.63	-0.39	0.06	10.42	0.69	0.27	13188
36	0.37	2.98	0.25	0.48	3.00	0.27	1.79	0.38	0.12	33948
37	1.16	-0.25	0.27	1.33	0.05	0.33	1.87	0.73	0.40	19610
38	0.71	0.55	0.14	0.92	0.86	0.20	0.95	0.51	0.38	24708
39	1.46	1.04	0.17	1.42	0.97	0.16	2.37	0.40	0.44	18825
40	0.62	2.22	0.15	0.72	2.15	0.15	3.36	0.28	0.23	22853
41	1.22	0.26	0.16	0.20	3.00	0.42	39.92	0.57	0.48	17502
42	1.07	2.57	0.17	1.07	2.62	0.18	5.15	0.22	0.14	31451
43	1.06	0.88	0.19	0.92	1.32	0.19	2.74	0.44	0.43	36342
44	0.02	1.69	0.89	2.50	3.00	0.14	9.08	0.15	-0.07	28277
45	0.84	0.76	0.32	1.05	1.19	0.37	3.39	0.56	0.33	31029
46	0.50	0.54	0.10	0.63	1.01	0.18	2.43	0.49	0.32	21132
47	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.35	-0.31	0.16	2.68	0.72	0.14	19269
48	0.18	1.80	0.24	1.22	2.37	0.49	4.19	0.52	0.08	23187
49	1.13	-0.15	0.25	1.14	0.16	0.31	2.60	0.69	0.42	17652
50	0.80	1.86	0.26	0.94	1.93	0.27	2.68	0.38	0.23	28012
51	0.94	0.64	0.31	1.11	0.91	0.34	1.04	0.57	0.35	22689
52	0.59	-0.24	0.04	0.68	0.80	0.21	0.84	0.59	0.36	32345
53	0.91	-0.31	0.14	0.97	0.69	0.31	3.65	0.66	0.44	36923
54	1.00	27.49	0.20	2.50	3.00	0.24	4.29	0.24	0.00	50484
55	0.02	0.00	0.97	2.50	2.86	0.18	8.59	0.18	-0.06	42610
56	1.00	15.95	0.21	2.17	3.00	0.21	2.07	0.21	0.02	28427
57	0.98	1.99	0.18	1.19	2.23	0.19	0.87	0.27	0.26	46282
58	2.21	1.23	0.19	2.20	1.52	0.20	2.43	0.36	0.48	50733
59	0.91	-0.09	0.06	1.06	0.47	0.16	2.06	0.60	0.47	27467
60	0.53	2.48	0.19	0.89	2.43	0.21	0.49	0.31	0.22	51852
61	0.87	-0.58	0.22	1.02	0.22	0.41	3.34	0.76	0.36	23683
62	0.72	1.66	0.25	1.12	1.83	0.27	0.89	0.41	0.28	46996
63	0.65	1.08	0.18	0.83	1.67	0.22	0.63	0.43	0.33	43143
64	0.39	0.52	0.05	0.70	1.60	0.22	1.61	0.48	0.29	43674
65	0.56	0.03	0.19	0.76	0.82	0.35	2.44	0.61	0.30	21417

66	0.81	0.39	0.21	0.97	0.88	0.26	1.35	0.57	0.40	31783
67	1.85	2.14	0.21	1.90	2.20	0.21	4.58	0.26	0.19	52056
68	1.77	1.63	0.25	2.02	1.77	0.26	1.04	0.36	0.32	50657
69	0.86	1.38	0.15	0.92	1.63	0.16	1.27	0.34	0.36	30691
70	1.01	1.40	0.35	1.35	1.72	0.37	1.20	0.48	0.28	45591

APPENDIX B: 2004 IRT PARAMETERS AND STATISTICS

	Parscale			Xcalibre						
Item	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	*R*	*P*	r_{pbis}	Omit
1	0.81	1.52	0.19	0.81	1.96	0.18	2.89	0.29	0.25	10793
2	1.20	0.63	0.25	1.19	0.85	0.25	1.16	0.49	0.38	14740
3	0.73	1.86	0.25	1.11	2.37	0.26	1.17	0.31	0.17	30440
4	1.33	1.12	0.18	1.42	1.50	0.19	0.62	0.33	0.39	25344
5	1.01	1.01	0.27	1.28	1.43	0.29	3.91	0.43	0.33	25704
6	0.67	0.88	0.26	0.65	1.30	0.24	1.36	0.48	0.27	20671
7	0.83	0.19	0.26	0.82	0.57	0.26	1.43	0.62	0.30	23916
8	1.23	2.25	0.15	1.74	2.89	0.15	2.42	0.17	0.07	36074
9	0.84	0.70	0.26	0.82	1.05	0.25	0.68	0.50	0.31	19993
10	0.83	0.23	0.33	0.74	0.27	0.28	1.50	0.64	0.27	12424
11	0.89	1.58	0.44	1.64	1.98	0.45	5.17	0.50	0.16	22834
12	0.96	0.43	0.23	1.20	1.62	0.31	3.70	0.50	0.41	53309
13	1.03	0.98	0.20	0.98	1.20	0.19	2.91	0.39	0.34	15097
14	1.29	1.22	0.20	1.42	1.55	0.20	0.90	0.34	0.36	26321
15	1.41	0.88	0.30	1.28	1.09	0.29	0.74	0.48	0.35	16972
16	0.94	0.73	0.23	0.80	0.79	0.18	1.46	0.48	0.32	12539
17	1.41	1.79	0.12	1.79	2.34	0.13	5.03	0.16	0.19	19994
18	1.14	0.49	0.27	1.00	0.65	0.24	1.06	0.55	0.34	18427
19	0.24	2.95	0.13	1.81	2.94	0.31	4.69	0.32	0.07	53160
20	1.08	0.57	0.26	1.01	0.77	0.24	1.30	0.53	0.34	21278
21	1.00	10.62	0.17	2.19	3.00	0.17	2.75	0.17	0.02	40651
22	1.87	1.23	0.21	1.53	1.72	0.21	4.21	0.32	0.34	32290
23	1.20	1.38	0.24	1.12	1.89	0.25	2.54	0.35	0.26	27547
24	0.91	-0.43	0.13	0.90	-0.24	0.11	4.96	0.71	0.27	16250
25	1.40	0.22	0.19	0.20	3.00	0.43	38.79	0.59	0.38	20498
26	1.32	1.79	0.18	1.57	2.37	0.18	3.76	0.23	0.21	41664
27	0.11	4.05	0.16	2.46	3.00	0.42	5.78	0.42	-0.05	34831
28	0.53	1.94	0.17	0.69	3.00	0.20	2.57	0.27	0.16	44958
29	1.00	1.12	0.23	1.17	1.81	0.24	0.67	0.38	0.33	44889
30	1.18	0.03	0.25	1.08	0.39	0.26	1.34	0.66	0.34	26471
31	1.33	1.47	0.14	1.25	2.07	0.14	4.43	0.22	0.30	28768
32	0.96	-0.72	0.27	0.89	-0.80	0.18	3.46	0.80	0.23	8784
33	1.34	1.44	0.17	1.74	1.87	0.17	3.20	0.26	0.33	36203
34	0.86	0.79	0.25	1.29	1.30	0.29	4.06	0.47	0.36	30871
35	1.41	0.77	0.27	1.69	1.39	0.28	0.84	0.48	0.44	49051
36	0.98	1.35	0.21	1.28	1.95	0.22	0.48	0.34	0.31	48196
37	1.07	-0.03	0.22	1.01	0.23	0.21	1.83	0.65	0.34	20662
38	0.61	-0.89	0.00	0.70	-0.24	0.12	5.40	0.71	0.24	17966
39	0.63	-0.58	0.00	0.76	0.82	0.27	3.31	0.64	0.29	36499
40	1.52	0.91	0.16	2.50	3.00	0.25	5.54	0.24	-0.10	53963
41	1.50	1.33	0.27	1.70	1.59	0.27	4.01	0.36	0.29	9004
42	0.13	0.00	0.00	2.50	3.00	0.23	8.89	0.23	-0.07	31279
43	0.35	1.41	0.22	0.72	2.23	0.32	2.49	0.43	0.18	30555
44	0.58	-0.49	0.16	0.67	0.27	0.29	2.64	0.69	0.26	20608
45	0.67	0.39	0.23	0.83	1.25	0.29	1.40	0.55	0.31	39373
46	0.69	1.58	0.30	1.18	2.17	0.32	2.07	0.39	0.20	39709
47	1.45	1.93	0.13	1.67	2.70	0.13	6.39	0.15	0.14	43419
48	0.69	-0.23	0.10	0.64	0.75	0.19	2.47	0.61	0.33	32004
49	1.00	2.21	0.21	1.64	3.00	0.21	1.99	0.22	0.06	51965
50	1.16	0.53	0.22	1.28	1.09	0.25	1.96	0.49	0.43	33320
51	1.41	1.55	0.15	1.53	2.12	0.15	4.52	0.22	0.27	29750
52	0.82	-0.16	0.28	1.02	0.66	0.41	3.65	0.68	0.33	28594
53	1.13	-0.82	0.09	0.84	-0.03	0.27	2.30	0.77	0.31	26486
54	0.93	1.28	0.23	1.20	2.01	0.24	0.42	0.35	0.31	48427
55	1.41	1.03	0.29	1.32	1.57	0.29	1.57	0.42	0.34	31381
56	1.55	0.62	0.17	1.47	0.87	0.16	4.01	0.45	0.48	24440
57	1.01	0.19	0.16	1.10	0.85	0.19	2.48	0.55	0.42	37485
58	1.32	0.68	0.22	1.43	1.08	0.22	1.92	0.46	0.44	32903

59	0.68	1.66	0.17	1.06	2.37	0.17	1.67	0.27	0.28	56167
60	0.62	0.70	0.15	0.85	1.56	0.20	2.85	0.44	0.34	44496
61	0.08	5.71	0.15	2.50	3.00	0.40	5.57	0.40	-0.02	35293
62	1.12	-0.44	0.21	1.23	0.66	0.39	2.79	0.72	0.39	40404
63	0.09	2.70	0.22	2.07	3.00	0.37	3.22	0.37	0.01	46744
64	0.81	-0.18	0.16	1.18	0.92	0.33	2.28	0.63	0.38	41771
65	0.67	0.23	0.11	0.88	1.67	0.22	1.75	0.49	0.42	55927
66	1.25	1.08	0.27	1.62	1.67	0.27	0.99	0.42	0.38	51153
67	1.13	-0.64	0.16	1.16	0.18	0.37	2.55	0.77	0.32	27839
68	0.18	-1.23	0.38	1.78	2.88	0.31	3.47	0.32	0.01	29969
69	1.69	0.61	0.19	1.70	1.27	0.21	0.82	0.46	0.52	49717
70	0.55	0.59	0.16	0.83	1.49	0.23	2.80	0.48	0.33	42655

APPENDIX C: 2003 DIF COMPARISON

		Male			Female			
Item	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	χ^2	*p*
1	0.20	1.21	0.47	0.20	1.57	0.47	0.08	0.77
2	1.39	0.80	0.27	1.39	0.63	0.27	77.99	0.00
3	1.06	2.20	0.36	1.06	2.56	0.36	32.27	0.00
4	0.76	1.70	0.41	0.76	1.74	0.41	0.57	0.46
5	0.58	0.62	0.24	0.58	0.18	0.24	43.33	0.00
6	0.78	1.19	0.14	0.78	0.60	0.14	414.23	0.00
7	0.38	-0.65	0.08	0.38	-0.96	0.08	10.55	0.00
8	1.44	0.00	0.14	1.44	2.45	0.14	33.79	0.00
9	0.34	3.32	0.11	0.34	3.03	0.11	8.08	0.01
10	0.86	0.98	0.19	0.86	0.74	0.19	88.13	0.00
11	1.39	2.04	0.16	1.39	2.11	0.16	3.76	0.05
12	0.69	0.34	0.26	0.69	0.06	0.26	30.58	0.00
13	2.28	2.39	0.31	2.28	2.26	0.31	9.87	0.00
14	0.53	0.15	0.08	0.53	-0.08	0.08	13.85	0.00
15	1.32	0.95	0.15	1.32	0.52	0.15	498.65	0.00
16	1.23	-0.52	0.19	1.23	-0.81	0.19	99.44	0.00
17	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
18	0.63	-0.20	0.05	0.63	-0.27	0.05	2.62	0.10
19	0.15	0.00	0.39	0.15	0.00	0.39	0.00	1.00
20	1.57	1.49	0.12	1.57	1.31	0.12	80.12	0.00
21	1.09	0.53	0.21	1.09	0.44	0.21	13.57	0.00
22	1.01	0.95	0.16	1.01	1.23	0.16	150.31	0.00
23	0.48	0.49	0.13	0.48	0.23	0.13	9.59	0.00
24	0.88	-0.20	0.09	0.88	-0.47	0.09	66.49	0.00
25	1.32	0.49	0.19	1.32	0.14	0.19	298.82	0.00
26	0.55	1.34	0.16	0.55	0.86	0.16	100.47	0.00
27	1.26	0.66	0.26	1.26	0.28	0.26	295.64	0.00
28	1.09	-0.56	0.11	1.09	-0.74	0.11	38.66	0.00
29	0.88	0.06	0.21	0.88	-0.23	0.21	56.71	0.00
30	1.12	0.08	0.26	1.12	-0.09	0.26	36.28	0.00
31	0.70	-0.29	0.09	0.70	-0.51	0.09	24.08	0.00
32	1.10	-0.07	0.22	1.10	-0.37	0.22	111.00	0.00
33	0.98	2.07	0.18	0.98	2.29	0.18	23.59	0.00
34	0.96	-0.06	0.14	0.96	-0.28	0.14	56.55	0.00
35	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
36	0.36	3.39	0.26	0.36	2.70	0.26	28.17	0.00
37	1.08	-0.18	0.26	1.08	-0.52	0.26	106.65	0.00
38	0.66	0.69	0.13	0.66	0.28	0.13	102.86	0.00
39	1.32	1.16	0.17	1.32	0.81	0.17	294.42	0.00
40	0.60	2.04	0.14	0.60	2.09	0.14	1.16	0.28
41	1.13	0.30	0.15	1.13	0.04	0.15	141.19	0.00
42	0.98	2.70	0.18	0.98	2.36	0.18	27.51	0.00
43	1.00	0.95	0.19	1.00	0.71	0.19	83.78	0.00
44	0.04	0.00	0.69	0.04	0.00	0.69	0.00	1.00
45	0.75	0.77	0.31	0.75	0.54	0.31	32.28	0.00
46	0.49	0.61	0.10	0.49	0.35	0.10	13.53	0.00
47	0.17	-2.18	0.77	0.17	-2.45	0.77	0.03	0.84
48	0.17	2.01	0.21	0.17	1.15	0.21	1.41	0.23
49	1.04	-0.03	0.24	1.04	-0.43	0.24	155.81	0.00
50	0.70	2.03	0.25	0.70	1.66	0.25	72.70	0.00
51	0.87	0.77	0.30	0.87	0.37	0.30	144.65	0.00

52	0.57	-0.12	0.07	0.57	-0.40	0.07	25.05	0.00
53	0.88	-0.44	0.13	0.88	-0.42	0.13	0.17	0.68
54	0.11	2.36	0.22	0.11	34.17	0.22	7.13	0.01
55	0.03	-1.57	0.75	0.03	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.91
56	0.10	2.49	0.18	0.10	0.00	0.18	0.90	0.35
57	0.91	1.90	0.18	0.91	1.86	0.18	0.82	0.37
58	2.05	1.31	0.19	2.05	1.01	0.19	200.16	0.00
59	0.87	-0.01	0.07	0.87	-0.27	0.07	73.00	0.00
60	0.51	2.48	0.19	0.51	2.33	0.19	4.11	0.04
61	0.61	0.87	0.27	0.61	0.38	0.27	7.36	0.01
62	0.65	1.71	0.24	0.65	1.45	0.24	30.60	0.00
63	0.62	1.19	0.18	0.62	0.86	0.18	50.32	0.00
64	0.40	0.84	0.10	0.40	0.48	0.10	12.85	0.00
65	0.52	-0.12	0.17	0.52	-0.16	0.17	0.24	0.63
66	0.74	0.41	0.20	0.74	0.17	0.20	29.88	0.00
67	1.78	2.02	0.21	1.78	2.03	0.21	0.05	0.82
68	1.66	1.58	0.25	1.66	1.48	0.25	15.23	0.00
69	0.80	1.52	0.15	0.80	1.17	0.15	129.07	0.00
70	0.89	1.45	0.35	0.89	1.20	0.35	40.44	0.00

APPENDIX D: 2004 DIF COMPARISON

		Male			Female			
Item	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	χ^2	*p*
1	0.86	1.83	0.18	0.86	1.42	0.18	163.32	0.00
2	1.23	0.68	0.24	1.23	0.25	0.24	425.86	0.00
3	0.92	2.45	0.25	0.92	1.36	0.25	671.50	0.00
4	1.36	1.35	0.18	1.36	0.81	0.18	605.82	0.00
5	1.08	1.19	0.27	1.08	0.69	0.27	367.34	0.00
6	0.67	0.92	0.25	0.67	0.57	0.25	97.73	0.00
7	0.81	0.07	0.25	0.81	-0.17	0.25	41.84	0.00
8	0.06	0.00	0.56	0.06	0.00	0.56	0.00	0.95
9	0.88	0.74	0.26	0.88	0.55	0.26	46.30	0.00
10	0.83	0.17	0.33	0.83	-0.03	0.33	32.75	0.00
11	1.10	1.84	0.44	1.10	1.33	0.44	166.35	0.00
12	0.96	0.44	0.23	0.96	0.16	0.23	67.29	0.00
13	1.06	1.16	0.20	1.06	0.67	0.20	494.99	0.00
14	1.44	1.51	0.20	1.44	0.80	0.20	1026.83	0.00
15	1.38	1.03	0.29	1.38	0.30	0.29	1251.40	0.00
16	0.89	0.77	0.21	0.89	0.15	0.21	621.32	0.00
17	5.53	4.18	0.16	5.53	2.43	0.16	0.14	0.71
18	1.06	0.53	0.24	1.06	-0.20	0.24	954.85	0.00
19	0.21	3.40	0.12	0.21	3.29	0.12	0.16	0.69
20	0.99	0.57	0.23	0.99	-0.19	0.23	898.99	0.00
21	0.02	6.96	0.80	0.02	0.00	0.80	0.41	0.53
22	1.80	1.52	0.21	1.80	0.92	0.21	753.09	0.00
23	1.26	1.72	0.24	1.26	1.09	0.24	562.49	0.00
24	0.90	-0.41	0.22	0.90	0.00	0.22	173.08	0.00
25	0.99	0.15	0.12	0.99	-1.36	0.12	3579.48	0.00
26	1.53	2.23	0.18	1.53	1.56	0.18	391.12	0.00
27	0.15	10.32	0.39	0.15	0.20	0.39	132.30	0.00
28	0.24	2.88	0.05	0.24	-0.11	0.05	656.77	0.00
29	1.06	1.45	0.22	1.06	0.68	0.22	826.47	0.00
30	1.08	-0.07	0.22	1.08	-0.56	0.22	299.90	0.00
31	1.39	1.89	0.14	1.39	1.14	0.14	855.30	0.00
32	0.22	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
33	1.62	1.81	0.17	1.62	1.12	0.17	773.73	0.00
34	0.95	0.93	0.25	0.95	0.43	0.25	325.51	0.00
35	1.33	0.91	0.26	1.33	0.35	0.26	494.66	0.00
36	0.99	1.63	0.21	0.99	1.23	0.21	143.94	0.00
37	0.87	-0.24	0.16	0.87	-1.19	0.16	646.65	0.00
38	0.60	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
39	0.61	-0.71	0.03	0.61	-0.62	0.03	7.98	0.01
40	0.01	2.78	0.88	0.01	1.51	0.88	0.00	0.92
41	1.84	1.63	0.27	1.84	0.94	0.27	961.17	0.00
42	0.03	2.95	0.79	0.03	0.00	0.79	0.84	0.36
43	0.46	1.77	0.25	0.46	1.28	0.25	58.11	0.00
44	0.66	-0.32	0.27	0.66	0.00	0.27	38.75	0.00

45	0.70	0.49	0.27	0.70	1.14	0.27	221.48	0.00
46	0.38	1.92	0.21	0.38	-0.10	0.21	642.07	0.00
47	1.45	2.73	0.13	1.45	1.73	0.13	441.81	0.00
48	0.71	-0.12	0.22	0.71	0.67	0.22	419.97	0.00
49	1.35	2.79	0.21	1.35	2.31	0.21	25.89	0.00
50	1.16	0.59	0.22	1.16	0.15	0.22	341.13	0.00
51	1.51	1.97	0.15	1.51	1.26	0.15	671.20	0.00
52	0.89	-0.18	0.31	0.89	-0.40	0.31	29.74	0.00
53	1.16	-0.63	0.34	1.16	0.00	0.34	352.97	0.00
54	0.95	1.56	0.22	0.95	1.09	0.22	206.96	0.00
55	1.43	1.26	0.28	1.43	0.67	0.28	605.29	0.00
56	1.57	0.74	0.17	1.57	0.14	0.17	1053.16	0.00
57	1.01	0.19	0.15	1.01	0.02	0.15	41.57	0.00
58	1.33	0.81	0.21	1.33	0.21	0.21	792.23	0.00
59	0.71	2.13	0.16	0.71	1.39	0.16	286.81	0.00
60	0.57	0.72	0.11	0.57	0.24	0.11	108.05	0.00
61	2.10	7.11	0.40	2.10	7.77	0.40	0.00	0.95
62	1.10	-0.62	0.19	1.10	-0.91	0.19	67.64	0.00
63	0.05	0.00	0.35	0.05	0.00	0.35	0.00	1.00
64	0.86	-0.22	0.19	0.86	-0.02	0.19	34.54	0.00
65	0.66	0.16	0.09	0.66	-0.16	0.09	43.98	0.00
66	1.36	1.36	0.27	1.36	0.64	0.27	775.56	0.00
67	1.13	-0.80	0.18	1.13	-0.83	0.18	1.02	0.31
68	0.19	-2.24	0.55	0.19	0.00	0.55	3.09	0.08
69	1.64	0.67	0.19	1.64	0.26	0.19	352.15	0.00
70	0.53	0.56	0.12	0.53	0.15	0.12	58.05	0.00

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Deletion of Segments in Jussive Verbs: Generative Phonology View

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***Abstract*—The objectives: this research is meant to find correct phonological solutions to the deleted and reduced segments at the underlying level of jussive verbs in Modern Standard Arabic. The methodology: to account for any phonological change in jussive, the researcher refers to Chomsky's and Halle's (1968) theoretical views on Generative Phonology. The results: the lax vowels [u & a] are deleted in jussive verbs if they are followed either by a consonant in one environment and the lax vowel [a] in another. The vowels [ā, ū & ī] are reduced if followed by a consonant and the lax vowel [a] of the definite article *al* 'the'. The conclusions: it is evident that the deletion and reduction of segments are not only syntactically motivated due to the occurrence of a jussive entity in the structure but also phonologically because there are certain specific environments in which such process take place.**

***Index Terms*—vowels, consonants, deletion, reduction, lax, tense**

I. Introduction

Deletion is a universal phonological process in which a vowel or consonant is dropped from an entity regardless of its class. The relevant literature shows that there were a number of Arab linguists who gave the issue a great significance. For instance, Maghalsih (2007) argued that jussive is a kind of mood restricted in its occurrence to the verb of the imperfective in a structure. The deletion of a vowel or/and consonant from the end of the jussive verb marks this structure; the same vowel is used as a finite tense marker in Arabic syntax in the indicative form before being dropped when preceded by a jussive particle. The indicative verb becomes jussive in three situations: (i) *al-sukūn* 'voweless consonant or quiescence', as in [*la tadhhab-Ø ila al-madrasati* 'do not go to school']. The verb *tadhhab* carries the jussive marker zero as it is preceded by the negative item *la* 'not' . It carries the form *yadhhabu* 'goes' in the indicative before being used in mood. In other words, the short vowel [u] is the present tense marker. (ii) *h□adhf h□arf al-ᶜillih min ākhirihi* 'elision of a short vowel from the end of the imperfective verb' as in [*wa- la tamshi- Ø fi al- ard□i marah□an* 'And walk not on the earth with conceit and arrogance'. In this case, the verb *tamshi* 'walk' is in jussive mood and is reduced vowel [i]. The verb carries the form of *tamshī* 'walks' in the indicative before being used in mood (c.f. Honorific Qur'an, p. 373, verse, 37). (iii) *h□adhf al-nūn min ākhirihi* 'the deletion of the alveolar nasal [n] from the end of the imperfective verb' as in ['*aw lam yaraw- Ø 'anna nasūqu al-mā'a 'ila al-'ard□i al-jurzi* 'have they not seen how We drive water to the dry land'] (c.f. Honorific Qur'an, p. 558, verse, 27). In this situation, the verb *yaraw* 'see' bears the zero markers since the nasal [n] and [u] are omitted. It is evident that the verb carries the form *yarawna* 'see' in which /n/ and /a/ are overt before being in jussive mood. The elision of the structure [na] normally occurs if any of *al-'afᶜāl al-khamsih* 'five verbs' is used. They follow the conjugation forms of (1) *yafᶜalūna* 'they do', (2) *tafᶜalūna* 'you pl do', (3) *tafᶜalāna* 'you both do', (4) *yafᶜalāna* 'they both do' and (5) *tafᶜalīna* 'you feminine singular do' (, p. 78).

In the international literature, Schane (1973) focused on deletion of segments and stated that a consonant is omitted in an environment due to feature changing. For instance, the word- final consonants, in French, are deleted when the following word begins with another consonant or a liquid as in [*petit tableau* 'a small picture'] which becomes [peti tablo] and [*petit livre* 'A small book'] becomes [peti livre]. However, they are retained when the following word begins with a vowel as in [*petit ami* 'a small friend' remains [petit ami] and a glide as in [*petit oiseau* 'a small bird'] remains [petit waso]. Not only a consonant but also a vowel is omitted if the vowel of the definite article *le* or *la* 'the' is followed by another vowel in a word boundary as in [*le ami* 'the boy'] which becomes [l ami] (c.f. p. 52-53). He also argued that certain English morphemes terminating in a vowel drop the vowel before a suffix beginning with a vowel as in [*Mexico*] which become [*Mexican*] which is derived from [Mexico + an] in which the vowel [o] is deleted. In another example, the vowel [o] is dropped if the suffix is initiated by a vowel as in [*cello + ist*] which becomes *cellist* (p. 53).

Fromkin (1983) confirmed that the velar voiced consonant [g] is deleted when it occurs before a final nasal consonant as in 'sign' [sãyn]. This is applied to a number of words in English such as *resign, phlegm, diaphragm, paradigm, design*…etc. Likewise, delete a word final /b/ when it occurs after an /m/ as in 'bomb' /bamb/ but phonetically it is [bām]. This is applied to words such as *iamb, crumb* and *bomb* (p. 133). A vowel may also be reduced in certain environments due to phonetic and phonological or syntactic reasons; for instance, in English a vowel reduction involves the weakening of unstressed vowels to schwa. It displays morphological as well as syntactic alternations between a stressed full vowel and unstressed reduced schwa; for instance, the high long vowel [i] in

*comp**e**te* [kompit] becomes [ə] if the verb is changed to a noun as *comp**e**tition* [kompətIʃIn]. Likewise, the high short vowel [o] in *ph**o**ne* becomes [ə] if the other forms of a noun are given as in *ph**o**nology* [fənolodɜI] (p. 91). As the reduced vowels are derived from different underlying phonemes, [ə] is an allophone of them. Thus, the process of vowel reduction in English is syntactically motivated in the sense that the schwa changes the class of the word from a verb to a noun as a specimen of the category. Not only reduced but also a vowel can be deleted in English. For instance, 'he is' [hi Iz] can be said as 'he's' [hiz] in casual speech. In ordinary everyday speech most of English native speakers delete the unstressed short vowels that are italicized bold in *myst**e**ry, gen**e**ral, mem**o**ry, fun**e**ral, pers**o**nal, vig**o**rous* and *Barb**a**ra* (p. 89).

Lass (1984) argued that if a segment can merge from zero, it can also be deleted. He illustrated three different types of deletions based on the position of the deleted segment. For instance, if the deletion happens in the initial position, it is aphaeresis as [I am] becomes [I'm] in which the vowel [a] is deleted because of contraction. If the deletion happens at the medial position, it is called syncope as in [sɛkrItɛrI] 'secretary' in American style of articulation or [sɛkrItrI] 'secretary' in British pronunciation of the same word in which [ɛ] is deleted. And finally, if the deletion of segment happens at the end of the word, it is called apocope. To take Swedish, in Sandhi the final vowel [a] of a nominal stem is deleted before the plural suffix [or] as in [*flicka* 'girl' becomes *flickor* 'girls' (p.186-187).

In the relevant literature, Wright (1984) and Abdulhamid (1995) mentioned that Arabic has two types of jussive particles. (i) The ones that have the ability to perform jussive on one verb and (ii) the ones that have the ability to perform jussive on two verbs[(1)].

II. Problem of the Study

Deletion and /or reduction of a vowel and the nasal consonant /n/, in particular, take place in various ways in jussive verbs. Such phonological processes never happens to the same verb in the indicative form. These phenomena need to be checked in a concise manner with reference to Chomsky's and Halle's (1968) views of distinctive features and phonological rules. This work is an attempt to check the exact environments in which such segments succumb to change and find justifications for the change. To capture the nature of change, certain distinctive features and restricted phonological rules are posited to differentiate between segments.

III. Objectives and Questions of the Study

The objectives of this research are to find correct solutions to the reasons behind deletion and/ or reduction of segments at the end of the verb in the jussive form that makes it entirely different from indicative. To solve the above issues, the following questions are being asked.

1. What is the exact segment that succumbed to deletion or any other phonological change?
2. What are the environments in which a vowel is deleted?
3. What are the environments in which the nasal components [na] are deleted?
4. What are the environments in which a vowel is reduced?
5. How do the distinctive features help the researcher posit correct phonological rules to differentiate between segments in various environments?

IV. Theoretical Views of Generative Phonology

The researcher refers to Chomsky's and Halle's views on generative phonology to account for each segmental change and test the environments in which the change took place and differentiate between them by using the distinctive features of the generative phonological theory at the underlying as well as the surface levels; thus certain phonological rules are to be posited to govern the change and specify each environment. Chomsky and Halle (1968) posited specific distinctive features to distinguish vowels from consonants on one hand and vowels from each other on the other whenever a vowel is deleted and/or reduced. They involve (i) features of the major class, (ii) body of tongue and (iii) sonorant/ non-sonorant (obstruent) (iv) syllabic/ non-syllabic. Such features are discussed in detail as follows:

A. Major Class Features

The distinction between vowels and consonants is not only related to articulatory mechanism but also to voicing. Thus, the production of vowels did not involve any major contact between articulators as compared to consonants. In such situations, the airstreams are not obstructed at any point in the vocal tract; however, in the production of consonants, a major constriction at some point along the vocal tract was always there. As known, all vowels in English are voiced; whereas, in case of consonants some of them are [+voiced] and others are [-voiced]. To account for other differences between segments, let us look to the analysis below:

1. Vocalic – non-vocalic

These two features are used to describe sounds produced with an oral cavity in which the most radical constriction does not exceed that found in the high vowels [i] and [u] and with vocal cords that are positioned so as to allow spontaneous voicing as vocalic; however, non- vocalic sounds one or both of these conditions are not met.

2. Consonantal - non-consonantal

These two features are used to distinguish between vowels and consonants as two primary classes. Consonantal sounds are produced with a radical obstruction in the midsagittal region of the vocal tract; while, non- consonantal sounds are produced without such an obstruction. The former includes liquids; nasal and non- nasal consonants while the latter includes voiced vowels, voiceless vowels, glides [w, j] and [h, ?].

3. Sonorant – non-sonorant (obstruent)

These two features are introduced to distinguish sounds that allow spontaneous voicing from sounds that do not respectively. The sonorant segments are vowels, glides, liquids and nasals while the non- sonorant are fricatives and affricates. A refinement of these features is described as syllabic and vocoid (vowel-like in nature); hence, glides are characterized as non-syllabic and vocoid. Thus, the articulatory similarity between vowels and glides is captured by the distribution in the position of syllable nuclei. Consonants are described as contoids and vowels as vocoids while the same distinction

4. syllabic/ non-syllabic

They are used basically to differentiated between vowels and glides; however, it operates in the case of consonants. Vowels are syllabic but glides are not; furthermore, nasals and liquids are syllabic but obstruent consonants are non-syllabic ones. It must be mentioned that [± syllabic] is a different type of feature since it refers to the possibility of occurrence (distribution) of a sound in a given position (context) – i.e. syllable nucleus.

B. Cavity Features

There are certain features to distinguish consonants from each other.

1. Coronal / non-coronal: the former is used to describe sounds produced with the blade of the tongue raised from the neutral position. It includes dental, alveolar, palato-alveolar consonants; however, non-coronal is used to describe the sounds articulated with lips or with the body of the tongue in the neutral position. It includes glides, vowels, uvula and non retroflex vowels.

2. *Anterior / non-anterior:* the former is used to describe sounds that are produced with an obstruction that is located in front of the palato-alveolar region of the mouth; it includes labials, dentals and alveolars; but, non- anterior sound are produced without such an obstruction. It has palato-alveolar, retroflex, palatal, velar, uvular and pharyngeal.

C. Body of Tongue Features

There are certain distinctive features relating to the tongue body to define vowels; they include:

1. High- non- high

High sounds are produced by raising the body of the tongue above the level that occupies in the neutral position. It includes [i and u]. Non- high sounds are produced without such rising the body of the tongue; it involves the vowels [e, ɛ, a, ɑ, o and □].

2. Low- non- Low

Low sounds are produced by lowering the body of the tongue below the level that it occupies in the neutral position; it contains [a and α]. However, non- low sound are produced without such lowering the body of the tongue. It has [i, u, e, ɛ, o and □].

3. Back-non back

Back- non back: back sounds are produced by retracting the body of the tongue form the neutral position; it consists of [ɑ, □, o and u]. Non – back sounds are produced without such retraction from the neutral position; it has [i, e, ɛ, and a]. (c.f. 1968:305).

4. Rounded/un-rounded

The feature rounded/un-rounded makes a distinction between vowels pronounced with either rounded as in [u, o, □ and ɑ] and spread lips as in [I, e, ɛ and a].

The above relevant features will be used to check the environment in which a consonant and vowel is deleted or reduced in Arabic phonology of jussive verbs, in particular.

V. Deletion of a Vowel in Jussive Verb

Deletion is a phonological process in which a segment is omitted either initially, medially or finally. The deleted segment bears certain distinctive generative features and is represented by the symbol [Ø] in the structure and for which a phonological rule is posited. As far as the jussive structure level, in Arabic, is concerned, a segment is to be deleted from the end of a verb if it is in the jussive form or else the structure is ungrammatical at the syntactic as well as phonetic level. Syntactically, Arabic has a number of jussive entities of different natures; if any one of them precedes the verb of imperfective, certain phonetic articulatory change of segments has to happen. The entities are represented by: (i) *lam* ' not', (ii) *lamma* ' not', (iii) *li* 'let', (iv) *la* 'not', (vii) '*in* 'if', (viii) *man* 'who', (ix) *ma* 'whatever', (x) *mahma* 'whatever', (xi) '*aiyana* 'when', (xii), *h*□*aithuma* 'whenever', (xiii) *kaifama* ' however', (xiv) '*aina* 'where' and (xv) '*nna* ' wherever'. As the effect maximally occurs to vowels, the researcher is enforced to mention the quality of them in Arabic. There are the high front tense vowel [ī], the high front lax vowel [i], the high back tense vowel [ū], the high back lax vowel [u], the law front tense vowel [ā] and the low front lax vowel [a]. Arabic, like any other languages in the world, accepts the deletion of a vowel in a final position; to account for this issue, the researcher provides the instances in (1).

Indicative Sentence

1a. ya drus - ***u*** ᶜaliyyun/ wah□īdun
3rd, sg,masc. study pres. Ali Wahid
'Ali/ or Wahid studies'

Jussive Sentnce

1b. lam ya drus - ***Ø*** ᶜaliyyun/ wah□īdun
not 3rd, sg,masc. study juss. Ali Wahid
'Ali/ or Wahid does not study'

1c. * lam ya drus ***-u*** ᶜaliyy -un wah□īdun
not 3rd, sg, masc. study pres. Ali nom Wahid
'Ali/ or Wahid does not study'

(1a) illustrates that the verb *yadrus-u* 'he studies' is in the indicative form; thus, it carries the present marker [u] attached to it. However, if the verb is made jussive mood by adding the negative entity *lam* 'not' to the initial position of the sentence, the vowel [u] must be dropped as in (1b) or else the sentence is ungrammatical as in (1c). The deletion, of [u] in (1b), is captured by the phonological rule (1d).

1d.

$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{vocalic} \\ +\text{lax} \\ +\text{back} \\ +\text{round} \\ -\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \emptyset \;/\; - \begin{bmatrix} \{C \;\&\; -\text{vocalic}\} \\ -\text{consonantal} \end{bmatrix}$$

The rule (1d) reads as that the vowel [u] must be deleted if is followed by a consonant (C) or a semi- vowel. It is evident that if this rule is applied to (1a), it will not be applied because there is no phonological process is evolved.

If a verb of jussive carries the plural form in a verbal sentence, Arabic accepts the deletion of the same vowel [*u*], the nasal consonant [*n*] and its conjoint i.e. the vowel [a] (i.e. the plural marker). This phenomenon happens if the verb in which the structure [una] preceded by any jussive item. The example (2) is a specimen of the environment.

Indicative Sentence

2a ya- sm ***u*** ***una*** r- rijālu
3rd, pl,masc. go high pres. pl. det men
'The men enjoy high positions'

Jussive Sentence

2b. li ya- sm - 0 ***u*** ***Ø*** r- rijālu
let 3rd, pl,masc. go high juss. pl det men
'Let the men enjoy high positions'

2c. *li ya- sm - 0 ***u*** ***na*** r- rijālu
let 3rd, pl,masc. go high juss. pl det men
'Let the men enjoy high positions'

(2a) illustrates the actual overt markers of tense [u] and plural [una] of the indicative form of the verb *yamsu* 'enjoy high position'. (2b) illustrates that the tense marker [*u*] deleted due to the overt pre-occurrence of the jussive permissive entity *li* 'let'. However, the remnant parts of the plural marker i.e. [na] are to be deleted as they are followed by the assimilated liquid [r] as a specimen of a number of a assimilated segments such [l, r, n, ʃ, θ, ð, s, s□, z, ð□, d, d□, t□, t] that have the features [+coronal, +anterior]. These phonological phenomena in (2b) are captured by the phonological rules (2d) and (2e) respectively.

2d.

$$\begin{bmatrix} [+\text{vocalic}] \\ +\text{lax} \\ +\text{back} \\ +\text{round} \\ -\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \emptyset \;/\; - \begin{bmatrix} +\text{vocalic} \;\&\; +\text{nasal} \\ +\text{lax} \quad +\text{coronal} \\ +\text{back} \quad +\text{anterior} \\ +\text{round} \\ -\text{low} \end{bmatrix}$$

(2d) is read as that the vowel [u] is deleted if it is followed by [u] and the nasal [n].

2e.

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{nasal} \;\&\; +\text{vocalic} \\ +\text{coronal} \quad +\text{lax} \\ +\text{anterior} \quad -\text{back} \\ \quad -\text{round} \\ \quad -\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \emptyset \;/\; - \begin{bmatrix} C \end{bmatrix} \quad \#\ .$$

(2e) is read as that the components [na] are omitted if they are followed by a consonant in boundary. These two phonological rules of (2d) and (2e) cannot be conjoined as they talk about a vowel and the nasal [n].

Likewise, in (3a), Arabic accepts the short vowel [*a*] and the parts of the plural markers [na] to be deleted from the verb *yas^{c}a* 'seek' when the verb bears the plural form and is used in jussive form as in (3).

Indicative Sentence

3a.	ya	s^{c}	**-a**	**-wna**	r	-	rijālu	ila	l	-khairi
	3rd, sg,masc.	seek	pres	pl	det		men	for	det	charity

'The men seek for charity'

Jussive Sentence

3b.	lamma	ya	s^{c}	-	**Ø**	**-w**	- **Ø**	r-	rijālu	ila	l	-khairi
	did not	3rd, sg,masc.	seek	juss.		pl		det	men	for	det	charity

'The men did not seek for charity'

(3a) is an indicative sentence in which the present tense is visible with the marker [a] to which the plural marker [wna] is also added. Once the negative jussive polarity item *lamma* 'not' occurs before the verb, the vowel [a] of the present tense and the second part of the plural marker [na] are to be deleted as in (3b). Such phonological changes are shown in the phonological rules (3c) and (3d) respectively. It is evident that jussive cannot have visible tense though it is a finite structure which is similar to subjunctive structures in Arabic syntax.

3c.

$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{vocalic} \\ +\text{lax} \\ -\text{back} \\ -\text{round} \\ +\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \text{Ø} \;/\; - \; \begin{bmatrix} -\text{vocalic} \\ -\text{consonantal} \end{bmatrix}$$

3d.

$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{nasal} \;\&\; +\text{vocalic} \\ +\text{coronal} \;\; +\text{lax} \\ +\text{anterior} \;\; -\text{back} \\ \qquad\quad -\text{round} \\ \qquad\quad +\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \text{Ø} \;/\; - \; \begin{bmatrix} \text{C} \end{bmatrix} \; \#\,.$$

(3c) and (3d) cannot be conjoined as one rule as they have different segments. In other words, there is the nasal [n] that has different distinctive features which are irrelevant to vowels. In short, it is obvious that the deletion of the segments [u], [a], [n] and [w] are not only syntactically motivated but also phonologically manifested; this is due to the fact that the structure is changed to jussive which is entirely different from indicative in two features: (i) the overt occurrence of a jussive entity, (ii) the deletion of the tense marker and the second part of the plural markers [na] without changing the finiteness of the structure. There are some other verbs of the category that are treated in the same manner once they are preceded by any jussive entity; they are listed in (4).

4. i. yas^{c}a 'to seek good act'
   ii. yarqa 'to go high'
   iii. yan'a 'to go aside
   iv. yaqn^{c}a 'to condole'
   v. yabqa 'to stay'
   vi. yn^{c}a 'to condole'

In short, once a jussive entity precedes the verb in the imperfective form, the short vowels [u], [a] and the plural conjoins [na] must be omitted for syntactic as well as phonetic reasons.

VI. Reduction of a Vowel in Jussive Verbs

The only weak vowel in English is the schwa /ə / which is known as the reduced vowel. The schwa occurs as a result of a common phonetic process called vowel reduction, a process reduces a strong vowel into the schwa, the weak vowel when the syllable containing that vowel becomes unstressed. However, this phenomenon in Arabic is entirely different in the sense that the reduced vowel is not a schwa but a lax form of the same vowel and it is not weak. The researcher may give the specimens of (5) and (6) to illustrate the reduction of [ā] to [a] when two jussive entities occur.

Indicative Sentence

5a.	ta-	lq	***ā***	d□aifa-	ka	mustabshiran	
	2nd,sg,masc.	meet	pres.	guest	your	happy	

'You meet your guest if you are happy'

Jussive Sentence

5b. *la ta- lq **-ā** d□aifa- ka illa mustabshiran
not 2nd,sg,masc meet juss. guest your unless happy
'Do not meet your guest unless you are happy'

5c. la ta- lq **-a** daifa- ka illa mustabshiran
not 2nd,sg,masc meet juss. guest your unless you are happy
'Do not meet your guest unless you are happy'

Indicative Sentence

6a. ya- rd□ **-ā** bi nas□ībi hi
3rd, sg,masc. accept pres. with luck his
'He accepts his luck'

Jussive Sentence

6b. *lam ya- rd□ - **ā** bi nas□ībi hi
not 3rd, sg,masc. accept juss. with luck his
'I did not accept my luck'

6c. lam ya- rd□ **-a** bi nas□ībi hi
not 3rd, sg,masc. accept juss. with luck his
'I did not accept my luck'

A look at (5a) and (6a) indicates that they are correct Arabic sentences because the tense vowel [ā] marks the imperfect verbs *talqā* 'meet' and *yard□ā* 'accepts'. As the same vowel is not reduced to lax in the presence of the jussive polarity negative entities *la* and *lam* 'not', (5b) and (6b) are incorrect. (5c) and (6c) are made correct since the vowel [ā] is reduced to the lax [a] in a word boundary. This phenomenon is captured in the phonological rule (7).

7.

$$\begin{bmatrix}+\text{vocalic}\\ -\text{back}\\ +\text{low}\\ +\text{tense}\end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix}+\text{vocalic}\\ -\text{back}\\ -\text{low}\\ -\text{tense}\end{bmatrix} \;/\; - \begin{bmatrix}+\text{consonantal}\end{bmatrix} \; \#\;.$$

However, the same tense vowel [ā] is reduced to lax [a] if it is followed by the definite article *al* 'the' and preceded by a jussive item. The sentences (8) and (9) illustrate the point of discussion with the occurrence of two other different jussive entities.

Indicative Sentence

8a. yu- jz **-ā** l - waladu
3rd, sg,masc. rewarded pres det boy
'The boy was rewarded'

Jussive Sentence

8b. * lamma yu- jz **-ā** l - waladu
not 3rd, sg,masc. rewarded juss. det boy
'The boy was not rewarded'

8c. lamma yu- jz **-a** l - waladu
not 3rd, sg,masc. rewarded juss. det boy
'The boy was not rewarded'

Indicative Sentence

9a. ya- ns **-ā** t□ -ṭulābu- durūsa- hum
3rd, pl,masc. forgets pres. det students lesson their
'They did not forget their lessons'

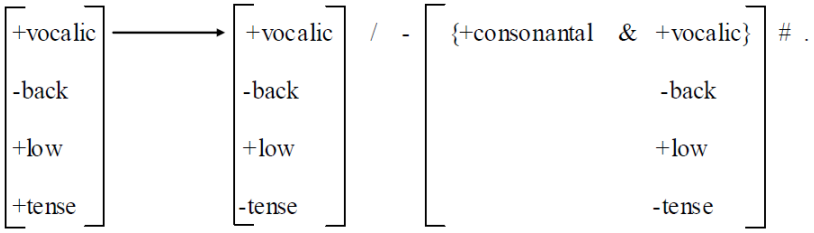
Jussive Sentence

9b. * lam ya- ns **-ā** t□ -ṭulābu- durūsa- hum
not 3rd, pl,masc. forget juss. det student lesson their
'They did not forget their lessons'

9c. lam ya- ns **-a** t□ -ṭulābu- durūsa- hum
not 3rd, pl,masc. forget juss. det student lesson their
'They did not forget their lessons'

(8a) and (9a) are grammatical sentences because the imperfective tense marker represented by the tense vowel [ā] is not reduced. (8b) and (9b) are ungrammatical sentences because the same vowel remains tense in the occurrence of the jussive entities *lamma* and *lam* 'not. These two sentences are made correct as in (8c) and (9c) because the vowel is reduced to [a]. the rule (10) covers the change.

10.



Not only [ā] but also [*ū*] is reduced if it is preceded by a jussive entity; for instance, *man* 'whoever' in (11b and c) and the conditional particle *in* 'if' in (12b and c) which are used respectively.

Indicative Sentence

11a. ya- sm ***-ū*** bi akhlāgi hi
3rd, sg,masc. go high pres with ethics his
'He enjoys high ethics'

Jussive Sentence

11b. * man ya- sm ***- ū*** bi akhlāgi hi ya- njah□u.
Whoever 3rd, sg,masc. went high juss. with ethics his he pass
'Whoever enjoys high ethics, he succeeds'

11c. man ya sm ***-u*** bi akhlāgi hi ya -njahu.
whoever 3rd, sg,mas. go high juss. with ethics his he pass
'Whoever enjoys high ethics, he succeeds'

Indicative Sentence

12a. ya- dn ***-ū*** l - waladu
3rd, sg,masc. come closer pres. det boy
'The boy comes closer'

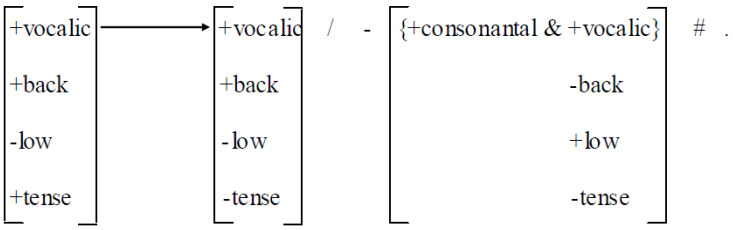
Jussive Sentence

12b. * 'in ya- dn ***-ū*** l - waladu ya- s□qut□u
If 3rd, sg,masc. pass juss. det boy 3rd, sg,masc. falls
'If the boy comes closer, he falls'

12c. 'in ya- dn ***-u*** l - waladu ya - s□qut□u
If 3rd, sg,masc. pass juss. det boy 3rd, sg,masc. falls
'If the boy comes closer, he falls'

(11a) and (12a) are normal indicative sentences in which the imperfective verbs are marked by the tense marker [ū]. However, (11b) and (12b) are incorrect because the jussive entities, namely, *man* 'whoever' and *'in* 'if' are overt and the tense vowel [ū] is not reduced to lax. As, the same vowel is reduced in (11c) and (12c) in the verbs *yasmu* 'go high' and *yadnu* 'comes closer' respectively, the sentences are made correct. It is evident also that, in (12c), as the vowel [u] is followed by the definite *al* 'the', [a] is deleted. In short, if the high back tense rounded vowel [*ū*] is preceded by a jussive entity and followed by a consonant, it is reduced to lax; however, if it is followed by the unique the definite article *al*, it is reduced ; moreover, [a] of the article is omitted. The reduction process of the tense [ū] is shown in the phonological rule (13)

13.



The rule (13) indicates that the vowel [ū] is reduced to [u] whenever followed either by a consonant or the lax vowel [a] of the article *al*.

Likewise, the high front tense vowel [ī] is reduced to lax whenever the jussive verb is preceded by any jussive entity such as the specific adverbial entity *mata* 'when' in (14c) and the polarity negative item *lam* 'not' in (15c) respectively.

Indicative Sentence

14a ya- 't ***-ī*** faşlu al - shitā'
3rd, sg,masc. come pres. season det winter
'Winter comes'

Jussive Sentence

14b. *mata ya- 't ***-ī*** faşlu al - shitā' tuzra^{c}u al - ashjāru
when 3rd, sg,masc. come juss. season det winter plant det trees
'When winter came, trees planted'

14c. mata ya- 't ***-i*** faşlu al - shitā' tuzra^{c}u al - ashjāru

when 3rd, sg,masc. come juss. season det winter planted det trees
'When winter came, trees planted'

Indicative Sentence

15a. ya- rm **-ī** r- rajulu shawkan fi al -ṭarīqi
3rd, sg,masc. throw pres det man thorns on det road
'He throws thorns on the road'

Jussive Sentence

15b. *lam ya- rm **-ī** r- rajulu shawkan fi al -ṭarīqi
not 3rd, sg,masc. throw juss. det man thorns on det road
'He did not throw thorns on the road'

15c. lam ya- rm **-*i*** r- rajulu shawkan fi al -ṭarīqi
not 3rd, sg,masc. throw juss. det man thorns on det road
'He did not throw thorns on the road'

(14a) and (15a) are grammatical indicative sentences in which the verbs *ya'tī* 'come' and *yarmī* 'throw' are marked by the tense vowel[ī]. (14b) and (15b) read wrong as the same vowel retain the same quality. In (13c) and (14c), [ī] is reduced to lax and the vowel [a] of the article *al* is deleted and [l] is assimilated to [r]. the reduction of the vowel is seen in (16).

16.

$$\begin{bmatrix}+\text{vocalic}\\-\text{back}\\-\text{low}\\+\text{tense}\end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix}+\text{vocalic}\\-\text{back}\\-\text{low}\\-\text{tense}\end{bmatrix} \;/\; - \begin{bmatrix}\{+\text{consonantal} \;\&\; +\text{vocalic}\}\\-\text{back}\\+\text{low}\\+\text{lax}\end{bmatrix} \;\#\;.$$

To sum up, the tense vowels [ā], [ū] and [ī] at the end of the imperfective verbs of jussive are reduced to lax if the verbs in which they occur are preceded by the given jussive entities and followed either by a consonant or particularly the lax vowel [a] of the definite article *al* 'the' as shown in the phonological rule (16); thus, the rules (7), (10), (13) and (16) are joined in one phonological rule as in (17).

17.

$$\begin{bmatrix}+\text{vocalic}\\+\text{tense}\end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix}+\text{vocalic}\\-\text{tense}\end{bmatrix} \;/\; - \begin{bmatrix}\{+\text{consonantal} \;\&\; +\text{vocalic}\}\\-\text{tense}\\+\text{low}\\-\text{back}\end{bmatrix} \;\#$$

We may notice that the vowel reduction process is not only syntactically but also phonetically motivated because Arabic has this unique syntactic phenomenon among languages.

To sum up;

This study has come out with new results as compared to previous studies. This fact is based on the fake results that have been achieved by the Arab phoneticians. They are constantly claiming that jussive is marked either by (1) the zero marker, (2) deletion of a vowel and (3) deletion of the nasal [n] from the end of the jussive verb. Such drawbacks took place due to the following reasons. They based their analysis merely on the surface structure representations rather than going to deeper levels; second they did not specify the real qualities of the deleted vowel. Third, they did not realize that the plural marker is composed of [n] and the vowel [a] but not merely [n]. As contrasted to the current study, the results are summarized as follows: (i) jussive is actually marked by the deletion of the lax vowels of [a] and [u] but not [i] at the underlying level and continued to be covert at the surface level; this contradicts point (1). (ii) The vowels [ā, ū & ī] are reduced to become lax at the underlying level and are retained to the surface level. This point also contradicts the point (2) a head. (iii) The nasal components [na] but not merely [n] are deleted at the same underlying level as contrasted to point (3). These new results are confirmed by the posited phonological rules which cannot be applied at the surface level otherwise.

VII. Conclusion

It is obvious that the segments that succumb to deletion and reduction occur merely at the end of the imperfective jussive verb at the underlying level but not of the imperfective indicative. The deleted segments are the high back round lax vowel [u] and the high front lax vowel [a]; however, the vowel [i] is not deleted. Moreover, the nasal components [na] are also deleted in the same process. It is obvious that there are different environments in which a vowel is deleted; for instance, the lax vowel [u] is deleted if the verb to which it is attached is preceded by the jussive specimen *lam* 'not and followed by a consonant as in (1) and by the vowel [u] of the plural marker [una] as in (2). Not only [u] but also [a]

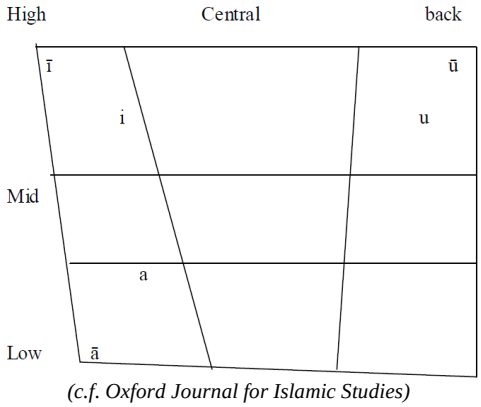
is deleted if the verb to which it is attached is preceded by the jussive specimen *lamma* 'did not' and followed by the semi-vowel [w] of the plural marker [wna] as in (3). This [w] is retained while the components [na] are to be deleted if followed by the assimilated liquid [r]. Similar assimilated segments that are treated like [r] include [l, r, n, ʃ , θ, ð, s, s□, z, ð□, d, d□, t□, & t]. The vowel [ā] is reduced if followed by a consonant as in (5c); it is also reduced if followed by the lax vowel [a] of the definite article *al* 'the' as in (6c, 8c & 9c) in a word boundary. It is evident that the liquid [l], in (8c), is not assimilated to [w]; however, the same segment is totally assimilated to [t□] in a regressive manner in (9c). The vowel [ū] is reduced to lax if followed by a consonant as in (11c). Moreover, it is reduced if it is followed by the lax vowel [a] of the same article as in (12c). Finally the vowel [ī] reduced to lax if followed by a consonant as in (14c) and if followed by the lax vowel [a] of the same definite article as in (15c). There is also a total assimilation of the liquid [l] to [r] in a regressive style in the same sentence. The distinctive features proposed by Chomsky and Halle (1968) are of a great help to formulate new phonological rules that differentiate between segments that are deleted and reduced and govern their environments in a prices manner.

VIII. Transliteration Symbols of Arabic Consonants Phonemes

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration
أ	ʾ	ض	ḍ
ب	b	ط	ṭ
ت	t	ظ	ẓ
ث	th	ع	ʿ
ج	j	غ	gh
ح	ḥ	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	sh	و	w
ص	ṣ	ي	y

Notice: the researcher has a reference to the transliteration symbols while writing the Arabic phonemic segments in the text. (c.f. *Oxford Journal for Islamic Studies)*

IX. Transliteration Symbols of Arabic Vowels Phonemes



(c.f. Oxford Journal for Islamic Studies)

X. Standard Arabic Phonetic Symbols of Consonants as per IPA

	Labial	Inter-Dental	dental/ alveolar plain	dental/ alveolar emphatic	palatal	velar	uvular	pharyngeal	glottal
nasal	m	-	n	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stop vl	-	-	t	t□	-	k	q	-	?
v	b	-	d	d□	dʒ	-	-	-	-
Fricative vl	f	Θ	s	s□	ʃ	-	χ	ħ	h
v	-	ð	z	ð	-	-	ɣ	ʿ	-
Trill	-	-	-	r	-	-	-	-	-
Lateral	-	-	-	l	-	-	-	-	-
Approximate	w				j				

Notice: the researchers do not refer to the phonetic symbols but they used merely the transliteration ones while writing the Arabic specimens in the text. The phonetic symbols are listed only for knowledge (c.f, http:/en wikipedia.org/wiki Arabic Phonology).

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The Pedagogical Impact of Discourse Markers in the Lecture Genre: EFL Learners' Writings in Focus

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***Abstract*—The lecture in its many forms is the most commonly used method for transferring information. The present study investigates the effects of discourse markers in lectures on students' compositions, i.e., whether the use of discourse markers in lectures has positive effect on producing more cohesive texts. 20 male advanced level learners, aged 25 to 40, were chosen from one of the language institutes in Isfahan. The participants were divided into two groups. Two texts for giving lectures were chosen related to *"Science and Technology"*, as it was the title of one of the units in the students' book. In order to compare the comprehension of the participants from the text, discourse markers were used in the lecture of group 1 (G1) and in the other lecture for group 2 (G2) no discourse marker was used. Finally, the cohesive devices used in each composition were identified and counted by the researcher. Frequency, mean and standard deviation of the cohesive devices in each category were computed using SPSS. The results indicate that G1 used more cohesive devices in their writings and therefore produced more coherent texts, i.e. the use of discourse markers facilitated their comprehension and had positive effect on producing more cohesive compositions.**

***Index Terms*—lecture genre, discourse markers, cohesive devices, composition, coherent text**

I. Introduction

Communication is viewed as a process of transferring thoughts from one person's mind to another's. The benefits of interaction, for improving comprehension and enhancing communicative competence on behalf of students, have been the focus of many studies from a psycholinguistic perspective (e.g., Gass (1997), Gass and Madden (1985) In: S. Gass and C. Madden, Editors, Input in second language acquisition, Newbury House Publishers, Cambridge, MA (1985). Gass and Madden (1985), Gass and Varonis, (1994), Long, (1981) and Pica et al., (1987) and from a socio-cultural perspective (e.g., Breen, (2001), Hall and Verplaetse, (2000) and Morell, (2002). The interaction between learners and teachers has received an enormous amount of attention during the past 30 years from researchers in a wide range of disciplines.

Interactive lectures play an important role in improving comprehension and in enhancing communicative competence in the English language.

Teachers involved in the field of ESL or EFL have a range of instructional material available, namely speech events such as seminars and tutorials; but the lecture "remains the central instructional activity" (Flowerdew, 1994). In lectures teachers seem to invite students to interact and participate more than in previous times, what may be seen as an attempt to narrow distances and avoid formalisms.

Research into lecture comprehension is related to question of *how* of teaching and learning (Flowerdew, 1994), and therefore being of great help in applied linguistics. Both the lecturers and learners can benefit from how the listening comprehension process and different features of lectures work.

The literature on L2 lecture comprehension suggests that listeners continue to experience difficulties, even at advanced proficiency levels (Mulligan & Krikpatrick, 2000; Thompson, 1994). But what are the causes of these difficulties? Flowerdew (1994) discusses a number of variables involved in lecturing to international audiences that have an impact on successful comprehension, ranging from delivery speed to some particular lexico-grammatical, interpersonal, disciplinary and culture-related features of lecture discourse.

Lecture discourse has been conventionally known to be of a monologue nature. Traditionally, a lecture has been considered an institutionalized extended holding of the floor in which one speaker imparts his view on a subject using a slightly impersonal style (Goffman, 1981, p. 165).

The use of conversational style lectures allows for interaction among lecturers and students. There are, of course, different degrees of interaction within lectures and distinct levels of asymmetrical power among participants.

A common experience among new teachers is learning how to lecture. Lecturing is a skill, a strategy, and a practice. As a skill, lecturing is learned over time. For example, teachers learn how to select content to hold students' attention. Lecturing is a strategy that teachers use when they want to efficiently cover a great deal of content. In addition, it is a practice that has shared meanings, practical knowledge, and language.

According to Swanson and Torraco (1995), the lecture was established formally centuries ago as a teaching process that began with a literal reading of important passages from the text by the master, followed by the master's interpretation of the text. Students were expected to sit, listen and take notes.

However, giving a good lecture is an art, akin to a stage performance in which the lecturer is the protagonist and holds the audience's attention to the end. Some of the skills involved in giving a good lecture stem from the lecturer's personality, but others can undoubtedly be practiced and learnt.

The present study investigates the effects of discourse markers in lectures on written texts, i.e., whether the use of discourse markers in lectures has positive effect on producing more cohesive texts. Therefore, two topics were chosen for lectures, one using discourse markers and the other without discourse markers for two groups. After lecturing by the teacher, the students were asked to write whatever they understood from the lecture. The texts were compared to see which of these two groups produced more cohesive texts, i.e., used more cohesive devices in their compositions.

II. Background of the Study

A. The Genre of Lecture

Students' comprehension of academic discourse has become an important focus of study especially due to the numbers of university students who are attending lectures held in English (Alcaraz Varó, 2000; Flowerdew, 1994; Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001; Jordan, 1997). Many of these studies have attempted to determine what variables of the lecture discourse play a role in improving non-native speakers' understanding of the content. Among the variables are lecture schemata, speech modifications, use of visual aids, note-taking and interaction (Morell, 2000). To improve L2 students' comprehension, studies on lecture discourse recommend that lecturers use, for example, accurate representation of the macro-structure (Tauroza & Allison, 1994; Olsen & Huckin, 1990) and discourse markers (e.g., Thompson, 2003), an adequate speech rate (Griffiths, 1990), repetitions (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992), and the possibility of negotiating meaning (Lynch, 1994; Morell, 2004).

Lectures have not only been studied to determine what will facilitate students' comprehension, but also to examine their role as events that can be beneficial for the linguistic and communicative competence of second and foreign language students. Wesch and Ready (1985) claimed that "gains in second language proficiency are best achieved in situations where the second language is used as a vehicle for communication about other subjects rather than itself." In other content lecture studies based in countries where English is not the official language (Griffiths, 1990; Morell, 2000), it has been found that in many cases interactive lectures will benefit EFL students not only in so far as their comprehension is concerned, but also in terms of improving their linguistic and communicative competence.

Furthermore, a number of recent studies on academic spoken discourse (Crawford Camiciottoli (2004) and Crawford Camiciottoli (2005); Fortanet, (2004); Hincks, (2005); Hood & Forey, (2005); Miller, (2002); Morell, (2004); Recski, (2005); Webber, (2005)) have focused on the interpersonal features and, for the most part, suggest that the tenor, that is, the relationship between the speaker and listeners, plays an essential part in establishing a comfortable context that will encourage participation. In addition, other studies have revealed the importance of the interpersonal relations established within spoken academic situations that will increase the non-native speakers' willingness to communicate and in turn contribute to their successful acquisition of the second language (Kang, 2005). A considerable body of research has examined various aspects of lectures (e.g. Bligh, 1972). One strand of this research has investigated the structure of lectures and the ways in which different styles of lecture lead to different outcomes for the student. So Flowerdew and Miller (1995, 1997) have looked at the notion of cultures in lectures, Khuwaileh (1999) has examined the role of lexical chunks and body language, and Thompson (1994), amongst others, has looked at the discourse structure of lectures.

B. Discourse Markers

In linguistics, a discourse marker is a word or phrase that is relatively syntax-independent and does not change the meaning of the sentence, and has a somewhat empty meaning. Examples of discourse markers include the particles "oh", "well", "now", "then", "you know", and "I mean", and the connectives "so", "because", "and", "but", and "or".

Although discourse markers are usually considered to be textual units that guide readers or listeners in their comprehension of a written or spoken text, they also act as interpersonal features. According to Chaudron and Richards (1986), discourse markers can be grouped into macro-markers, which are higher-order markers signaling major transitions and emphasis in the lectures, and micro-markers, which are lower-order markers of segmentation and intersentential connections. The interpersonal features of discourse markers can be readily perceived in macro-markers that specify the lecturer's attitude (e.g., I believe, I think, I agree with), that elicit responses (e.g., what do you think about…?) and that accept responses (e.g., that's absolutely right).

Discourse markers are part of gathering of linguistic features enhancing and fostering successful lecture comprehension. Thus from the 70s onwards researchers into the lecture comprehension process whether in L1 or L2

have pointed out the effectiveness of learning about discourse markers for the comprehension of connected discourse (Cook, 1975; Murphy and Candlin, 1979; Kintsch and Yarbrough, 1982; Chuadren and Richards, 1986).

Discourse markers have been largely studied by researchers and they are still focusing their interest. Researchers may agree on the underlying concept of discourse markers but they use different names to refer to that very same concept. Thus we find labels such as: cue phrases (Knott and Dale, 1994), discourse connectives (Redeker, 1990), discourse signaling devices (Polanyi and Scha, 1983), pragmatic connectives (Van Dijk et al. 1978; Stubs, 1983) among others.

There are different categories of discourse markers. Fraser (2004) states there are five separate and distinct categories that contribute primarily to DMs:

1. Coordinate Conjunctions*: and, but, or, so, yet…*
2. Subordinate Conjunctions*: after, although, as, as far as, as if, as long as, if, immediately…*
3. Adverbials: *anyway, besides, consequently, furthermore, still, however, then…*
4. Prepositional Phrases: *above all, after all, as a consequence, in fact, in general…..*
5. Prepositions: *despite, in spite of, instead of, rather than….*

Under the semantic point of view, Fraser (2004) proposes a marginal DMs classification as follows:

1. Contrastive Markers (CDMs): *but, alternatively, although, conversely, despite (this/that), in spite of (this/that), in contrast to…*
2. Elaborative Markers (EDMs): *and, above all, also, besides, by the same token, equally, for example, in particular….*
3. Implicative Markers (IDMs): *so, after all, all things considered, as a conclusion, as a consequence, hence, accordingly, then, therefore…*
4. Temporal Markers (TDMs): *then, after, as soon as, before, eventually, finally, first, meantime, meanwhile…..*

C. Cohesive Devices

As one of the four basic language skills, writing is more complex in that it tests a person's ability to use a language and the ability to express ideas. As a result, a person needs to write not only coherently but correctly, which requires much more time and skills. This is especially so when writing in a second/foreign language. Cohesion and coherence, two important textual elements (Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Halliday, 2000), have long been recognized as important features of ‘‘good’’ writing.

Print texts achieve coherence in two ways: through words and through context. Conventional advice focuses on the relationship between words, as we see in the advice offered by Daniel Kies (2003):

Coherence is product of many different factors, which combine to make every paragraph, every sentence, and every phrase contribute to the meaning of the whole piece. Coherence in writing is much more difficult to sustain than coherent speech simply because writers have no nonverbal clues to inform them if their message is clear or not. Therefore, writers must make their patterns of coherence much more explicit and much more carefully planned. Coherence itself is the product of two factors—paragraph unity and sentence cohesion. (n.p.)

Cohesion refers to the explicit linguistic devices that link the sentences in a text. These cohesive devices include reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), and since they are manifested at the surface level of a text, cohesion should be relatively straightforward to identify. Textual cohesion is a critical aspect of successful language processing and comprehension and is premised on building connections between ideas in text. As noted by both Silva (1993) and Ferris (1994), cohesion plays an important part in the lexical development of L2 writers, and it also serves as a means to distinguish differences between L1 and L2 writers.

One of the most important objectives of writing in an academic environment is to create texts that are coherent and cohesive in order to establish successful communication within an academic community. Thus, the analysis of the use of cohesive devices has been of great interest for researchers and language instructors involved in the study and teaching of academic writing (Connor, 1984; Hinkel, 2001; Nesi & Basturkmen, 2006).

Several studies have compared the use of cohesive devices in the writing of native and non-native speakers of English (Connor, 1984; Francis, 1989; Hinkel, 2001; Scarcella, 1984). Most of these studies reported that non-native speakers’ use of certain lexical cohesive devices was often rare or inappropriate. Hinkel (2001) reports that even the advanced non-native speaker writers in her study did not use a wide variety of cohesive ties to achieve a unified text.

Research on cohesion and coherence in writing has been flourishing since the publication of Cohesion in English (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Halliday and Hasan propose that in any language, such grammatical and lexical devices as reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion create ‘‘texture’’– the property of being a text. These devices form cohesive relations between sentences and elements in sentences, thus contributing to the coherence of the text.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants in this study were 20 male advanced EFL learners, aged 25 to 40, chosen from one of the language institutes in Isfahan. The participants were divided into two groups of 10. All the participants took the placement test required for admission to study English in the institute. They studied *Passage 2*, 2nd edition, in 30 sessions.

B. Materials

The material in this study was the Passage book which was taught by the teacher (me) in 30 sessions. Also, one topic for lecture was chosen for the participants, which was related to one of the topics in their book.

C. Procedures

First, the 20 EFL learners were divided into two groups. Two texts for giving lectures were chosen related to *"Science and Technology"*, as it was the title of unit 3 of Passage 2. In order to compare the participants' comprehension of the texts, discourse markers were used in the lecture of group 1 (G1) and in the other lecture for group 2 (G2) no discourse marker was used. As it was explained in the background of the study above, several studies have shown that using discourse markers in lectures facilitate comprehension. It has been tested several times for speaking. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate whether this effect is also seen on writing or not, i.e., whether the learners who listened to the lecture using discourse markers could produce more coherent texts and use more cohesive devices or not. Actually, the base for comparison between the writings of two groups was the use of cohesive devices. As for data analysis, cohesive devices used in each composition were identified and counted by the researchers. Then, frequency, mean and standard deviation of the cohesive devices in each category were computed using SPSS.

IV. Results

Assessment Results

Altogether, 20 compositions were collected. The scores given to each composition by the researchers were sorted and the mean was determined as the final score for that piece. The results are presented in Table 1 below.

As shown in Table 1, the mean score of the 20 compositions was 20.6 (out of a maximum score of 25). Thus, the compositions scored 23 or above were considered the best, while those scored 16 or below the weakest. Since most of the scores fell into the range from 18 to 23 (mean score ± SD), the students in this study could be considered similar in writing ability. (Marking criteria for assessing writing were similar to other studies: 21–25: Main ideas stated clearly and accurately; well organized and perfectly coherent; very effective choice of words; no errors; full control of complex structure. 16–20: Main ideas stated fairly and accurately; fairly well organized and generally coherent; effective choice of words; almost no errors; good control of structure. 11–15: Loosely organized but main ideas clear; logical but incomplete sequencing; adequate choice of words but some misuse of words; many errors. 6–10: Main ideas not clear or accurate; ideas disconnected; lacks logical sequencing; limited range and confused use of words; a lot of errors; poor control of structure. 0–5: Main ideas not at all clear or accurate; no organization; incoherent; very limited range and very poor knowledge of words; full of errors; no control of structure.)

TABLE I.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Median
20.6	2.36	0.33	14	24	10	20

Cohesive devices

Applying Halliday and Hasans (1976) cohesive framework as the basis for data analysis, the number of cohesive devices used in each composition was counted, followed by the determination of the frequency, mean and standard deviation of the cohesive devices in each category. However, in the actual analysis, two types of cohesion, substitution and ellipsis, were not included because ''they are more characteristically found in dialogues'' (Halliday, 2000, p. 337) and they are seldom used in formal writing.

Table 2 and 3 below present the number and percentage of the different subcategories of grammatical and lexical cohesive devices identified in the compositions of two groups. They show that the students in the present study employed a variety of cohesive devices with some types of devices used more frequently than others.

Based on the percentage of each cohesive tie, it is evident that the lexical devices had the highest percentage for both groups (G1= 60.3%; G2=50.7%), followed by the reference devices (G1=24.7%; G2=20.3%) and the conjunction devices (G1=15%; G2=29%).

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF COHESIVE DEVICES FOR G1

Type of cohesive devices	Reference devices	Conjunction devices	lexical devices	Total
Frequency	1546	725	2723	4994
Mean	20.8	11.7	64.2	96.7
Standard deviation	12.3	4.8	11.6	27.15
Standard error	1.85	0.87	1.92	4.2
Range	75	32	62	123
Percentage based on total	24.7%	15%	60.3%	100%

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF COHESIVE DEVICES FOR G2

Type of cohesive devices	Reference devices	Conjunction devices	lexical devices	Total
Frequency	1423	698	2658	4779
Mean	28.46	13.96	53.16	95.58
Standard deviation	11.49	5.41	11.75	23.12
Standard error	1.63	0.77	1.66	3.27
Range	63	30	56	112
Percentage based on total	20.3%	29%	50.7%	100%

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The total number of cohesive devices used in the compositions of both groups were counted and compared. The findings reveal that the participants in G1 used more cohesive devices in their writings compared to G2, i.e., those who listened to the lecture containing discourse markers produced more coherent texts. In this study, the cohesive devices were divided into three categories: Lexical devices, Reference devices and Conjunction devices. The frequency of use of cohesive devices indicate that the participants in each group used lexical devices more than reference devices and conjunction devices were used less than the others. However, the frequency of use of each of these three types of cohesive devices for G1 was more than G2.

Being the main carrier of message and the means of expression, lexical items are the principal components of any composition. That may contribute to the fact that lexical devices are the most extensively used categories of cohesion in students' writings. However, because lexicon involves both meaning and usage, it becomes a much more complicated and difficult task for foreign learners of English. Lexical devices include repetition, antonyms, synonyms, superordinate and collocations. The greatest problem the students had in using lexical devices was the wrong use of collocations. The wrong use of collocations involved phrases, verbs, nouns and prepositions.

Although reference devices were the second most extensively used categories of cohesion in the students' writing, the students appeared not to be at ease with their use. The problems with the use of reference devices were mainly of three types: the shifted use of pronouns; omission or misuse of the definite article; and underuse of comparatives and overuse of the phrase 'more and more'. The students in this study tended to shift pronouns within or between clauses such as from the first person to the second or from the singular form to the plural. As a result, the referents and the referring items were made inconsistent, which often times confused the reader and even caused problems in comprehension.

With regard to the use of conjunctions, it seems that the students were capable of using a variety of devices to bridge the previous sentence(s) and the following one(s) to make their writing clearer and more logical. However, only those commonly used items as "and", "but", "or" and "so" were the students' favorites, whereas the items learned later such as "furthermore", "on the contrary", "moreover", "in addition", "on the whole", and "nevertheless" seldom occurred in their writing.

Although lexical cohesion was the most extensively used category of cohesive devices, it appeared to be an area that needs improvement for students even in advanced levels. The students demonstrated a limited choice in the use of lexical items and the great majority of the lexical devices were repetitiously used. The rare use of synonyms, antonyms, superordinates, and general words indicates that much needs to be done in the teaching of vocabulary in Iran. As a consequence, much needs to be done in the teaching of writing to enhance the students' awareness of the importance and use of cohesive devices in their writing. First of all, as marking criteria set the standard for judging a piece of writing, teachers and learners should be familiarized with the marking criteria for different writing tests. It is the teachers' responsibility to first comprehend and then explain the marking and assessing criteria in the class, and thereby enhance students' awareness of what contributes to the quality of writing (Densteadt, 1996). As a result, the students will know what to emphasize when writing in English.

In addition, focused activities should be developed in combination with explicit instruction. The students can be required to write a paragraph for 3–5 min, using different cohesive devices. Following that, peer review could be used to analyze the cohesive devices used in each other's writing and comment on the effects of using those cohesive devices. After each task is finished, it is necessary for the writing teacher to choose a sample composition for critique, stressing the importance of using cohesive devices effectively and appropriately and reminding the students to avoid overusing or underusing cohesive devices.

Since the acquisition of English vocabulary by EFL learners is a thorny task because there are subtle devices in each word as far as meaning and use are concerned, this kind of teaching may not be effective on the learning of lexical devices, which concern far more aspects of language such as semantics and pragmatics. In order to raise the students' syntactic and semantic awareness, they should be encouraged to read as extensively as possible. By doing this, they will not only extend their vocabulary but also better understand the use and meaning of words in different contexts. Apart from reading, it is necessary to train the students to paraphrase words or phrases by means of synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms or examples through exercises. Thus, they would not only recall as many words as possible but will be able to create more vivid and effective compositions through the use of lexical devices.

A final word is that the findings of this study can possibly be applicable to other EFL contexts outside Iran as well. However, methods of improving EFL/ESL learners' writing and the effects of different teaching methods need further examination in other actual contexts.

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The Role of Motivation and Controversial Conceptual Material in Foreign Language Classrooms

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***Abstract*—Spanish classrooms in the U.S. rarely teach students about the tumultuous relationship with natives of the target language, and this lack of material can leave the learner without certain linguistic knowledge. The novelty of exploring controversial relationships in the target language has the possibility of challenging students' conceptions of the world which can open up different channels for motivation in the classroom, and ultimately, language learning.**

***Index Terms*—Spanish, motivation, conceptual material, foreign language, ACTFL, Piaget, goal orientation, interest, self-efficacy, control factors**

Many students are taught a foreign language through static (or "matter-of-fact") themes such as daily activities, cooking recipes, or holidays. Rarely are U.S. second language learners exposed to stories or histories that reveal the more complex and potentially controversial aspects of their own country and its relationship to target-language nations. Instead, many students are taught in a curriculum of nationalism and continue to assimilate simple contextual views, but in a different language.[1] By combining second language learning[2] with an exposure to histories and stories that challenge previous static beliefs in the context of controversial conceptual change, second language learners will be potentially motivated to learn the new language in order to either support their original point of view or, alternatively, to accommodate to the newly presented material.

Much of the material in foreign language classrooms focuses on subjects such as daily interactions, food, cultural norms, and small snippets of history, but rarely emphasizes controversial contemporary and historical relationships between the native language (L1) and the target language (TL) population. Although the material that is being taught now (daily activities, etc.) is important for day-to-day interaction, to not learn about the complex past-present relations between the L1 and TL population is similar to a Christian U.S. language student learning Arabic without any idea of the Prophet Muhammad. Raising controversial topics in the foreign language classroom has the possibility of not only enriching students' conceptual understanding of the TL country(ies) and their own, but of also capturing their attention. The material would allow for more intake and an increase in motivation to use the TL to produce comprehensible output. Language classes should not just use controversial conceptual material as the sole part of the curriculum, but should include it, at some point in time, as an integral chapter of the L2 learner's education.

The relationship between L1 and TL learning in controversial conceptual material is varied amongst languages. Not all L1s and TLs will have a complex and controversial history. For example: If the L1 is German and the TL is Punjabi; if the L1 is Swahili and the TL is Spanish; if the L1 is Tagalog and the TL is Urdu. In these language relationships there lacks a strong historical/contemporary domination or controversial interaction, which could be compared to the following; if the L1 is English and the TL is Spanish, is the L1 is French and the TL is Vietnamese, if the L1 is Korean and the TL is Japanese, if the L1 is Mandarin and the TL is Tibetan. In the latter relationships there is a controversial past and present between nations that speak the specific languages. It is not just the hot relationship between countries that would motivate students' language use, but the direct influences in how their country interacts and is perceived in the world because of these controversial interactions. A student's social position in relation to the TL will affect language learning. If the student comes from a country that has been dominated by the TL, the student might develop increased negative emotions towards the TL and not be motivated to learn. This paper will not discuss student motivation from countries or subgroups within those nations that have been dominated by the TL. Instead the focus will concern student motivation from countries that *have* dominated or controversially affected the TL population, specifically English learners of Spanish in the United States.

Many U.S. students are unaware of negative perspectives that arise from the imperialistic history of the United States and its supposed role in suppressing democracy and human rights throughout the world; but more specifically, many

[1] This paper is not an attempt to lay out in detail how language is taught, but draws on the author's personal learning and observation of Spanish in high schools.
[2] Throughout the article I will refer to second language learning as the general acquisition of a new language, which is not limited to just a second language, but possibly a third or more. The same reference applies for second language learners, who already might be bilingual.

U.S. students are unaware of this relationship vis-à-vis Central and South America. Consequently, United States English speaking students are learning Spanish without any idea of the politics that shape human relations between the two regions. Students have the potential to benefit from discussing broad historical and contemporary interaction between the L2 learner's country and the TL nation because of the access to increased contextual knowledge.

Foreign language learning is different from many other subjects in school because of the interdisciplinary mix of literature, art, history and music that allow insights into a collective psychology. In chapter 3, "Motivation, Anxiety and Emotion in Second Language Acquisition," of the book *Individual Differences and Instructed Language Learning*, Peter MacIntyre reiterates the psychological correlation by saying "It is the emphasis on culture, *psychological* identification with a specific cultural group, and changes in identity that most clearly distinguish language learning from other subjects studied in school" (italics added)(Macintyre n.d., p. 54). If L2s are only being exposed to limited pieces of information, they will cease to acquire a fuller picture of the target-language community, thus reducing conceptual expansion. In addition to knowing syntax, grammar and vocabulary, language has the potential to be dynamic and exhibit varied implicit meanings, as certain words are derived from historical events and are utilized differently in communication mediums.

An example of such a word in Spanish that has its origins in the recent history of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America which might not be obvious to a L2 learner based off simple translation is the word "To disappear" or *desaparecer*. The verb was newly defined during the twentieth century military dictatorships in Latin America as "disappear" took on a political meaning "to disappear someone" (desaparecer), describing those considered threats to the State who were kidnapped, tortured, and disappeared by their own national security forces ("The Disappeared", n.d.). The Federación Latinoamericana de Asociaciones de Familiares de Detenidos-Desaparecidos (FEDEFAM, n.d.), a non-profit humanitarian organization formed by relatives of the "disappeared," define the process of disappearing somebody as a forced disappearance:

A forced disappearance consists of a kidnapping, carried out by agents of the State or organized groups of private individuals who act with State support or tolerance, in which the victim "disappears". Authorities neither accept responsibility for the deed, nor account for the whereabouts of the victim. Petitions of habeas corpus or "amparo"- legal mechanisms designated to safeguard the liberty and integrity of citizens-are ineffective, and the kidnappers remain anonymous (FEDEFAM, n.d.).

Once a L2 learner of Spanish has been exposed to the above, their conceptual idea of the words "to disappear someone" (desaparecer) and "the disappeared" (los desaparecidos) acquires a historical and political position in their Spanish language learning. Additionally, the support of the L2 learner's home nation (the United States) in advocating military dictatorships may challenge previous student conceptions about the U.S. as a bastion of a democratic society. In doing so, meaningful conversation, questions, or criticisms may arise and the motivation to use the target language to convey thoughts and emotion will increase. When L2 learners are taught that learning a new language is not just a cold process to gain skills in a target language, but a powerful and sometimes controversial journey that allows them to discover their world through mediums of art, literature, music, history, and meaningful dialogue, their motivation to absorb and use the target language may increase in order to explain and affirm their conceptions.

While introducing controversial conceptual material opens new possibilities in motivating language learners, it can only be successful if certain preconditions have been satisfied. First, proficiency levels have an impact on how and to whom controversial conceptual material is presented in the L2 classroom. According to ACTFL's (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) sample progress indicator, 12th graders should be able to:

- Exchange, support, and discuss their opinions and individual perspectives with peers and/or speakers of the target language on a variety of topics dealing with contemporary and historical issues.
- Demonstrate an increasing understanding of the cultural nuances of meaning in written and spoken language as expressed by speakers and writers of the target language in formal and informal settings.
- Prepare a research based analysis of a current event from the perspective of both the U.S. and target cultures (ACTFL, 2000).

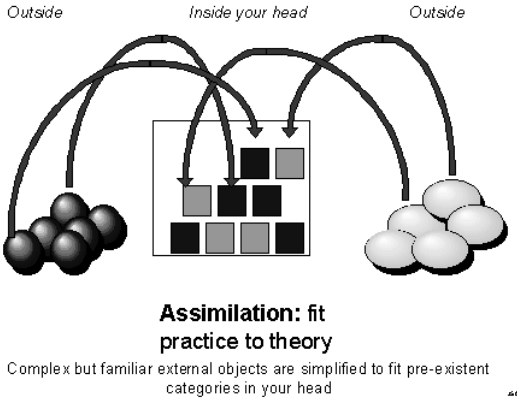
The above indicators are the ideal results of a successful working curriculum that includes controversial conceptual material. One could assume that, based on a well delivered language education, students in 10th or 11th grade have the CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) to begin utilizing controversial conceptual material (Cummins, n.d.). The second condition that must be met is the establishment of a functional pedagogy. The presentation and dialogue concerning controversial conceptual material will be most effective within the Communicative Language Teaching method (CLT). CLT is based on the idea that "successful language learning involves not only a knowledge of the structures and forms of a language, but also the functions and purposes that a language serves in different communicative settings" (Lightbrown, 2006, p. 196). Essentially communication of meaning is emphasized rather than pure grammatical practice. Within the CLT approach, there is "content-based instruction." Content-based instruction classes are foreign language programs in which lessons are formed around subject matter rather than "language points" and again emphasize meaning over form (Ibid, 197). Lightbrown and Spada emphasize the importance of content-based instruction:

It [content-based instruction] creates a genuine need to communicate, motivating students to acquire language in order to understand the content. For older students, there is the advantage of content that is cognitively challenging and

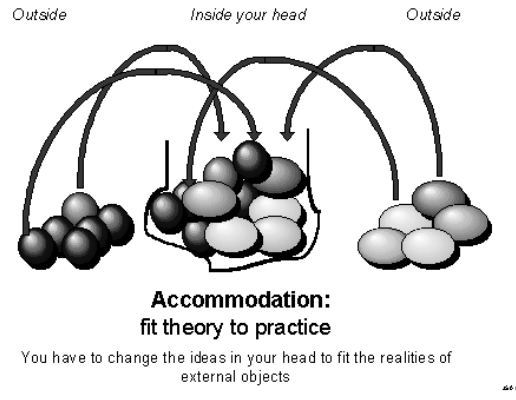
interesting in a way that is often missing in foreign language instruction, especially where lessons are designed around particular grammatical forms (Ibid, 159).

When students are given contextual information and the opportunity to communicate, conversation no longer becomes predictable, but instead inspires the L2 speakers to express their personal values, use a logical form to defend their opinions, and draw on cognitive resources to form their ideas into the TL. After explaining controversial conceptual material as a beneficial component of language learning, one can see how it can increase motivation using the conceptual change model.

The conceptual change model was authored by Posner and colleagues (Posner, Strike, Hewson, Gertzog, 1982), and based on Jean Piaget's theories of assimilation and accommodation. Piaget stated that assimilation involved applying a new object into an old schema (Boeree, n.d.). For example, many high school aged students are aware that certain produce is imported into the U.S. In a lesson about commerce between the U.S. and other Spanish speaking countries, a student might learn about the origin of certain produce, such as the large amount of bananas imported by companies like the banana brand *Chiquita* from Colombia. One more semantic fact is assimilated into an old schema of commerce, maintaining the system of a world market. The assimilation of this information can be modeled in the following image (Atherton, 2005):



The incoming information to the L2 learner is non-challenging, and conceptually the same as before, just with another fact. It would be hard for a language teacher to engage in any stimulating or motivation conversation with students about knowledge that is already known, just expanded. Accommodation, on the other hand, is the process of adapting an old schema to a new object (Boeree, n.d.). Instead of the L2 learner's previous lesson based on assimilative information, the L2 student now has a lesson that includes controversial material. The student is now exposed to material that not only mentions *Chiquita* as a principal importer of bananas from Colombia, but also its complex role by indirectly supporting murder and massacres among the Colombian civilian population (Kroft, 2008). The fact that this U.S. based company preferred to pay an unofficial "tax" to paramilitaries in order to protect its economic interests, which in turn funded the armed group's exploits, has the propensity to challenge a student's conception about the state of the world market. If a student already knew about the above material, then he would assimilate this new object (*Chiquita* scandal) to his already existing conceptual idea of Latin American-U.S. economic relations. If the student on the other hand was not aware of any events as such, and it conflicted with his strong foundations in the current system, this would cause a state of disequilibrium. If the student finds that the old schema (the original world market as totally beneficial) needs to adapt to the new object (*Chiquita* scandal), this will cause accommodation. A model of accommodation is shown below (Atherton, 2005):



The incoming information to the student is different and conceptually challenging, in that it tests the functionality and overall performance of production, distribution, and profit in the current world market. Controversial conceptual material will be easier for a teacher to implement in a class discussion that challenges the way students buy and consume on a daily basis, affecting their connection of the target language countries. The above example is not to debate whether the world market is "good" or "bad," but to show how a discussion of this controversial subject has the propensity to increase L2 learners' motivation to use the TL because of its meaningful content. L2 learners will draw on their cognitive TL resources to defend the previous conception, support the accommodation of the bananas-for-blood conception, or debate something in-between.

In Posner's article "Accommodation of a Scientific Conception: Toward a Theory of Conceptual Change" (1982), he writes of assimilation and accommodation as the acquisition of knowledge based on comprehensibility and reason:

Our central commitment in this study is that learning is a rational activity. That is, learning is fundamentally coming to comprehend and accept ideas because they are seen as intelligible and rational… We believe it follows that learning, like inquiry, is best viewed as a process of conceptual change. The basic question concerns how students' conceptions change under the impact of new ideas and new evidence (212).

Posner states that four conditions must be met for accommodation to occur in students. The first is that there must be *dissatisfaction* with existing conceptions, a collection of anomalies and "lost faith" in the ability of a current conception to solve problems (214). For example, the L2 learner is exposed to controversial conceptual material that challenges his perception of the current world market as the most beneficial system of production and distribution for everybody, and after a while the previous conception fails to answer his questions about fairness and opportunities for the disadvantaged in the these societies (such as the *Chiquita* scandal). Next, the new material has to be *intelligible*, or understood in order to see how it could affect the future (Ibid). For example, the L2 understands alternative ideas for production and distribution of goods in Latin America, such as fair-trade, green technology, increased allocation of profit to the general public etc. Third, the new conception must be *plausible*, in that it must have the capacity to solve previous problems the original concept was unable to fix (Ibid). For example, an L2 student learns about banana farmer cooperatives in Latin American countries that benefit traditional agrarian families otherwise excluded or disadvantaged by large agricultural companies. The L2 learner is also shown the increased presence of fair-trade bananas sold in U.S. stores. The alternative is now plausible in the mind of the student. Fourth and last, the new concept should be *fruitful* (no pun intended), meaning it has the potential to open up new areas of inquiry (Ibid). For example, the L2 now believes there is a possibility that the benefits of fair trade could extend to other products in the market, such as oranges, coffee beans, and other staples. The L2 learner has experienced an accommodation change, in that he has been exposed to controversial conceptual material that "complexified" his previous perceptions, prompting him to consider the new information in a logical process.

One can not assume that conceptual change or motivation will occur just because there is a rational and logical problem occurring in a language learner's brain. Adolescent students in the classroom rarely have the same goals and states of being as a professional researcher. Pintrich, Marx, and Boyle (1993) critiqued Posner's notion that conceptual change will occur simply because of a logical crisis:

That is, it suggests that learners behave very much like scientists in that, when they become dissatisfied with an idea, they will then search out new intelligible, plausible, and fruitful constructs which will balance their general conceptual model. However, there are both theoretical and empirical reasons to believe that academic learning is not cold and isolated. For example, there is empirical evidence that more affectively charged motivational beliefs, such as students' self-efficacy beliefs, and their goals for learning can influence their cognitive engagement in an academic task. Accordingly, individual students' motivational beliefs may influence the process of conceptual change (These theories are drawn from a general field of motivation which I will present below) (172).

Now the L2 learner is faced with numerous factors and needs in order to display an increase in motivation. Pintrich lists four categories inside the classroom that will affect motivation: Goal orientation beliefs, interest, self-efficacy, and control. Goal orientation will be discussed first.

Pintrich mentions goals as an issue, but specifically mastery versus performance goals. A student with a mastery goal sees intellectual ability as a means to an end, or instrumental for obtaining intrinsically oriented aspirations including the satisfaction of curiosity, self-improvement, and a refined comprehension of people and events (Wigfield, 2002, p. 35). Performance goals on the other hand consist of objectives related to demonstrating competence to the student's self or others (Radosevich, 2007, p. 175).

Pintrich cites multiple research studies in suggesting that when students are expected to process conceptual material in-depth, those who have a mastery/learning orientation increase the probability of conceptual change using Posner's four conditions (dissatisfaction, intelligible, plausible, fruitful), (Pintrich, 1993, p. 177). In a controversially charged Spanish classroom, the teacher must state that work will not be graded by ideological belief (which would rid the need for a highly biased performance goal based on a teacher's political preference), but by using a high amount of accuracy, correct grammar, and the fluency to eloquently express a logical and reasoned thesis. The classroom emphasis on mastery goals would allow for students to focus on historical and contemporary people and events (as said above), and also the ability to grade student work on controversial material. (It should be noted that performance goals do have a positive effect on motivation if a performance goal oriented student receives good grade). Pintrich also states that

"challenging, meaningful, and authentic" tasks that are relevant to life outside of the classroom can facilitate mastery goal orientation (Ibid, 177). Controversial material discussed in the Spanish classroom can easily be seen outside of school, such as one of the most-talked about issues: illegal/legal Mexican immigration and its correlation with the increase of Spanish in the U.S.

Pintrich also addresses a more obvious factor for motivation in the classroom: interest. Pintrich mentions work done by S. Hidi concerning interest: "…both personal interest and situational interest have a 'profound effect on cognitive functioning and the facilitation of learning'" (Ibid, 183). Hidi mentions that "personal interest" will influence students' activation and acquisition of knowledge, effort and willingness to persist on a task, and selective attention (Ibid). Some students might just be purely interested in social studies and history because it is enjoyable by itself. Situational interest on the other hand is specifically influenced by classroom factors. Pintrich mentions challenge, choice, novelty, and fantasy as a few of the components in situational interest. It is possible to apply some of these situational interest factors in the controversial Spanish classroom.

- Challenge: It is difficult to articulate one's genuine thoughts in a TL, especially abstract concepts and opinions.
- Choice: Students have the option of choosing whatever political and ideological position they would like, as long as they can articulate their thoughts using the TL in a logical manner.
- Novelty: As I mentioned above, many U.S. students are not exposed to controversial historical and contemporary material concerning Latin American-U.S. foreign policy, especially academic and peer-reviewed information and ideas that point to the complexity between the U.S. and Latin America countries.
- Fantasy: Magical-realism is a popular literary genre created and refined by one of the most famous authors in the world, Gabriel García Márquez, to explain controversial happenings through literature. One such work of Márquez is One Hundred Years of Solitude, in which he fantastically retells the banana massacre of the United Fruit Company (a U.S. corporation) against banana workers that took place in Santa Marta, Colombia in 1928, as well as North American influence in the literary city of Macondo.

Essentially it is important to have classroom material that maintains the above characteristics, otherwise students will not be interested enough to attend to new information.

Another main factor that the conceptual change classroom needs to consider is self-efficacy. Pintrich gives two definitions of self-efficacy in the conceptual change context. The first can be considered as the students' confidence in their own ideas and conceptions: "In this case, higher levels of self-efficacy or confidence in one's own beliefs would be a hindrance to conceptual change" (Ibid, 186). The second definition refers to self-efficacy as students' confidence in their abilities to use cognitive tools necessary to integrate and synthesize "divergent" ideas (Ibid). The main goal of this paper is not to find a method to fully conceptually change a student, and for this reason the focus will be on the second definition of self-efficacy. If students do not have strategies to research, compare, contrast, or comprehend controversial material, then no amount of interest or mastery goal orientation will allow for solid learning: such a lack of know-how will eventually lead to feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness. A major factor that affects the ability to write and discuss a logical argument depends on the student's research. The internet has multiple resources for research, as well as a library, and it is imperative that student's have the capability to use both sources. Another factor to consider is how much of the TL should be integrated into the curriculum. If it is beyond the students' ability to comprehend the teacher's speech as well as controversial material, then little conceptual change or input will occur, thus severely limiting the opportunity to produce output while creating a low level of motivation. Students' level of proficiency should be considered before any controversial conceptual-material is implemented.

Control factors will ultimately affect motivation in the Spanish classroom. Pintrich discusses internal versus external control: internal control focuses on students' beliefs that they are the main drivers of their learning and success, while external control concerns students' perceptions that learning and success will be mainly affected by outside factors such as the teacher's grading difficulty. In Pintrich's own studies he found that internal control beliefs were positively related to college students' use of metacognitive strategies and deeper processing, plus their actual performance on class exams, lab reports, papers, as well as the final grade in the course (Ibid, 189). Ultimately the teacher would have to create an internal-control environment in the controversial conceptual change classroom, especially when emotions can be high in attributing academic troubles to the teacher's choice of material and supposed political preference.

Because of the delicate nature of controversial material, more time needs to be devoted for students to research and formulate comprehensive ideas about issues. Pintrich recognizes project-based learning in science as a way to extend time to students. Project-based learning is designed for students to investigate a significant problem with a specific question that serves to organize and direct activities (Ibid). The science manner of project-based learning can be copied into a controversial conceptual change Spanish classroom. For example, a long term project could be the study of the Zapatista indigenous movement and its conflict with the Mexican government, private U.S. and Mexican companies, and the world market ideology in southern Mexico. At the beginning of the project date, students will be informed that they will act as members of a jury, defense, prosecution, and judge that will deem multiple members of the conflict as either guilty or innocent (similar to the "Putting Columbus on Trial" method that many middle schools have employed). This project-based opportunity would allow students to look at a contemporary event with living people plus the control of "judgment" over deciding the fate of each group. The Zapatista trial would also require extensive use of the TL in order to communicate ideological and lawful reasons for each group's sentence.

I. Selective Factors of Motivation to Consider

Although factors of motivation according to authors of conceptual change were discussed, addressing motivation in a more general sense can construct a functional classroom using controversial conceptual material. Deci and Ryan (1985) define the study of motivation as "the energization and direction of behavior" with energy meaning the feeling of "needs" and direction as "the processes and structures of the organism that give meaning to internal and external stimuli, thereby directing action toward the satisfaction of needs." (3). So, the need for the student is to learn the language while using direction, or his cognitive structure, to interpret inner and outer factors that could lead towards the fulfillment of such desires: behavior is ultimately affected by the intensity of such a need and the external and internal features that affect cognitive processing.

One of the most studied aspects of need and direction is intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation: those who see themselves as the source of their own motivation are intrinsically motivated, while those who engage in an activity because of rewards, punishment, or a desire to please someone are considered extrinsically motivated (Linnenbrink, 2008, p. 450). Students in a Spanish classroom could be in the class because they like learning new languages or want to move to the TL country (intrinsic), while many are in class because of academic requirements (extrinsic). As with a majority of classes in the U.S., many of these students want to avoid a bad grade, which takes the form of a punishment in a multifaceted way and could cause disappointment to another. At this point in time extrinsic qualities in mainstream education are here to stay, but through self-determination theory (SDT), it is possible to nurture an individual's previous extrinsic perceptions towards intrinsic value in the Spanish classroom.

SDT proposes that three needs must be met in order for human beings to achieve intrinsic motivation: competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Urdan, 2007, p. 303). Competence involves feeling effective in one's continuous dealings with the social surroundings and having a sense of opportunity to implement and articulate one's capacities. Autonomy consists of student recognition that behavior or decisions ultimately come from the learner's self, even with outside influence, while relatedness is the individual's feelings of connectedness to others and the community, or in this case, the students and teacher that make up the classroom (Ryan, 2007, p. 7). The use of controversial conceptual material could cause some students to feel inferior because of the competitive nature of debate between peers, plus varying participant language capacity, which could undermine competence. Within the class it is important to foster rules that demand respect for each student's belief and extended time for an individual to express complicated opinions that require even more patience because of the TL. Controversial conceptual education advocates autonomy for students because of its emphasis on the importance of individual opinions, and the only limitation is that beliefs are stated in the TL with logical evidence. Finally, to promote relatedness, a teacher must encourage unity within the class and emphasize that all the students are working together as a team to reach increased Spanish fluency even if there are varying opinions: every student-to-student interaction represents an opportunity for output and intake, and controversial conceptual material only acts as the subject to inspire such conversation.

Students may have an intrinsic interest in Spanish, but if the perception of success or failure in class work and goals are not attributed to the student's own work, there will be a decrease in motivation to engage controversial conceptual material. More importantly, a student has to have a balanced locus of control, which refers to "an individual's generalized expectations concerning where control over subsequent events resides," or in this case, a student's belief about his or her own control concerning the controversial conceptual material aspect of grades and success (Locus of Control). There are numerous factors that could affect a student's locus of control, including internal features such as academic and emotional ability, previous experience, habits, attitudes, self-perceptions, maturity, attention and mood during task, while external characteristics that include instruction, family, other students and directions can alter the locus of self control (Weiner, 1980, p. 42). I believe that controversial conceptual material gives students a majority of the control because they are encouraged to agree, disagree or some combination of the two within a controversial subject, as long as they are able to voice their logic in the TL. The teacher acts as an initial source of information and direction, since the topics included in the curriculum are largely unknown to a majority of U.S. students. Afterwards, students are encouraged to form their own opinions and defense, while the teacher steps back as a facilitator during student dialog and activities. This form of instruction can encourage a student's perception of success or failure in the classroom as internal, or based on his own effort and ability, versus an external sense of control which is based on factors outside of a student's management.

There are more than perceived internal and external factors that can affect the locus of control according to attribution theory. In addition, a student might ask if the cause of success or failure is stable or unstable, and if that factor is controllable or uncontrollable (Vockell, n.d.). For example, if a well performing student enters into a test after hearing that her uncle died, and then sees that she performed poorly on the exam, she would attribute her failure to an external, unstable and uncontrollable cause that affected her internal ability to perform successfully. According to Weiner, one of the forefathers of attribution theory, (1980), the individual will attempt to explain their successes and failures based on personal ability, exerted effort, difficulty of the task, and luck (41). Students will most likely pursue academic endeavors within the controversial conceptual classroom if success and failure are ascribed to internal, unstable factors over which they have control (also known as effort) (Vockell, n.d.). It is important that the controversial conceptual classroom make effort a key factor in student perceptions of success and failure: if students fail,

they only have themselves to blame. If LLs succeed, then they can attribute their success to their own personal effort and ability.

In order for students to have a balanced locus of control, the teacher has to provide an atmosphere that offers the possibility of success for everyone. The level of perceived difficulty in reaching success, though, can be varied individually amongst students. Addressing students' beliefs about their own capability to perform well is known as self-efficacy. According to Albert Bandura, one of the most renowned experts about self-efficacy, an individual that lacks a feeling of capability, even if they have the capacity, will experience little incentive to perform a task:

"…human motivation..[is] based more on what an individual believes than on what is objectively true. Unless people believe that their actions can produce the outcomes they desire, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of obstacles. For this reason, how people behave can often be better predicted by the beliefs they hold about their capabilities than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing…(Schunk, 2007, 86).

A balanced locus of control and intrinsic motivation will be hard to spot if a student feels that he is incapable of reaching some kind of success in a given task. An individual develops self-efficacy based off four personal interpretations of internal and external factors: interpreting one's own performance, interpreting the performance of others, interpreting others' expressions of your capabilities, and interpreting one's psychological state (Mayer, 2007, p. 505). In the classroom, a student would interpret his performance by reflecting on previous experience and the current situation. He would also analyze his peers' performance, because if a majority of the class can do it, why can't he, and if they can't, maybe he is unable to as well. Others' expressions directed toward the student, including peers and the teacher, influence perceived self-efficacy; if they are portraying genuine smiles and encouraging words, a student is more likely to have a higher level of self-efficacy, while worried looks and cautionary words could decrease the student's perception of capability. Lastly, the student's reflection of his psychological state has an impact. If he feels relaxed and thoughtful after examining an assignment or test instruction (assuming the end result is important to him), the student has a higher sense of self-efficacy. If the student recognizes that he feels nervous, unconfident, and feels his heart beat faster, then his perceived notion of self-efficacy will be lower and may inhibit his ability to perform well.

The above factors influence self-efficacy, and these beliefs ultimately affect student work by revealing how much effort the learners will spend on a task, how long they will persevere when approaching difficulties, and how resilient they will be in the face of "adverse situations" (Parajes, n.d.). A teacher is unable to control for all four factors that form self-efficacy other than providing material that is appropriate for the LL, which would then allow students to see their peers succeed and give them a sense of "I can too!" Additionally, a teacher's observable reactions to student answers or work should be managed appropriately for each individual LL. For example, if there is a shy Spanish student with lower self-efficacy, the teacher should express positive commentary in a non-patronizing manner, as this has the potential to increase the student's perception of capability. On the other hand, a student with too much perceived sense of self-efficacy who is not performing well should receive negative but constructive feedback.

The considerations of intrinsic motivation, locus of control, and self-efficacy are important for controversial conceptual activities because of its focus on a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. Human beings are a species of constant communication, and honing this quality in a class activity can arouse genuine exchange of ideas which has the potential for intrinsic interest. But in order for productive output and intake to take place, the individual must feel that he has the capacity and control to contribute to a conversation. If limits such as strict grading on correct verb conjugation, pronunciation, and teacher interruptions occur, the student might feel that he does not have the self-efficacy to express ideas or the control over a genuine conversation, which is what is required to execute controversial conceptual material. The teacher needs to set grading standards that are not based on how many errors or mistakes the student has, but on the amount of observable effort that is exerted. Most importantly, the teacher has to verbally convey this idea to students since individual perceptions of success and control are not based on what is objectively true, but on what is believed and interpreted by the LL. People control success by reducing the chance of failure, and if the chance of failure is small in comparison to success, students might be more likely to engage in the activity. The teacher should convey to students that making mistakes and errors are important, if not integral, to learning Spanish, and the only failure is not taking the chance to make the mistake.

II. Controversial Conceptual Material in ACTFL Standards

One could ask how controversial conceptual material fits into a collectively acceptable way of teaching students. It is worth examining the method in each standard of ACTFL's philosophy on language learning (ACTFL, n.d.). There are five categories that include communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities.

COMMUNICATION

Communicate in Languages Other Than English

- ***Standard 1.1:*** *Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.*

Controversial conceptual material requires students to research and ultimately express their opinions in the form of debate or conversations.

- ***Standard 1.2:*** *Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.*

Focusing just on controversial conceptual material would be overbearing if it was the only topic studied, but in today's teaching context, it offers a new topics for language learning.

• ***Standard 1.3:*** *Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.*

The idea of putting the Zapatistas, world market ideology, and other actors on trial would allow students to present documents, pictures, literature, music, and other mediums to the class.

CULTURES

Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

• ***Standard 2.1:*** *Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.*

Controversial conceptual material is based on presenting the TL life and perspectives that is not addressed in many classrooms.

• ***Standard 2.2:*** *Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.*

Products such as agriculture and manufactured goods are not only a main source of imports into the U.S. but also a point of contention between social groups, economic leadership, and the TL population as a whole; the goal of controversial conceptual material is for students to be acquainted with these perspectives through Spanish learning.

CONNECTIONS

Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

• ***Standard 3.1:*** *Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language*

Art, music, literature, news, journalism, and other fields are mediums that social and individual TL voices have used to express themselves through conflicted history and contemporary issues, and are key components of controversial conceptual material.

• ***Standard 3.2:*** *Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.*

Many U.S. students are not aware of forced political disappearances, which were more prevalent in the Southern Cone of South America during the dirty wars of the 70's and 80s. Concepts like "desaparecer" provide an insight into viewpoints that were formed out of a collective sentiment of fear and oppression.

COMPARISONS

Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

• ***Standard 4.1:*** *Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.*

Controversial conceptual material draws on students' previous conceptions of the world, which have been formed in English, and relies on TL learning to either accommodate or assimilate new material, thus allowing the learner to alternate between language intake and production.

• ***Standard 4.2:*** *Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.*

Controversial conceptual material seeks to expose language learners to alternative life styles not seen in the U.S. For example, subsistence farming and the culture that revolves around the small scale and community based Latin American activity versus large scale agricultural production with John Deere equipment.

COMMUNITIES

Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World

• ***Standard 5.1:*** *Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.*

Spanish is a widely used language in the United States, and with the right pretense, there are multiple venues for discussing controversial issues, such as Latino social clubs, restaurants, visiting speakers and blogs.

• ***Standard 5.2:*** *Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.*

There is a strong doubt that any method or approach will guarantee students' motivation to be life-long learners, but controversial conceptual material can present TL learners with alternative domestic opportunities that stem from hot issues, such as disadvantaged Latino community in the Boys and Girls Club and social advocacy groups. The method can also expose students to further foreign prospects of volunteering or doing an internship.

III. Conclusions

Goal orientation, interest, self-efficacy, and control factors are only small parts to a larger puzzle of motivation inside the Spanish classroom. In fact, everything mentioned in this paper is only a basic start to how a Spanish classroom in the U.S. will need to increase motivation using controversial conceptual material. Inevitably the ideas proposed here are contingent on the personality of the educator, students' temperament, scholastic resources, and a thousand other variables. However, the above authors' contributions form a base for a potentially successful increase in L2 learners' motivation by introducing controversial conceptual material. The mere presentation of controversial conceptual material

is novel and bound to catch students' interest compared to many educators' beliefs that adolescent L2 learners are "in their own world" and thus cater to an over generalized idea of cognitive immaturity. If a well delivered curriculum in conjunction with the listed psychological and second language theory is applied, today's students may have a higher propensity to be motivated by previous unknown and conflicting realities and relationships between their country and the TL nation.

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Implicit Versus Explicit Feedback in Classroom: An Experimental Study

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***Abstract*—The quasi-experimental design used in this study aimed at investigating the merits of using two types of corrective feedback, namely recasts and elicitations. Sixty EFL learners were randomly assigned to three groups (recast, elicitation and control group). The instructional intervention targeted the relative clauses. Acquisition was measured by a grammaticality judgment test. The results proved that the experimental groups significantly outperformed the control group. Besides, the results of the one-way ANOVA indicated the greater effectiveness of elicitations in posttest to recast group. However, the results of delayed post test showed no significant differences between the two treatment groups.**

***Index Terms*—corrective feedback, explicit feedback, implicit feedback, recasts, elicitations**

I. Introduction

Since its inception, interaction hypothesis has greatly raised our consciousness of the tremendous effects of interlocutor's feedback on the learner's language development. This hypothesis is based on the premise that negotiation for meaning facilitates acquisition. The corrective feedback (CF) resulting from negotiation of meaning is beneficial to and facilitative of L2 development. It sets the stage for learner to focus on some aspects of language which will subsequently lead to incidental, implicit language learning (Long, 1996). In addition, the role of CF has been acknowledged by Schmidt's (1990, 2001) Noticing Hypothesis which states that second language acquisition is derived by the learners' attention to input. From this perspective, CF serves as a trigger for noticing.

The rise of research in the area of CF over the past decade reflects a growing recognition of the paramount role of this issue in language leaning. There have been some descriptive studies focusing on the teachers' and learners' preferences for error correction methods (Firwana, 2010; Halimi, 2008; Park, 2010), experimental studies examining different features of feedback such as the degree of explicitness (Doughty and Varela, 1998;Takahashi, 2007), or linguistic targets, length, number of changes (Egi, 2007), and the effectiveness of different types of CF (Ammar and Spada, 2006; Ellis, Loewen, Erlham 2006; Nassaji, 2009; Perdomo, 2008).

Given the body of research on beneficial effects CF in developing the learners' competence, the present study seeks to determine the differential effects of recasts and elicitation.

II. Review of Literature

CF has been defined by Lightbown and Spada (1999) as "any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect" (p. 171). CF research "constitutes an area of inquiry that can connect theory, research and practice" (Sheen, 2010, p.177). Different researchers have adopted various categorizations of CF but most have employed a combination of the six types which were proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997): recasts, explicit correction, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. Two of the most important categories recast as an implicit feedback and elicitation as an explicit have been considered in this study.

A. RECASTS

More than any other type of CF, recasts have attracted the attention of many researchers (Ellis and Sheen, 2006; Hawkes, 2003) and it seems to have been the most influential type of feedback (Ayoun, 2001; Long, Inagaky and Ortega, 1998). The main motive behind this is the fact that in different classrooms recast is the most frequent negative feedback type used by language teachers (Lochtman 2002 cited in Ellis and Sheen, 2006; Lyster, 1998a; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Nassaji, 2007; Panova and Lyster, 2002). Moreover, recasts have been distinguished from other feedback types based on the premise that they are not explicit and don't interrupt the flow of communication (Baleghizadeh and Abdi, 2010).

In the context of first language, recasts are viewed as "utterances in which the caretaker produces an expanded grammatically correct version of a prior child utterance" (Mitchell and Myles, 2004, p. 162). For L2, Lyster and Ranta

(1997) define recast as "the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error" (p. 46). Long (2007) considers recast as the reformulation of a learner's utterance in which one or more non target like items are exchanged with the correct target like item. He further adds that during recast, the focus of the interlocutor is on exchanging communicative information and not treating language as an object. Recast neither damages the learners' self-confidence (Loewen and Philp, 2006) nor does it "intrude unduly in the communicative flow of the activity". It constitutes a brief time-out from communicating, which allows the learner to focus explicitly but briefly on form" (Ellis, Loewen, Erlam, 2006, p. 363).

Recasts not only provide positive evidence but also negative one, enhance interaction, and make the target forms more salient (Hawkes, 2003). They arise from a communicative language development in which both parties share "a joint intentional focus" (Long, 2007, p.114).

Despite the obvious merits of recasts, there are some drawbacks. First, they are not usually followed by self- or peer-repair. In other words, students only repeat the teachers' correct formulation of their utterances (Baleghizadeh and Abdi, 2010). In addition, since recasts do not provide any explicit indication of errors (Ellis, 2007) they are assumed to be ambiguous by some researchers because they are difficult to distinguish from non-corrective repetition. They might be considered as confirmation, paraphrase or a CF (Lyster, 1998a). In fact, some argue that "recasts of grammatical errors probably do not provide young classroom learners with negative evidence, in that they fail to convey what is unacceptable in the L2" (Lyster, 1998b, p. 207).

B. Ellicitation

Elicitation as another type of feedback has been defined as a feedback type in which the learner is not provided with the reformulated utterance, rather he is pushed toward self-correction (Lyster and Mori, 2006). Lyster (1998b) proposes that this process of self-correction necessitates a deeper processing level and is therefore more effective in enhancing the learners' language knowledge. Pausing, encouraging students to self reformulate, asking questions are the three techniques proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997).

C. Empirical Studies on Corrective Feedback

Experimental and quasi experimental designs of studies have been utilized to investigate the effectiveness of various types of CF. To investigate the effectiveness of corrective recasting, Doughty and Varela (1998) compared the performance of two groups of young learners in a content-based classroom. The results showed that the learners in the corrective recasting group which included a repetition of the error, followed by a recast outperformed the other group who received no feedback.

In a similar vein, Han (2002) examined the contribution of CF in the form of recast to the acquisition of tense consistency. He found out that due to their heightened awareness, the learners in the recast group were more successful in both oral and written tests in comparison to the no feedback group. In their experimental design study, Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006) compared the effectiveness of implicit and explicit CF on low-intermediate learners' performance. To measure the implicit knowledge, an oral imitation test was employed while in order to tap into the learners' explicit knowledge, an untimed grammaticality judgment test in addition to a metalinguistic knowledge test were used. The statistical analysis indicated the superiority of explicit feedback over the implicit type for both delayed imitation and grammaticality judgment test.

Lyster (2004) investigated the differential effects of recasts and prompts for the acquisition of grammatical gender in French. The different prompts included in his study were elicitations, metalinguistic cues, clarification requests, and repetitions. The results indicated that prompts combined with form-focused instructions were much more effective than formed-focused classroom receiving recasts. Similar results were reported by Panova and Lyster (2002).

Peredomo (2006) examined the effectiveness of two feedback types on the learners' acquisition of auxiliary verb 'to have' and the use of past participle in the present perfect tense. The participants were randomly divided into two distinct feedback type groups (recast and explicit negative evidence). Interestingly, the learners in the recast group outperformed the other group who were provided with explicit negative evidence.

Believing that focus on form instruction is very effective in L2 learning, Menti (2003) aimed at exploring the effects of recast and elicitation on the performance of intermediate EFL learners in a private language institute. The results of immediate post- test showed that the elicitation group created less erroneous sentences.

Ammar (2003) conducted a quasi-experimental design study to discover the potential effectiveness of two different negative feedback techniques, namely elicitation and recast. The participants were two groups of low proficient and high proficient learners. The targeted structure was possessive determiners. They designed a pre-test, immediate post test and a delayed post test. The statistical analysis showed that the high proficiency group took equal advantage of both elicitation and recast while the low proficiency learners profited more from elicitations on both immediate and delayed post test.

In their fully controlled study, Carroll and Swain (1993) probed into the effects of 4 different types of negative feedback on L2 acquisition. They specifically aimed at determining whether CF could teach learners the appropriate constraint on a generalized rule. To this end, one hundred subjects were randomly assigned to 4 experimental groups and a control group. While the first group simply was told that their sentence was erroneous, the other experimental groups received explicit error correction, recast, metalinguistic feedback. Analysis of data proved the superiority of all 4

groups in comparison to the no feedback group. Besides, the metalinguistic feedback proved to enhance the learners' competence to a greater extent than other feedback types.

Not only have researchers investigated the role of error correction and the comparison of its various types, but also they have examined the cognitive processes occurring in the language learning process. As an example, Nabeu and Swain (2002) performing a case study on a 19 year old EFL learner, they aimed at scrutinizing the relationship between the learner's awareness of recast and l2 learning. The results demonstrated that recasting as a complex verbal behavior is impacted by some factors as the teaching atmosphere, interaction context, and the learners' cognitive styles. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that recast is not only manipulated by feedback type (grammatical and lexical), but also by paralinguistic factors as well as the learner's potentials for taking advantages of the learning opportunities provided by feedback.

Carroll and Swain (1993) and DeKesyer (1993) state that most studies on CF have not isolated formal instruction from CF and therefore, their results might have been biased by the formal instruction. Studies like Ammar and Spada (2006) and Lyster (2004) are two examples of such claim. Therefore, the present study aims at filling this gap.

III. Research Questions

1. Do the learners who are exposed to communicative activities including a CF benefit more than those who are just exposed to communicative activities?
2. Is explicit negative feedback in the form of elicitations more effective than implicit feedback in the form of recasts?

IV. Method

The present study adopted a quasi-experimental design involving a pre-test, treatment and two tests (a post test, and a delayed post test).

A. Participants

Sixty students participated in this study. All participants except one were monolingual. The mean age of participants was 23. The study was conducted at an Institute in Shiraz. Based on the result of a TOEFL test, they were considered to be intermediate learners. Learners at this proficiency level were assumed to be appropriate because they could maintain communicative interactions and their errors could be amenable to CF. The teaching approach adopted by the Institute was the communicative one. Students attended the class twice a weak each for 2 hours.

B. Procedure

A TOEFL test was administered in order to ensure the homogeneity of the group. Out of the total of 75 students who participated in this study, 60 students were included in the study because of their different level of proficiency. They were assigned to intact groups (two experimental groups and a control group). The learners in the treatment group were asked to perform some communicative focused task (Ellis, 2003) in three successive sessions. The tasks purposefully elicited the relative clauses. The two experimental groups received feedback either in the form of recasts or elicitations while the control group neither completed these tasks nor did it receive any feedback. The learners in this group just continued their usual instruction.

C. Target Structure

In this study, intensive feedback focusing on just some pre-selected target forms were used. Relative clause was adopted as the target structure for the following main reasons: first because learners had already learned this structure and second based on our many years of teaching experience relative clause is one of the most problematic structures for Iranian learners. Either the relative clause is erroneously produced or as Pazhakhi (2007) envisions it the learners avoid it by simply mixing two simple sentences. This is further supported by the contrastive analysis of Persian and English as well as previous research by Schachter (1974) which has demonstrated that relative clauses are one of the most difficult structures for Iranian learners to acquire. The third reason for choosing this structure related to its paramount role in interactional communication.

The typical errors made by learners were the following types:

*The man that he is wearing a jacket is my father.

*This is the book that I borrowed it.

*The man who his shirt is blue is my father.

*The man that is driving is energetic.

*These are the people that she knows their neighbors.

Or they might totally avoid the relative pronoun by producing sentences like the following:

I met the woman. She is a doctor.

Our aim in this study was not examining whether CF can help learners in acquiring completely brand new structures, but whether or not it can assist the learners in gaining more control over the structure that they already know.

D. Instructional Material

Various picture description tasks which were of focused type (Ellis, 2003) were utilized. The main focus of the task was on meaning, not form. The learners were asked to imagine that they were on the phone with a friend who really needed to know the information in the pictures; So they were to describe the information in the picture using relative pronouns (whose, whom, where, which, who, when, etc.). In addition, they were to imagine themselves describing a criminal scene for a detective. Each instructional treatment session took 30 to 45 minutes. The teacher in the recast group reformulated the learners' mistakes while she tried to elicit the correct response in the other treatment group.

Examples of recasts and elicitations provided to learners:

Recast:

Sara: the man whom I saw him was tall.

Teacher: the man whom I saw was tall.

Elicitation:

Parisa: the girl that was wearing a yellow dress was tall

Teacher: Say that again please.

The girl……

Pardon me!

E. Measurements

Three completely similar tests were designed. A pretest, a post test, and a delayed post test were conducted in a counter-balanced design as proposed by Brown (1988) to reduce test-retest effects. Initially a pilot study was undertaken on the tests and after the subsequent item analysis, the best functioning items were chosen and the rest were either eliminated or modified. Each test included 40 items (20 correct, 20 incorrect) in addition to the 10 distracters. The reliability index of the tests was established through Cronbach Alpha. The reliability of the three tests computed through Cronbach Alpha was .78, .82, and .79 consecutively. The students sat for the pretest a day before the treatment, the post test, a day after the treatment activities, and the delayed post test, 15 days after the posttest.

V. Data Analysis

Using SPSS 16, descriptive statistics were calculated. Then one-way ANOVA was run on the raw scores of the grammaticality judgment tests (pre-test, post-test, delayed post test) to check significant differences between the two groups. Post hoc analysis was respectively performed when the results of ANOVA deemed significant.

VI. Results

The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR TEST SCORES BY GROUP

Group		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	A	20	17.00	32.00	24.4500	4.45415
	B	20	17.00	30.00	23.8000	3.99473
	C	20	15.00	32.00	23.9000	4.80022
2	A	20	17.00	29.00	24.3000	3.68639
	B	20	22.00	30.00	26.2500	2.38140
	C	20	21.00	34.00	27.2000	3.95501
3	A	20	17.00	30.00	24.6000	3.51538
	B	20	23.00	34.00	28.8000	3.05390
	C	20	20.00	33.00	28.1500	3.29713

The three groups showed uniformity in their knowledge of relative clauses at the time of pre-test. To further investigate the differences among the three groups, a one-way ANOVA was computed.

TABLE 2
THE ONE WAY ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
A	Between Groups	.900	2	.450	.029	.971
	Within Groups	869.950	57	15.262		
	Total	870.850	59			
B	Between Groups	250.033	2	125.017	12.116	.000
	Within Groups	588.150	57	10.318		
	Total	838.183	59			
C	Between Groups	199.033	2	99.517	6.025	.004
	Within Groups	941.550	57	16.518		
	Total	1140.583	59			

The ANOVA run on the pre-test shows that there was no significant differences among the three groups in terms of their overall performance, *F (2, 57)* = .029, *P* = .97. However, the groups receiving feedback performed considerably different from the non-feedback group in both post test and delayed post test. F (2, 57) = 12.11, P=.00 for the post test, and F (2, 57) = 6.07, P= .00 for the delayed post test. Post hoc Tukey pairwise comparisons indicated that the treatment groups (recasts and elicitations) outperformed the control group in both post test and delayed post test. So the first research question was answered affirmatively.

As for the feedback type, the results of one-way ANOVA showed that the difference between the two experimental groups was significant. Post hoc Tukey comparisons indicated that the elicitation feedback in the immediate post-test was significantly superior to the recast type of feedback (p=.03). However, the difference between the two experimental groups did not reach statistical significance (p=.74) in the delayed post test.

VII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed at examining the effects of CF in L2 learning. Besides, it sought to explore the effects of implicit and explicit feedback. The explicit feedback was operationalized as elicitations while implicit feedback as recasts. The results of the post test and delayed post test empirically supported the fact that exposing learners to communicative activities in juxtaposition with consciousness raising activities such as error correction is more effective than exposing them to mere communicative activities. This is in line with empirical findings of Carroll and Swain (1993); Doughty and Varela (1998); Lightbown and Spada (1999); Leeman (2003); Muranoi (2000); and White (1991) comparing feedback and no feedback group. So this will shed light on the importance of teachers' error correction of the learners to produce target like structures.

Concerning the differential effects of elicitations and recasts, the results of the immediate post-test demonstrated the superiority of the elicitations in comparison to recasts which can be accounted for by taking into consideration the explicit-implicit dichotomy. Explicit feedback led to much more feedback appreciation. Thus, this study provided empirical support for negative evidence especially the explicit type of feedback. this will subsequently corroborate Schmidt's (2001) noticing hypothesis which emphasizes attracting the learners' attention to formal aspects of language in order to achieve linguistic gains.

The justification behind the less effectiveness of recast was the fact that the learners couldn't notice the teachers' reformulation as a kind of CF; rather they might have assumed it as a mere positive evidence. In this regard, Long (1996) asserted, "The fact that an utterance is intended as a correction . . . does not necessarily mean that a learner will perceive it that way" (p. 432). Therefore, they might have considered it as a confirmation of their utterance than a reformulation and correction of it.

As for the delayed post test, although still greater gains were achieved by the elicitation group, no significant difference was observed between the two types of CF. In other words, although greater achievements were gained through explicit feedback, it didn't prove to be significantly different from the implicit one. This can imply the more enduring nature of recast which is also corroborated by Rassaei and Moinzadeh (2011).

VIII. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The most important goal of teachers is enhancing teaching. One of the most salient ways to achieve this goal is through error correction. Using more form focused activities in combination with meaning based activities deems beneficial; Learners should be provided with more opportunities to interact more with competent interlocutor to receive CF in its various forms. However, rather than choosing one type of feedback, teachers should have a variety of different feedback types at their disposal to choose from.

Based on the findings of this study, one might be tempted to conclude that explicit feedback is always better than the implicit one. However, special care must be exercised when choosing a particular feedback type since factors such as

context, level of proficiency (Amar and Spada, 2006; Perdomo, 2008; Rodriguez and Perdomo, 2002), type of the target structure, learners' orientation toward a particular feedback, age, motivation and many other factors (Nassaji, 2006) can affect the outcome of a particular type of feedback. Teachers, therefore, need "to orchestrate, in accordance with their students' language abilities and content familiarity, a wide range of feedback types befitting of the instructional context" (Lyster, 2007, p. 124).

Another pedagogical implication of this study is the need to promote the saliency of recast to decrease its ambiguity and add to its beneficial value as a common feedback type in English classes. In this regard, some researchers have put forward the idea that recasts are likely to be more useful if highlighted by clues so that learners can perceive them as CF rather than as a communicative response to what they said (Nicholas, Lightbown, and Spada, 2001; Takahashi, 2007).

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Exploring Students' Anxiety in Computer-based Oral English Test

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***Abstract*—The present study examined the state of anxiety in the computer-based oral English test and the impact of the test anxiety on the candidates' performance. 80 subjects were measured with a questionnaire adapted from Sarason's Test Anxiety Scale right after taking an oral English test on computer in a multimedia language lab. Two raters analyzed the correlation between the test anxiety score and that of their oral test. Results showed that there is a relatively high test anxiety in the computer context for a few subjective as well as objective reasons. And also the apprehension of different levels was proved to, more or less, affect the candidates' spoken English performance to some extent. It is suggested that improving testing environment and strengthening pre-test training can be used to reduce the level of anxiety and therefore, help evaluate students' real oral English proficiency.**

***Index Terms*—computer-based oral English test, test anxiety, test performance, testing environment**

I. Introduction

With the increasing demand of oral English proficiency and the popularity of the computer used in language teaching and testing, more and more universities in China tend to adopt the computer-based oral English test. It is efficient for about 300 students to take the test simultaneously within 30 minutes. Besides, there is interaction between students. However, test-takers' performance is largely affected by various factors, among which test anxiety has long aroused researchers' attention.

A. Test Anxiety

Anxiety belongs to the cognitive behvaior rising from self-doubt and self-depreciation (Zhang, 2004). It is "a state of apprehension, a vague, sometimes undefined, fear" (Scovel, 1978). Test anxiety has been defined as one element of general anxiety composed of cognitive attentional processes that interferes with competent performance in academic or assessment situations (Spielberger & Vagg, 1995).

Horwitz pointed out that anxiety is built up to the climax when language learners communicate with others orally and oral test has the potential of provoking both test and oral communication anxiety simultaneously in susceptible students. (Horwits & Cope, 1986). Therefore, it is reasonable that some test-takers tend to feel extremely apprehensive in the orally evaluative situation. Oral English test anxiety is related to such elements as communicative apprehension (i.e the fear of communicating with others), test anxiety (i.e. general fear of the negative evaluation) and face anxiety (i.e. the fear of the direct threat to one's self-esteem due to the failure in talking with the examiner in oral test). (Han, 2005)

Some researchers have explored the causes of oral test anxiety. Such factors as time limit, test techniques, test format, length, testing environment and clarity of test instructions are believed to cause test anxiety to a certain extent (Young, 1999). Kitano posited that fear of negative evaluaiton and self-perceived speaking ability contribute to the different level of anxiety among test-takers. Sarason held that test anxiety occurs when students who have performed poorly in the past develop negative, irrelevant thoughts during evaluative situation.(Sarason, 1986). Chinese researchers have also obtained some findings on the sources of test anxiety. According to Tian(2006), among seven internal and external factors affecting the level of test anxiety, such items as test self-efficacy, language learning and testing strategies and cognitive interferance are significantly correlated. Xie (2008) suggested that the unfamiliarity or ambiguity of the task may increase the examinees' anxiety.

Besides, researchers have been exploring the relationship between test anxiety and the performance. Sarason (1984) analyzed the nature of test anxiety and its relationship to performance and cognitive interference from the standpoint of attention processes. Sullivan found that high test-anxious individuals would show cognitive impairments on attention and memory skills. Zhang(2004) suggested that the relationship between the CET-SET (National College English Test-Spoken English Test) score and test anxiety is negatively significant. Others hold that task-irrelevant thoughts, such as worries and concerns about self-evaluative aspects of failure contribute greatly to the poor performance.

B. Computer-based Oral English Test

However, most of the research mentioned above were concerned with the written tests and a few research on oral test anxiety were conducted in the context of traditional face-to-face mode, not to mention the computer-based speaking test.

In recent years, computer technology began to be used as a substitute for traditional face-to-face oral test. The computer-based oral test is a multimedia English proficiency test delivered by a computer that is intended to elicit and measure knowledge of pronunciation, vocabulary, syntas and cohesion. The computer presents test instructions and test tasks, controlls the preparation and response time, and stores participants' responses. The participants wear headsets and speak into microphones. This highly-efficient testing is adopted by more and more Chinese universities for its time-saving, fatigue-reducing and security. However, does the computer-based oral test increase the degree of anxiety or exert no more effect than the researchers have worried?

Shermis assumed that the acceptance of computerized tests may be hindered by the concern that test performance is linked to computer anxiety. He concluded that examinees feel they may perceive a loss of control over the testing environment, which can increase testing anxiety and reduce performance on subsequent task (Shermis, 1998). He also doubted that computer anxiety in test-taking situations is really an extension of test anxiety.

C. The Purpose of the Present Study

The present study aims to explore the degree and causes of anxiety in compter-based oral English test and its effect on students' performance. How much do test-takers feel anxious when taking oral test on computer in the multimedia language lab? What are the causes of such anxiety? How does their anxiety influence their performance in the evaluative situation?

II. Research Method

A. Hypotheses

Two hypotheses have been developed in light of the research target.

1. Some students feel anxious for some reasons when taking oral tests on computer.
2. Students' anxiety influences their speaking performance in the computer-based oral test to some extent.

B. Participants

The research was conducted in June 2011. 80 freshmen from 2 classes were chosen from a key university which has adopted the computer-based speaking test for 3 years. There are 43 male students and 37 female. The average age is 19.3. They were required to fill in a questionnaire about test anxiety, right after the oral English test of the second semester, which taking up 10 percent of the final examination.

C. Instrument

A questionnaire and subsequent interview are both used for investigating computer-base oral test anxiety. After reviewing related literatures, the researchers chose the ones that they thought were the most appropriate for the situation and produced 22 items. The questionnaire is composed of two sections, the first part is concerned with the students' basic information, such as name, age and gender, and the second contains 22 items designed on the basis of Sarason's Test Anxiety Scale (TAS) and researchers' teaching experience. The original TAS is slightly modified by adding 6 statements about the specific context of computer-based oral test. The 22 items concern 4 main variables, namely, computer-based testing environment(6), confidence in language proficiency(6), difficulty and complexity of test(2), and finally, the physical and psychological symptoms of test anxiety(9). Students respond to items based on Likert 5-point scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree) yielding a range of scores from 22 (lowest test anxiety) to 110 (highest test anxiety). The questionnaire demonstrates high internal consistency, its reliability coefficient is proved to be 0.840.

TABLE I.
RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.840	22

D. Achievement Measure

There are four items in the oral test, including reading aloud and retelling a short passage, picture description and pair discussion. Each student was given 15 minutes to complete all these tasks. Directions of each item were stated clearly on the screen to facilitate students to understand what they were required to do. What's more, a countdown clock was set on the right corner of the screen to remind the students how much time left. The pair for the discussion was randomly chosen by the computer system.

E. Procedure

Each student was distributed a questionnaire immediately after they had taken the oral test in a multimedia language lab. The aim of the study was explained to them clearly as they were asked to blacken the most suitable choice. Afterwards, 16 students were selected randomly to be interviewed. The interview questions are centered around their true feeling and state of mind while taking the oral test on computer.

Two raters assessed students' performance on the basis of the audio records with the rubric of CET-SET. Each student

was graded from such aspects as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, sentence variety, clarity and coherence of the utterance and so on. The total score is 15. Both the scores of the test anxiety and students' speaking performance were entered into computer. Then the data was processed by SPSS 18 to detect the degree of computer-based oral test anxiety and the correlation between test anxiety and students' performance.

III. Results

A. The State of Test Anxiety

TABLE II.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF COMPUTER-BASED TEST ANXIETY SCORE

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Test anxiety in CBST	80	44	102	74.2500	1.5636

TABLE III.
PERCENTAGE OF LOW AND HIGH ANXIOUS STUDENTS

	Number	Percentage
Low-anxious	6	7.5%
High-anxious	12	15%

Table 2 and 3 represent the degree of test anxiety in computer-based oral Engish test.

A score of 55 or below ranks in the low test-anxiety range, any score above 90 signifies high test anxiety, the rest scores in between rank in the medium range.

According to the table, the highest score is 102, the lowest is 44, the mean is 74.25. 7.5% students scored lower than 55, however, about 15%, or 12 out of 80 students whose scores were higher than 90 were considered highly-anxious. Undoubtedly, these statistics reflect a relatively high level of anxiety in the computer-based oral test.

TABLE IV.
DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION FOR COMPUTER-BASED TEST ANXIETY VARIABLES

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean
Computer-based testing environment	3.4042	1.25797	.19890
Confidence in language proficiency	3.4728	1.26213	.19992
Difficulty and complexity	3.2000	1.18105	.18674
Physical and psychological symptoms	3.000	1.03775	.16408

N=80

Table 4 represents the variables reflecting the level of anxiety in the computer-based speaking evaluation. Except for the physical and psychological symptoms, lack of confidence in one's own language proficiency ranks first, followed by the pressure of computer-based testing environment and difficulty and complexity of the test. To be more specific, as many as 70 percent of students admitted that in computer context, the short preparation time (5) and limited answering time (6) contributed to their anxiety, the means of these two items are 4.0750 and 3.650 respectively. However, not many students worry about the operation of computer (mean=2.8000), they did not think it would increase the level of anxiety. Almost 60 percent of students felt unnatural and strange talking to computer, the mean is 3.5750, at the same time, 47.5 percent of students reported that the unfamilarity of the discussion partner chosen by the computer system also made them worry whether they could cooperate well and communicate smoothly. The high mean of lack of confidence in language proficiency reflects the main concern of the oral test of any form, and it is more salient in the computer situation.

In the subsequent interview, one student said "*I feel extremely anxious when the time shown on the screen is running quickly. I'm afraid that I'll not complete all the task before the time runs out. So I can't concentrate on the topic, instead, I'm in constant dread… I can't fully express what I want to say. It has definitely affects my performance.*" Another student reported "*I feel strange to talk to a machine which seems cold, emotionless and above all, ridiculous. Although I have the experience of chatting via computer, I still feel anxious in such an evaluative situation*."…

B. The Impact of Students' Anxiety on Speaking Performance

TABLE V.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
a15	74.2500	15.63650	80
s	10.6625	1.72607	80

TABLE VI.
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN TEST ANXIETY SCORE AND SPEAKING TEST SCORE

		Test Anxiety Score	Speaking Test Score
Test Anxiety Score	Pearson Correlation	1	-.669**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
Speaking Test Score	Pearson Correlation	-.669**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

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

TABLE VII.
AVERAGE MEAN OF TEST ANXIETY AND ORAL TEST SCORE OF HIGH- AND LOW-ANXIOUS STUDENTS

	N	Test Anxiety Score Mean	Oral Test Mean
High-anxious (above 90)	18	95.78	9
Low-anxious (below 55)	6	49.33	12.5

From Table 6, we can see the correlation coefficient of the test anxiety score and speaking test score is -0.669, which indicates the correlation between them is negatively significant at the level of 0.01. In other words, the more anxious the students feel, the more poorly they perform in the computer-based speaking test. The negative correlation is also reflected from Table 7, in which high-anxious students score 95.78 in test anxiety on average, but the average score of speaking test is as low as 9, much lower than that of the low-anxious students. The above statistics reveal that the anxiety in the evaluative situation affects how students perform in oral test. Judging from the audio records of their speech, high-anxious students tend to make more errors in pronounciation, grammar and word collocation etc.

IV. Discussion

The present study indicates that the level of anxiety is relatively high among students taking oral test in the computer context. And meanwhile, the anxiety influences students' performance in computer-based oral English test. A few subjective and objective factors can account for the issue.

A. Factors Causing Test Anxiety in Computer-based Oral English Test

1. Subjective reasons

According to the present study, there are several factors contributing to the anxiety while the candidates are taking oral test via computer.

First, they are inexperienced in taking computer-based test, especially speaking test. Although the modern college students are labelled as the Internet Generation, they still lack the real experience of communicating orally via computer, not to mention in the evaluative situation. The strange / ridicular feeling and unnaturalness of talking with computer increase their apprehension.

Second, poor ability of time management on computer also influences how they perform. Some students worried that they cannot complete all the tasks within the given time, so they talked very quickly, with errors in grammar and vocabulary being ignorant. They stared at the time-running bar, the fast movement of the time even accelerated their breathing rate and heart beat, it may distract their attention, and made them think something irrelevant, such as what if I cannot finish within the limited time. These irrelevant thoughts, in turn, must affect their normal attention which should be paid to the test itself, therefore, definitely affected the accuracy of their speech. But when finishing all the required tasks, they found time had not run out, so they had to keep silent or add some inconsistent information. Therefore, their failure to manage time reflects their lack of metacognitive strategy, which is regarded as a critical determinant for success in language learning and testing.

Thirdly, poor self-efficacy influences students' confidence in handling the oral test. Those who always thought they would not do well in any evaluation would be more anxious. And what's more, the unpleasant past experience, such as, bad score also had a negative psychological impact on the ongoing test. One interviewee said "*I'm afraid of being given low mark for my poor performance partly because of the unsatisfied performance and very low score I got last semester.*"

2. Objective reasons

In addition to the subjective factors mentioned above, there are also a few objective reasons, especially the uncontrollable testing environment.

Firstly, those who perceived a lack of control over the noise in the multimedia language lab showed increased feelings of helplessness and reduced performance on subsequent task. When they took oral exam on computer, peer's loud voice may influence the normal performance of the examinee. The thought that they've lost the control over the testing environment, more or less, increased their anxiety.

Secondly, the lack of cooperation with the discussion partner also leads to anxiety to some extent. The partner of pair

is selected randomly, so two speakers are not familiar with each other. Above all, they couldn't rely on the body language (the facial expression, the gestures etc.) to express and interpret the feelings. Besides, mostly the two speakers sit far away from each other though in the same room. Therefore, lack of full understanding and smooth communication will increase the degree of apprehension.

Thirdly, degree of difficulty and complexity of test also turn out to be a factor affecting the examinees' emotionality. One student complained in the interview that once spotting the topic which was beyond his expectation or which he was not so familiar with, his mind would go blank and couldn't speak anything. It is suggested that topics should be interesting, up-to-date, specific, useful, controversial and closely related to students' life. In this case, anxiety disturbs the recall of prior learning and thus degrades performance. It is consistent with Young's findings "In language testing, the greater the degree of evaluation and the more unfamiliar and ambiguous the test tasks and formats, the higher the learners' anxiety is produced.

B. Negative Impacts of Test Anxiety on Students' Speaking Performance

According to the findings, there are a few negative impacts of test anxiety on students' speaking performance, mainly in the impairment of language proficiency.

First, the participants' language proficiency reflected in the speaking test has been partly impaired by their anxiety. Judging from the audio records, those whose test anxiety scores are high made more errors in pronunciation, grammar and sentence arrangement. In retelling section, some high-anxious students suffered from distorted pronunciation, inaccurate verb tense, incorrect word collocation, even misunderstanding of the passage. One student admitted later *"my voice trembled badly for the extreme anxiety, and I even failed to pronounce some words correctly. If it is not in the speaking test, I guess I would not make such silly mistakes."* The frequent procrastination is another reflection of the anxiety. Besides, in the picture description section, the high-anxious students failed to identify the most striking information which should not be ignored. Undoubtedly, the students' real language proficiency is not fully reflected because of their anxiety.

Secondly, high degree of anxiety also affects students' working memory, which has been reflected in their performance of retelling. Judging from the records, some high-anxious students forgot retelling important information for the reasons that their attention was partly distracted by irrelevant thoughts. Such thoughts which were not related to the task must have occupied the place in the brain where the useful information should take up. As a result, the impairment of the normal working memory definitely affects the performance.

Thirdly, constant anxiety in speaking test may mar the candidates' self-efficacy and self-confidence. On the one hand, the fear of negative evaluation triggers anxiety in the test, which affects the performance; on the other hand, the poor performance, in turn, impairs the confidence and self-efficacy, which will increase the degree of anxiety. The malignant cycle will impose great pressure on the students psychologically and influence their performance in the future speaking tests.

V. Implication

This research is somewhat significant in China where an increasing number of universities have adopted the computer-based oral English test for improving the efficiency of speaking test. There are a few implications for the test takers, teachers and researchers respectively.

A. Improving the Testing Environment of the Computer-based Oral English Test

Firstly, in the computer-context the pair system in discussion section can be innovated by selecting two students sitting next to each other or utilizing the technology of video talking. In this case, the two speakers can communicate face-to-face, which may reduce certain load of apprehension caused by the unfamiliarity of the partner and enable them to identify the other party's body language as well.

B. Strengthening Pre-test Training

Megacognitive strategy such as the management of time should be well trained in classroom teaching. What's more, the school administration should provide students with more opportunities to practice speaking at normal time in multimedia language lab by imitating the testing environment. As a result, students will familiarize the new form of communication and build up confidence and reduce their anxiety as well.

VI. Conclusion

The present study has explored the state of anxiety in the computer-based speaking test and concluded that students indeed feel anxious when taking speaking test on computer and the anxiety, more or less, affects their performance in the test. The findings would enable the researchers to further improve the testing environment of computer-administered test and create more feasible means to help reduce students' anxiety so that their real language proficiency could be examined.

The small number of the samples restricts the results of the study, therefore further research in a larger quantity of subjects is needed. In addition, the negative impacts of test anxiety on the speaking performance could be investigated

in more specific aspects, such as at the level of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and discourse etc in the future research.

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The Effect of Metadiscourse on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension

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***Abstract*—This study is an attempt to investigate the effect of metadiscourse on listening comprehension of EFL intermediate and advanced students. 120 students were assigned into four groups of 30. There were two groups of treatment and control both in intermediate and advanced levels. Two versions of monologues with and without discourse markers were given to the control and treatment groups respectively. The result showed a significant difference between groups in advanced and intermediate levels. There was however no significant difference within the intermediate groups. So, a follow up unstructured interview was conducted to find out the possible reason. The result showed that intermediate students were not aware of the role of discourse markers in the monologues. This consciousness raising regarding discourse markers helped the premise of the study and the result of the second administration of the versions of the monologues to the intermediate groups showed a significant difference. The findings of this study clearly display the crucial role of metadiscourse and the degree of consciousness about them across different levels in listening comprehension of EFL students.**

***Index Terms*—metadiscourse, listening comprehension, consciousness raising, discourse markers**

I. Introduction

Fortunately, the significance of metediscourse has recently been recognized as a pivotal feature in communication. Luckily, this important issue has been touched by academia and especially language teaching milieu and its facilitative role (Crismore, 1984, 1989; Hyland, 1998, 1999; Perez & Macia, 2002) has been acknowledged. Adding to this promising context is the shift from the traditional textual focus to more functionally oriented perspectives in the realm of metadiscourse. This new view according to Hyland (2005) considers metadiscourse as a phenomenon, which is distinct from propositional meaning and refers to the aspects of the text that embody writer-reader interactions and the relations, which are internal to the discourse.

The presence of metadiscourse has been investigated in written discourse (Hyland, 2005; Hyland, 2000, 2004; Carlson, 1998). The effect of the discourse markers has also been investigated in this field as well (Martinez, 2004; Simin and Tavangar, 2009; Cheng and Stefensen, 1996; Intraprawat, and Stefensen; 1995). Contrary to all these attempts in determining the role of discourse markers in written discourse, the crucial role of metadiscourse in spoken discourse seems to have been ignored.

Students of English as a foreign language are more required to listen to and comprehend great amounts of second language input (Eslami and Eslami, 2007). The importance of metadiscourse in listening comprehension has attracted the attention of some scholars (Chaudron and Richards, 1986; Flowerdew and Tauroza, 1995; Perez and Macia, 2002).

Despite these attempts to underscore the role of metadiscourse in written discourse, there has been little attention paid to the role of metadiscourse in listening comprehension. So this study is partially inspired by the few studies conducted recently and is hopeful to highlight the crucial role of discourse markers in EFL students listening comprehension.

A. Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse is a widely used term in current discourse analysis and language education that involves speakers or writers not only in producing but an interaction between text producers, text and their audience (Hyland, 2005). In fact text producers try to anticipate their audience expectations, requirments and resources to affect their understanding to pave the way of an effective communication. Until recently there has been an overarching ideology quite limited to conveying the ideas by focusing on the grammatical patterns and rules. Today, however, new conceptualizations of metadiscourse have led to a shift towards the means that speakers or writers try to express their attitudes. Hyland (2005)

argues that " metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goals or services, but also involves he personalities, attitudes and assumptions of those who are communicating" (p. 3).

Halliday's (1994) functional, pragmatic approach to language is of great help in conceptualizing, understanding and classifying metadiscourse. He considers three major functional systems for the language i.e. ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational level concerns with the propositions, the interpersonal layer is dealt with all those personal feelings, personality expressions as well as the social interplay along with different interactional forms. The textual layer is quite essential for understanding the ideational and interpersonal meaning. Following this functional view, metadiscourse can be classified into two broad categories i.e. the interpersonal and textual in which we can find other subcategories as well. Vande Kopple (1985) believes that textual metadiscourse reveals a discoursal relationship between individual propositions that culminate in a cohesive and coherent text. This is what Lyons (1997) refers to as text reflexivity, or "the capacity of natural language to refer to or describe itself" (p. 5)

Different scholars have investigated the role of metadiscourse instruction in different skills of the language (Dastjerdi and shirzad, 2010; Jalalifar and Alipour, 2007; Martinez, 2004). The common result of these studies displays the positive effect of discourse markers instruction.

Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010) investigated the effect of explicit teaching of metadiscourse markers on EFL learners' writing ability at three levels of advanced, intermediate, and elementary. They found that explicit instruction of meta-discourse makers significantly increased EFL learners' writing ability at three levels. Their findings also revealed that intermediate EFL learners took more benefits of familiarity with discourse markers than those at the other levels in their writing ability.. In other words, intermediate EFL learners improved their writing more significantly than the other groups.

B. Metadiscourse and Academic Lectures as Monologues

The lecture discourse has been analyzed by some scholars (Murphy and Candlin, 1979; Chaudron, 1988; Shing Chiang and Dunkel, 1992; Allison and Tauroza, 1995). They have in fact considered factors such as speech rate, cultural differences, note-taking practices, listening strategies and discourse organization. Listening to the lectures as monologues has always been one of the demanding jobs for foreign language learners. It has also been an important skill for university students (Flowerdew and Miller, 1992). Different scholars have considered lectures as monologues from different perspectives. Some have focused on the macro structure of lectures (Olsen and Huckin, 1990), others have paid attention to the interactional practices of lecture comprehension (Morell, 2004).

II. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants in this study included four groups of 30, two intermediate and two advanced, students taking IELTS training courses at Kishair English Institute, Mashhad. Iran. All the participants' first language was Farsi and their age ranged from 22 to 43 with the mean of 33.

First a test of TOEFL derived from *Actual TOEFL tests* was given to 112 EFL students studying at Kish Air English institute. Then those whose scores ranged between 450 and 550 were considered as intermediate. Also, those whose scores ranged above 550 were considered as advanced learners. Therefore, 65 of the test takers were labeled intermediate and 62 advanced. Other participants, whose scores were lower than 450 and did not serve a purpose for the study were excluded from them. For the sake of the purpose of the study, both groups of scores were ranked from the highest to the lowest. Then in each group the one with highest score was assigned to one group and the second highest score was assigned to another group and this process continued to the one with the lowest score. So the participants were randomly assigned into four groups. Moreover, to make the number of each group equal, the researchers included 30 students in each group. Finally, in order to make sure that the difference between the mean scores is not significant and the two intermediate and the two advanced groups are the same with regard to the construct tested, the researchers used an independent t-test.

TABLE 1.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE INTERMEDIATE GROUPS

		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
GE	Equal variances assumed	.166	.46	9.064	58	.63	2.20	.29837	2.1148	3.2936
	Equal variances not assumed			9.109	57.9	.63	2.20	.29689	2.1177	3.2907

TABLE 2.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE ADVANCED GROUPS

		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
GE	Equal variances assumed	.166	.46	9.064	58	.67	2.70	.29837	2.1148	3.2936
	Equal variances not assumed			9.109	57.9	.61	2.70	.29689	2.1177	3.2907

The results of this test revealed that the two groups at both levels, intermediate and advanced did not significantly differ from each other in terms of their performance on the T-test. It means that the participants of the two groups were equal with regards to their GE (General English) ability.

B. Materials

The materials used for this study consisted of 5 monologues based on section 4 of IELTS examinations. 5 of these monologues were derived directly from IELTS tests. Since such section consists of monologues with are rich in metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005), they serve the purpose of the study very well. The other 5 monologues were based on the first group of monologues but the metadiscourse were excluded.

C. Procedure

First, the researchers in the study selected five monologues from the original IELTS exams. Then in order to organize the second group of monologues, they excluded the metadiscourses from the original ones. Hyland's model of interpersonal metadiscourse (2005) was determined for underlining the metadiscourse and their exclusion from the original monologues. Then both groups of monologues were recorded by British native-like voices. Next, the recorded monologues were given to some university teachers and four university students of TEFL to check the content of the records. Then, the recorded monologues were given to the groups. The learners in the experimental groups listened to the original monologues and those in the control groups listened to those with the metadiscourse excluded.

III. RESULTS

The first research question was "Is there any difference in intermediate EFL learners' listening comprehension with regard to the inclusion and exclusion of metadiscourses?" The following table shows the mean scores of the intimidate control and experimental groups.

TABLE 3
ILLUSTRATES WHETHER SUCH DIFFERENCE IN MEAN SCORES OF THE TWO GROUPS IS SIGNIFICANT OR NOT.

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Intermediate	Experimental	30	17.2043	1.94330	.21460
	Control	30	13.5000	1.76486	.20516

		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
GE	Equal variances assumed	.166	.46	9.064	58	.34	2.70	.29837	2.1148	3.2936
	Equal variances not assumed			9.109	57.9	.31	2.70	.29689	2.1177	3.2907

As table 4 shows the difference between the two groups is not significant. It means that the inclusion and exclusion of metadiscourses has no significant effect on intimidate EFL learners' listening comprehension.

The second research question was "Is there any difference in advanced EFL learners' listening comprehension with regard to inclusion and exclusion of Metadiscourses?" The following table demonstrates the mean scores of the advanced experimental and control groups.

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Advanced	Experimental	30	17.4021	1.94330	.21460
	Control	30	14.5000	1.76486	.20516

In order to see whether the difference in mean scores of the two groups is significant or not, the researchers used an independent t-test (Table 5)

		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
GE	Equal variances assumed	.166	.46	9.064	58	.000	2.70	.29837	2.1148	3.2936
	Equal variances not assumed			9.109	57.9	.000	2.70	.29689	2.1177	3.2907

As table 5 shows, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups. It means that metadiscourses have a significant effect on advanced learners' listening comprehension.

IV. Discussion

The results of the first research question showed that the exclusion of metadiscourses has no significant effect on intermediate EFL learners' listening comprehension. Since that was not the case for the advanced ones, the researchers decided to conduct an unstructured interview with 5 learners of each group to gain further insights into the causes of such results. Therefore, 5 learners of each group were invited for a half hour interview with the researchers. In order to elicit reliable answers from the interviewees and to keep them motivated for the interview, the researchers paid each one 20, 000 Rials, around 20$. The unstructured interview was used in this study because as Dörnyei (2007) words it

allows maximum flexibility to follow the interview in unpredictable directions, with only minimal interference from the research agenda. The intention is to create a relaxed atmosphere in which the respondent may reveal more than he/she would in informal contexts, with the interviewer assuming a listening role……This kind of interview is most appropriate when a study focuses on the deep meaning of particular phenomena (p.136).

Having conducted the interviews, the researchers found that almost all the intermediate interviewees, 9 out of 10, 5 in the control group and 4 in the experimental group, were not aware of the concept of metadiscourse. However, most of the advanced learners interviewed, 9 out of 10, 4 in the control group and 5 in the experimental one, were familiar with the concept of metadiscourse. Thus, based on the findings of the interviews, the researched decided to expand the study. They conducted a further study on the same intermediate control and experimental groups. But this time, both experimental and control groups were consciously familiarized with the concept of metadiscourse by the researchers. Then, both the control and experimental groups were given five monologues different from the previous ones. However, the control group received the ones with the metadiscourses excluded. Next, the mean scores of both groups were observed. The following table demonstrates the mean scores of both groups.

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Intermediate	Experimental	30	16.2043	1.94330	.21460
	Control	30	14.0521	1.76486	.20516

An independent t-test was used to see whether such difference in mean scores is significant or not (table 6)

		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
GE	Equal variances assumed	.166	.46	9.064	58	.63	.000	.29837	2.1148	3.2936
	Equal variances not assumed			9.109	57.9	.63	.000	.29689	2.1177	3.2907

As table 7 shows, the difference in mean scores is significant at P<0.001. It means that exclusion of metadiscourse can significantly influence intermediate EFL learners' listening comprehension if they are already familiar with the concept of metadiscourse.

The findings of this study also corroborate those of Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010). As mentioned in the review of literature Datjerdi and Shirzad (2010) found that explicit teaching of discourse markers can improve EFL learners' Writing ability. In this study the researchers found that metadiscourse play an important role in EFL learners' listening comprehension. Both studies highlight the significant role of meta-discourse on the EFL skills such as writing and listening comprehension.

Moreover, Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010) indicated that intermediate EFL learners could improve their writing ability more significantly than those at the elementary and advanced levels when they learned the metadiscourse markers explicitly. In this study, the researchers found that if intermediate EFL learners become consciously aware of the role of meta-discourse makers in their listening comprehension, their performance can improve their listening ability more significantly than when they are not aware of them. Therefore, both studies emphasize the explicit teaching or awareness of metadiscourse-markers can help intermiduate EFL learners to improve not only their writing ability but also their listening comprehension ability.

V. Conclusion

The results of the present study indicate that the effect of meta-discourse on EFL listening comprehension should not be neglected by the teachers. Also, metadicourse can play a more influencing role on listening if the consciousness of the EFL learners' is raised by their teachers, especially at the intermediate level.

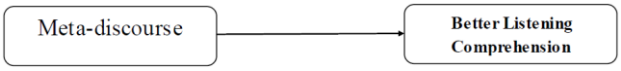

Figure1.The plausible effect of meta-discourse on EFL learners' listening comprehension

Researchers interested in the field of meta-discourse can do more research on the role meta-discourse markers on the other skills and subskills of English Language such as reading comprehension and speaking ability.

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Teaching Listening Comprehension Skills: A Test-orientated Approach

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***Abstract*—Attributed to a "receptive skill" in the communicative process, listening comprehension would be the most arduous task of all four language skills. It is likely that EFL (English as a foreign language) students encounter various predicaments, of e.g. grasping main ideas of the dialogues in contexts, and in turn suffer from learning anxiety. The issue of how to assist the students in improving their listening competency is worth attention. This article is, therefore, intended for illustrating a test-orientated approach to teaching listening comprehension skills to EFL students through an analysis of sample questions about listening comprehension (i.e. Choosing the Right Picture, Short Questions, and Short Conversations) on GEPT tests at the elementary level and through provision of tips (i.e. Skim, Scan, Listen, Guess/Infer, Choose & Write and Check) on how to answer the questions effectively. Implications for teaching listening comprehension are also made at the end of the paper.**

***Index Terms*—General English Proficiency Test (GEPT), listening comprehension, receptive skill, teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), test-orientated approach**

I. Introduction

Among EFL countries, there has been a widespread belief that to elevate levels of English competency of their people is to boost up their competitive edge in the international arena in the 21st century. The reason lies in that English is deemed *linga franca* widely used in every sector of communication, especially, international trade, politics, cultural exchange, science and technology (De Swaan, 1995; Salverda, 2002). Since the initiation of World Wide Web era in 1990, the role of English language has become even more crucial than ever before. There were over 75% English websites worldwide in 1999 alone (Press, 2000) while 95% of the literature collected in SCI (Science Citation Index) was in print in English in 1997 (Garfield, 1998). In this light, the MOE in Taiwan enacts educational policies aiming at developing Taiwanese students in higher education system to become elites with a practical communication capability in English (Su, 2005; 2009a; 2009b). Not only is standardized English competency tests adopted to evaluate the students' English competency, but also the regulation of English graduation threshold is promulgated in myriads of higher education institutions (Su, 2005; 2009b). Among the standardized English competency tests, e.g. GEPT (The General English Proficiency Test)[1], TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS (The International English Language Testing System), JET (Junior English Tests), TOEIC Bridge and Cambridge Main Suite, the GEPT has attracted the most attention. Since the GEPT development project of multiple test levels, i.e. the Elementary, Intermediate, High-intermediate, Advanced and Superior, reached completion in 2002, there have been four million examinees sitting for the tests. More than 300 junior high schools or high schools, hundreds of universities, private enterprises and government agencies in Taiwan recognize GEPT scores (Refer to Note 1). Taking the tests has become an enormous vogue in Taiwan.

Teaching listening comprehension is one of the major tasks in TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) (Ur, 1989). Although listening is a "receptive skill", rather than a "productive skill", in the process of interpreting messages of what people utter (Lindsay & Knight, 2006, p.47), listening comprehension would be the hardest of all the four language skills of i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing, especially, to EFL learners. This situation can be traced to that listeners have to receive the message in a foreign language, de-code it and comprehend it instantly in a meaningful context; thereof, it would not be difficult to imagine that they might encounter a variety of hurdles, for example grasping main ideas of the dialogues in contexts, and therefore suffer from anxiety. Other conceivable

[1] GEPT, a standardized test developed by *The Language Training and Testing Center* under the commission of the Ministry of Education in Taiwan, targets English learners at all levels in Taiwan. This test corresponds to Taiwan's English education framework, meets the specific needs of English learners in Taiwan for self-assessment, and provides institutions or schools with a reference for evaluating the English proficiency levels of their job applicants, employees, or students. The GEPT promotes a balanced English learning process, covering the four language skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking with the goal of improving the general English proficiency level of Taiwanese learners (For more details, please refer to http://www.lttc.ntu.edu.tw/E_LTTC/E_GEPT.htm).

predicaments are (1) hardship to link the words heard to the meanings in time, (2) failure to grasp the meanings of the sentences even when their understanding each word heard in the sentences, (3) mistaking one word for another that carries a similar pronunciation, (4) inability to remember the words, phrases or sentences just heard, (5) incapability to break a long conversation into meaningful units, and (6) failure to integrate every word heard into a meaningful chunk (Goh, 1997).

With those above-mentioned difficulties, one might not doubt that students/listeners have to go through several cognitive reactions (Wenden, 1991) in the listening process when encountering the listening problems. They would stop to search for the meaning of the words heard and try to translate them from L2 to L1. They might also stop to transform the words into pictures (Goh, 1997). Due to the pauses in the listening process, there is a likelihood that they miss, if not largely, part of the content in the conversation and lose tracks of the gist. Therefore, the issue as to how to help students sharpen listening comprehension skills are worthy of study.

This paper aims at exploring into how to teach effective listening comprehension skills by analyzing sample questions on GEPT tests at the elementary level based on three books (Lai, 2003; Liu, 2009; Zhang, 2003) related to General English Proficiency Test listening comprehension tests and by providing tips on how to answer them effectively. Implications for teaching listening comprehension are also made at the end of the paper.

II. Tips on Taking GEPT Listening Comprehension Test

There are five steps suggested to do the GEPT listening comprehension test:

1. **Skim** (through the pictures and sentences)
2. **Scan** (for possible clues and underlie the key words)
3. **Listen** (to, especially, key words or sentences)
4. **Guess/Infer** (the possible answer from the context)
5. **Choose and write** (the correct answer)
6. **Check** (the unanswered questions)

First, test-takers **skim** through the pictures and/or sentences quickly while scanning for and underlie the key words. Second, they **listen** carefully to, especially, key words or sentences. Then, they have to **choose and write** the correct answer. If encountering some doubts and hesitation in choosing the right answers, they still have to answer by **guessing** the possible answer from the context and by linking questions asked to the key words heard. Once finished the tests, they need to **check** for the unanswered questions to make sure that no questions are left unanswered. These five to six steps particularly can be applied to answering questions on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level. The following is the brief introduction to three main parts on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the elementary level, followed by an analysis of common question types in Part I, Part II and Part III on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level along with tips on answering these different types of questions.

III. Analysis of Three Parts on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level

There are three parts on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level: "Choose the Right Picture", "Short Questions", and "Short Conversations".

Part I: Choose the Right Picture

There are 10 questions. Exam takers have to listen to each question along with three English sentences and then choose the matching picture. Exam takers are allowed to listen to each question one time only.

Part II: Short Questions

There are 10 questions all together for this part. Exam takers have to listen to each English sentence and then choose the right answer from three choices of answers. Exam takers are allowed to listen to each question one time only.

Part III: Short Conversations

There are 10 questions all together for this part. Exam takers have to listen to one conversation and a corresponding question before they choose a right answer from three choices of answers. Exam takers are allowed to listen to each conversation and question twice.

According to a synthetic analysis of the questions recurrent in the three books (Lai, 2003; Liu, 2009; Zhang, 2003), several related topics can be summarized, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1:
COMMON QUESTION TYPES IN PART I ON GEPT LISTENING COMPREHENSION TEST AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Related Topics	Example Questions
Price/Amount/Frequency	How much is it? What costs $100? How many…? How often…?
Duration of Time	How long does it take? How long have you studied English?
Activity + Day of the Week	What does a person do on Sunday? When does the man do?
Actions	What is the man doing? What is the man going to do? What has the man done? What did the man do? What can the man do?
Job	Who is the person? What does the person do?
Age	How old is the man?
Weather	How is the weather? What is the weather like? What season is it?
Reason	Why is the man angry?
Identify a person or thing	Which one…?
Place	Where is the supermarket?
Time	What time is it? What day is today?
Feeling	How does the man feel?
Way	How does the man do his job?

A. Tips on Answering Questions in Part I: Choose the Right Picture

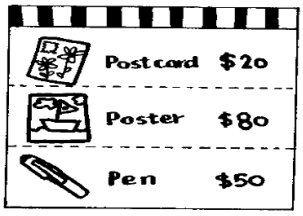
When taking the exams, test takers have to keep alert to the recordings by making good use of senses of, especially, hearing and sight and coordinating them well. Rigy (1980) posits the important role of using senses in listening comprehension activities, echoing the correlation between senses used and memory capacity as indicated by Clark and Starr (1986). While learners are able to memorize 30% of what they try to learn through the sense of sight, the use of senses of both hearing and sight augments their memory capacity by 20%, reaching at 50% (see Table 2).

TABLE 2:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSES USED AND MEMORY CAPACITY

Senses	memory	Senses	memory	Senses	memory
Read	10%	See	30%	Speak	70%
Hear	20%	Hear + See	50%	Speak + Do	90%

Four steps/tips are suggested for answering questions in Part I on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level effectively: "look at" the pictures for possible clues to the answers, "listening to" the clues carefully, "spot" the clues and "choose" the right answer by matching the question and clues found in the pictures provided on the listening comprehension test. Illustrations are provided herein to demonstrate how to apply these four tips, as follows.

Example Question (No.1) in Part I on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level (Zhang, 2003, p. 8)



Question: What costs $80?
A. The post card costs $80.
B. The poster costs $80.

C. The pen costs $80.

Analysis on Question (No.1) in Part I on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level

1. Eyes on the picture for possible clues:

Clues:

(1) what: postcard, poster, pen

(2) price: $20—twenty dollars

$80—eighty dollars

$50—fifty dollars

2. Hear: "What costs $80"

3. See: $80 and poster

4. Choose: (B) by matching the question and the picture clue.

Example Question (No.2) in Part I on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level (Zhang, 2003, p. 57)

Analysis on Question (No. 2) in Part I

1. **Eyes** on the picture for clues:

Question: What are they doing?

A: There are two children playing on the beach.

B: They are playing on the beach.

C: They are very happy.

Two children + **play** + **beach**

Clues:

(1) who: boy, girl, they

(2) where: beach

(3) what: play sand

2. **Hear:** "What/ doing?"

3. **Choose:** the answer (B) by matching the question and the right picture clue.

B. Question Types in Part II: Short Question

There are two question types in Part II:

1. Answering Short Questions

2. Responding to Statements

Examples of these two question types are given herein and an analysis of the example questions is provided as illustrations in the following sections.

a. Tips on Answering Short Questions in Part II on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level

There are common types of short questions that can be found in Part II on GEPT test at the elementary level, e.g. "W" questions, "H" questions, "Yes/No" questions and "Tag" questions, as illustrated in Table 3. The issue as to how to answer these questions depends on the clues containing in each question type. Table 3 indicates common short questions types that normally appear in Part II on GEPT Listening Comprehension Test at the Elementary Level and an analysis of the purposes of the questions. Recurrent questions or sentences are also listed in Table 3 for reference.

TABLE 3:
COMMON SHORT QUESTION TYPES IN PART II ON GEPT LISTENING COMPREHENSION TEST AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Question Types	Purposes of the Questions	Example Questions/Sentences
6 "W" Questions	The purposes of 6 "W" questions are to ask specific information, starting out the questions with a question adverb, for example "what", "who", "where", "when", "why", or "whose"….?	"What is your occupation?" "Who is the boy wearing a hat?" "Where did you do last night?" "When are you going to the movie?" "Whose car is it?"
"H" Question	The purpose is to find out opinions and feelings of other people. "How….?"	"How do you like your trip to Japan?"
Yes/No Question	The purpose is to invite or ask for opinions or ideas.	"Would you like to…?" "May I …?" "Do you think…?" "Do you know…?"
Tag Question	The purposes of tag questions are (1) to state opinions and (2) to seek the agreement of other people.	"This pizza's delicious, **isn't it?** "You like the new teacher, **don't you**?"

b. Different Types of Statements in Part II

There are several types of statements that can be found in part two on GEPT test at the elementary level, as indicated in Table 4.

TABLE 4:
TYPES OF STATEMENT COMMONLY FOUND IN PART TWO ON GEPT TEST AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Statement Types	Example Dialogues
State a problem: This kind of questions is purported to express one's regret and pity.	A: I have a terrible headache. B: I am sorry to hear that./That's too bad.
State your suggestions or proposition	1. A: I think you need a larger size. B: You're right. I've gotten a little fat lately. 2. A: I think you should put on a jacket. B: Come on. It's 23 degree outside. 3. A: Let's order pizza. B: Come on. You know I don't like pizza.
State your wish	A: I hope I didn't call when you were busy. B: Don't worry. I was just watching TV.
State your situation	A: I really can't play tennis very well, but I can play badminton. B: I know what you mean; tennis is very difficult.
State your opinion	A: I think your brother looks just like you. B: Well, I'm a little fatter than he is.
State your compliments: Answer with your appreciation such as "Thank you".	A: That's a beautiful dress! B: Thanks. I got it on sale.
Greeting/Introducing	A: Let me introduce to my sister. B: Nice to meet you. My name is Mary.
Gossiping	1. A: I saw your English teacher in the store this morning. B: I hope she didn't tell you about my last test. 2. A: I heard you were going to study in Canada this coming summer. B: No, actually I want to go to the United States.
State your comparison	A: Those sweaters are a lot cheaper than these. B: Yeah, but these are a lot nicer.

c. Tips on Answering Questions on Part II: Short Questions

Three gimmicks on how to answer short questions, i.e. to skim, scan, listen and choose, are indicated as follows.

1. **Skim** through all three answers quickly.
2. **Scan** to look for clues (e.g. key words, patterns, repeated words).
3. **Listen** to the question carefully and pay attention to the clues in the question.
4. **Choose** an answer according to the clues.

Three example questions from Zhang (2003) are used as examples to demonstrate how to answer the questions effectively based on the four gimmicks.

Example Question (No.1) in Part II (Zhang, 2003, p. 4)

Choose the best answer to the question.

A. Well, after I eat breakfast, I do my homework.

B. I ate breakfast and then did my homework.

C. Sunday will be February 1.

Analysis on Question (No.1) in Part II
1**. Skim** through all the three answers quickly.
2. **Scan** for possible clues.
Clues:
(1) Repeated words: "eat breakfast"
(2) Different words: "do homework"
"did homework"
"will be…."
3. **Hear**: "What ***do*** you do…?"
(1) Activity--homework
(2) Use auxiliary verb "do"
4. **Choose**: "(A) Well, after I eat breakfast, I do my homework."
Example Question (No.2) in Part II (Zhang, 2003, p. 10)
Choose the best answer to the question.
A. No, he didn't.
B. No, he hasn't.
C. No, he isn't.
Analysis on Question (No.2) in Part II
1. **Skim** through all the three answers quickly.
2. **Scan** for possible clues.
Clues:
(1) Repeated words: "No, he"
(2) Different words: "didn't", "hasn't", "isn't"
3. **Hear**: "**Has** your brother decided what he's going to do next year?"
Take note of the clue: "Has"
4. **Choose**: "(B) No, he hasn't."
Example Question (No.3) in Part II (Zhang, 2003, p. 10)
Choose the best response to the statement.
A. Nice to meet you. My name is Sarah.
B. No, I don't have a sister.
C. I have two sisters, actually.
Analysis on Question (No.3) in Part II
1. **Skim** through all the three answers quickly.
2. **Scan** for possible clues.
Clues:
(1) repeated words: "have", "sister".
(2) different words: (A) introduce oneself.
(B) and (C) talk about "sister".
3. **Hear**: "Let me introduce…"
This question belongs to greeting/ introducing statement.
Introduce one person to another.
4. **Choose**: "(A) Nice to meet you. My name is Sarah."

C. Tips on Answering Questions on Part III: Short Conversation

Tips:
1. **Skim** all the answers provided quickly.
2. **Scan** to see if there is any pattern based on key word/words.
3. **Guess/infer** the question from the answers.
4. **Listen** to the question carefully.
5. **Focus on** the key sentences with the key word/words in them.
6. **Find and choose** the right answers according to the questions.
Example Question (No.1) in Part III (Zhang, 2003, p. 11)
Choose the best answer to the question according to the conversation.
A. She stayed inside today.
B. She has been outside today.
C. She likes cold weather.
Analysis on Question (No.1) in Part III
1. Skim all the answers provided.
2. Scan the answer options to see if there is any particular sentence pattern or key word/words.
Answer options:
A) stayed inside

B) has been outside
C) likes cold weather
3. **Guess/Infer** the question from the answers.
4. **Hear** the question: "Which statement is true about the woman?"
5. **Focus on** the key sentence: "You've been inside all morning."
6. **Find and choose** "(B) She has been outside today."

IV. Conclusion and Implications

In an EFL listening comprehension classroom, it is imperative that teachers provide their students with authentic materials (Breen, 1985; Lindsay & Knight, 2006; Taylor, 1994) as much as possible. Teaching materials adopted should be related to learners' background knowledge, interest and curiosity as evidences (MacDonald, Bager, & White, 2000) show a positive correlation between learner authenticity and students' learning achievement. Authentic social situations based on the content of listening materials used in the classroom should be re-emerged where students can transform simulated communication into authentic communication and further apply the simulated practice into real world communication. According to MacDonald et al. (2000), the more the listening material is related to students' experience and background knowledge and allows the students to interact with it, the better they understand and learn.

Designing step by step listening activities through pre-listening, listening and post-listening tasks (refer to Lindsay & Knight, 2006) help learners meet classroom authenticity, reach learner authenticity, and motivate them to communicate with the texts and other learners in the classroom. In doing so, learning and teaching goals and purposes can be reached and, in turn, students' listening comprehension proficiency can be enhanced. In addition, as a saying goes, "Practice makes perfect", students' devoting themselves to practicing doing listening comprehension tests as much as possible pays off.

Equally crucial for learners is to acknowledge their own listening difficulties or weaknesses and learn from the mistakes. It is, more often than not, lexical and syntactic problems are detrimental to their listening comprehension (Wenden, 199), for example learners' limited vocabulary and lack of understanding of discourse genres contributing to listening difficulties (Goh, 1997). Learners' inefficient memory and unfamiliarity with intonation, stress, special accents, idioms and slang of a foreign language (Wenden, 1991) also act as hampers to their listening comprehension. Speedy speeches add to the gravity of the listening comprehension impediments. Personal traits, for instance sluggishness, timidity and reserve, as opposed to activity, liveliness and vivacity, harmfully impact students' achievement in listening comprehension (Wenden, 1991). Physical hindrances also pose as negative effects. Listeners in an emotional status, for example stress, nervousness or anxiety, are inclined to be disadvantageous in listening comprehension; likewise, people who suffer from physical problems like fatigue or illness are likely to be in a similarly negative situation.

On the part of teachers, providing students with gimmicks (i.e. Skim, Scan, Listen, Guess/Infer, Choose & Write and Check) on how to answer questions effectively enhances students' achievement in taking listening comprehension tests. More importantly, students have to engage themselves in an active, rather than passive, persistent, rather than impatient, and long-term commitment to learning English as a foreign language as "Rome is not built in one day".

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Investigating Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety within the EFL Learner's Interlanguage System: The Case of Iranian Learners

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Abstract—**The present study is an attempt to investigate the status of the EFL learner's interlanguage system as dealt with foreign language (FL) speaking anxiety in the classroom. The objective of the study is first to specifically determine the extent to which Iranian EFL learners attribute their FL speaking anxiety to the constituents of their interlanguage system and second to indicate the related gender and level-based differences among the participants. To this end, the researcher divided the general notion of interlanguage system into its three main researchable constituents: interlanguage phonology, interlanguage grammar, and 'interlanguage meaning system' and then attempted to design a self-reporting questionnaire with a five Likert-type scale mainly on the basis of FLCAS developed by Horwitz, et. al. (1986). After analyzing the results, the findings indicated that the participants were more likely to attribute their most FL speaking anxiety experienced in the classroom to their interlanguage meaning system as compare with the other two subsets of their interlanguage system. In terms of the gender differences, the results suggested that the female participants were found to be more prone to experiencing FL speaking anxiety within the framework of their interlanguage system. With respect to level differences, the results demonstrated that gaining more FL knowledge may not necessarily lead to a substantial reduction in experiencing FL speaking anxiety, since more proficient participants were more subject to the anxiety-provoking factors within their interlanguage system than less proficient participants.**

Index Terms— **FL speaking anxiety, Interlanguage system, EFL learners**

I. Introduction

The ever-growing need for good communication skills in English language has created a huge worldwide demand for achieving a good command of English among its non-native speakers (NNSs) around the globe. And one of the indispensable and crucial aspects of learning English for NNSs in this respect has been to develop a good speaking ability. In fact, since leaning to speak a second or foreign language can usher in an era of change and innovation in any individual's life, NNSs probably tend to perceive their speaking ability as an important criterion for their success. Thus, they may attempt to pursue it more seriously rather than other aspects of foreign language learning. However, learning a second or foreign language is prone to be susceptible to some affective variables. One of these affective variables is *Foreign Language Anxiety* which, as Worde (1998) discusses, more than half of foreign language learners experience some kinds of it in their language classrooms.

To date, foreign language (FL) anxiety among NNSs has been investigated to a relatively great extent. Research of this kind includes some studies which have aimed at exploring FL anxiety from learners' perspective such as Casado and Dereshiswsky (2004), Granschow et al.(1994), Marwan (2007), Seller (2000), Young (1990) to name but a few. In the realm of FL anxiety studies, they have mainly intended to probe and estimate the FL anxiety factors in relation to the macro-skills included in the broad notion of learner *language proficiency*. Moreover, FL anxiety has also been viewed from other perspectives, for example, from teachers' perspective (e.g. Aydin, 1999; Jackson, 2001; Kota, 2005; Young, 1992). Nevertheless, to the best of the author's knowledge, even though the learner's *interlanguage system* is constantly in a state of flux, no research study has been conducted to explore particularly the state of foreign language anxiety from within the learner's interlanguage system. In effect, seemingly, the language anxiety studies conducted so far seem to have mainly delved into the phenomenon of FL anxiety with regard to evaluation of its effects on the learner language proficiency. That is, they have viewed and investigated this issue from the outer circle of the EFL learner's interlanguage system while neglecting the other underlying potential instigators that might bring about anxiety from within this transitional system.

In other words, seemingly the skills constituting the external construct of learner language proficiency are derived from their gradually developed underlying interim segments embedded in the learner's interlanguage system; therefore, both the inner and outer circle of the EFL learner's interlanguage system require to be investigated in a parallel manner, since these two circles seem to be interrelated and thus they both might account for the emergence of FL anxiety in EFL learners. In this case, perhaps there is a need to carry out some studies aimed at investigating the constituents of this

interim system from within to enable researchers to view FL anxiety from a vantage point. In this sense, any finding manifesting the extent (if any) to which this system is hindered by the negative beliefs learners come to hold about their learning in the class may assist language teachers in identifying the anxiety-provoking factors within the learners' interlanguage system in order to facilitate the development of their interlanguage systems. In light of such a rationale, this study focuses on FL speaking anxiety as one of the affective variables influencing the learner's interlanguage system in an endeavor to take a preliminary step towards approaching FL anxiety from within the framework of this system. In this way, it might put forward some pedagogical implications for EFL teachers which may initiate some changes in their professional teaching methodologies and practices and consequently, provide their learners with more efficient feedback due to their awareness of the status of their learners' interlanguage system while dealing with FL speaking anxiety in the classroom.

II. Theoretical Background

A. Defining the Concept of Interlanguage

Interlanguage theory, proposed by Selinker (1972), concerns with the question of systematicity and variability in the performance of language learners, the question of how the emerging system develops and the role of transfer from the first language in this process. As argued by Selinker,

The interlanguage, a separate linguistic system resulting from the learner's attempted production of the target language norm, is the product of five central cognitive processes involved in second language learning: (1) language transfer: some items (2) Transfer of training. (3) Strategies of second language learning. (4) Strategies of second language communication. (5) Overgeneralization of the target language linguistic materials (cited in McLaughlin, 1987, p. 61).

As discussed by Brown (2000), interlanguage refers to the "separateness of a second language learner's system, a system that has a structurally intermediate status between the native and target languages. This is neither the system of the native language nor the system of the target language, but a system based up on both languages" (pp. 215-216). Nonetheless, this language, like any other natural language, is systematically variable (Tarone, 1983) and thus can be influenced by both cognitive and affective variables. Furthermore, as Ellis (1997) discusses, the learner's interlanguage system can be studied from its various interconnected aspects, for example, from its social aspects, discourse aspects, and psycholinguistic aspects. However, the focus of the present study is on the investigation of the EFL learner's interlanguage system from a linguistic aspect.

B. Defining Language Anxiety

In general, Spielberger (1983) defines anxiety as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with the arousal of the nervous system. However, in attempting to define *language anxiety*, Scovel (1978) argues that it should be born in mind that even though we all know what language anxiety is and we all have experienced feelings of anxiousness, anxiety is still not easy to define in a simple sentence. "It is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self -doubt, apprehension, or worry" (as cited in Brown, 2000, p. 151). To put it in another word, anxiety can be generally associated with "threats to self-efficacy and appraisals of situations as threatening" (Pappamihiel, 2002, p. 331). In addition, Gregersen (2005) argues that learners who feel anxious in their foreign language learning may find their study less enjoyable. In case of the conducted studies on foreign language anxiety (e.g., Aida, 1994; Macintyre, et. al., 1997), a review of the literature has shown that foreign language anxiety is negatively related to foreign language learning. However, in the light of the studies directed at examining the correlation between anxiety and language learning thus far, the overall findings are fairly inconsistent and contradictory. For example, Young (1991) reviews sixteen studies investigating the relationship between anxiety and language learning and demonstrates inconsistent results both within and across these studies. Accordingly, as Young maintains "research in the area of anxiety as it relates to second or foreign language learning and performance is scattered and inconclusive" (p. 426).

C. Factors Contributing to FL Anxiety

The components of foreign language anxiety have been identified (Horwitz, et. al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) to narrow down this concept into researchable issues: (1) communication apprehension or anxiety. (2) Fear of negative evaluation. (3) Test anxiety. The consolidation of these factors thus leads to the creation of anxiety in language learners. Communication apprehension generally refers to a type of anxiety experienced in interpersonal communicative settings (McCroskey, 1987) which is obviously relevant to second/foreign language learning contexts. In language classrooms where learners have little control of the communicative situation, and their performance is constantly monitored by both their teacher and peers (Horwitz, et. al., 1986), communication apprehension seems to be augmented in relation to the learners' negative self-perceptions caused by the inability to understand others and make themselves understood (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). In other words, communication apprehension is a type of shyness characterized by fear of and anxiety about communicating with people. Difficulty in speaking in public, in listening or learning a spoken message is the manifestation of communicative apprehension. Communication

apprehension in foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge that one will almost have difficulty understanding others and making oneself understood (Cubukcu, 2007).

Regarding the fear of negative evaluation, as Young (1991) argues, "students are more concerned about how (i.e., when, what, where, or how often) their mistakes are corrected rather than whether error correction should be administered in class" (p. 429). In this sense, it seems that teachers' beliefs about language teaching may act as some obstacles for L2 learners and thus create language anxiety in them because the assumptions of teachers as to their role in the language classroom may not always correspond to the individual needs or expectations that L2 learners would consider for their teachers.

Test anxiety refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure. Test anxious students often put unrealistic demands on themselves. Test anxiety is likewise believed to be one of the most important aspects of negative motivation. It can be defined as "unpleasant feeling or emotional state that has physiological and behavioral concomitants and that is experienced in formal testing or other evaluative situations" (Dusek 1980, p. 88).With regard to test anxiety, many of the learners feel more pressure when asked to perform in a foreign/second language, because they are certainly challenged by the fact that they need to recall and coordinate many grammar points at the same time during the limited test period. As a result, they may put down the wrong answer or simply freeze up due to nervousness, even if they know the correct answer (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Price, 1991).

Moreover, some scholars have endeavored to investigate the types of learning activities in terms of FL anxiety; for example, Horwitz (2001) argues that language learners feel more comfortable in pair work and personalized activities, but this is a relative concept; some activities judged as comfortable by some are also regarded as stressful by others. It is also worth mentioning that, some researchers have attributed other factors to foreign language anxiety. For example, Cubukcu (2007) identifies the main sources of anxiety in the following: "(a) presenting before the class, (b) making mistakes, (c) losing face, (d) inability to express oneself, (e) fear of failure, (f) teachers, and (g) fear of living up to the standards" (p. 133). According to Cubukcu, teachers should consider the possibility that anxiety accounts for the student behaviors before associating poor student performance with the lack of ability, inadequate background or poor motivation.

D. Effect of FL Anxiety on Learners

Over the past decades, the general impacts of FL anxiety on learners have produced conflicting results. Many educators and researchers have suggested that FL anxiety can have negative effects on learners' speaking ability. For example, Onwuegbuzie, et. al. (1999) argue that the existence of foreign language anxiety can affect negatively the fluency of learners' speech and learning in a general sense. Likewise, Na (2007), and Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) have explored FL anxiety among different EFL learners and have maintained that FL anxiety can generally impact negatively on learners' performance. In this sense, Levine (2003) reports that students who come from monolingual backgrounds also tend to feel more anxious than students who come from bi-or multilingual backgrounds. Also, Goshi (2005) suggests that students with negative beliefs about their learning English feel more foreign language anxiety.

In contrast, some other researchers have assumed a positive role for language anxiety in terms of foreign language learning (see for example, Alpert & Haber, 1960; Chastain, 1975; Kleinmann, 1977). In this sense, Bailey (1983) suggests the benefit of anxiety in language learning. Bailey studied students' diaries to analyze their competitiveness and anxiety during a language class. The students' comments centered on four major themes: (1) their reaction to the class, (2) their preference for a democratic class, (3) their need to succeed and to receive positive reinforcement, and (4) their competitiveness. In general, their anxiety grew out of their apprehension of having to communicate, their concern about tests, and their fear of negative evaluation. In the end, the study explained the positive effects of competitiveness by means of the formation of facilitative anxiety in learners.

E. Effect of FL Anxiety on Productive Skills (Speaking & Writing)

Several investigators (e.g. Aida, 1994; Chang, 1996) have examined the effects of FL anxiety on the oral performance in the classroom. To elaborate more on these studies, two of them are particularly discussed here. Ganschow et al. (1994) did a study exploring differences in foreign language anxiety and native oral and written language skills among college students. The results of the study revealed that students significantly differ in their English oral and written achievements in terms of the amount of FL anxiety they suffer from. In another study, Young (1990) investigated the students' perspective on anxiety and speaking. To this end, a questionnaire was designed to identify sources of anxiety over speaking in FL and then was administered to 135 university level Spanish students and 109 high school students. Results of the data analysis indicated that speaking in FL was not exclusively the source of student anxiety, but that speaking in front of the class was. (cited in Chang-Cheng, 2005).On the other hand, some investigators have studied writing apprehension and its effect on students' performance in FL courses (e.g. Cheng, 2002; Cheng, et. al., 1999; Daly & Wilson, 1983).For example, Saito and Samimy (1996) examined the relationship between anxiety and the study of Japanese and noted that attitude and motivation, along with anxiety, were crucial factors affecting student performance over time.

F. Effect of FL Anxiety on Receptive Skills (Reading & Listening)

Sellers (2000) devoted an outstanding study to examining the relationship between language anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign language. The issues addressed were: (1) the effects language anxiety on the reading comprehension and recall of university level language student (2) the effects of language anxiety on the reading process itself. The results revealed that anxiety does affect the reader's concentration on a reading task and on the comprehension of the passage. On the contrary, Matsuda and Gobel (2001) investigated the possible link between foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) and foreign language reading anxiety (FLRA) among Japanese university students and reported the results that contradicted the above-mentioned results, that is, they found that FLCA and FLRA are clearly independent constructs. Likewise, Sadighi, et. al. (2009) examined the relationship between listening comprehension (LC) and FLCA among Iranian university students and found that there was no relation between LC and FLCA.

On the other hand, several researchers have also aimed at studying anxiety and its relationship to listening comprehension (e.g. Bacon, 1989; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Gardner, et. al., 1987; Lund, 1991). The corollary of these studies have manifested that anxiety impedes listening comprehension. For example, Elkhafaifi (2005) examined the relationship between listening FL anxiety and listening comprehension in Arabic language classrooms and came up with the similar results being consonant with the above-mentioned results, that is, listening anxiety like other language skills also correlates negatively with listening achievement.

III. Methodology

A. Questions

The present study seeks to find the answers to the following research questions:

1. To what extent do Iranian EFL learners attribute their FL speaking anxiety to the three constituents of their interlanguage system (i.e. phonology, grammar, & meaning)?
2. Which of the three constituents of Iranian EFL learners' interlanguage system is more subject to FL speaking anxiety arousals?
3. Are there any significant differences in the degree of FL speaking anxiety between the learners' gender?
4. Are there any significant differences in the degree of FL speaking anxiety between the learners' course levels (i.e. Lower Intermediate & Upper Intermediate)?

B. Participants

The participants involved in the present study comprised 74 Iranian EFL learners studying English at two affiliated branches of an English language institute in Mashhad. The subjects were selected through a convenience sampling including 31 males and 43 females. The age of the learners ranged from 14 to 23 with the mean of 17.5 years. One half of the learners were learning English at Lower Intermediate level and the other half of the learners were learning English at Upper Intermediate level. The criterion of the aforementioned English language institute for placement of the EFL learners was based on *ACTFL Oral proficiency Interview (OPI)* following the *ACTFL Proficiency Guide Lines* (Novice Low, Novice Mid, Novice High, Intermediate Low, Intermediate Mid, Intermediate High, Advance Low, Advance Mid, Advanced High, and Superior).

In addition, not only the population of the study needed to be identified, but also the intended features of sub-groups within the population (i.e. gender & course level) needed to be precisely determined in the present study. To do so, the stratified random sample was employed to select the participants; therefore, the early population sample included 106 learners. But in order to consider the homogeneity of the sample of the study, it was decided to calculate the mean of the learners' exam scores obtained during their three pervious semesters and then the learners with the average scores of one standard deviation above or below the mean of total scores were only allowed to incorporate into the final sample. Hence, the size of the sample reduced to 74 subjects and consequently, 32 learners (nearly 30%) were excluded from the early population sample. Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that the two affiliated branches of the English language institutes in question were quite similar in terms of the educational system, course books, and even their teacher staff and the only visible difference was the location of these two branches.

C. Instrument

The most well-known instrument for measuring FL classroom anxiety has been *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)* during the last decades due to its high validity and reliability. However, since oral performance is underscored in this study, the researcher attempted to modify some of the items included in FLCAS (Horwitz, et. al., 1986). To this end, first the researcher divided the general notion of interlanguage system into its three main researchable subsets: *interlanguage phonology*, *interlanguage grammar*, and *'interlanguage meaning system'* . In this way, it was felt possible to investigate the impacts of FL speaking anxiety on the above constituents of the learner's interlanguage system. Furthermore, it should be noted that the defined 'interlanguage meaning system' in the study refers to the learner's semantic, lexical and discoursal knowledge of the target language. Second, the researcher attempted to develop a self-reporting questionnaire mainly on the basis of the FLCAS due to its well-established validity and reliability. So, some items in the inventory of the FLCAS were totally deleted or were modified to meet the needs of the study and to enhance the suitability of the item construction (See Appendix A).

In addition, to make sure that the participants had no problem in understanding the questionnaire, the developed self-reporting questionnaire was then translated from English version into Persian version (See Appendix B). In order to avoid the translation task from having any biased impact on the results of the questionnaire and also to consider more cautiously the cross-culturally ethnocentric problems in this affectivity test, the procedure of back translation was used to validate the Persian questionnaire. Therefore, three English language teachers translated the original questionnaire into Persian and three others back translated the Persian questionnaire into English. An expert on translation was then asked to validate the translated English version. He approved of the similarity between the two versions. In this way, the validity of the translated version was endorsed.

The designed questionnaire consisted of 18 items measuring FL speaking anxiety within the frame of EFL learners' interlanguage phonology, interlanguage grammar, and 'interlanguage meaning system'. The items are illustrated below:

*****Items measuring FL speaking anxiety in terms of the EFL learner's interlanguage phonology: 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16.

*****Items measuring FL speaking anxiety in terms of the EFL learner's interlanguage grammar: 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17.

*****Items measuring FL speaking anxiety in terms of the EFL learner's 'interlanguage meaning system': 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18.

D. Procedure

To assess the internal consistency reliability of the items included in the translated questionnaire, a pilot test was administered among 17 subjects randomly selected from the whole population in question. The results showed the internal consistency reliability, achieving an alpha coefficient of .82 in the pilot run. And, since George and Mallery (2003) suggest that items can be claimed to have a high degree of reliability if they achieve a score of .80 or higher in the reliability statistics; therefore, the items in the designed questionnaire indicated a relatively high degree of internal consistency as the alpha value was greater than .80. After the pilot test, the ambiguities and misunderstanding of items were recognized and some of the items bearing extreme scores were revised to assure a higher reliability. In addition, a few changes were also made in the introductory instruction of the questionnaire to increase the reliability of questionnaire. To collect the necessary data, the questionnaire was distributed among the participants in question while adequate time was given to them to complete it.

IV. Results

To answer the research questions, the data were collected and analyzed quantitatively using SPSS. Firstly, to estimate the extent to which Iranian EFL learners attribute their FL speaking anxiety to the three constituents of their interlanguage systems under investigation, the average mean scores of participants' responses to the questionnaire items were calculated out of the possible maximum mean score of 30. Furthermore, it should be noted that when the statements of the designed questionnaire were negatively worded, responses were reversed and then were computed. In this way, a high score in all likelihood represented high anxiety. The achieved results are illustrated below:

TABLE1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PARTICIPANTS' SCORES

	N0. of items	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Interlanguage phonology	6	8	18	13.8	3.8
Interlanguage grammar	6	13	23	20.4	2..5
'Interlanguage meaning system'	6	17	27	24.7	3.4

As shown in Table 1, the participants reported the overall mean score of 13.8 for items measuring FL speaking anxiety related to their interlanguage phonology with a standard deviation of 3.8, the overall mean score of 20.4 for items measuring FL speaking anxiety related to their interlanguage grammar with a lower standard deviation of 2.5, and the overall mean score of 24.7 for items measuring FL speaking anxiety related to their interlanguage meaning system with a standard deviation of 3.4. To display more specifically the obtained results for the questionnaire items, they are illustrated in the following:

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS BASED ON THE PARTICIPANTS' SCORES

	N0. of items	Mean	SD
Interlanguage phonology	1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16	2.3	.63
Interlanguage grammar	2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17	3.4	.41
'Interlanguage meaning system'	3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18	4.1	.57

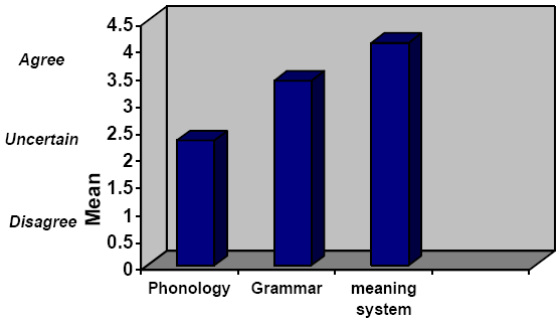

Figure1. Comparison of the anxiety factors within the participants' interlanguage system

As can be seen in Figure 1, it appears that the degrees of FL speaking anxiety that the participants indicated for the categorized constituents of their interlanguage system in the questionnaire items varied significantly. More particularly, on the one hand, in terms of interlanguage phonology, the relevant questionnaire items did not evoke a relatively high degree of FL speaking anxiety, since the participants reported a rather small amount of FL speaking anxiety for their interlanguage phonology (M = 2.3) as compared with the other two related categories in the questionnaire. Therefore, seemingly, the participants are not very anxious about their L2 pronunciation or accent while speaking a foreign language in the classroom. On the other hand, the participants reported statistically substantial amounts of FL speaking anxiety for their interlanguage grammar and meaning system (i.e. M = 3.4 & M = 4.1, respectively) suggesting that the participants may suffer more FL speaking anxiety from these two constituents of their interlanguage system.

In addition, the status of the participants' interlanguage system as dealt with FL speaking anxiety is presented based on different course levels and genders in the following figures respectively:

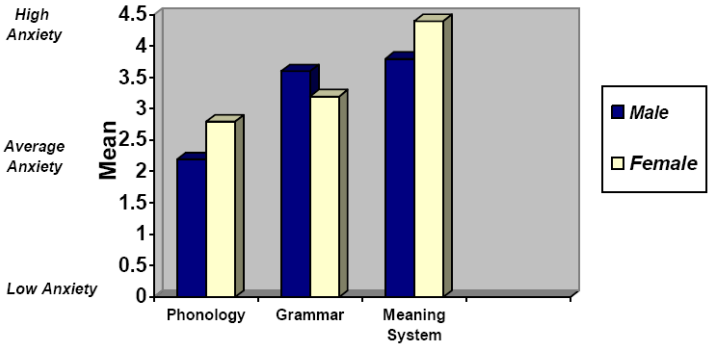

Figure 2. Comparing gender-based differences in the overall means of FL speaking anxiety among the participants

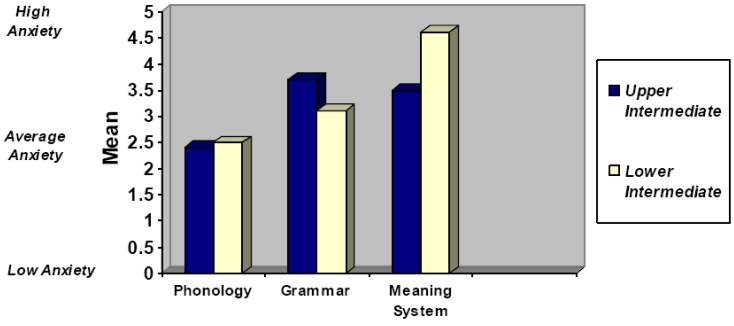

Figure 3. Comparing level-based differences in the overall means of FL speaking anxiety across the two groups

As can be observed in Figure 2, regarding the gender-related differences, the participants did not report mutual amounts of FL speaking anxiety for the categories in question. In fact, the findings suggested that the female participants might experience relatively greater amount of FL speaking anxiety for the items related to interlanguage phonology and meaning system (i.e. M = 2.8 & M = 4.4, respectively) as compared with the male ones. Moreover, it should be mentioned that the male participants experienced relatively more FL speaking anxiety with respect to their interlanguage grammar (M = 3.6) in comparison with female ones (M= 3.2).

Further, according to Figure 3, it seems that the participants almost experience similar amount of FL speaking anxiety in the classroom in terms of their interlanguage phonology across the two levels, namely Upper Intermediate and Lower Intermediate. In contrast to this similarity, the participants across the levels indicated statistically varying amounts of FL speaking anxiety for their interlanguage grammar and meaning system. In effect, the results showed that the Lower Intermediate learners were found to significantly exceed the Upper intermediate learners with regard to the

reported amount of FL speaking anxiety for their interlanguage meaning system, whereas the Upper Intermediate learners were found to exceed the Lower Intermediate learners in terms of the reported amount of FL speaking anxiety for their interlanguage grammar system.

V. Discussion

To address the first two research questions, the overall findings of the study suggested that the Iranian EFL learners under study are likely to attribute their most FL speaking anxiety in the classroom to their interlanguage meaning system while they may attribute their FL speaking anxiety in the classroom more to their interlanguage grammar rather than to their interlanguage phonology. In fact, among the three constituents of the Iranian EFL learners' interlanguage system, their interlanguage meaning system might be considered as the most potential instigator for their FL speaking anxiety in the classroom. In a nutshell, it is safe to mention that since the Iranian EFL learners under study tend to experience a rather small degree of FL speaking anxiety for their interlanguage phonology in comparison with the other two categories in the study, they are perhaps more concerned about conveying their meanings to their interlocutors than being concerned about their pronunciation while speaking English in the classroom. One possible reason for such phenomenon traces back in part to the phonological similarities existing between Persian and English language. In other words, seemingly, Iranian EFL learners are able to learn to reduce their phonological variations from the target language phonology. One possible explanation is that the phonological forms are learned better due to their transfer from the learners' L1. That is, turning a non-native or non-standard English pronunciation into a native-like or standard one is generally within the Persian speaking EFL learner's capabilities and if some of the learners fail to do so, it is perhaps not due to phonological anxiety factors.

Furthermore, with regard to the third research question, the corollaries of the study also showed that the female participants might suffer from relatively greater amount of FL speaking anxiety with respect to their interlanguage phonology and meaning system as compared with the male ones. Nevertheless, the female participants were found to experience relatively less FL speaking anxiety with respect to their interlanguage grammar than the male ones.

Finally, with respect to the last research question, the results of the study demonstrated that the Upper Intermediate EFL learners seem to perceive more FL speaking anxiety with respect to their interlanguage grammar and meaning system as compared with the Lower Intermediate learners. Therefore, the results corroborated the findings of the pervious language anxiety studies, for example, the study of Sito and Samimy (1996) in which they suggest that the influence of foreign language anxiety becomes more important as the instructional levels of learners increase. In the light of such findings, one possible explanation is that more proficient learners have developed a significantly broader range of English knowledge and as a result, they have become acquainted with so many grammatical structures, vocabulary items, and other language forms. Hence, they are perhaps more susceptible to FL speaking anxiety-provoking factors than less proficient learners on account of having access to more complex FL knowledge. In sum, the findings suggest that gaining more FL knowledge may not necessarily guarantee against FL speaking anxiety in the classroom.

VI. Conclusion

In the present study, it was suggested that investigating the effects of FL anxiety only on the surface of the language skills does not suffice and the underlying elements of these skills need to be scrutinized within the framework of the interlanguage system as well. Thus, the study might have some pedagogical implications for EFL teachers, especially for Iranian teachers. According to the findings, perhaps one of the implications of the study is that Iranian EFL teachers need to indicate and show verbally or non-verbally that they understand what their learners mean while they are attempting to convey their meanings in the classroom. In this way, teachers can develop rapport with their learners and may help them to alleviate their FL speaking anxiety, since the learners' interlanguage meaning system is considerably subject to FL speaking anxiety notwithstanding the course levels. Likewise, concerning the gender-related differences, the findings suggest that Iranian teachers bear in mind that female learners are more likely to experience FL speaking anxiety than male learners; therefore, teachers are suggested to support them more with positive feedbacks and avoid employing direct negative feedbacks while they are speaking in the classroom.

However, like all other studies, the current study is not certainly without any limitations. One of the limitations is that the small sample size restricts the generalization of findings of the study. Thus, there is an essential need for future research to cross-validate findings from the present study to a different and larger sample. Another limitation of the study is that it does not specifically address FL speaking anxiety in terms of the related social and pragmatic aspects of the learner's interlanguage system which may also account for some of the learners' FL speaking anxiety in the classroom. Thus, it is suggested that some future studies be planned to investigate the pragmatic aspects of the learner's interlanguage system as dealt with FL speaking anxiety in the classroom across the various cultures.

Appendix A English Version of the Designed Questionnaire

Statements (1) through (18) describe how you feel about speaking English. Please read the statements carefully and give your first reaction by choosing an answer for each statement: (1) strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree (4) Agree, or (5) Strongly Agree.

Personal information:

Gender: Male Female

Age: ……

_____

1) I never feel quite sure of myself when I am pronouncing English words in my language class.
1 2 3 4 5
2) I am usually at ease when using grammar in my speaking in my language class.
1 2 3 4 5
3) I get tense and confused when the teacher does not understand what I mean in English.
1 2 3 4 5
4) I keep thinking that the other students have better English accents than I do.
1 2 3 4 5
5) In my language class, it bothers me when I can not speak English very much because of my grammar.
1 2 3 4 5
6) I start to panic when I am not sure of saying something that makes sense in English.
1 2 3 4 5
7) I never feel embarrassed when other students are hearing my English accent in my language class.
1 2 3 4 5
8) I would be worried failing to use correct grammar in my speaking in my language class.
1 2 3 4 5
9) I can feel my heart pounding when the teacher asks me the question; "what do you mean?"
1 2 3 4 5
10) The more I try to speak English fluently in the class, the more disappointed I get.
1 2 3 4 5
11) I wonder why some people feel very self-conscious when teacher corrects their grammatical mistakes.
1 2 3 4 5
12) While speaking in my language class, I feel intimidated when I translate word by word the expressions from my native language into English language.
1 2 3 4 5
13) It bothers me when I can not speak English with a good accent in my language class
1 2 3 4 5
14) When I want to use correct grammar to speak English in the class, I get so nervous that I forget what to say.
1 2 3 4 5
15) In my language class, I feel pressured when I use English sentences not heard before.
1 2 3 4 5
16) I always feel that the other students will laugh at my accent as I speak English in class.
1 2 3 4 5
17) It frightens me when I can not speak English without any grammatical mistakes in the class.
1 2 3 4 5
18) I do not feel afraid when the teacher does not understand what I mean in English.
1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX B PERSIAN VERSION OF THE DESIGNED QUESTIONNAIRE

جملات و عبارات زیر (18-1) حالت و احساس شما را هنگام انگلیسی صحبت کردن در سر کلاس توصیف می کند. لطفاً عبارات زیر را به دقت خوانده و اولین جوابی که به ذهنتان می رسد را انتخاب کنید.

توجه: در این پرسشنامه نیازی به نوشتن اسم و مشخصات فردی افراد نیست و جواب های شما نیز هیچ گونه تاثیری در نمره ی کلاسی یا امتحانی شما ندارد.

لطفاً نوع جنسیت خود را مشخص کنید: مرد زن سطح کلاس:.....

ردیف	جملات	کـــاملا موافقم	موافقم	نظـــری ندارم	مخالفم	کـــاملا مخالفم
1	هنگامی که کلمات انگلیسی را سر کلاس زبان تلفظ می کنم هیچ وقت خیلی به خودم مطمئن نیستم					
2	وقتی سر کلاس زبان ازگرامر انگلیسی در صحبت کردن خود استفاده می کنم احساس نگرانی نمی کنم.					
3	وقتی که سر کلاس زبان معلم منظور من را به انگلیسی نمی فهمد احساس نگرانی می کنم.					
4	سرکلاس زبان مدام فکر می کنم بقیه بچه های کلاس لهجه انگلیسی بهتری نسبت به من دارند.					
5	فکر اینکه سر کلاس زبان، انگلیسی را نمی توانم به خاطر وضعیت گرامر زیاد صحبت کنم آزارم می دهد.					
6	وقتی سر کلاس زبان مطمئن نیستم چیزی را که می خواهم بگویم در انگلیسی معنی می دهد یا نه ، احساس نگرانی می کنم.					
7	.وقتی سرکلاس زبان بچه ها لهجه انگلیسی من را می شوند اصلا خجالت نمی کشم.					
8	وقتی نمی توانم گرامر انگلیسی را درست هنگام صحبت کردن سرکلاس زبان رعایت کنم، احساس نگرانی می کنم.					
9	وقتی سرکلاس زبان، معلم به انگلیسی از من می پرسد (منظورت چیست) ؟ احساس میکنم قلبم تند تند می زند.					
10	هر چه بیشتر تلاش می کنم تا انگلیسی را روان تر سرکلاس زبان صحبت کنم ، بیشتر احساس نا امیدی می کنم.					
11	تعجب می کنم چرا بعضی از بچه ها وقتی معلم سرکلاس زبان اشتباهات گرامری آنها را تصحیح می کند ، خیلی خجالت می کشند.					
12	وقتی سر کلاس انگلیسی صحبت می کنم و عبارتی را از زبان مادری خود به انگلیسی کلمه به کلمه ترجمه می کنم ، احساس نگرانی می کنم.					
13	فکر انگلیسی صحبت کردن با لهجه بسیار خوب سرکلاس زبان آزارم می دهد.					
14	هنگامی که از گرامر انگلیسی در صحبت کردن خود استفاده کنم به قدری مضطرب می شوم که فراموش می کنم می خواهم چه بگویم.					
15	وقتی سر کلاس زبان از اصطلاحات و عبارات انگلیسی استفاده می کنم که قبل آنها نشنیده ام احساس دلواپسی و نگرانی می کنم.					
16	همیشه سرکلاس زبان، فکر میکنم وقتی انگلیسی صحبت می کنم بقیه بچه ها کلاس به لهجه ی من می خندند.					
17	وقتی سرکلاس زبان، انگلیسی را با گرامر غلط صحبت می کنم احساس ترس می کنم.					
18	وقتی معلم سر کلاس زبان منظور من را به انگلیسی نمی فهمد احساس نگرانی و آشفتگی نمی کنم.					

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A Survey of Attitudes toward Mediation among Chinese High School EFL Teachers and Their Classroom Constraints

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***Abstract*—This paper raises concerns about Chinese high school EFL teachers' attitudes toward mediation and their classroom constraints. From the data gathered in the survey of 152 EFL teachers, the findings indicate that most teachers fail to mediate students' learning due to situational constraints that they encounter though they hold positive attitudes toward mediation. Statistically, teachers with higher educational qualifications have more positive attitudes toward the mediator role than those with lower qualifications. Most of them view the lack of advice from relevant experts and of training on the implementation of mediation as the most influential of all the constraints. It is thus proposed that EFL teachers re-orient their roles from traditional instructor to mediator with the help of re-education programs.**

***Index Terms*—EFL teachers, attitude, mediation, constraint**

I. Introduction

Current education reforms imply that it seems necessary for teachers to implement the role of mediator instead of disseminator in the language classroom since the value of adult mediation in children's learning can never be overstressed (Seng, Pou, & Tan, 2003). From the perspective of facilitating learners' education quality, this study is expected to be important since most of China's high school students are unable to express themselves orally and literally in proper English (Ye, 2007). Rather, they are exposed to limited linguistic knowledge attaching importance to grammatical forms of language (Ting, 1987). The most successful foreign language teaching programs, however, should "involve the whole learner in the experience of language as a network of relations between people, things, and events" (Savignon, 1987, p. 236, cited in Chen, 2005, p. 3). Mediation provides learners with more opportunities for them to practise English systematically and to render the language learning more effective (Williams & Burden, 2000). In this regard, the role of teacher as mediator should take priority in language instruction (Feuerstein, 1990; Feuerstein & Feuerstein, 1991).

II. Questions

To fulfill the target of exploring teachers' attitudes toward mediation and their classroom constraints, two questions that follow to be addressed are proposed:

1. What are EFL teachers' attitudes toward mediation?
2. What situational constraints hinder teachers from implementing mediation?

III. Review of Literature

Constructivism, "a vast and woolly area in contemporary psychology, epistemology, and education" (Von Glaserfeld, 1997, p. 204), is a widely-used term by psychologists, educators, curriculum designers, and some others (Woolfolk, 2004). Most of the users of this term tend to stress learners' commitment to understanding the meanings of objects and their learning development through personal and communal participation (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999). People are accustomed to talking about constructivism in two forms: individual and social constructivism (Palincsar, 1998; Phillips, 1997; Woolfolk, 2004). Individual constructivist approaches are related to how individuals establish certain elements respecting their cognition and affection derived from their psychological organ (Phillips, 1997). Thus, individual constructivism is known as psychological constructivism, of which Piaget is a preeminent representative (DeCorte, Greer, & Verschaffel, 1996; Paris, Byrnes, & Paris, 2001). In Piaget's view, though social surroundings seem important to children's enhancement, social interaction is not the main approach for children to adjust their thought (Moshman, 1997). By contrast, social constructivism concerns the formation of communal knowledge of distinct schools and how the process of people's common cognition about the world is conveyed to other individuals of a socio-cultural community (Woolfolk, 2004).

Social constructivism as a pedagogical theory has developed in the last few decades (Teague, 2000). Gergen (1995) argues that, in the model of social constructivism, all knowledge is constructed through social interaction. More talented people are able to transmit knowledge to others, and language learning could effectively be processed at this point when these participants get involved in constructing knowledge through interaction (Gergen, 1995; Woolfolk, 2004). If social constructivism is appropriately applied in the language classroom setting, it will surely impact on each facet of the class including the innovation of the implementation of the teacher's role (Teague, 2000), which is also the focus of the current study.

"Mediation theory has played a central role in social constructivist framework" (Sun, 2005, p. 6), which "is concerned with helping learners to become autonomous, to take control of their own learning, with the fundamental aim of enabling them to become independent thinkers and problem-solvers" (Williams & Burden, 2000, p. 68). Mediation is thus conceptualized as the correlation between the universe and humans who build up this relationship by applying physical and mental instruments (Feuerstein, 1986; Lantolf, 2000).

Since not every interaction encompassing a task, a learner, and a mediator has a quality of mediated learning experience (MLE), according to Feuerstein (1980), a system of the MLE criteria is developed to distinguish different levels of MLE interactions. In the MLE program, Feuerstein (1980) therefore proposes 12 parameters as indispensable criteria for evaluating the quality of MLE interaction: significance, purpose beyond the here and now, shared intention, a sense of competence, control of own behavior, goal-setting, challenge, awareness of change, a belief in positive outcomes, sharing, individuality, and a sense of belonging (pp. 289-290). The program consists of 400 cognitive tasks constructed to instruct the skills as models in terms of issues on mental activities, problem solving, and learning strategies (Feuerstein & Feuerstein, 1991). Meanwhile, Feuerstein (1980) believes that teachers or other adults can "mediate" in large numbers of different ways. Even each of all the 12 criteria of the MLE program also belongs to a mediation strategy or technique (Feuerstein & Rand, 1997; Rodriguez & Bellanca, 1987; Skuy & Mentis, 1999). In other words, there are 12 different ways of mediation rooted in these 12 MLE criteria, which might provide adequate flexible space for the teacher in the language classroom to conduct mediation (Seng et al., 2003).

IV. Data Collection

A. Instrument

To obtain the data to address the research questions, a survey was adapted from William and Burden's *Mediation Questionnaire* (2000) testing teachers' attitudes toward mediation respecting Feuerstein's 12 MLE functions, together referring to Liao's *Communicative Language Teaching Questionnaire* in which Liao (2003) claimed that China's high school EFL teachers encountered situational constraints associated with the current educational system, students, and teachers themselves. Concurrently, an assumption in the case of the effects of teachers' demographic attributes on attitudes toward mediation should be allowed for since "attitudes develop early in childhood and are the result of parents' and peers' attitudes, contact with people who are 'different' in any number of ways, and interacting affective factors in the human experience" (Brown, 2001, p. 168). Given potential linguistic biases from EFL, a Chinese version questionnaire was employed in the study, subject to a panel of experts in Chinese.

B. Subjects

The current study was conducted in Henan province located in eastern central China for the accessible population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007). According to Creswell's (2005) rough estimate of a survey sample size, 350 teachers were chosen randomly from 350 secondary schools in Henan. A vital difficulty with the survey is that a smaller percentage of pre-sampled participants tend to answer questionnaires (Liao, 2003). Out of the 350 distributed questionnaire sheets, 152 effective copies (43.4 %) were returned, but "power is not an issue" since the sample size is large with 100 or more subjects (Stevens, 1996, p. 6, cited in Pallant, 2007, p. 205).

V. Findings

Findings for RQ1: What Are EFL Teachers' Attitudes toward Mediation?

In this study, the data of the teachers' attitudes toward mediation were elicited from the responses to Item 1 of the questionnaire, in which there are 12 statements scaled from 1 to 5, representing *strongly disagree*, *disagree, neutral*, *agree*, and *strongly agree* (see Appendix). The average score for each item is 3, with the minimum total 12 and the maximum 60. The data analysis was processed via the *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* version 16.0 for Windows.

TABLE 1
TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO ATTITUDES TOWARD MLE FUNCTIONS

Question Item	Frequency					*M*	*SD*	Ranking
	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree			
a1.Shared intention	1	8	23	89	29	3.91	.785	8th
a2. Significance	6	13	37	70	24	3.62	.988	11th
a3.Purpose beyond the here and now	6	13	62	58	11	3.37	.893	12th
a4. A sense of competence	0	4	12	77	58	4.25	.714	4th
a5.Control of own behavior	0	5	14	65	67	4.28	.769	2nd
a6. Goal-setting	0	6	19	69	57	4.17	.798	6th
a7.Challenge	0	6	34	77	33	3.91	.777	9th
a8. Awareness of change	0	9	46	73	23	3.73	.791	10th
a9. A belief in positive outcomes	0	3	4	44	100	4.60	.645	1st
a10.Sharing	0	4	13	71	62	4.27	.732	3rd
a11. Individuality	0	2	20	69	57	4.22	.727	5th
a12. A sense of belonging	0	8	27	69	46	4.02	.839	7th

First, the frequencies of the teachers scaling each of the 12 mediation statements (marked *a1-a12*) on attitudes, means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*), and ranking orders (based on *M*) are summarized in Table 1, which shows that most of the participating teachers supported the application of mediation as each of the mean values (*M*) exceeded the average score (= 3.00). In particular, "a belief in positive outcomes" (1st), "control of own behavior" (2nd), "sharing" (3rd), and "a sense of competence" (4th) are ranked the four highest in the means regarding the teachers' attitudes toward mediation. The means of the first three features are lower, where "purpose beyond the here and now" and "significance" are rated lowest.

Second, a hypothesized assumption was formulated to detect the effect of the participants' demographic data on their attitudes toward mediation: The difference is significant in teachers' attitudes toward mediation across the groups of gender, age, teaching-year, educational background, grade-level, and class size at the $p < .05$ level. To test this hypothesis, one-way ANOVA and *t*-tests were conducted as shown in Tables 2-4.

TABLE 2
T-TEST FOR TEACHERS' ATTITUDES ACROSS GENDER AND EDUCATION QUALIFICATION GROUPS

Group	F	*t*	*df*	Mean Difference	*p. (2-tailed)*
Gender	.054	.559	145	.03547	.577
Education qualification	.710	3.675	145	.24070	.000

TABLE 3
ATTITUDE MEANS OF TEACHERS WITH DIFFERENT EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

Education Background	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Std. Error Mean*
Higher qualification	104	4.1348	.36863	.03615
Lower qualification	43	3.8941	.34237	.05221

TABLE 4
TESTS FOR TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MEDIATION ACROSS FOUR GROUPS

Group	*dfB/dfW*	F	*p.* (*p*-value)
Age	2/144	.077	.926
Teaching years	2/144	.672	.512
Grade level	5/141	1.094	.367
Class size	2/144	1.533	.219

Two independent-samples *t*-tests were performed and measured no significant difference between the male and female participants in the means on the attitudes toward mediation since the *p*-value is .577 (>.05), but the teachers' attitudes toward mediation were significantly influenced by their education qualifications at the *p*-value .001 (<.05) as shown in Table 2. Inspection of the means suggests that the participants with higher qualifications (i.e., master and bachelor) were more positive toward mediation than those with lower ones (i.e., two-year diploma and secondary school certificate) as presented in Table 3. Four one-way ANOVA tests were administered and showed no significant difference in the respondents' attitudes toward mediation as regards the mean scores across the groups of age, teaching-year, grade-level, and class size (p>.05) as shown in Table 4.

Findings for RQ2: What Situational Constraints Hinder Teachers from Implementing Mediation?

It seems hard for the teachers' positive attitudes toward mediation to accurately determine what they did since attitude-behavior is not always one-on-one consistent due to situational constraints (Oskamp, 1991). Item 2 of the questionnaire required the respondents to answer the 20 statements to be measured on a scale of 1 to 6, representing *not sure, not at all, only a little, fairly, a lot,* and *quite a lot*. Most of the participants (n = 147) offered their answers with 17 missing values, and five participants left this item blank whose missing data did not constitute a threat to the wanted validity of the instrument since the valid sample size exceeded 100 (Stevens, 1996, cited in Pallant, 2007). No participants added other constraints while scaling this item. The 20 statements were categorized into three sections associated with (a) China's current education system (*a-d*), (b) the students (*e-g*), and (c) the teachers themselves (*h-t*).

The frequencies of the 20 constraint items, means, standard deviations, and ratings (according to *M*) for the participants' constraints that they scaled are summarized in Table 5, where the mean of 75% of the items (n = 15) is over 3.5(M > 3.5). The top three constraints are "lack of advice from related experts" (1st), "lack of training as the role of mediator" (2nd), and "lack of funds paid for teacher role training programs" (3rd). The remaining 25% of the constraints (n = 5) were believed least influential (M < 3.5), which are "lack of cultural knowledge" (16th), "mandatory textbooks" (17th), "mandatory syllabuses" (18th), "lack of oral English proficiency" (19th), and "attitudes toward teaching work" (20th).

TABLE 5
TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO SITUATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Constraint Item	Frequency						*M*	*SD*	Ranking
	1 Not Sure	2 Not at All	3 Only a Little	4 Fairly	5 A Lot	6 Quite a Lot			
a. Mandatory syllabuses	17	21	41	49	13	3	3.20	1.215	18th
b. Mandatory textbooks	13	22	42	53	12	2	3.24	1.136	17th
c. Grammar-based exams	7	12	22	42	39	24	4.14	1.353	10th
d. Large-sized class teaching	2	11	17	37	40	40	4.51	1.284	4th
e. Students' low proficiency in EFL	1	4	23	51	41	27	4.42	1.084	6th
f. Students' passive learning attitudes	0	1	28	55	44	16	4.32	.936	8th
g. Students' resistance to class participation	4	4	35	44	45	13	4.11	1.125	11th
h. Your lack of oral proficiency in English	5	31	54	46	11	0	3.18	.965	19th
i. Your lack of knowledge as the role of mediator	6	16	41	52	21	10	3.66	1.183	15th
j. Your lack of cultural knowledge	4	25	58	46	12	2	3.29	.981	16th
k. Your lack of support from school	13	22	23	43	35	11	3.67	1.411	14th
l. Your lack of mediation-based teaching materials	7	8	26	38	41	27	4.22	1.342	9th
m. Your lack of mediation role-related teaching aids	4	10	26	30	47	30	4.33	1.316	7th
n. Your lack of mediation role effectiveness testing tools	4	11	14	36	45	37	4.48	1.316	5th
o. Your lack of time to prepare the mediation-based lesson	4	18	38	41	27	19	3.86	1.298	12th
p. Your lack of training as mediator	0	6	13	36	48	44	4.76	1.102	2nd
q. Your lack of funds paid for teacher role training programs	1	11	25	26	32	49	4.56	1.352	3rd
r. Your lack of advice from related experts	0	7	12	39	34	55	4.80	1.168	1st
s. Your lack of cooperation with colleagues	2	25	35	36	35	14	3.81	1.279	13th
t. Your attitude toward teaching	10	67	36	21	7	5	2.75	1.150	20th

VI. DISCUSSION

From the survey, it was noted that most of the teacher participants viewed the lack of advice from relevant experts and of training on implementing the mediator as the most influential of all the constraints since the teachers' knowledge of mediation greatly affected their attitudes toward mediation. It was not surprising that the teachers with senior educational qualifications held more favorable attitudes toward mediation than those with junior qualifications. This also confirms Grosser and Waal's (2008) claim that mediation tool training or re-education programs should be developed to "provide the necessary knowledge, skills, and moreover attitudes to pre-service teachers to become mediators of learning in order to ensure the development and growth of thinking skills" (para. 1). Thus, enhancing teachers' qualifications seems to hold great importance in the current educational setting respecting EFL teachers' re-education programme.

China is taking measures to facilitate the re-education of EFL teachers to continuously raise the holistic quality of instructional power by carrying out a system of teachers' required academic qualifications (National Curriculum, 2000). In 1999, the Ministry of Education of China proposed the execution of teachers' continuing education project for China's high schools, whose goals "are to train all the teachers in order to meet the needs of quality education, particularly the training for implementing the new national curriculum…and improving the pedagogical practice" (National Curriculum, 2000, p. 18).

China has about 572,000 secondary school EFL teachers, and around 55% of the junior school EFL teachers and 80% of the senior school EFL teachers have obtained university degrees (Cheng & Wang, 2004; Education in China, 2005; National Bureau of Statistics of China [NBSC], 2008). Apparently, upgrading the subject and pedagogical knowledge of so many teachers would be expensive and time-consuming, so the normal type of re-training available would probably be short-term intensive seminars and workshops (Cheng & Wang, 2004). This project seemed to affect about 550,000 secondary school EFL teachers and millions of secondary students learning EFL in China (Liu & Gong, 2000; NBSC, 2008). Post-training teachers' classrooms, however, are still characterized by teacher-centeredness and textbook-centeredness as "teacher colleges/universities are accustomed to copying comprehensive universities, and

taking care of developing discipline knowledge and research, and paying little attention to pedagogical knowledge and abilities" (National Curriculum, 2000, p. 18).

Therefore, it seems equally important to extend teachers' scope of knowledge on the implementation of mediation in process of the promotion of teachers' qualifications through which their comprehensive language skills are expected to be upgraded. For that to happen, teachers have to acquire a rich command of EFL without which "fostering students' language proficiency would be a very difficult task to accomplish" even in the mediated context (Cheng & Wang, 2004, p. 3). The findings of this study are thus expected to provide some implications for teachers' upgrading of education qualifications and challenges that they face while implementing mediation. In view of the current instructional environment, many elements restrict teachers' implementation of mediation, which deserve to be lessened until overcome through deeper educational reforms and teachers' personal efforts.

VII. Conclusion

This study is aimed at investigating China's high school EFL teachers' attitudes toward the role of mediation in order to reveal why so few teachers have mediated their students' learning and what can be done to make future classrooms more mediative. Hopefully, this study is among the initial attempts to explore EFL teachers' attitudes toward mediation and their situational constraints in time of implementing the mediator role. Based on the findings, a conclusion is drawn that most high school EFL teachers fail to mediate students' learning on account of situational constraints that they come across though they hold positive attitudes toward mediation. It is a tough challenge for EFL teachers to administer mediation smoothly by overcoming situational constraints related to the current education system in China, students, and teachers themselves. It is therefore proposed that EFL teachers in China should re-orient their roles from traditional instructor to mediator with the help of teachers' re-education program.

Appendix Mediation Questionnaire

Dear participants**,**

I am conducting research on "A survey of attitudes toward mediation among Chinese high school EFL teachers and their classroom constraints" and would appreciate a few minutes of your time in accomplishing this questionnaire in order to help with my ongoing research. Your responses will be used for research purposes only and kept absolutely confidential. Be kindly informed that your answered questionnaire sheet will not fall into any wrong hands. No participants will be named in the research. The validity of this survey depends on the extent to which your responses are open and frank. So you are warmly required to answer honestly. Thanks for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Xxx

Question 1: For each of the following 12 statements, please circle the figure from 1 to 5 that most closely agrees with how you feel. Consider your answers in the context of your current job or past work experience.

It is important to:	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. make your instructions clear when you give a task to your learners.	1	2	3	4	5
2. tell your learners why they are to do a particular activity.	1	2	3	4	5
3. explain to your learners how carrying out a learning activity will help them in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
4. help learners to develop a feeling of confidence in their ability to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
5. teach learners the strategies they need to learn effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
6. teach learners how to set their own goals in learning.	1	2	3	4	5
7. help your learners to set challenges for themselves and to meet those challenges.	1	2	3	4	5
8. help your learners to monitor changes in themselves.	1	2	3	4	5
9. help your learners to see that if they keep on trying to solve a problem, they will find a solution.	1	2	3	4	5
10. teach your learners to work co-operatively.	1	2	3	4	5
11. help your learners to develop as individuals.	1	2	3	4	5
12. foster in your learners a sense of belonging to a classroom community.	1	2	3	4	5

Question 2: There are 20 factors listed below. Please indicate how much each factor influences your teaching role by circling the figure from 1 to 6. If there are some other elements that hinder you playing the role of mediator, please list them and circle the relevant figure representing the extent to which each element influences your role.

Situational constraints	Not sure	Not at all	Only a little	Fairly	A lot	Quite a lot
1). The mandatory syllabus	1	2	3	4	5	6
2). The mandatory textbook	1	2	3	4	5	6
3). Grammar-based exams	1	2	3	4	5	6
4). Large-sized class teaching	1	2	3	4	5	6
5). Students' low proficiency in English	1	2	3	4	5	6
6). Students' passive learning attitudes	1	2	3	4	5	6
7). Students' resistance to class participation	1	2	3	4	5	6
8). Your lack of oral proficiency in English	1	2	3	4	5	6
9). Your lack of knowledge as the role of mediation	1	2	3	4	5	6
10). Your lack of cultural knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	6
11). Your lack of support from your school	1	2	3	4	5	6
12). Your lack of mediation-based teaching materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
13). Your lack of mediation role-related teaching aids	1	2	3	4	5	6
14). Your lack of mediation role effectiveness testing instruments	1	2	3	4	5	6
15). Your lack of time to prepare the mediation-based lesson	1	2	3	4	5	6
16). Your lack of training as a mediator	1	2	3	4	5	6
17). Your lack of funds paid for teacher role training programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
18). Your lack of advice from experts	1	2	3	4	5	6
19). Your lack of cooperation with colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6
20). Your attitude toward teaching	1	2	3	4	5	6

Question 3: Please complete the following demographic information as appropriate.
Name: _____
Gender: _____
Age: _____
Year(s) of teaching EFL: _____
Educational qualifications attained:
------Bachelor's Degree ------Two-Year Certificate
------Secondary School Certificate ------Others
The grade you are teaching in:
-------Junior Grade One -------Junior Grade Two
-------Junior Grade Three -------Senior Grade One
-------Senior Grade Two -------Senior Grade Three
The average number of the students in your class: _____

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Political Zionism and Fiction: A Study of John Updike's *Terrorist*

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***Abstract*—Since its creation in 1948, Israel has more visibly touched upon different discourses, such as political, cultural and religious, to legitimize its existence in Palestine, a land that had nothing to do with Holocaust and Nazi's violence against European Jews. Regarding the deep political influence and power of Israel over the United States, the present writer would attempt to trace such influence in recently-written American fictions which deal with the newly-shaped genre, 'literary terrorism', especially John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006). Having witnessed the terrorist attacks of September 11, Updike, one of the most committed American writers, portrayed an Arab-American teenage boy, Ahmad, whose extremist justifications would have turned him into an anti-hero, if Jack Levy, the Jewish protagonist of the novel, had not changed his mind at the end of the novel. Here, Updike focuses on the Orientalist and Neo-Orientalist binary opposition of 'the Self'/ 'the Other', represented by Jack and Ahmad, in order to demonstrate and justify the claimed superiority of the 'the West' (or 'Israel' here) over 'the Orient'.**

***Index Terms*—Neo-Orientalism, John Updike, political zionism, literary terrorism**

Although the murmurs of constituting a nation for the Jews were heard in the late 19th century, it was World War I which intensified the debates over this issue. When World War I broke out and the violence over Jews increased in Europe, a few Jews claimed that they deserved the right to come back to what they considered to be their homeland. As Goldschmidt (1971) notes, "The rise to power of Hitler and his Nazi party in Germany put the Jews in that country in dire peril and many Jews tried to get out of the country" (p. 249). Since European countries were unable to offer them enough job opportunities, the only place which was left for them was the land of Palestine (Goldschmidt, 1971). It was at this time that political Zionism which was the belief that "the Jews should form and maintain a state for themselves" in their ancestral land was created (Ibid, p. 271). Consequently, the number of the Jew immigrants increased until they constituted a large part of the Arab population of Palestine. It was in 1948, that "the Jewish Agency Executive Committee formally declared that those parts of Palestine under Jewish control were now the independent state of Israel" (Ibid, p. 289).

Actually, heading to Palestine in order to live a peaceful life and escape racism and anti-Semitism was not motivated only by necessity and the suffering the Jews had undergone in Europe, but by "the serene assurance that they as Jews and Europeans were superior to the people whose land they proposed to 'acquire and appropriate'. Indeed they felt themselves superior to all the peoples of the Orient and they stated their superiority quite clearly" (Jansen, 1071, p. 149). This sense of superiority was inspired again by the old conflict between the West and Islam which showed itself off since the Crusades and especially in the middle of nineteenth century when "a branch of evangelical theology known as 'dispensationalism'" emerged and developed the idea of "Muslims as the inevitable enemy of God's plan to restore the Jews to their ancestral home in the holy land" (Kidd, 2010, p. 255-6).

As Mamdani claims in *The Jew, The Arab: A History of the Enemy*, colonization has two stages. He believes that, "Before you can try and eliminate an enemy, you must first define that enemy" (Anidjar, 2003, p. xvii). This belief, generally, is the basis of colonial powers policies because it legitimizes and as a result, necessitates the colonization of a country and people that are represented as uncivilized. Edward Said in "Zionism from the Standpoint of Its Victims" (1997), also, explains the process of Zionist colonization as such:

in its conscious and declared ideas about Palestine, Zionism attempted first to minimize, then to eliminate, then, all else failing, finally to subjugate the natives as a way of guaranteeing that Israel would not be simply the state of its citizens (which included Arabs of course) but the state of the whole Jewish people, having a kind of sovereignty over land and peoples that no other state possessed or possesses (p. 32).

As Said asserts in the same article, "The native Arabs had to be seen as an irremediable opposite, something like a combination of savage and superhuman, at any rate a being with whom it is impossible to come to terms" (p. 34). Also, in *Orientalism* (1978), he notes that if the Arab is mentioned in Orientalist texts, he is regarded only as:

The disruptor of Israel's and the West's existence, or in another view of the same thing, as a surmountable obstacle to Israel's creation in 1948. In so far as this Arab has any history, it is part of the history given him (or taken from him: the difference is slight) by the Orientalist tradition, and later the Zionist tradition (p. 286).

According to the supporters of imperialism, "it has distinct 'moral', economic and psychological characteristics, and Israel today displays them all. The 'moral' characteristic is that the imperialist must believe that he has a duty, an obligation, a mission to rule 'the lesser tribes without the law' for their own good" (Jansen, 1971, p. 329). Zionists

claim that they have been beneficial not only in bringing law and order to the barbarian inhabitants of Palestine, but also in making habitable the land which was more like a dessert before the arrival of Zionists. Further, they believe that Zionism will restore 'a lost fatherland', and in so doing mediate between the various civilizations; that present day Palestine was in need of cultivation, civilization, reconstitution; that Zionism would finally bring Enlightenment and progress where at present there was neither (Said, 1997). As such, Zionism portrayed itself as an imperial power "bringing civilization to a barbaric and/or empty locale" and then as a "movement bringing Western democracy to the East" (Ibid, p. 17).

After defining Palestinians as uncivilized natives who even do not know how to cultivate their own lands and people over which an imperial power ought to be dominant, Zionists started the second stage of colonization, the elimination of Palestinians and their history. As Edward Said (1997) states, "The Zionists set out systematically either to reduce the Palestinians to a nonexistent population or to strip down those who remained to the status of a silent coolie class" (p. 18). Then, he continues, "The intention to create a Jewish National Home is to cause the disappearance or subordination of the Arab population, culture and language" (p. 31). Therefore, Zionism, as a newly-shaped power which is endowed with the support of superpowers like the United States, has "effaced the Palestinians, his or her history, his or her actuality" in the same way that Western imperialists had effaced the actuality and history of their colonies before (p. 18).

In *Orientalism* (1978), Said also believes that the inferiority that the West attributes to the East simultaneously serves to construct the West's superiority. Identity, for Said, whether of Orient or Occident, is a construction which involves the construction of opposites and 'others' whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from 'us'. The West always functions as the 'center' and the East is a marginal 'other' that simply through its existence confirms the West's centrality and superiority (Bertens, 2001). Zionism, as the best evidence of this fact, took the advantage of defining, legitimizing and consolidating its political basis and superiority by depicting itself as a messenger of Western culture and civilization. As Herzl, one of Zionist leaders, argued,

It is more and more to the interest of the civilized nations and of civilization in general that a cultural station be established on the shortest road to Asia.Palestine in this station and we Jews are the bearers of culture who are ready to give our property and our lives to bring about its creation (qtd. in Jansen, 1971, p. 83).

The legitimization process was programmed not only to define the Arabs through age-old Oriental clichés, but also in accordance with Neo-Orientalist discourse to represent them as natural-born terrorists. Logically speaking, any action toward the usurpation of a country inspires responses and reactions on the part of the natives and settlers of the target country and consequently, every attacker ought to expect counterattacks. Thus, even Zionist historians have empirically shown the idea of Jewish colonizers in Palestine always met with quite unmistakable native resistance, not because the natives thought that Jews were evil but because no natives take *kindly* to having their territory settled by foreigners (Said, 1997). But what have been pictured and called in Zionism-supporting media and writings were far beyond the truth of native resistance and defense against the usurpers. The almost total absence of any source of knowledge considering the history, life and resistance of Palestinian settlers accompanied by the incredible investment of Zionism and its allies in disseminating malicious political clichés of Palestinian natives in both high and low cultural areas of the West, paved the way for Israel to legitimize its racist crimes in Palestine.

Another strategy, which suppresses both Arabs' and Western intellectuals' publicly declared criticisms leveled at Israeli's racist and genocidal policies, is to call them anti-Semitism. According to this policy, Palestinians "are charged with anti-Semitism if they complain about the destruction of their villages; the ethnic cleansing of their cities; the loss of their country and right to citizenship; house demolitions; discrimination against Muslims and Christian Palestinians; the program of targeted assassinations; the well documented cases of torture" (Corrigan, 2009, p. 155). The individuals, activists or politicians in the United States and Europe who criticize human-rights problems in Israel or question the basic political ideology of Zionism are accused of anti-Semitism and racism as well. Therefore, from 1948 onward, charging those against Zionism movement policies with anti-Semitism has been perceived as an effective political weapon which, as George Soros notices, has been able to "silence the political debate on Israeli's policies toward the Palestinians" (Ibid, p. 148) and it could not be done without boundless Western and especially American support of Israel.

Regarding the nature of Zionist movement as moral and liberating, America coordinates with the Jewish state in war against terrorism since September 11, 2001. Although this coordination returns back to the years before the attacks of September 11, 2001, one could claim that it has increased in the years following that date. What Americans did in the recent years was to share the horror of the terrorist attacks in America's soil with Israelis who, as propaganda emphasized, were the victims of Palestinian terrorist attacks. They regarded Arab resistance done mostly through suicidal bombings as terrorist attacks on Israel and intentionally ignored the conditions that had led to such attacks. Thus, by calling all resistance terrorism as well as spiteful and pre-programmed portraying of what was going on in the Occupied Territories, Zionism did her best to turn the tide and reverse the public criticism to public approval; the approval which would never be gained if terrorist attacks of September 11 had not occurred. Therefore, one could conclude that what happened in that black Tuesday was an appropriate opportunity for both Israel and the United States through which they got the chance to justify their colonial policies and political interference in internal affairs of the Middle Eastern countries.

As it is obvious, the United States' and Israel's relationship is not confined to their alliance for the so-called war against terrorism or the attempt to 'civilize' the Arabs. During his visit in May 2008 to participate in the 60-year anniversary celebration of Israel, the United States president George W. Bush addressed the Israeli Knesset: "the alliance between our governments is unbreakable, yet the source of friendship runs deeper than any treaty" (qtd. in Qumsiyeb, 2008, p. 181). Indeed, Israel has proved to be an issue of special attention in U.S. policy in the Middle East. Many scholars discuss that their relationship has turned out to be associated with unusual levels of mutual dependency and support though it has experienced some frictions. Definitely, the United States has always had the role of a supporter and Israel has been supposed to act as a defense partner in this relationship. "U.S. and Israeli officials covertly coordinated intelligence operations and Israel's development of nuclear weaponry" in order to consolidate the pillars of Israel state in Palestine and enable it to play the role of the defender of the US interests in the Middle East (Schulzinger, 2006, p. 379). But as American politicians confess, the influence and pressure of pro-Israel lobby inside the United States have reached a point that makes America defenseless against Israel's demands. Thus, the relationship between Israel and U.S. seems to be an unequal one according to which the influence and authority of pro-Israel lobby inside the U.S., due to their secret security information about the U.S. Security Services, has led to "suppressing books, restricting free speech, and unduly pressuring government officials" (Ibid).

Since its birth, political Zionism has resorted to different discourses to legitimize its colonial tendencies. Literature, regarded as an influential discourse due to its concern with politics and history, has been no exception to this. The impact of political Zionism in recently-written American fictions which deal with the newly-shaped genre, 'literary terrorism' has become obvious from one story to another, from one novel to the other. Many writers, whether Jewish or not, have dealt with Jews as major or minor characters in their works. Although the presence of Jewish characters in literature could not be limited to the twenty-first century literature, one could definitely claim that this presence has been enhanced and even changed during the recent years under the boundless authority of Zionists over different fields of American culture, such as literature.

Updike's *Terrorist* is an example of the writer's attempt at participating in the literary terrorism which was practiced as the direct result of the terror attacks of September 11. Though known as the 'bard of the middle class mundane', Updike moved beyond his consistency in dealing with daily lives events of his characters to a new American worldview in order to conform himself with the transforming world; a world which had headed for division, the division between the West and the East.

Since the novel has been inspired directly by the American hatred of Islamic fundamentalists, one could consider it as a political-religious one whose political aspect could be associated with the Arab-Israeli conflicts. Ahmad, the hero of the story, influenced by his Muslim teacher, Shaikh Rashid, and in spite of Jack Levy's warning, the Jewish character of the novel, decides to join a furnishing company as a truck driver, later revealed to be associated with Islamic fundamentalism. Though Ahmad prepares himself to do the terrorist operation assigned to him to be fulfilled, Jack succeeds in stopping him by reminding him that God's will is on creation and life rather than destruction, the fact that Ahmad as an extremist Muslim had ignored. Thus, by dissuading Ahmad from exploding the bomb, Levy robs him of his previous title as the hero of the story and introduces himself as the lovable hero of the novel who as a matter of fact, is a Jewish one; A hero whose primary concern has been to warn Ahmad against his extremist beliefs and guide him to the right decision; a hero whose very presence as a Jew and his similarities to Arab-American Ahmad and differences from him, both legitimize the colonial motives of political Zionism and question the motives of fundamentalists for committing terrorist crimes.

The first descriptions of Jack Levy introduce him as a perfect father and husband who has done whatever he has been supposed to do during his lifetime and is now absolutely ready to embrace his death:

…all that is left on Earth for his body is to ready itself for death. He has done his courting and mating; he has fathered a child; he has worked to feed that child, little sensitive Mark with his shy cloudy eyes and slippery lower lip, and to furnish him with all the tawdry junk the culture of the time insisted he possess, to blend in with his peers. Now Jack Levy's sole remaining task is to die and thus contribute a little space, a little breathing room, to this overburdened planet (*Terrorist*, p. 20).

But as the novel goes on, Levy turns out to be not the hero one would imagine due to the above descriptions, but a 'drag', as he names himself, who has lost all his hopeful connections to the world. He seems to be not an adorable father, not a faithful husband and even, not a devoted Jew although as a father and a husband, he has never been willing to leave his family. In a conversation which goes on between Ahmad and Jack at the end of the novel, he reveals the reality of his life which partially reminds one of the reality of Wandering Jew's life:

A woman I was crazy about has ditched me, my job is a drag, I wake up every morning at four and can't get back to sleep. My wife—Jesus, it's too sad. She sees how unhappy I am and blames herself, for having gotten so ridiculously fat, and has gone on this crash diet that might kill her… I want to tell her, 'Beth, forget it, nothing's going to bring us back, when we were young.' … The one child we had, his name is Mark, lives in Albuquerque and just wants to forget us (p. 303).

Jack, sleepless at nights, concerned with his death and willing to die, hating consumerism as well as obesity of his wife, and rejected by another woman and even his own son, seems not to be interested in the life he is living. He is in fact wandering in the depths of his loneliness, in a world he, like a Wandering Jew, wants it to be ended with a sweet

death. But ironically, this world-weary man who laments the consumerism which has haunted people's daily lives turns out to be the savior of a Muslim who is isolated from the outside world, the world which in his (Ahmad's) view offers nothing but corruption. While Ahmad, a representative character of fundamentalists, recognizes the devotion to consumerism as a justification for his decision to carry out the terrorist act, Levy, himself an anti-consumerist and Updike's speaker in the novel, expresses his confusion about the appropriateness of this extremist motive by his attempt to prevent him from blowing up the tunnel.

The characters in the novel are situated in a microcosm which represents a macrocosm. Ahmad is an Arab-American who is more a representative of Muslim Arabs than a model of an American teenager. Also, Jack not only acts as an American but also reminds one of the values of the political Zionism due to his contrast with Ahmad. While Ahmad is drowning in the darkness of negligence symbolized by the darkness of the tunnel which is supposed to be the graveyard of the innocent American people, Jack like a prophet (his real name is Jacob, reminding one of Jacob, the Prophet), leads him to the light of consciousness symbolized by the light of the sun outside the tunnel; the consciousness of the fact that God is a creator not a destructor. This is the same so-called consciousness and light that Zionism claims to offer Palestinians.

Jack, also, by preventing Ahmad from blowing up the bomb, helps him to regain his freedom. Joining the Fundamentalist groups, the Muslim Arabs give up their own freedom and independence in favor of the group's beliefs and creeds. As such, Ahmad dedicates his mind and will to the extremist conceptions of the group and heads to fulfill his mission, though he is not willing to do that as a human being. The decision he makes at the end of the novel is in fact, his first decision made of his free will. Once more, it is Jack who helps him to come back to his self-consciousness, to the freedom which was crushed by the heaviness of the group's dictatorship. Indeed, it is Jack who 'frees' him from the bonds of captivity and wakes him up to the reality of liberty; the liberty which Zionism claims it bring to Palestinians. But, ironically, Ahmad's freedom from the bonds of extremism leads to another captivity; this time, he lets himself be colonized by the Jewish character, Jack, just in the same way that Zionists colonize the Orientals in the name of freedom.

The contrast between Jack's way of life and Ahmad's not only questions the terrorists' motives and reminds one of Zionism's so-called values, but also helps the readers to penetrate into Jack's depth of personality as a Jew. Updike, as a Neo-Orientalist, develops his Jew and Muslim characters, Jack, Ahmad and Shaikh Rashid, to delineate and highlight the Neo-Orientalist binary oppositions of the West/East and we/them in the novel. According to such binaries, Jack and his accompanying traits suggests the active, democratic, modern and civilized West and Shaikh Rashid and his pupil, Ahmad represent the passive, anti-democratic, and anti-modern East.

To accentuate the 'truth' of these binaries, Updike portrays the potential of Jack and Shaikh Rashid to act as a father figure in the novel. On the one hand, there is Shaikh Rashid, Ahmad's teacher since his childhood, who is supposed to act as a father, protector and leader for Ahmad due to their affinity in religion, beliefs and the hours they have spent together for nine years. On the other hand, there is Jack, the school's counselor, who though knows Ahmad for a short time, cares for his future. The characters' true natures come to be revealed at the end of the novel when Ahmad, religiously brainwashed by Shaikh Rashid, heads to fulfill his suicidal mission in the name of Allah and with the hope of entering the Paradise as a martyr. Here, this is Jack who insists on dying with Ahmad: "I don't think I'll get out. We're in this together, son" (p. 296), while Shaikh Rashid had left him alone to do his mission by himself the night before. Furthermore, this is Jack again who proves to be the only reliable and honest character while the Muslim ones betray Ahmad: Shaikh Rashid by slaving him to his own extremist beliefs first and putting him in jeopardy by persuading him to undertake that heroic mission later and Charlie, the son of an immigrant Lebanese boss of the Furnishing company Ahmad works for, who as a CIA undercover, "was using you (Ahmad) to flush out the others" (p. 292). Therefore, though Ahmad is manipulated by the Muslim characters around him, he receives genuine love and protection of the Jewish character of the novel, Jack Levy.

In addition to establishing the binaries of 'the self'/'the other', Updike tries to construct the identity of 'the self'—Jack Levy-- through the construction of 'the Other'—Ahmad—because as Alaswad (2000) states, "Construction of the ethnic Other is closely connected to the construction of the Self-identity" (p. 42). In contrast to the early scholars on colonialism, Aime Cesaire, for instance, who denied any kind of interaction between colonizer and colonized except the relations of domination and submission, Homi Bhabha believes that the colonizer's identity has no 'origin' in himself and is not a fixed identity, but is differential. As in Lacan, identity is constructed in interaction with 'others' and with 'the other' (Bertens, 2001). As such, Jack attempts to befriend Ahmad in order to stabilize his own identity. Although his initial efforts are unsuccessful, he ultimately succeeds in knowing Ahmad's internal thoughts, religious beliefs and complex character through deeper investigations, even sleeping with Ahmad's mother. This search for the self establishes his dominance as a modern, democratic, secular Westerner so much so that he manages to dictate his power to Ahmad at the end of the novel when he miraculously saves Ahmad from the trap which was set for him and supports him with the answers Ahmad was supposed to give to the police's questions.

Although Jack Levy seems to be a passive character politically, he is the speaker of the Western vantage point regarding the issues of colonialism, Israel and democracy. When discussing over the job Ahmad is going to select, Jack recommends him to join the Army. Here, as a Westerner, he sides with the so-called values of American colonialism in Iraq:

"If you have no job prospects think about the army… If you have any Arabic, they'd love you."Ahmad's expression stiffens. "The army would send me to fight my brothers." "Or to fight *for* your brothers, it could be. Not all Iraqis are insurgents, you know. Most aren't. They just want to get on with business. Civilization started there. They had an up-and- coming little country, until Saddam." (p. 40-1)

Definitely, such an American value—civilizing 'the others'—is one of the so-called values Israel claims to endow the Palestinians with because Israeli colonialism is inspired by American colonialism and consequently, Jack, as a Jew, advocates it. Parenthetically, it is a wonder indeed how a writer of Updike's stature, supposedly an intelligent one, could so grossly oversimplify and distort the brute realities of the occupation of Iraq, could so brazen facedly be a mouthpiece for the American government. Updike's last novel was a surprise indeed!

As Batchelor (2009) points out, "the one character in *Terrorist* who is thought to be somewhat level-headed from a political standpoint cannot get past his own racist sentiments and the aftermath of 9/11" (p. 70). In the graduation party, Jack's mind is abruptly led to remember the pains, genocide and violence the European Jews had endured during the World War II: "Europe's Jews dressing up in their clothes to be marched off to the deaths camps" (*Terrorist*, p. 111). Later, when a Muslim imam begins his lecture in the party, he is reminded of Israel again. Then, his good will toward the imam is replaced with an image which connotes suffocation as if Islam and Muslims have been responsible for what had happened to synagogues:

When Levy thinks of embattled Israel and of Europe's pathetically few remaining synagogues needing to be guarded by police day and night, his initial good will toward the imam dissolves: the man in his white garb sticks like a bone in the throat of the occasion (p. 112).

Acting as a prophet at the end of the novel, Jack brings his mission to perfection by prophesying Ahmad's and Arab-Americans' future. Having succeeded in changing Ahmad's decision, Jack recommends him to be a lawyer: "I know this may sound premature, but I wasn't kidding about you making a good lawyer. You're cool under pressure. You talk well" (p. 309). Further, he continues to foresee the future of Islamic fundamentalism and Muslims, implying the Neo-Orientalist idea that Muslims or as Jack prefers to call them Arab-Americans, are criminals, the belief that is haunting the minds and turning into a fact: "In the years to come, Arab-Americans are going to need plenty of lawyers" (p. 309).

Conclusion:

Regarding the deep influence that September 11, 20001 exerted over Americans, many serious and popular writers put their pen to write about both the mental consequences of those events from the vantage point of the survivors and terrorists' motives for committing the attacks. Due to Zionism's authority over American cultural discourse, many of the post-9/11 novelists focused on portraying Jewish characters which were in one way or another associated with political Zionism. John Updike's *Terrorist* is one of those novels which characterizes its Jewish character, Jack Levy, to represent both American and Zionist colonial values. Jack, acting as a prophet, saves Ahmad, the Arab-American character from the darkness of his religious unconsciousness and leads him to regain his lost freedom and in this way consolidates the so-called claims of his colonizer coreligionists for bringing freedom, civilization and democracy to the land of Palestine.

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Teaching Writing through Reading Integration

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***Abstract*—There has not been a consensus among the researchers though the question whether writing teachers use reading activities in pre-writing phase in their writing class has been long posed. This paper is an endeavour to examine the extent to which reading integration approach is beneficial to EFL learners' writing performance.**

***Index Terms*—teaching writing, reading, EFL**

I. Introduction

Hedge (1998) declared that writing skill was often relegated to the status of "homework" due to limitation of time and syllabus outcomes, thus having no effects on the possibility of the teacher guidance. As structuralists and audio linguists emphasized oral forms of communication and reading, according to Tribble (1996), writing was considered as a tool for the practice and reinforcement of specific grammatical and lexical patterns; accuracy being all important whereas content and self expression given little if any priority. The students who were expected to produce an error-free coherent text without giving any prior thought to the meaning of the finished product encountered numerous seemingly insurmountable obstacles as Trible (1996) stated that they were basically "writing to learn" and not "learning to write" as instructed by this traditional product-oriented approach.

This view, nonetheless, has changed considerably along with the development of the communicative language teaching since 1980s since there was a widespread recognition that writing was a process which involves several steps in creating a piece of work. According to Silva (1990, p. 15), this tendency, namely the process-oriented approach, needed step-by-step developments, one of which was the integration of reading and writing.

As far as we have concerned, reading and writing have a mutual effect. Reading builds the knowledge of diverse kinds to write on or to employ in writing; writing reinforces knowledge in a way that builds schemata to read with. Reading and writing interact with each other, possibly making use of the same cognitive structures to create a text world (Kucer, 1985). Thus, an integrated-skill classroom is an ideal environment to apply Steve Peha's "Read like a writer" approach as an integration and reciprocal interaction of reading and writing.

This research is an endeavour to investigate the extent to which Steve Peha's read-like-a-writer approach is beneficial to EFL learners and thereby to attain a better way to teach integrated reading and writing courses. Questions guiding this research encompass:

1. What are the possible problems facing students in writing essays?
2. Can the application of Steve Peha's read-like-a-writer approach related to critical and analytic reading activities in pre-writing stage have effects on the students' writing competence?

II. Literature Review

A. What is Writing?

Writing is a process, not a "product which has been far being new. Also, writing is a complex process of exploring one's thought, discovering ideas and generating meaning (Flower and Hayes, 1980). In this way, the writing process is a sharp tool to discover meaning, to perfect a piece of writing both in thoughts and in grammatical accuracy and to bring intelligence to the writing. Therefore, Byrne (1988) declares writing is a process of encoding (putting your message into words) carried out with the reader's expectations; or, as confirmed by Nunan (1999, p. 273), "a complex, cognitive process that required sustained intellectual effort over a considerable period of time".

B. Influence of Reading on Writing

The influence of reading on writing has been expressed through the concept in which reading is trying to discover what a piece of written text means by understanding the words a writer is using. When reading, "we don't just wait for the meaning to come to us, we go for it-aggressively. We look deeply into the text hunting in certain specific ways searching for clues as to what the writer is trying to say." (Peha, 2003:3)

Taking into consideration the effects of reading on writing, there are a number of studies that fail to show an apparent correlation between reading and writing ability with the intention of proving that writers must also be readers. For instance, Battle (1986) concluded that freshmen did not appear to absorb reading skills as a function of learning to write.

Or, several compositions themselves have not been without ambivalence toward the importance of reading in improving student writing (Morrow, 1997).

Nonetheless, reading can advance learners' ability to write since reading can aid the learners' process of writing as affirmed by Brown (1987, p. 331), "by reading and studying a variety of relevant types of text, students can gain important insights both about how they should write and about subject matter that may become the topic of their writing." In other words, reading can provide models for writing. Murcia and Olshtain (2000, p. 158) state that:

Many writing course and certainly most autodidactic strategies in writing involve using well-written passages form literature, or passage written by others, as models for one's own writing. Thus, many writing classes begin with reading texts, analyze them, looking at them as models for writing or using them as a piece of communication to response to.

For these reasons, reading playing a decisive role in the development of writing ability for reading appears to be an essential pre-condition to produce good writers.

C. The Read-like-a-writer Approach

Although the correlation between reading and writing has been adopted by most researchers, it is infrequent to make out this association practiced in second language writing classrooms. It can be probably explained that research has not provided a straightforward performance of this relationship. The researcher, after studying the researches related to reading-writing connection, found that in order to exploit reading in writing classes, teachers have to (1) let students know how their writing pieces are evaluated and (2) guide them to read like writer to acquire writers' ideas and crafts so that they can improve their writing proficiency and get higher writing scores. Based on this standpoint, some scholars claim the writer as a reader and the reader as a writer (Smith, 1983). Smith (1983) agrees reading like a writer allows one to actually become a writer. When reading like a writer, other than making meaning of the text, the reader takes in and learns from the author's style, use of conventions and the like. When reading like a writer, the reader uses the author's text as a model for the texts that he or she reader will ultimately write.

In order to make the read-like-a-writer approach be more apparently understood, Spandel (1996) shares that if the teacher truly want their students to read in order to write, they must make certain that our reading instruction promotes them to focus on those fundamentals of a written piece that make writing valuable. Reading trait-based writing, a confirmed method for helping students grow to be stronger writers, is relied heavily upon this thought: identifying the qualities that skilled, experienced readers believe make writing successful. It is quite accurate to say one of the widely-used reading-based programs is the six-trait writing because it exploits the use of reading texts to exemplify how writing works. The six traits, which most readers search for in any piece of writing are ideas (clarity, thought, support, and detail), organization (internal structure), voice, word choice, sentence fluency (rhythm and flow), and conventions (mechanical correctness as well as the use of textual conventions such as bold type or graphics). The entire six-trait writing approach is based upon the philosophy of placing what can be gained as reader into the writer's work. Each of the six traits is interrelated into the Reader's Handbook—only from a slightly different perspective. According to the handbook, students approach text samples as readers. Hopefully, they will not only enhance their reading skills but also apply what they know as writers. Smith (1983, pp. 52-53) points out:

To read like a writer we engage with the author in what the author is writing. We anticipate what the writer will say, so that the author is in effect writing on our behalf, not showing how something is done but doing it with us. This is identical spoken language situation where adults help children say what they want to say or would like and expect to be able to say. The author becomes an unwriting collaborator. Everything the learner would want to spell the author spells. Every thing the learner would want to punctuate the authors punctuates. Every nuance of expression, every relevant syntactic device, and every turn of phrase, the author and learner write together. Bit by bit, on thing at a time, but enormous number of things over the passage of time, the learner learns through reading like a writer to write like a writer.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Student sample

The student sample comprised two classes of sixty-three full-time EFL students at Ho Chi Minh City University of Finance-Marketing. Class 09B (30 students) was randomly selected as control group and Class 09E (33 students) as experimental group. However, when the questionnaires were delivered at the end of the course, the collected data were 58 (28 from Class 09B and 30 from Class 09E), since there were absentees on the day the questionnaires were handed out. The majority of the students were 21 or 22 years old. The predominant gender of the surveyed group (93.1%) was female. Almost all of the students (98.3%) have learned English since they were in junior secondary school.

Teacher sample

A group of eight teachers including two males (25%) and six females (75%) were given a questionnaire similar to the students'. Undoubtedly, the responses from Teachers' questionnaire are indispensable because it is necessary to understand students' writing problems from another point of view: the instructors. 62.5 % of them had eight or more

years of teaching experience. In terms of degree, three had a MA, one was studying for an MA and the remaining four had a BA.

B. Instruments

Pretest and posttest

Pretest

The pretest was administered in the second week, after the students were taught carefully about essay. The tests were monitored and controlled carefully. The students of two groups were asked to write with the same topic in ninety minutes in the class. The purpose was that the result of the pretest would show whether the two groups' English level was the same because if the level of students would be a great variance, it would cause difficulty in administering the experiment and in the interpretation of the result of the study.

Posttest

As to the posttest, the students were asked to write an argumentative essay in ninety minutes after nine weeks of learning the academic essay writing for the purpose of observing whether the application of Steve Peha's read-like-a-writer approach can help to improve English writing performance and to what extent the use of this application is helpful in their writing. Also, the posttest would be administered in the classroom to ensure the same physical conditions for the students, because the physical conditions are not exactly the same, expected results might not be reached.

Scoring

63 writing papers of each topic, i.e. 126 essays in all, were computerized to guarantee that the students' handwriting did not affect the way the teachers evaluated the students' essays before being distributed to each of the two experienced teachers (coded as T1 and T2). The essays were numbered from 1 to 126 so that the teachers might not get the impression that they were evaluating the essays written by the students of two different groups. Each of the two teachers was then requested to evaluate 126 essays, employing the same essay writing rubric. The essay writing rubric were basically designed based on the criteria of a well-formed essay from the perspective of Steve Peha's read-like-a-writer. However, there would be 6 elements from Steve Peha's approach: organization, ideas, voice, word choice, sentence fluency and convention, the voice criterion was omitted. It can be explained by two reasons: first, it was extremely hard for foreign language learners to recognize the voice of the author as voice reveals the authors' personality and second, in order to avoid the issue of distraction when too many criteria were included in the writing rubric, the study only considered five criteria which are commonly mentioned in writing rubric 1) organization, 2) ideas, 3) word choice, 4) sentence fluency and 5) convention. After that, the teachers had an appointment to reach unanimous agreement on the students' scores. The evaluation process lasted more than four months.

Survey questionnaires

Student questionnaire

Student questionnaire was contrived to elicit information on the respondents' English learning background, attitudes towards essay writing and suggestions to improve the teaching and learning of essay writing performance. There were 10 questions divided into two parts in student questionnaire. The first three questions were meant to gain better understanding of the respondents' English learning background including gender, age, the time they began to learn English. The next seven questions were in the form of ended and open-ended questions: the former requested the students to tick their selected answers or put their choice in a priority order while the latter provided appropriate space for the subjects to write in. Each section of student questionnaire was designed to serve a certain purpose:

- The first three questions were designed to elicit the students' perception of the importance of writing skill and their habit of writing practice. The purpose is to identify how frequently the students practice their writing: never practice, write as required; and to assert whether essay writing is an indeed difficult task.
- The next four questions which were designed based on the criteria of a well-formed essay from the perspective of Steve Peha's read-like-a-writer approach such as rubric 1) organization, 2) ideas, 3) word choice, 4) sentence fluency and 5) convention

Teacher questionnaire

There were 12 questions divided into two parts in Teachers' questionnaire. The first part, which included five questions for the subjects' gender, age, educational background, years of teaching, and whether they have taught writing, helped the researcher eliminate the answers given by those who did not meet the requirements of the study. The second part consisted of seven questions which were the same as the second part's seven questions in student questionnaire.

C. Experimental Teaching

In the control group, the syllabus was designed to cover all the requirements of the course, that is, it would mention all the types of academic essays throughout the main course book "*Refining Composition Skills: Rhetoric and Grammar for ESL students*" by Smalley and Ruetten (1986) with the reading comprehension questions added to help the students understanding the texts.

In the experimental group, the syllabus was designed to ensure totally that (1) the requirements of the course was sufficiently met, like what was done in the control group and (2) the part of applying the critical and analytic questions designed based on the perspective of writer so as to be considered as read-like-a-writer way.

Therefore, Steve Peha' read-like-a-writer approach was applied in the teaching of experimental group. Accordingly, the criteria of the approach such as organization, ideas, word choice, voice, sentence fluency and convention were taught in the form of questions for writing exploration.

During nine weeks of learning, both groups were fundamentally taught the same general knowledge about essay: introduction to the essay, six basic academic types of essay. It was worth to note that the first chapter was well taken care of because this was the orientation chapter in which students were taught about what to do and how to do it throughout the course. Another thing to note was that the two classes were taught exactly the same in the first week to ensure the validity of the pretest they would do the week later. And from the third week, the two classes will study differently with the application of Steve Peha's read-like-a-writer approach for the experimental group.

IV. Results and Discussions

A. Writing Test Results

Criteria based analysis of writing tests

TABLE 1.
CRITERIA BASED ANALYSIS OF PRETEST AND POSTTEST

No.	Criteria		09B - control group (30 students)		09E - experimental group (33 students)	
			Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
1	Organization	Cannot state the problem	10 (33.3%)	3 (10%)	12 (36%)	4 (12%)
		Not have a thesis statement	11 (36.3%)	3 (10%)	12 (36%)	3 (9%)
2	Ideas	Not have logical ideas	11 (36.3%)	5 (16.5%)	14 (42%)	1 (3%)
		Cannot narrow topic	10 (33.3%)	5 (16.5%)	13 (39%)	2 (6%)
3	Word choice	Use basic and known vocabulary	14 (46.2%)	4 (13.2%)	16 (48%)	5 (15%)
		Translation form Vietnamese	22 (76.6%)	10 (33.3%)	26 (78%)	12 (36%)
4	Sentence fluency	Unnatural linking	12 (39.6%)	8 (26.4%)	15 (45%)	10 (30%)
		Limited variety of sentences	20 (66%)	12 (39.6%)	22 (66%)	10 (30%)
5	Convention	Error in grammar	16 (52.8%)	9 (29.7%)	19 (57%)	11 (33%)
		Misspelling and inappropriate punctuation	13 (42.9%)	6 (19.8%)	16 (48%)	6 (18%)

Analysis of organization

In the pretest, Class 09B has 10 students (33.3%) which cannot state the problems and 11 students (36.3%) which cannot write the thesis statement of the assigned topic. Meanwhile, among 12 students (36%) of Class 09E, 10 students (33.3%) cannot state the problems and 11 students (36.3%) cannot write the thesis statement of the assigned topic. It seems 09B-ers are slightly better than 09E-ers in the pretest.

In the posttest, however, in spite of the number of students of 09B and 09E respectively 3 (10%) and 4 (12%) cannot state the problem; there are the same with 3 students in each class that cannot write the thesis statements. It means that the students in 09E can get marginal improvement in organization of the writing essay rather than students of 09B.

Analysis of ideas

In the pretest, there are 36.3% (11 students) cannot have logical ideas for their writing and 33.3% (10 students) cannot narrow down the given topic in 09B. And 09E has 42% (14 students) cannot have logical ideas for their writing and 39% (13 students) cannot narrow down the given topic. It shows that 09B-ers are also a little bit better than 09E-ers in identifying the ideas for the essay writing.

Nevertheless, 09E can create a dramatically change in the posttest: there are only one (1) student that did not have logical ideas and 2 students who cannot narrow the topic; whereas there are 5 (16,5%) students cannot have logical ideas for their writing and 5 (16,5%) students cannot narrow down the given topic in Class 09B.

It is possible to say that after nine weeks studying the two different syllabuses which were designed for these two groups: 09B-control group and 09E-experimental group, the 09E-ers can receive more input from the application of Steve Peha' s read-like-a-write approach in learning writing than 09B-ers that just studied without the association of the read-like-a-writer approach.

Analysis of word choice

The ability of 09E-ers of choosing appropriate words for their writing in the pretest also indicates that they were not as good as 09B-ers. 48% (16 students) of 04B only use the basis simple vocabulary which they already knew before and 78% (26 students) translate their writing exactly from Vietnamese and they really did not care about which word can be used in such situations. While 09B also has the same phenomenon but with a smaller number; only 14 students (46,2%) use the basis simple vocabulary and 22 students (72,6%) translate their writing from Vietnamese.

In the posttest, both the two classes have some improvements in word choice for essay writing. It reveals the theory of "reading having influence on writing" can work effectively in the integrated reading-writing classroom when the percentages of students of the two classes of the study are nearly the same.

Analysis of sentence fluency

It is similar to the analysis of Word choice, the number of the students of both classes have mistakes in this part of pretest is rather high. It is up to 12 09B-ers (39.6%) cannot link the sentences naturally because they usually used some common conjunctions for instance "and, but" ,etc.; and 20 09B-ers are short of the ability to use varied sentence structures; instead they used basis, simple and short sentences that make their writing unsmooth and incoherent. So do 09E-ers. There are 15 students (45%) lacking the natural linking of the writing and 22 students (66%) use simple and short sentences in order to avoid the errors in grammar and structures.

Again in the posttest, the performances of 09E-ers can ensure the effective implement of Steve Peha' approach because they can improve more than 09B-ers. There are only 10 students (30%) who cannot know how to link their sentences naturally. That means 15% (45% - 30%) students who had such mistakes decreased. Class 09B still had 8 students who linked their sentences unnaturally with the decreasing of 13.2% (39.6% - 26.4%) in comparison with 15% of Class 09E.

Especially, the students who can merely use some limited variety of sentences of Class 09E considerably decrease from 66% (22 students) to 30% (10 students). Meanwhile, Class 09B has 12 students (39.6%) who had such mistakes, decreasing 26.4% (66% - 39.6%) in comparison with 36% (66% - 30%) of Class 09E.

Analysis of convention

In both two classes, the numbers of the students who have errors in grammar are high in the pretest: 16 students (52,8%) in Class 09B and 19 (57%) in Class 09E. Also with the errors in using inappropriate punctuation and misspelling, 09B-ers occupy 42.9% (13 students) and 09E-ers are 16 students (48%).

However, in the posttest, both of them can get progress: there are 9 09B-ers (29.7%) have errors in grammar and 6 09B-ers (19,8%) use inappropriate punctuation and misspelling. While there are 11 09E-ers (33%) have errors in grammar and 6 09E-ers (18%) use inappropriate punctuation and misspelling.

In a nutshell, this analysis shows that in the pretest, the students seemed to struggle with their performances. 09B-ers resorted to translating the ideas that appeared suddenly in their minds from Vietnamese structures and 09E-ers left many sentences unfinished due to the lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge or the inability in using word choice for appropriate words, or simply the unfamiliarity with writing an essay following a strictly obliged English style format or organization. Moreover, in terms of sentence fluency, very few students from both classes could compose fluent sentences with correct punctuation and spelling. This was understandable since these aspects were not taught or corrected carefully in the previous writing course.

Also, from this analysis, the difference between 09B-ers and 09E-ers was that 09B-ers were more focused on expressing all the current ideas in their minds in English. Although this resulted in falling back on L1 structures and lexicon to express ideas in L2, this attempt suggested that generally 09B-ers were more motivated to elaborate on their writing performance. And as they tended to write much, they tended to show more and more grammar mistakes on the long run.

09E-ers, on the other hand, seemed to be more "passive" in their attempt to express their ideas in English. This resulted in the fact that they could not elaborate much on their writing performance. This advantage was that they did not have to fall back on L1 to express their ideas and they seemed to take a good control of the grammar. But their writing performances were poor in English.

By and large, in terms of language use, it can be said that 09B-ers were little better than 09E-ers at first. However, after the implementation of the read-like-a-writer-enhanced syllabus, the writing performances of 09E-ers were much better while the writing performance of 09B-ers in general did not improve much.

Analysis of writing test scores

The pretest scores reveal that 09E-ers are generally not as good as 09B-ers. In fact, the gap is slightly big between the two classes. While 42.4% of 09E-ers scored from 4 to below 5, only 13.3% of 09B-ers did. And while the percentage of 09E-ers who scored from 5 to below 6 was little higher than that of 09B-ers (42.4% compared to 40%), more 09B-ers got into the 6-to-below-7 range (36.7%, as compared to 9.1% that is 4 times difference). The majority of 09E-ers scored from 4 to below 6, while the majority of 09B-ers scored from 5 to below 7. The percentage of exceptional students who scored above 7 in the pretest in both classes were basically the same (with that of Class 09B was a bit higher, 6.7% compared to 6.1% in Class 09E).

The posttest scores show a significant change in the experimental class. While the percentage of students who scored from 4 to below 5 in 09B remains the same, 27.2% (42.4% - 15.2%) less of 09E-ers' scores belonged to this range. Moreover, 18.2% (60.6% - 42.4%) more of 09E-ers scored from 5 to below 6 and the percentage of 09E-ers who scored from 6 to below 7 doubled, while the number remains the same in Class 09B. There is, in Class 09E, a shift from the concentration of scores in the range of 4 below to 6 to the range of 5 below to 7. This improvement shift cannot be seen in Class 09B where the score concentration is still in the 5-to-below-7 range. So, while most 09E-ers performed less well in the pretest, more of them wrote better in the posttest. As 09E-ers practiced to write less and read more during the course because they had to spend their time answering the questions for writing exploration, which were

designed to be added in the experimental syllabus, the improvement of Class 09E could be considered as the result of more reading-to-write input they received, which was beneficial to their writing skill.

However, more students in Class 09B got the range of above 6 than those in Class 09E in the posttest. A closer look reveals that many more students scored from 6 and above in Class 09B (43.4% = 36.7% + 6.7%) than in Class 09E (only 15.2% (9.1% + 6.1%)), almost one-third) in the pretest. The posttest result shows that Class 09B got 50% (36.7% + 13.3%) 6-and-above scores (increasing 6.6%, from 43.4% = 36.7% + 6.7%0 to 50%) while Class 09E got 24.3% (18.2% + 6.1%) (increasing 9.1%, from 15.2% (9.1% + 6.1%) to 24.3%). So while the percentage of increase in Class 09E is slightly higher than that in Class 09B, the percentage is still higher in Class 09B because from the beginning, it is much higher already.

It appears so lucid that the possibility of scoring worse in the posttest of writing skill is unlikely because after nine weeks of exposure to English; instead, because the writing performances reveal the real level of the students, the scores in the posttest mostly stay the same or increase. So, this might explain why many more students in Class 09B scored above 6 than in Class 09E, notwithstanding the amount of reading-to-write input 09E-ers received. Basically, the class with more students with higher level finally has more students in a higher range. And once again, it shows that the read-like-a-writer approach does not benefit students of higher level as much as it does with students of lower level.

B. Responses from Questionnaires

Importance of writing

When being asked whether or not writing is important (Question 1), all 58 students (100%) and 8 teachers (100%) give a positive answer, which shows that they can evaluate the significance of writing because this is one of the basic acquired language skills. Answers to Question 1 indicate the reasons why writing is important (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.
REASONS WHY WRITING IS SO IMPORTANT

Question 1	Students' responses		Teachers' responses	
	Total check	%	Total check	%
Evaluate the students' English proficiency	3	5.1%	1	12.5%
Be essential for the future careers	5	8.5%	3	37.5%
Assist other English skills	12	20.3%	1	12.5%
Improve knowledge application	6	10.2%	2	25%
Reinforce grammar and enlarge vocabulary	38	64.4%	3	37.5%

Table 2 shows that most of the students (64.4%) believe that writing can help them reinforce grammar and enlarge vocabulary and one-fifth of them (20.3%) realize the relationship between writing and other language skills; to 37.5% of the teachers, be essential for future careers and reinforce grammar and increase vocabulary are two main reasons why writing skill is important.

Students' frequency of writing practice

Question 2 aims at finding out how often the student subjects practice writing outside class because practice is an indispensable factor in writing improving progress.

TABLE 3.
STUDENTS' FREQUENCY OF WRITING PRACTICE

Question 2	Students' responses		Teachers' responses	
	Total check	%	Total check	%
never practice	1	1.7%	1	12.5%
write as required	53	89.8%	7	87.5%
practice frequently	6	6.8%	0	0%
a. twice a week	2	3.4%	0	0%
b. four-five times a week	1	1.7%	0	0%
c. write diary	1	1.7%	0	0%
d. write about favorite topic once a week	2	3.4%	0	0%

Table 3 indicates that 53 students (89.8%) practice writing as instructed. The number of the students who frequently practice writing is low (only 6.8% in which 1.7% write four to five times a week and 1.7% write everyday in the form of diary). The teachers share this opinion: 87.5% state that their students only practice as required and 12.5% think that their students never do it. The teachers' and students' responses to Question 2 infer that the students' awareness of the importance of self-practice in L2 learning writing is insufficient.

Difficulty level of the essay writing

Question 3 aims to confirm whether or not the essay writing is indeed a difficult task.

TABLE 4.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL OF ESSAY WRITING

Question 3	Students' responses		Teachers' responses	
	Total check	%	Total check	%
Difficult	55	94.8	8	87.5
Not difficult	3	6	0	12.5

Table 4 proves that almost all the students (93.2%) and the teachers (87.5%) perceive the difficulty of essay writing. It can be obvious that it requires a painstaking effort and time to teach and learn how to compose a good essay

Criteria for a well-formed essay

Presented in Figure 1 and Figure 2 are the answers to question 4. Criteria are placed in their order of importance for measuring how good an essay is in which 1 is the most important criterion.

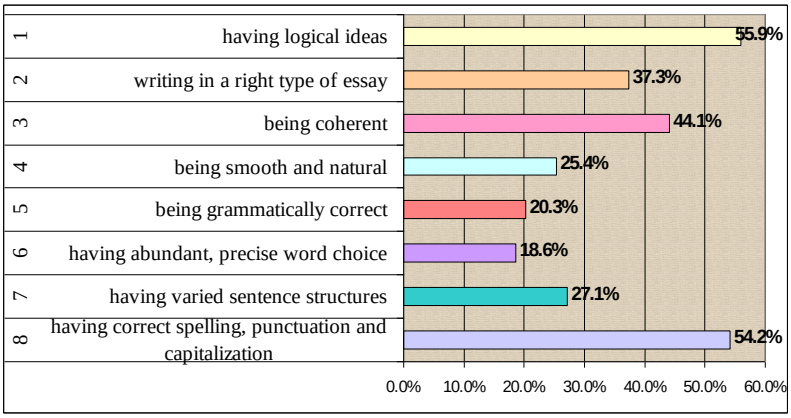

Figure 1. Students' responses to criteria for a well-formed essay

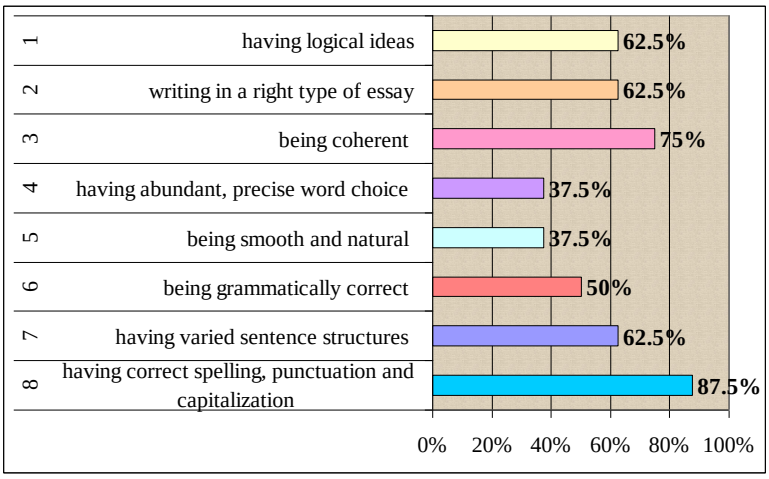

Figure 2. Teacher's responses criteria for a well-formed essay

Figure 1 and Figure 2 show that students and teachers share almost the same idea about the order of importance in which criteria for measuring how good an essay is occur:

+ "*having logical ideas*" is considered the most important criterion of a well-formed essay (55.9% of the students and 62.5% of the teachers rank it the first).

+ "*writing in a right type of essay"* is ranked the second (37.3% of the students and 62.5% of the teachers) because it is the common characteristic and it helps the reader follow the writer's ideas more easily.

+ *"being coherent", "being grammatically correct" and "having varied sentence structures"* are of relative significance as they attain the third, the fifth and the seventh position respectively.

+ *"having correct spelling punctuation and capitalization"* does not considerably affect the quality of the essay as much as 54.2% of the students and 87.5% of the teachers put it in the eighth position.

+ *"being smooth and natural" and "having abundant and varied word choice"* are valued differently by the teachers and the students: the students rank them the fourth position and the sixth position respectively while the teachers rank them the other way round.

Degree of difficulties encountered by the student writers

The subjects' responses to Question 5 illustrated by Figure 3 and Figure 4 help to come up with difficulties encountered by the student writers. Figure 3 shows the degree of difficulties responded by the students in writing an essay in which 1 is the difficulty they encounter most.

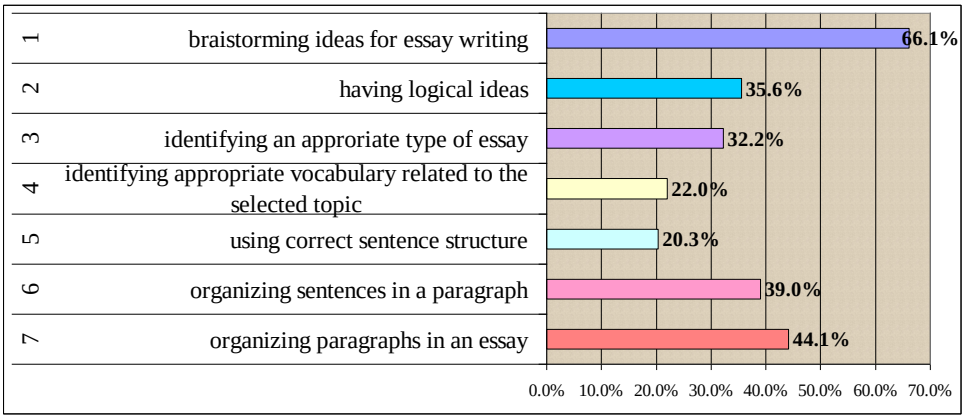

Figure 3. The degree of difficulties responded by the students in essay writing

Figure 4 shows the degree of difficulties responded by the teachers in writing an essay in which 1 is the difficulty they encounter most.

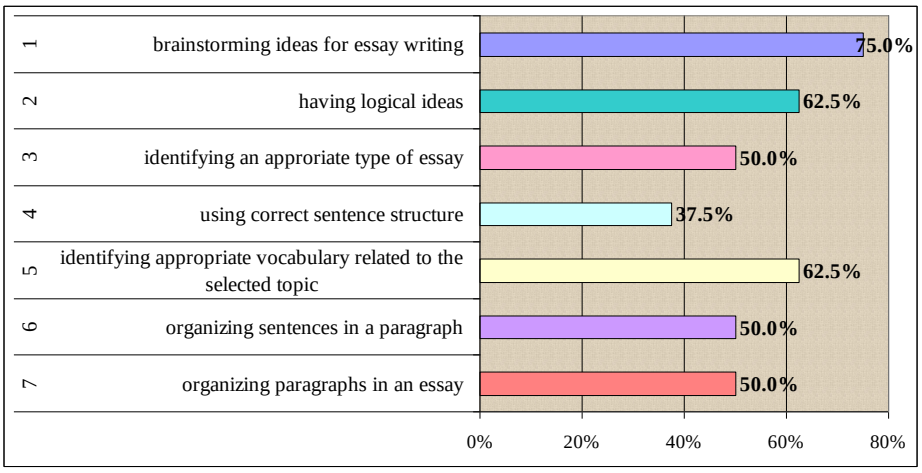

Figure 4. The degree of difficulties responded by the teachers in essay writing

+ *"Brainstorming ideas for essay writing"* is considered the most difficult by 66.1 % of the students and 75% of the teachers. Knowing what to say, which is usually done in pre-writing stage, is almost always the students' big problem. At this stage, the students are supposed to generate as well as determine ideas to convince their reader that their viewpoint is right.

+ *"having logical ideas"* is ranked the second obstacle of essay writing by 35.6% of the students and 62.5% of the teachers. It is not surprising as logical idea is the essay's prominent characteristic. In order to convince their reader, the students have to prove themselves as good writers by showing logical thinking.

+ *"identifying the appropriate type of essay"* is considered the third difficulty by 32.2% of the students and 50% of the teachers. This is reasonable because Vietnamese students are not familiar with writing in a direct way, they tend to write as much as possible what they can conceive without attending to the requirements for such types of essays.

+ *"identifying appropriate vocabulary related to the given topic"* and *"using correct sentence structure"* are evaluated variously by the teachers and the students: while the two are ranked the third and the fourth difficulty in writing the essay respectively by 22% and 20.3% of the students, the teachers rank the two the other round.

Reasons why the students are not good at writing

The subjects' responses to Question 6 in Figure 5 and Figure 6 aim to identify why the students are not good at writing.

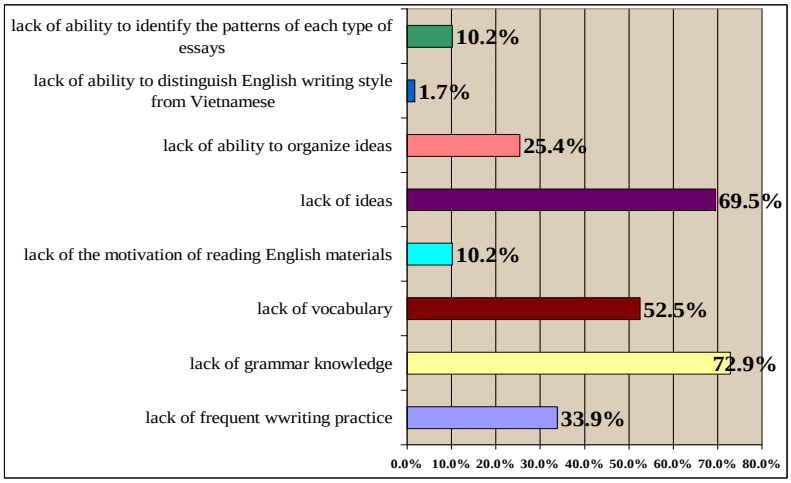

Figure 5. Reasons responded by students why students are not good at essay writing

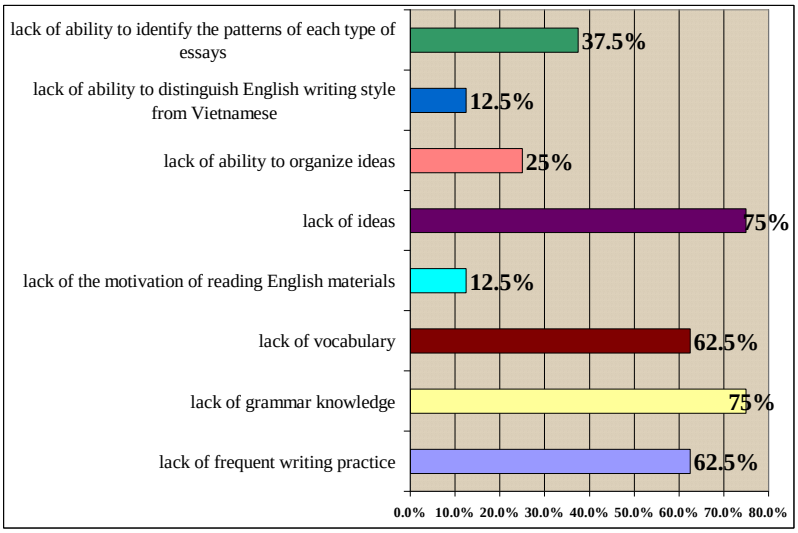

Figure 6. Reasons responded by teachers why students are not good at essay writing

Figure 5 and Figure 6 divulge that

+ *"lack of grammar knowledge", "lack of ideas", "lack of frequent writing practice"* and *"lack of vocabulary"* are considered by both the students and the teachers as the students' four most common reasons for their failure to gain competence in writing.

+ *"lack of ability of identifying the patterns of each type of essays"* is regarded as the fifth reason by 10.3% of the students and 37.5% of the teachers. The different percents infer that the students evaluate their grasp of each type of essay patterns higher than the teachers do.

Suggestions to improve the teaching and learning of writing

Suggestions to students

The subjects' responses to Question 7 as shown in Figure 7 and Figure 8 give light to what the students should do to improve their learning of writing.

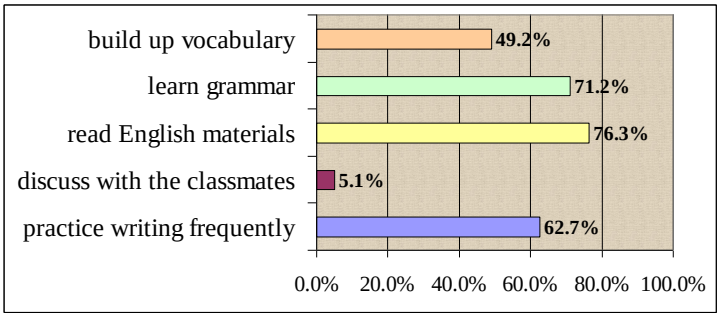

Figure 7. Students' suggestions to improve the students' learning writing

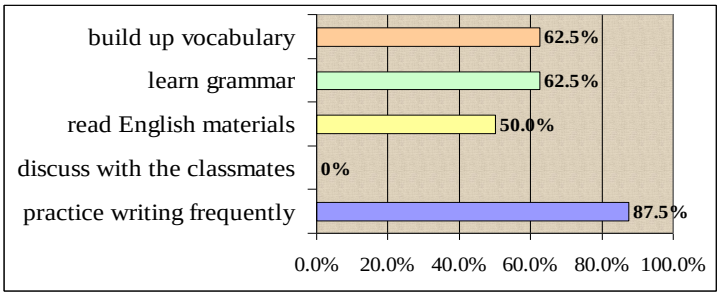

Figure 8. Teachers' suggestions to improve the students' learning writing

+ *"Practice writing frequently"* is proposed by 62.7% of the students and 87.5% of the teachers as a way to improve the students' writing. Suffering from their limited time for essay writing and lack of skills for self-study, not many of the student subjects are eager to practice writing by themselves out of class, especially without any guidance from their teacher; in contrast, the teacher subjects consider self-study essential at tertiary education.

+ *"Learn grammar"* is supported by 71.2% of the students and by 62.5% of the teachers as grammar incompetence is considered the most common reason affecting the students' writing.

+ *"Build up vocabulary"* is offered by 49.2% of the students and 62.5% of the teachers which are nearly the same as the percent of the students and the teachers who admit that lacking vocabulary prevents the students from gaining competence in writing.

+ *"Read English materials"* is recommended by 76.3% of the students and 50% of the teachers, which is contrary to small percents of the students and the teachers who acknowledge the lack of reading English materials for the students' failure to gain competence in writing. The difference may infer that both of the student and teacher subjects evaluate the usefulness of reading English in helping the students enlarge vocabulary and gather ideas for writing.

Suggestions to teachers

Figure 9 and Figure 10 propose what the teachers should do to improve their students' writing competence.

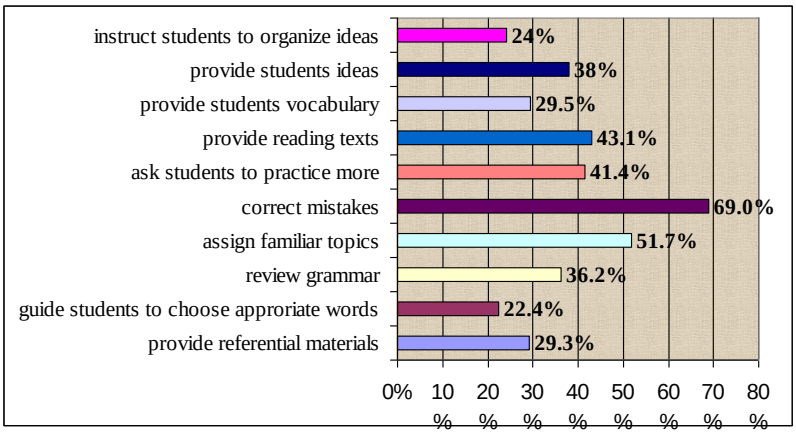

Figure 9. Students' suggestions to teachers to improve the students' learning writing

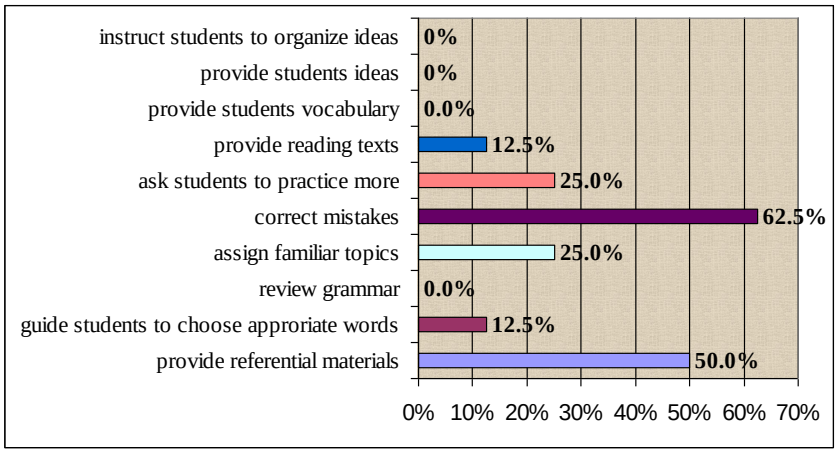

Figure 20. Teachers' suggestions to teachers to improve the students' learning writing

+ *"Correct mistakes"* is proposed by 69% of the students and 62.5% of the teachers with more or less the same hope that the students can avoid making the mistakes.

+ *"Provide referential materials"* is suggested by 29.3% of the students and 50% of the teachers. The different percents show that the teachers evaluate the usefulness of reference materials more than the students do, especially in gathering ideas and enlarging vocabulary.

+ "*Ask students to practice writing more"* is recommended by 41.4% of the students and 25% of the teachers: on the one hand, the students suggest this to compensate for their lack of skills for self-study; on the other hand, the teachers do not have much time to correct their students' essays, hesitating to assign topics for homework.

+ *"Provide reading texts"* is offered by 43.1% of the students and 12.5% of the teachers. As finding and analyzing model essays are time-consuming, the teachers are reluctant to apply it in writing classes while the students find the usefulness of analyzing model essays to improve their writing.

+ *"Provide students ideas"* and *"provide students vocabulary"* related to the given topic are supported by 38 % and 25.9% of the students respectively. However, none of the teachers propose them. On the one hand, the students assume that the teachers' providing ideas and vocabulary related to the given topic can facilitate the students' writing. On the other hand, the teachers consider that this may leave the students with a false impression that their lack of ideas and vocabulary does not affect their writing essays as they really do in reality, especially when the students take examination.

+ *"Review grammar"* is suggested by 36.2% of the students. However, none of the teachers propose it as for the fourth-year students reviewing grammar is their own duty.

V. Concluding Remarks

The conclusion drawn from the questionnaire analysis of the teachers' and the students' responses towards the problems facing the fourth-year students of Ho Chi Minh City University of Finance-Marketing in writing essays was rather the same implications as the mutual understanding between the teachers and the students which helps the teachers design their lesson plans suitable for the students' needs. The difference between teachers and student subjects in proposing suggestions to improve the students' writing demonstrates the teachers' enthusiasm insufficiency and the students' passive role in the teaching and learning of writing – a time-and-effort consuming work.

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The Exploring Nature of Methodology in the Current Studies of Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) with Focus on Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) of Rebecca L. Oxford

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***Abstract*—There is not a method abandoned as what it might be called a baby-and-bathwater type reaction. Still all the methods have failed to deliver quit the hoped-for miracles. In this way, methodology alone can never be a solution to find what is searching. Rather it is an aid and suggestion. In addition, in the case of methodology, it is true that we are moving in risky area. Research on the related literature of Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) shows that LLSs has a history of only thirty years that is much sporadic (Chamot, 2005a). Recently such strategies have been the focus of specific research (Oxford, 1990), and much of the research was descriptive. The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning(SILL) of Rebecca L. Oxford which is a kind of self-report questionnaire, as an important instrument to measure LLSs, has been used extensively by researchers in many countries, its reliability has been checked in multiple ways, and has been reported as high validity, reliability, and utility(Oxford, 1996a). In the current study, the investigator aims to explore nature of methodology and the use of SILL in the studies of LLSs.**

***Index Terms*—language learning strategies, self-report questionnaires, strategy inventory for language learning, methodology in the studies of language learning strategies**

I. Introduction

One of the human nature characteristics is interesting in research on the related human characteristics. Such research includes two types of approaches that are qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative studies include experimental and non-experimental designs. Each of these approaches and designs has some base of theoretical framework, particular applications, and special methodology. In quantitative research, the goal is to explore the relationship between some variables in terms of research questions or hypotheses.

A literature of research was conducted to identity published and unpublished related sources. The related literature of Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) shows that there are several methods of gathering data. These methods include interview (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper & Russo, 1985;Wenden1986), think-aloud (Anderson & Vandergrift, 1996; Cohen & Hosenfeld,1981), questionnaire (Bialystok, 1981; Ehrman & Oxford,1990; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989;Ramirez,1986), Dairies (Oxford, Lavine, Felkins, Hollaway & Saleh,1996; Rubin,1975; Tyacke & Mendelsohn1986), observation (O'Malley et al.,1985; Stern,1975), list (Stern, 1975), and so on.

II. Self-report Questionnaires in the Studies of LLSs

In the most studies of LLSs, a self-report questionnaire is chosen as a basic instrument, because it is possible to use this kind of questionnaire to survey a large number of participants in manner that would be practicing almost impossible using any other method. Questionnaire is used as one of the most widely data-elicitation tool (Goa, 2004). In addition, it is used by many researchers (Bialystok, 1981; Ehrman & Oxford, 1990; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Ramirez, 1986). High reliable questionnaires are preferred because we can be sure that, we will get the same result each time we measure the same thing. However if questionnaire is not reliable, we do not know if the changes in the scores are due to changes in the person we are measuring or to some type of error in testing process; in such way, the use of questionnaire is not without criticism.

There are three ways of using self-administered questionnaire instruments. Firstly, using the available questionnaire without any change; secondly, using adapted questionnaire; thirdly, developing new questionnaire.

Based on the availability and characteristics, one researcher will choose one of these questionnaire types. If the same questionnaire has tested for its psychological parameters, it is possible to use it as what it is, and without any change. Nevertheless, since in cross-cultural research, some changes are needed in order to avoid some problems. However, there is lack of cultural sensitivity (Kember, Wong & Leung, 1999). Sometimes, because of lack of particular questionnaire, and dominance of particular situation, one researcher develops new questionnaire.

III. Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Initially SILL used in North America with foreign language learners by different researchers such as Ehrman and Oxford(1989) and Oxford and Nyikos(1989) , and it increasingly used in Asia-Pacific region by researchers such as Yang(1999), Hiso and Oxford(2002), and Griffiths(2003).

Two versions of SILL are available. The first one is used with individuals who their native language is English, and they are learners of other languages than English. It is consists of 80 items (Version 5.1). The second one is used with learners of English as a second or foreign language. It is consists of 50 items (Version 7.0).

In the current study, the later one is discussed. SILL includes Memory Strategies(9 items), Cognitive Strategies(14 items), Compensation Strategies(6 items), Metacognitive Strategies(9 items), Affective Strategies(6 items), and Social Strategies(6 items).

The SILL is a structured survey (Oxford, 1990), which according to Oxford and Nyikos (1989) the strategies which are included in SILL are gathered from extensive literature review. In addition, Oxford (1996a) claims in general, SILL reliabilities have been high, and the reliability remains "very acceptable" (Oxford & Bury-Stock, 1995, p.6). Moreover, Green and Oxford (1995) remark that reliability using cronbach alpha ranging from .93 to .95 depending whether the survey is taken in learner's own language or in target language. Regarding validity, Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) point out that the all types of validity are very high. Moreover, factor analysis of SILL is confirmed by many studies (Hsiao & Oxford, 2002; Oxford, 1996a; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995).In this way, as Ellis (1994) believes Oxford's taxonomy is possibly the most comprehensive currently available. Several empirical studies have been found moderate intercorrelation between the items of six categories in SILL (Oxford & Ehrman, 1995). Moreover Oxford (1996b) presents "each sub-scale would have an adequate number of items to facilitate more in-depth understanding of the learning strategies" (p.3).

The SILL has been used in various studies to show how much strategy use correlate with various variables such as gender, learning style, proficiency level, task, and culture (Bedell & Oxford,1996;Bruen,2001; Green & Oxford,1995; Oxford, Cho ,Leung & Kim,2004; Nyikos & Oxford,1993; Oxford & Burry-Stock,1995; Wharton,2000). In addition, Chamot (2005b) claims that SILL is a standard measure, and point that is more important, the most descriptive studies are based on the Oxford's SILL. In this way, SILL allows easy comparison with other studies and helps the researchers to conclude their studies' results in comparison with the results which were found by the other related studies in the literature. Such results can support each other in the way to that it is useful and helpful for suggestion of pedagogical implications.

The SILL has used with learners of English who ate native speakers of different languages such as Chinese, French, Germen, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Thai, and Turkish (Oxford, 1990). Moreover, its reliability reported in many studies as high reliability in different languages (Abu Shamis, 2004; Grainger, 1997; Griffiths, 2002; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Park, 1997; Sharp, 2008; Szu-Hsin, Ting-Hui & Tzu-Ying, 2006; Yang, 2007).

The SILL is self-scoring, and paper and pencil survey. It is 5-point scale range from "never or almost never" to "always or almost always". Currently Oxford and her colleagues are developing a task-based questionnaire to complement SILL (Oxford, Cho, Leung & Kim, 2004).

Initially, Oxford adapted a version of Rubin's direct/indirect distinction. Oxford (1990) argues, "Direct and indirect strategies are equally important and serve to support each other in many ways (p.12).

As Oxford (1990) points out there is thirty minutes of time in order to administrate SILL. The evaluation for the answer is varied between 1 to 5. For the missing answers, if it was possible, the researcher may ask the respondents to answer them. The respondents are asked to respond the items honestly, answer all the items, and mark their response in correct spaces. In addition, there is no need to have formal training in applied linguistics, psychology, or related fields in order to administrate and score this instrument. However, in keeping with the standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, interpretation of SILL requires professional training in psychological testing and measurement such as reliability.

The respondents are asked to choice the statement which how true of them it is. They are told that answer must be in terms of how well the statement describes them. In addition, they are told that there is no right or wrong answer to these statements.

The focus of instructions is on this state that respondents understand what they are supposed to do. The following instructions are given to respondents:

1. This questionnaire should take about some particular duration of time to complete SILL; 2. There is possible to ask any question about the words and statements that they do not understand; 3. This questionnaire is not a test of respondents' English language proficiency.

IV. English Language Proficiency Test in the Studies of LLSs

Since generally there is significant impact of English language proficiency on overall academic achievement of students (Fakeye & Ogunsiji,2009), and specifically there is relationship between strategy use and language proficiency (Abu Shmais,2004), therefore because of nature the use of English LLSs, there is need for a general English proficiency

test for determining the proficiency level of participants in English in order to minimize the effect of English language proficiency on the results which are caused from such English language proficiency.

Determining proficiency in language learning for speakers of other languages is not easy endeavor, and has been discussed by experts (Bachman, 1990; Farhady, 1982). In various studies, language performance levels have been based on scores on norm-referenced or criterion-referenced tests (Bremner,1999; Dereyer & Oxford, 1995; Green & Oxford,1995), scores decided by teachers (Chamot & El-Dinary,1990; Chamot & Kupper,1989) or self-ratings by learners (Wharton,2000). Even the extensively used Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and the others are not universally accepted as a reliable or valid measure of proficiency.

Usually there are some problems in administration of language proficiency test such as time limitation for administration of full parts of language proficiency test, difficulty of permission to administrate full parts of language proficiency test.

It must bear in mind that the classification of levels in proficiency language of participants in one study is as Jafarpour (2001) defines "the percent classification of subjects by the experimental test that corresponds to those by the criterion" (pp. 32-33) (as cited in Golkar & Yamini, 2007).

V. Background Questionnaire in the Studies of LLSs

Based on some indicators such as the parents' socio-educational background and occupation, sex, age, mother tongue, the general average of results of pervious semester; participants are matched as closely as possible for socio-economic background to minimize the effect of social class

VI. Procedure of Adaptation of Instruments in the Studies of LLSs

In adaptation of instruments from one language to another in research works, some problems occur, such as the problem of translation one questionnaire to another language (Perera & Eysenck, 1984).

It must bear in mind that translation/back translation is one of more effective ways to solve the equivalent concepts of translated and original version of one questionnaire (Behring & Law, 2000), and one researcher can be ideal translator if she or he is fluent in target language.

There is need for some linguists, psychologist, or other professional people who are professional in the fields of related to the questionnaires which are supposed to be translated and adapted. Such people must fully proficient in both languages that the translation is supposed to be down between them. In this way, they are asked to check translated version of questionnaires in order to check the consistency with original version of them. Secondly, since such people are professional in related study of questionnaires, they are asked to check the psychometrics of questionnaires. Whenever full agreement among such people is achieved, and pilot study confirms the items of questionnaires, such questionnaires will be administrated in main study.

VII. Pilot Study

Before administration of main study, pilot study is needed to be administrated. The pilot study as "A small-scale replica and a rehearsal of the main study" (Riazi, 1999, p.198) is carried out to achieve the following objectives:

a) To check whether the translated items of questionnaires are understood correctly as the original versions; b) To analyze acceptance degree of psychometrics of adapted version in order to use them as valid and reliable instruments in order to measure what one researcher aims to investigate; c) To test suitability of research methods which are used in order to use research instruments; d) Although all the instruments have provided with needed requirements by the researchers who develop them, but there is need to estimate needed time, cost, and the other requirements to administrate main study; e) To get feedback in order to revise questionnaires to balance between spoken and written forms of the translated language. In such way, the participants can feel the meaning of the items so much better.

The sample for pilot study was selected so as it represents entire sample for participants whom asked to participate in main study. Moreover, sample size in pilot study ranges from 20 to bigger of 65(Hinkin, 1998).

It is better, in pilot study, at each stage, after participants completed the stage, they are engaged in an informal conversation in their mother tongue. The participants are asked to discuss regarding difficulties at that stage. Based on this type of discussion, the researcher will be aware of the comments in details of the participants in the pilot study.

All the suggested comments are written as a particular list of comments. Such list is checked by the researcher to categorize its items in different categories. Moreover such list is discussed with the those people professional in related fields in order to apply them and affect the instruments of the study. All the suggestions of these people were applied up to everybody agrees upon. The revised instruments are shown to some of participants who participated in the pilot study in order to finalize them.

VIII. Data Collection Procedures

During data collection, it is better that

a) The instruments are administrated during class time and based on the availability of the participants; b) The researcher, herself/himself, administrate the instruments; c) All the participants participate in the study are explained the goals of study by the researcher; d) All the explanation of the materials is performed through mother tongue language of the participants; e) To increase the credibility of the response, the participants are asked that they should be honestly in their answers, and they should not spend too much time on any of the items; f) The respondents are asked to ask any question or doubt it they have; g) After completion of answering the questionnaires, the respondents are asked whether they answer all the items or not; and whether they mark their response in correct spaces or not. In each of both states, if the respondents did not answer all the items or not mark their responses in correct spaces, they are asked to revise those items, and answer those items or mark their responses in correct spaces; h) It must bear in mind that all the participants must be volunteer to participate in all stages of the study.

During data collection, the sample drawn from the population must be representative so as to allow the researchers to make inferences or generalization from sample statistics to population (Maleske, 1995). As Riazi (1999) presents "A question that often plagues the novice the researcher is just how large his sample should been order to conduct an adequate survey or study. There is, of course, no clear-cut answer" (pp.242-243). If sample size is too small, it is difficult to have reliable answer to the research questions. If sample is too large, it is difficulty of doing research. Moreover, number of participants may affect the appropriateness of particular tool (Cohen & Scott, 1996).

IX. Rationale for the Methods of Data Collection

There are various methods to collect data, such as survey tools and written questionnaire (Gu & Johnson, 1996; Fan,2003), interview (Gu 2003b; Parks & Raymond,2004), think-aloud or verbal reports (Anderson & Vandergrift,1996; Goh,1998; Nassaji,2003), diaries or dialogue journal (Carson & Longhini,2002;Oxford, Lavine, Felkins, Hollaway & Saleh, 1996), recolective narratives (Oxford, Lavine, Felkins, Hollaway & Saleh, 1996). Such measurements are used in the single form of method (separately) or as component methods (single set of methods) based on nature and goals of research works. For example, Griffiths (2004) used self-report (SILL) and interview in order to find the relationship between LLSs and proficiency in her research work. Rubin (1975) did by means of observing students in classrooms, talking to good language learners, and eliciting observation from teachers. However, one of the main difficulties in the study of LLSs is direct observation of LLSs (Griffiths, 2004).

Every one of these methods has specific structure and characteristics. For instance, according to Nunan (1992), interview vary from structured, through semi-structured to un- structured, and as Naiman, Frohlich, Stern and Todesco (1978) claim "the interview proved to be a useful research technique" (p.35). Moreover as O'Malley et al. (1985) state that "generally we had considerable success in identify learning strategies through interview" (p.35). Alternatively, the multiple-methods procedure has specific characteristics. For instance, it is used whenever the time is available. When the time is restricted, researcher should use the most reliable and valid strategy assessment measure (Oxford, 1996a). In this way, Cohen (1998), McDonough (1995), O'Malley and Chamot (1990) claim that each kind of data collection has its own limitation.

One of important methods is self-report method. Self-report is always subject to errors. For example since usually some of the strategy items are vague, and therefore open to differing interpretation, thereby possibly affecting reliability, it causes to the results, as Gu, Wen and Wu (1995) state that such results can be "dangerously inadequate and unreliable"(p.7). Nevertheless, there is not better method has been suggested to identify learner's mental process. In addition, as Dornyei (2003) points out advantages for self-report, as versatility, cost effectiveness, and efficiency in terms of staff and students time and effort. Moreover, most language research has favored the use of questionnaire, inventories, and survey because date can easily be collected by a large number of participants and analysis is uncomplicated (Cohen, 1998; Oxford, 1990, 1996b). Self-administered questionnaire may have much less interview bias (Gorard, 2001). In addition, as Cohen (1987) claims that LLSs are internal mental processes and not directly observable behavior. Their identification and description have relied greatly on learners' reports (as citied in Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999).

Although most research has employed multi-data collection for gathering and validating learning strategies (Ellis, 1994), and in order to amplify the quantitative questionnaire data, it is need to employ complementary qualitative data collection, as recommended by Chaudron (1986), but as O'Malley and Chamot (1990) point out the results of data collection procedure varied considerably when there are multi-data collection procedures.

At finally yet importantly, it must bear in mind that it is the best when one method is dictated by nature of the problem rather than academic fashion and prestige.

X. Data Analysis Procedures

In the most studies, the data obtained through the instruments is entered into database (Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software) to enable data analysis to be carried out.

In the analysis of data, it must description of the entire sample of participants, finding reliability and validity of instruments, correlation analysis between the independent variables and the dependent variables, checking of prediction of some variables through the other variables, and so on.

Data analysis includes different data analysis procedures. One of these procedures includes calculating descriptive statistics. Such descriptive statistics including range and mean of age of participants, reported frequency of strategy use, reliability of instruments, and so on. One of important issues in descriptive statistics is issue of reliability of the instruments for entire group. Internal consistency and test-retest reliability are the most commonly used methods to check the reliability of tests and measures (Costa & McCare, 1992). Moreover "Cronbach Alpha, a measure of internal consistency, was chosen as the most appropriate reliability index" (Oxford, 1996a, p.31), and it is identified to be an appropriate measure which is applied in order to estimate the reliability of items within one instrument (Pedhazur & Schemelkin, 1991.

The second procedure of data analysis includes Pearson Correlations that used to identify the strength and direction of the relationship between variables. As known to the researchers in the field, correlation does not imply causality, but it does provide a picture of relationships. Moreover, Pearson correlation cannot be used when one of two variables is nominal.

The third procedure of data analysis includes Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) that is an analytic tool. In non-experimental research, ANOVA does not show the same meaning as experimental research. In non-experimental research, ANOVA does not mean causality between the independent variables and the dependent variables when there is significant relationship. In this way, the use of ANOVA in non-experimental research is criticized if the goal is finding casual relationships (Johnson, 2001). Moreover the use of ANOVA in non-experimental is perfectly acceptable when the goal is not causality according to top statisticians (e.g. Johenson, 2001). In addition, ANOVA has been frequently used for many years in non-experimental research (Johnson, 2001).

ANOVA or F-test is used as a single or one-way, as two-way or as N-way analysis in order to compare more than two variables which are studied (Riazi,1999). Such comparison includes means (Mousavi, 1999). Depend on the type of research whether experimental or non-experimental research, the goal of ANOVA is varied.

In such way, correlation is used to find degree and direction of relationship between variables, and ANOVA test the significance of relationship.

The fourth procedure of data analysis includes multiple regression analysis. As Newton and Rudestan (1999) point out it is used to find relationship between multiple distributed independent variables and a single dependent variable. As Mousavi (1999) remarks regression analysis is "a statistical technique for estimating or predicting a value for a dependent variable from a set of independent variables"(p.320).

The fifth procedure of data analysis includes factor analysis in order to determine whether it is possible to divide the items of the questionnaire into sub-groups. As Riazi (1999) remarks factor analysis is "A statistical procedure for analyzing the intercorrelation among a number of measures that reduces the set to a smaller number of underlying factors" (p.97). In such procedure, it is assumed that there are probably one or more underlying factors (Mousavi, 1999). In addition, some more procedure of data analysis, exploratory factor analysis, is performed. Such factors are used for the adaptation of instrument or the development new instruments.

XI. Limitations of Methodology in the Studies of LLSs

All the education quasi-research deal with living human beings are occur out of laboratory conditions have limitations (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003).All the studies have several of limitations of methodology are ones common in the literature. Firstly, the need for a large scale.

Secondly, it is exclusive reliance on self-report responses to the questionnaires. Since the questionnaire is self-report and single source of information, it is not clear whether participants actively used the strategies, they indicated. Their response may not be just their beliefs and thoughts that they have about their use of strategies. In order to investigate students' actual use of strategies, the researchers must observe classes, use think-aloud procedure (introspection), interview, and so forth. Moreover, there may also have been some unclear points in questionnaires themselves. In addition, the vagueness of wording has been another persistent problem in using questionnaire (Gu, Wen & Wu, 1995). Another difficulty in cross-language research involves translation. In the case of SILL, SILL does not describe in detail the LLSs a student uses in responses to any specific language task.

The third one, there is an issue in the statistical procedures. The reliability estimates internal consistency may not be appropriate to measure something that could fluctuate in short period; however, it is popular in the studies of LLSs. The test-retest reliability measure is better indicator of reliability in this type of research.

The fourth issue, since measurements which are developed in the western countries may not be so successfully employed in the eastern countries, and many value measurements which are developed in western countries are not success to assess in eastern countries (Matthews, 2000; Schwartz, Malech, Lehmann, Burgess, Harris & Owens, 2001). In the case of used instruments, some limitations may disappear. Such limitations are as characteristics of cross cultural-research and its instruments.

XII. Conclusion

Research on the related literature of LLSs, shows that LLSs has a history of only thirty years which is much sporadic (Chamot, 2005a). Recently such strategies have been the focus of specific research (Oxford, 1990), and much of the research was descriptive.

Although each study employs some interesting methodology, but because of uncontrolled extraneous variables, certainly it is not conclusive and comprehensive results in nature. And it is rarely possible to adequately control for all variables in any natural research. In this way it is better that, it should be some research methods to corroborate results of each others.

There is need to have more higher psychometrics of instruments as possible which are used in study. For example, regarding questionnaires, the reliability must be on the threshold of .70 (de Vaus, 1995), but this is well possible that the participants should be tested on valid and reliable instruments (Chamot, 2005b). In this way, it must so much attention about this matter that the reliability must be more higher as possible and it must tested in reliable way.

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A Study of the Relationship between English Self-concept and Language Learning Strategies

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***Abstract*—The present study concentrated on the relationship between self-concept and language learning strategies. Participants of the study were 157 students from one University in Shandong, China. Quantitative data was collected through two questionnaires. The first one was the revised Chinese version of self-concept scale modified by Pan (2003) from Marsh's (1992) SQDII. Another inventory based on Oxford' classification system of learning strategies (SILL) was used to assess learner's strategy use. By the reliability analysis, it was found that all these coefficients were significantly high, and the two questionnaires were reliable respectively. Based on the detailed analysis of data, some major findings through statistical analysis of SPSS 13.0 were summarized as follows. First of all, the subjects' English self-concept was medium, and the subjects' English pronunciation self-concept was better than their general English self-concept and English speaking self-concept. Second, gender had no significant effects on the general English self-concept and English speaking self-concept. Finally, in terms of the relationship between English self-concept and language learning strategies, by Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regressions, it was concluded that general English self-concept, English speaking self-concept and English pronunciation self-concept had the highest correlation level with the cognitive strategy, and English pronunciation self-concept had the weakest correlation level with the memory strategy and compensatory strategy. The findings of the study imply that there are some pedagogical implications for English learning and teaching. At the same time, teachers should attach importance to enhancing students' English self-concept level in training their language learning strategies.**

***Index Terms*—English self-concept, language learning strategies, relationship**

I. Introduction

A. Background of the Study

Until now, more and more researchers have come to realize the importance of learning strategies and self-concept on ESL/EFL studies. However, the majority of previous studies on language learning strategies have focused mainly on one dominant modifiable variable, occasionally with reference to other unmodifiable variables such as gender and age. Meanwhile, individual learner variables interact with each other in the process of language teaching and learning, so it is necessary to have an overview on their interrelationships that are yet in shortage in reality.

Despite the fact that there have been empirical studies on factors that influence strategy use, and self-concept's influence on learning achievements, little has been done on the relationship between language learning strategies and English self-concept. Thus, more empirical ESL/EFL studies are in great need to explore such interrelationship, especially in different contexts. In recent years, second language learning strategies attract more and more researchers' (Bialystok, 1981b; Leino, 1982; Thomas & Gadbois, 2007; Watkins & Gerong, 1999; Wenden, 1991; William & James, 2002) attention. What makes them concern the aspect so much? According to Ellis (1994), learning strategies are the bridges that connect individual difference and environmental factors and the study results. The individual differences and environmental factors will decide the choice of learning strategies. Based on it, self-concept, as one factor of individual differences, will influence the choice of learning strategies. In Ellis's (1990) model of L2 acquisition, learning strategies play the mediating role between individual learner differences and learning outcomes. Individual learner differences (beliefs, affective states, general factors, and previous learning experiences) together with various situational factors determine the learners' choice of learning strategies.

During the past decades, researchers gave different definitions to self-concept from different perspectives. This study is based on the theory of Shavelson et al. (1976) who claimed that self-concept is "a person's self-perceptions formed through experience with and interpretations of his or her environment. They are influenced especially by evaluations by significant others, reinforcements, and attributions for the individual's own behavior" (p. 413).

Because Oxford's classification is perceived as most easily understood and the most readily accepted (Cheng Xiaotang & Zheng min, 2002), the present thesis is based on Oxford's classification of language learning strategies(LLSs). Oxford's (1990, pp. 17-22) taxonomy of LLSs is summarized in Table 1.1.

B. Rationale for the Study

For learners, their optimal learning potential may be compromised in the presence of overly negative self-concept. Self-concept, as a dynamic and motivating set of attitudes held about oneself (Burns, 1979), is promoted as an important

and focal object within the experience of each individual because of its primacy, centrality, continuity and ubiquity in all aspects of behaviors, mediating as it does in both stimulus and response.

Self-concept has to do with a person's perceptions and evaluations regarding himself or herself. It is a basic requirement for successful cognitive and affective activity. According to Marsh (1990), self-concept is formed through experience with and interpretations of environment. It develops when we are children and gradually learn to identify a self as distinct from others. As we incorporate beliefs, attitudes and memories, new experience and ideas will be affected by the previously existing notion of who we are and by our need to protect this fragile self. In addition, an individual concept of self is especially influenced by evaluations from significant others, reinforcements, and attributions for one's behavior.

Among the factors that influence learners in language learning, learning strategies are important roles. According to Nunan (1991), one of the characteristics of the "good" language learner is an ability to reflect on and articulate the processes underlying their own learning. Effective learners are aware of the processes underlying their own learning and seek to use appropriate learning strategies to control their own learning (Jones et al., 1987). More effective learners differ from less effective ones in their use of strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Students who are designated by their teachers as more effective learners use strategies more frequently, and use a greater variety of strategies than students who are designated as less effective.

Bialystok (1981b) found that Grade 10 and 12 learners of L2 French in Canada varied in the extent to which they believed that language learning involved formal as opposed to functional practice, and that this influenced their choice of strategies.

Wenden & Rubin (1987) also found that learners who emphasized the importance of learning tended to use cognitive strategies that helped them understand and remember specific items of language, while learners who emphasized the importance of using language employed few learning strategies, relying instead on communication strategies. Learners who stressed personal factors did not manifest any distinct pattern of strategy use.

Bialystok (1981) stated that aptitude was not as influential as learners' beliefs. However, it was possible that learners with enhanced decontextualized language skills (seen by Skehan (1989) as one aspect of aptitude) would be better able to talk about the strategies they used.

Leino (1982) pointed out that learners with high conceptual levels were better at describing their strategies than learners with low conceptual levels. It was possible, then, that learning strategies were related to that part of language aptitude shared with a general intelligence factor.

William and James (2002) pointed out that beginning readers' reported word identification strategies for identifying unfamiliar words in text were examined in relation to reading achievement, reading-related skills, and academic self-perceptions. Children who were participating in a three-year longitudinal study of reading acquisition in a whole language instructional context were placed in two groups according to their reported word identification strategies obtained towards the end of their first year of schooling. Results indicated that children who reported using wordbased strategies showed superior reading and reading-related performance, and reported more positive self-efficacy beliefs in reading and more positive academic self-concepts than children who reported using text-based strategies. The results were discussed in terms of predictions stemming from the different theoretical assumptions about reading acquisition that underlie the code-emphasis and whole language approaches to beginning reading instruction.

Although many researchers from home and abroad have made a lot of research to find out that there are significant differences of using learning strategies between the good learners and losers of examination, the research about individual and environmental factors' influences on learning strategies is little. In China, some research found out that English self-concept can influence learning strategies. Xu Jin and Zhao Jingbo (2006) conducted a survey among 598 medical sophomores of a medical university by using the self-concept questionnaire and strategy inventory of language learning. The results showed that self-concept had significant correlation with language learning strategies. It was concluded that during the training of language learning strategies, importance should be attached to enhancing English self-concept level.

Watkins and Gerong (1999) conducted a test about language of response and the spontaneous self-concept. Responses to the Twenty Statements Test were obtained from 166 Filipino secondary school children asked to respond either in English or Cebuano, their local language. Contrary to the cultural accommodation hypothesis, the respondents did not provide more independent self-references in the English language condition. Examination of responses indicated that when responding in English, the participants, particularly the males, were influenced by the school context. The females tended to provide more relational self-references.

Thomas and Gadbois (2007) examined students' self-esteem and self-concept clarity as well as their tendencies to employ deep- or surface-learning approaches and self-regulate while learning in relation to their self-handicapping tendencies and exam performance. Participants were 161 male and female Canadian, first-year university students. Participants completed a series of questionnaires that measured their self-esteem, self-concept clarity, approaches to learning, self-regulation and reflections on performance prior to and following their exam. The results were that self-handicapping was negatively correlated with self-concept clarity, deep learning, self-regulated learning and exam grades, and positively correlated with surface learning and test anxiety. Regression analyses showed that self-concept clarity, self-regulation, surface-learning and test anxiety scores predicted self-handicapping scores. Self-concept clarity,

test anxiety scores, academic self-efficacy and self-regulation were predictors of mid-term exam grades.

Previous studies have also shown that learners can not automatically know what strategies work best for them. For this reason, explicit strategy training, coupled with thinking about how one goes about learning and experimenting with different strategies, can lead to be more effective.

C. Purpose and Significance of the Study

In this study, learners' self-concept and language learning strategies were discussed. It was well known that the learners' self-concept would not only influence their choice of activities that they undertook, but also affect the amount of effort that they prepared to expend and their level of persistence. Language learning strategies also had an effect on language learning.

The main objective of this study was to reveal the characteristics of Chinese non-English majors in terms of their self-concept on English learning and the learning strategies they used, and to investigate the way gender influenced self-concept and LLSs. Moreover, it aimed at studying the relationship between self-concept and LLSs. With regard to the relations between English self-concept and language learning strategies, the findings of the research can be in line with the hypothesis that positive self-concept contributes significantly to learning strategies, and learners with high self-concept might use the learning strategies better than those with lower self-concept and thus achieve better performance.

The results of the study can contribute to a better understanding of English self-concepts Chinese college non-English majors hold about themselves in English learning, and thereby help teachers find effective ways to stimulate and enhance them. Demonstrating the relationship between self-concept and language learning strategies can subsequently lead to better performance in English.

To begin with, the study on relationship between self-concept and LLSs promotes a new perspective to research into LLSs and can enrich research on second/foreign language learning strategies and self-concept. In addition, the findings of this study might serve as a foundation for further studies on EFL strategy instruction and self-concept.

Second, this study can help Chinese non-key university English teachers better understand the characteristics of EFL students' self-concept and strategy use. The results on the relationship between self-concept and LLSs can instruct teachers to teach students different LLSs according to their self-concept. It is beneficial to EFL learning and teaching.

Third, the research might provide some theoretical implications for psychological research into the nature of self-concept.

All these considerations lead to the following research questions:

(1) What are the characteristics of Chinese non-English majors in terms of their self-concept on English learning and the learning strategies they use in English learning?

(2) If yes, what roles does gender play on the development of self-concept and on the use of specific strategies?

(3) What is the relationship between self-concept and learning strategies of Chinese non-English majors?

II. METHODOLOGY

The current study involved 157 students majoring in computer science and international trade and business in Shandong University of Finance. The sources of data of the study came from two questionnaires, one on English self-concept and the other is on language learning strategies. The questionnaire on self-concept is created by modifying the Academic Status Quo of High School Students (ASQHSS) developed mainly by Pan (2003) which itself is substantially based on the Self Description Questionnaire II (SDQII) by Marsh (1992). The second questionnaire is the measure of language learning strategies: SILL. All the items represent the concrete strategies used throughout the whole learning process rather than being associated with specific task (Cohen, 1998). The questionnaires were administrated during normal class time. Only two students did not respond to the questionnaires properly because of the contradiction. As a result, 155 questionnaires were valid and used for statistical analyses.

Before the statistical analyses were conducted, responses to all negatively worded items in English self-concept scale were first reversely scored so that higher scores reflected higher self-concept. Then the total scores of each subject's general English self-concept, English speaking self-concept, English pronunciation self-concept, were computed respectively. At the same time, the scores of each subject's learning strategies were put into the computer. Then all the related data were put into the computer and statistical analyses were conducted with SPSS 13.0.

As to the first research question, descriptive statistics was conducted to find out the overall situation of all participants' self-concept and learning strategies. Then an independent samples t-test was carried out to identify whether there were significant differences in the self-concept between males and females. Similar statistical procedures were used to analyze the data obtained from the SILL. Finally, the Pearson correlation and regression analysis were conducted to reveal whether there was a significant relationship between the self-concept and the use of learning strategies.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Characteristics on Self-concept and LLSs

As shown in Table 3.1, the mean scores (from 3.450 to 3.711) of both the specific and global measures of English self-concept indicated that Chinese college non-English majors did not hold high English self-concept. The mean scores of English pronunciation self-concept were found to be higher than those of English speaking self-concept and English general self-concept. So it meant that among the non-English major students' English self-concept, the level of English pronunciation self-concept was the highest, followed by the level of general English self-concept, and that of English speaking self-concept was the lowest.

The SPSS 13.0 was utilized to analyze the subjects' scores in the SILL. The discussion on each strategy set included the minimum, maximum, mean scores and standard deviation.

It was found that eleven strategy sets were categorized as the group of medium use. Among them, ten strategy sets belonged to memory, cognitive, social and affective strategies. This suggested that these strategies were used sometimes by the subjects. The strategies of overcoming limitations in speaking, centering one's learning, and self-evaluation obtained mean scores higher than 3.500, which meant these strategies were used frequently by the subjects (Table 3.2). It seemed that students in this college preferred to employ compensatory strategies and metacognitive strategies, because the mean scores of the two strategies were above 3.500. The compensation category had the highest mean scores. On the other hand, the mean scores of translation and transfer in cognitive strategy and cooperation in social strategy were all lower than 3. It indicated that these strategies were the least frequently used.

B. The Effects of Gender on Self-concept and LLSs

As shown in Table 3.3, the analysis provided convincing evidence that male and female learners differed in their global English, speaking and pronunciation self-concepts. The mean of females' general English self-concept (3.8000) was higher than that of males' (3.566). To a certain extent it meant that female learners had more positive general English self-concept than the male. And the means of females' specific-domain English self-concept were also higher than those of males, which implied that females had more positive English self-concept in the facets of speaking and pronunciation than males. However, there was only statistically significant gender difference in the pronunciation self-concept (As shown in Table 3.3, $p=0.018<0.05$). It indicated that females' pronunciation self-concept was significantly higher than males. Therefore, by the statistical analysis, no substantial impacts of interaction could be observed on all dependent variables.

The independent samples t-test was used to examine the role of gender difference in learning strategies. Table 3.4 shows that the P values of eleven strategy sets did not reach the significant level ($p<0.05$) which indicated gender difference had a weak relation with learning strategies. But three strategy sets, as shown in Table 3.4, strongly relate to gender difference. Female students were found to more frequently use the strategies of centering one's learning, planning & organizing and empathy than male students. Generally speaking, gender had no significant effects on LLSs.

C. The Relationship between English Self-concept and LLSs

In the study, the relationship between English self-concept and LLSs is the key question. Thus this part discussed the relationship in detail and by correlation analysis, more results were found.

1. Results of Correlation Analysis

In this study, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to determine the degree of association between English self-concept and language learning strategies. General English self-concept, English speaking self-concept and English pronunciation self-concept had the highest correlations with the cognitive strategy, with values of r=.523, r=.478 and r=.384 respectively. Among them, English pronunciation self-concept had the lowest correlations with the memory strategy (r=.189) and compensatory strategy (r=.220). General English self-concept had higher correlations with six language learning strategies, comparing with English speaking self-concept and English pronunciation self-concept. The matrix of correlation coefficients between English self-concept and language learning strategies was shown in Table 3.5, which showed that all of the correlations were considered to be statistically significant.

2. Results of Regression Analysis

In this study, the three aspects of English concept were treated as independent variables while the fourteen sets of strategies were considered as the dependent variables. That was to say, the fourteen sets of strategies were used as outcome measures in separate regression analyses, with the three aspects of English concept initially available to predict the language learning strategies. Results from Table 3.6 were seen as the powerful predictor on dependent variables. It showed that English general self-concept and two specific English self-concepts (speaking and pronunciation) were found to be significantly correlated with some language learning strategies.

Table 3.6 was just summary of the significant results of relationship between self-concept and language learning strategies. The author chose the four sets of learning strategies with the highest coefficients in three self-concepts respectively, because in each self-concept, highly-correlated strategy sets can specify the relationship between self-concept and language learning strategies.

As for general English self-concept, it correlated significantly to the strategies of centering one's learning, practicing, taking one's emotional temperature and planning & organizing. First, among them, it had the highest relationship with strategies of centering one's learning (.525). General English self-concept referred to global understanding of his or her English ability or knowledge. Second, when students had high assessments to their global English level, they were willing to spend more time practicing to get their higher expectation. So the general English self-concept correlated

significantly to practicing strategy (.515). Third, the strategies for taking one's temperature dealt with handling one's emotion state which included activities like writing diaries, sharing feeling with others and being aware of pressure on health. English learners, marked with a tendency for organizing and controlling, would use these strategies to minimize the influence from negative feelings. Finally, the planning and organizing strategies here referred to arranging a comfortable environment for learning, making plans ahead for weekly study and seeking personal goals in learning tasks. It was not surprised to see that students with the high general English self-concept would develop these strategies to arrange their own learning.

As for English speaking self-concept (ESSC), there were significant relationships between ESSC and the strategies of practicing, cooperation, encouragement, and overcoming limitations in speaking. Firstly, ESSC had highest correlation with practicing strategy (.520). Practicing was a good way to improve students' English speaking ability while students with high ESSC had more confidence to practice and had ability to put more time to practice. Secondly, strategy of cooperation was second highly correlated with ESSC (.442). When students with high consciousness in their English speaking were talking with people, they would naturally employ these strategies in communication. Thirdly, the strategies of encouragement dealt with taking some "reasonable" risks and then self-rewarding. Students who had high ESSC often put continuous effort because they determined to do the best. So they would use the strategies supporting their progresses in learning. Last but not least, if one student had high English speaking self-concept, it showed that he was confident in English speaking and could be satisfied with his speaking ability. So during talking with others, he could try his best to overcome limitations in his speaking and he would use some compensatory techniques such as inference, use of gesture and mother tongues that could help him temporarily narrow the gap of understanding or expressing in English.

Concerning English pronunciation self-concept (EPSC), it was significantly related to strategies of rehearsal, practicing, sending and receiving message and self-evaluation. To begin with, EPSC had a highest correlation with strategy of rehearsal (.435). In language leaning strategies, the rehearsal strategies concerned practicing spelling, pronunciation and getting familiar with useful expressions. Students with high EPSC would frequently use the strategies to develop a personal meaning in learning. Second, EPSC was correlated significantly to practicing strategies (.392). It was obvious that with the purpose in mind, students often actively sought for opportunity to read and practice. Third, the strategies for sending and receiving message mainly concerned building input and output structure which included activities like note taking, summarizing and outlining. Students with high EPSC would use the strategies of building structures for input or output. Finally, the strategies for self-evaluation concerned learning from one's mistakes and making progress in one's learning. Students who had high assessment of their English pronunciation would employ the strategies in correcting one's mistakes in coursework and seeking highest possible grades.

IV. Conclusion

The study explored some characteristics of college non-English majors' self-concept and language learning strategies, and the relationship between self-concept and LLSs. But the present study was constrained by time and personnel. The analysis tools were not perfect and the perspectives concerned were not so complete. Therefore, the depth and width of the results were far from satisfactory. Despite the limitations, the present study has made an attempt to examine language learning strategies from a completely new perspective and has yielded enlightening findings. Subsequent studies are hoped to overcome the above-mentioned limitations and draw a more complete picture of it.

V. Pedagogical Implications

From the major findings, it was found that improving self-concept is a good way to develop students' language learning strategies because self-concept has positive correlation with language learning strategies. In order to improve use of learning strategies, college students should shape a positive self-concept which means to identify and admit self. It is also a way of perfecting and developing oneself.

Through the above research and result analysis, English teachers should pay more attention to help students develop their positive self-concept that can motivate their language learning strategies. First, English teachers should enhance the students' general English self-concept. Second, English teachers should not ignore importance of pronunciation teaching, especially the teachers who teach students at the early elementary stage of English learning. Last but not least, teachers can integrate language learning strategies into language instruction to influence the students' self-concept and their performances. In fact, it has become clear that language instruction should accommodate to students' learning through flexible teaching techniques and language teachers should be more sensitive to individual learners.

Appendix

TABLE 1.1
SUMMARY OF OXFORD'S (1990) LIST OF STRATEGIES

Direct Strategies	Indirect Strategies
Memory Strategies Creating mental links or connections Applying images to sounds Reviewing well Employing action	1.Metacognitive Strategies A. Centering your learning B. Arranging and planning your learning C. Evaluating your learning
Cognitive Strategies A. Practicing B. Receiving and sending messages C. Analyzing and reasoning D. Creating structure for input & output	2. Affective Strategies A. Lowering your anxiety B. Encouraging yourself C. Taking your emotional temperature
Compensation strategies Guessing intelligently Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing	3.Social Strategies A. Asking questions B. Cooperating with others C. Empathizing with others

TABLE 3.1
RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' SELF-CONCEPT

Variables	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	SD
GESC	3.660	5.510	1.490	.940
ESSC	3.450	5.000	1.020	.914
EPSC	3.711	6.000	1.625	.902

Notes: GESC=General English Self-concept ESSC=English Speaking Self-concept
EPSC= English Pronunciation Self-concept SD=Standard Deviation

TABLE 3.2
RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' LLSS

Categories	Strategy Sets	Items	Mini	Maxi	Mean	Std.Deviation
Cognitive Strategy	Rehearsal	6	1.551	4.502	3.144	0.653
	Practicing	4	1.807	5.000	3.204	0.708
	Sending and receiving message	5	1.403	4.805	3.102	0.628
	Translation and transfer	5	1.006	4.304	2.706	0.639
Memory Strategy	Association	6	1.337	4.406	2.682	0.621
	Structured review	3	1.004	5.006	3.195	0.806
Compensatory Strategy	Overcoming limitations in speaking	5	2.007	5.002	3.981	0.774
Metacognitive Strategy	Centering one's learning	2	1.005	5.006	3.543	0.731
	Planning and organizing	5	2.003	5.006	3.358	0.644
	Self-evaluation	3	1.401	5.003	3.656	0.735
Affective Strategy	Encouragement	2	1.508	5.002	3.410	0.904
	Taking one's temperature	3	1.001	5.001	3.158	0.823
Social Strategy	Cooperation	4	1.203	5.003	2.902	0.707
	Empathizing with others	2	1.006	4.802	3.321	0.553

TABLE 3.3
GENDER EFFECTS ON ENGLISH SELF-CONCEPT

	SEX	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**t**	**df**	**Sig.(2-tailed)**
GESC	1	75	3.566	.910	-1.230	151	.137
	2	80	3.800	1.050			
ESSC	1	75	3.310	.900	-1.003	151	.108
	2	80	3.621	.960			
EPSC	1	75	3.650	.920	0.786	151	.018
	2	80	3.910	.970			

Notes: GESC=General English Self-concept ESSC=English Speaking Self-concept
EPSC= English Pronunciation Self-concept 1=male, 2=female

TABLE 3.4
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON GENDER DIFFERENCES

Categories	Strategy Sets	Mean		T	P
		Male	Female		
Cognitive Strategy	Rehearsal	3.093	3.441	.332	.765
	Practicing	2.940	3.515	1.577	.114
	Sending and receiving message	3.001	3.302	.485	.628
	Translation and transfer	2.607	3.104	-.270	.759
Memory Strategy	Association	2.508	2.980	.310	.700
	Structured review	2.984	3.402	1.674	.096
Compensatory Strategy	Overcoming limitations in speaking	3.773	4.307	.044	.970
Metacognitive Strategy	Centering one's learning	3.205	3.601	2.544	.009*
	Planning and organizing	3.252	3.506	3.055	.004*
	Self-evaluation	3.403	3.893	1.652	.210
Affective Strategy	Encouragement	3.502	3.201	1.962	.054
	Taking one's temperature	3.002	3.305	1.485	.150
Social Strategy	Cooperation	2.808	3.106	.387	.668
	Empathizing with others	3.201	3.351	2.320	.022*

Note: Levene's test for equality of variances (T and P) examines whether the grouping variable of gender (Female/Male) demonstrates difference on strategy sets.

TABLE 3.5
CORRELATION BETWEEN SELF-CONCEPT AND LLSS

	Cognitive Strategy	Memory Strategy	Compensatory Strategy	Metacognitive Strategy	Affective Strategy	Social Strategy
GESC	0.523	0.310	0.340	0.464	0.396	0.430
ESSC	0.478	0.231	0.300	0.354	0.365	0.356
EPSC	0.384	0.189	0.220	0.276	0.284	0.280

$p<0.01$

Notes: GESC=General English Self-concept ESSC=English Speaking Self-concept
EPSC= English Pronunciation Self-concept

TABLE 3.6
RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Self-concept	Strategy Sets	Standardized Coefficients
GESC	Centering one's learning	0.525
	Practicing	0.515
	Taking one's temperature	0.486
	Planning and organizing	0.441
ESSC	Practicing	0.520
	Cooperation	0.442
	Encouragement	0.356
	Overcoming limitations in speaking	0.346
EPSC	Rehearsal	0.435
	Practicing	0.392
	Sending and receiving message	0.356
	Self-evaluation	0.330

$p<0.01$

Notes: GESC=General English Self-concept ESSC=English Speaking Self-concept
EPSC= English Pronunciation Self-concept

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The Effect of Portfolio and Self Assessment on Writing Ability and Autonomy

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***Abstract*—This study explored the effect of portfolio and self assessment on writing tasks on the one hand and self regulation ability on the other by assigning sixty freshman undergraduate university students majoring in teaching English as a foreign language to a control and experimental group. They had enrolled in the Writing Essay course at Tabaran University in Iran in 2010. While both groups wrote several essays during the course and took a self regulation questionnaire and the same writing task at the beginning and end of the course as pre-and-post tests, only the participants in the experimental group were required to write portfolios regularly and perform self assessment tasks. The multivariate analysis of results showed that the two groups had no significant difference in their writing and self-regulation abilities when the course started. The experimental group, however, did not only score significantly higher than the control group on the writing task (F = 14.390, df = 1, p <.000) but also gained higher self regulation ability as a result of writing portfolios and self assessment (F = 58.235, df = 1, p <.000). The implications of the study are discussed within a foreign language teaching context.**

***Index Terms*—portfolio, self assessment, autonomy, writing ability**

I. Introduction

The ability to foster an autonomous learning environment which is enhanced by portfolio and self assessment as true examples of what scholars find satisfactory alternatives in assessment (Brown and Hudson, 1998; Norris, Brown, Hudson, and Yoshioka, 1998), seems to be a demanding job in an exam-oriented culture like Iran. Students' writing ability in second language in this culture is usually assessed by a paper and pencil summative test at the end of the term, which is mostly a product-oriented pedagogy not involving the process as the best indicative of the students' improvement.

What seems to be the main concern in this context is the lack of research demonstrating conclusively that creating the assessment for learning culture not only pushes the frontier of language assessment towards more formative progressive assessment but it helps the learners take advantage of an autonomous atmosphere created by this alternative assessment (Chen, 2008).

One of the trends in the changing world of language assessment has been promoting learners' self-assessment, facilitated by the explicit descriptive criteria in curriculum standards (Little, 2005; Ross, 1998). Another one has been portfolios that are effective for writing courses in different ways such as skill development as well as tracing the students' growth in university classrooms (Kathpalia and Heah, 2008). Portfolio assessment in the field of writing can be defined as "a collection of texts the writer has produced over a defined period of time" (Hamp-lyons, 1991; p.262).). Assessment for learning is, in fact, the best counterpart for the emerging process approach of writing. Through portfolio and self-assessment learners are allowed to learn while checking the multifaceted process of writing skill.

Genesee and Upshur (1996) state that portfolio assessment imposes a sense of ownership which is enhanced by the fact that portfolio experience is not a brief one-shot presentation of writing. Portfolio assessment, in fact, appears to show the greatest promise in enhancing different dimensions of learning and promoting autonomy (Chen, 2006). As far as one of the important concepts in portfolio pedagogy is the students reflection on their writing papers collected in their portfolio (Fink, 2004; Jones and Shelton, 2006; Zubizarreta, 2004). Kathpalia and Heah, (2008) argue "a writing portfolio without reflection is merely a collection of written work which does not contribute to 'real' learning". Diminishing this gap, we tried to integrate self assessment with portfolio assessment along with comprehensive instruction as well as predetermined criteria to enable learners examine their work by reflecting on what they have done. The rationale behind this integration was to provide students with a valuable opportunity to reflect on their writing activities based upon a standardized thought provoking checklist. Little (2005) calls this process formalizing, through which we can make the portfolio and especially self-assessment as reflective as possible.

This study hopefully tries to turn the attention of the TEFL teachers towards the notion of 'assessment culture' (Lynch and Shaw, 2005) that mentions "students should be active participants in the process of developing assessment

procedures...” (p. 265). Active involvement of the learners in assessing their performance will enable them gain ownership of their learning (Chen, 2008). The assumption behind this study is that this type of involvement will not only improve students authority both in the realm of assessment and learning but will optimistically change the trend of exam-oriented culture in the present educational context which seems to serve no purpose except measuring the learners' ultimate ability.

Self-assessment, portfolio assessment, and writing ability

Assessment for learning is the best counterpart for the emerging process of writing. Through portfolio and self assessment learners are allowed to learn while checking the multifaceted process of writing skills. Portfolio assessment in the field of writing can be defined as “a collection of texts the writer has produced over a defined period of time” (Hamp-lyons, 1991, p. 262). Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli and Ansari (2010) investigated the effect of portfolio assessment as a process-oriented assessment mechanism on Iranian EFL students' English writing ability. The findings showed that portfolio assessment empowers students' learning of English writing. Lam and Lee (2009) emphasize the formative role of portfolio assessment. Conducting the research they try to underscore the formative role of the portfolio assessment and how it can effectively align teaching with assessment. Almost all of the students' conceptions about the effect of formative portfolio assessment on their writing ability were positive. The role of formative portfolio assessment was also highlighted by the instructors in in this study.

Buyukduman and Sirin (2010, p. 56) believe that “since education is inherently interdisciplinary, the only valuable way to measure learning is to make the assessment part of the learning process, ensuring it provides students with information on the quality of their learning. The findings of their study indicated that the learning portfolio made the students take the responsibility, do some research and gave them the chance to learn at their own pace.

Portfolios must demonstrate some features to be considered as good examples of alternative assessment. Among these features, students' reflection has been highlighted (Lynch and Shaw, 2005). Self-assessment included in the process of selecting, reading and feedback can foster learners' reflection on their activities compiled in portfolio. Including self-assessment in the process of portfolio assessment will cover the lack of constructive feedback, which is observable in traditional achievement tests. “To encourage deep learning, teachers should give students an opportunity to engage in reflective dialogue and self-assessment”. (Kathpalia and Heah, 2008). Fink (2004) states that this type of reflection provided by self-assessment will make students more mindful and more aware of their own learning especially in how and what of their learning. Kohonen (2000) points out that Portfolio assessment opens new ways for promoting the learner autonomy not just by telling them that they are in charge of their learning but by making this visible to them. Making students conscious and reflective about their learning is a difficult task which should be made more feasible by means of a criterion-refrenced plan such a predetermined organized self-assessment.

It has strongly been argued that self-assessment is an integrated part of autonomous learning (Holec, 1981; Tudor, 1996; Thomson, 1996). The role of self-assessment in promoting learner autonomy has been underscored to the extent that Hunt, Gow, and Barnes (1989) argue that without learner self-assessment and evaluation “there cannot be real autonomy” (p. 207). In a recent study, Little (2005) states that self-assessment promote learner autonomy. He emphasizes the important role of self-assessment in reflective learning. He argues that students should submit an evaluative account of their activities included in the portfolio or to rate their portfolio against a checklist as a guide to the portfolio process from the beginning. He also takes account of three reasons for engaging learners in self-assessment. Firstly, it involves students in the process of curriculum evaluation. Secondly, self-assessment in a learner centered pedagogy shapes the processes on which the learner autonomy develop. Thirdly, it provides learners with opportunities to use their knowledge beyond the classroom.

II. Methodology

A. Research Questions

This study thus aims at investigating the effect of two types of alternative assessments on the TEFL students' writing autonomy improvement as well as their general ability in writing. To do so, answering the following questions seems inevitable.

1. Do self and portfolio types of assessments as part of the ongoing instructional course, improve the students' autonomy in writing?
2. Do self and portfolio types of assessments have any effect on the students' general writing ability?

B. Participants

The study was conducted on 59 TEFL students attending the writing class at Tabaran university in the 2010-2011 academic year fall semester. The majority of them (88.3 %) were female and 11.7 percent were male, native speakers of Persian, between 18-34 years old, and highly motivated to pass the writing course. The participants were divided into experimental and control groups. The study lasted for 16 weeks and the participants in both groups received instruction according to the pre-planned procedure.

C. Instruments

The instruments used in this study were a writing IELTS task and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pritrich et al., 1991). The first one which was used both as a pre and post test enabled us to to determine the level of the students' writing ability as well as their improvement during the course. The second instrument was used to determine the students' autonomy in writing.

We used this self-regulation questionnaire as a mean to examine the students' autonomy as the argues go that these strategies have been used in the literature to describe both autonomous and self-regulated learners (Wenden, 1995; and Lee, 1998). Wenden (1995) has strongly emphasized a strong relationship between autonomy and self-regulation.

Hue (2008) also argues that self regulated strategy development as a possible solution to the problem of fostering learning autonomy (p. 248).

The students in both experimental and control groups participated in the writing task as the pre and post test. They also participated in the questionnaire at the very beginning and end of the term.

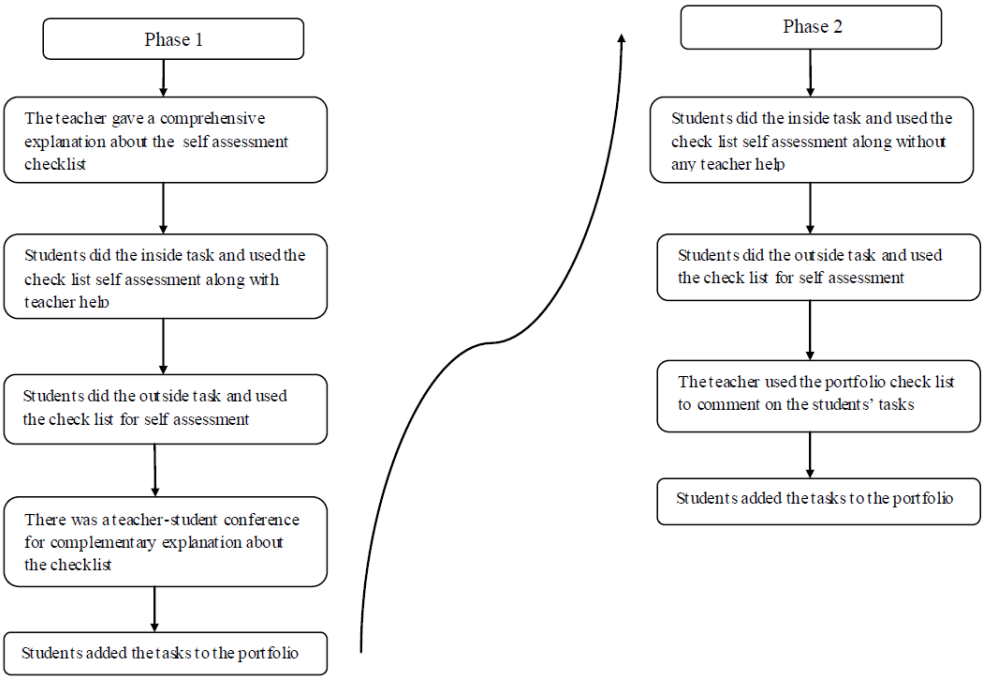
D. Procedure

Our experience with TEFL students in Iran suggests that learning autonomy can not be improved just by indirect hints given to students but by means of predetermined criterion-oriented planned interactive activities led by the instructor along with vivid rubrics so that students would find themselves capable of controlling their learning. Organized criterion-oriented self assessment integrated with Portfolio assessment helped both teacher and students get at the heart of autonomous learning little by little. This notion is in line with the notion of a number of scholars in 1990s who sought to operationalize the idea that autonomy is a matter of degree (Nunan, 1997). Therefore, what is worthy doing in this context is not an attempt to produce autonomy but a logical trend along with patience to foster and build upon what learners already possess. Accordingly, we decided to divide the treatment into two phases. In the first phase, we provided learners with with enough instruction in how to select, collect and reflect on their activities (Hamp-lyons and Condon, 2000) in their portfolios as well as filling the self-assessment checklists through which they could improve their independent sel-control and autonomy in writing.

In the first phase, the students in the experimental group were given instructions during the first four weeks. They were required to write one task inside the classroom and one outside on different topics. They prepared files to keep record of their tasks in order. Since we found out that self-assessment by means of checklists need intensive instruction, we corrected the students' tasks using the checklists each session and discussed the content of them in the class along with individual conference. After four weeks students felt they could follow the instruction in how to self-evaluate their papers using the checklist. From the fifth session, they showed improvement in self-correction. We found the first four weeks of the term quite efficient for teaching students how to work with the checklist. We could also pilot the checklist during this period.

In the second phase, students showed improvement in self-assessing their tasks using the checklist. The teacher decided to decrease the teacher-student conference sessions and finally stop them except for some of the students who needed more help. For the second half of the term almost all of the students could self evaluate their papers, fill the checklists out, and add them to their portfolio to be randomly checked by the teacher.

After that, we checked the students' portfolios every other week and recorded the feedbacks in the portfolio checklists. In this way, both students and teacher reflected on the whole activities recorded in the portfolio.



III. RESULTS

This study aimed at finding the impact of portfolio and self-assessment on writing and autonomy abilities of the TEFL students. For this purpose the following null hypotheses were formulated to be examined.

1. Self and portfolio types of assessments as part of the ongoing instructional course, do not improve the students' autonomy in writing.

2. Self and portfolio types of assessments do not have any effect on the students' general writing ability.

In order to investigate the above-mentioned hypotheses, various statistical analyses including descriptive and referential statistics were conducted to accomplish the purpose.

Descriptive statistics for the two groups on each of the measures are shown in table 1. In each case, standard deviations, means, number of participants and items are shown.

In order to ensure that students in the two groups began the study with similar writing proficiency, an independent sample t-test was performed.

Results are shown in table 2.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PRETEST AND FINAL EXAMINATION

Tests	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Control	28	9.107	1.6179	.3058
	experimental	30	9.283	1.8648	.3405
Final examination	Control	28	13.8036	1.67409	.31637
	experimental	30	15.4667	1.65015	.30127

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF THE PRETEST

	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
Equal variances assumed	.652	.423	-.383	56	.703	-.1762	.4599	-1.0974	.7450
Equal variances not assumed			-.385	55.716	.702	-.1762	.4576	-1.0930	.7406

As shown in table 2, the p value is not lower than .05. This shows that there is no difference between the experimental and control group with respect to writing ability at the very beginning of the study.

In order to show the initial position of the students with respect to their self-regulation ability in writing, an independent samples t-test was used. The results can be observed in table 4.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PRETEST SELF REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE WITH THE NORMAL SCORES AND AVERAGED SCORES

Score	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Normal	Control	28	100.11	5.711	1.079
	Experimental	30	100.07	6.153	1.123
Averaged	Control	28	3.2039	.20270	.03831
	Experimental	30	3.2656	.16830	.03073

TABLE 4
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

		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
Pre 31	Equal variances assumed	.016	.898	.026	56	.979	.040	1.562	-3.088	3.169
	Equal variances not assumed			.026	55.999	.979	.040	1.558	-3.080	3.161
Pre	Equal variances assumed	.774	.383	-1.264	56	.211	-.06167	.04879	-.15942	.03607
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.256	52.635	.215	-.06167	.04911	-.16019	.03684

On examining table 4, it can be found that there is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups with respect to their initial position in autonomy.

In order to investigate the first null hypothesis, i.e., Self and portfolio types of assessments as part of the ongoing instructional course, do not improve the students' autonomy in writing, an independent sample t-test was used. The result can be observed in table 6.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF POSTTEST SELF REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE WITH THE NORMAL SCORES AND AVERAGED SCORES

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Normal	Control	28	105.64	4.794	.906
	Experimental	30	94.87	5.818	1.062
Averaged	Control	28	3.4078	.15463	.02922
	Experimental	30	3.0602	.18766	.03426

TABLE 6
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF THE POST TEST SELF REGULATION WITH NORMAL AND AVERAGED SCORES

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Mean		
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Normal Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	1.217	.275	7.668 7.719	56 55.177	.000 .000
Average Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	1.217	.275	7.668 7.719	56 55.177	.000 .000

Table 6 shows that the t value for the two variables if 7.668. The criterion for statistical significance at alpha=.05 and degrees of freedom of 56 is 2.000 (two-tailed test). Accordingly, the first null hypothesis which stated that self and portfolio types of assessments do not improve the students' autonomy in writing, is rejected.

In order to investigate the second null hypothesis i.e., Self and portfolio types of assessments do not have any effect on the students' general writing ability, an independent samples t-test was used.

TABLE 7
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF THE FINAL EXAMINATION

		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
Mean	Equal variances assumed	.284	.596	-3.809	56	.000	-1.66310	.43665	-2.53782	-.78837
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.807	55.602	.000	-1.66310	.43687	-2.53840	-.78779

As can be found in table 7 There are statistically significant differences between the groups in the writing ability (the p value is less than .05). Therefore the second null hypothesis which stated that Self and portfolio types of assessments do not have any effect on the students' general writing ability, is rejected.

To investigate the effect of Portfolio and self-assessment on students' writing ability as well as autonomy in writing, an ANCOVA on post self-regulation scores by group (experimental vs. control), using pre self-regulation scores as a covariate was conducted.

TABLE 8
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS (DEPENDENT VARIABLES: POST TEST SELF-REGULATION AND POST TEST ESSAY WRITING TASK, FIXED FACTOR: GROUP; COVARIATE PRETEST SELF-RGULATION)

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Group	Post SR	1682.816	1	1682.816	58.235	.000
	Post test	39.999	1	39.999	14.390	.000
Error	Post SR	1589.332	55	28.897		
	Post test	152.886	55	2.780		
Total	Post SR	584084.000	58			
	Post test	12666.250	58			

a. R Squared = .516 (Adjusted R Squared = .498)
b. R Squared = .215 (Adjusted R Squared = .186)

Table 8 shows that there is a significant difference in posttest scores between groups.

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings from this study appear to demonstrate the strength of alternatives in assessment i.e., prtofolio assessment and self-assessment, to enhance the students' writing ability as well as their autonomy in writing. We chose two groups in a foreign language learning context, one experimental and the other control. In the first phase of the study it seemed quite necessary to familiarize the participants in the experimental group with the procedure of the portfolio and self-assessments. The instruction targeted the self-assessment checklist and gradual autonomous writing activities respectively. The participants in the experimental group soon were acquainted with the procedure and its pleasant independent activities.

The regular implementation of the self-assessment checklist in class as well as outside the class had great effects on students' sense of independency in their writing activities. As the few first sessions elapsed, the students in the experimental group who were once unwillingly using the checklists to monitor their improvement, started implementing the checklists enthusiastically.

To observe this dynamic autonomous trend statistically we administered a self-regulation questionnaire at the very beginning of the course. The first quantitative analysis which was an independent sample t-test showed no difference between the two groups writing ability and autonomy. After a few sessions of instruction on the self-assessment checklists and regular inside class and outside class writing activities, students were left on their own to follow their path toward independent self-assessment. The second independent sample t-test on self-regulation questionnaire showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group with respect to writing autonomy. It suggests that the type of assessment has strong influence on the students writing autonomy. Self-assessment and portfolio assessment are among those alternative types of assessment that lead to autonomous learners. This result echoes the earlier findings in the literature (Butler and Lee, 2010). This success partly can be attributed to the teachers pedagogical intervention as well as the students self-awareness of the journey they took during the course. The students in the experimental group also increased this awareness by reflecting on their self-evaluated writing activities going through the portfolio they had prepared during the term.

The findings in table 7 contribute to the fact that Portfolio and self-assessment not only make learners autonomous in writing but also improve their writing ability. The same significant difference is observable in table 8. Through an ANCOVA analysis which considers the pretest as the covariate, the significant difference between groups both in self regulation questionnaire as an indication of autonomy and writing ability is quite obvious.

Little (2003) states that the success of the learner autonomy depends on a series of elements such as insight into the nature of independent learning, the right attitude towards this process, a reflective stance vis a vis one's own practice, both self-management and an openness to collaboration, interaction and exchange with one's peers. What is in line with this summary is the assessment for autonomy as opposed to assessment of autonomy (O'Leary, 2007). In other words, portfolio and self-assesment in the present study have focused on the former function to foster learners' autonomy through assessment. O'Leary (2007) also argues that "assessment for , or as, learning which focuses on the process as well as the outcome of the learning, can therefore enhance the student learning experience and foster the development of autonomy" (p.3).

Butler and Lee (2010) speculate that self-assessment helps students reflect on what they have achieved and it would possibly help in teaching and learning environment where effort is a highly valued part of educational success.

Dafei (2007) in his study concluded that the more autonomous a learner becomes the more likely he/she achieves high language proficiency. This outcome is congruent with the findings of the present study according to which the idea of writing ability improvement is in line with writing autonomy development. In fact, as the students' writing autonomy develops, their writing ability improves too.

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Communicative Language Teaching in an EFL Context: Learners' Attitudes and Perceived Implementation

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***Abstract*—Communicative language teaching (CLT) applicability to English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts has recently been debated extensively. This study addressed 1525 Jordanian EFL school learners' attitudes and perceived implementation of *traditional form-focused* (FFI) instruction and *communicative meaning-oriented* instruction (MOI) of English. The data were collected using a 41-item questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and referential statistics. Results showed that students' preferences associated with MOI were relatively higher. Too, whereas EFL instruction met learners' preferences associated with FFI, it rarely responded to learners' MOI needs. More precisely, despite some MOI practices, the gap between students' preferences and teaching practices associated with MOI was much wider than that between students' preferences and teaching practices associated with FFI. Female learners held relatively higher preference and reported significantly higher exposure to MOI. Compared to private-school learners, public-school learners held higher preference for and more involvement MOI. Low-proficiency learners reported higher preference to, and more practice of, FFI. These results were discussed, and recommendations were set accordingly.**

***Index Terms*—EFL instruction, meaning-oriented instruction, form-focused instruction, communicative language teaching**

I. Introduction

Due to the great potential communicative competence has played in the emergence of communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches and shaping of well-informed language pedagogies, it has remained a concept that arouses researchers' curiosity providing a framework that integrates language theory and teaching practice (Savignon, 1991). Rigorous theoretical and empirical research have made applied linguists and educators realize that communicatively competent language users need knowledge of the language and, more importantly, active use and evident ability to put this knowledge in authentic communicative events (Chung & Huang, 2009). Notwithstanding this realization, English language educators, teachers, and learners, continue aspiring to fully grasp the concept of communicative competence, let alone putting it into practice. Instead, there is persistent ambiguity among both learners and teachers pertinent to what CLT is (Savignon, 2007).

CLT is a multi-perspectival approach that builds on several disciplines including linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and education. It focuses on carrying out and implementing methodologies that are capable of enhancing the learner's functional language ability through active involvement in authentic communicative (Savignon, 2007). Savignon asserts that what lies at the heart of CLT is the understanding that language learning is an educational and a political issue as well. The first step in determining such aspects as the teaching method and materials that match the goals of EFL instruction, accordingly, is the immediate context or setting in which EFL instruction is to take place. Given this understanding, CLT is best viewed as an approach, rather than a method, that maintains some level of consistency in the theoretical framework with a much wider room for individual interpretation and variation than most methods usually allow when it comes to decisions concerning design and procedure (Richards & Rogers, 1986).

One important distinctive feature of CLT is its emphasis on meaning-oriented instruction (MOI), a term that emerged in response to language teaching methods that emphasized the mastery of language forms (Hedge, 2000). Educators' increasing awareness that learners acquire a foreign language best when their attention is focused on the meaning communicated rather than on the linguistic form led to a lack of interest in such methods as grammar translation and audioingualism. Krashen and Terrell's (1983) natural approach, for example, stressed that if second language acquisition is sought, it is important that the teacher provides learners with sufficient comprehensible input and natural communication opportunities in a psychologically non-threatening environment. In line with this, Prabhu (1987) proposed that learning is at its best when the learner indulges in meaning-oriented activities such as information, reasoning, and opinion gap tasks. Today, meaning-oriented communicative language teaching methodology has the overarching principles of focus on real communication, providing learners with opportunities to try out what they know, tolerance of learners' errors as a healthy sign of progress in developing the communicative competence, integrating the different skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and allowing students to discover grammar rules by themselves (Richards, 2006, p. 13). Meaning-oriented instruction, therefore, aims at developing the language learners' communicative competence through paying close attention to authentic language use, encouraging learner-learner and peer- peer negotiation of meaning, encouraging learners' risk taking, focus on fluency, which entails emphasis on language production rather than correctness, and assigning importance to learners' autonomy (Williams, 1995). On the other hand, it undermines the importance of form-focused instruction (FFI) characterized by accuracy, error correction, and explicit instruction of grammar rules (Baleghizadeh, 2010).

The aforementioned awareness that learning a language through mastering its grammar constitutes but one component of communicative competence has influenced language teaching pedagogy in the last few decades through shifting attention from form-focused teaching (FFI) toward meaning-oriented teaching (MOI). Whereas the first type concerns any teaching action, planned or supplementary, that is proposed to encourage the language learner to attend to linguistic form (Ellis, 2001), the latter acknowledges the interdependence of language and communication towards the goal of language teaching, namely developing the learner's communicative competence (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

MOI emphasizes learning how to communicate in a language through ample interaction in that language, adopting authentic materials, providing the learner with an opportunity to focus on the language as well as on the learning process, enhancing the learners' personal experiences as integral components of the classroom learning, and linking both the classroom language learning and the off-classroom activities (Nunan, 1991). Parallel to such understanding, MOI is not limited to face-to-face communication, nor is it confound to oral communication; it applies to reading and writing as well as long as learners are involved in meaning expression, interpretation, and negotiation. It does not also aim to dictate specific procedures or a particular type of activities (Savignon, 2007). Additionally, unlike form-focused grammar-oriented instruction, MOI has at its heart developing students' communicative competence (Richards & Rogers, 1986).

In general terms, findings from empirical research (e.g., Alkhayyat, 2009; Aubrey, 2010; Chung & Huang, 2009; İnceçay & İnceçay, 2009; Matsuura, Chiba, & Hilderbrandt, 2001; Rao, 2002; Savignon & Wang, 2003) on EFL learners' attitudes toward MOI in different EFL contexts have reported some contradictory findings, recommending, therefore, an integration of both communicative and non-communicative activities as beneficial for learners. For example, Rao (2002) explored thirty Chinese EFL undergraduates' perceptions of communicative and non-communicative activities using quantitative and qualitative data. Participants reported favoring some communicative (e.g., student-student and student-teacher interaction, personal responses to students' exercises, and songs) and other non-communicative activities (e.g., audio-lingual drills, dictionary exercises, teacher's explanations of grammatical rules, error correction, and obedience to teacher's instruction). A reconciliation of both activity types was recommended accordingly.

Rao's study was duplicated by İnceçay and İnceçay (2009) on thirty Turkish EFL university students with results showing students' preference of both communicative (e.g., whole-class discussion, pair-work, and group-work) and non-communicative (e.g., error correction and audioligual drills) activities. The researchers thus recommended an alignment of both activity types. Both studies (i.e., Rao, 2002; İnceçay & İnceçay, 2009) attribute students' preference of non-CLT activities to the norms and traditions inherent in the teaching methods students are used to.

Savignon and Wang (2003) investigated Taiwanese EFL learners' perceptions and attitudes pertinent to classroom practices representative of form-focused and meaning-based instruction. The instruction the learners reported receiving, it was found, did not meet their needs and wants.

Chung and Huang (2009) interviewed 24 Taiwanese senior high school learners to investigate their attitudes toward the classroom leaning experience focusing on CLT. Their results revealed that despite the efforts of the Ministry of Education to implement, and students' positive attitudes toward, CLT, language teaching stressed memorization, grammar, and translation to meet exam requirements. They also reported difficulty in integrating CLT with traditional teaching methods adopted for so long. The focus of English teaching practice, they suggested, should shift toward developing students' communicative competence.

In a study that investigated factors which contribute to 22 Japanese business EFL learners' willingness to communicate in different sized classroom (a one-on-one classroom, a small group classroom, and a large group classroom), Aubrey (2010) found that the CLT approach increased willingness to communicate when students had a

positive attitude towards CLT. This shows that developing learners' attitudes toward CLT enhances their willingness to communicate in EFL classrooms.

Matsuura, Chiba, and Hilderbrandt (2001) explored the beliefs of 301 Japanese students and 82 Japanese college and university English teachers about CLT instruction. The researchers reported that Japanese students tended to consider functions, speaking, grammar, listening, cultural differences, reading, non-verbal cues, pronunciation, and writing as important for learning communicative English. Reading, writing, and grammar were not considered as important as speaking and listening. In terms of the reasons why English should be learned, the results revealed that the majority of students believed that it was necessary to respond to each other and interact with their teachers. It was also important for them to familiarize themselves with the Western-style learning strategies and communication styles. Only one third believed that teachers should focus on grammar. In terms of the instructional materials, students' preference of topics that reflect everyday life interaction and learning about social issues students preferred was not assigned a lower level of perceived importance by their teachers.

Alkhayyat (2009) explored the extent to which Jordanian EFL teachers are aware of some characteristics of CLT and their implementation level of these characteristics, using a questionnaire and classroom observation. The results revealed that the study participants "had good knowledge ... in different degrees" of the characteristics addressed (ibid, p. 399) despite the hindering obstacles EFL teachers had in CLT implementation. Significant differences were reported attributed to (a) the teaching experience, in favor of above-15-year-experience teachers and (b) gender, in favor of male teachers. Alkhayyat recommended conducting similar survey research in different parts of Jordan.

Since CLT was first introduced with the aim of engaging students in authentic communication to develop their communicative competence, those learners play a decisive role in determining the level of success CLT may achieve (Chung & Huang, 2009). Understanding the attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, preferences, and needs of the next generation is inevitable if EFL instruction is really behind empowering students linguistically and culturally (Savignon, 2007). Clear understanding of learners' attitudes and perceptions of CLT as a widespread framework in shaping current definitions of the goals set for EFL teaching is quintessential to help learners attain these goals (Savignon & Wang, 2003). Simultaneously, discrepancies between those learners' attitudes, on the one hand, and classroom practices and goals, have been shown to affect learning negatively (Savignon & Wang, 2003). Moreover, scholars (Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Victori & Lockhart, 1995; Matsumoto, 1996; Oxford & Green, 1996; Wenden, 1998, cited in Sakui & Gaies, 1999, p. 487) agree that an exploration of learners' attitudes "can lead to more effective in- and out-of-class language-learning behaviors as well as greater self-knowledge and autonomy." Nonetheless, learners' attitudes toward and beliefs about communicative language teaching have not received the due attention especially since "most studies look at learner attitudes and beliefs bout language learning in general; few focus on learner attitudes and beliefs about instructional practices in particular" (cf. Savignon, 2007, p. 225). Also, they "have, in general, received less attention than teacher beliefs." (Loewen et al., 2009, p. 92). Thus, this study sets to investigate learners' attitudes as well as perceived practices of CLT implementation in Jordanian schools with the aim of identifying areas of challenge towards further improvement.

II. The Setting: Jordan

Towards meeting the needs of more Jordanians wanting to develop their ability to communicate in English, the Ministry of Education has adopted new policies. Dominated by traditional approaches in the 1960s and a structural approach in the 1970s, EFL instruction in Jordan witnessed a shift in the mid 1980s toward official adoption of the CLT approach (Kailani, 1995) in a context where the two most commonly instructional pedagogies currently used are communicative language teaching and grammar-focused instruction (Al-Jamal, 2007). With the advent of the new millennium, teaching English has become mandatory since the first, instead of, fifth grade; EFL and Arabic instruction begin simultaneously in both public and private schools.

There are some similarities and differences between public and private schools in Jordan. Given the centralized educational system in Jordan, both school types are alike in terms of applying the mandates of the Ministry of Education manifest in using the same textbooks and subjection to the same supervisory system. Nonetheless, particularly with relevance to English education, private schools have, in addition to the English textbooks mandated by the government, a supplementary textbook that may vary from one school to another. More often than not, these supplementary textbooks require a relatively higher proficiency level for learners to meet their demands. Additionally, many private schools have resident supervisors for different school subjects, which is not available in public schools. The last difference lies in the socio-economic status of the learners. Since public education is provided free for learners until the end of the 10^{th} grade (the K-12 grade-sequence system in Jordan is similar to that of USA) and given the high cost of private education in relation to the citizens' income, it can be safely stated that most citizens who can afford the cost of private education prefer sending their children to private schools. Teachers' salaries, especially those who are experienced, are generally higher in private schools. Finally, in addition to Arabic and English, some private schools teach French, the second most commonly taught language after English, since the beginning of the 1^{st} grade.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In response to the research problem addressed, this study is geared by the following questions:

1. What attitudes and perceived practices pertinent to FFI and MOI do Jordanian EFL learners hold? Is there any discrepancy between students' attitudes and perceived practice?

2. Is there any statistically significant difference (alpha=.05) in Jordanian EFL learners' attitudes and perceived instructional practice pertinent to FFI and MOI according to difference in gender, school type (public vs. private), grade level (basic vs. secondary), or proficiency level (low, intermediate, high)?

3. What beliefs do Jordanian learners hold pertinent to EFL instruction in general?

III. Method

A. Participants

The current study sample comprised randomly selected 1525 (714 female and 811 Male) EFL students enrolled in both public (*N*= 738) and private (787) schools from two Jordanian cities. The sample represented both basic (*N*=727) and secondary (*N*=798) grades. Participants were subcategorized according to their proficiency level, as measured by their grades in the English language course in their first semester, into three groups: (a) low proficiency (those with a grade of lower than 59%; n=323), (b) intermediate (60-79%; *N* = 466), and high proficiency (80% and above, *N* = 733).

B. Instrument

To collect data for this study, a modified version of Savignon and Wang's (2003) questionnaire was used for two purposes. First, the questionnaire was comprehensive enough to the different domains associated with CLT instruction. Secondly, it is assumed in the current study that it would be easier to compare results when comparable versions of the study instruments are used across several EFL settings.

The original questionnaire, administered by those researchers in Chinese and translated to English, was administered in the current study in the Arabic language. Two modifications were made on the original questionnaire (see the Appendix). First, whereas in the original questionnaire "Responses were scored from 1 to 7 on a scale in the Likert format and the scores then converted to a scale from -3 to +3 for ease in interpretation", the current study used a four-point Likert scale format whereby 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree. This was made to avoid any ambiguity that would have arisen in interpretation since the original 7-point format ranged between the two extreme values strongly disagree and strongly agree without labels showing what the values in between (2-6) correspond to. It would also help in avoiding negative values in the possible responses. The second modification concerned the number of items in the questionnaire. In the original questionnaire, students were asked about attitudes and practices associated with their Senior high school as well as their Junior high school. Since the items were the same under each school level, the current study avoided repetition of these items resulting in a lower number of items and, instead, had the school level as one of the independent variables. Moreover, whereas Savignon and Wong's (2003) study had the limitation of administering the questionnaire to populations of freshman university students who were asked to reflect post hoc on their secondary school EFL classroom experience, the current study targeted student populations who are currently school learners. Instead of reflecting post hoc on old experiences, the sample of this study was asked to reflect on and report current attitudes and beliefs.

Since the original questionnaire was in English, it was translated into Arabic. Translation accuracy was verified using back-translation. Validity of the questionnaire and appropriateness for the Jordanian setting were verified through presenting it to three professors with expertise in EFL/ESL instruction, two experienced English language supervisors and two English teachers. Reliability was ensured through distributing the questionnaire to a sample of 50 students. Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated yielding the following values: form-focused classroom practice (.63), meaning-oriented classroom practice (.81), form-focused classroom attitudes (.71), meaning-oriented classroom attitudes (.75), form-focused classroom attitudes (.85), and meaning-oriented classroom attitudes (.83). Following contacting the target schools and obtaining the respondents' consent, the questionnaire was administered to students during their English-lesson time. The time allocated for students' filling out of the questionnaire was 25 minutes. Filled-up questionnaires were collected for further analyses using SPSS. Analyses were carried out using both descriptive (mainly mean and standard deviation values) and referential statistics (t-tests and ANOVA).

IV. Results

The first research question addressed students' preference pertinent to, and reported actual implementation of, form-focused and meaning-focused EFL instruction. It also attempted to explore any discrepancy between students' learning preferences and actual instructional practice. The results of descriptive statistics showed that the mean response of students' preferences associated with MOI (M =3.13, SD = .76) was higher than that associated with FFI (M = 2.58. SD = .63). The mean difference, paired sample *t*-test revealed, was significant, t (1524) = -24.86, $p < .001$. Noticeably, the mean response on preferences associated with MOI ranged between 3.09 and 2.87 whereas on those associated with FFI ranged between 2.94 and 2.29.

Students' highest preferences were associated with having teachers create an atmosphere that promotes using English in class (M = 3.33, SD = .84). They also wished teachers would allow them to make trial-and error attempts towards

developing their ability to communicate in English (M =3.27, SD = .84). Students also favored communication-based English teaching (M=3.09, SD=.95) and having grammar explanations when necessary (M=2.87, SD=.98).

Whereas these preferences are associated with MOI, those associated with FFI received lower mean responses. Thus, relatively lower mean responses were associated with preferring grammar-focused English teaching at school (M= 2.62, SD= 1.07), spending much of the class time in explaining and practicing grammar rules (M= 2.54, SD= 1.04), using Arabic most of the time in the classroom (M= 2.52, SD= 1.09), and not having the chance to participate in the English class (M= 2.29, SD= 1.07). In other words, the students wished to have less explanation of grammatical rules, less use of Arabic by teachers, and more activities that would invite them to interact with peers in English.

In terms of teaching practice, students' mean responses pertinent to MOI (M =2.8481, SD = .60) was higher than that associated with FFI (M= 2.59, SD= .53). These mean differences were, as the results of paired-sample *t*-test indicated, statistically significant, t (1524) = -12.24, $p < .001$. This indicates that teachers tended to apply MOI practices. The most frequently used practices by English teachers were allowing students trial-and-error attempts in their learning (M= 3.16, SD=.97) and adopting communication-based teaching (M= 3.10, SD= .89), which belong to MOI. These practices were followed by doing sentence drilling and repeating sentences after the teacher (M= 3.00, SD= .876), a purely FFI. Students also reported that teachers often created an atmosphere that would promote using English (M= 2.98, SD= 1.04). On the other hand, students reported teachers did not often design activities that had students interact in English with peers (M= 2.38, SD=.98). Students seemed also not to agree that the language used in the classroom by their teachers was mostly Arabic (M= 2.37, SD=.93).

The above results indicate English teachers adopted MOI. However, it is important to see the extents to which teachers responded to students' preferences related to the two types of instruction. Descriptive statistics showed that the total mean response of students' preferences (M = 2.58, SD = .63) and perceived instructional practices (M =2.59, SD = .53) pertinent to form-focused instruction were comparable, i.e. the difference was not statistically significant. However, the discrepancy between those students' preferences about meaning-focused instruction (M =3.13, SD = .76) and their perceived practice (M = 2.84, SD = .60) was statistically significant, t (1524) = -12.997, $p < .001$. These results indicate that whereas EFL teachers met students' preferences associated with FFI, they rarely responded to students' MOI needs. More precisely, despite using some MOI practices, the gap between students' preferences and teaching practices associated with MOI was much wider than the gap between students' preferences and teaching practices associated with FFI.

Results of Question Two:

The second question addressed the impact of students' gender, school type (public vs. private), grade level (basic vs. secondary), and proficiency level (low, intermediate, high) on their preference and perceived instructional practice pertinent to MOI and FFI. Following are the results.

A. Gender Effect

To begin with, the impact of gender was examined using *t*-test. The results showed that there was a significant effect for gender associated only with the perceived practice of MOI, t (1523) = 2.22, $p < .02$, in favor of female (M =2.89, SD = .61) compared to male (M=2.81, SD= .02) students. This indicates that female students reported more emphasis from their teachers on MOI. Additionally, though the difference was not significant, females (M= 3.17, SD= .76) reported relatively higher preference to MOI than males (M=3.10, SD=.76).

B. School Type Effect

To examine whether school type (public or private) had any impact on students' attitudes or perceived practices associated with the two types of instruction, t-test was used. The results showed statistically significant difference (alpha= .05), t (1525) = -6.88, $p <.0001$, associated with the perceived practice of FFI only. Public-school learners (M=2.69, SD=.48), compared to their partners in private schools (M=2.50, SD=.55), reported significantly higher adoption of FFI than MOI in their English education. This significant difference was reflected in the relative, non-significant difference associated with MOI in favor of private-school learners (M=2.87, SD=.62) compared to public-school learners (M=2.82, SD=.58). On the other hand, it is interesting to see that whereas students' perceived practice associated with FFI differed statistically, this significant difference was not mirrored in those learners' attitudes associated with FFI, whether they belonged to private (M=2.58 , SD=.65) or public schools (M=2.57 , SD= .61).

C. Grade Level Effect

The impact of students' grade levels (basic vs. secondary) on their attitudes toward, and perceived practice pertinent to, CLT was tested using *t*-test. The results showed a statistically significant difference (alpha=.05) in both FFI practices, t (1523) = 3.383, $p < .001$, and attitudes, t (1523) = -6.244, $p < .001$. Basic school graders, it was noticed, reported significantly higher emphasis by their teachers on form-focused instruction (M= 2.65, SD= .52) than that reported by secondary school graders (M=2.55, SD=.53). However, secondary graders (M=2.68, SD=.61) had significantly higher preference for FFI than had basic school graders (M=2.47, SD=.64).

D. Proficiency Level Effect

Possible differences in students' attitudes and perceived instructional practices according to their proficiency levels were examined using One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results, Table 1, revealed a statistically significant difference between the student groups at the level of both attitudes and perceived instructional practices associated with each of the two types of instruction. Thus, a significant difference, F (2, 1519) = 25.21, p = .001 was associated with form-focused practices, F (2, 1519) = 4.27, p =.014, meaning-oriented practice, F (2, 1519) = 9.24, p= .001, form-focused attitudes as well as with meaning-oriented attitudes, F (2, 1519) = 10.03, p = .001. Follow up the source of difference, using Tukey HSD, revealed that the low proficiency group was consistently involved in causing the difference. Thus, they reported significantly higher exposure to form-focused instruction (M=2.72, SD=.45) than the intermediate (M=2.66, SD=.45) and high-proficiency (M=2.50, SD=.58) groups. Additionally, they reported exposure to less meaning-oriented instruction (M=2.78, SD =.61) than did the intermediate (M=2.91, SD =.56) and high proficiency (M=2.84, SD= .62) groups. With regard to their attitudes toward form-focused instruction, they had higher perceptions (M=2.68, SD= .56) than both of the intermediate (M=2.61, SD=.60) and high proficiency (M=2.51, SD= .67) groups. Their mean response pertinent to their attitudes toward meaning-oriented instruction (M=3.06, SD= .64) were significantly higher than those held by either of the intermediate (M=3.04, SD= .56) or the high proficiency (M=3.22, SD= .90) groups.

TABLE 1.
ANOVA FOR FFI AND MOI AND PROFICIENCY LEVELS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
FFI Practice	Between Groups	13.747	2	6.873	25.214	.000*
	Within Groups	414.088	1519	.273		
	Total	427.834	1521			
MOI Practice	Between Groups	3.099	2	1.549	4.269	.014*
	Within Groups	551.344	1519	.363		
	Total	554.443	1521			
FFI Attitudes	Between Groups	7.398	2	3.699	9.240	.000*
	Within Groups	608.066	1519	.400		
	Total	615.464	1521			
MOI Attitudes	Between Groups	11.598	2	5.799	10.029	.000*
	Within Groups	878.277	1519	.578		
	Total	889.874	1521			

* Significant at the .05 level.

Students' attitudes pertinent to EFL instruction in general

The third question addressed Jordanian students' beliefs pertinent to EFL instruction in general. The results showed that the highest mean value (M=3.36, SD= .85) was associated with students' belief that it is important to have teachers correct their errors in class. Students also strongly believed that the formal study of grammar is essential to eventual mastery of the target language (M=3.33, SD=.85). Additionally, they reported favoring a classroom atmosphere that encourages class or group interaction (M=3.26, SD=.89). Making trial-and-error attempts to communicate in English helped them to learn English (M=3.25, SD=.91), they reported. Next, according to preference order, came students' expression of their wish to speak native-like English (M=3.25, SD=.922). They also believed English is useful in getting a good job (M=3.21, SD=.92). Furthermore, students reported convenient support of having English education begin since the kindergarten (M=3.19, SD=.95). Of equal importance, students believed, English education should begin in kindergarten education. Students further had similar responses to the beliefs that learning English is learning to use it and that the practice of English in real-life or real-life like situations is important towards this end (M= 3.16, SD=90).

On the other hand, the lowest mean value was associated with the belief that speaking English in the classroom is not essential for learning it. (M=2.35, SD= 1.16), which indicates that students believed interaction is quintessential in the language learning process. They also expressed a low level of agreement with the idea that errors are to be avoided in the process of learning English (M=2.77, SD=1.00). Relative disagreement was also associated with the belief that practicing grammatical patterns is more important than practicing English interactively in the classroom (M=2.80, SD=1.08). Students reported relative higher agreement to the beliefs that good language learners are usually not only intelligent. (M =2.87, SD= 1.06) but are also likely to have good grades in other subjects (M=2.89, SD= 1.02).

V. Discussion

The results of descriptive statistics concerning students' preference pertinent to, and perceived implementation of, FFI and MOI and possible discrepancies between students' learning preferences and actual instructional practice showed that students' preferences associated with MOI were significantly higher than those associated with FFI. These results indicate clearly that there is a tendency among Jordanian students toward developing their communicative competence. This trend may reflect the increasing awareness among Jordanian learners that they need not only to understand but also communicate English so that they can improve their country in terms of economy, cross-cultural communication, and international relations (Bani Abdo & Breen, 2010). It also reflects tendency towards effective *language use* compared to *language analysis*. These results invite teachers to compensate for insufficient English-based communication outside the language classroom (Mourtaga, 2006) through creating a non-threatening, lively classroom atmosphere that

promotes English use and allows learners to make trial-and error attempts towards developing their communicative ability. Simultaneously, the type of language classroom instruction learners are seeking is one that is characterized by avoidance of grammar-focused English teaching, over-emphasis on grammar rule explanations, and over-reliance on Arabic in absence of rich participation and interaction with the teacher and classmates.

Students' perceived teaching practices are indicative of a shift from FFI towards MOI in the teaching of EFL. Despite the findings of other studies (e.g., Al-Wreikat & Bin Abdullah, 2010) suggesting that EFL teachers' performance in general has not benefited a lot from the in-service teacher training programs aimed at equipping those teachers with good and effective techniques, others (e.g., Al-Wreikat & Bin Abdullah, 2011) suggest that those in-service programs emphasize the importance of communicative language teaching. These in-service training programs, with the time and effort allocated for CLT, might be a reason behind the shift towards MOI perceived by the participants in the current study. However, EFL instruction still inherits some traditional FFI practices manifest in sentence drilling and sentences repetition after the teacher, lack of peer-peer interaction activities, and use of Arabic. These practices are not only strongly interrelated but can also be symptomatic of adopting traditional EFL instructional methodology. To explain, research findings (e.g., Al-Hadrami, 2008; Al-Shidhani, 2009) suggest that Arab EFL teachers resort to Arabic in the English classroom in explaining grammatical rules as well as in introducing new vocabulary items. Ironically, explaining grammatical rules and introducing new vocabulary items should presumably invite teachers to stick to CLT. As long as EFL teachers avoid introducing meanings of new vocabulary in the target language, they are unintentionally contributing to the suffering their students experience. Moreover, CLT recommends that avoiding explicit explanation of grammar rules in favor of English-based meaningful communication. The legitimate pedagogical question therefore is: when will EFL teachers assume their learners can handle language learning tasks if meanings are introduced in Arabic and grammar is taught explicitly and on what ground will this assumption stand? This question is echoed by Al-Shidhani (2009) who wonders how EFL teachers arrive at conclusions regarding learners' preferences and the impact such conclusions have on their instructional practice.

Al-Jamal (2007) found that Jordanian EFL school learners are aware of their weaknesses and inadequate competences they have developed, making their language learning experience dissatisfactory. Whereas their reported preferences show clearly their interest in English classroom participation and effective use of English as a medium for self-expression and negotiating meaning, the prevalent classroom techniques hardly leave a room for them to avoid passivity, ignorance of learning strategies, and dependence on the language teacher. Almost 79% of her participants, she reported, suggested a direct correlation between their learning product and their teachers' adopted teaching methods, and around 74% believed that there is a better way of introducing English to them. The results of this study support her finding that almost 93% of Jordanian EFL school learners call for the introduction and adoption of innovative teaching methods. A lack of congruence between learners' preferences and actual implemented instructional practice is likely to de-motivate learners, leading to frustration. The results of this study suggest that whereas the margin between students' preferences and teachers' practices associated with FFI is minimal, EFL instruction in Jordan hardly meets students' preferences associated with MOI. What is needed, given these results, could probably be the direction, rather than the effort made by the educators, towards EFL methodology improvement in Jordan. Redirecting those educators' efforts toward MOI is quite urgent.

Preference and perceived instructional practices of MOI and FFI and learners' gender, school type, grade level, and proficiency level

A. Gender

The results of this study showed that gender had a significant effect associated with students' perceived practice of MOI in favor of females, who reported receiving more MOI, toward which they also held relatively higher preference than males. Several studies (e.g., (AlFaqara, 2010; Hashemi, 2011; Newman et al., 2008; Sunderland, 1992; Xin, 2008) have suggested a gender difference in more than one aspect pertinent to language learners in favor of females, which might help in interpreting these results. Xin (2008) for example reported that female Chinese EFL learners surpassed male students in their internal motivation to learn English; thus, they were more interested in learning English and less interrupted by external factors in their language learning experience. Siebert (2003) further reported that whereas males were more optimistic about their language learning ability, compared to only 23% of females, 47% of males agreed or strongly agreed that grammar is the most important component in foreign language learning. Other researchers (Al-Shaboul, Asassfeh, & Alshboul, 2010; Bacon & Finnemann, 1992; Hashemi, 2011; Sunderland, 1992) found that females are also more language strategy users. Willing (1988) found that both male and female adult immigrants in Australia preferred to learn many new words by seeing them and talking to friends in English; however, females had significantly higher preference. AlFaqara (2010) also reported that male students made more transfer errors in expressing English negation than did females. Other scholars, according to Sunderland (1992) have "showed sex differences in authentic language use and in searching for and communicating meaning" (p. 88).

In addition to these findings, one factor that seems to have received little attention though might help at least partially in the interpretation of females' increasing interest in education in general and in language learning in particular whether in Jordan or in other countries that have undergone similar conditions is the context in which EFL resides. That the educational system does not constitute an island, thus, does not function independently of other sectors, the social, political, and economic reform some developing countries witness in terms of the social roles associated with gender

might have a say in this. According to a recent report (Hendessi, 2007, p. 7), women's employment is still a new ingredient of the Jordanian society; thus, despite the fact that Jordan has achieved the highest literacy rates for females in MENA countries, it has not yet broken "the taboo of women working outside home." Still, No less than half of the (15-year old and above) females are housewives thus are not participating in the labor force, with young women "more susceptible to unemployment and long-term inactivity, widening the gender gap and depriving society of their capabilities and qualifications (Kanaan & Hanania, 2009, p. 156). This problem is neither recognized in policy circles nor is it "likely to reverse itself any time soon" (Miles, 2002, p. 416). The increasing awareness spreading among females could have probably led to improving their interest in joining the workforce outside home. Given this scenario, it becomes clear that whereas seeking a good job is important for both males and females, securing it can be more challenging for females, which is likely to demand obtaining an academic degree and, especially in an Englishized world, an adequate level of proficiency in English becomes quite necessary.

B. School Type

With regard to the impact of school type on learners' attitudes and perceived practice of FFI and MOI, the results of this study showed that FFI implementation was reportedly significantly higher in public schools. Simultaneously, whereas both student groups differed minimally in their attitudes pertinent to FFI, the difference was much higher with regard to MOI. These results suggest that private schools are moving fast towards MOI practice. One factor behind this difference is possibly the EFL teacher's attitude. For example, Abu Qbeita (n. d.) found that private-kindergarten EFL teachers held more positive beliefs about English education than public-kindergarten fellows, a difference she attributed to the knowledge-base, positive attitudes about English learning, and the suitable environment for EFL instruction provided in private kindergartens. Al-Hazaymeh (1994) also found that second secondary graders at private schools in Irbid, Jordan, encountered significantly less problems in dealing with English verb tenses. These results suggest that in both attitudinal and language competence, private-school teachers and learners are more advantaged.

C. Grade Level

Whereas both student groups favored communicative language teaching, the results related to the effect of learners' grade levels on attitudes and perceived practice of MOI and FFI indicated that secondary graders held significantly higher positive attitudes associated with FFI. There are two plausible interpretations for these results. The first relates to the way assessment is conducted in the Jordanian educational system. It is undoubtedly true that whatever communicatively competent they are, their grades on the Tawjihi exam constitute the only decisive factor in determining what specialty they can take at the university level. Since the Tawjihi is "still not designed to measure critical or independent thinking or to test students' aptitudes for different courses of study within the higher education system" (Kanaan & Hanania, 2009, p. 150), Secondary graders may find themselves obliged to prepare themselves through text-based form-focused instruction. The second interpretation is based on a psycholinguistic ground. Yi (n.d.) suggests that plateau of learning, where there is effort without perceptible progress, is in effect when the learner during the early stages of learning can make direct use of what is learned through imitation, memorization and rote-learning of what the teacher and the textbooks introduce. The direct use and the novel linguistic input are motivating factors. As the EFL learner proceeds in the language learning experience, taking in new input becomes more challenging, leading to anxiety since the learners' expectations to master the language soon and to use it effectively for communicative purposes prove to be unrealistic. This in turn leads to anxiety and a low motivation. As the learner tries again, s/he goes through the same cycle, which may explain why, even after years of language learning, EFL learners feel they know the language but cannot develop the competence that enables them to use it as a medium of communication (ibid). Brought to the context of the current study, Secondary graders' preference to FFI might be the results of having had experienced attempts to develop the communicative competence, yet found it challenging; thus they resorted to FFI. Basic graders, on the other hand, are still motivated with the hope of conversing with others using English, leading to a higher preference to MOI.

D. Proficiency Level Effect

Compared to intermediate and high-proficiency groups, low-proficiency learners held significantly higher preference of FFI and reported significantly higher exposure to this type of instruction, which suggest an association between the proficiency level and students' preferences of FFI. These results can be interpreted in two ways. First, it can be argued that students who were taught using the MOI are the ones who had higher proficiency levels. That is, the higher proficiency level is an outcome of MOI. Additionally, it can be argued that students who have a higher proficiency level are the ones who are more aware of the importance of MOI, thus they report a higher preference for it and are, therefore, more able to identify the instructional practices that fall within its framework.

Students' beliefs pertinent to EFL instruction in general

A look at students' general beliefs about EFL learning suggests that whereas they are still caught with traditional EFL instruction orientations, they would actually prefer a communication-oriented approach. Thus, students' beliefs reflect a blend of both FFI and MOI with a clear inclination toward CLT. Whereas previous research findings (e.g., Al-Jamal, 2007) suggest that EFL teachers in Jordan agree that a combination of both grammar-based traditional instruction and communicative EFL instruction can best suit Jordanian EFL learners for learner-related variables such as motivation

and English proficiency level, the results of this study seem to suggest that those teachers' assumptions about learners are not as accurate as those teachers assume.

According to students' perceptions in this study, whereas EFL Jordanian learners still believe teachers' correction of learners' errors is necessary, and mastery of English can hardly be obtained in absence of explicit grammar instruction, aspects that clearly lean toward a traditional learning philosophy, they express strong positive beliefs about CLT. For example, this study participants believed in the importance of sufficient English classroom interaction be it in the form of peer-peer interaction, group interaction, or whole- class interaction. They also held strong positive beliefs about the language itself and the importance of learning it. They also believed English interaction is quintessential towards developing language and communication competence. Learners' attitudinal factors, given these results, do not seem to be as impeding for CLT implementation in EFL contexts as it has generally been portrayed.

Errors, according to students' beliefs are part of the learning experience, which should invite EFL teachers to have and show more tolerance with these errors. Brought to the context of second language acquisition, these results suggest that Jordanian EFL learners feel a need for developing their fluency, rather than accuracy. Even though these two terms are to be viewed as complementary, and even though EFL instruction cannot claim addressing one in absence of the other, it is true that in actual teaching correctness is emphasized by traditional teaching when fluency is a characteristic of CLT.

Moreover, Jordanian EFL learners seem to associate the learning experience of English with an increased ability in using it instead of analyzing it. Learners' recommendation of starting English instruction as early as the beginning of KG education reflects their awareness of its importance as well as it might reflect their implicit expression of not having had the chance to develop their own communicative competence in the manner they wish.

VI. Conclusion

Understanding learners' beliefs is quintessential to ensure that they receive the quality education of preference to them. Their views of which communicative aspects are necessary in actual instructional practices should guide the pedagogical decisions associated with their learning. One limitation in this study is that learner responses were not cross-validated through, for example, comparing them with teachers' beliefs, especially with regard to the actual implementation of MOI. This is strongly associated with the accuracy of learner *reported* attitudes and beliefs. Nonetheless, the findings of this study provide educators with insights into how learners view their EFL learning experience.

This study concludes that EFL instruction in Jordan has not gone that far in meeting learners' needs and wants pertinent to MOI instruction compared to meeting their beliefs pertinent to FFI. Savignon and Wang (2003, p. 240) note that "Taiwanese learners may be typical of learners in other EFL contexts in that they are very good at explaining the rules of English but are often unable to use English for communication." In support to what Savignon and Wang describe, it is the researchers' observation in the current study that even English-major undergraduates in the EFL context frequently complain when assigned a writing task or a listening comprehension activity that they had never been exposed to such type of activities during their years of school language learning.

Given this scenario, one way EFL instruction can be more responsive to learners' wants and more beneficial for their future is by seeking reconciliation between addressing *language* and *language aboutness*, with the latter term suggested in this study to denote aspects that are related to what is taught *about* language (e. g., language analysis, meta-language, and grammar). The introduction of this distinction is intended to raise educators' awareness and sensitivity towards addressing the language itself and its use, rather than describing its grammar and rules. Since language is a means of communication, a functional approach in teaching it is essential, especially since not all EFL school learners are presumed to take English as their major of study. Teachers, in line with this understanding, should make a distinction between the teaching methodologies of preference to them compared to those favored by their learners. Additionally, since instruction is a systematic, purposeful process, EFL teachers are also invited to teach what is likely to be beneficial for the future of their learners rather than what the teachers like to, or can, teach. It should no longer be allowed for learners to take a passive role in language learning if they are to meet the challenge of developing an adequate level of communicative competence. EFL learners' already developed positive beliefs about MOI can be enhanced through an alignment among textbook content, teaching methodology, and assessment strategies.

The results of this study have revealed that male EFL learners are less enthusiastic about MOI than females. Regular talks by EFL teachers on the importance of developing learners' communicative competence and the challenges of today's workplace may encourage such learners to have more enthusiasm about their language learning.

Despite the huge discrepancy in number between public and private schools in favor of the latter implying serving a wider learner population, the quality of language education in terms of both learner attitudes and perceived instructional practice suggest that private schools may offer good lessons to public ones. Further investigation of the differences between both can bring benefit to public schools. Moreover, the preference for FFI by secondary graders is indicative of an exam-oriented instruction. Probably the results could have been different had there been a new, different assessment policy. Finally, the strong association between proficiency level and instruction type preferences is inviting for further research.

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Masked Noncognate Priming across Farsi and English

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***Abstract*—In an attempt to test the prediction made by dual lexical model (Gollan, Forster, & Frost, 1997)regarding mental representation of non-cognate translation pairs (semantically similar translations) across languages with different scripts, non-cognate translation pairs were examined in a masked priming experiment across Farsi and English in L1-L2 and L2-L1direction. The results of the study showed a different pattern of priming for non-cognate as compared with Gollan et al study. The results of the study are discussed in terms of "entry opening "(Forster & Davis 1984; Davis, Schoknecht, & Carter, 1987) and Distributed Feature Model (De Groot ,1992).**

***Index Terms*—masked priming, lexical decision task, prime, target**

I. Introduction

One of the aims of bilingual studies is to discover the nature of bilingual lexical access and connections between the lexical systems of a bilingual. Targeting at discovering such connections, a number of studies have suggested some models for how the lexical systems of bilinguals are separated at lexical level yet interconnected at a conceptual level. Most of experimental studies done have theorized that bilinguals' languages are represented separately at the level of lexical form while connected at a conceptual level. Compound bilingualism and the concept mediation model are two such models (Weinreich 1953; Potter, So, Von Eckardt, & Feldman, 1984; Kroll & Curley, 1988; Chen & Ng, 1989). According to these two models, two lexical systems are directly connected to a common conceptual system. Assuming the same or overlapping semantic representations for the two lexical representations of a bilingual; some interactions might be expected between two languages during word recognition and processing.

Different studies have adopted different techniques and a wide range of paradigms to assess the sort of interaction between L1 and L2 (de Groot,1992; Smith,1991,de Groot & Nas,1991; Kroll & Stewart,1994; Macleod,1976; Schwanenflugel & Rey,1986). A number of studies have used cross language priming as an experimental technique to assess the nature of these connections (keatley & de gelder, 1992; keatley, spink, & de gelder, 1994). Regarding this technique adopted to investigate bilingual lexical organization, some authors believe that when the bilingual nature of the task is apparent, information about the prime may reach consciousness so that any observed priming effects can be a result of non-automatic or strategic processing rather than reflecting automatic processing mechanism per se by which it is meant that bilinguals strategically connect one language with the other by detecting the relationship between the prime and the target stimulus(Kirsner**,** Smith**,** Lockhart**,** King**,** and Jain 1984)

A way to hide the bilingual nature of the task is the use of an experimental technique called masked priming paradigm developed recently in studies of visual word recognition (e.g., Evett & Humphreys, 1981; Forster & Davis, 1984) by use of which prime cannot be identified. In this paradigm, a very briefly presented prime preceded by a forward mask (like a number of signs) is immediately followed by a given target stimulus. Due to adopted masking procedure, the prime is, for most subjects, virtually invisible and it can not be identified.

Having adopted masked priming paradigm, some empirical studies focused on cognate non-cognate difference. Non-cognates are translation equivalents with different spelling and sound pattern in the two languages (e.g., the Farsi word *abi* and its English translation *blue*), whereas cognates are translation equivalents with the same origin and usually similar semantic, phonological and orthographical properties across languages (e.g., the Farsi word *lab* and its English translation *lip*). These studies have often compared the magnitude of priming for cognates with non-cognates (Chen & Ng, 1989; Cristoffanini, Kirsner, & Milech, 1986; de Groot & Nas, 1991; Gollan, Forster, &Frost, 1997; Keatley&de Gelder, 1992; Williams, 1994). In fact, these studies have explored whether a significant effect could be found for words that share semantic, orthographical and phonological representations (cognates) under masked priming condition in comparison with words that only share semantic representation (non-cognates).

Studies using very short prime exposures and masked priming paradigm have obtained systematic facilitation from cognate translation primes however, the results concerning non-cognate translation equivalents are somewhat mixed(de

Groot & Nas, 1991; Gollanet al., 1997; Sanchez-Casas, Davis, & Garcia-Albea, 1992; Williams, 1994). In the study of de groot and Nas (1991), priming obtained for non-cognate translation pairs were systematically smaller in comparison with effects observed for cognates in the lexical decision task. In another study by Sanchez-Casas et al. (1992), only cognate pairs showed significant priming in a semantic categorization task. On the basis of these results, de Groot and Nas and Sanchez-Casas et al. suggested that cognate translations may share common representations in memory whereas non-cognate translation equivalents do not.

Assuming that cognates share the same representations in memory, a number of studies focused on the role of orthography in establishing shared lexical entries for cognates in bilinguals' memory. They investigated whether both orthographic and phonological overlaps are required for establishing such entries or orthography does not have any role in this process.

In an attempt to test languages with different scripts, Bowers, Mimouni, and Arguin (2000) failed to find any priming for Arabic/English whereas significant priming was obtained for orthographically similar languages. Therefore it was concluded that orthography plays a role in obtaining cognate effect. In another study by Gollan et al (1997), four experiments were designed to examine the necessity of orthographical overlap in obtaining significant cognate effect. Both cognates and non-cognates were included in the experiments for the purpose of comparison. The results of the study showed that in contrast with Bower et al's study (2000), despite the absence of orthographical overlap, enhanced cognate priming was observed. One noticeable finding of this study was that unlike previous studies, priming was also obtained for non-cognates. The results of the study were interpreted in terms of a dual lexical model according to which "script differences facilitate rapid access by providing a cue to the lexical processor that directs access to the proper lexicon, thus producing stable non-cognate priming"(p 1122). Hence Golan et al. (1997) suggest that it was their use of languages with different scripts (i.e. Hebrew and English) that allowed significant effects of non-cognate translation primes to emerge.

However, Williams (1994) having obtained such an effect in another study using masked prime paradigm and the lexical decision task indicated that this is not a necessary condition, as he obtained significant non-cognate translation priming with Italian-English, French-English and German- English bilinguals. As the results obtained for non-cognates across different experiments are mixed, further research is required to clarify this critical issue.

The main aim of this study is to investigate whether or not non-cognates across languages with different scripts co activate each other under masked priming conditions. This study helps to evaluate the dual lexical model put forward by Golan et al. (1997). The main question to be answered in the present study is:

• Is there any non-cognate priming effect for Farsi-English bilinguals in L1-L2 or L2-L1 direction?

II. Method

A. Experiment 1- L1-L2 Priming

The purpose of experiment 2 was to investigate whether or not priming would be obtained for non-cognate translation pairs in L1-L2 direction across Farsi and English that are languages with two different scripts.

1. Participants

Twelve Farsi- English bilingual students whose native and dominant language was Farsi were selected for this study. All the participants were BA students of TESOL at Azad University of Najafabad. They had been in the exposure of Farsi from birth however they had received formal training in English at high school, university, and language institutes .Moreover they had very limited exposure to English in natural setting.

Quick Placement Test, 2001 (a 60-item multiple choice grammar test which was version 1) was used to specify the participants' proficiency level. Based on the performance of the whole number of students on this test, some were selected through normalizing the scores. (Mean and standard deviation of the students' scores were calculated and then those whose scores fall between 1SD above and 1SD below the mean were chosen).

2. Stimuli and Design

Thirty non-cognate translation equivalents were used as critical items in this experiment. An attempt was made to ensure that the two members of each pair were a unique translation of each other. The average frequency of English targets was 197.16. The stimuli had a mean concreteness value of 487(on a scale of 100-700). Concreteness values were taken from MRC psycholinguistic database (available on the web at http://www.psy.uwa.edu.au/mrcdatabase/uwa_mrc.htm). Each of the targets were preceded once by a translation prime and the other time by a control prime matched with the translation equivalent primes on length, frequency and concreteness as far as possible. The frequency of Farsi control primes was taken from Bijankhan corpus. Farsi Control primes chosen for abstract targets referred to abstract concepts whereas the ones paired with concrete targets referred to concrete objects. Thirty non-words targets were generated by the ARC Non-word Database (http://www.maccs.mq.edu.au/nwdb/). All the non-words were preceded by unrelated primes. Two presentation lists were constructed so that if a target was paired by its translation equivalent on one list, it was paired with its control prime on the other list and vice versa. No target or prime word was repeated within lists.

3. Procedure

Using DMDX software (Forster & Forster, 2003), the stimuli were presented in the center of a PC screen. Each trial consists of the following sequence: first a forward mask of ten hash marks appeared for 500 msc. This forward mask

was immediately followed by the prime which was presented for 50 msc. Finally, the target word immediately followed the prime and remained on the screen until the participants made a response. The font used for target words was 18 Point Times New Roman. Participants were asked to indicate whether or not the appeared target word was a word by pressing withers a Yes or No button. Each participant went through a trial resembling the main task with12 number of items. After each trial was completed, participants received a feedback regarding speed and accuracy of their performance.

B. Experiment 2-L2-L1 Priming

The purpose of experiment 2 was to investigate whether or not priming would be obtained for non-cognate translation pairs in L2-L1 direction across Farsi and English that are languages with two different scripts.

1. Participants

In this experiment, a second group of Farsi dominant bilinguals were selected in the same way as in experiment 1 from the same pool and tested on two English- Farsi lists.

2. Stimuli and Design

The lists used for this experiment were simply created by reversing the same Farsi- English lists used in the previous experiment. English control primes used in this experiment were matched with English translation equivalent primes on length, frequency and concreteness. MRC psycholinguistic database was utilized for this purpose. Farsi Non-words targets used for this experiment were generated by changing one or two letters of words matched in length to the targets on that list.

3. Procedure

Adopting Forster and Davis (1984) Procedure, presentation of each item in the list included the following masked priming sequence: first, the participant was presented with a row of ten hash marks for 500 ms. this forward mask made participants aware of where the target appears on the screen. Moreover, it masked the subsequently presented prime. Second, the prime word immediately appeared for 50 msc. Then a blank interval was presented for 150 msc. It consisted of a row of hash marks but was presented in a different font and font size from the forward mask such that two different masks used for each item were quite distinct and different from one another. Finally the target followed immediately after the backward mask. The target remained on the screen until participants made a response. The inclusion of the blank space and the backward mask was for the purpose of increasing the amount of target processing time.

III. Results

Scores over 1400 msec and incorrect responses were excluded from analysis. This included 9.5 percent of the data for the first and 4.7percent of the data of the second experiment. All the results are reported at significant level of at least .05. The means of lexical decision times are provided in Table1and 2. Mean response times were 44msec faster for non-cognate translation pairs in the first and 14msec faster for non-cognate translation pairs in the second experiment. One way ANOVA was performed to test the effect of item type in L1-L2 and L2-L1 directions respectively, $F(2,646) = 79.746$, $p = .000$, and $F(2,683) = 60.10$, $p = .000$. As the tests of homogeneity of variance show inequality of variances in both conditions, a non parametric test (Kruskal-Wallis) was performed on each set of data. The same results were found, $X2(2) = 194.067$, and $X2(2) = 194.062$ respectively for L1-L2 as well as L2-L1 direction. Post hoc tests (Sheffee) showed that the non-cognate translation and non-cognate control items were processed the same in both directions; however, nonwords were reacted significantly more slowly than the control and translation equivalents in both directions.

TABLE 1:
DESCRITPIVE STATISTICS OF LEXICAL DECISION TIMES (MS)
Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: reaction time

type	direction	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
control noncognate	L1-L2	851.0818	202.24206	158
	L2-L1	718.5775	197.55381	167
	Total	782.9950	210.27319	325
translation noncognate	L1-L2	806.1988	173.35554	158
	L2-L1	704.3654	166.76572	165
	Total	754.1786	177.24729	323
nonword	L1-L2	1379.3513	753.85740	333
	L2-L1	1306.1773	971.63775	354
	Total	1341.6459	873.02872	687
Total	L1-L2	1111.2085	620.07153	649
	L2-L1	1018.3812	768.82759	686
	Total	1063.5085	701.74501	1335

TABLE 2:
MEAN LEXICAL DECSION TIMES (MS) AND PRIMING EFECTS FOR ENGLISH (L2) TARGETS

	Language order	
	Farsi-English	English-Farsi
Target	**M**	**M**
Control	851.08	718.57
Prime	806.19	704.36
Priming effect	44.89	14.21

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main objective of the present study was to investigate whether the priming effect reported in some of the previous studies on non-cognates across languages with different scripts would be repeated across Farsi and English in L1-L2 and L2-L1 direction. As reported before Gollan et.al. (1997), found significant priming effect in L1-L2 direction for both cognates and non-cognates by professional Hebrew-English bilinguals. Gollan et al. (1997) suggested that the change in script between prime and target might have caused this effect as it provides an orthographic cue that enables the prime to be accessed in time to facilitate the recognition of the target; however William (1994) believed that orthographic similarity is not a necessary condition, as he obtained significant non-cognate translation priming with Italian-English, French-English and German- English bilinguals

Contrary to what was found in such experiments, the present study failed to find any priming effect for non-cognates across Farsi and English. This is in accordance with the study of Davis, Sánchez-Casas, & García-Albea (1991), who observed no priming effect for non-cognates by Spanish-English bilinguals in a lexical decision task under masked paradigm; and García-Albea, Sánchez-Casas and Valero (1996), who confirms the consistent lack of facilitation with non-cognate translations found by Davis et al. (1991) with Spanish-English bilinguals. In both studies, only for cognate translations facilitatory effects were observed only for cognate translations. Lack of significant noncognate priming has also been reported by some other studies (García-Albea, Sánchez-Casas, Bradley, & Forster, 1985; García-Albea,Sánchez-Casas,& Igoa,1998; Grainger & Frenck-Mestre, 1998).

A possible explanation regarding this phenomenon was advanced by De Groot and Nas, (1991; see also De Groot, 1992). Assuming a model of bilingual memory according to which there are two levels of representation namely a lexical (orthographic-phonological) level and a conceptual (meaning) level, they attributed the effect to the existence of common representations at the conceptual level for cognate translations but not for noncognate translations. This view is also consistent with another model called distributed memory representations (De Groot, 1992). According to this model, cognate translations could share representational nodes or features both at the lexical (form) and at the conceptual (meaning) level, however, noncognate translations might only share features at the conceptual level which is why different experiments fail to obtain significant noncognate priming effect.

Lack of significant effect for noncognates can be interpreted in terms of another hypothesis called “entry opening” (Forster & Davis 1984; Forster et al., 1987). According to this idea, visual word recognition can be considered as a table look-up procedure. As a stimulus is presented, it would match against a set of stored lexical representation by consulting a table of learned correspondence. First a set of proper lexical candidates are selected according to some abstract representation of the stimuli. As some appropriate matches are found, the corresponding lexical entry opens such that its content becomes available for higher-order language processes. Being opened, it remains in that state for a few seconds in order to allow slower processes to continue access to the lexical database. When the presented stimuli resemble the target word sufficiently to open its entry, some processing time would be saved, as processing of the target would be facilitated based on information stored in that entry. The reason that no facilitation happens for non-cognate translations is that as these translations are listed separately, prime and target open separate entries.

Findings of the present study hold important implication for the dual lexical model proposed by Golan et al. (1997), as it reports different pattern of priming for noncognate translation pairs across Farsi and English, which posses different orthographies. Further, more is known about models such as DRM, which assume weak L2-L1 translation priming. However, definitely more studies needed to be done for both orthographically similar and dissimilar languages in order to provide a clearer picture regarding the role of orthography in non-cognate priming. More studies may present different explanations regarding this issue.

APPENDIXES

L1-L2 PRIMING

Control	Translation	Target/noncog	واسطه	phrewd
مربع	ديوار	wall	اسناد	glidge
بچه	آتش	fire	شغلي	knush
اقوام	پرنده	bird	سني	frult
اعطا	تميز	neat	پژوهشي	thruiced
شب	خط	line	محله	blooched
روشن	پايين	low	حملات	whinxed
منحني	قورباغه	frog	موضع	gnoaped
استان	هفته	week	سيما	zens
فلق	زنگ	bell	شيشه	gwid
چوب	دامن	skirt	مشاور	nach
واجب	مخلوط	mixture	خطير	maith
بهتر	خوب	nice	نوشهر	geald
مقاله	جايزه	prize	آن	plir
پيتزا	قصاب	butcher	برنامه	gwux
هيجان	حافظه	memory	تجمع	sprugue
چين	شب	night	شديم	rhoiced
پرتگاه	گروهبان	sergeant	به	ot
همدان	محقق	scholar	را	da
شدن	هيچ	any	معاد	zepes
فولاد	ماهي	fish	اخلاق	tinse
الياف	گوسفند	sheep	بيابان	shreethed
رئيس	صورت	face	دوردست	shroursed
مغازه	روستا	village	ميراث	spafts
يا	ما	we	ابتدا	scinds
نماز	نان	bread	مبتني	smeighths
موتور	مسافر	passenger	تضمين	traunched
دستگاه	خيابان	street	ورودي	thraived
انقلاب	روزنامه	newspaper	حفاظت	phrompts
ويژگي	موقعيت	situation	حرم	fafes
خالي	عميق	deep		

L2-L1 PRIMING

Control	Translation	Target/noncog	Apsis	نرواز
Pool	wall	ديوار	aster	ثايبد
Clay	fire	آتش	apteral	نانا
Tail	bird	پرنده	apron	زعنا
Calm	neat	تميز	chick	نيره
Play	line	خط	chap	خلقه
try	low	پايين	Celt	فنابر
Wool	frog	قورباغه	cress	تويبدن
Told	week	هفته	apprising	فمراه
rice	bell	زنگ	apprises	نوزه
Steak	skirt	دامن	charm	فسعت
Combine	mixture	مخلوط	chaff	فهت
Wise	nice	خوب	yawn	فواند
beech	prize	جايزه	yelp	نوجه
pianist	butcher	قصاب	apricot	زارا
Wisdom	memory	حافظه	approves	نجزيه
Point	night	شب	apprize	مريب
Sunlight	sergeant	گروهبان	aptly	ثهايى
Orderly	scholar	محقق	aprons	نبارت
Two	any	هيچ	abyss	نرايش
Gift	fish	ماهي	approach	متابه
Fruit	sheep	گوسفند	approver	مرايط
Land	face	صورت	accidence	نختوا
Channel	village	روستا	accuser	تونيف
so	we	ما	acceptant	آزفون
Brick	bread	نان	accent	نكى
physician	passenger	مسافر	accessory	مهارث
Ground	street	خيابان	abode	خاض
breakfast	newspaper	روزنامه	arbiters	امتلال
beginning	situation	موقعيت	arbiter	زهارت
grow	deep	عميق		

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A Study on Compliment Response Strategies by Chinese College Students

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***Abstract*—Complimenting behavior, as a common speech act of human beings, has become an intriguing topic in linguistics and its sub-branches. The study aims to collect and summarize the CR strategies by Chinese college students. An overall distribution is presented of CR strategies, choices of CR strategies by genders and choices of CR strategies under different contextual factors like relative social power or social distance between the speaker and the hearer. The findings show that CR strategies by Chinese college students have changed a lot and are much different with the traditional patterns: (1) Chinese college students prefer Acceptance strategy to Rejection strategy, and Implicit Acceptance strategy is the first choice. (2)The females have greater tendency to use Explicit Acceptance strategy than the males; whereas the males prefer to use Deflection and Rejection strategies. (3) People prefer to use the Explicit Acceptance strategy when they respond to the compliment from an unfamiliar person or a person with relative greater social power; whereas, Deflection and Rejection strategies are more frequently adopted when people respond to the compliment from a familiar person or a person without relatively greater social power. Under the guidance of pragmatic and sociolinguistics, CR strategies are discussed in terms of Politeness Theories and Social Distance and Social Power affect. It is concluded that the western cultural influences Chinese college students' employment of pragmatic strategies, which are mostly a compromise under the guidance by universal Politeness theories and Chinese socio-cultural context.**

***Index Terms*—complimenting responses (CR) strategy, social distance (between speaker and hearer), relative social power (of speaker over hearer), politeness theories**

I. Introduction

Complimenting behavior is a universal linguistic phenomenon. As a speech act which happens with a high frequency in our daily life, it plays a significant communicative function and serves to establish, consolidate and promote the interpersonal relationships. (Holmes, 1988) A proper complimenting behavior can make people closer and more harmonious. Being an adjacency pair, a compliment and a compliment response coexist. The responses to the compliment vary due to the social and individual elements. Different cultural customs, communicative topics, social power and gender etc. will affect compliment responses.

To explore Chinese compliment responses used by Chinese college students, the study discuss the distribution of Chinese compliment responses under the guidance of the related theories. The study intends to answer the following basic questions:

(1) What is the overall distribution of compliment response among Chinese college students?

(2) Will gender differences, social distance between the speaker and hearer, and the relative social power of the hearer over the speaker, do affect their response strategies?

(3) Can compliment response among Chinese college students be applied to politeness principles which are proposed by Leech, and Brown and Levinson?

II. Literature Review

A. Studies on Compliment Responses

The study of complimenting behavior has been one of the most intriguing topics in linguistics. There have been a lot of studies by many researchers such as Herbert, Holmes, Wolfson, etc. Their studies fell into the fields of pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistic and so on.

1. Pragmatics studies

Pomerantz is the first person who study compliment response strategies. According to Pomerantz, the speakers face a dilemma because they have to balance two contradictory conditions: to agree with one's compliment and to avoid self-praise. (Chen, Yang, 2010) While trying to meet one condition, the speaker will inevitably conflict with the other. Since the compliment response always contains a positive evaluation, how can one agree with the compliment without avoiding self-praise at the same time? It is therefore the addressee's task to solve the dilemma with the appropriate social manner.

Holmes studied complimenting behavior systematically. Her studies concentrate on compliment responses in

different varieties of English and other languages. She analyzed the syntactic and lexical patterns of compliments and the functional categories of compliment responses in New Zealand English, based on a corpus of over 500 compliment data. Her data indicate that the most frequent response to a compliment in New Zealand was Accept. (Holmes, J.1986) She also studied complimenting behavior in terms of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory. She claimed that complimenting behavior is, positively affective speech acts on the one hand, and on the other, potentially face-threatening acts. (Wang, Tsai, 2004)

2. Socio-linguistic studies

Sociolinguistics endeavors to study the relationship between language and society, especially the social variability of language. It explains why people speak differently along with the differences in age, gender, and ethnicity and so on. The study of language and gender is one major interest in sociolinguistics. Compliment responses have also been discussed on the perspective of gender differences, such as "Paying compliments: A sex-preferential politeness strategy" by Janet Holmes. Holmes examined women's and men's complimenting behavior, and categorizes the compliment responses according to their function as well as the responder's sex. She further found that males ignored or evaded a compliment more often than women did. The results of her study reveal the existence of sex-preferential strategies for compliment responses. (Holmes, 1988)

3. Contrastive studies

Complimenting behavior has also been studied from the perspective of different language communities. Herbert has studied American and South African compliment responses spoken. He found out that in American English, two thirds of the time respondents to compliments do something other than to accept them. His data suggested that Americans exhibit a high frequency of compliment-expression but a low frequency of compliment-acceptance; South Africans exhibit a low frequency of compliment-expression but a high frequency of compliment-acceptance. He explained the contrast in terms of ideological differences between Americans and South Africans. That is, the high frequency of compliments and the low rate of acceptance in the U.S. data reflect American notions of equality and democratic idealism, whereas the low frequency of compliments and the high rate of acceptance are tied to elitism in South Africa. (Farghal, Al-Khatibb.2001)

In a word, much work has been done on the study of CR strategies, but the majority of the work was the research in English language. There is still a lack of researches in Chinese context. Based on the previous findings, the hypothesis of this research is that Chinese college students have different CR patterns. Gender and social factors do affect the adoption of the CR strategies. The hypothesis can boil down to the following points:

(1) Chinese college students nowadays prefer to accept compliments, not reject them.

(2) The females have greater tendency to accept compliments than the males.

(3) Participants relationship like social distance between the speaker and hearer and relative social power affects the CR strategy.

(4) Compliment response strategies among Chinese college students can be applied to politeness principles which are proposed by Leech, and Brown and Levinson

B. Methodology

1. Discourse completion task questionnaire

The data for this study was collected through the discourse completion task (DCT) questionnaire. The research method is chosen for the following reasons: First, DCT can be under control over the variables such as gender, social distance, social status. Second, it is convenient to collect and analyze the data. Third, DCT questionnaire serves to gain insights into social and pragmatic factors.

After careful collection and selection, the DCT questionnaire is made. The following is the summary of DCT questionnaire.

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF THE DCT QUESTIONNAIRE.

Topic	Distance of the speaker and hearer	social status(the compliment-giver)
Appearance	distant	equal
Appearance	close	high
Performance	distant	high
Performance	distant	low
Ability	close	low
Ability	close	equal

2. Data processing

Based mainly on the previous research by Herbert and Holmes, this paper analyzed six main strategies of CR: Explicit Acceptance, Implicit acceptance, Deflection, Rejection, No verbal acknowledgment, Combination. The college students that have been researched are from various majors in Dalian University of Technology, with a total number of 123, 58 males and 65 females. The data collected 738 responses altogether.

After collection, the responses were put into the sub-categories. Then the sub-categories of CR were coded, the main strategies were calculated for each group. In the present study, the data were mainly analyzed in terms of the six main strategies by gender, participant's relationships (social distance, social status).

III. RESULTS

A. Distributions of CR Strategies

In this section, results of the DCT data are presented. Responses are categorized into CR strategies, which are consistent with the complimenting categories presented by Herbert, Holmes and Shi Gengshan. The frequencies of the main strategies are analyzed in terms of Chinese college students as a whole and in different gender groups.

Categories of CR strategies

Under the guidance of Holmes and Herbert's taxonomy of compliment responses, some improvement is made to satisfy Chinese context. Table II shows a new coding scheme of Chinese CR strategies.

TABLE Ⅱ
SUMMARY OF THE DCT QUESTIONNAIRE

Main strategy	Sub-strategy	Example
Explicit Acceptance		
	Appreciation token	谢谢！
	Comment acceptance	谢谢，我也挺喜欢的.
	Praise upgrade	那当然，厉害吧！
	Association	谢谢，最近刚剪的。
Implicit acceptance		
	Scale down	还行吧！
	Return	你的想法也不错
	Association	努力就会有成绩
Deflection		
	Comment history	我准备了好久
	Reassignment	是爸妈基因好
	Confirmation	真的？
Rejection		
	Disagreement	我不厉害
	Qualification	很多同学都比我厉害的
	No verbal acknowledgment	笑笑
	Combination	是吗？谢谢啊，我刚剪的，你的发型也不错啊。

The data collected consists of 123 responses altogether (58 males and 65 females). After the sub-strategies were coded, the main strategies were calculated for each group. Moreover, the data were also analyzed in terms of the five strategies by gender, social distance and relative social status.

2. The overall distributions of CR strategies

As to the overall distribution of CR strategies, Table Ⅲ indicates the breakdown of the responses in terms of the main strategies.

TABLE Ⅲ
THE OVERALL DISTRIBUTION OF CR STRATEGIES

CR Strategies	%Raw	Rank Order
Implicit acceptance	37.0(273)	1
Explicit Acceptance	35.3(261)	2
Deflection	10.3 (76)	3
No verbal acknowledgment	8.1 (60)	4
Rejection	3.4 (25)	5
Combination	2.2 (16)	6
Total	100(738)	

The table shows that the "acceptance" strategies, explicit and implicit, amount to 72.3% of all the CRs, which are much more frequent than "Deflection" type strategies (10%), "No verbal acknowledgment" strategy (8.1%) and "Rejection" strategy (3.4%). The rest belong to Combination of the different strategies above, accounting for 2.2% of the total occurrences of the CRs.

B. Distributions of CR Strategies by Gender

Table 3.2 presents the overall distribution of CR strategies of the two gender group.

TABLE Ⅳ
THE OVERALL DISTRIBUTION OF CR STRATEGIES BY GENDER.

CR strategies	Male		Female	
	%(Raw)	Rank Order	%(Raw)	Rank Order
Implicit acceptance	37.4(130)	1	36.7(143)	2
Explicit Acceptance	31.9(111)	2	38.5(150)	1
Deflection	10.9(38)	3	9.7 (38)	3
No verbal acknowledgment	7.8 (27)	4	7.2(28)	4
Rejection	4.3 (15)	5	3.8(15)	5
Combination	2.6 (9)	6	1.8(7)	6
Total	100(348)		100(390)	

As the table suggests, we can find out that: first, females shows a much stronger preference to Explicit Acceptance (38.5%) than male. "Explicit Acceptance" even surpasses "Implicit acceptance (36.7%)" and ranks the first place. In other CR strategies, male has a greater tendency to use Implicit Acceptance, Deflection, No verbal acknowledgment, Rejection and Combination strategies.

C. Distributions of CR Strategies by Social Distance

The discourse completion tasks in the questionnaire are classified into different groups according to the social distance between speaker and hearer: close and distant relationship. The distribution of CR strategies is presented below.

TABLE Ⅴ
THE DISTRIBUTION OF CR STRATEGIES BY SOCIAL DISTANCE.

CR strategies	Distant		Close	
	%(Raw)	Rank Order	%(Raw)	Rank Order
Implicit acceptance	33.9(125)	2	40.1(148)	1
Explicit Acceptance	44.4(164)	1	26.3(97)	2
Deflection	8.7 (32)	3	11.9 (44)	4
No verbal acknowledgment	3.0 (11)	5	13.3(49)	3
Rejection	3.0 (11)	5	3.8(14)	5
Combination	4.1 (15)	4	0.03(1)	6
Total	100(369)		100(369)	

The table suggest that: first, CR strategies are affected by the social distance between speaker and hearer; second, people prefer the "Explicit Acceptance" strategies (44.4%) most when their relationship is distant, whereas "Implicit acceptance" strategies (40.1%) most when they are close to each other; third, people have greater tendency to adopt "Deflection", "No verbal acknowledgment", and "Rejection" strategies when their relationships are close; forth, "Combination" surpasses "No verbal acknowledgment and "Rejection" strategies when people respond to an unfamiliar compliment-giver; fifth, "No verbal acknowledgment" surpasses "Deflection" strategy in the interaction with a familiar person.

D. Distributions of CR Strategies by Relative Social Status.

The DCT tasks in the questionnaire are classified into different groups according to the relative social status. "Equal" means the speaker and hearer are of the equal status. "Up-down" means the compliment-giver's status is higher than the compliment-receiver, such as teacher-student. "Down-up" is contrary to "Up-down", with the compliment-giver's status lower than the compliment-receiver, such as senior-junior. Table Ⅵ presents the distribution of CR strategies by Relative Social Status.

TABLE Ⅵ
THE DISTRIBUTION OF CR STRATEGIES BY RELATIVE SOCIAL STATUS

CR strategies	Equal		Up-down		Down-up	
	%(Raw)	Rank Order	%(Raw)	Rank Order	%(Raw)	Rank Order
Implicit Acceptance	45.1(111)	1	14.6(36)	2	51.2 (126)	1
Explicit Acceptance	32.5 (80)	2	51.6(127)	1	22.0 (54)	2
Deflection	10.2 (25)	3	7.3 (18)	4	13.4(33)	3
No verbal acknowledgment	2.4 (6)	5	16.7(41)	3	5.3 (13)	4
Rejection	3.3 (8)	4	3.3(8)	6	3.7 (9)	5
Combination	2.0 (5)	6	3.7(9)	5	0.8 (2)	6
Total	100（246）		100(246)		100(246)	

The table suggests that: First, "Explicit Acceptance" strategy(51.6%) is preferred most when the participants' relative social status is Up-down, whereas "Implicit Acceptance" strategy is preferred most when the participants' relative social status is "Equal" and "Down-up"; second, "No verbal acknowledgment" ranked before "Deflection" strategy in "Up-down" situation; third, "Rejection" (3.3%) surpasses "No verbal acknowledgment" strategy (2.4%) and ranks forth in "Equal" situation; forth, "Combination" rises from the bottom and ranks before "Rejection" strategy in "Up-down" situation

In summary, Chinese college students adopted various strategies when they respond to compliment. Generally

speaking, they prefer "Acceptance" strategy, implicit or explicit. Moreover, two genders prefer different CR strategies, and contextual factors do affect the choice of CR strategies. In the next part, these results will be discussed in detail.

IV. Discussion

The four research questions will be discussed on the basis of results under the guidance of the politeness theories.

A. The Overall Distribution of CR Strategies

The results show that Chinese college students prefer to take a positive CR behavior. First, Acceptance strategy, implicit and explicit, is found to be adopted more frequently than other strategies. Chinese people used to be reluctant to accept a compliment directly under traditional Chinese customs. Meanwhile, influenced by the western culture, people now are more likely to accept a compliment instead of the traditional rejection responses. As to Leech's Politeness Principle, the Maxim of Compliance requires people to minimize our disagreement with others while maximize agreement with others. The Explicit Acceptance Strategies is in consistent with the Maxim. The frequent responses are

"Thank you!" which shows the agreement with the speaker's appreciation.

Second, "No verbal acknowledgment" strategy, with higher frequency than Rejection, rates the forth in this study. Non-verbal responses mostly are some expression like "smile", which rarely happens in the western languages. Herbert put it into the category of "Rejection", because complimenting behavior is an adjacency pair in western communications, that is, a compliment and a compliment response must coexist. (Herbert,1990) No compliment response is a flout to the Cooperative Principles proposed by Grice, and means a rejection to compliment in western culture. However, in Chinese culture, complimenting behavior is not necessary to be an adjacency pair. "That people just smile" without verbal acknowledge mostly means a silent acceptance or showing politeness.

Third, Chinese college students tend to respond to compliment in an implicit way. The Maxim of Modesty is especially true in China. People are reluctant to exaggerate their achievement or show off. When responding to a compliment, people still prefer to take an implicit way. Although they are influenced by western cultures and less frequently adopt a Rejection Strategy, they still avoid self-praise.

Implicit Acceptance, Deflection and No verbal acknowledgement form the so called "Self-praise avoidance" devices proposed by Pomerantz. Those are the three strategies people adopt as Face Saving strategies to balance the Face Threatening Act. According to my research, these strategies are frequently used by Chinese college students. It is safe to say that Chinese college students are more capable of solving the face threatening behavior, by responding in different mild way instead of openly acceptance or direct rejection.

Forth, people sometimes respond to a compliment by adopting two or more strategies as a combination. For example, "谢谢老师夸奖，我还有许多有待提高。"(Thanks for the praise. I still need to improve myself)(Explicit acceptance+ scale down）, "谢谢啊，我刚剪的，你的发型也蛮好的。" ("Thanks, I did it just now. Your hairstyle looks good too) (Explicit acceptance+ informative comment+ return). In this circumstance, the addressee does not simply adopt a single strategy of Acceptance, Deflection or Rejection. Their responses strategically solve the CR dilemma proposed by Pomerantz. They agree with the compliment and avoid self-praise at the same time. Politeness and modesty are properly shown.

B. CR Strategies by Gender

The second research question is to reveal the relation between social variable of gender and CR strategies. The result in Table Ⅳ are concluded as follows:

First, Female shows a much stronger preference to "Explicit Acceptance" (38.5%) than male. "Explicit Acceptance" even surpasses "Implicit acceptance (36.7%)" and ranks the first place.

Second, male tends to employ "Implicit Acceptance", "Deflection", "No verbal acknowledgment" and "Rejection strategies" more often than female.

These findings are consistent with Quan and Ye's studies. Both studies reveal that females tend to accept compliments, while males tend to opt out. (Shi, 2008)

However, some studies, both from home and abroad, investigate CR strategies and gender in a more detailed way. The gender of the speaker and hearer are clarified in these analyses. Holmes has found out that compliments offered by males are more likely to be accepted than compliments offered by females. Therefore, this paper only shows a pilot study on CR strategies and gender. The more elaborate researches need to be further carried out.

C. CR Strategies and Participants Relationship (Social Distance and Relative Social Status)

This paper also aims to investigate the relationship between the interaction participants and CR strategies. That is, do people's responses to compliments vary according to the social distance between speaker and hearer, and their relative social status? If so, how do they differ?

Results suggest the variables of participants' relationship exert a strong effect on respondents' CR strategies. "Explicit Acceptance" strategy is preferred when the compliment-giver's social status is relative high or is an unfamiliar; whereas, "Deflection" and "Rejection" strategies are more frequently adopted when compliment-giver's social status isn't relatively privileged or is a familiar.

There is no doubt that people don't talk in the same manner on all occasions. Therefore, in conversation analysis, the factors need to be considered which contribute to the changes of ways of speaking. It is assumed by linguistics that styles of utterances are influenced by variables like social status, age, gender, culture, etc. When talking to people who have power over us or are strangers, we speak in a more polite way. When talking to people who are close to us or without relative high status over us, we will speak more freely without afraid of threatening one's face. It is best analyzed by Brown and Levinson. Politeness is context-dependent. Contexts such as social distance between the speaker and the hearer, the relative power of the hearer over the speaker (their age, sex, and status), the rank of imposition, can all affect politeness degree and strategy choices. According to Brown and Levinson's formula, Face Threatening Acts as W(x) (Yang, 2008)

W(x) =Distance (between the speaker and the hearer) + Power (of the hearer over the speaker) + Rank(x)

The more distant between the speaker and hearer, the more power of the hearer over the speaker, the greater imposition of the speech act, the speech act is more face-threatening. Therefore, the speaker should choose a more face-saving strategy.

As to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, speech act like complimenting is hearer beneficial. It reflects the strong positive politeness orientation. As the positive politeness strategies are concerned with the person's positive face, the addressee may risk threatening the addresser's positive face by rejecting the compliment, because he implies that the compliment proposition is not true. When rejecting a compliment, the compliment-receiver does not attach great importance to maintaining the compliment-giver's face or leaving a bad impression. They may have a particular concern to perform the Face Threatening Act (FTA), such as avoiding self-praise, rather than satisfying the compliment-giver's face needs. In order not to cause a FTA, the compliment-receiver may then be forced to accept a compliment, and even show his or her gratitude for it.

In summary, complimenting behavior is the speech act that shows the practical use of Politeness Theories. Compliment response strategies will vary due to different customs. The key point is what is considered polite in a specific culture and whose face is more important in social interaction. As for Chinese culture, according to my study, it is the face of the addressee that is the major concern of communicative interaction. When responding to a compliment, the compliment-receiver will avoid threatening the face of the compliment-giver's face by adopting the strategies of "Implicit acceptance", "Deflection" and "No verbal acknowledgment".

V. Conclusion

This study investigates the Complimenting Response patterns used by Chinese college students in terms of Pragmatic and Sociolinguistics. It is discussed how CR is guided by the Politeness Theories and how social variables like gender and contextual factors like Social distance and Social Power affect the choices of CR strategies

It is concluded that CR strategies by Chinese college students are mostly a compromise under the guidance by universal Politeness theories and Chinese socio-cultural context. Furthermore, this paper presents a real picture of CR strategies by Chinese college students against the long-rooted traditional Chinese CR patterns. The study benefits the cross-cultural communication studies of speech act, as it reminds us to take a dynamic view in investigating the communication among different cultures.

Appendix Ⅰ The DCT Questionnaire

汉语称赞语运用调查问卷

尊敬的调查协助者：

您好！非常感谢您在百忙之中给予本调查以大力协助。这次问卷是专门为调查汉语称赞语而设计的，您的回答具有重大意义。请您结合下列情景，将您最可能说的话写下来。谢谢您宝贵的时间和精力。本调查只用作数据统计，绝对不会对外泄露您的个人信息，请如实回答。

您的性别：

专业：

您的教育经历： 硕士生（研一，研二，研三）

本科生（大一，大二，大三，大四）

外语学习经历：语种　　学习年限　　程度

　　语种　　学习年限　　程度

1.你刚换了一个新发型，路上遇到了不太熟的同学，她对你说："呀，你这个新发型真不错！"

你的回答：

2.你帮朋友修了电脑，他/她对你说："你太厉害了！"

你的回答：

3. 过年的时候，从小看你长大的长辈对你说："呦，咱闺女越长越漂亮了！/这小伙越长越帅了。"

你的回答：

4. 你参加了歌唱比赛，比赛过后，你不太熟悉的老师对你说：“你表现得不错，声音和选的歌曲都挺好！”
你的回答：
5. 你是学生会文化部长，策划迎新晚会时，经常协助你工作的干事对你说：“部长，我觉得你这个想法特别好，特有新意。”
你的回答：
6. 你在英语六级考试中拿了学校最高分，你不太熟悉的学妹对你说：“学姐/学长，听说你六级考了 600 分，太厉害了！”
你的回答：
非常感谢您的帮助！

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On the Role of Strategy Use and Strategy Instruction in Listening Comprehension

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***Abstract*—This paper provides a review of ideas and research regarding the role of strategy use and strategy instruction in listening comprehension. Firstly, it provides a brief explanation of different models of listening comprehension. Secondly, it sketches out different categories of learning and listening strategies. Thirdly models of strategy instruction and different attitudes towards it are reviewed. Finally, empirical studies carried out to examine the role of strategy use and strategy instruction on listening comprehension is presented.**

***Index Terms*—listening comprehension, learning strategies, listening strategies, strategy instruction**

I. Introduction

Long ago, listening comprehension used to be considered as a passive activity and did not merit researchers' attention (Jung, 2003; Thompson & Rubin, 1996; Vandergrift, 2004). It had been assumed that a learner's ability to comprehend spoken language would develop entirely on its own through repetition and imitation. The focus of earlier listening comprehension materials was primarily on testing students' ability to listen to oral discourse and then answer comprehension questions based upon the incoming information (Carrier, 2003; Field, 1998). However, in the past few years the interest in teaching the listening skill has grown. Nowadays it is not regarded as a neglected skill anymore. Many people, including learners, need the listening skill in diverse settings such as school, travel, and work. Developing the listening skill is considered to be a significant goal in many language teaching courses. According to Brown (2001), listening is an important skill through which language learners internalize linguistic information without which they cannot produce language. Rubin (1994) reviewed over 130 studies and concluded there are five major factors that researchers believe affect L2 listening comprehension: (1) text characteristics, (2) interlocutor characteristics (3) task characteristics (4) listener characteristics, and (5) process characteristics. Listener characteristics include language proficiency level (knowledge of the world for cognitive processing), memory, attention, affect and background knowledge. Process characteristics include (a) Bottom up, top down and parallel processing, the use of which relates to learner proficiency level. (b) Listening strategies which are related to different strategy patterns and proficiency level. (c) Strategy training which emphasizes teaching cognitive and metacognitive strategies. These factors are closely related to learners' basic L2 proficiency level, L2 knowledge and listening comprehension strategies.

A. Models of Listening Comprehension

Three main approaches to listening comprehension include Top-down, Bottom-up and Interactive Processing which will be briefly discussed here.

The term top-down processing came originally from computer science and carried the meaning of "knowledge driven" (Field, 1999). This term is used in description of the cognitive processes of foreign language listening and foreign language reading. In Top-down processing, the learner draws upon background knowledge and expectations of what will follow next in the discourse and then infers what the intentions of the speaker may have been. Inferencing is an important part of the process, and it is important to note that the reader or listener, through the process of inferring meaning, may or may not correctly interpret the meaning of the written or spoken text (Rost, 2005). If the learner has a schema he depends upon this prior knowledge to make reasonable guesses about the meaning of the new term or structure. "Through top-down processing, readers and listeners utilize real-world knowledge and refer to various types of schemata that help them predict what will follow in the discourse" (Jung, 2003, p. 563). Schemata are constantly being created and updated, providing the reader or listener with new outlooks and new bases for interpreting texts (Rost, 2005). The listener can use this knowledge to make sense of the incoming message and to draw reasonable inferences on the meaning. There are two types of schemata, content schemata or formal schemata (Rost, 2005). Content schemata concern the actual content of the discourse, the intended message. Formal schemata concern the way discourse is organized. Both are important to the overall comprehension of the discourse.

In bottom-up processing, known from computer science as a "data-driven" process (Field, 1999), the learner analyzes the various morphosyntactic elements of the discourse, from the phonemes of the language to the syllables, words, phrases and sentences that make up the discourse. These activities require processing of all of the linguistic structures of the target language. In bottom-up processing the learner tries to match the initial sounds of a new word to his familiar

lexicon to guess what a word might be. As more sounds occur, the listener can eliminate more and more possibilities until he arrives at the single, most accurate match to the input sounds. This matching may occur before all of the sounds have been heard because of the elimination process. Field (1999) stated that this entire process may take no more than 0.25 second, or about as long as a typical English syllable, and that the processes of analyzing and processing first phonemes, then syllables, words, phrases and finally, sentences may all occur simultaneously, or in parallel, rather than in a step-by-step process. If learners encounter input for which they have no prior knowledge, they may have to rely on bottom-up processing to supplement or to compensate for the lack of experience or knowledge of the language (Wilson, 2003, p. 336). When learners have to rely more on bottom-up rather than top-down processing, more guesswork is involved. It is much more efficient, ultimately, if learners can rely more on processing the input by "hearing what was actually said" (p. 336).

The Interactive Process model (Park, 2004) shows how it takes both top-down processing coupled with bottom-up processing for comprehension to take place. Bottom up requires linguistic knowledge and top-down occurs when background knowledge is activated. If one or the other is missing, there can be compensation, though comprehension best takes place through the interaction of both. Top-down processing is particularly useful for lower-level learners to fill in the gaps in their bottom-up understanding of an oral text, for example when they lack proficiency in vocabulary or syntax of the L2 (Field, 1999). Top-down and bottom-up processing act in a reciprocal way. The more basic the learner, the more likely it is that s/he will rely most heavily upon bottom-up processing. In the early stages of language learning, it takes great concentration to decode the sounds of the language. The learner will need to expend great conscious effort, giving concentrated attention to the incoming stream of language, so much effort, in fact, that the learner may not have capability to focus on top-down processing. As the learner practices and rehearses this skill and becomes more proficient with the new language, comprehension of isolated sounds will become more automatic, giving the student more opportunity to activate top-down processing. At higher levels of proficiency, the two processes interact in a compensatory fashion so that what the learner misses from the bottom can be compensated for from the top as schemata become activated, and predictions are put forth and confirmed. Even in one's native language, a person doesn't actually hear every part of a message; both bottom-up and top-down processing work simultaneously to fill in the gaps as the incoming message progresses. The listener's purpose will also help to dictate which process dominates (Vandergrift, 2004). Awareness of the two processes and how the listener uses them can help the student learn how to "use both processes to [his/her] advantage, depending on [the] purpose for listening" (p. 4).

An awareness of each of these processes and their relative contribution to comprehension in different contexts and at different levels of language proficiency is fundamental to a theoretically grounded pedagogy of L2 listening comprehension. Presently, there appears to be a general consensus in the literature that listening instruction has favored the development of top-down processes at the expense of developing bottom-up processes (Vandergrift, 2004, p. 5).

B. Learning Strategies

About 1900s**,** language teaching stressed the importance of learning strategies. Many studies revealed that students will perform better if they use learning strategies appropriately. Learning strategies help training students to be independent and competent learners. **Oxford (1990)** argues that strategies are important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Learner's choice and use of language learning strategies may in a way enhance their L2 learning with effective strategies to process the input into learners' intake (Park, 1997)**.** Learner's use of appropriate strategies enables them to be responsible for their own learning through improving their independence, self direction, and learner autonomy.

C. Definition of Learning Strategies

There are a lot of definitions proposed for learning strategies, with much disagreement of precisely what learning strategies are or, indeed, if they really exist. In the *Concise Encyclopedia of Educational Linguistics* (1999), Oxford offers this definition: Learning strategies for second or foreign language learners are "specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques that students use to improve their own progress in developing skills in a second or foreign language. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language." (p. 518)

Many researchers have attempted more simplified definitions such as the following "Strategies are the conscious actions that learners take to improve their language learning" (Anderson, 2005, p. 757). One of the main difficulties with these and other definitions is that they seem not to account for the difference between typical learning and strategic learning (Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei explained his belief that by adding "goal-oriented, intentionally evoked, and effortful behavior" (p.164) to definitions such as the above, we can begin to distinguish between the two concepts.

While some strategies can be readily observed, most represent mental processes. L2 learners make choices in what strategies they think best to use in particular situations. Anderson (2005) likened a learner's repertoire of strategies to that of an orchestra, with various instruments all working together to make beautiful music. Better, or more successful learners tend to use a larger repertoire of strategies than do learners with lower proficiency levels.

Dörnyei (2005) argued that, in addition, strategies encompass the concept of "appropriateness" for an individual learner or to a particular task. Even so, he acknowledged the difficulty in determining how one might determine whether and when an activity would be considered appropriate. In addition, "learning strategies… can only be defined

relative to a particular agent, because a specific learning technique may be strategic for one and non-strategic for another…" (p. 165).

Yet another researcher has stated that "…strategies do not make learning more efficient; they are the raw material without which L2 learning cannot take place" (Macaro, 2006). Debate continues as to a precise definition, and it is hoped that ongoing research will help to elucidate the many facets of the concept of learning strategies.

D. Categories of Learning Strategies

Several strategies inventories have been proposed in response to various research projects. Macaro (2006) pointed out that one of the biggest areas of difficulty in the study of learning strategies centers on a lack of clarity in both definition and classification of learning strategies. The following section will present and introduce some of the most well-known taxonomies which have been proposed by scholars in the field of language learning.

One of the most comprehensive pieces of research on learning strategies was carried out by O'Malley and Chamot and colleagues in the 1980s. The final taxonomy which they came up with after several longitudinal studies consists of:

1. Metacognitive strategies: they have executive functions and include thinking about the learning process, planning for the learning, monitoring and evaluating the learning process
2. Cognitive strategies: they are utilized to directly manipulate the learning tasks at hand and are applied to specific tasks.
3. Socio-affective strategies: they have to do with interacting with others and
4. affective control to help learn the materials. (Brown, 2007, P.134)

Another very popular and frequently used strategy inventory was developed by Oxford and proposed six different categories of learning strategies. Oxford used factor analysis to group strategies into the following: Cognitive, metacognitive, memory related, compensatory, affective, and social strategies. Originally, the SILL was developed for the Defense Language Institute in California as a way to measure the language learning strategies those students used (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). The current SILL provides an 80-item version for native speakers of English who are learning a foreign language and a 50-item version for ESL/EFL students. Students respond to a series of statements about possible strategy use by choosing one of the Likert-scale numbers, 1 – 5, with 1 representing "never or almost never true of me" and 5 representing "always or almost always true of me" (p. 4). The SILL has been translated into many different languages. Following are the six strategy groups with their corresponding subscales for the ESL/EFL 1990 version of the SILL:

1. Memory strategies, such as grouping, imagery, rhyming, and structured reviewing (nine items)
2. Cognitive strategies, such as reasoning, analyzing, summarizing (all reflective of deep processing), as well as general practicing (14 items).
3. Compensation strategies (to compensate for limited knowledge), such as guessing meanings from the context in reading and listening and using synonyms and gestures to convey meaning when the precise expression is not known (six items).
4. Metacognitive strategies, such as paying attention, consciously searching for practice opportunities, planning for language tasks, self-evaluating one's progress, and monitoring error (nine items).
5. Affective (emotional, motivation-related) strategies, such as anxiety reduction, self-encouragement, and self-reward (six items).
6. Social strategies, such as asking questions, cooperating with active speakers of the language, and becoming culturally aware (six items). (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995, p.5)

Macaro (2001) classified strategies on a continuum with, at one end, cognitive strategies and at the other, metacognitive/social/affective. Following the same pattern, he placed along with cognitive, subconscious, direct, automatized, difficult to articulate, non-evaluative, primary, and natural. Along with metacognitive / social / affective, he included conscious, indirect, controlled, easier to articulate, evaluative, support, and taught (p. 24). Those falling at the cognitive side are closely related to the task at hand while those falling more at the metacognitive / social / affective side are more related to the learner's self-preparation to complete the task. Learners may be able to better articulate what happens in these latter strategy types than they can in the more cognitive ones. We are reminded that this classification falls on a continuum, so many strategies fall somewhere in-between the two extremes in each grouping. Examples (direct, subconscious) might include the following:

1. *Linking* words or ideas to visual images as you see them or hear them" (more cognitive
2. Memorizing a list of vocabulary items by using some sort of system" (mid- range of continuum)
3. *Asking the teacher for clarification* or to repeat something they didn't "quite catch (more metacognitive/social/affective)" (p. 25).

In his more recent work, Macaro (2006) preferred to classify learning strategies as either cognitive or metacognitive, claiming that metacognitive subsumes the socio-affective domains. Macaro presented his belief that strategies always include a goal. That goal may have origin with the learner, as in the learner's self-imposed desire to master a certain concept, for example, or it may have a teacher-imposed goal, as in the necessity to pass a test. In his explanation of how learning takes place in relation to strategy use, Macaro chose to identify and investigate strategy clusters, which can include activation of several interrelated or sequential strategies. This concept of strategy clusters was followed in interventions presented in this study.

In an attempt to bring different categorizations of strategies together, Dornyei (2005) proposed a typology with four types of strategies:

1. Cognitive strategies, involving the manipulation or transformation of the learning materials/input (e.g., repetition, summarizing, using images).
2. Metacognitive strategies, involving higher-order strategies aimed at analyzing, monitoring, evaluating, planning, and organizing ones' own learning process.
3. Social strategies, involving interpersonal behaviors aimed at increasing the amount of L2 communication and practice the learner undertakes (e.g., initiating interaction with native speakers, cooperating with peers).
4. Affective strategies, involving taking control of the emotional (affective) conditions and experiences that shape one's subjective involvement in learning. (p. 169).

E. Listening Strategies

Listeners make use of a variety of strategies to make sense of the incoming messages and compensate for their lack of knowledge especially in EFL contexts. Listening Strategies which are employed by language learners are relatively the same as general learning strategies discussed in the previous section.

Vandergrift (1997b) taxonomy is based on O'Malley and Chamot (1990, 137-139); Oxford (1990, 21); Vandergrift (1996). He proposed three types of strategies, metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective.

Field's (2008) taxonomy draws upon Dornyei and Scott and adapts their list of strategies to make them refer to listening strategies. Some new strategies have been added by him too. His taxonomy of listening strategies involves:

1. Avoidance strategies: learner gets by without the missing or uncertain piece of input.
2. Achievement strategies: learner attempts to make maximum sense of what has been decoded.
3. Repair strategies: learner appeals for help.
4. Pro-active strategies: learner plans her behavior in away that might enable problems of understanding to be avoided. (Field, 2008, p.298)

F. Teaching Listening Strategies

Until recently, most research focused on discovering and categorizing the types of learning strategies used in language learning or the differences between strategy uses in successful language learners as compared to those of less successful learners (Chamot, 2005). The focus has shifted to research into ways to teach effective strategy use. Information that has been gathered from descriptive studies is now being used to "measure relationships between strategy use and language proficiency, metacognition, motivation, and self-efficacy" (Chamot, 2005, p. 115).

Researchers disagree on whether or not learning and listening strategies should be actively taught to L2 learners. Several researchers believe that the research is, in fact, indefinite as to whether instruction in strategies really produces any positive effect for learners (Chamot, 1995; Rubin, 1994) though it should be noted that this type of research is very difficult to conduct and results may not be clear. For example, in a study of student success in developing and using learning strategies (Thompson & Rubin, 1996), it was found that L2 students did show some improvement in their use of strategies incomprehension of videotaped materials. However, the study did not show a positive correlation between strategy instruction and learner performance. In addition, no distinction was made between those strategies intended to assist in extracting meaning and those intended for learning a new language. A study of how raising awareness of the strategies L2 speakers can use showed that those learners who were given instruction in strategies for oral communication realized greater improvement in their speaking abilities than did the control group, which did not receive strategies instruction (Nakatani, 2005). Other studies have also shown that intervention, the teaching of strategies, has been beneficial for L2 learners **(**McGruddy, 1998; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Ross & Rost, 1991; Thompson & Rubin, 1996).

Even among those researchers who believe strategies should be taught, there is disagreement about in what context that should occur. Is it better to teach strategies as part of the ESL or foreign language curriculum, or might it be better to provide a course of strategy instruction in isolation? There is concern about whether or not students will transfer what they have learned into real-world learning. Chamot (2004) proposed that "teachers should opt for explicit instruction and should probably integrate the instruction into their regular course work, rather than providing a separate learning strategies course" (p.19). Further, she advised teachers in all content courses to learn about and actively teach students the strategies they would need to succeed in those courses. Despite results from early studies showing that strategies did not seem to transfer to new learning situations, more recent studies have shown that when metacognitive strategies are prioritized, transfer does occur.

Rubin (1996) focused on three approaches in teaching strategy use: raising teacher awareness so that instructors can be more effective in teaching strategies, providing learners text-based instructional materials, and using media-based instruction. Rubin's 1989 Language Learning Strategies Program relied on computer and video disk input to help learners identify successful learning strategies.

An important component of strategy instruction is the increase in students' awareness of the background knowledge they bring to the task. Many learners fail to realize that they already know a great deal about grammar, vocabulary, and communication. They often do not know how to transfer that knowledge to learning another language. Students may not realize they can use what they know about the world and about human interaction to direct their critical thinking and

problem solving. Learners need to be reminded how they filter information through that which they already know, as well as how this filter can help or hinder as they learn a new communicative system. (Rubin, 1996, p. 152)

A number of studies have shown increases in various categories of learning strategy use as a result of instruction (Chamot & O'Malley, 1996; Goh, 1998; Goh, 2002a; McGruddy, 1998; Rubin, 1996; Yang, 1996).

Even when students have been instructed in listening strategies, problems can be created. A definition for the term "listening strategy" (Chen, 2005) states: "L2/FL learning and strategy learning are considered to be the learning of complex cognitive skills." even though a second language listener might actually know a vocabulary item or phrase, s/he might not recognize that item when it is presented in a stream of speech. As an alternative to the teaching of strategies like predicting or listening for key terms, giving listeners opportunities to listen over and over, each time adding to what they *have* been able to identify and then giving them access to a written script so that they can compare their hypotheses to the actual, may help L2 listeners to feel more comfortable with their listening tasks. The goal is to show students how much they are able to understand rather than allowing them to focus on their failure to understand. This process is very like the actual process of listening and comprehending aural discourse.

Proponents of active teaching of both learning and listening strategies (Arnold, 2000; Field, 1998; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Goh, 1998**;** Harley, 2000; Morley, 2001; Park, 2000; Thompson and Rubin, 1996**;** Vandergrift, 1999, 2002) base their beliefs on various pieces of research. L2 learners, research shows, do benefit from being actively taught do use various strategies as they approach listening tasks. Proponents believe instructors must be well-trained in as well as committed to instructing use of strategies. Mendelsohn (1995) offered the premise that it is a listening instructor's responsibility to teach students to use strategies rather than simply provide opportunities for students to listen to oral passages

G. Models of Listening Strategy Instruction

There are various issues related to strategy instruction in the literature. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) discussed about these issues in their seminal book ' *learning strategies in second language acquisition'*. A controversy which exists in instruction in learning strategies is whether instruction should focus on learning strategy instruction or should be integrated with classroom instruction. Some scholars believe that students can generalize the strategies to other contexts and they learn better when they put all their effort on developing strategic skills rather than trying to learn the content at the same time, so the best way to teach learning strategies is to design a separate program or course to implement strategy instruction. Another group of researchers are in favor of integrated strategy instruction. They argue that when students practice strategies by performing academic and language tasks, transference of those skills and strategies to similar tasks and similar contexts will be more easily and successfully done. There is a third group which is in favor of integrating both approaches which were discussed above (Dansereau, 1985; cited in O'Malley & Chamot ,1990, p.153; Derry, 1984 cited in O'Malley & Chamot ,1990, p.153).

Another dichotomy which is discussed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) is direct versus embedded instruction. They state that "in direct instruction, students are informed of the value and purpose of strategy training, whereas in embedded instruction, students are presented with activities and materials structured to elicit the use of the strategies being taught but are not informed of the reasons why this approach to learning is being practice" (p.153). An advantage mentioned for embedded strategy training is that little teacher training is required. The results of studies has shown that students which are trained using embedded approach can not transfer the skills and strategies to new tasks (Brown, Armbruster, & Baker, 1986 cited in O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p.153).When the purpose and importance of the strategies are explained to the students , a metacognitive component , students are able to maintain and use strategies for longer period of time and transfer it to the new tasks (Brown et al. 1986; Palincsar and Brown, 1986 cited in O'Malley & Chamot,1990, p.153). Many researchers recommend direct strategy training over embedded one.

An instructional model for strategy training which is discussed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) is 'the strategy teaching model' developed by Jones et al. (1987). This model is based on six assumptions:

1. Learning is goal oriented. Expert learners have two major goals during the learning process: to understand the meaning of the task and to regulate their own learning. In other words, learners have both declarative knowledge, or content goals, and procedural knowledge, or strategic goals for a learning task.

2. In learning, new information is linked to prior knowledge. Prior knowledge is stored in memory in the form of knowledge frameworks or schemata, and new information is understood and stored by calling up the appropriate schema and integrating the new information with it. Knowing how and when to access prior knowledge is a characteristic of effective learners.

3. Learning requires knowledge organization. Knowledge is organized in recognizable frameworks such as story grammars, problem/solution structures, comparison/contrast patterns, and description sequences, among others. Skilled learners recognize these organizational structures and use them to assist learning and recall.

4. Learning is strategic. Good learners are aware of the learning process and of themselves as learners, and seek to control their own learning the use of appropriate learning strategies. Strategies can be taught, but many do not transfer to new tasks. Although each content area may require a particular set of strategies and skills, a number of core skills underlie all subject areas. Examples of these core skills are using prior knowledge, making a representation of the information, self monitoring, and summarizing.

5. Learning occurs in recursive phases. All types of learning are initiated with a planning phase, followed by online processing, and ending with consolidation and extension of the new information. In the planning phase, the problem is identified, goals are set, and prior knowledge is activated. During on-line processing new information is integrated, assimilated, and used to clarify or modify existing ideas. During consolidation and extension the learner summarizes and organizes the new information, assesses achievement of the goal established in the first phase, and extends learning by applying it to new situations. During each phase the learner may return to a previous phase to rework one or more of its aspects.

6. Learning is influenced by development. Differences between older and younger students and between more and less proficient learners are due in large part to differences in prior knowledge and learning strategy use. These differences may be present when children begin school or may develop over time, but in either case they tend to persist unless intervention is undertaken. (Jones, Palincsar, Ogle & Carr,1987 cited in O'Malley & Chamot,1990, p.187-188)

In this model the specific sequence which is suggested for instruction is: assessing students' current strategy use, explaining the new strategy, modeling the strategy and providing scaffolding when students practice using strategies for the first time. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) elaborate on three phases that teachers go through for instruction. In the preparation phase the teacher activates students' prior knowledge of the lesson topic through questioning, evaluating the relevance of the prior knowledge, and refining that knowledge. During this phase students can also preview the new information to be learned, develop new vocabulary, and identify concepts or beliefs that may be changed or replaced after instruction. In the presentation phase of the lesson, students interact with the new information presented by the teacher or text through selecting, comparing, organizing, and integrating activities. Reciprocal teaching, in which students and teacher cooperate to understand a text by taking turns to apply a sequence of comprehension strategies. The application and integration phase of the strategic lesson serves the dual purposes of evaluating and consolidating the learning task. To evaluate their learning, students refer back to their original goals that were established during the preparation phase. In doing so they consolidate the new information by using it to restructure their prior knowledge, identified in the preparation phase. (p.189)

Another well-known model which is proposed for strategy training is 'cognitive academic language learning approach'. Chamot and O'Malley (1987) state that this model is designed to meet the needs of three types of students:

1. Students who have developed social communicative skills through beginning level ESL classes or through exposure to an English-speaking environment, but have not yet developed academic language skills appropriate to their grade level;

2. Students who have acquired academic language skills in their native language and initial proficiency in English , but who need assistance in transferring concepts and skills learned in the first language to English and

3. Bilingual English-dominant students who have not yet developed academic language skills in either language. (p. 229)

This model is based on the cognitive theory in which language is viewed as a complex skill. Learners should pass through certain stages to move from declarative to procedural knowledge. Learning in this view is seen as movement from controlled to automatic processing via practice. Anderson's (1983, 1985) ACT model is a processing model from cognitive psychology which suggests that acquiring a language (movement from declarative to procedural knowledge) takes place in three stages: the cognitive, the associative, and the autonomous stages. (Cited in O'malley and Chamot ,1990,p.162). O'Malley and Chamot (1990) argue that this approach "provides useful insights into the academic language needs of LEP students, which CALLA is intended to meet" (p.192). The CALLA includes three components: topics from the major content subjects, development of academic language skills, and direct instruction in learning strategies for both content and language. Our focus is on the third component, strategy instruction. Chamot and O'Malley (1987) express that strategy instruction in CALLA is based on four arguments:

1. Mentally active learners are better learners. Students who organize new information and consciously relate it to existing knowledge should have more cognitive linkages to assist comprehension and recall than do students who approach each new task as something to be memorized by rote learning.

2. Strategies can be taught. Students who are taught to us strategies and provided with sufficient practice in using them will learn more effectively than students who have had no experience with learning strategies.

3. Learning strategies transfer to new tasks. Once students have become accustomed to using learning strategies, they will use them on new tasks that are similar to the learning activities on which they were initially trained.

4. Academic language learning is more effective with learning strategies. Academic language learning among students of English as a second language is governed by some of the same principles that govern reading and problem solving among native English speakers. (p.240)

General guidelines for learning strategy instruction in CALLA model are as follows: at first, teachers find out what strategies the students are already using. It can be done through interviews or think-aloud procedure. Next, the teacher can select some new strategies which are not utilized by the students. In the presentation phase, teachers explain the purpose of the learning strategies, name the strategies to be taught, and explain about the advantages of using them. The explanation of the strategies should be tailored to the proficiency level of students. Then teachers model the strategy use by performing a task. Teachers should provide the students with a variety of activities and tasks to practice the strategy use. The next stage is to enable students to learn how to evaluate their own strategy use. This can be done through

writing the strategies after completing a task, discussing about the strategies used for tasks, keeping dialogue journals and etc. Finally, teachers help students to transfer the strategies to new contexts.

Another model of strategy instruction is proposed by Vandergrift (2004) and Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010). Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) explain about stages of strategy instruction in this model:

Prelistening: *Planning/predicting stage*

1. After students have been informed of the topic and text type, they predict the types of information and possible words they may hear.

First listen: First verification stage

2. Students verify their initial hypotheses, correct as required, and note additional information understood.

3. Students compare what they have understood/written with peers, modify as required, establish what still needs resolution, and decide on the important details that still require special attention.

Second listen: Second verification stage

4. Students verify points of earlier disagreement, make corrections, and write down additional details understood.

5. Class discussion in which all class members contribute to the reconstruction of the text s main points and most pertinent details, interspersed with reflections on how students arrived at the meaning of certain words or parts of the text.

Third listen: Final verification stage

6. Students listen specifically for the information revealed in the class discussion which they were not able to decipher earlier.

Reflection stage

7. Based on the earlier discussion of strategies used to compensate for what was not understood, students write goals for the next listening activity

H. Empirical Studies on Listening Strategies

Murphy (1985) used a think aloud procedure to study the listening strategies of effective and less effective ESL learners. He found that effective learners used more strategies and a greater variety of strategies. But less effective learners concentrate too much on the text or their own knowledge. At that time the categorization of learning strategies had not been done yet, so Murphy did not distinguish between metacognitive and cognitive and other kinds of strategies.

Rubin (1988 cited in vandergrift, 1999) investigated the effect of strategy instruction on the comprehension of video by Spanish high school students. The performance of three experimental groups was compared with the two control groups. Rubin found that the use of some strategies (e.g. storyline) can help students in successful comprehension of difficult materials. He concluded that "the combination of well selected video and the acquisition of effective learning strategies can improve student affect and motivation" (p. 32).

Chamot and Kupper (1989) used a think aloud procedure and examined the listening strategies of high school learners. They found that effective learners used more strategies than less effective learners. They used the strategies, like note taking, selective attention, and self-evaluation with greater persistence. Chamot and Kupper examined the strategy use of Russian students too. They found that effective listeners used four categories of strategies more than others, they include: comprehension monitoring, problem identification, inferencing, elaboration

O'Malley, Chamot and Kupper (1989) investigated the pattern of strategy use of high school intermediate learners. They concluded that effective listeners can keep their concentration, back on the track when distracted and they decide what to attend beforehand. They try to make a connection between what they already know and what they listened. They use the cues in the context and their personal experience. On the other hand less successful listeners did not make fewer use of their background knowledge. They lose their concentration easily when encountering a problem. Effective learners used inferencing, self monitoring and elaboration more.

Using a think aloud procedure, Bacon (1992a, 1992b) examined the strategy use of male and female university students learning Spanish. She observed that the factors which play role in successful listening are: motivation, use of background knowledge, self control, maintaining attention and using a variety of strategies flexibly. She also found that the learners used more cognitive strategies. Female students made use of metacognitive strategies more than males. She noticed that effective and less effective learners used monitoring equally but effective learners were more realistic.

Using a structured interview, Vandergrift (1996) examined the types and numbers of strategy used by core French students. Students were at different course levels. He concluded that three categories of strategies could be distinguished; cognitive, metacognitive, socio affective. Students reported more cognitive strategies than the other categories. As the course level increased the total number of strategies reported increased too. The same pattern was observed for metacognitive category. Females reported using more metacognitive strategies compared to males. Reported use of socio-affective strategies increased by course level too.

In a longitudinal study, using video segments from simulated authentic materials, Thompson and Rubin (1996) investigated the effect of strategy instruction on the listening comprehension performance of university students learning Russian. The performance of an experimental group was compared to a control group which received no strategy instruction. The result of the pre and post test showed that students who received strategy instruction improved significantly over those who did not receive such instruction. It was demonstrated that metacognitive strategies helped students to manage their approach to listening.

Goh (1997) investigated Chinese students' metacognitive knowledge in L2 listening comprehension. The students were asked to keep a diary about their listening. Some questions were designed to help students in reflecting on specific occasions where they listened to English and report what they did to understand better. They were also asked to include their thoughts about learning to listen, and to say how they practiced their listening after class. The students' beliefs and observations were classified under person knowledge, task knowledge, and strategic knowledge. Analysis of the diaries demonstrated that the students reported extensively on all three types of metacognitive knowledge. Goh (1997) stated that "The listening diaries demonstrated that the students had a high degree of metacognitive awareness. They were conscious of their learning process and the demands of listening to English, and had specific beliefs about the factors that could enhance or impair their listening comprehension" (p.367)

In another study, Vandergrift (1997) investigated the strategy use of novice and intermediate level of French students. He concluded that novice learners relied heavily on elaboration, transfer, and inferencing. Novice level students overcome the limited knowledge by using extra linguistic cues and cognates. On the other hand intermediate level learners used over twice as many metacognitive strategies as the novice-level learners.

Using retrospective verbal data, Goh (2002a) investigated the listening strategies and tactics used by a group of ESL learners. Participants were male and female students, aged between 18 and 19, from the People's Republic of china. Two students, one more proficient listener and one less proficient were selected for further analysis and comparison of tactic used and interaction. Goh (2002) identified a total of 44 different tactics used by the learners: 22 cognitive tactics grouped under eight cognitive strategies and 22 metacognitive tactics grouped under six metacognitive strategies. She found that both learners used a combination of listening tactics when processing individual segments of the text. Both used metacognitive and cognitive tactics and both engaged in top-down and bottom-up processing. However, there were some differences between the two learners. The more-proficient listener used a wider range of tactics while the less-proficient listener used more low level tactics. Goh concluded that "although individual tactics were useful, successful comprehension also depended on whether the listener was able to combine various mental tactics in a way that could truly enhance comprehension" (2002, p. 203).

Carrier (2003) taught listening comprehension strategies, focusing on academic listening tasks. The participants were a small group of high school ESL students. This study took six weeks and included both bottom-up and top-down approaches to listening. The strategies which were taught involved selective attention and note taking. First the teacher defined and modeled the strategies then provided the students with opportunity to practice. The result of pre-test and post-test revealed that students significantly improved both bottom-up and top-down approaches.

Vandergrift (2003a) made use of tasks designed to develop effective listening strategies to raise awareness of FSL university students about listening process. The instruction was as follows: after being informed of the topic of the lesson, students wrote their prediction and related vocabulary about the information they might hear. Then they listened to the aural text for the first time and saw whether their predictions were right. Next they discussed about what they had understood. The students listened to the text for the second time and wrote additional information. This was followed by class discussion in which students shared the strategies they had used to comprehend the text. After a third listening, students wrote a personal reflection on what they had learned about their own listening processes and what strategies they might use in future to improve listening comprehension. Students' written reflections revealed positive reactions to the strategies, increased motivation, and understanding of their own thinking processes during listening tasks.

Vandergrift (2003b) compared the listening comprehension strategies of more- and less-skilled Canadian seventh-grade students of French. Students listened to several French texts and were asked to think aloud during the process. The more skilled listeners used more metacognitive strategies, especially comprehension monitoring, than did their less skilled peers. In addition, more skilled listeners engaged in questioning for clarification, whereas the less skilled used more translation.

Goh and Taib (2006) utilized eight specially designed listening lessons that included traditional listening exercises, individual post-listening reflections on their listening experience, and teacher-facilitated discussions that focused on specific aspects of metacognitive knowledge about listening to teach metacognitive strategies to ten primary school pupils. After the eight lessons, the students reported a deeper understanding of the nature and the demands of listening, increased confidence in completing listening tasks, and better strategic knowledge for dealing with comprehension difficulties. The weaker learners have benefited the most from this process-based approach to listening instruction.

Graham et al (2008) examined the development of strategy use over 6 months in two lower-intermediate learners of L2 French in secondary schools in England. Strategic behavior of these two learners was investigated through verbal reports made by them while completing a multiple-choice listening task. The results revealed a high degree of stability of strategy use over the time period, with pre-existing differences between the high and low scorer persisted.

Graham and Macaro (2008) investigated the effects of strategy instruction on the listening performance and self-efficacy of 68 lower-intermediate learners of French in England. The effects of high- and low-scaffolded interventions were also compared. Result represented that the program improved listening proficiency and learners' confidence about listening.

Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) investigated the effects of a metacognitive, process-based approach to teaching second language (L2) listening. The participants were 106 students of French as an l2. 59 students were assigned to experimental group. They listened to a variety of texts and were taught metacognitive processes including prediction,

planning, monitoring, evaluating and problem solving. The control group included 47 students who listened to the same texts without metacognitive instruction. The experimental group outperformed the control group in the listening comprehension measure. Less skilled listeners in the experimental group made greater gains than their more skilled ones.

II. Conclusion

Teachers may need to introduce the concept of language learning strategies to students and make students familiar with the learning strategies. They may need to provide instruction and practice in using strategies, which have positive influence on their performance. Foreign language teachers should be engaged in an ongoing process of determining the kinds of strategies which have potential for improving students' listening ability. As Oxford et al. (1989) has suggested, it is important to teach learners clearly why and how to use strategies in appropriate situations. It is necessary for teachers to provide learners with opportunities to practice the new strategies so as to integrate them into the process of language learning. Learners themselves can apply the strategies while working on different listening tasks and activities. Using listening strategies increases their awareness about the listening process, which leads to better performance. By practicing listening strategies, learners become self-regulated listeners and can succeed in accomplishing different tasks with different levels outside the classroom contexts. More research evidence has confirmed the positive influence of strategy instruction on developing listening; therefore, incorporating strategy-based tasks and activities in listening textbooks becomes an urgent need. Materials developers should allocate specific sections of listening materials to introduce the concept of strategies.

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Toward a Cognitive Stylistic Contingency Theory of Translation (English–Arabic–English)

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***Abstract*—Contingency theory is a theory of communication. It is a theory of change of cultural, ideological, political, social, mental and cognitive values. These values are not constantly stative0. Many of them are temporal and susceptible to change every now and then, be they cultural, ideological, political or other values. Some terms and words of cultural or other connotations can acquire new dimensions and change bias and attitude from time to time and from nation to nation. 'Revolution' (ثورة), for example, used to have pejorative connotations of bloodshed, military coups, communism, backward politics and dictatorship. However, in the light of the latest Arab Youth revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Libya and Yemen in 2011, the term has earned new positive dimensions of meaning, demonstrating peacefully to change the political dictatorial regimes of many Arab Countries into democratic, freely elected governments. This paper investigates the style of contingency and volume of the vicissitudes of the ideologies of different types, cultural, ideological, etc. over time. The aim is to demonstrate the new changes in the reception and perception of these ideologies and how people re-interpret and re-construct new meanings accordingly. All this is discussed in relation to the cognitive theory of translation in practice, juxtaposing the changes that may have taken place with respect to the topic concerned.**

***Index Terms*—contingency, contingency theory, change, cognitive, cognitive stylistics, cognitive stylistic translation, ideology, revolutionary contingency, sociocultural contingency, construction / reconstruction of meaning, values**

I. Introduction

David Birch (1995) views language as ideologically loaded. Ideologies are hidden in texts that cannot be exposed but by regarding these texts as discourse. In discourse, there are participants who act, react and interact in a context of social environment, where writers and readers produce and interpret texts against a background of ideologically naturalised beliefs and commonsense assumptions.

To Birch, communication is a dynamic activity because the whole process of 'making' meaning is a dynamic one. Meanings do not exist out of communication, nor do they exist as finalized, unchanged versions or products available to language users for use at any time. Communication is contingent upon the ways in which certain communities, institutions and individuals assign values to certain meanings in a context of power relations: the powerful over the disempowered, and the processes of naturalization and inculcation of fossilized meanings (ibid.).

Birch successfully suggests a 'contingent theory of communication' which is to him, at the same time, a theory of ideology. We make sense of the world by classifying it discursively, a view that replaces the assumption that the world has a 'natural' order and structure. To prove this, he gives a striking example of a strategy as how to explore the concept of 'colonization'. One's concerns spring from a desire to right some wrongs; to bring justice to bear in unjust situations; to find out about and interrogate the ways in which strategies of colonization persist in societies long after the colonizers seem to have left the country. Birch concludes that the politics of everyday life is never the same. He adds that "the naturalness of truth is always contingent upon who has the most control of these and other strategies. Truth is a cultural practice" (ibid.). (For more developments, models, examples and applications of contingency theory in cognitive stylistics and translation, see Birch (1989); Ghazala (2011); Simpson (2004); Stockwell, (2002a & 2002b); Venuti, (1992,1995, 1996, 1998, 2000 & 2004); Verdonk, (1999 & 2002); Verdonk *et al* (1995); Weber(1992, 1996 & 2005); Gavins (2000, 2005 & 2007); Gavins & Steen. (2003); Gutt (2000 & 2005); Black. (2006); Jeffries (2010); and others).

Birch's theory of contingency which involves a constant change of values and attitudes is claimed in this paper to have influenced the cognitive theory of translation considerably in several ways. It sheds light on parts of meaning which cannot otherwise be traced but through careful consideration of style and its implications. Another feature of influence is the establishment of the principle of unearthing the truth which in cognitive stylistic theory lies behind the surface meaning. A third aspect of impact is the fact stated clearly by the contingency theory, namely, in principle, meaning is ideologized, culturalized, politicized and socialized by communities and is, therefore, not readily available to readers; they have to work hard to construct it in terms of their own background ideologies, cultures and attitudes. Further, dogmatized meanings and implications are not valid any more in the cognitive theories of language, style and meaning, including translation theory and practice. This leads to the conclusion that the translators' perception of

meaning as an unchanged linguistic phenomenon can no longer be justified. (For further details see Ghazala, 2011 and 2012 (forthcoming); Newmark, 1981, 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1998; Hatim and Mason, 1997; Bassnett, 1991; Snell-Hornby, 1995; and others)

The following points of discussion and translated examples may offer more details, illustrations, justifications and arguments in this direction of ceaseless contingency and change of values, ideologies and meanings.

II. Politico-ideological Truth Contingency

The very idea of truth contingency upon the dominant power, or ideology, is brilliantly illustrated in the following example from American press (quoted in Ghazala, 2011):

A Message to Israel: Time to Stop Playing the Victim Role

[…] You don't get to act like a victim any more. 'Poor little Israel' just sounds silly when you're the dominant power in the Middle East. When you've invaded several of your neighbors, bombed and … occupied their land, and taken their homes away from them, it's time to stop acting oppressed. … The fact is, you have the upper hand and they don't. You have sophisticated arms and they don't. You have nuclear bombs and they don't. So stop pretending to be pathetic[c…].

[…] Calling Hamas the 'aggressor' is undignified. The Gaza Strip is little more than a large Israeli concentration camp, in which Palestinians are attacked at will, starved of food, fuel, energy - even deprived of hospital supplies. They cannot come and go freely, and have to build tunnels to smuggle in the necessities of life. It would be difficult to have any respect for them if they didn't fire a few rockets back.

[…] Bombs don't ask for ID cards. Bombs are civilian killers. That's what they do. They're designed to break the spirit of a nation by slaughtering families… .

And please, Israel, try to restrain yourself from using that ridiculous argument, borrowed again from Bush[…], that Hamas leaders "hide among civilians", by living in their homes. Apparently, in the thinking of Israelis, they should all run out into an uninhabited area somewhere (try to find one in Gaza), surround themselves with flares and write in the sand with a stick, "Here I am!"

Yesterday you shelled three UN-run schools, killing several dozen children and adults… . You seem to feel you can kill whomever you like, whenever you like, and wherever you like[...]. Talk about a rogue state. The Palestinians are human. They're not dogs you can beat into submission[…]. The more you oppress people, the more people resist. (Philip Slater: From *The Huffingtonpost Online Newspaper*, USA: 1. 7. 2009)

Apparently, the article is loaded with defiance of the naturalness and long-established pro-Israeli (fabricated?) truth which represents Israel as a democratic, poor, wretched, defenceless and oppressed state. The American journalist, Slater has watched, sensed and suffered humanly the Israeli inhuman atrocious practices which have scandalously blown up that fake truth. Therefore, he has challenged the naturalness of such a long-lasting, anti-truth Western ideologies through the following words and expressions juxtaposed with the dogmatised ones:

Dogmatized, anti-truth ideologies	Truthful ideologies
-Israel plays the Victim Role	Stop playing the Victim Role
-Long persecuted Jews	Jewish … aggressor … change
-Israel acts like a victim	Israel should … victim … more.
-Poor little Israel	This phrase sounds silly for it is the dominant power in the Middle East
-Israel is threatened by Arabs	Israel invaded them and occupied their land and taken their homes
-Israel acts the oppressed	It's time to stop acting oppressed
-The Arabs have the upper hand	Israel has the upper hand and they don't.
-Arabs have sophisticated arms	Israel has sophisticated arms and they don't.
-Both sides have no nuclear weapons	Israel only has nuclear weapons and Arabs don't.
-Israel pretends to be pathetic	Israel should stop to be pathetic.
-Americans don't talk about Israel	Americans should talk about Israel as a terrorist, (being a terrorist, evil empire) rogue state and evil empire.
-Israel's calling Hamas aggressor is dignified	Israel's calling Hamas aggressor is undignified
-Hamas is the aggressor	Israel is the aggressor.
-Nazi concentration camps for oppressing Jews in Germany	A large Israeli concentration camp is Gaza for starving, attacking and oppressing Palestinians.
-Palestinians are not respected for rocketing Israel	Palestinians are respected for rocketing Israel.
-Israel is anti-Nazi practices	Israel is borrowing from the Nazi playbook, punishing a whole nation for the attack of a few.
-violation of international law is a Nazi practice Gaza is an	violation of international law in Israeli practice.
-Israelis are not hypocrites	spare us hypocrisy

-Israel doesn't bomb civilians	you're bombing civilians in Gaza
-Bombs are not for killing civilians	Israeli bombs are civilian killers in Gaza
-Israel's argument that Hamas leaders hide among civilians is serious	Israel's argument that Hamas leaders hide among civilians is ridiculous.
-Israel doesn't shell UN-run institutions	Yesterday you shelled three UN-run schools in Gaza, killing several dozen children and adults
-Israel takes every care to avoid civilian casualties	So much for "taking every care to avoid civilian casualties".
-Israel doesn't kill but in self-defence	you feel you can kill whomever, whenever and wherever you like
-Israel demonstrates respect for The UN	you're demonstrating contempt for the UN
-Israel's macho bullying policy has been working for decades	your outdated policy of mach bullying isn't working. The Palestinians are human. You cannot beat them into submission
-The more you oppress people the less they resist	the more you oppress people the people resist

It is astonishing how many ideologies about Israel in the West have been daringly questioned and reconsidered in this article. Whole socio-political, socio-cultural, pro-Israel and anti-Arab conceptions have been challenged and have, therefore, to be changed. Until the Israeli massacres in Gaza against children, women, civilians, stones, trees and everything, the Israelis had been enjoying the fabricated image of a poor, oppressed and civilised state. At the same time, the Arabs have been the oppressors, aggressors, uncivilised people and killers of the Jews. These have been looked at as unchallenged natural truths by Western societies. However, nothing is impossible according to Birch's 'truth contingency theory'. Indeed, Gaza has challenged all these truth ideologies, to be replaced by new truths that have been confirmed indelibly by the TV and Web pictures watched and viewed by everybody, everywhere the world over.

The fact of the matter is that, after Gaza, the so-called unchallenged truth ideologies have been anti-truths fabricated a long time ago by Zionist and pro-Israel institutions and lobbies. In other words, these discoveries of the new truths about Israel are in fact no more than a new exploration of the original truths and a throw-back to the brass tacks about them, that the West have been 'colonised' and beaten to deception by them for a long time.

Chief among the serious ideologies about Israel that have been challenged here are (i) the borrowing of the Israelis from the Nazi playbook, and (ii) the description of Gaza as 'a large Israeli concentration camp'. Both stand in sharp contrast to the Israeli/Zionist anti-Nazi ideology which was exploited by Israel to blackmail the International Community, especially the West. The same Nazi practices and genocides have been committed by the pretentiously anti-Nazi Israelis. Henceforth, the Israelis have now changed into the New Nazi, practising Nazi atrocities on the Palestinians in Gaza in the same way the Nazis allegedly did with the Jews.

This is *a reconstruction* of a fake, long lasting, stereotyped and naturalised pro-Israel's ideology into a truthful newly emerging and sharply contrastive anti-Israel ideology. The contingencies upon which this ideological shift was based were the Israeli savageries and massacres in Gaza. Truth contingencies are, thus, unstable, but are liable to change when the need arises with new situations and positions.

This article is a good example of how words may be quite telling about the speaker's ideology, especially in political rhetoric. The fact of the matter is that, whether we like it or not, we are beset and besieged by the language of politics. We meet it everyday and everywhere in different forms and sources - in the mass media, in the very chat we have with many others, in work, academic, public and family circles, even in commodity prices. Among the local equivalents we have for politics are "negotiating, budgeting, reporting, referring, taking measures, arbitrating, debating, legislating, passing laws, etc." Politics surrounds us to become an integral part of life.

This text is a reflection and application of Birch's 'contingent theory of communication' which is a theory of ideology. We make sense of the world by classifying it discursively, a view which replaces the assumption that the world has a 'natural' order and structure. Our concerns spring from a desire to right some wrongs; to bring justice to bear in unjust situations, and question the ways in which strategies of a certain conceptualised ideology persist in societies. Indeed, the politics of everyday life is never the same. Truth is always contingent upon who has the most control of these and other strategies. The translation of this part of the article into Arabic suggested below has taken all these cognitive stylistic considerations of contingency into account:

رسالة إلى إسرائيل: كفي عن لعب دور الضحية

" ... لا حاجة بك [يا إسرائيل المزعومة] إلى لعب دور االضحية بعد الآن. فقد باتت عبارة "إسرائيل الصغيرة المسكينة" سخيفة وأنتِ القوة المهيمنة في الشرق الأوسط. وبما أنكِ غزوت العديد من جيرانكِ، وقصفتيهم بالقنابل ... واحتليت أراضيهم، وسلبتيهم بيوتهم، آن الأوان أن تكفي عن لعب دور المضطهد. ... فالحقيقة هي أن يدك هي الطولى لا أيديهم، وأنتِ من يمتلك الأسلحة المتطورة لا هم، وأنتِ من في حوزته ترسانة نووية وقنابل نووية وليس هم. كفي عن التظاهر بالتمسكن وإثارة الشفقة... .

[...]. من المعيب حقاً أن تصفي حماس "بالمعتدي". فما قطاع غزة إلا معسكر تعذيب إسرائيلي كبير، يتعرض فيه الفلسطينيون للاعتداء في كل لحظة، محرومين من الطعام والوقود والطاقة - بل وحتى من المعدات الطبية والمستشفيات. كما أنهم لا يستطيعون الدخول إلى القطاع والخروج منه بحرية، مما اضطرهم إلى حفر أنفاق تحت الأرض كي يُهَرِّبوا أساسيات الحياة من الطعام والشراب. وبناء على هذه الأوضاع المزرية، لن يستحق الفلسطينيون أي احترام من أحد إن لم يردوا ببضع صواريخ على اعتداءات الإسرائيليين.

[...] إن القنابل لا تطلب إبراز البطاقة الشخصية (!)، فالقنابل هي قاتلة المدنيين. وكذلك تفعل. فهي مصممة خصيصاً لكسر معنويات شعب بذبح أفراد أسَره... .
يوم أمس قصفتم ثلاث مدارس تابعة لوكالة غوث اللاجئين (الأونروا) التابعة للأمم المتحدة، وقتلتم العشرات من الأطفال والكبار. ... يبدو أنكِ تشعرين أنك تستطيعين أن تقتلي من شئت، متى شئت، أينما شئت. ... إنني أتحدث عن دولة شريرة. فالفلسطينيون بشر. إنهم ليسوا كلاباً تساق إلى القهر قسراً. ...فكلما اضطهدتِ الناس، زادوا تصميماً على مقاومتك."

Obviously, the text challenges the naturalness and long-established American and Western pro-Israeli fabricated truth which represents Israel as a poor and oppressed state. However, the atrocities and massacres committed by Israel in Gaza over three weeks (in December 2008 and January 2009) have scandalized that misleading truth. Thus, Slater, the American journalist, has challenged the naturalness of such long-lasting, anti-truth Western ideologies through the following words and expressions juxtaposed with the dogmatized ones (the full text of the original (which can be seen online) is taken into account in the following analysis):

Dogmatized, anti-truth ideologies		Truthful ideologies
-Israel plays the Victim Role	→	Stop playing the Victim Role
كفي عن لعب دور الضحية	←	تلعب إسرائيل دور الضحية
-Long persecuted Jews	→	A Jewish State is an aggressor for a change
دولة يهودية معتدية من باب تغيير شكل	←	اليهود المضطهدون منذ أمد بعيد
-Israel acts like a victim	→	Israel should not act like a victim any more.
ينبغي على إسرائيل ألا تلعب دور الضحية بعد الآن	←	تتصرف إسرائيل وكأنها ضحية
-Poor little Israel	→	This phrase sounds silly for she is the dominant power in the Middle East
تبدو هذه العبارة سخيفة لأن إسرائيل هي القوة الطاغية في الشرق الأوسط	←	إسرائيل الصغيرة المسكينة
-Israel is threatened by Arabs	→	Israel invaded them and occupied their land and taken their homes
إسرائيل غزتهم واحتلت أراضيهم وسلبتهم بيوتهم	←	إسرائيل مهددة من العرب
-Israel acts the oppressed	→	It's time to stop acting oppressed
آن الأوان أن تكفي عن التصرف كطرف مضطهد	←	تتصرف إسرائيل كطرف مضطهد
-The Arabs have the upper hand	→	Israel has the upper hand and they don't.
لإسرائيل اليد الطولى وليس لهم	←	للعرب اليد الطولى
-Arabs have sophisticated arms	→	Israel has sophisticated arms and they don't.
تمتلك إسرائيل - وليسوا هم أسلحة متطورة	←	يمتلك العرب أسلحة متطورة
-Both sides have no nuclear weapons	→	Israel only has nuclear weapons weapons and Arabs don't.
إسرائيل وحدها تملك أسلحة نووية، أما العرب فلا	←	كلا الطرفين لا يملك أسلحة نووية
-Israel pretends to be pathetic	→	Israel should stop being pathetic.
يجب أن تكف إسرائيل عن التمسكن	←	إسرائيل تتمسكن
-Americans don't talk about Israel (being a terrorist, evil empire)	→	Americans should talk about Israel as a terrorist, rogue state and evil empire.
يجب أن يتحدث الأمريكيون عن إسرائيل كدولة إرهابية شريرة وإحدى إمبراطوريات الشر	←	لا يتحدث الأمريكيون عن إسرائيل بوصفها إمبراطورية الشر والإرهاب
-Israel's calling Hamas Aggressor is dignified	→	Israel's calling Hamas aggressor is undignified
وصف إسرائيل لحماس بالمعتدي أمر معيب	←	وصف إسرائيل لحماس بالمعتدي أمر غير معيب
-Hamas is the aggressor	→	Israel is the aggressor.

إسرائيل هي المعتدية ←	حماس هي المعتدية
-Nazi concentration camps for oppressing Jews in Germany →	A large Israeli concentration camp in Gaza for starving, attacking and oppressing Palestinians.
معسكر الاعتقال الإسرائيلي هو غزة لتجويع الفلسطينيين والاعتداء عليهم وتعذيبهم ←	معسكرات الاعتقال الألمانية [المزعومة] لتعذيب اليهود
-Palestinians are not respected rocketing Israel →	Palestinians are respected for rocketing Israel
الفلسطينيون يستحقون الاحترام ←	الفلسطينيون لا يستحقون الاحترام لإطلاقهم
لإطلاقهم الصواريخ على إسرائيل ←	الصواريخ على إسرائيل
-Israel is using anti Nazi practices →	Israel is borrowing from the Nazi playbook
إسرائيل تستعير من قاموس النازية ←	إسرائيل ضد الممارسات النازية
-violation of international law is a Nazi practice →	violation of international law in Gaza is an Israeli practice.
انتهاك القانون الدولي في غزة ممارسة إسرائيلية ←	انتهاك القانون الدولي ممارسة نازية
-Israelis are not hypocrites →	spare us (you Israelis) hypocrisy
وفروا علينا نفاقكم أيها الإسرائيليون ←	الإسرائيليون ليسوا منافقين
-Israel doesn't bomb civilians →	you're bombing civilians in Gaza
تقصف إسرائيل مدنيين في غزة ←	لا تقصف إسرائيل مدنيين
-Bombs are not for killing civilians →	Israeli bombs are civilian killers in Gaza
القنابل الإسرائيلية قاتلة المدنيين في غزة ←	القنابل ليست مخصصة لقتل المدنيين

Indeed, astonishingly many ideologies about Israel in the West have been questioned in this article. Whole socio-political, socio-cultural, pro-Israel and anti-Arab conceptions have been challenged and have, therefore, to be changed. The old truth ideologies have, after the Gaza massacres, proved to have been anti-truths. In other words, these facts of the new truths about Israel are new explorations of the original facts that the West has been misled by for so long. Thus, a number of ideologies about the Israelis and the Palestinians have been challenged here. All truth contingencies upon which these ideological shifts were based were the Israeli savageries in Gaza in 2009.

All these are good reasons for the translator to focus exceptionally on the construction of these weighty implications of the stylistic choices of the original into the target text, as suggested in the above translation. Some ideological terms and expressions have been added on pro-Arab individual and national attitude and culture. The qualifying adjective 'المزعومة' (alleged) is added after 'Israel' and 'State of Israel' between two brace brackets as an indication of the rejection of the overwhelming majority of the target readership to recognise it.

Both terms, دول محور الشر / إمبراطوريات الشر ('rogue States'/'evil Empires') are translated in accordance with the currently and recently recognised translations, which are coined by the American political idiom to describe anti-American and anti-Israel States. On the other hand, تغيير شكل (for a change) is informal in use and is preferred to the formal phrase من أجل التغيير / من باب التغيير for it is more sarcastic and pejorative than the latter.

III. Sociocultural Contingency

Here is an example from literary discourse, to discuss from this contingent ideological perspective of social and cultural background:

"[…] The pub was full of truckies and construction workers, drinking beer and eating pasties.

[…]

The baker dug me in the ribs. 'I come from Salamanca,' he screeched. 'Is like a bullfight, no?'

Someone else shouted, 'The Boongs are fighting,' although they weren't fighting - yet. But the drinkers, jeering and cheering, began shifting down the bar to get a look.

[…]

'Ole`!' shouted the Spanish baker, his face contorted into grimace. 'Ole`! Ole`!'

(Chatwin, *The Songlines*. 1987. See Birch, 1995 for the whole text)

To many, this text is of little value and perhaps not worthy of reading, or commenting on. This is not surprising in terms of its lexical meaning (or subject matter), for there is nothing interesting about the theme, characters or events. However, a cognitive reading of style that is culturally and ideologically based can make something of this text. According to this reading, we read texts with our diverse background knowledge and mentality, and not with the writer's background knowledge. Thus, we, the readers, make meanings. They are not ready-made by writers. Writers construct them in terms of their own cognitive backgrounds, but readers *re*construct them in their own terms of constantly changing cognitive knowledge. Additionally, meanings are not stative, waiting there for us to construct them in the same way, and with the same contingencies that have already been framed by our social, cultural, ideological and/or political communities and institutions. We use them at will as indisputable, consensual sources of interpretations, against which we draw value judgments that no one can deny or defy.

The text's setting is Australia. As everybody knows, Australia is a multi-cultural country in which communities of different cultures have to live together, despite their differences. They have demonstrated a great deal of understanding each others' cultural differences, yet the feeling of belonging to one's original culture and the non-belonging to others' cultures has its roots in this text. Birch isolates what he calls 'character classifications':

"Truckies, construction workers, the Outback male tourists, Land Rights lawyers, the blacks darling, a stingy little man, Park Warden, Yer dirty Gin, missus, a Spaniard, the town baker, two Aboriginals, Aboriginal, the other, a scrawny boy, the man, the boy, the baker, someone else, the Boongs, the drinkers, the Aboriginal man, the truckie, the older man, the man, the Spanish baker, the bouncer, the two Aboriginals, the Spaniard, best friends."

This positioning of the character classification here may suggest an uncomfortable stereotyping of Aborigines, women, workers, Spaniards, white tourists and travel writers / narrators. There is a major divide between regular occupants of the pub, and the passers-by, more distanced and more sophisticated tourist, the white Australians in the pub and the Aborigines; between the white people of the town and the blacks who claim back their land; and between the 'uncivilised' value systems of the Outback pub culture of Australia and the 'civilised' value systems of elsewhere.

These are among the important issues to be considered in this passage. They are ideology-oriented. More issues are suggested by questions also posed by Birch (ibid.) at reading this text:

-Whose culture are we reading/writing here?

-What values do we privilege?

-Are these values contingent upon racism, intolerance, bigotry, justice, injustice, multi-cultural embrace, or ethnocentric narrow-mindedness and inexperience?

-Finally, I may ask, aren't such questions a matter of an individual reader's ideology?

In reply to the final question, yes, all these questions are questions of 'ideology of reading'. The reader applies his/her own ideology (religious, social, political and cultural) he/she personally and individually entertains. Birch poses good questions including the first two about whose culture and whose values we, the readers, apply when we read such a text.

Thus, at reading this passage here, we are more likely to read it, bringing our own background mentalities, cultures, values and ideologies. What we have here can be described as 'Pub Culture'. This culture is a Western culture that all characters involved in the text, as well as Birch, take it for granted to be a matter of course in their ideology. That is why Birch did not include 'pub, drinking beer, buttocks, and I took my drink' in his list of ideological words and expressions. However, and in response to Birch's questions about whose culture and whose values we reconstruct, 'pub culture' is not a part of many nations' cultures, including Muslim nations. Even the words 'pub', 'beer' and 'take a drink' are not normal in Islamic culture, for they are prohibited in Islam.

Further, taboo words are quite sensitive to Islamic as well as some eastern cultures, which is why I have left a few lines out of the passage above. These words may discourage Muslim and many eastern readers from reading the text in the first place. This stresses religious culture as one of the major contingencies upon which ideology is based, for some cultures at least. This contingent component of ideology seems to have been marginalized by many stylisticians including Birch (ibid.). This contingency component can be sometimes decisive for religion-committed readers' ideologies. Indeed, cognitive-ideological stylistics may be interesting and useful for its realistic, truthful and ever-renewed truths, bases and principles.

The text is obviously literary, including a number of cultural dialect words and expressions. The characters are non-educated and use their own dialects. The style is, therefore, rather colloquial. When translating the passage, it might be a good idea to translate dialect words into Arabic equivalents to reflect the colloquial tone of the original, as suggested by the following version:

(1)

"[...] كانت الخمارة تغص وتبلع بسائقي الشاحنات وعمال البناء، يحتسون البيرة ويأكلون الفطائر.

[...]

نحرني الخباز نحرة في خاصرتي وزعق قائلاً: أنا من سلامنكا. تبدو(العركة) كمصارعة الثيران، ولا لا / ولا إيه؟ صاح آخر: علقت (عركة) بين أهل أستراليا الأصليين. لكن ما بدوا بعد. لكن السكرانين بدؤوا يخرجون من الخمارة ليتفرجوا على العركة وهم يصيحون ويهيصون.

صاح الخباز الإسباني: يا ويلي، وليّ، وقد انقبض وجهه مذعوراً وكأن حية قرصته."

The dialect words used are:

(الخمارة، تغص وتبلع، نحرني، نحرة، وزعق، العركة، ولا لا، علقت (عركة/علقة)، ما بَدَوا، ولاّ لا/إيه، الخمارة، يهيصون، يا ويلي، وليّ، وكأن حية قرصته)

Some of these words and expressions are local dialects. For example, خمارة (instead of the more formal,حانة) (pub) (a widely known Arabic dialect); تغص وتبلع (full of L crammed with) (Syrian); نحرني...نحرة ('dug me in the ribs') (Syrian); علقت ('fighting') (Syrian); عركة ('fight') (Saudi); علقة ('fight') (Egyptian and Syrian); ما بَدَوا ('they weren't fighting') (Saudi/Syrian ما بْدُوا); ولا لاء ('no?') (Syrian); ولاّ إيه ('no?') (Egyptian); يهيصون ('jeering') (Arab Gulf States); ولّيّ ('Ole`!') (Syrian); وكأن حية قرصته ('panicking'/'as though bitten by a snake') (Syrian).

Other expressions are used in both formal and dialect Arabic (e.g. خمارة ('bar'); يا ويلي (Ole`!').

This version of translation has preserved the dialectal tone of style of the source text. Therefore, it seems to have achieved the maximum degree of transforming meaning and effect of the style of the original. This is partly true, but not to one's satisfaction. First, the Arabic language is a conservative language that, despite many anti-standardisations and pro-dialectalizations of written Arabic, the Arabic dialect is still alien to writing in general, and literary texts in

particular. One or two exceptions of dialectal use might be allowed for emphatic, humorous, ironical or other peculiar stylistic reasons. As a result, the frequent use of Arabic dialect words and expressions in a translated text would cause negative reactions against it and its translator from the target readers, who take it as a sign of disrespect for the Language of the Holy Koran.

More importantly, dialect words jeopardise changing the style of a serious text into a less serious, or even sarcastic, style, in which case the whole translation might collapse. Above all, which dialect of the Arab country is the translator going to use, bearing in mind that he/she translates to an Arab readership? The best way to achieve a sort of unanimity of Arab readership is to give up dialects in favour of formal Arabic, whether Classical or, more agreeably, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), a variety of which is perfectly formal and more simplified and which uses modern words and expressions. Dialect is still strongly confined to spoken discourse in Arabic.

On the other hand, cultural connotations and implications are ignored in this translation. Many cultural hints have been left covert where they should be constructed and made overt to target readers to enable them to get into the world of the style of the source text. The next version of translation of the same text suggests some kind of solution to the two major problems of dialectal and cultural deficiencies of translation (1).

(2)

"[...] كانت الحانة تغص بسائقي الشاحنات وعمال البناء، يحتسون البيرة ويأكلون الفطائر.

[...]

"وكزني الخباز الإسباني وكزة في خاصرتي وصاح بأعلى صوته: "أنا إسباني من سلامنكا. أتراها مصارعة الثيران كما في بلدي في الخارج، أم لا؟" صاح آخر: "الأستراليون الأصليون يتقاتلون". لكنهم لم يكونوا يتقاتلون بعد. فكيف عرف ذلك؟ بدأ الزبائن ينسلّون من البار وهم يصيحون ويهتفون ليتفرجوا على المعركة.

صاح الخباز الإسباني: "يا للهول!"، وقد انقبضت قسمات وجهه وارتعدت فرائصه من شدة الذعر والتقزز."

In this translation, dialect words and expressions are disposed of for good reasons. Literary language is expected to be formal only, Classical and MSA. More so, Classical Arabic is more frequently used in literary texts, traditional and modern, than MSA. Unlike Modern English views, which refuse the division between literary and non-literary language (e.g. Fowler, 1981/1985; Carter and Nash, 1990; Boase-Beier, 2006 and all contemporary stylisticians), this polarization sustains in Arabic. Arabic Literary language, especially poetry, is viewed as a special language, not inherently (which comes to terms with current English views), but in terms of language patterning and prosodic features in particular. Therefore, dialect is not expected by Arab readers to be used in literary translation for the reasons just pointed out. The dialect words of (1) above are replaced by formal ones, which makes the translation formal and normal, thus conforming to the stylistic traditions and requirements of translating literature into Arabic. A careful juxtaposition of (1) and (2) above may illustrate dialect differences easily.

That said, the process has not been a mere replacement of a colloquial word or expression with another equivalent formal one. Other factors are involved. For example, 'وكزني ... وكزة' is a classical collocation that is different from the informal 'نحرني ... نحرة' both in sense and effect. More importantly, the latter is rather painful and connotes dissatisfaction, whereas the former is not painful and connotes humor and attracts somebody else's attention to something. In a similar way, the second 'خمارة' (bar) is substituted for 'بار' not so much for dialectal as for cultural reasons, to avoid using it for its unfavourable sense for the majority of target readers. Thus, by using the transferred term, بار, the cultural factor has been realised, and at the same time it is referred back to its foreign, non-Arab source. However, this does not apply to كاونتر (counter) which is a dialect transferred word. Therefore, it has been replaced by the formal word منصة.

Unlike the colloquial وليّ, يا ويلي, which is formal, it is dropped in favour of the more emphatic and expressive يا للهول (other options of similar effects includeيا ويلي ويا سواد ليلي). However, the last metaphorical Syrian dialect وكأن حَيَّه قَرْصتْهُ can be standardized by vocalization as وكأن حَيَّةٌ قَرَصَتْهُ, and, due to its localized connotation, it has been replaced by the similarly effective formal, well-known expression ارتعدت فرائصه.

On the other hand, some words and expressions have been modified, qualified, extended, over-emphasised, dropped or replaced for stylistic and cultural reasons. For example, الإسباني (Spanish) is added to pre-modify 'baker' to pinpoint his cultural belonging; the same applies to إسباني to introduce the same character from Salamanca, as many target readers do not know the whereabouts of this city. On the other hand, stating the nationality and cultural origins of characters plays a pivotal role in our understanding and interpretation of the source text's stylistic choices, which would be constructed by the translator in the target language. Also, the 'Boongs' is translated into الأستراليون الأصليون, 'Aboriginal man' into الأسترالي الأصلي and 'truckie' into سائق الشاحنة الأسترالي الأصلي to emphasise the strong cultural and racial ties between them, which illustrates much about the implications of people's action and reaction to the fight. Hence the addition of the phrase من بني جنسه (compatriot) with the aims of underpinning the character's strong links with the Aboriginal man.

In addition, other expressions are understood from the source text by implication, and have accordingly been extended, e.g. فكيف عرف ذلك ('how did he know that?'), implied in 'they weren't fighting'; ارتعدت فرائصه ('scared to death'/'scared out of his wits'), implicated by 'in grimace'; في بلدي ('in my country'), connoted by 'bullfight'. Other terms have been preferred for their greater effect and emphasis, for example ينسلون ('shift away') and دس ('shoved it').

All the above are examples of conceptualisation of stylistic choices in their original context. Extensions like these are extensions of the characters'/speakers' ideas triggered by certain stylistic choices which are made in their cultural,

mental and ideological backgrounds. Many of the extended terms and expressions (such as 'my compatriot' and 'in my country') are ideology-laden, expressing a political or racial attitude on the part of the characters involved. 'Truckie' is a dialect word that has been ideologized through its dialectal use and, in the translation, through stating the truck-driver's nationality and culture which is behind his mentality (of aggressiveness and trouble-making) and attitude (of supporting and encouraging his compatriot).

For all these reasons taken together, the second version of translation, which is constructed on cognitive stylistic bases, might have dug in deep for the actual meanings and effects of the source text.

Perhaps the very latest on contingency theory is what may be described as 'revolutionary contingency'.

IV. Revolutionary Contingency

The surprising thing is that many of the older, original terms have lately made a strong come back to the media, especially 'revolutionists', resistance, Zionism, Zionists, Zionist Entity and long live (cf. the Tunisian, Egyptian, Libyan, Yemeni, Syrian, etc. revolution in 2011 (في عام 2011 إلخ. (الثورة التونسية / المصرية / الليبية / اليمنية / السورية)); 'Long live Egypt' (تحيا مصر / عاشت مصر); Palestinian Resistance (المقاومة الفلسطينية / اللبنانية)); etc.

The latest Arab revolutions in 2011, especially the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions -which were more peaceful than others revolutions - have changed several long-established ideas, ideologies, socio-cultural concepts and traditions, especially the political ones. For convenience of argument, focus will be on the more significant of the latter two revolutions and perhaps, specifically *the most significant of all Arab revolutions in modern Arab history, the Egyptian revolution*. Let us start with the established ideologies and cultural concepts of political nature which had been prevalent covertly and overtly among people:

(a) Demonstrating against the regime is banned.
(التظاهر ضد النظام ممنوع)

(b) The National security police and intelligence are intimidating.
(إن شرطة أمن الدولة، والمخابرات (أو الشرطة السرية) أجهزة مرعبة)

(c)Dictatorial rule is unquestionable.
(الحكم الدكتاتوري غير قابل للنقاش)

(d) Never say 'No' to the police.
(لا تقل 'لا' للشرطة أبداً)

(e) Anti-governmental slogans are categorically banned.
(الشعارات المناوئة للحكومة ممنوعة منعاً باتاً)

(f) The breach of curfew is impossible to anticipate.
(إن خرق قانون منع التجول غير متوقع على الإطلاق)

(g) Pharaoh culture is an unquestionable symbol of national pride, civilization and long-lasting Egyptian tradition.
(إن الثقافة الفرعونية رمز وطني وحضاري وتراث مصري عريق غير قابل للنقاش)

(h) The President never makes mistakes.
(الرئيس لا يخطئ أبداً / الرئيس معصوم من الخطأ)

(i) Islamic religiousness is a glaring sign of fundamentalism and terrorism.
(التدين الإسلامي إشارة فاقعة للأصولية والإرهاب)

(j) The Holy Koran and the Cross can never coexist in peace in Egypt.
(القرآن الكريم والصليب لا يتعايشان أبداً في مصر)

(k) Establishing strong ties and normalization of relations with Israel is plausible.
(إقامة أواصر قوية وتطبيع العلاقات مع الإسرائيليين أمر مقبول)

(l) The martial law is in effect indefinitely.
(قانون الطوارئ ساري المفعول إلى أجل غير مسمى)

(m) Mixed demonstrations are unimaginable.
(المظاهرات بمشاركة الجنسين أمر غير وارد)

(n) The Egyptian youths are useless and hopeless.
(الشباب المصري عديم النفع ولا أمل فيه)

(o) The age of revolutions in a conventional way has become history.
(لقد ولى زمان الثورات القليدية)

(p) The age of old-fashioned national, enthusiastic and inspiring songs has gone.
(لقد ولى زمان الأغاني الوطنية الحماسية القديمة)

(q) The million-demonstrations are unimaginable.
(المظاهرات المليونية غير واردة)

(r) People are submissive, afraid, cowardly, so they will never revolt against the regime.
(الناس أذلة، وخائفون، وجبناء، لذا لن يثوروا على النظام أبداً)

(s) The Country's army is a pro-regime's army.
(جيش البلاد هو جيش النظام)

(t) The people run away from the police.
(يهرب الناس أمام الشرطة)

(u) People only listen to the President, but they are not listened to.
(الناس يستمعون للنظام فقط، لكنه لا يستمع إليهم أبداً)

(v) Pro-regime camel thugs, ruffians, gangsters, muggers and boot boys are history.
(لقد ولى زمان بلطجية الجمال، والأشرار، وقطاع الطرق، وعصابات السلب والنهب، وعصابات التخريب)

(w) The Egyptian people are too backward to be prepared for democracy.
(الشعب المصري متخلف وغير جاهز للديمقراطية)

(x) The Egyptian people cannot demonstrate peacefully in a civilized way.
(الشعب المصري غير قادر على التظاهر سلمياً بطريقة حضارية)

(y) The Egyptian people – if and when – may demonstrate only violently.
(يتظاهر الشعب المصري – هذا إذا تظاهر – بعنف فقط)

(z) Nobody in Egypt or in the whole world expects the Egyptian youths to revolt in millions against their regime.
(لا يتوقع أحد في مصر أو في العالم أجمع أن يثور الشباب المصريون بالملايين ضد نظامهم)

(aa) No freedom of expression is foreseen in the near future in Egypt.
(لا يُتوقع حرية تعبير في المستقبل القريب في مصر)

(bb) The Arab peoples, including the Egyptians are viewed by their dictatorial regimes as lethargic, obsequious, timid, meek, spiritless, slavish and driven like lambs to the slaughter.
(ترى الأنظمة الدكتاتورية شعوبها العربية بما فيها الشعب المصري شعوباً خاملة، وذليلة، ورعديدة، وخنوعة، وميتة الروح، ومستعبدة وتساق كما تساق النعاج إلى المسلخ)

Yet, after the 25th of January Egyptian Youth Revolution at at-Tahrir Square and elsewhere in Alexandria, Mansurah, Suez and several other Egyptian main cities, all these allegedly age-old traditions and ideologies have changed drastically as follows (this list should be considered in contrastive juxtaposition with the first one above):

(a) Demonstrating against the regime is allowed, whether it likes it or not.
(التظاهر ضد النظام مسموح به شاء أم أبى)

(b) The National security police and intelligence are not intimidating.
(شرطة أمن الدولة، والمخابرات والشرطة السرية أجهزة غير مرعبة)

(c) Dictatorial rule is questionable.
(الحكم الدكتاتوري قابل للنقاش)

(d) You can say 'No' to the police.
(تستطيع أن تقول 'لا' للشرطة)

(e) Anti-president and anti-government traditional slogans are common (الشعارات المناوئة للحكومة شائعة) (e.g. 'The People wants to oust the regime!'; 'The People wants to oust the government!'; 'Get out / leave the Country, President!') (e.g. (الشعب يريد إسقاط النظام؛ الشعب يريد إسقاط الحكومة، إرحل (للرئيس)

(f) Breach of curfew is possible to anticipate.
(خرق قانون منع التجول متوقع)

(g) The Pharaoh culture is a symbol of dictatorship and oppression, as in Islamic culture.
(الثقافة الفرعونية رمز للدكتاتورية والقهر، كما هي حالها في الثقافة الإسلامية)

(h) The President may make fatal mistakes.
(قد يرتكب الرئيس أخطاء قاتلة / الرئيس غيرمعصوم)

(i) Islamic religiousness is normal and has no relation to terrorism.
(التدين الإسلامي أمر عادي ولا يمت بصلة للإرهاب)

(j) The Holy Koran and the Cross can coexist in peace in Egypt (as it has been confirmed at At-Tahrir Square of Cairo when Al-Azhar Muslim scholar and a priest raised the Holy Koran and the Cross up hand in hand before the whole world in February, 2011).
(يمكن للقرآن الكريم والصليب أن يتعايشا بسلام في مصر) (كما تأكد في ميدان التحرير في القاهرة عندما قام أحد علماء الأزهر وقسيس برفع القرآن الكريم والصليب يداً بيد أمام العالم أجمع في فبراير، عام 2011)

(k) Establishing strong ties and normalization of relations with the so-called Israel is deplorable.
(إقامة أواصر قوية وتطبيع العلاقات مع ما يسمى بإسرائيل أمر مستنكر)

(l) The martial law should be lifted very soon indefinitely.
(ينبغي رفع قانون الطوارئ على الفور إلى أجل غير مسمى)

(m) Mixed demonstrations are normal.
(المظاهرات بمشاركة الجنسين أمر طبيعي)

(n) The Egyptian youths are quite useful and have high hopes.
(الشباب المصري عظيم النفع وذو آمال عريضة)

(o) The age of conventional revolutions has never gone, but changed style.
(ما ولى زمان الثورات التقليدية أبداً ولكن تغير الأسلوب)

(p) The age of classic national, enthusiastic and inspiring songs has come back.
(لقد عاد زمان الأغاني الوطنية الحماسية القديمة)

(q) The million-demonstrations are quite imaginable.
(المظاهرات المليونية ممكنة جداً)

(r) People are brave, fearless, resolute, audacious and able to revolt against the regime.

(إن الشعب شجاع، ولا يخاف، وثابت القلب والقدم، ومقدام، وقادر على الثورة على النظام)

(s) The Country's army is the people's army.

(جيش البلاد هو جيش الشعب)

(t) The police run away from the people.

(تهرب الشرطة أمام الناس)

(u) The President listens to the people.

(الرئيس يستمع للشعب/ لمطالب الشعب)

(v) Pro-regime camel thugs, ruffians, gangsters, muggers and boot boys have been brought back in the third millennium by the deposed Egyptian regime.

(عاد زمان بلطجية الجمال، وشذاذ الآفاق، وقطاع الطرق، وعصابات السلب والنهب، وعصابات
التخريب في الألفية الثالثة على يد النظام المصري المخلوع)

(w) The Egyptian people are too civilized and ever prepared for democracy.

(إن الشعب المصري متحضر جداً وجاهز للديمقراطية دائماً)

(x) The Egyptian people have set an example for the whole world in how to demonstrate peacefully in a civilized way and change oppressive regimes.

(لقد ضرب الشعب المصري مثلاً يحتذى للعالم بأسره في كيفية التظاهر سلمياً بطريقة حضارية
وتغيير الأنظمة القمعية)

(y) The Egyptian people never demonstrate violently.

(لا يتظاهر الشعب المصري بعنف إطلاقاً)

(z) Nobody in Egypt or in the whole world expected the Egyptian youths to revolt in millions against their regime, but they disappointed everybody and did it).

(لم يتوقع أحد في مصر أو في العالم أجمع أن يثور الشباب المصريون بالملايين ضد نظامهم، لكنهم
خيبوا آمال الجميع وفعلوها)

(aa) Freedom of expression is a reality now in Egypt.

(إن حرية التعبير حقيقة واقعة الآن في مصر)

(bb) The Arab peoples, including the Egyptians are spirited, alive, energetic, inspired, steadfast, revolting, ardent, active and never driven to slaughters like lambs anymore.

(إن الشعوب العربية بما فيها الشعب المصري شعوب حية، ونابضة بالحيوية، وطموحة، وقوية الشكيمة،
وثائرة، ومتوقدة حماساً، ولا تقاد كما تقاد النعاج إلى المسلخ أبداً)

In the light of these changes of dogmatized political ideologies, mentalities, cultures and long established, but fake traditions, the language of politics and its implications are expected to change tremendously. Consequently, the emergence of these new meanings would change a great deal of the people's perception of life as a whole. Therefore, these changes are approached and translated in terms of a cognitive perspective of contingency, mobility, freshness and renewal of political, social and cultural ideologies, attitudes and concepts.

V. Conclusions

We may conclude from this investigation of the repercussions of the contingency theory of change on the translation theory and practice that the latter has to match the former and respond positively to it. That is, the translator has to bear in mind the temporality of political, cultural and social ideologies, attitudes and traditions which are susceptible to change. This change should be reflected and matched in translation through a cognitive approach that can be flexible enough to accommodate it any time, anywhere. This leads in effect to suggest a parallel contingent theory of translation that is flexible enough to adapt to any unforeseen changes in traditional implications and ideologies.

The translation procedures that are recommended to be employed are mainly cognitive, allowing for more freedom and courage on the translator's part to add, change, modify, delete, illustrate and create new terms and concepts. He/she can use at liberty any of the following procedures as applicable: paraphrase; overtranslation (or specification); undertranslation (generalization); expansion; deduction; neologism; euphemization; addition; deletion; classifiers; translation couplet; translation triplet; calques (or foreignization); naturalization; transference (or transliteration); proximity; culturalization; and deculturalization / neutralization (or the use of universals / internationalisms). (For illustrations and procedures, see Newmark, 1988, Ghazala, 2008, 2011 and 2012 (forthcoming); Baker, 1998; Robinson, 1997/2007; Bell, 1991; Alvarez, 1996; Venuti, 1996 and 2004 and several others)).Obviously, translation theory is expected to be compatible with any emerging theory that concerns meaning and any new changes, means, procedures and theories that may affect our perception of it. A case in point nowadays is the contingency theory of perception of ideologies and attitudes of different kinds and how it reflects upon cognitive translation theory. Indeed, many things are prone to change and translation theory and practice is no exception.

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What do Medical Students Need to Learn in Their English Classes?

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***Abstract*—Our long term goal as teachers is to match the content of the courses to the students' needs. The students of medicine are not so positive about the content of their course. Due to the different levels of the students' backgrounds in English classes or ESP classes and regarding the obstacles the instructors are encountered with in what to teach so as to meet the expectations of ESP students a needs analysis can be so helpful, so as to channel the instruction toward the learners' enthusiasm and interest and to make the output worthy A needs analysis assessment is a very beneficial step to reach this goal. The overall aim of the NA is the identification of elements which will lend themselves to training (Gillet 1973).This research is an endeavor to find out about the needs of the students of medicine in mastering different skills of language in the process of academic context.To do this research students were asked to ill out a questionnaire of needs analysis . The findings revealed that most of the students attached priority to mastering basic skills. The results of this research can be helpful in making decisions on what to teach to such students. By means of carrying out such a research instructors can be aware of the particular needs and perceptions of their subjects in the classroom which otherwise may remain hidden from the sight of those involved in curriculum planning on one hand and assumed instructors on the other hand.**

***Index Terms*—needs analysis, English for specific purposes (ESP), medical students**

I. Background/Introduction

EMS (English for Medical Students) programs have been developed without conducting a systematic needs analysis from both the students' and instructors' point of view. On the importance of needs analysis there are myriad of viewpoints. Widdowson (1981) states that "if a group of learners' needs for a language can be accurately specified, then this specification can be used to determine the content of a language program that will meet these needs."Hutchinson &Waters (1992) argue that if learners, sponsors, and teachers know why learners need English, that awareness will have an influence on what will be accepted as reasonable content in the language course and what potential can be exploited. The ESP approach uses the needs analysis framework as the main tool to define learners' needs in a specific field because the awareness is more recognizable in a specific target situation representing a "real-life-situation". Witkin and Altschuld (1995) define needs analysis as a systematic set of procedures undertaken for the purpose of setting priorities and making decisions about programs or organizational improvement and allocation of resources. These statements are a means to channel our thought toward the importance of needs analysis and how it can help b teachers, curriculum designers and students to reach the goal of language learning in academic contexts as well as in any other settings.

English teachers in academic levels (EAP) are responsible to help students develop the kind of English proficiency that will lead to success in their academic life.

In his research on Nursing students English language proficiency,Bosher (2002) conducted a needs analysis study to account for the perceptions of these students on their need students in English classes. The findings indicated that communicating with clients and colleagues in the clinical setting were the major areas of difficulty. Al-Busaidi (2003) investigated academic English, Almulhim (2001) and Al-Bazzaz (1994) looked at business English, and Al27 Gorashi (1988) investigated military English needs. However, very rare studies have considered widely and specifically the English language needs of medical students.

A major objective of the NA n this study is to establish a basis concerning the usefulness and applicabiliy of English by students in the academic situation. Specifically, information gathered the areas of interests and also the areas of difficulty The project aimed to assess the students' language requirements in academic situations

1. What are medical students' perceptions of their language needs in relation to the tasks they must perform in the university setting?
2. What specific language difficulties do medical students perceive themselves to have?

II. Methodology

The subjects of this study were 41 medical students of the Faculty of Medicine, Zanjan University who were native Persian speakers with an average age of between 19-21 years. All of them had passed the same national University

General English or ESP as compulsory courses language of the university which ware required in order to enroll in the more advanceى ESP courses of the Faculty of Medicine

The objective was to gather basic, general information about the medical students' language needs. Furthermore, in development of the questionnaire some faculties were interviewed for their experiences.

To devise the instrument, a pilot study was done. The subjects of the pilot study were selected from the same pool as the participants of the main study.

A way to check the construct validity of a test or a questionnaire is to use the specialist's opinion or some informants' views. (Aldeson 1990b and 1990c) uses the judges in the examining of constructs of reading skills. Selinker uses specialists in understanding validity of a questionnaire.

To make sure that the items of the questionnaire do test, in fact, what they should, i.e., the questionnaire has construct validity, the questionnaire was put into judgment. In the first judgment test items were judged from the componential point of view.

In this test three university professors holding a PhD degree in the field of methodology in medical sciences as well as TEFL and therefore experts in this field were selected to judge the items. Although the items were sought to be very close together in nature, they were judged to be different enough to be classifiable into different categories.

The pilot student questionnaire took 20 minutes to be completed. This questionnaire was developed by Victoria Chan (2008) and has been used by a number of researchers. The reliability coefficient was estimated and the alpha in this pilot study was 0.83 with 7 cases. This alpha level was satisfactory to follow the study and to do the main administration.

Each section of the questionnaire served a unique purpose. The questionnaire was translated into Persian and as mentioned after a pilot administration it was administered to 25 students (21 females and 4 males). It focused on four aspects as follows:

1. How do you rate the importance of learning each of the subjects as related to four language skills including reading, writing, speaking and listening.
2. Which one of the four major English skills is the most important for success in your other subjects in the college?
3. How important are these tasks in English for your other subjects?
4. How do you evaluate your abilities and knowledge of English in the areas including Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Grammar, General vocabulary and Medical vocabulary. The answers were rated on a six point Likert scale from the very important to unimportant on five point Likert scale but they were constricted to three points to make a facility in the analysis.

III. Results

As was mentioned before the questionnaire was divided into four parts. Questions in part one included importance of skills. This part of the questionnaire was constructed regarding the four main language skills. The first skill concerned with reading skill and it was divided into different categories as follows:

a. newspapers b. Journals c. academic texts d. lecture handouts e. reference books f: reading materials on the interest.

As Table 1 demonstrates, In this part 61% selected reading handouts and 60% selected reading materials on the Internet as the most important. However, the whole ratings did not show a significant difference, and this can be an indication that they totally considered reading skill as an important skill to master.

A. Part 1: How do You Rate the Importance of Learning Each of the Subjects as Related to Four Language Skills?

TABLE 1:
READING SKILL

Reading skill	**A little important** **Fre.** **%**	**important** **Fre.** **%**	**Very important** **Fre.** **%**
Newspapers	10 23.3%	17 39.5%	16 37.2%
Journals	8 19.5%	17 41.5%	16 39%
Academic texts	7 16.7%	14 33.3%	21 50%
Lecture handouts	20 50%	6 15%	14 35%
Reference books	10 24.4%	6 14.6%	25 61%
Reading materials on the internet	8 20%	8 20%	24 60%

To find out about the importance of learning language skills, the second skill under consideration was listening skill. This skill similar to the reading skill was divided into different subsections as follows.

Listen to: a. to a radio b. to the television programs c. films d. course lectures e. materials/seminars f. class discussions

TABLE 2.
LISTENING SKILLS

Listening skill	**A little important** **Fre.** **%**	**important** **Fre.** **%**	**Very important** **Fre.** **%**
Radio	13 32.5%	10 25%	17 42.5%
TV programs	2 5%	12 30%	26 65%
Films	4 10.3%	9 23.1%	26 66.7%
Course lectures	9 22%	6 14.6%	26 63.4%
Seminars	8 25.5%	7 22.6%	16 51.6%
Classroom discussions	9 26.5%	7 20.6%	18 52.9%

As the table above clarifies, in listening skill films (66.7%), TV programs (65%) and course lectures (63.4%) were rated as the most important ones. This finding could be justified if we assume that in the world of today majority of knowledge is gained through audiovisual means and students specify less of their time for listening to radio. Furthermore, since their classes are usually handled in English language on one hand, and they have to take part in monthly Journal clubs, this fact would offer good reasons for why they have attributed weight to course lectures.

As above, the speaking skill was divided into some areas including; a. in-class discussions; b. conferences; c. seminars; d. at presentations

TABLE 3.
SPEAKING SKILL

Speaking skill	**A little important** **Fre.** **%**	**important** **Fre.** **%**	**Very important** **Fre.** **%**
In-class discussions	10 28.6%	6 17.1%	19 54.3%
Conferences	12 33.3%	10 27.8%	14 38.3%
Seminars	11 31.4%	11 31.4%	13 37.1%
presentations	10 27.8%	10 27.8%	16 44.4%

A close consideration reflects the idea that they attached much importance to in- class discussions (54.3%) among the other areas. This may be due to the fact that they feel a need to be able to talk and involve themselves in classroom discussions. As speaking in seminars is concerned, it has not attracted much attention (37.1%). The reason may be that they have not still perceived this need to take an active role for speaking in seminars and for taking part in public or scientific presentations.

The other skill which was judged for its importance from students' point of view was writing skill. It was divided into subcategories including a. letters; c. course assignments; d. field reports; e. email messages; f. The internet; g. notes; h. exam papers

TABLE 4.
WRITING SKILL

Writing skill	A little important Fre. %	important Fre. %	Very important Fre. %
Letters	**9** **26.5%**	**7** **20.6%**	**18** **52.9%**
Course assignments	**7** **21.5%**	**6** **18.2%**	**20** **60.0%**
Field Reports	**13** **38.2%**	**8** **23.5%**	**13** **38.2%**
Email messages	**6** **17.6%**	**5** **14.7%**	**23** **67.6%**
On the Internet	**5** **14.3%**	**5** **14.3%**	**25** **71.4%**
Notes	**13** **39.4%**	**5** **15.2%**	**15** **45.5%**
Exam papers	**8** **22.9%**	**7** **20%**	**20** **57.1%**

The most important scopes they needed writing skill for were for communication on the Internet (71.4%), email messages (67.6%) and course assignments(60%). This finding is justified by the fact that in the world of today, our students pass much of their time of communication through the Internet. The subcategory of field reports which was marked as the least important (38.2%) may be because of the fact that they did not have to write their clinical or lab reports in English language.

B. Part 2 of the Questionnaire

The second part of the questionnaire of needs analysis asked for ranking of the language skills which was the most important for success in their other subjects in the college. This part included four main skills of reading comprehension, listening, speaking and writing

TABLE 5:
RANKING OF THE LANGUAGE SKILLS

Skills which are more important as related to success in the students' subjects	A little important Fre. %	Important Fre. %	Very important Fre. %
Reading comprehension	4 10.8%	10 27%	23 62.2%
Listening	2 5.4%	16 43.6%	19 51.4%
Speaking	3 8.1%	4 10.2%	30 81.1%
writing	24 64.9%	1 2.7%	12 32.4%

It was interesting to learn that the subjects of this study attached extreme importance to speaking skill (81.1%) and then reading skill (62.2%).This may be due to the specific circumstances in their classroom, where they have to talk out their ideas. Furthermore, the second priority of them which was attached to reading skill is deemed to be a self-supporting point, due to the fact that they have to study their original textbooks written in English language.

C. Part 3 of the Questionnaire:

This part of the questionnaire focused on the level of importance of the tasks in English for their other subjects. The tasks were subdivided as follows;

Reading:

Textbooks -Technical articles in journals- Manuscripts-Texts on the Internet

Writing

Lab reports-Assignments-Taking notes in lectures-Answering questions related to the part of the textbook

Listening & Speaking

Following lectures-Following question/ answer sessions in class-Listening to spoken presentations-Participating in **discussions**-Asking questions in class- spoken presentations

As to the reading skills, the tasks of reading textbooks and reading articles on the Internet were judged to be equally very important (46.3%).However; the task of reading manuscripts did not attract much attention (24.4%). This may be due to the fact that it may rarely occur that they read manuscripts in English.

Regarding writing, none of the tasks received considerable priority. An examination of table 6 reveals that totally they considered tasks under writing skill as not very important.

Furthermore, in listening and speaking they indicated majority of them indicated that the tasks of classroom discussions (56.1%) and asking questions in class (51.2%) were very important among others.

TABLE 6.
IMPORTANCE OF THE SKILLS AS RELATED TO OTHER SUBJECTS?

Importance of the tasks related to other subjects	**A little important Fre. %**	**Important Fre. %**	**Very important Fre. %**
Reading			
Textbooks	5 12.2%	17 41.5%	19 46.3%
Technical articles in journals	8 19.5%	14 84.1%	19 46.3%
Manuscripts	14 34.1%	17 41.5%	10 24.4%
Texts on the Internet	4 9.8%	22 53.7%	15 36.6%
Writing			
Lab reports	16 39%	15 36.6%	10 24.4%
assignments	13 31.7%	16 39%	12 29.3%
Taking notes in lectures	14 35%	18 45%	8 20%
Answering questions related to the part of the textbook	16 39%	13 31.7%	12 29.3%
Listening and Speaking			
Following lectures	2 4.9%	17 41.5%	22 53.7%
Following question/ answer sessions in class	8 19.5%	15 36.6%	18 43.9%
Listening to spoken presentations	3 7.5%	18 45%	19 47.5%
Participation in discussions	3 7.3%	15 36.6%	23 56.1%
Asking questions in class	8 19.5%	12 29.3%	21 51.2%
Giving spoken presentations	7 17.5%	17 41.5%	17 41.5%

D. Part 4 of the Questionnaire

In this part of the questionnaire the students were asked to evaluate their abilities and knowledge of English. Thus, they were asked to self- report what level of English proficiency they had. This was an important question whose answers would be compared with the course content. The items were as follows:

Reading
Writing
Speaking
Listening
Grammar
General vocabulary
Medical vocabulary

As the table 7. Shows they indicated that their medical vocabulary scope (61.9%) and general vocabulary level (47.4%) were not satisfactory. Furthermore 44.7% stated that their listening skill ability was insufficient.

TABLE 7.
ABILITIES AND KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH OF THE STUDENTS

Abilities and knowledge of English of the students	**unsatisfactory Fre. %**	**Satisfactory Fre. %**	**Good Fre. %**
Reading	7 18.4%	19 50%	12 31.6%
Writing	10 26.3%	20 52.6%	8 21.1%
Speaking	15 39.5%	12 31.6%	11 28.9%
Listening	17 44.7%	14 36.8%	7 18.4%
Grammar	15 39.5%	19 50%	4 10.5%
General vocabulary	18 47.4%	15 39.5%	5 13.2%
Medical vocabulary	13 61.9%	5 23.8%	3 14.3%

Reading seems to be a better developed ability with 50% satisfactory and 12% good percentage. This may be because they had more exposure to reading texts. The following table presents a brief review of what went on in the previous parts.

Although in some cases responses were overlapping, for example in listening 17 (44.7%)respondents claimed their level of listening was unsatisfactory and they needed English very much to be able to understand oral utterances. Moreover, 52.6% subjects pointed out that they had satisfactory level of written language followed by 26.3% who believed that they had unsatisfactory level of writing.

In speaking responses were similar. Regarding general and technical vocabulary as can be seen in table 7, these domains were the abilities they needed to develop more than others.

In sum, the figures show that in terms of four main language abilities, respondents needed help to develop to proficient levels in order to reach their goals.

TABLE 8.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Items	**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Reading skill	43	1	3	2.2	0.54
Listening skill	41	1	3	2.35	0.58
Speaking skill	36	1	3	2.1	0.70
Writing skill	35	1	3	2.3	0.62
Learning reading skill	41	1	3	2.2	0.45
Learning writing skill	41	1	3	1.9	0.52
Learning speaking and listening skill	41	1	3	2.4	0.51
Evaluation of skills	38	1	3	1.8	0.47

The results of this table indicated perception between students on relative ability in English language skills. As it can be seen, for learning writing skills figures changed almost dramatically. In fact, they stated low level of priority for learning written language (M=1.9). Listening skill(M=2.35) and learning of listening and speaking skills(M= 2.4) gained much of attention. This data were particularly important. The stated need to communicate orally may be relevant to medical procedures. In evaluation of their total abilities and considering different skills of English language (M=1.8) more than half of the students believed that they had unsatisfactory knowledge of English. This outcome signals that English language skills in a wider perspective should be addressed and catered for.

IV. DISCUSSION

As there is an increasing tendency toward more learner- centered approaches and placing the learners themselves in the center of attention in the process of learning, there must be some means of deciding on how the materials can be practical and to what extent the existing materials and courses are thought by the learners as useful. By means of NA which is a process of learning about the present situation of the students in academic contexts and learning about the requirements, important findings were obtained..

The major endeavor throughout this research was made to find out about the type of activities to include in future courses of English and the suitable content by taking account of medical students' point of view.

In the light of findings, it is reasonable to place priority on improving all four basic language skills in general and listening and speaking skills in particular. Furthermore, academic vocabulary development was deemed essential by the learners.More English courses specially designed and geared to students' academic needs are recommended as an urgent need for medical students. Meanwhile, another outcome of the findings was that the English language courses that Medical students currently take do not match their present level and are not satisfactory.

On the basis of a database of information gained in this study about language needs, perceptions and expectations for English courses new courses can be established to meet the needs of both learners and instructors and to create more practical situation.

This study is regarded as a preliminary process to determine and modify the course content in accordance with the perceived needs.

The results of such analysis can help to increase the likelihood that the English course be related to students' subjects and field of study and their concern as well. In fact, the needs analysis project revealed that students had particular opinions on priorities given to learning of language skills and they were able to assess the importance of related sub skills as related to their academic subjects and interest.

In sum, the elements of analysis lead to the establishment of more fruitful courses leading to more achievement of students in their disciplines.

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An Empirical Study on the Effectiveness of the Lexical Approach to Improving Writing in SLA

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***Abstract*—The study tries to explore the effectiveness of the lexical approach to improving writing in SLA. In order to find out what effects the lexical approach can have on the writing in SLA, the author conducts a teaching experiment with an experimental class and a control class. A pre-test and a post-test are used as the tools to collect the data. SPSS is used to analyze the data in the experiment. Results of the experiments show that a lexical approach to SLA teaching can enhance students' awareness of lexical chunks, significantly improve their frequency of using lexical chunks, and conduce to raise their level of English writing.**

***Index Terms*—the lexical approach, SLA, writing competency, lexical chunks**

I. Introduction

Writing is one of the four basic language skills, which occupies an extremely important position in second language teaching. It also plays essential roles in cultivating students' comprehensive language competence and increasing students' overall cultural awareness. However, writing ability is rather difficult to be developed; although teachers and students have invested a lot of time and energy, the result is not always satisfactory. In the daily teaching, it's not unusual for the teachers to find that despite having mastered a large quantity of grammar rules and vocabulary, many students still use some very simple words, phrases and sentences, or translate word for word to express themselves. The reason may be that there is much disconnection between language input and output in the process of SLA, thus how to help students to output language effectively, and transform the language knowledge into language skills becomes an urgent and essential task.

Many researchers (Lay, 1982; Uzawa &Cumming, 1989) have found that in second language writing low proficiency students are often dependent on their mother tongue thinking, and they use native language to organize ideas, and then literally translate them into the target languages. This means that in the writing in SLA the mother tongue thinking and second language thinking are mixed and interacted consistently, which tends to result in misnomer, sentence errors, bad coherence, and vague expression. Some language researchers (Nattinger &De Carrico, 1992; Lewis, 1993) find there are a large number of word clusters with a high ratio of reproduction in language. After collecting, analyzing and deconstructing these phrases from language materials and language communication, language learners get access to some language units and rules which can be reused in actual communication. Based on this, some new sentences can be produced, leading to more abundant communicative forms and more influent communicative process. These fixed and semi-fixed phrases are called lexical chunks. By analyzing and summarizing research in this area, researchers understand the roles and significance of lexical chunks in language learning in more depth and more thoroughly and a lexical approach is thus put forward.

II. Background

A. The Lexical Approach

Michael Lewis (1993), who puts forward the lexical approach, suggests that lexis is the basis of language instead of grammar—lexis is misunderstood in language teaching when grammar is traditionally assumed as the basis of language and that mastery of the grammatical system is a prerequisite for effective communication. According to Lewis (1993), the key principle of a lexical approach is that "language consists of grammaticalized lexis, not lexicalized grammar."(p.36). One of the central organizing principles of any meaning-centered syllabus should be lexis. In Lewis' theory of lexis, lexical chunks are paradigm grammar and the acquisition of language knowledge and improvement of communicative abilities depend on the expansion of vocabulary, the abilities of collocation, and the mastery of basic vocabulary and language structures. Lexical chunks are the smallest unit in verbal communication as well as a perfect unit of language learning.

In the lexical approach, lexical chunks in its various types are thought to play an essential role in native and second language teaching and learning. Nattinger (1980) suggests that teaching should be based on the idea that language production is the piecing together of ready-made units appropriate for a particular situation.

Lewis (1997) suggests the following taxonomy of lexical items:

• polywords (e.g., a couple of; at times; in turn)

• collocations, or word partnerships (e.g., strongly recommended; meet the minimum standards)
• institutionalized utterances (e.g., I'll get it; We'll see; That'll do; If I were you....; Would you like a cup of coffee?)
• sentence frames and heads (e.g., It is not as…as you think; It's said/ reported/ suggested that…) and even text frames (e.g., The aim of the thesis is to explore…; On one hand …, on the other…)

B. Language Information Theory

Language information processing theory holds that language learning is a non-automated information processing process of cognitive activity. The process is divided into five stages: input, attention, analysis, memorization and output. Cognitive psychologists believe that the brain's methods of processing input information are bottom-up and top-down mode. Bottom-up mode features attention to details, which is a series of process from the lower to the higher, from decoding the words to accessing the final information; top-down mode highlights the recognition of the overall structure, emphasizing the roles of accumulated background knowledge in understanding the language information. These two methods are interrelated, and interacted in helping to comprehend the language information with the layers ranging from morphology and syntax to discourse. The top-down mode of learning lexical chunks accelerates the application of chunks from the lexical and syntactic level to the discourse level, resulting in improving the learners' writing competency (Yu Xiulian, 2008).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Purpose of the Study

The study tries to explore how to apply the lexical approach to college English writing and then examine the effects that lexical chunks have on improving college students' writing competency.

B. Participants

Participants in this experiment are sophomore non-English majors in two parallel classes: Class A (42) and Class B (43) with a total of 85 students. Class A is the experimental class and Class B is the control class and both of two classes are taught by the author.

C. Method

For the experimental class, the author chooses *New Horizon College English* as the text book, adopts the lexical method to teaching and consciously cultivates students' abilities of identifying and applying lexical chunks to help them to develop their writing abilities through a series of teaching and learning activities, while for the control class, the conventional method of teaching is implemented with the same text books. Results of the study are primarily reflected through students' writing performance in a pre-test and a post-test, and SPSS11.5 is used for statistics and analysis. After the experiment, writing performance of the two classes will be compared and contrasted through quantitative analysis. The experiment lasts 16 weeks.

D. Procedure

1. Pre-test

At the beginning of the academic term, students in the two classes were asked to write a composition of no less than 120 words with the title *Part-time Jobs for College Students* within 30 minutes. Full mark of the writing is 15. Students were advised to undertake the task seriously and carefully, as scores of their writings would be included in the final assessment on their daily performance. Writings of the students are scored by two experienced teachers and an average score of each composition is adopted.

2. Teaching design and teaching activities (based on the lexical approach) in the experimental class

According to the lexical approach, language class activities are divided into three phases: Observation —Hypothesis— Experiment. Lewis (1997) states that focus of the language teaching should shift from grammar to vocabulary, and teachers should encourage students to master a large number of necessary vocabularies according to their needs while providing students with meaningful and comprehensible input materials so that students can master vocabulary in the contexts. For teachers, to increase students' sensitivity of vocabulary intentionally and teach students to identify lexical chunks are encouraged. In the first three weeks, the author introduced the knowledge about lexical chunks to students, including the definition, categories and functions of chunks, and ways to collect chunks. By adopting the lexical approach, teaching activities are designed as follows (take the text *Cultural Difference in Western and Japanese Decision-making* as an example).

a. Pre-reading activities

Before reading the passage, students are asked to discuss and answer the following questions:
• Have you ever heard of premarital agreements? What do you think they are for?
• Do you think premarital agreement will take the romance out of marriage for the man as well as the woman?
• Would you ask for a premarital agreement before your marriage? Why or why not?

b. While-reading activities

In this stage, it's better for the teachers to ask students to have a global reading first so that students can have an overall understanding of the main idea and know about the whole structure of the passage, which is beneficial to students' writing. Then a detailed reading activity is followed.

In this part, teaching activities takes the lexical chunks as the index with the sequence of observation, hypothesis and experiment. Through the recognition, learning and application of lexical chunks, students are expected to master and apply them efficiently, so that their language competency can be improved.

Recognizing the lexical chunks

At the beginning of the study, some knowledge about chunks has been taught to the students. While reading a passage, a student is firstly asked to identify and find out the chunks in it with the purpose of shifting his focus from grammar and independent words to chunks. Focusing more attention on lexical chunks rather than on the language rules in SLA to draw the rules of utilizing language is rather similar to the way of mother tongue acquisition.

• polywords: in contrast to; on some way; owing to; in a pinch

• collocations: come to grips with; work for; be related to; distinguish from; set up; fall through; press for; wonder at; lag behind; exert oneself; at the least; be superior/ inferior to; develop from; from one's point of view; set up; deal with; be based on; be true of; achieve harmony; in a different perspective, be secondary to; press for; be frustrated by; take great pride in; convert to; be feasible to

• sentence frames and heads: This is of extreme importance when doing something; First…Second…; The difference is that…; It is …who…; By that I mean…

This part belongs to the observation stage and aims to guide students to feel the characteristics of the English language and pave the way for utilizing lexical chunks.

Practicing and utilizing the lexical chunks

This part belongs to the hypothesis and experiment stage and aims at training students to perceive and internalize the usage of lexical chunks in various ways. In this stage, the teacher should devise various ways to guide students to practice, utilize and master the lexical chunks. The following ways are advised.

• Sentence completion: From my point of view, the "you to you" approach is superior to the "I to you" approach.

• Sentence making: This is of extreme importance when trying to achieve harmony in a company.

• Sentence translation: Use "come to grips with" to make a sentence.

• Text retelling or abbreviating: Use the lexical chunks in the passage to retell or abbreviate the text.

• Text reciting: Students are expected to recite the parts which contain many of the chunks in the text.

With the recognition and utilization of chunks, students are expected to master the lexical chunks in practice, which contributes to the fluency of language output.

c. Post-reading activities

In the post-reading activities, students are expected to consolidate the chunks learned previously and then make an extensive reading to collect and master more chunks further. Language learning is a process of accumulation of language knowledge. With more chunks stored in the brain, it's more likely for the students to output language in faster steps and the more accuracy and fluency of the writing can be realized. In order to encourage students to collect chunks more willingly and actively, they are asked to exchange each others' chunks found in their extensive reading after class. Students are also encouraged to make class reports orally and literally in class with the chunks they have obtained in the extensive reading as the consolidating way.

3. Post-test

In order to determine the effect of the lexical approach to writing in SLA, a post-test is taken by students in the two classes. All are asked to write a composition of no less than 120 words with the title *Psychological Problems among College Students* within 30 minutes. Writings of the students are scored by two experienced teachers and an average score of each composition is adopted.

IV. Data Analysis and Results

In order to investigate the effect of the study, a number of descriptive and inferential statistical procedures are initiated. The results obtained through such analysis will be explained and depicted in the following section. A premise of the study is that the experimental group and the control group are comparable and the difference between the two classes is not significant before the experiment. In other words, the two groups of students are expected to indicate no significant differences concerning the levels of writing and they should be of homogeneity concerning the writing competency before the study. In order to check the homogeneity, a pre-test is given to the two classes to judge and evaluate their levels of writing.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON PERFROMANCE ON PRE-TEST

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Class A	42	8.67	1.57
Class B	43	8.78	1.76

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF RESULTS OF PRE-TEST

	Group	N	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pre-test	Class A	42	-0.021	0.192	-0.11
	Class B	43			

Table 1 indicates that the means are statistically very close to each other on the pre-test (8.67 and 8.78). Hence, it can be inferred that the students in the two classes don't differ greatly from one another in terms of their writing performance. In the dependent samples test of results on the pre-test t-value is -0.021 and p is 0.192. Table 2 reveals that the value of t is not significant at the level of p (> 0.05), which means the participants' almost equal writing competency statistically.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON PERFROMANCE ON POST-TEST

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Class A	42	10.29	2.016
Class B	43	9.36	1.922

TABLE 4
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF RESULTS OF POST-TEST

	Group	N	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Post-test	Class A	42	2.32	0.001	0.93
	Class B	43			

From Table 3 &4, we can find that the average score of experimental class is 10.29, which is 0.93 more than the average score of the control class (9.36). The independent samples test of the results on the post-test shows that the two groups are significantly different at the level of 0.001 (<0.05), from which we can deduce that after the lexical approach is adopted in SLA, students' writing performance is greatly improved in the experimental class, while the traditional approach attributes no significant progress to improving students' writing competency in the control class.

TABLE 5
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST OF THE RESULTS OF PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

Group	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Class A	-1.62	2.711	-5.014	41	0.000
Class B	-0.58	2.426	-1.882	42	0.065

Table 5 shows that the average score of experimental class on the post-test is 1.62 more than that on the pre-test while the average score of the control class on the post-test is only 0.58 more than that on the pre-test. For the experimental class, t is significant at the level of p=0.000, while for the control class t is not significant at the level of p=0.065. It can be inferred from Table 5 that although the two classes' writing performance is improved after a term's learning, only the writing abilities of the experimental class are significantly improved.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

From the analysis above, we can come to find that the lexical approach to improving students' writing abilities is rather effective. The reason may lie as follows. First of all, the lexical approach focus on the awareness of using lexical chunks, which can bring benefits to the internalization of language input and the language acquisition. Only when the learners themselves are aware of the gap between them and the native speakers of English, can it be possible for them to work harder to reduce that gap. Secondly, the lexical approach emphasizes learning words by heart by regarding them as a whole unit stored in memory. Learners can pick them up as a whole if needed rather than fix them up temperately according to grammatical rules, which can reduce the pressure of coding language, save the brain a lot of time and effort to process information, thereby enhance the fluency of expression. Lewis (1997) says, "Fluency is based on the acquisition of a large number of fixed or semi-fixed prefabricated blocks, which is the basis for language innovation." (p.120). Also, as a combination of grammar, semantics and context, lexical chunks picked up as a whole can significantly reduce the number of wrong semantic collocation, and improve the accuracy and authentic nature of language.

The experiment shows that a lexical approach to SLA teaching can enhance students' awareness of lexical chunks, significantly improve their frequency of using lexical chunks, and conduce to raise the level of English writing. The result of the study gives clues to college English class teaching, especially to teaching writing. First, it shows the lexical approach is practical and effective; Secondly, to follow the approach to teaching, teachers guided by the lexical chunk theory should first change their teaching concepts, guide students to establish a sense of lexical chunks, and make the opportunities to help students to use lexical chunks creatively in the communication with a variety of teaching methods to improve students' pragmatic and communicative competency. Thirdly, due to the large number of lexical chunks, it is not enough to collect, practice and master lexical chunks in class. At the same time, students are expected to learn to use dictionaries, corpus and net resources to master lexical chunks after class. Of course, it still remains to be further

studied how to apply the lexical approach to every aspect of language teaching better to improve students' comprehensive competency.

APPENDIX A PRE-TEST WRITING

Directions: for this part, you are allowed thirty minutes to write a composition on the topic *Part-time Jobs for College Students*. You should write at least 120 words, and base your composition on the outline given below:

1. Currently, many students take part-time jobs in their spare time in the college campus.
2. Peoples' ideas are divided as whether they should take the part-time jobs.
3. In my opinion …

APPENDIX B POST-TEST WRITING

Directions: for this part, you are allowed thirty minutes to write a composition on the topic *Psychological Problems among College Students.* You should write at least 120 words, and base your composition on the outline given below:

1. At present, many students are suffering from serious psychological problems.
2. Causes for these psychological problems are …
3. What measures should be taken to address these issues.

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Sense of Humor and Emotional Intelligence as Predictors of Stress among EFL Teachers

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***Abstract*—This study investigated the association of teacher stress with sense of humor and emotional intelligence (EI) among 108 EFL teachers from 5 private language institutes in Tehran. It was also checked that whether sense of humor and EI could predict teacher stress. The participants were administered Fimian's (1984) Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI), Thorson and Powell's (1993) Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale (MSHS), and Bar-On's (1997) EI test. A series of Pearson Product Moment Correlations and a 2-step Hierarchical Regression Analysis were run. The findings revealed that EFL teachers' sense of humor and EI were reversely correlated with their stress level. It was also found that, after accounting for the contribution of demographic variables, sense of humor and EI could collectively add to the prediction of teacher stress, however, only EI could separately predict teacher stress. Implications of the study are discussed, and suggestions for future research are made.**

***Index Terms*—stress, sense of humor, emotional intelligence, EFL teachers**

I. Introduction and Literature Review

Since the pioneering work of Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978a, b, 1979), numerous studies on teacher stress have been conducted worldwide (e.g., Farber 1984, 1991; Heibert & Farber, 1984; Kyriacou, 1980). Due to the high level of teacher attrition, teacher stress remains an important topic in educational research today (Backhirova, 2005). 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).

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978a) 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. According to Pennicuik (2003), the less stressful a person is at work, the more likely he or she will be present and the more likely the production and performance will increase (Pennicuik, 2003). Several factors determine how stressful a job is. Psychological demands placed on the individual and the ability to manage certain aspects of his or her job are identified by Hanson and Sullivan (2003) as important factors.

In identifying the most common 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). Pithers and Soden (1998) 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.

Jepson and Forrest (2006) suggested that teacher experience with stress differs as teaching experience increases. Beginning teachers often suffer from stress early because they are often given classroom assignments and students that are identified as difficult (Bobek, 2002). Many teachers enter into the profession with passion and energy, but soon run out because of stress. According to Intrator (2006), there are multiple evokers of intense emotions;

1. The public scrutiny of standing in front of a classroom the fear of not being liked or respected by students;
2. The vulnerability that comes with awareness of how students, administrators, and cooperating teachers routinely judge your performance;

3. The anxiety that comes when you are teaching a subject where your own understanding is incomplete; or
4. The discomfort that comes from having to make rapid-fire and uncertain decisions, whether in disciplining a student, correcting a student, asking a question, or adapting a lesson on the fly. (p. 235)

Just the same, veteran teachers also experience stress because of the changing roles, extension of additional duties and the new direction of education.

Moreover, 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). Interestingly, Kyriacou and Sutcliff (1978a) pointed out that stress reactions would vary among individuals, even when the objective external conditions are the same. 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 (e.g., Dunham, 1992; Farber, 1984; Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985).

Therefore, it seems natural that one should raise the question as to why some teachers succeed in surmounting high levels of occupational stress, in continuously enhancing students' achievements, and in setting and pursuing high goals for themselves, while others cannot meet expectations imposed on them and tend to collapse under the burden of everyday stress. The reason may lie in teachers' sense of humor as a coping mechanism and their emotional intelligence as a coping resource which 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 (Bar-On, Brown, Kirkcaldy and Thome, 2000).

In this connection, humor has been viewed by several theorists as one of the highest adaptive mechanisms of coping (Lefcourt, 2001). It is often difficult for an individual to take an objective stance in a stressful situation. However, humor, as a coping mechanism, offers one the opportunity to step back from the immediate stress of a situation and view it from a distance (Morreall, 1983). Martin and Lefcourt (1984) found that when individuals use humor to face anxiety, they are able to find multiple ways of interpreting their situation.

There is also a considerable amount of research that has acknowledged the association of pedagogically appropriate humor with: (a) positive teacher evaluations, (b) greater student enjoyment of the subject, and (c) greater student retention (Martin, 2007). Humor has also been shown to be appropriate for students at all levels and remains to be a powerful, positive, effective instructional tool for advancing learning (Berk, 2002; Polio & Humphreys, 1996). Empirical studies have concluded that students learn more from teachers who have a strong humor orientation than those with a weaker orientation (Korobkin, 1988; Martin, 2007; Torok, McMorris, & Lin, 2004). It has also been shown that teachers who effectively use humor are able to convey course content more effectively (Downs, Javidi, & Nussbaum, 1988). Humor in the classroom is not the answer to all classroom management issues, but it is an excellent preventive measure and can often diffuse tense situations (Loomans & Kolberg, 1993). Humor, in fact, may be one way to decrease teacher burnout caused by unmediated stress (Abel, 2002; Kuiper & Martin, 1998; Talbot & Lumden, 2000).

On the other hand, Ciarrochi, Chan and Caput, (2000) posited that emotional intelligence may protect people from stress and lead to better adaptation. They opined that an objective measure of emotion management skill is associated with a tendency to maintain an experimentally induced positive mood which has obvious implication for preventing stress. Teachers who experience more positive emotions may generate more and better teaching ideas; they may also develop "broad-minded coping" skills (Frederickson, 2001, p. 223), which can help them solve more problems. Kremenitzer (2005) stated that ''being able to regulate and manage emotions within the classroom is an important factor for effective and successful teaching" (p. 7). He argued that unlike other skills that a teacher has, the ability to respond to unanticipated and difficult spontaneous situations is perhaps the most challenging of all. When the time frame for reflection is short, teachers must be able to make a quick emotional adjustment even in the middle of the most negative situation.

Bar-On (2003) found that there was a moderate yet significant relationship between emotional and social intelligence and psychological health. Teachers who experience more positive emotions may generate more and better teaching ideas; they may also develop ''broad-minded coping" skills (Frederickson, 2001, p. 223), which can help them solve more problems. Research studies have also demonstrated that emotional intelligence could help foster effective coping with past events and traumatic experiences (e.g., Nolen-Hoeksema, McBride, & Larson, 1997; Pennebaker, 1997), with anticipation of desired goals in the future (e.g., Taylor, Pham, Rivkin, & Armor, 1998), and with current events and chronic stress (e.g., Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000).

Further, some empirical studies have been conducted to test the relationship between EI and stress among people from different walks of life. For example, Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2002) explored the relationship between occupational stress and emotional intelligence. They found a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and stress at work, indicating that workers who had higher overall emotional intelligence suffered less stress related to the occupational environment. Slaski and Cartwright (2002) investigated the relationship between a measure of emotional intelligence, subjective stress, distress, health, morale, quality of working life, and management performance. Their findings indicated a significant link between emotional intelligence and health and performance. These findings were encouraging in that emotional intelligence may play an important role in moderating the stress process and increasing individual resistance (Slaski & Cartwright, 2002).

However, there is a glaring lacuna in the existent literature on the association of teacher stress with EI and sense of humor in the context of teaching a foreign language with its emotionally challenging nature, high levels of affective involvement, complexity and constant interaction (Vaezi & Fallah, 2011a, b). Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to extend current research pertaining to teacher stress. Specifically, the relationship between EFL teachers' stress, their EI and sense of humor will be examined. As such, this study intends to answer the following two research questions:

1. Are there significant relationships between stress, EI and sense of humor among EFL teachers?
2. Can EI and sense of humor add to the prediction of stress among EFL teachers after accounting for the contribution of demographic variables?

II. 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). Fifty five teachers (50.9%) were single and 53 (49.1%) were married. They were selected from 5 private language institutes in Tehran.

To receive reliable data, the researchers explained the purpose of the study to the participants and informed them about the approximate time needed to complete the questionnaires (approximately 40 minutes). Further, all teachers were assured that their participation would be anonymous and voluntary. It was also explained that the results would consist of group data and that individual participants and institutes would not be identified. This information was presented in an informed consent form that was handed out with the survey packet. The completion of the survey packet indicated implied consent and thus no signed consent form was returned. Participants were encouraged to keep the informed consent page for their records. Teachers were encouraged to contact the investigators if any questions or concerns arose as a result of their participation in the study. The participants took the questionnaires home, filled them in and submitted it to the researchers within a week.

Finally, in order to answer the research inquiry, the responses obtained from the questionnaires were tabulated and analyzed.

B. Instruments

An anonymous self-report questionnaire, comprising 3 scales and a subject fact form, served as the research tool in this study. The 3 scales measured teachers' EI and sense of humor and stress. The fact form enquired about participants' demographic information including age, gender, marital status and years of teaching experience.

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. In this study, the reliability estimate of the scale was $\alpha = 0.89$.

2. Sense of Humor Scale

Thorson and Powell's (1993) Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale (MSHS) was utilized to measure EFL teachers' sense of humor. The MSHS is an auto-report measure of overall sense of humor and is composed of 24 items assessing humor on four dimensions. These four dimensions include: (a) the creation or production of humor, (b) humor used as a coping mechanism, (c) humor used socially, and (d) humor appreciation. Respondents indicate their agreement with the statements by selecting responses from a five-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1*(Strongly Disagree)* to 5 *(Strongly Agree).* In the current study the reliability estimate of the scale was $\alpha = 0.91$.

3. EI scale

To evaluate language teachers' EI, the researcher 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].

III. Results

A. Research Question 1

In order to investigate intercorrelation between variables a series of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was utilized. Regarding research question one, the results indicated that teacher stress was reversely correlated with both sense of humor and EI as follows: stress and sense of humor ($r = -.25$, $p < .01$) and EI ($r = -.56$, $p < .01$) (see Table 1).

TABLE 1.
INTERCORRELATIONS BETWEEN VARIABLES (N = 108)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. EI	-	.48**	- .56**	.38**	.25**	.29**	.02
2. SH		-	- .25**	.27**	.17	.16	.15
3. TS			-	- .27**	- .32**	- .24**	- .22*
4. YTE				-	.68**	.48**	.14
5. Ag					-	.44**	.23*
6. MS						-	- .01
7. Gn							-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* .Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Note. EI = Emotional Intelligence, SH= Sense of Humor, TS = Teacher Stress, YTE = Years of Teaching Experience, Ag = Age, MS = Marital Status

B. Research Question 2

In order to find whether sense of humor and EI could predict teacher stress, a 2-step hierarchical regression analysis was run. It should be noted that prior to running the regression analysis, preliminary data screening techniques were used to check the assumptions including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, outliers and sample size. No assumptions were violated and therefore no data transformation techniques were required.

Additionally, to determine which demographic variables needed to be controlled in the regression equations, a series of correlation analyses was run to obtain the correlation between the dependent variable and the demographics. For this purpose, Gender and Marital Status were dummy coded into quantitative terms. Only variables showing significant associations (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996) with the stress measure were included in the subsequent regression equations. It was found that all the demographics were significantly correlated with stress (see Table above). Therefore, all of them were retained.

Since no assumption was violated, no data transformation techniques were required. Then to answer the second research question as to whether sense of humor and emotional intelligence can add to the prediction of stress after accounting for demographic variables, a 2-step hierarchical regression analysis was run.

As shown in Table 2 , Step 1 which included demographic variables was significantly predictive of teacher stress, accounting for 13 % of the variance ($R^2 = .13$, $F [4, 103] = 4.08$, $p < 0.01$). EI and sense of humor were added in Step two. They collectively and significantly added to the model ($\Delta R^2 = .25$, $\Delta F [2, 101] = 21.54$, $p < 0.01$), explaining an additional 25 % of the variance in teachers' stress levels.

TABLE 2.
SUMMARY OF HIERARCHICAL MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR VARIABLES PREDICTING STRESS (N = 108)

Predictors	B	SE B	β	R	R^2	ΔR^2	ΔF	df
Step 1				.37	.13	.13	4.08**	(4, 103)
YTE	-.64	.95	-.09					
MS	-8.89	5.91	-.16					
Ag	-.57	.72	-.10					
Gn	- 10.30	5.26	- .18					
Step 2				.62	.39	.25	21.54**	(2, 101)
YTE	.58	.84	.08					
MS	-4.46	5.04	-.08					
Ag	-.71	.61	-.13					
Gn	- 11.63	4.50	- .20					
SH	.24	.16	-. 21					
EI	-.42	.06	-.60**					

* p < .05, ** p < .01,
Note. YTE = Years of Teaching Experience, MS = Marital Status, Ag = Age, EI = Emotional Intelligence, SH= Sense of Humor. ΔR2 = R2 change, ΔF = F change, df = Degree of Freedom, B = Unstandardized Regression Coefficients
β = Standardized Regression Coefficients.

As indicated by Standardized Beta Values, EI ($\beta = .60$, $p < .01$) could significantly predict teacher stress. However, sense of humor ($\beta = .22$, $p > .05$) could not significantly and separately predict teacher stress.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

As stated before, the present study sought to examine the relationship between stress, EI and sense of humor among EFL teachers. In addition, the predictive strength of EI and sense of humor was tested. The size of these correlations indicates that the higher the teachers' EI, and sense of humor, the lower their stress level. The findings also showed that, after accounting for the contribution of demographic variables including teacher age, teaching experience, marital status and gender, EI and sense of humor could collectively predict stress among the teachers. However, only EI could separately have a significant predictive strength.

One plausible explanation for the EI significant potency in predicting teacher stress and their negative correlation could be that highly emotionally intelligent individuals are particularly adept at perceiving their needs, as well as the needs of others with whom they work, both which enable them to anticipate and cope with stress instead of being overwhelmed by it (Bar-On, 1997). The results are in accordance with previous theoretical and empirical studies on the role of emotional intelligence in stress, though these are noticeably slim in the foreign/second language context. According to Bar-On (1997), emotionally intelligent people "are generally optimistic, flexible, realistic, and successful at solving problems and coping with stress, without losing control" (p. 156).Those who score high on emotional intelligence skills are expected to cope more effectively with environmental demands and pressures associated with occupational stress and health outcomes than those who score low on EI (Brackett, Palomera & Mojsa, 2010; 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). Individuals are emotionally intelligent then they can cope better with life's challenges and control their emotions more effectively (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. The results also support Bar-On, et al., (2000), Nikolaou and Tsaousis (2002) and Slaski & Cartwright (2002) who all found negative relationship between stress and EI among participants from different walks of life.

On the other hand, the results, indicating significant correlation between teacher sense of humor and stress, substantiate the view that humor positively affects the appraisal of stressful events and attenuates the negative affective response (Kuiper et al. 2004; Martin et al. 1993).Kuiper and Martin (1998a) suggest, individuals with a good sense of humor use more realistic processing of stressful events. Humor has been linked to several coping strategies such as distancing oneself from the stressor (Kuiper and Martin (1998b; Lefcourt, 2001), aggressive efforts toward confronting and dealing with the stress (Kuiper and Martin (1998b), and resolving the problems causing stress (McCrae and Costa 1986). Consequently, the results support the suggestion that individuals with a good sense of humor more accurately and realistically appraise the stress in their lives than those with a poor sense of humor (Kuiper and Martin 1998b; Martin, 2003). It appears that individuals with a poor sense of humor may either overestimate the appraisal of stress in their lives or perhaps are more predisposed to psychologically experience greater stress regardless of the number of stressful life events. One plausible explanation for this finding is that through sense of humor teachers can create a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom which will be undisputedly conducive to increasing interaction between teacher and learners .Wubbels et al. (1991) deemed the relationship between teacher and students the most significant aspect of classroom atmosphere. This is more evident in EFL settings, and even crucial in private institutes where group work and discussion are prevalent practices. In such a classroom, teacher's positive personality is an indispensable ingredient. Thus, the more the teacher attempts at creating an interactive supportive atmosphere, the more adept s/he will be in assuaging stress and high tensions inherent to the nature of EFL teaching especially in private language institutes which have set high pedagogical standards for teachers to meet.

V. Conclusion

The overall results of the present study lead to the conclusion that enhancing teachers' sense of humor and especially their EI might have a buffering effect on their stress level.

Foreign language teaching is a complex task that is associated with anxiety and feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt and apprehension, also teachers have to deal with students who come to class not only with diverse abilities but also with a range of emotional tendencies. Based on these findings, EI can be a potential coping resource against teacher stress. Since EI can be taught and developed (Goleman, 1995), EFL teachers should be helped in teacher preparation programs to be aware of the concept of EI and develop it in themselves, so that they can help better address stressful events in language institutes and create better educational situations for their students.

As Hawkey (2006) suggested, teacher education needs to address emotion in education in more explicit ways than is currently the case. Moreover, he points out that:

Emotionality lies at the intersection of the person and society, for all persons are jointed to their societies through the self-feelings and emotions they feel and experience on a daily basis. This is the reason the study of emotionality must occupy a central place in all the human disciplines, for to be human is to be emotional (p. 139).

Moreover, as suggested by many psychologists, humor is a set of attitudes and skills which can be learnt through practice (e.g. Fry, 1984), and everyone has the potential for a sense of humor and we are all born with the capacity to

laugh (Fry, 1984). As a result, individual EFL teachers are advised to consciously adopt humor in their personal and teaching life. It is hoped that teachers would then keep their problems in perspective, or at least have a different focus during some of the discouraging or depressing low points. Besides, those with staff development responsibilities are suggested to encourage teachers to be more humorous and provide them with opportunities for acquiring such skill. For examples, the institute authorities should emphasize the functions of humor and introduce certain skills of being humorous in orientation programs for beginning and inexperienced teachers. The education department and teachers' union should organize workshops or in-service programs for teachers on how to keep their ever present stresses in perspective, and there the roles and functions of humor should also be introduced. A state of no stress is impossible in nature. We all have felt the tensions of stress, and we all have experienced the exhilarating feeling that follows laughter. Humor is really a healthy technique to put events and people in the proper perspective (Dardick, 1990). Thus, there is no reason to be so reluctant to incorporate some humor in our life.

The findings of the current study, however, must be treated with caution. To the researchers' best knowledge, this is the first attempt to study EFL teachers' stress, their EI and sense of humor together in an institutional context. Thus, this study should be replicated to see whether similar findings can be obtained elsewhere. Since this study was conducted only in private language institutes, further research needs to be carried out at high schools in order to compare the results.

Though considered as overall terms in the present study, sense of humor and emotional intelligence are multidimensional constructs; therefore, a promising area of research could focus on determining the specific dimensions of these two constructs which are most influential in the cognitive appraisal of stress. Finally, in addition to self-report measures, in-depth interviews, life histories, case analyses, and observational examinations are just a few examples of some other approaches that could add significant descriptions and nuances to the teacher stress database.

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Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

Aims and Scope

Journal of Language Teaching and Research (JLTR) is a scholarly peer-reviewed international scientific journal published bimonthly, focusing on theories, methods, and materials in language teaching, study and research. It provides a high profile, leading edge forum for academics, professionals, consultants, educators, practitioners and students in the field to contribute and disseminate innovative new work on language teaching and research.

JLTR invites original, previously unpublished, research and survey articles, plus research-in-progress reports and short research notes, on both practical and theoretical aspects of language teaching, learning, and research. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Language teaching methodologies
- Pedagogical techniques
- Teaching and curricular practices
- Curriculum development and teaching methods
- Programme, syllabus, and materials design
- Second and foreign language teaching and learning
- Classroom-centered research
- Literacy
- Language education
- Teacher education and professional development
- Teacher training
- Cross-cultural studies
- Child, second, and foreign language acquisition
- Bilingual and multilingual education
- Translation
- Teaching of specific skills
- Language teaching for specific purposes
- New technologies in language teaching
- Testing and evaluation
- Language representation
- Language planning
- Literature, language, and linguistics
- Applied linguistics
- Phonetics, phonology, and morphology
- Syntax and semantics
- Sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics
- Discourse analysis
- Stylistics
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- Language teaching and psychology, anthropology, sociology
- Theories and practice in related fields

Special Issue Guidelines

Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 10 to 15 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

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- Review process for the selection and rejection of papers
- Name, contact, position, affiliation, and biography of the Guest Editor(s)
- List of potential reviewers if available
- Potential authors to the issue if available
- Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
  - Submission of extended version
  - Notification of acceptance
  - Final submission due
  - Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

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