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Marking of Speech Act Distinctions in Japanese and English

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***Abstract*—The present study examines differences between Japanese and English with respect to speech act distinctions. In particular, the two languages are contrasted with each other in terms of overt realizations of such distinctions. It is then shown that speech act distinctions are more robustly realized overtly in Japanese than in English. The main goal of this paper is twofold. First, I show why the difference between the two languages in terms of overt marking of speech act distinctions poses a significant challenge for speakers of English to learn Japanese. Second, I demonstrate that the difference in question is more prevalent than it is usually assumed, implying that the challenge that learners face is also more prevalent. It is thus my hope to raise the awareness of this challenge among instructors as well as among students.**

***Index Terms*—speech act, sentence types, sentence final particles (SFPs), Japanese, English**

I. Introduction

When a speaker makes an utterance, s/he carries out a speech act, such as the act of making a statement or the act of informing the address of a fact. As the number of distinct speech acts far exceeds the number of distinct sentence types, a single sentence type generally takes on multiple speech acts. For example, the sentence type 'declarative' can be used for making a statement, or informing the addressee of a fact among other speech acts. In other words, each sentence type is "underspecified" for speech act distinctions (cf. Clark, 1996). While this observation holds true for any language, it applies to different degrees, depending on the language. In other words, more speech act distinctions are overtly made in some languages than others. In the present paper, I show that Japanese makes more overt distinctions than English. I also discuss why this difference between the two languages poses a serious difficulty for English speakers learning Japanese.

II. Preliminaries

A. Major Sentence Types and Speech Act Distinctions

It is crucial to make a clear distinction between sentence types and speech act distinctions. Different sentence types, such as declaratives or interrogatives, differ from one another in form. In contrast, different speech acts, such as (making) a statement or (asking) a question, refer to functions; different functions may or may not be associated with distinct forms (i.e., distinct sentence types). We will discuss specific examples of "mismatches" between form and function in the relevant sense later in this section.

Three major sentence types are traditionally recognized: declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences (König and Siemund, 2007).[1] Both English and Japanese distinguish these three sentence types overtly. English marks these distinctions syntactically whereas Japanese does so morpho-syntactically as illustrated in (1) and (2), respectively.

(1) Major sentence types in English
a. Mary made pizza.
b. Did Mary make pizza?
c. Make pizza!

(2) Major sentence types in Japanese
a. Hanako-wa piza-o tsukut-ta.
Hanako-TOP pizza-ACC make-PST
'Hanako make pizza.'
b. Hanako-wa piza-o tsukut-ta-no.
Hanako-TOP pizza-ACC make-PST-Q
'Did Hanako make pizza?'
c. Piza-o tsukure.
pizza-ACC make.IMP

[1] König and Siemund (2007) point out that the three-way distinction is also reflected in punctuations in languages, such as English: the period (.), the question mark (?), and the exclamation point (!).

'Make pizza!'

In English, interrogatives are marked with an auxiliary (e.g., *did*) preceding the subject as in (1b)[2]; in Japanese, interrogatives are marked with a question morpheme (i.e., *-no*) added to the verb as in (2b). English imperative sentences involve the nonfinite base form of the verb (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999) as in (1c); Japanese imperatives involve a special conjugated form as in (2c).[3]

For each of the major sentence types above, there are "typical" speech acts that are associated with it. For example, declarative sentences are typically used to make a statement or an assertion; interrogative sentences are typically used to request the address for information (i.e., question); imperative sentences are typically used to give orders.[4] However, the relationship between sentence types and speech act distinctions is in fact much more complicated. One obvious case is rhetorical questions, such as *Who would have guessed that?*, which is interrogative in form, but is not a question in function. It is in fact an assertion (i.e., *Nobody would have guessed that*). As far as rhetorical questions are concerned however, the relationship between the form and its function is conventionalized: question in form and assertion in function. In other words, the function (i.e., speech act) is clear as long as the address recognizes it as a rhetorical question. However, in other cases, speech act distinctions are usually not very obvious from the forms. For example, Clark (1996, p.213) points out that a simple imperative sentence like *Sit here* (i.e., form) can express a number of distinct speech acts (i.e., functions).

(3) Form and function correspondences

	Form	Response	Function
a.	'Sit here.'	'Yes, sir.'	Order
b.	'Sit here.'	'Okay.'	Request
c.	'Sit here.'	'No thanks.'	Offer
d.	'Sit here.'	'What a good idea!'	Advice

As evidenced in the distinct yet felicitous responses, one single imperative form can be associated with a number of different functions. In other words, imperative sentences as in (3) are underspecified for their speech act distinctions. As we will see, other sentence types are also underspecified for their speech action distinctions. In particular, we will scrutinize declarative sentences and their speech acts in the remainder of the paper. We will see that, while both Japanese and English do not mark all the speech act distinctions overtly, English makes fewer distinctions overtly than Japanese.

B. Difference between Japanese and English: An Example

English declarative sentences are "versatile" in that they are used for a number of distinct speech acts. For example, as König and Siemund (2007) point out, English declarative sentences like (4) can be used to make a statement or to give a directive.

(4) English declarative

It is terribly cold in this room.

In addition to making a statement, one can use sentence (4) in order to direct the address to make the room warm by pointing out that it is terribly cold. While the English sentence in (4) is ambiguous in terms of the relevant speech acts, its Japanese counterpart is not ambiguous. Compare (4) with (5a).

(5) Japanese counterparts of English declarative in (4)

a. Kono heya-wa sugoku samui.
this room-TOP very cold.PRES
'It's terribly cold in this room.'

b. Kono heya-wa sugoku samui-ne.
this room-TOP very cold.PRES-CONFIRM
'It's terribly cold in this room (don't you agree with me?).'

c. Kono heya-wa sugoku samui-yo.
this room-TOP very cold.PRES-INFORM
'(I'm telling you) It's terribly cold in this room.'

Japanese declarative sentences like (5a) are used to make a statement, but cannot be used as a directive. To express the latter speech act, sentence-final particles (SFPs), such as the "confirmation-seeker" *ne* (5b) or the "informing particle" *yo* (5c) are necessary. For example, with the SFP *yo*, the speaker informs the addressee of the fact (rather than merely stating it), which implicates that an action needs to be taken to remedy the situation. The contrast between (4) and (5) shows that a single sentence form in English corresponds to multiple sentence forms in Japanese (i.e., declarative sentences with and without SFPs). In other words, more speech act distinctions are overtly marked in

[2]The exception is a case where the subject is the interrogative pronoun (e.g., *Who made the pizza?*), where there is no auxiliary.

[3] There are two imperative conjugation paradigms in Japanese. For example, both *tsukurinasai* 'make!' and *tsukure* 'make!!' are considered to be imperative forms. The former is often referred to as the "polite" imperative, and the latter the "non-polite" imperative. Interested readers are referred to Makino and Tsutsui (1989, p.284-285) for differences between the two types of imperative forms.

[4] To make the distinction between form and function explicitly, I use terms, such as "interrogative," "imperative" to refer to different sentence types/forms, and reserve terms, such as "question" and "order" for their respective speech act/function.

Japanese than in English. As we will see in Section III, what we have observed in (4) and (5) is not an isolated case; we will see other cases of speech act distinctions overtly realized in Japanese, but not in English.

C. Major Source of Difficulty for Learners

As we just saw in the contrast between (4) and (5), one and the same declarative sentence in English has more than one "translation" in Japanese. All those translations are equally grammatical. To make it worse, they have the same propositional content, and are thus truth-conditionally equivalent (cf. Blakemore, 2002, Ch. 2). In other words, their differences emerge only when they are used in context (i.e., at the pragmatic level).

This observation should be contrasted with cases where overt distinctions have semantic import (as well as pragmatic one). Let us take another type of SFPs, such as the question particle *no*, as an example.[5] The question particle is obligatory in interrogative sentences, whether it is morphologically realized as in (6a) or prosodically realized as in (6b).[6]

(6) Japanese interrogatives

a. Hanako-wa piza-o tsukut-ta-no. [=(2b)]
Hanako-TOP pizza-ACC make-PST-Q
'Did Hanako make pizza?'

b. Hanako-wa piza-o tsukut-ta?
Hanako-TOP pizza-ACC make-PST-Q
'Did Hanako make pizza?'

c. *Hanako-wa piza-o tsukut-ta.
Hanako-TOP pizza-ACC make-PST-Q
'Did Hanako make pizza?'

An interrogative sentence without a question particle as in (6c) is ungrammatical. In addition, notice that (6c) is unacceptable even in isolation. In other words, the use of the question particle is dictated by semantics while the use of other SFPs, such as *yo* and *ne*, is dictated by pragmatics. For the ease of reference, let us call SFPs like *no* semantic SFPs, and SFPs like *yo* and *ne* pragmatic SFPs. What this dichotomy means is that the use of pragmatic SFPs is optional at least at the semantic level (while it is obligatory at the pragmatic level). In other words, errors involving pragmatic SFPs go unnoticed unless they are used as part of a discourse. On the other hand, errors involving semantic SFPs are predicted to be obvious even without discourse. In fact, the asymmetry between these two types of SFPs is consistent with Kakegawa's (2008) finding that learners tend to overuse *yo* (pragmatic SFP) while there is no such observation of errors involving *no* (semantic SFP).[7] In sum, the difficulty that learners have with pragmatic SFPs comes from the fact that, while they are truth-conditionally equivalent, Japanese sentences as in (5) are not interchangeable in a discourse since they differ from each other in speech act. It is therefore necessary for English speakers learning Japanese to make overt distinctions in their target language, which they do not have to make in their native language. This allows us to understand why the difference between Japanese and English causes difficulty for English speakers.

III. Overt Markings of Speech Act Distinctions in Declaratives

In Subsection B of Section II, we saw one instance where Japanese makes more rigorous speech act distinctions than English. In this section, we will examine a few other cases in order to establish that what we observed in Section II is a more prevalent phenomenon.

A. Making a Statement vs. Answering a Question

In Japanese, it is often necessary to overtly mark a declarative sentence whether it is used as a statement or as a response to a question. Let us take a 'why' question in (7) as an example.

(7) Japanese 'why' questions

a. Q: Dooshite gengogaku-o benkyooshite iru-no
why linguistics-ACC studying is-Q
'Why are you studying linguistics?'

b. A: Omoshiroi kara.
interesting.PRES because
'Because (it) is interesting.'

c. A: #Omoshiroi.[8]
interesting.PRES

[5]There are two distinct question particles in Japanese: *no* and *ka*. The choice between them depends on the conjugation paradigm of the predicate. There are two distinct conjugation paradigms for verbs, which are often referred to as "short forms" and "long forms." For example, the present affirmative form of the verb 'to make' is *tsukuru* in its short form, and it is *tsukurimasu* in its long form (See Banno, Ohno, Sakane, and Shinagawa (2011, Ch. 8) for different uses of the two paradigms). The question particle *no* is used with short forms while *ka* is used with long forms.

[6] Question intonation in Japanese involves a sharp rising pitch on the final syllable (Vance, 2008, Ch. 7). The presence of such intonation is indicated by the question mark in (6b), and the absence of it is indicated by the period in (6c).

[7] We will discuss a case of *yo* overuse in Subsection B of Section III.

[8] The pound sign (#) is used to indicate the sentence is grammatical but not appropriate.

'(It) is interesting.'

The question in (7a) asks for the reason why the addressee is studying linguistics. While both (7b) and (7c) are grammatical sentences, only (7b) can serve as a response to (7a). On the other hand, while it can be used as a statement, (7c) cannot be used as a response to a question. Compare the Japanese example in (7) with the English counterpart in (8).

(8) English 'why' questions

a. Q: Why are you studying linguistics?

b. A: Because it is interesting.

c. A: It is interesting.

It is not surprising that (8b) serves as an appropriate response to the *why* question in (8a). However, given the observation with Japanese in (7), it is interesting that (8c) is also an appropriate response in English. It seems reasonable to say that a declarative sentence like (8c) is underspecified for its speech act in English, and can be used as a response as well as a statement through pragmatic accommodation. On the other hand, the Japanese counterpart in (7c) is more specified, and cannot be accommodated as a response. The contrast between (7) and (8) thus also shows that speech act distinctions are marked more explicitly in Japanese than in English.

The above contrast is not restricted to *why* questions. Questions involving the comparative and superlative construction provide other paradigmatic cases. For example, talking about Mt. Rainer, one can use the comparative sentence in (9a) and the superlative sentence in (9b) to make statements.

(9) English comparative and superlative sentences

a. Mt. Rainer is higher than Mt. Fuji.

b. Mt. Rainer is the highest in Washington State.

Importantly, these same sentences can be also used as responses to questions as in (10).

(10) English comparative and superlative questions

a. Which is higher, Mt. Rainer or Mt. Fuji?

b. What is the highest mountain in Washington State?

Observe that the English sentences in (9) are underspecified in their speech act since they can be used either as statements or as responses to a question. When used as responses, they may sound slight awkward. However, it is due to the slight redundancy that arises from the phrases that are contained in both the questions and the responses (e.g., *in Washington State*). If we disregard this factor, the sentences in (9) are equally acceptable as statements or as responses. Now, let us compare the English case with the Japanese counterpart in (11) and (12).

(11) Japanese comparative and superlative sentences

a. Rainer-san-wa Fuji-san yori takai.
Rainer-Mt.-TOP Fuji-Mt. than high.PRES
'Mt. Rainer is higher than Mt. Fuji.'

b. Rainer-san-wa Washinton-de ichiban takai.
Rainer-Mt.-TOP Washington-in number.one high.PRES
'Mt. Rainer is the highest in Washington.'

(12) Japanese comparative and superlative questions

a. Rainer-san-to Fuji-san de docchi-ga takai?
Rainer-Mt.-and Fuji-Mt. between which.one-nom high.pres
'Between Mt. Rainer and Mt. Fuji, which one is higher?'

b. Washinton-de dono yama-ga ichiban takai?
Washington-in which mountain-NOM number.one high.PRES
'Which mountain is the highest in Washington?'

Unlike the English counterpart in (9), the Japanese comparative and superlative sentences in (11) cannot serve as responses to questions as in (12); they can only serve as statements. To respond to questions as in (12), the comparative and superlative sentences in (13) must be used instead. In fact, (13) can be only used as responses, not as statements.[9]

(13) Japanese comparative and superlative sentences as responses

a. Rainer-san-no hoo-ga Fuji-san yori takai.
Rainer-Mt.-GEN side-NOM Fuji-Mt. than high.PRES
'Mt. Rainer is higher than Mt. Fuji.'

b. Rainer-san-ga Washinton-de ichiban takai.
Rainer-Mt.-NOM Washington-in number.one high.PRES
'Mt. Rainer is the highest in Washington.'

The crucial difference between the two types of comparative/superlative sentences is in the marking of the subject: it is marked with the topic marker *wa* in the former (i.e., (11)), but it is marked with the nominative case marker *ga* in the

[9] There is one apparent exception to this rule. Sentences like (13) can be construed as statements, where the subject receives narrow focus. Kuno (1973, Ch.2) calls this use of *ga* the "exhaustive-listing" reading. For example, (13a) can be translated as "It is Mt. Rainer that is higher than Mt. Fuji." However, given the fact that such cleft sentence is not used in isolation, sentences as in (13) are always responses of some kind. For example, (13a) can be a response to the statement *Fuji-san-wa Rainer-san yori takai* 'Mt. Fuji is higher than Mt. Rainer' as well as a response to a question like (12a).

latter (i.e., (13)).[10] Notice that the comparative/superlative sentences in (11) and those in (13) are truth-conditionally equivalent yet distinct from each other in terms of speech act. Therefore, the difference between them is another overt distinction that learners of Japanese need to make.

B. Making a Narrative vs. Answering a Question

As we saw in the contrast between (11) and (13), responses are different from statements in speech act. Furthermore, the speech act distinction is overtly realized as distinct sentence types in Japanese. In this subsection, we examine responses again. This time, responses are contrasted with narratives. Let us start with an English example. As illustrated in (14), the same sentence, such as *He is majoring in linguistics*, can be used as part of a narrative (14a) or as a response to a question (14b) in English.

(14) English narratives and responses

a. John is a student at MIT. He is majoring in linguistics.

b. What is John majoring in? He is majoring in linguistics.

In (14) too, distinct speech acts are realized in a single sentence form in English. In contrast, Japanese narratives and responses show an asymmetry in terms of SFPs. As illustrated in (15a), the SFP *yo* is not compatible with narratives.[11]

(15) Japanese narratives vs. responses

a. John-wa MIT-no gakusee desu. Gengogaku-o senkoosite imasu-(*yo).
John-TOP MIT-GEN student is linguistics-ACC majoring is-INFORM
'John is a student at MIT. (He) is majoring in linguistics.'

b. John-wa nani-o senkoosite iru-no. Gengogaku-o senkoosite imasu-(yo).
John-TOP what-ACC majoring is-Q linguistics-ACC majoring is-INFORM
'What is John majoring in? (He) is majoring in linguistics.'

In contrast, *yo* is compatible as part of a response as shown in (15b). Since *yo* is not semantically required as discussed earlier, it is optional as part of a response as in (15b). Put it differently, a sentence with *yo* can be used as a response to question, not as a part of a narrative in Japanese. In contrast, no such asymmetry exists in English as (14) shows. The contrast between (14) and (15) thus constitutes another case where a speech act distinction is overtly made in Japanese but not in English.

IV. Summary and Conclusion

As we started out with the distinction between sentence types and speech acts, there are mismatches between the two in any language. Specifically, we saw that English sentences tend to be more versatile than Japanese sentences in terms of speech act distinctions. We examined several cases where speech act distinctions are overtly realized in Japanese but not in English. One such instance is a case where pragmatic SFPs, such as *yo*, are involved. It has been observed in a large body of literature that, while SFPs are introduced relatively early in the classroom, the mastery of them usually does not take place until a late stage (Kakegawa, 2008; Sawyer, 1992 among others). In the present study, I argued that the difficulty associated with (pragmatic) SFPs stems from the fact that they render truth-conditionally equivalent sentences. In other words, the presence or absence of SFPs is determined at the pragmatic level. What this implies for language pedagogy is that it is necessary to practice SFPs in context, not in isolated sentences.

We also examined cases where SFPs are not involved, such as *kara* 'it is because.' In such cases as well, we saw that Japanese tends to make more speech act distinctions overtly than English, posing a serious difficulty for English speakers learning Japanese. The several cases we examined in the present paper are by no means comprehensive. For one, there are other distinct Japanese sentence forms that correspond to the same English sentence. In addition, the *wa*/*ga* distinction we touched upon (see footnote 10) permeates through the language. While the number of cases I discussed is relatively limited, I hope to have successfully shown (i) Japanese makes more overt speech act distinctions than English; (ii) why this asymmetry between the two languages poses a serious challenge for learners of Japanese; (iii) this issue and the problem are not limited to cases involving SFPs but they are more prevalent than previously thought.

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[10] In fact, the distinction between (11) and (13) holds for other sentences that involve *wa* and *ga*. Kuroda (1972) points out that virtually every English sentence has two distinct Japanese translations, differing in *wa* and *ga*. For example, the English sentence *A dog is chasing a cat* can be translated as *Inu-wa neko-o oikakete iru* or *Inu-ga neko-o oikakete iru*. These two Japanese translations are truth-conditionally equivalent, but they differ in speech act. The comparative/superlative constructions in (11) and (13) are thus specific instances of the dichotomy between *wa* and *ga*.

[11] Recall from Subsection C of Section II that learners tend to overuse *yo*.

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English Pronunciation Teaching: Four Case Studies from Finland

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***Abstract*—The present study looks at how English pronunciation teaching practices are like in Finnish schools from the primary to upper secondary level; in particular, which methods are used and which items are emphasised. The study was carried out as *focussed observations* (Hopkins 2008, p. 89), as classroom observations were considered the best way to achieve the aim of this study. Four EFL teachers were each observed for 6–9 lessons within a period of one week. A pre-prepared observation form was used as a tool, and then developed into a categorisation of the teaching methods used by the observed teachers. As for the results, the teachers offered pronunciation teaching very different from each other, but in general the pronunciation teaching was found to be pragmatic and teacher-led, and traditional teaching methods were used. At the segmental level, a strong emphasis was placed on phonemes that have typically been found to be difficult for L1 Finnish-speaking learners (sibilants and affricates). Despite the emphasis on suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching literature, explicit teaching of suprasegmental features of speech was neglected by the observed teachers.**

***Index Terms*—pronunciation teaching, EFL, classroom observations**

I. Introduction

Since the late 1980s, when interest in pronunciation teaching as a research topic was on the rise, the focus of pronunciation teaching has shifted from practising individual sounds to concentrating equally on suprasegmental features (e.g. intonation, rhythm, stress) – at least in (English) pronunciation teaching literature (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 11; Lane 2010, p. 8). Is this the case in the classrooms as well? This paper addresses the issue in the context of Finland, where English and many other foreign languages are studied extensively and language skills are highly valued. In general, a great deal is invested in language studies in Finnish schools, and according to 2009 statistics 40.1% of the year's upper secondary school graduates had studied three different languages in addition to their mother tongue, and 11.0% had studied four. English is the most widely studied foreign language in Finland. Nearly all children study it as their first foreign language: 99.6% of all upper secondary school graduates in 2009 had begun their English studies in the lower classes of basic education[1]. (Kumpulainen 2010, pp. 88–89.) Besides education, English has a grown status in Finnish working life and people's leisure activities (see Leppänen et al. 2011).

The pronunciation skills of advanced Finnish learners of English (university students of English) have been recently studied by Lintunen (2004). Lintunen's study, which was restricted to segmentals, reveals that even advanced Finnish learners of English make systematic errors (or, deviations from the standard) in their pronunciation. This result led Lintunen (2004, p. 215) to suggest that pronunciation is not given enough attention in school teaching. However, this critique aimed at teachers is only based on the learners' pronunciation skills, not on any empirical work on EFL teaching, teacher surveys or the like. Thus, Lintunen's study raises questions regarding how English pronunciation teaching is carried out in Finnish schools if the learning results are found fault with. This paper, part of my ongoing Ph.D. project, aims to shed light on this question and to fill the research gap in English pronunciation teaching in Finland. A special interest is taken in both teaching methods and the contents of teaching. The following research questions were set for the present study:

(1) *Which methods are used in teaching English pronunciation in the context of Finnish schools?*
(2) *Which aspects are emphasised in English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools?*

To answer these questions, classroom observations in Finnish schools were arranged and the study described in Chapter III was conducted.

II. Theoretical Background

English pronunciation teaching has undergone a change in focus from what is called a narrow approach – concentrating on segmentals – to a broader one that emphasises suprasegmentals and regards pronunciation as an integral part of oral language use (e.g. Morley 1991). This expanded concept of pronunciation operates top-down, and

[1] The compulsory basic education for 7- to16-year-olds in Finland lasts nine years. For more information about the Finnish educational system, see e.g. Kumpulainen (2010, p. 222).

includes more focus on longer stretches of speech, the effects of voice-setting, stress and intonation, as well as coarticulation phenomena such as shortenings, weakening, and assimilation (Pennington & Richards 1986). Included in the concept is also the simultaneous teaching of accuracy and fluency (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 361), so the contents of the narrow approach (segmentals) are not abandoned even though a broader approach is adopted. Here we might also use the term *balanced approach* (e.g. Lane 2010, p. 8), recognising the need for both segmental and suprasegmental training. The teacher's role is regarded more as that of a coach (Morley 1991), and learner-centredness is seen as a key issue: learner autonomy and authority should be recognised, and the learners' personality, ego and identity issues as well as different learner modes should be taken into consideration in pronunciation teaching (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 362).

According to recommendations in the literature, method-wise the teaching should be grounded in meaningful practice that considers the learners' needs for real-life situations (Morley 1991), and to communicative language teaching (CLT) (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, p. 316; Seidlhofer 2001). However, applying the principles of CLT to pronunciation teaching is more easily said than done, and developing communicative pronunciation teaching methods has been urged for long (Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 9). Computer-assisted instructional technology could naturally be made use of in pronunciation teaching, and it has also been suggested that the teaching could benefit from the ideas and techniques of other disciplines such as drama (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 362). On a personal note, it pleases me greatly that there is a call for more emphasis on the link between speaking and listening, which can even be seen as two sides of the same coin, namely, spoken language (Cauldwell 2003). Related to this link, a very welcome point is suggested by Jenkins (2000, pp. 208–212) in connection with the concept of English as an International Language(EIL). She suggests that instead of getting rid of one's foreign accent, learners would benefit from so-called *accent addition*, i.e. adding different (especially non-native) accents of English to their perceptive repertoire (but not necessarily to their productive repertoire). Overall Jenkins (2000) and many scholars involved in the study of English as a lingua franca (ELF) (for more about ELF research, see e.g. Mauranen & Ranta 2009; Seidlhofer 2011) speak for intelligibility (as opposed to perfection) as the main aim of pronunciation teaching.

Contrastive Finnish-English studies have been extensively conducted, and the pronunciation problem areas of L1 Finnish-speakers of English are well mapped, particularly regarding the segmental level (Wiik 1965, 1966; Lehtonen, Sajavaara & May 1977; Suomi 1980; Morris-Wilson 1992; about suprasegmentals see e.g. Hirvonen 1967, 1970; Niemi 1984; Toivanen 2001). The L1 Finnish-speaking learners of English are prone to encounter problems in the following areas due to differences in the sound systems of Finnish and English. First, plosives give trouble to Finns due to voicing distinctions, as do sibilants and affricates, most of which do not occur in Finnish. Plosives are also problematic in the sense that aspiration is not a familiar phenomenon in the L1 of Finns. Similarly, interdentals do not occur in the Finnish language. The v–w distinction causes problems for Finnish learners of English, whereas vowel sounds do not usually bring about noticeable difficulties. When Lintunen (2004) made a segmental analysis of Finnish university students' English pronunciation, he found that most difficulties lie in the above-mentioned areas, and the students made significantly fewer errors in vowel sounds than in consonants.

Unfortunately, researchers have not taken an interest in pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools. What is known about the matter is mainly based on learners' opinions, and covers only few phonetic teaching methods. Lintunen (2004) asked university students (n=108) whether they had been taught how to read phonetic symbols during their school years, and the participants' answers do not indicate a strong phonetic orientation in school teaching: only 5.6% of the participants said that they had been taught how to read all of the relevant symbols, whereas 50.0% were of the opinion that none had been taught to them. A similar study by Tergujeff, Ullakonoja and Dufva (2011), also conducted with university students (n=207), revealed similar results: In the teaching of English, phonetic script was taught *often* to only 1% and *never* to 25% of the respondents; phonetic listening tasks, e.g. sound discrimination, were done *often* in the teaching received by 1% and *never* in the teaching received by 47% of the respondents; and finally, none of the respondents indicated they had *often* received training in intonation and speech rhythm, whereas 48% indicated that they had *never* received teaching in these areas.

As pointed out by previous studies, learners' opinions suggest that phonetic training is not frequently used in English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools, even though phonemic transcription can be seen as a useful tool in pronunciation teaching for L1 Finnish-speaking learners in particular. This is due to the fact that the learners are used to a close letter-to-sound correspondence in their L1 (Suomi, Toivanen & Ylitalo 2008, p. 141), and a correlation between pronunciation skills and skills in phonemic transcription has been suggested (Lintunen 2004).

III. Method

This section presents the method of the study. In order to obtain first-hand information about English pronunciation teaching, classroom observations were chosen as the method. In the description of the classroom observations, the discussion is partly devoted to explaining why the record-taking method of the observations was chosen. Finally, the cases and data analysis are introduced.

A. Classroom Observations

Teachers from four different schools were chosen for this study. I attended EFL lessons by one teacher from each school without participating in the teaching in any way. Each teacher was observed for 6–9 lessons within a period of one week. Two of the schools were small village schools with teaching groups of 4 to 15 pupils, and the two others were medium-sized schools with teaching groups of 14 to 28 pupils. The teachers knew that the classes were observed for research purposes, but the focus of the observations was revealed to them only after the period of observation, in order not to influence their teaching and behaviour in class. They did not know whether the focus of the observation was on them or their pupils.

The choice of the record-keeping method of the observations was made between written accounts and video recordings. Audio recording was not seen as an option due to practical reasons – classrooms are too large and often have poor acoustics, teachers move about, and important information can be drowned in other voices and general noise. The combination of recording and writing transcripts was ruled out because the study did not aim at a detailed analysis of what is said during the lessons (cf. Wragg 1999, p. 14). Video recording would have offered a good, re-playable visual and audio account when analysing the data, but teachers and pupils, if not used to being video recorded, might have been affected by the presence of the video camera, and getting appropriate permissions for the video recordings from the schools, the teachers and the pupils or their parents if they were under-aged could have been problematic. Overall, it might have been more difficult to find teachers willing to participate. Written notes were considered adequate for the present purposes and were chosen as the method, though immediate decisions about what to record were required and the possibility of action replay was excluded. However, an observer with pen and paper rather than a video camera was estimated to have less of an effect on the teachers and the pupils (cf. ibid., pp. 16–17)

Data gathering was carried out as *focussed observations* (Hopkins 2008, p. 89). An observation form was prepared beforehand and filled in during the lessons. The form consisted of a list of pronunciation teaching methods drawn from pronunciation teaching literature (Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia et al. 1996) and a textbook analysis of current EFL textbooks used in Finland (Tergujeff 2010). In addition, the form included space for notes after each pronunciation teaching method in the list, which was used to describe the procedure in class if the method in question was used by the teacher.

After the observation period the teachers were asked to fill in a short questionnaire regarding their education, work experience, and teaching materials they use in their pronunciation teaching. Because of the relatively short observation period, the teachers were also asked to estimate how much they taught pronunciation during the observations compared to usual.

B. Cases

The teachers were chosen for this study so that they would represent teaching at all school levels from basic education to upper secondary school. I also wanted to observe teachers from both small and bigger schools in terms of teaching group size, as a larger teaching group is sometimes named as a factor that makes pronunciation teaching difficult. Because temporary and part-time teaching posts are often filled by teachers without full formal qualifications[2], and in the lower classes (1–6) of basic education primary school teachers (and not EFL subject teachers) are often in charge of teaching English to young learners, such teachers were included in the present study.

The four observed teachers – Ms Laine, Ms Sten, Ms Niemi and Ms Virta (the names have been changed) – had teaching experience varying from 10 to 23 years. Two of the teachers were qualified EFL subject teachers by Finnish standards, holding an M.A. degree. One held a B.A. degree only and one was a professional primary school teacher with ELT specialisation. The professional primary school teacher, Ms Laine, was responsible for teaching English to children in basic education classes 3–6, and the teacher with a B.A. degree, Ms Sten, taught pupils in basic education classes 7–9. Of the formally qualified EFL subject teachers, Ms Niemi taught pupils both in basic education (classes 7–9) and in upper secondary school, and Ms Virta taught in upper secondary school. Relevant background information about the teachers is given in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE OBSERVED TEACHERS.

Teacher	Qualifications	Experience	Pupils
Ms Laine	M.Ed.	23 years	8–13 years old
Ms Sten	B.A.	13 years	13–16 years old
Ms Niemi	M.A.	10 years	13–19 years old
Ms Virta	M.A.	12 years	16–19 years old

Ms Laine, a professional primary school teacher, was observed for eight 45-minute English lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. Her education includes some studies of English, but she is not a formally qualified EFL subject teacher by Finnish standards. She teaches English at the beginners' level, i.e. to basic education pupils aged 8 to 13, and has teaching experience of 23 years. The size of her teaching groups was 8 pupils on average. A school helper was at her disposal and attended the classes regularly. When asked about her choice of pronunciation teaching materials

[2] In Finland, fully qualified EFL subject teachers hold an M.A. degree in English, including a teacher training programme/pedagogy as a minor subject in the degree.

after the classroom observations, she stated that she uses exercises included in the course books, other materials such as cards and pictures, and materials she prepares herself. She also stated that during the classroom observation period, she taught the same amount of pronunciation compared to the usual.

Ms Sten was observed for nine 45-minute lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. She holds a B.A. degree in English, but is not a qualified EFL teacher by Finnish standards. She teaches English to pupils aged 13 to 16 at the basic education level. The size of her teaching groups was 17 pupils on average. She has 13 years of teaching experience. After the classroom observations, she said that she uses pronunciation exercises included in the course books and exercises that she prepares herself. She stated that she taught less pronunciation during the observations than in general.

Ms Niemi was observed for nine 45-minute lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. She is a formally qualified EFL subject teacher, and teaches English at the basic education level and also in upper secondary school, i.e. to pupils aged 13 to 16 and 16 to 19. Her teaching groups averaged 11 pupils. She has 10 years of teaching experience. When asked after the classroom observations, she indicated that she uses pronunciation exercises included in the course books, materials from other sources and her own materials. She estimated that she taught pronunciation the regular amount during the classroom observation period.

Ms Virta, also a formally qualified EFL subject teacher, was observed for six 75-minute lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. She teaches English in upper secondary school, i.e. to pupils aged 16 to 19. The average size of her teaching groups was 25 pupils, and she has teaching experience of 12 years. In pronunciation teaching she uses exercises that are included in the course book and in specific pronunciation and oral skills textbooks. In addition, she prepares materials herself. She taught the regular amount of pronunciation during the period of classroom observations.

C. Data Analysis

Analysis of the classroom observations began by excluding material that represented general oral skills teaching instead of specific pronunciation teaching. In drawing the line between these two, the same criterion was used as in the textbook analysis by Tergujeff (2010): specific pronunciation teaching explicitly directs the learner's focus towards pronunciation. Due to this definition, *recasts* (see Nicholas, Lightbow & Spada 2001) for example were not counted as pronunciation practice. However, reading aloud tasks were included, as they were not seen to serve any other (e.g. communicative) purpose than pronunciation practice. The same decision was made concerning the use of nursery rhymes, which are regularly mentioned in pronunciation teaching literature and can offer good practice of speech rhythm. The final data was then classified, which was simple because an observation form had been used. The form served as a starting point for the classification. Further, the data was studied in order to analyse the contents of pronunciation teaching, i.e. what was and was not taught, at both the segmental and suprasegmental levels.

IV. Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study. In the first section, a summary of all teaching methods used by the observed teachers is presented to give an overall picture of the range of methods. In the following sections, the idea is not to describe each and every pronunciation teaching exercise, but to demonstrate the teaching during the classroom observations and to highlight issues of interest from the viewpoint of my research questions. In more detail I shall describe the teacher corrections and the teachers pointing out pronunciation, phonetic training and ear training. Listen and repeat exercises were mainly imitating word lists the teacher read from the course books. Similarly, reading aloud was often done from course books. These methods are not dealt with any further. An example of a pronunciation rule is provided within one of the sections. Finally, I shall explore which teaching methods were *not* used and which areas of pronunciation were *not* taught by the observed teachers.

A. Teaching Methods

During the observed 32 EFL lessons, 111 pronunciation teaching activities were detected. These are presented in a teacher-specific manner in Table 2 below. Overall the activities were very traditional, including the time-honoured listen and repeat tasks, reading aloud, giving rules and teachers correcting and pointing out how to pronounce. Some phonetic training and ear training were also found to be used by the observed teachers. In addition, some rhymes were used in pronunciation teaching, and tactile reinforcement (reinforcement through the sense of touch) on one occasion.

TABLE 2.
SUMMARY OF TEACHING METHODS.

Teaching method	Times used in teaching				
	Ms Laine	Ms Sten	Ms Niemi	Ms Virta	Total
Listen and repeat	34	-	2	3	39
Teacher corrects	11	4	8	-	23
Teacher points out	5	-	-	16	21
Read aloud	4	-	6	-	10
Phonemic script	2*	-	-	7	9
Rhyme	3	-	-	-	3
Rules	1	-	-	1	2
Dictation/spelling	1	-	1	-	2
Discrimination	1	-	-	-	1
Tactile reinforcement	-	-	-	1	1
Total	62	4	17	28	111

*mentioned, not actively used

As predicted, the teachers showed great variation in their teaching methods. Ms Laine, teaching beginners, was by far the most active in teaching pronunciation: she used pronunciation tasks in most of the categories that were found to be in use by the four teachers. More than half of all pronunciation tasks detected during the observations were found in Ms Laine's teaching. Ms Sten, teaching at intermediate level, was the complete opposite of Ms Laine. She did not teach much pronunciation during the observed lessons, and when she did, she always used the same method: correcting the pupils. Ms Niemi and Ms Virta were slightly more active in pronunciation teaching, but they used different methods sparingly. They each used different methods from four or five categories.

A closer look at especially Ms Virta's choice of methods demonstrates that the proficiency level and/or age of the pupils possibly affect teaching. Compared to the other teachers, Ms Virta's pronunciation teaching is more analytical: she concentrates on pointing out pronunciation issues and uses phonetic training frequently. The other teachers are more practical. In their pronunciation teaching, they focus on listen and repeat activities, correcting their pupils and reading aloud tasks. Only Ms Laine used rhyme in her teaching – perhaps nursery rhymes and poems are seen as too childish for teenagers.

B. Teachers Correcting and Pointing Out Pronunciation

How to teach pronunciation communicatively is a challenge (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001), and this seems to be true for Finnish EFL teachers as well. In the era of communicative language teaching (CLT), it is surprising how teacher-led pronunciation teaching seems to be in the light of these four cases. This is demonstrated for example by the high frequency of teachers correcting pupils' pronunciation. Correcting pupils, however, should not cause negative feelings in pupils, and they should not feel as if they were punished, as stated by Morley (1991). Morley adds it is always the pupil who corrects (or better, *modifies)* the pronunciation, whereas the teacher's task is to give cues on how to do that. Lane (2010) is also of the opinion that the pupils should be offered an opportunity to self-correct, and suggest an instant cue (e.g. teacher saying "Pronunciation!") to notify the pupil of the mispronunciation without correcting him/her. In fact, this was usually not what the Finnish EFL teachers did. Mainly the teachers corrected their pupils by repeating a mispronounced word in the desired form. On one occasion Ms Sten also repeated the undesired form uttered first by a pupil, and then she explained that the undesired form could be misinterpreted as another word. Ms Niemi came closest to giving cues on how to correct mispronunciations, but in fact gave orders.

Example 1. Ms Niemi to a pupil pronouncing the word *honest* as [hɒ nɪ st]:
"Älä sano h:ta siihen!" ***(Don't pronounce the h there!)***
Example 2. Ms Niemi to a pupil pronouncing the word *whole* as [whəʊ l]:
"Sano pelkkänä h:na se alku!" (*Pronounce the beginning as a plain h!)*

The teachers' corrections and the occasions on which they take up pronunciation issues are of interest in the sense that they reveal possible focus areas of the pupils' pronunciation problems. Another possibility is that they reveal what the teachers regard as important factors in pronunciation. The two possibilities can of course be – and are hoped to be – interrelated. The teachers' corrections are summarised in Table 3 below. Most frequently the teachers corrected words that contain sibilants and affricates, e.g. *China, ocean, chocolate, Tracy, assistant, penguins* (Ms Laine),[3] *dictionary* (Ms Sten), *future, actually* (Ms Niemi). It is predictable that English sibilants cause difficulties for L1 Finnish-speaking learners, as the Finnish phoneme inventory only includes one sibilant, /s/, and no affricates. Therefore, the English sibilant and affricate sounds /z, ʃ, ʒ, ʧ, ʤ/ are foreign to Finnish learners and difficult to produce for many. Learning to produce these sounds is further complicated by the fact that Finnish traditionally lacks voicing distinctions in consonants.

Another tendency was found in the teachers' corrections of pupils' pronunciation, namely correcting spelling-induced mispronunciations. Such cases were the past perfect *had read, had drunk* (Ms Sten), *honest*, and *whole* (Ms

[3] Here it was at times difficult to distinguish whether the correction was directed towards the sibilant/affricate or some other segment or feature, especially with Ms Laine's young pupils.

Niemi). In their L1, Finnish learners of English are used to a transparent letter-to-phoneme correspondence (Suomi et al. 2008, p. 141), and are therefore especially prone to making mistakes caused by the irregular spelling conventions of English (for details about the irregular spelling of English see Wells 2008). As pointed out by Seidlhofer (2001), teachers should be aware of the relationships between orthography and phonology. A good example of such awareness was offered by Ms Laine, when she explained to her young pupils that the letter combination <kn> corresponds to sound /n/. Also, Ms Niemi corrected a pupil's mispronunciation of *honest* from [hɒ nɪ st] to [ɒ nɪ st] and of *whole* from [whəʊ l] to [həʊ l] (see Examples 1 and 2). Other words that Ms Niemi corrected were *psychology*, *euros*, *bargains* and *particularly*. In addition to the previously mentioned words, Ms Laine corrected the following words: *David*, *the USA*, and the phrase *Were David and Ann…?*

TABLE 3.
WHAT THE TEACHERS CORRECTED.

Item corrected	Example words
Sibilant sounds	*ocean, dictionary*
Affricate sounds	*chocolate, actually*
Spelling-induced mispronunciations	*had read, honest*

At times, two of the teachers pointed out the desired pronunciation of certain items before the pupils had attempted them. A summary of such cases is presented in Table 4 below. In these instances sibilants and affricates were also in focus. Ms Laine pointed out the affricate in *chance* by repeating the sound as follows:

Example 3. Ms Laine: "Ch-ch-chance!"

Ms Virta was very active in pointing out the pronunciation of words that include sibilants and affricates. Such words were *decompose*, *organisation*, *corporations*, *religious*, *garage*, and *positions*. To demonstrate the pronunciation of *positions*, Ms Virta wrote the word on the blackboard in phonemic script, and the word was persistently practised after the teacher (all together aloud), as she was not content with the pupils' performance. Ms Virta pointed out the pronunciation of the words *diner* and *volunteer* as well.

In correcting and pointing out pronunciation, there were instances in which the teacher interfered because a mispronunciation caused or might have caused a change in meaning and therefore potential communication breakdown. Ms Laine, for example, advised her pupils to pay attention to the aspirated /k/ in *cold*, in order to not be interpreted as having said *gold*. Also, she warned the pupils not to mix up *beard* with *beer*. Ms Sten corrected a pupil's production of *cousin*, because in the teacher's words it sounded more like *cushion* (due to the quality of the first vowel), and Ms Virta reminded her pupils as follows:

Example 4. Ms Virta: "It's Thai – thigh is something else."

Ms Virta also informed her pupils about words with alternative pronunciation (often British English vs. American English conventions), such as *schedule, vase, algae* and *aluminium/aluminum*. In addition, she instructed the pupils on how to distinguish *crisis* from *crises* in pronunciation.

TABLE 4.
WHAT THE TEACHERS POINTED OUT.

Item pointed out	Example words
Sibilant sounds	*organisation, positions*
Affricate sounds	*chance, religious*
Potential communication breakdown	*cold/gold, beard/beer*
Alternative pronunciations	*schedule, vase*

C. Phonemic Script

That Finnish EFL textbooks emphasise phonetic training, and that phonemic script is strongly present in them (Tergujeff 2010) were not reflected in these four case studies. Only one of the teachers used phonemic script and transcription exercises during the observed lessons, and in addition, one teacher referred to phonemic script – Ms Laine, who once urged her pupils to pay attention to the pronunciation instructions in phonemic script in a word list, and at another occasion noted that they would go through the phonetic symbols later. Despite the strong presence of IPA in Finnish EFL textbooks, phonetic training is not a frequently used pronunciation teaching method in Finnish schools; surveys have shown that pupils do not feel they are well taught e.g. how to read IPA symbols (Lintunen 2004, pp. 187–188; Tergujeff et al. 2011).

Ms Virta used phonemic script in her teaching in two ways: to demonstrate pronunciation and in deciphering tasks. The pupils were not asked to transcribe anything themselves. When the teacher demonstrated the pronunciation of individual segments with the help of transcription, it dealt with sibilant sounds, namely /z, ʒ , ʃ/. The two first were found to be among the most problematic sounds for Finnish learners of English, and the last one among those that often cause problems (Lintunen 2004, p. 149). The word *casual* was quite spontaneously picked up by the teacher and written on the blackboard in phonemic script, which in my view demonstrates her good transcription skills. Then she asked the pupils what sound the symbol ʒ stands for. In addition, they repeated the word time after time, and felt the voicing of

/ʒ / with their fingers on their throats, giving the pupils some tactile reinforcement (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, pp. 337–338).

D. Ear Training

Similar to the productive side of pronunciation, the recommended focus of practice has shifted towards units larger than the segment also in ear training. Morley (1991) suggests focussing more on pronunciation-oriented listening activities in English pronunciation teaching. She notes that particularly sound discrimination and identification tasks were traditionally important components of pronunciation teaching, but that a wider range of listening foci is recommended (ibid.). This was not realised in the observed lessons, and the receptive side of pronunciation was overall seldom practised. Ms Laine presented one sound discrimination exercise, asking her pupils whether they heard a 'hissing sound' in the word *sofa* like they do in the word *ship*. She also used a spelling task in her teaching, spelling to pupils herself. Ms Niemi assigned the pupils to dictate sentences to one another.

E. What was Missing?

As Table 2 shows, a range of pronunciation teaching methods was used by the four teachers. However, there are many methods that could have been used but were not, and in fact a whole area of pronunciation was neglected in the teaching: suprasegmental features. Here again, the idea is not to list all possible pronunciation teaching methods that could have been used, but I shall concentrate on a few main areas which would possibly have benefitted the learners according to recommendations in the literature. None of the teachers gave explicit instruction in intonation, word or sentence stress, nor rhythm, even though these areas of pronunciation have been suggested to be more crucial for intelligibility than individual sounds (Lane 2010, p. 2), and in pronunciation teaching literature it has recommended that these areas were emphasised. This broad approach to pronunciation teaching has also been suggested to lead to better learning results than a narrow one that concentrates on segments (see Derwing, Munro & Wiebe 1998). However, the pupils received implicit intonation practice in imitation tasks with longer stretches of speech, in read aloud tasks and when reading rhymes. Also, Ms Virta reminded her pupils of intonation in connection with an imitation task by saying:

Example 5. Ms Virta: "Imitoikaa ja muistakaa intonaatio ylös ja alas."
(*Imitate and remember: intonation up and down.*)

Learners' overall fluency of speech could also benefit from training connected speech (weak forms, assimilation, elision, linking), but this was not included in the teaching either. However, some have deemed it unnecessary to teach pupils to produce these features, but only to recognise them (Rogerson-Revell 2011). Further, the observed lessons lacked learner-centred pronunciation teaching methods. No so-called awareness-raising tasks or self-evaluations were used. Learning strategies were not dealt with either. It is also noteworthy that no technology or other helping tools (mirrors, charts, images, etc.) were present in the teaching (cf. Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, pp. 10, 354–361).

V. Discussion and Conclusion

Positive effects of pronunciation instruction have been reported in numerous studies. These studies suggest that instruction at both segmental and suprasegmental levels can result in improved pronunciation skills, and that teaching methods such as discrimination practice (e.g. Neufeld 1977, 1978 quoted in Neufeld & Schneiderman 1980; Derwing et al. 1998), concrete rules, giving immediate feedback (e.g. Elliott 1995, 1997), and imitation (e.g. Macdonald, Yule & Powers 1994) have had positive effects on the learning of pronunciation. In a comparison of narrow/segmental and broad/suprasegmental approaches, Derwing et al. (1998) conclude that the suprasegmental approach is more effective in terms of comprehensibility, accentedness and fluency.

The aim of the present study was to shed light on the methods and focus areas of English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools. Observing 32 EFL lessons revealed a range of ten different types of pronunciation teaching methods, including traditional imitation tasks, teacher corrections, teachers pointing out pronunciation issues, reading aloud, use of phonemic script and rhymes, presenting rules, dictation/spelling, sound discrimination, and tactile reinforcement. The teachers used different methods to varying degrees, ranging from one teacher (Ms Laine) using nine to another teacher (Ms Sten) using only one. Here it is worth noting that Ms Sten stated after the observations that she had taught pronunciation less than she typically does, whereas the other teachers indicated they taught it the regular amount. Measured by overall frequency in the whole data, the traditional listen and repeat exercises – found effective in e.g. Macdonald et al. (1994) – were the most common pronunciation tasks used during the observations. However, this finding is due to the fact that the method seems to have been Ms Laine's personal favourite – other teachers used it only sparingly. Teacher correction (comparable to immediate feedback in Elliott (1995, 1997)) and pointing out pronunciation issues were also common methods measured by the overall frequency of occurrence, whereas using rhyme, dictation/spelling, tactile reinforcement, and the well-tried methods of discrimination practice (e.g. Neufeld 1977, 1978 quoted in Neufeld & Schneiderman 1980; Derwing et al. 1998) and presenting rules (e.g. Elliott 1995, 1997) were less popular methods. None of the teaching methods were used by all the four teachers; imitation tasks and teacher correction were both used by three teachers. These two methods can be seen as the most popular ones in my data, as they were most common in terms of both frequency of occurrence and number of teachers using them.

Overall, the pronunciation teaching practices can be characterised as being teacher-led to a great extent. This does not correlate well with the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT), which usually aims at promoting learner autonomy and being learner-centred. In many instances the teacher interfered with and corrected a pupil's pronunciation, or gave them information about the pronunciation of a word. Communicative pronunciation tasks were hardly used in the observed lessons. Even though we are living the era of CLT, in fact, CLT and pronunciation teaching is a complicated combination, as stated by Seidlhofer (2001): CLT directs the learners' attention to communication and away from form, but a certain formal aspect, such as pronunciation, can be difficult to learn unless one pays attention to it. This is also demonstrated in Elliott (1995, 1997).

As a whole, the teachers seemed to be well aware of their pupils' potential problem areas in regards to segments. Sibilant and affricate sounds frequently appeared not only in teacher corrections but also in ear training, phonemic script and when teachers pointed out pronunciation issues. Therefore, the teachers must have had knowledge of the generic difficulty of these sounds to L1 Finnish-speaking learners, attained from experience or literature – or perhaps both. This is a very positive result in regards to Lintunen's (2004) study: the problem areas demonstrated again by his study were emphasised in the observed teaching. Pronunciation teaching given by these four teachers can also be characterised as somewhat pragmatic: the teachers seemed eager to correct their pupils' pronunciation, in particular if it raised the possibility of mispronunciation, thereby leading to communication breakdown. This gives the impression that the teachers emphasise intelligibility in their aims of pronunciation teaching. However, also in this the teachers operated at the level of segmentals, even though suprasegmental features of speech have been found to be more crucial for intelligibility than segmentals (e.g. Pennington & Richards 1986), and emphasis on suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching has been suggested to be more effective than emphasis on segmentals (Derwing et al. 1998).

This study addressed only a short period of English pronunciation teaching given by four teachers. The aim was not to make any generalisations about English pronunciation in Finland, nor about the teaching of the observed teachers (for a general view of teaching practices, a survey study of EFL teachers from Finland and other European countries is in progress (Henderson et al., forthcoming)). However, the data offered possibilities for a close examination of pronunciation teaching methods and the contents of English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools, and resulted in the following main findings. First, the teaching methods, the most popular of which were imitation and teacher correction, were found to be teacher-centred. Second, affricates and sibilant sounds stood out as the main contents of the teaching. Third, the recommended emphasis on prosodic features in pronunciation teaching was not realised during the observed lessons. Finally, a pragmatic approach was found in instances in which the teachers corrected their pupils in order to avoid communication breakdown from mispronunciation. Despite the small sample of the present study, some of these findings may be typical for English pronunciation teaching in general.

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An Investigation of the Impact of Teaching Critical Thinking on the Iranian EFL Learners' Speaking Skill

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***Abstract*—This study has attempted to determine the effect of critical thinking on Iranian EFL learners' speaking ability. There were two equal-sized groups of 20 learners: a control group and an experimental one. The subjects were advanced EFL learners at Shokouh Language Institute in Hamedan, Iran. There were 10 male and 10 female learners in each group. In both groups, similar topics were proposed for group discussion such as air pollution, global warming, friendship, drug addiction, happiness, etc. In the experimental group, in addition to having discussion on the given issues, the teacher devoted some time for teaching critical thinking techniques during the class time. In the very first session, the teacher explicitly elaborated on what critical thinking processes are. Then, during the following sessions the teacher taught critical thinking techniques for about 20 minutes and gave learners time to practice these skills. The findings of the current study revealed that those students who received instruction on critical thinking strategies did better on the oral interview post-test. In addition, it was observed that within the experimental group there was not any significant difference between the performances of male vs. female Iranian EFL learners' speaking ability after giving the treatment.**

***Index Terms*—critical thinking, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), speaking skill, problem-solving tasks**

I. Introduction

Critical thinking is a very hotly debated topic these days. All educators are now aware of the importance of equipping learners' with critical thinking techniques, and teachers are making efforts to teach these techniques in the most appropriate way. Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action (Sezer, 2008).

Children are not born with critical thinking skills. So how can we make critical thinkers out of children to succeed in their whole life? To start with, education could be the first step for promoting critical thinking among the children**.** Fisher and Scriven (1997) state critical thinking skills are required to be taught since students' thinking skills are not enough to face the problems students deal with either in education or in daily life. Therefore, educators are required to focus on teaching critical thinking to inform them how to learn instead of just transmitting information that is what to say. Emphasizing on making critical thinking as a part of educational courses, scholars have suggested that critical thinking can be taught in different classroom areas, such as those suggested by Shafersman(1991) including lectures, laboratories, writing activities, term papers, exam questions, home work, and quantitative exercises.

At each educational level, thinking must be practiced in each content field. This means hard work for the teacher. It's much easier to teach students to memorize facts and then assess them with multiple-choice tests. In a course that emphasizes thinking, objectives must include application and analysis, divergent thinking, and opportunities to organize ideas and support value judgments. When more teachers recognize that the facts they teach today will be replaced by the discoveries of tomorrow, the content-versus-process controversy may be resolved (Schmitt, 2002).

Nosich (2001) holds that most scholars believe that skills needed to begin to think about issues and problems do not suddenly appear in our students. Teachers who have attempted to incorporate higher level questioning in their discussions or have administered test items demanding some thought rather than just recall from their students are usually dismayed at the preliminary results. Unless the students have been prepared for the change in expectations, both the students and the teacher are likely to experience frustration.

Thus, we can conclude that critical thinking is quite complicated, and it is difficult for a child to develop such a complex ability without receiving aids from outside. Therefore, we understand that the task of teachers as people who play the pivotal role of training critical thinkers is very crucial, particularly in a language classroom in which students

should get the opportunity to express themselves and evaluate the arguments of their peers. Up to this date, little is known about the importance of teaching critical thinking skills in language classroom. To eliminate this issue, the present study aims at investigating the effects of teaching these skills in a speaking classroom.

II. Literature Review

A. Critical Thinking

Over the past twenty years critical thinking has moved from a small corner of the stage in philosophy and the social sciences to front and center. Higher education writers agree that critical thinking should be included in the undergraduate curriculum. However, there seems to be little agreement on exactly what critical thinking is (Allen, Rubenfield, & Scheffer, 2004).

A person who thinks critically employs the scientific method for understanding the ordinary world. This is true because critical thinking mimics the well-known method of scientific investigation: a question is identified, a hypothesis is formulated, relevant data are gathered, the hypothesis is logically tested and evaluated, and reliable conclusions are drawn from the result (Stapleton, 2002; Angeli &Valanides, 2009). All of the skills of scientific investigations are matched by critical thinking, which is therefore nothing more than scientific method used in everyday life.

Wade (1995) identifies eight characteristics of critical thinkers: Critical thinkers involve in asking questions, defining a problem, examining evidence, analyzing assumptions and biases, avoiding emotional reasoning, avoiding oversimplification, considering other interpretations, and tolerating ambiguity. Dealing with ambiguity is also seen by Strohm and Baukus (1995) as an essential part of critical thinking, "Ambiguity and doubt serve a critical-thinking function and are a necessary and even a productive part of the process" (p. 56)

Peak (1997), Mishoe and Welch (2002), and Facione (2007) point out critical thinkers have got different attributes which makes no difference what definition you use for critical thinking. These features help us distinguish them from uncritical thinkers. Here are some of those characteristics of a critical thinker:

- Asks relevant questions to the issue
- Assesses arguments which are made
- Admits a lack of understanding
- Has a sense of curiosity
- Analyses the interpretations and claims made
- Analyses the problems
- Is eager on finding new solutions
- Is a careful listener and is able to give appropriate feedback
- Does not jump to conclusions before all the facts have been collected
- Looks for proof
- Rejects incorrect or irrelevant information
- Compares beliefs and opinions with facts that come against them
- Formulates the central ideas that are involved

According to Bracken, Brown, and Feng (2009) the importance of teaching critical thinking is nowadays obvious to all educators. CT is essential as a tool of inquiry. As such, CT is a liberating force in education and a powerful resource in one's personal and civic life. While not synonymous with good thinking, CT is a pervasive and self-rectifying human phenomenon.

Carroll (2005) asserts that the ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit. Thus, educating good critical thinkers means working toward this ideal. It combines developing CT skills with nurturing those dispositions which consistently yield useful insights and which are the basis of a rational and democratic society (Worrell & Profetto-McGrath, 2007).

Fisher (2003) also emphasizes the significance of teaching critical thinking skills. He contends that critical thinking skills are required to be taught since students' thinking skills are not enough to face the problems students deal with either in education or in daily life. Therefore, educators are required to focus on teaching critical thinking to inform them how to learn instead of just transmitting information that is what to say.

Freely and Steinberg (2000) highlight the important role of debates, group discussions, and individual problem solving activities to enhance critical thinking in the students. They argue that debates improve critical thinking if the ideal opportunity is provided by the instructor for students. As far as it is a process of asking and answering questions and finding information to arrive at a reasoned judgment on a proposition, students have got the chance of coming against a theory. In that case, they not only increase their knowledge but also try to win a decision. Consequently, they greatly use their ability of critical thinking. “By setting group discussions, students are made to come up with a single decision through a collaborative activity analyzing others' beliefs, using the same standards and values of the members

of the group, and taking the responsibility of supporting the group" (Freely & Steinberg, 2000, p.9). As Wallace (2003) has claimed setting some sort of activities upon which individual decisions are made can promote critical thinking skills in students. It would be a kind of individual decision making while all the dimensions of a problem are controlled by the person without any further support. So that the person reflects on his own opinion, monitors himself, and makes the final decision on his own.

Some instructors might think that critical thinking cannot be taught through lecturing. Because these practitioners think that critical thinking is an active process whose skills such as analysis, synthesis, and reflection must be learned by performing them (Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Cortell, 2005; Grosser & Lombard, 2008). Thus, lecturing is considered as a passive activity when students just listen to the lectures passively. However, it is possible to make lectures active activities by stopping students while giving lectures and asking them some thoughtful questions about the materials which have been just presented.

Laboratories especially courses benefit a lot. The reason is obvious. Here, students practice their critical thinking. Because they are learning scientific method in which discovery learning is emphasized and clearly, critical thinking is involved in discovery learning when one tries to find relevant information and make inferences (Mangena & Chabeli, 2005).

Writing activities are the best way to teach critical thinking. Because writing is an activity which forces students to organize their thoughts, think deeply about their topic and present their conclusions in a persuasive manner. Goatly (2000) states that one reason that we might expect writing to improve critical thinking is the existence of some sort of writing such as persuasive or argumentative writing which have been difficult for the students.

B. Speaking Skill

Also the communicative activities which are used in the CL T class should be based on authentic materials which have been written for the real world use. Such materials are claimed to give students opportunities to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used. Furthermore, communicative activities are often carried out by the students in small groups. The nature of Speaking is so much part of daily life that we take it for granted. However, learning speaking, whether in a first or other language, involves developing subtle and detailed knowledge about why, how and when to communicate, and complex skills for producing and managing interaction, such as asking a question or obtaining a turn. According to Brown (2002), walking and talking are "species specific".

Speaking skills are often considered the most important part of an EFL course. With the growing need for international communication in the information age, many language learners attend language classes to improve their speaking ability. Even though many students have mastered basic speaking skills, some students are much more effective in their oral communication than others. And those who are more effective communicators experience more success in school and in other areas of their lives. According to Folse (2006), for most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication. Nevertheless, speaking in a second or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four language skills. Speaking a language is especially difficult for foreign language learners because effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions. Diversity in interaction involves not only verbal communication, but also paralinguistic elements of speech such as pitch, stress, and intonation (Seligson, 1997; Fulcher, 2003).

Based on Thornbury (2007) spoken interaction involves producing and negotiating language rather differently from the way it is used in writing. Speakers and listeners are simultaneously involved in both producing and processing spoken interactions. They are under time constraints which means that they must process language as they go, with no opportunities to go back and make changes. Speakers must also take account of relationships with others, adjusting their language according to the meanings they wish to get across, and responding to verbal or non-verbal signals from their listeners. Many spoken interactions consist of commenting on immediate actions or events, or casually moving from one topic to another (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Richard, & Renandya, 2002).

As far as assessing speaking is concerned, Joiner and Jones (2003) contend that among the macro skills of language, it has been widely recognized that speaking, particularly in a second or foreign language, is the most difficult language skill to assess. The method used for assessing oral communication skills depends on the purpose of the assessment. According to Luoma (2004) two methods are used for assessing speaking skills. In the observational approach, the student's behavior is observed and assessed unobtrusively. In the structured approach, the student is asked to perform one or more specific oral communication tasks. His or her performance on the task is then evaluated. The task can be administered in a one-on-one setting -- with the test administrator and one student -- or in a group or class setting. In the present study we adopted a structured approach for interviewing each learner individually at the end of the course. Both observational and structured approaches use a variety of rating systems. A holistic rating captures a general impression of the student's performance. A primary trait score assesses the student's ability to achieve a specific communication purpose - for example, to persuade the listener to adopt a certain point of view. Analytic scales capture the student's performance on various aspects of communication, such as delivery, organization, content, and language. Rating systems may describe varying degrees of competence along a scale or may indicate the presence or absence of a characteristic (Luoma, 2004).

Critical thinking has gained widespread popularity in various disciplines nowadays. Educators have realized the importance of nurturing students who are critical thinkers and have a critical eye to look at the world surrounding them. Critical thinking skills figure prominently among the goals for education, whether one asks developers of curricula, educational researchers, parents, or employers. Although lots of studies have been conducted in various fields to examine the significance of critical thinking and the methods of teaching it, we don't know much about the relationship between critical thinking and language learning. In other words, our knowledge about the effects of explicit instruction of critical thinking skills on language learning ability is far from perfect. To shed more light on this issue, the researchers embarked on the task of investigating the impact of teaching critical thinking skills on EFL learners' speaking ability.

Research Questions

This research has two main research questions:

Q_1. Does teaching critical thinking skills have any significant effect on the development of speaking ability of Iranian EFL learners?

Q_2. Do teaching critical thinking skills affect male and female learners differently?

Null Hypotheses

Based on the above research questions the following null hypotheses are formulated:

$H0_1$. Teaching critical thinking skills has no significant effect on the speaking ability of Iranian EFL learners.

$H0_2$. Teaching critical thinking skills do not affect male and female language learners differently.

III. Methodology

A. Participants

The participants of the present study were 40 advanced English learners studying at Shokouh Language Institute in Hamedan. They had already passed 12 courses in English and were at very advanced levels of English proficiency. They attended a free discussion class in which different issues ranging from social to environmental topics were discussed. There were both male and female learners in class. The learners were between 15 and 24 years of age. The participants were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups, each group consisting of 20 people. There were 10 male and 10 female learners in each group.

B. Instrumentation and Data Collection

I. TOEFL

In order to achieve homogeneity between the subjects regarding their general English proficiency, a TOEFL test was administered at the beginning of the study.

II. Oral interviews as pre-test, post-test

This research project exploited oral interviews both prior to the beginning of the conversational course and also right after the end of the course like pre-test and post-test. Subjects in both control and experimental groups were interviewed orally prior to the beginning of the conversational course. All subjects were asked the same questions by their own teacher. The interviews were recorded for further detailed, analytic scorning. Each taped-interview was rated by two raters in order to ensure the inter-rater reliability of the assessments. The first interviews were carried out prior to the beginning of the course to be compared with those conducted at the end of the course. Subjects in both groups had already passed nine terms of English language conversation; they were thought to form two almost-homogeneous classes. The second interviews which were conducted at the end of the conversational course were to determine how much of a difference the treatment given to the experimental group, made in comparison with the control group which did not receive such a treatment. The results of the first interviews which were assessed by two raters, then compared with those of the second interviews to see whether the treatment given to the experimental group, had any impact upon their oral proficiency level in comparison with subjects in the control group who had no such treatment.

How were the interviews conducted?

The first interviews which were conducted prior to the beginning of the course consisted of the following questions?

1. Tell me about yourself and your family?
2. Tell me about your own neighborhood. What is important to you in a neighborhood?
3. What are three main reasons of divorce in our country? What are to be done to decrease divorce rate?
4. Name four things you would like to do, but you can't.

The second interviews which were conducted right at the end of the term consisted of the following questions?

1. What is the most memorable experience of your life? Why so?
2. What kind of a person are you from your own perspective? What are your positive and negative points?
3. Describe your own hometown. Can you compare it with the capital city, what are the similarities and differences?
4. What are the pros and cons of our own culture?

The rating scale (Luoma.2004)

A checklist was developed according to which the raters were able to make more valid, reliable, and consistent assessment. Here I was not interested in a psychometric kind of assessment which is more limiting, rigorous, and scientific. What I was really looking for, was a more dynamic and flexible approach to assessment. The approach

adopted, was more likely to resemble performance or alternative assessment which allowed for more flexibility and also more freedom. The checklist was developed from an analytic descriptors of spoken language (council of Europe, 2001 cited in Luoma,2004, pp.72-74). The items on the list were accuracy, fluency, range, coherence, and interaction. Level descriptors (A+, A, B+, B, C+, and C) were specified for each item on the checklist according to which the raters assigned scores to the interviewees.

1). Accuracy:

A+: consistent grammatical control of complex language

A: a high degree of grammatical accuracy, errors are rare, difficult to spot and generally corrected when they do occur.

B+: a relatively high degree of grammatical control; makes no global errors which block communication and can correct most of the mistakes pointed to him.

B: uses accurately a repertoire of frequently used routines and patterns associated with more predictable situations.

C+: uses more simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes

C: only limited control of a few grammatical structures and sentences patterns in a memorized repertoire.

2). Fluency:

A+: can express himself or herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty that the interlocutor is hardly aware of.

A: can express himself or herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.

B+: can produce stretches of language with fairly even tempo: although he or she can be hesitant as he or she searches for patterns and expressions. There are a few noticeably long pauses.

B: can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.

C+: can make himself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts, and reformulations are very evident.

C: can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions.

3). Range:

A+: great flexibility in reformulating ideas with different linguistic forms to convey meaning, to emphasize, to differentiate, and to eliminate ambiguity. And also has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.

A: has a good command of a broad range of linguistic items to express himself or to reformulate ideas in an appropriate style on a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restrict what he has to say.

B+: has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions and express viewpoints on most general topics without much conspicuous searching for words.

B: has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express himself with some hesitation and circumlocution on topics such as family, hobbies, work, travel, and current events.

C+: uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations.

C: has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations.

4). Coherence:

A+: can create coherent and cohesive discourse marking, full and appropriate use of a variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of connectors and other cohesive devices.

A: can produce clear, smoothly-flowing, and well-structured speech. Shows controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors, and cohesive devices.

B+: can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his utterances into clear coherent discourse.

B: can link a series of shorter, discrete, and simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.

C+: can link groups of words with simple connectors like 'and', 'but', and 'because'.

C: can link words or group of words with very basic linear connectors like 'then' or 'and'.

5). Interaction:

A+: can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly. Can interweave his contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turn-taking, referencing, and allusion-making (16-20 scores).

A: can select a suitable phrase from a readily rage of discourse functions to preface his remarks in order to keep or to get the floor and to relate his own contributions skillfully to those of other speakers (14 - 16 scores).

B+: can initiate discourse, take his turn when appropriate and end conversation when he needs to. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc. (11-15 scores).

B: can initiate, maintain, and close simple face-to-face conversations on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can repeat back what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding? (8-11 scores).

C+: can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going on his own record (4- 8 scores).

C: can ask and answer questions about personal details. Can interact in simple way but communication is totally dependent upon repetition, rephrasing, and repair (0-4 scores).

Each subject was given a score based on the previously-mentioned descriptions and the level descriptors specified on the checklist. The maximum score in this scale is **74** (20+16+15+11+8+4) for each item and accordingly the total score is the average of all items divided by the number of items (again the total score can be as high as 74).

C. Procedure

Forty language learners taking a free discussion class at Shokouh Language Institute in Hamedan were selected and randomly assigned to control and experimental groups. In fact, the stratified sampling technique was used for the selection of subjects because the current study needed both male and female subjects. Accordingly, 20 male students and 20 female students were selected from among those advanced students who studied at Shokouh Language Institute in Hamedan. In order to ensure that learners were homogenous in terms of their linguistic ability, a paper-based TOEFL test was administered to learners at the beginning of the semester. The course consisted of 15 sessions, each lasting one and a half hours. An instructor taught the experimental group (G1) and another teacher taught the control group (G2). In both groups, similar topics were proposed for group discussion such as air pollution, global warming, friendship, drug addiction, happiness, etc. The teacher played the role of a discussion leader who tried to make sure everyone got the opportunity to express his/her opinions on proposed topics. The students were required to read on the topic before coming to the class and be ready for discussing their views on suggested topics. In the experimental class, in addition to having discussion on the given issues, the teacher devoted some time for teaching critical thinking techniques during the class time. In the very first session, the teacher explicitly explained what critical thinking is and how significant it is to have a critical mind in modern life. Then, during the following sessions the teacher taught critical thinking techniques for about 20 minutes and gave them time to practice these skills. These skills include involving learners in problem solving activities, raising questions, teaching logical reasoning, evaluating others' arguments, etc. Everything was the same for the control and experimental group except for the treatment.

IV. Results and Discussions

Seventy Iranian EFL students studying English Language at Shokouh Language Institute in Hamedan were selected. These learners were given a TOEFL test. Then the gathered data were analyzed by the SPSS program. The descriptive statistics revealed that the minimum score was 380 and the maximum score was as high as 610. The mean score was 580.64 with a standard deviation of 80.20. Then 40 top students were selected based on their scores on the TOEFL test. Actually, because the researcher needed two equal groups of 20 he selected the top 40 students whose scores was around the mean and above the mean. There were 10 male and 10 female learners in the each group. Therefore the researcher used stratified sampling for creating these two homogeneous groups.

Subjects in both control and experimental groups were interviewed orally prior to the beginning of the conversational course. All subjects were asked the same questions by their own teacher. The interviews were recorded for further detailed, analytic scorning. Each taped-interview was rated by two raters in order to ensure the inter-rater reliability of the assessments. Then all of the papers were rated by two raters based on Luoma (2004) profile for assessing speaking.

As it was mentioned above two raters rated the oral interviews by the students at the pre-test. So there were two scores for each learner at the oral interview pre-test. Accordingly, in order to see if there is a high degree of gotogetherness between the scores given by two raters, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used and a correlation coefficient of .826 was obtained. Since 20 oral interviews were scored by the two scorers, the degree of freedom is 18. The critical values for r at the .05 and .01 levels of significance are .443 and .561 respectively. Because the obtained value for r was greater than the critical values for r with 18 degrees of freedom (DF= 18) both at .05 and at .01 levels of significance (F > .443 and F > .561), it was concluded that there was a high positive correlation between the ratings of the two scorers.

After the treatment , needed data was gathered and analyzed using SPSS. The descriptive statistics for performances of the two groups on the pre-test and posttest have been given in Table 1. Figure 1 below depicts the results in a vivid manner. In order to see if there was any significant difference between the two groups at the outset an independent t-test was used. The results for the used independent T-test can be seen in the Table 3. Then the results of pretest and posttest for each group were compared using matched t-tests (See Table 2). It was observed that the two groups have had improved their speaking skills during the study.

A. Answering the First Research Question

The main question of the current study is to check if critical thinking has been more in teaching speaking to Iranian EFL learners i.e. whether subjects in experimental group (G1) who have received critical thinking training and practicing have outperformed subjects in control group (G2). As you can see in Table 1 the mean score for the Experimental Group is 67.16 and the mean score for the Control group on the post-test is 59.80. So there is an apparent difference between the performances of the two groups on the post-test in favor of the experimental group. But in order

to check if such a difference is statistically significant or not an independent T-test was used. There results of the used independent test have been presented in the table 2. The obtained t value is 4.27. This value is greater than the critical value for t with 38 degrees of freedom at .05 level of significance. Therefore the first null hypothesis of the study can be rejected and it can be concluded that the experimental group has outperformed the control group. Accordingly, it can be concluded that teaching critical thinking strategies has been effective in the development of Iranian EFL learners' speaking skill.

B. Answering the Second Research Question

The second research question of the present study was "Does teaching critical thinking skills affect male and female learners' speaking ability differently?" In order to answer this question the results for the performances of female and male Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group were compared with each other using an independent T-test. The descriptive statistics for performance of male vs. female students have been given in table 4.

As you can see the mean score for females is 68.52 and the mean score for males on the post-test is 65.80. So there is an apparent difference between the performances of the two groups on the post-test in favor of the females. But in order to check if such a difference is statistically significant or not, an independent T-test was used (Table 3). As you can see the calculated value for t at .05 level of significance 18 degrees of freedom is 1.07. Because this value is less than the critical value for t, the second null hypothesis of the study is not rejected and it can be said that there is not any significant difference between the performances of males vs. females on the posttest. This means that although there is a difference in favor of females, teaching critical thinking has almost had the same impact on the speaking skill of the two subgroups within the experimental group.

V. Conclusions and Implications

The findings of the current study revealed that experimental group outperformed the control group on the post-test. That is the students who received instruction on critical thinking strategies did better on the oral interview post-test. Of course both groups showed improvements in their speaking skills in comparison with their status at the beginning of the study. Namely both groups speaking improved irrespective of the methodology for teaching speaking. But there was a significant difference between the performances of the two groups after the special treatment was given to the experimental group. So it was concluded that critical thinking training had a crucial impact on promoting speaking ability of Iranian EFL learners. In addition, the proceedings of the present study showed that within the experimental group there was not any significant difference between the performances of male vs. female Iranian EFL learners' speaking ability. Now the question is that how can we justify for this kind of conclusions? Is critical thinking instruction really effective in development of EFL speaking ability? If so what are the strong points and advantages of teaching critical thinking strategies that helped students develop better speaking abilities?

It should be said that this kind of result is quite natural because both groups received a treatment of 15 sessions. Therefore it is natural that even the control group in which the learners didn't receive critical thinking instruction showed a progress in comparison with their status at the outset. Anyway in control group the students were active in the class, they talked to each other, they did role-plays, they learned many things to develop their speaking ability from the teacher and from their classmates during a long period of 15 sessions. So this progress from the pretest to the post-test for the subjects in the control group is definitely something justifiable as it is true for the experimental group.

But in the main question of the current study is why experimental group outperformed the control group on the post-test? In order to answer this crucial question we should consider the characteristics of critical thinking instruction and we should probe this kind of instruction closely to see what are the strong points, advantages, helpful facets and practical aspects in fostering EFL speaking.

In the experimental group, in addition to having discussion on the given issues initiated by the teacher and sometimes by the students themselves, the teacher allocated some time for teaching critical thinking techniques during the class time. Dialogue-focusing strategies such as identifying direction, sorting ideas for relevance, and focusing on key points are very important critical thinking strategies which were practiced in the classroom. These techniques are handy if the dialogue loses direction, becomes too wordy, or becomes so dense that learners simply must do some sorting or unpacking of ideas. Such "intellectual clean-up" — which involves putting things in order and making key issues prominent — is necessary in any dialogue. Critical-thinking strategies that helped the students in the current study include full-spectrum questioning, making connections, and honoring multiple perspectives. With these tools, the participants could add a deeper dimension to a dialogue that is "wallowing in the shallows" of a satisfactory, conventional approach or an unexamined vocabulary.

Critical thinking techniques helped the learners to uses evidence skillfully and impartially in their interactions with their classmates during the treatment. Such kind of techniques motivated the learners to organize their thoughts and to articulate them concisely and coherently in their oral productions. But the students in the control group didn't enjoy the benefits of such powerful strategies. Furthermore, in the experimental group the implementation of critical teaching strategies were very effective to guide the students to distinguish between logically valid and invalid inferences when they were talking to the teacher or to the peers.

Critical-thinking strategies helped the learners to become active participants in the interaction process by listening carefully to other students lectures, by judging on those utterances, and by making the best decisions about what to say in response to what has been said in the conversation by other interactants. In fact, critical thinking strategies help the learners consider all the characteristics of a good conversation when they were talking in the classroom. The students were totally attentive to what other students said and to what themselves wanted to say in the interactions.

A highly important aspect in the experimental class was that critical thinking strategies were quite suitable for a cooperative classroom. And cooperate learning in turn can facilitate critical thinking and can foster critical thinking abilities of the language learners. This idea is a very important one which has been studied in many investigations. For example Cooper (1995) argues that putting students in group learning situations is the best way to foster critical thinking. "In properly structured cooperative learning environments, students perform more actively benefiting from critical thinking with continuous support and feedback from other students and the teacher" (p. 8). So cooperative learning directly and indirectly enhances critical thinking and speaking ability of language learners.

So the outperformance of the experimental group of learners on the post-test and after giving the special treatment in comparison with the control group which didn't receive this kind of treatment can be justified by the strong characteristics of critical thinking instruction which could help the students develop their EFL speaking ability and which could motivate them to speak more and accordingly to learn more in the classroom. Another finding of the current study was that female subjects in the experimental group did better than the male subjects but this kind of difference was not statistically significant. Therefore no clear and robust conclusion can be drawn about the superiority of female Iranian EFL subjects in using critical thinking strategies for developing their speaking ability compared with male learners. More research is needed to examine if gender plays any effective role in using critical thinking strategies for language learning in general and for developing EFL speaking ability in particular.

The prominent pedagogical implications in this research correspond with what the following scholar believes in. Worrell and Profetto-McGrath (2007) asserted that applying and using critical thinking activities with different levels of language proficiency in English language classrooms can increase learner's level of thinking and simultaneously can help language learners promote their speaking abilities and enhance their own judgmental power in authentic and real-world conversations. Critical thinking techniques can equip learners with instruments which help them to go beyond the surface information presented in the conversation by other participants and to make their own decisions when they want to talk and to enhance their speaking abilities in long turn. The findings of the current study indicate that a critical thinker is a better language learner. Because a person who thinks critically can ask appropriate questions, can activate relevant information, efficiently and creatively sort through this information, reason logically from this information, and come to reliable and trustworthy conclusions about what other people have said that helps him to arrange what he wants to say in the best way.

This study wants to emphasize that critical thinking and speaking are interrelated and interdependent. This claim is not the researchers claim in this study but it is a very profound and a research-based idea. Vygotsky (1962) has talked about the interdependence of thought and speech and has emphasized that it is thinking that motivates speaking and vice versa. And as you know thinking is not limited just to the speaking ability and other language skills are all based on thinking. Listening comprehension, reading, and writing are all rooted in the thinking processes. In fact, thinking is the hidden software of all cognitive activities. Accordingly, enhancing critical thinking strategies can directly lead to learning a language better. Thus language teachers should try to include the explicit instruction of critical thinking strategies in the classrooms.

As it was mentioned above, the good results of critical thinking strategies instruction are not limited to the speaking ability and they are helpful for other language skills. Thus the researchers of the study think that further research is needed to investigate the impact of teaching critical thinking on the other language skills and sub-skills like listening comprehension, reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, the effect of implicit vs. explicit teaching of critical thinking strategies on EFL learners' different language skills and sub-skills needs more research.

APPENDIX TABLES

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR PERFORMANCES OF THE TWO GROUPS ON PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

			Pre-test		*Post-test*	
Group	Treatment	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
G1	Experimental	20	51.23	8.21	67.16	8.27
G2	Control	20	51.20	7.80	59.80	10.85

TABLE 2.
THE USED MATCHED T-TESTS

Pair	df	t	Sig
G1 Pretest/Posttest	1 9	6.76	.000 *
G2 Pretest/Posttest	19	3.16	.000 *

(P < .05 *)

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR PERFORMANCES OF THE MALES AND FEMALES ON PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

			Post-test	
Group	Gender	N	Mean	SD
G1	Female	10	68.52	6.27
	Male	10	65.80	5.85

TABLE 4
THE USED INDEPENDENT T-TESTS

	df	t	Sig(2-tailed)
G1- G2 Pretest	38	0.686	.002 *
G1- G2 Posttest	38	4.27	.189 *
G1- G1 Posttest	19	1.07	.386 (Male / Female)

(P < .05 *)

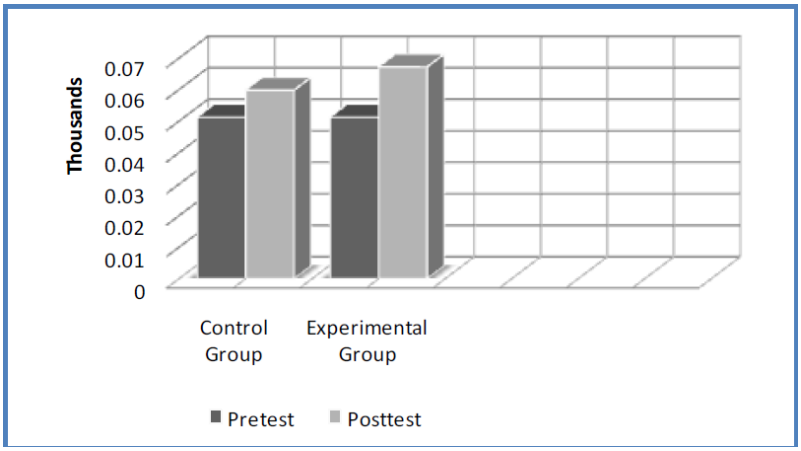

Figure 1 Pre-test & Posttest Performances of Study Groups

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"The Use and Reasons of Vocabulary Learning Strategies Use by Persian EFL Learners"

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The Relationship between Iranian EFL Learners Rote Learning Strategy Use and Their Level of Proficiency

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***Abstract*—The purpose of this study was to investigate the Iranian EFL learner's rote learning (RL) strategy use among vocabulary learning strategies. It also intended to find out whether the students' level of L2 proficiency would affect the pattern of their rote learning strategy use. To conduct the study, fifty Iranian EFL learners, studying English at the private language institute, were selected to participate in the experiment, and then, they were divided into low and high intermediate levels based on their scores on FCE test. Two instruments were used to collect the needed data, i.e., a vocabulary learning strategy questionnaire, a vocabulary test. The vocabulary learning strategy questionnaire and the vocabulary test were administered in two consecutive weeks and students completed them in the classroom. The results indicated that Iranian EFL learners used rote learning strategies more frequently than other categories of memory strategy. Besides, the results showed that there was some statistically significant difference between high and low-intermediate learners regarding their rote learning strategy use.**

***Index Terms*—Iranian EFL learners, rote learning strategy (RL), level of proficiency**

I. Introduction

Vocabulary learning is central to language acquisition, whether the language is first, second, or foreign. Given the difficulties of vocabulary learning in a second or foreign language (L2), along with the obvious necessity of trying to overcome them, one would expect that vocabulary instruction would be at the top of the agenda for language teachers. However, the opposite is often the case. That is, vocabulary is not explicitly taught in most language classes, and students are expected to "pick up" vocabulary on their own without any guidance (Oxford and Crookall, 1989). Many instances of so-called vocabulary instruction involve merely giving students lists of words to memorize or providing limited practice opportunities, with no further assistance to the often overwhelmed learner.

In order to learn a language and specially its lexicon, learners should make well use of language learning strategies. Cohen (1998, p. 4) defines language learning and language use strategies as those processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning and use of a second or foreign language, through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about the language.

Among language learning strategies, vocabulary learning strategy is one of the most important areas of investigation because of the great importance of vocabulary. However, one of the first problems a foreign language learner encounters is how to learn the enormous number of vocabulary items. The first and easiest strategy people usually use is repeating new vocabulary items until they can remember them. This strategy is called rote learning. Rote learning is learning in "a mechanical way without thought of meaning" (Macquarie Dictionary quoted from Biggs 1997, p.1). Whether positive or negative, it is used by many language learners to learn language and particularly vocabulary items.

The purpose of this study is to investigate rote learning strategy use among the English vocabulary learning strategies used by high-intermediate and low- intermediate Iranian EFL learners. Besides, the study examined if there was any relationship between students' rote learning strategy use and their level of L2 proficiency.

II. Theoretical Background

Vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to the typical language learner. However, teaching and learning vocabulary were neglected during a long period of time making it the Cinderella amongst all the language components required when learning a language. It was mostly because of certain dominant teaching approaches in the 1940's until the 1960's. The theories underlying these approaches such as structural linguistics (Fries, 1945) and generative transformational linguistics (Chomsky, 1957) focused on teaching grammatical and phonological structures

as well as emphasized on grammatical rules respectively. It was thought that when the learners have learned the structural frames and the grammatical rules, they will then be able to fill in the lexical items as needed. The teaching approach proposed by Hymes (1972) which emphasized communicative competence similarly identified vocabulary as secondary to functional language use. There was not much concern about the role of vocabulary because there was the belief that vocabulary would take care of themselves during language learning (Rojas 2008). However, second language (L2) acquisition depends crucially on the development of a strong vocabulary and calls for helping learners improve the way they go about learning vocabulary have been made on a number of grounds. Sokmen (1997, p. 225) argues for helping learners learn how to acquire vocabulary on their own, noting that it is "not possible for students to learn all the vocabulary they need in the classroom". In view of this, vocabulary acquisition is currently receiving attention in second language pedagogy and research.

The word *vocabulary* usually connotes word lists, and *vocabulary learning strategies* (VLS) can be considered a subset of general learning strategies in second language acquisition which are receiving more attention since the late 1970s and their investigation has advanced our understanding of the processes learners use to develop their skills in a second or foreign language. Therefore, vocabulary learning strategies can be defined as 'specific plans used by learners to learn foreign or second language vocabulary'. Nation (2001, p.217) maintains that a strategy would need to a) involve choice, that is, there are several strategies to choose from; b) be complex, that is, there are several steps to learn; c) require knowledge and benefit from training; and d) increase the efficiency of vocabulary learning and vocabulary use.

Brown and Payne (1994) identify five steps in the process of learning vocabulary in a foreign language: (a) having sources for encountering new words, (b) getting a clear image, either visual or auditory or both, of the forms of the new words, (c) learning the meaning of the words, (d) making a strong memory connection between the forms and the meanings of the words, and (e) using the words. Consequently, all vocabulary learning strategies, to a greater or lesser extent, should be related to these five steps (Fan, 2003, p. 223).

The biggest benefit obtained from various kinds of learning strategies, including vocabulary learning strategies, is the fact that these strategies enable learners to take more control of their own process of learning so that students can take more responsibility for their studies (Nation, 2001; Scharle & Szabó, 2000). Accordingly, these strategies foster "learner autonomy, independence, and self-direction" (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989, p. 291). When learners are aware of a wide range of various vocabulary learning strategies, they can decide upon how they would like to deal with learning the new vocabulary items. A good knowledge of the strategies and the ability to apply them in suitable situations might considerably simplify the learning process of new vocabulary for students, for instance, independence in selecting which words to study results in better recall of the words than when the words are chosen by someone else. (Ranalli, 2003, p. 9) For Nation (1990; 2001), the most important way to learn vocabulary is learners using strategies independently of a teacher. According to Schmitt and Schmitt (1995), the best teaching plan may be to introduce a variety of learning strategies to students so that they can decide for themselves the ones they prefer. That is, different learners apply different kinds of strategies that work for them, for example, some learners may repeat the new words several times or do different vocabulary exercises to learn the new words. This fact echoes learners' need to develop their knowledge of different kinds of strategies.

There have also been attempts to develop taxonomies of vocabulary learning strategies. Schmitt (1997) collected 58 of them from a variety of sources, including student questionnaires, literature reviews of vocabulary references and textbooks, and introspection. He then organized these using categories inspired by Oxford's inventory of general language learning strategies (1990), with some modifications. He proposed five strategy groups for learning vocabulary, including two major components: (a) Discovery Strategies, which are used to determine the initial meanings of words when learners first encounter them, such as Determination Strategies (DET) and Social Strategies (SOC). (b) Consolidation Strategies, which are used to consolidate the meanings when learners come across the words again. This category includes: Memory Strategies (MEM), Cognitive Strategies (COG), and Metacognitive Strategies (MET).

A number of significant research studies have investigated how learners use vocabulary learning strategies. Some of these have attempted to determine which strategies learners use and which they consider helpful.

In another study, Kudo (1999) investigated the frequency use of vocabulary learning strategies by three hundred and twenty-five Japanese senior high school students. His findings indicated that participants did not actively use VLS, nor did they know about so many strategies for learning vocabulary.

As to domestic studies on vocabulary learning strategies, Lu (2002) explored the effects of instruction of the selected vocabulary learning strategies for junior high school students of different levels of English proficiency. The results showed that the subjects of different English proficiency indeed benefited from the instruction of vocabulary learning strategies. She also advised that English teachers were encouraged to integrate the vocabulary learning strategy training into their syllabus so as to facilitate the learners' L2 learning.

Gu's (2003) detailed case studies on the VLS of two successful Chinese EFL students (who were not English majors) used reading tasks, think-aloud protocols, and interviews in order to document their observed use of VLS. Building on their preferred learning styles (auditory and visual), Gu's participants were highly motivated and employed a range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and approaches in their EFL vocabulary learning. Gu (2003) concluded that the combination of these strategies and approaches created a 'vocabulary-learning art' in which each participant exhibited

"...the flexible and skillful analysis, choice, deployment, execution, and orchestration of all strategies at their disposal in accordance with their own preferred style of learning" (p. 99).

Hamzah et al. (2009) investigated the undergraduate Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning strategies and its relation to the learners' vocabulary size. The findings of this study revealed that Iranian EFL learners are medium strategy users. Although all five categories of vocabulary learning strategies were reported, all of them had been used at a medium level. In addition, Iranian EFL learners revealed more interest in discovering the meaning of new words – determination strategy- rather than other categories of strategies which are mostly used to retain the meaning of new words. Among the strategies used to retain the meaning of new word, memory strategies were used more frequently than social strategies.

In some studies, rote learning has been regarded as one of vocabulary learning strategies since it is used by many language learners. For example, Hong Kong students learned meaningfully, then memorized the result to cope with examination requirements (Tang 1991). Generally, beliefs about RL can be divided into two broad categories of negative and positive. Negative beliefs focus on practical aspects while positive beliefs are based on explanation of its values. In some cultures, RL is considered as a preference and an effective way of getting basic and fundamental knowledge in the initial stages of language learning. The positive beliefs about RL also suggest that RL does not necessarily have to be meaningless repetition: it may help consolidate knowledge and deepen understanding. Written and verbal repetition, repeatedly writing or saying a word over and over again, are common strategies in many parts of the world. They are so entrenched that students often resist giving them up to try other ones (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990).

III. The Present Study

Having reviewed previous studies on vocabulary learning strategies and rote learning, this study was conducted in an EFL context, Iran, to address the following questions:

1. Do Iranian EFL learners use rote learning strategies more than other memory strategies?
2. Is there any relationship between rote learning strategy use and Iranian learners' language proficiency?

IV. Method

A. Participants

The population from which the participants were selected included the EFL learners who were enrolled in a language institute in Isfahan. To divide the participants into high and low intermediate levels, first the FCE was given to them, and then based on their scores fifty students were selected. As a result, twenty five high-intermediate level students (11 female and 14 male) and twenty five low- intermediate level students (16 female and 9 male) participated in this study. The participants were all informed that the study was for research purposes only and they were assured that their identities would be kept anonymous.

B. Instruments

Three instruments were used in this study: FCE test, a vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire and a vocabulary test. The reason for the use of FCE test was twofold: first to select the intended participants, and second to divide them into low and high-intermediate levels. Students were asked to circle the numbers of the Likert scale in the vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire and answer the questions of the vocabulary test.

C. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected in two consecutive weeks. In the first week, the vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire was distributed and the students were asked to read the statements carefully and complete the questionnaire in the class. The vocabulary test was distributed in the second week and the students did without consulting the dictionary. Again it was explained for the students that the test results would have no influence upon their final marks.

D. Data Analysis Procedure

In order to analyze the data, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 10.00 was used to calculate. First, to organize and summarize the students' responses in the questionnaire descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations were calculated to indicate the students' use of rote learning strategies. Next, the high- intermediate and low-intermediate students' scores in the vocabulary test were analyzed and the means and standard deviations were calculated. Finally, chi-square analysis was also done to see whether any significant difference existed between the high- proficient and low- proficient learners regarding their rote learning strategy use.

V. Results

The vocabulary learning questionnaire focused on different categories of memory strategies (rote learning; creating mental linkages; applying images and sounds and reviewing well) in vocabulary learning. To answer the first research question, the mean and standard deviation of all students' responses were calculated irrespective of their proficiency

group. To do this, the responses, i.e., Strongly agree (5points), Agree (4points), No opinion (3points), Disagree (2points), and Strongly disagree (1point), for each category of statements were directly fed into SPSS. The results of the descriptive analysis of the responses suggest that Iranian EFL learners use rote learning strategies more than other sub-categories of memory strategies for vocabulary learning. Table 4-1 presents the descriptive statistics of students' answers in descending order by their mean values.

TABLE 4-1.
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE RESPONSES OF ALL STUDENTS IN VOCABULARY LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE

Strategy category	Rank	Mean	SD
Rote learning strategy	1	3.98	.87
Reviewing well	2	3. 21	.94
Creating mental linkages	3	2.87	1.1
Applying images and sounds	4	2.11	.91
Total		3.42	1.09

As it is illustrated in the Table above, rote learning strategies had the top rank among all categories of memory strategies, M=3.98, followed by reviewing well M=3.21, creating mental linkages M= 2.87, and finally applying images and sounds M= 2.11. The percentage of each of these strategy categories is shown in the pie chart below:

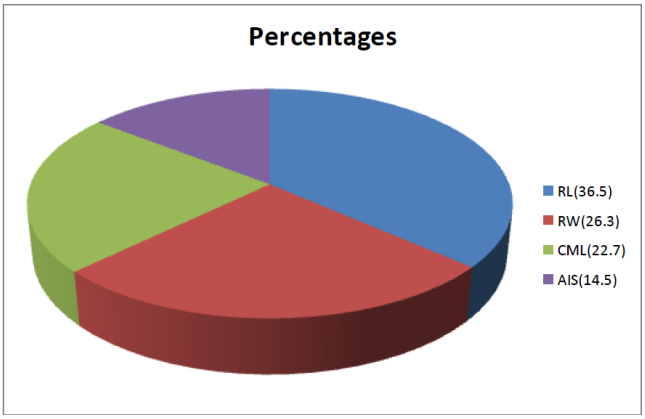

Figure 4.1. Percentages of usage of the 4 memory strategies

As it is obvious in the figure above, rote learning has the highest percentage among all the memory strategy categories.

The students' vocabulary tests were corrected and scored. All of the students' scores were fed into SPSS and the descriptive statistics of them were calculated. Tables 4-2 and 4-3 show the results:

TABLE 4-2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF HIGH-INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS' TEST SCORES

Number	**30**
Mean	**22.2**
Median	**20**
Mode	**19**
Std. Deviation	**4.9**
Range	**13**
Minimum	**14**
Maximum	**27**

TABLE 4-3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF LOW-INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS' TEST SCORES

Number	**30**
Mean	**18**
Median	**14**
Mode	**12**
Std. Deviation	**7.4**
Range	**14**
Minimum	**11**
Maximum	**25**

In order to investigate any relationships between rote learning strategy use and the students' language proficiency, chi-square was calculated. Table-2 shows its results:

TABLE 4-2.
CHI-SQUARE TEST

	Category	
Chi-Square(a)	11.286	
df	4	
Asymp. Sig.	.023	

The probability value, p= .023 and it is less than .05, therefore, the result is significant. According to the results, there was some statistically significant difference in rote learning strategy use of high- intermediate and low-intermediate students.

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a result of data analysis, a number of findings emerged that will be delineated and discussed in this section. A descriptive analysis of the responses of the subjects of both proficiency groups to the statements of the vocabulary learning strategies questionnaire to elicit the respondents' opinions about memory strategies in EFL vocabulary learning suggests that Iranian EFL learners think that of all the memory strategies for vocabulary learning, RL strategies were preferable. The mean of the RL strategy is the highest of the 4 MSs categories (M=3.98), followed by reviewing well (M=3. 21); creating mental linkages (M=2.87); and applying images and sounds (M=2.11). This finding is consistent with that of Li's study (2004). In that study, the Chinese learners preferred rote learning strategies to other categories of memory strategies and believed it is the most helpful strategy in vocabulary learning. According to Li (2004) the learners' preference for rote learning may be attributed to such factors like 'Chinese educational/cultural background, EFL environment, traditional habit, national situation/examination demand, Chinese linguistic background/the way of learning mother tongue, and failure to try out "best" strategies.

It seems that the two factors 'educational background and failure to try out "best" strategies' may be the probable reasons for Iranian EFL learners' adherence to rote learning strategies. The educational system in Iran and our course books guide the learners toward rote learning strategies. Moreover, Iranian learners show reluctance to trying new strategies and strategy training.

The use of different types and numbers of strategies may also depend on the learner and setting in which learning occurs and the language task to be completed, suggesting a need for more studies on different learners in different settings. Overall, the results of the first research question supported Politzer and McGroarty's (1985) and O'Malley and Chamots' studies (1990) who found that students from Asian backgrounds prefer rote learning and language rules as opposed to more communicative strategies.

The quantitative results of the second research question, being in line with most studies found in the literature today (e.g Ahmed, 1989; Dehghan and Yamini, 2005; Gu & Johnson, 1996; Kung, 2004; Lawson & Hogben, 1996; Li, 2004; Sanaoui, 1995; Sung, 2006, Wang, 2004), showed a significant difference between the two proficiency groups in regards to their vocabulary learning strategy use especially their rote learning strategy use. The number of rote learning strategies used by the subjects of the two groups makes it evident that the high-intermediate subjects did not differ in the number of strategies they used in comparison to the low-intermediate subjects; however, the subjects of these two proficiency groups differed in the way they combined the strategies while learning the vocabularies. Thus, the results obtained from the high-intermediate and low-intermediate students' questionnaire showed that the high-proficient subjects considered rote learning strategies as one of the ways for learning vocabulary and combined it with other strategies, whereas low- proficient subjects regarded rote learning strategies as the best and the most fundamental strategy and tried to rely on it to a large extent. The least frequently used strategy was applying images and sounds for both groups of subjects.

The aforementioned data provided a general insight into the overall vocabulary learning strategy use of high-intermediate and low-intermediate Iranian EFL learners. It was found that for students of these two groups rote learning strategies were the first priority while dealing with vocabulary. It was observed that reviewing well was the students' second priority and it may mean that if rote learning strategies did not work well in learning the new vocabulary items, the students may resort to these kinds of strategies that are very close to rote learning strategies in practice.

The findings in this study have suggested some implications which might be considered for future research, and which are of significance to educators and policymakers as well as to teachers and researchers. First and foremost, the results could imply the need for classroom pedagogy to explicitly integrate vocabulary learning strategies instruction for different proficiency level students and students are supposed to be introduced the importance of vocabulary learning strategies in the process of language learning. Since vocabulary learning strategies help students use the target language actively, it is very critical for students to comprehend the values of using strategies in vocabulary learning.

Second, it is very urgent for teachers to realize that not all strategies are suitable for all learners due to individual differences. Take gender, language competence and majors for instance. Male and female students may have different preferences for strategy use; students at different competence levels may employ diverse vocabulary learning strategies; students from different majors or schools may favor different strategy use. Thus, if teachers have a better understanding of their students' preference of strategy choices, they may try to instruct them how to select a few strategies besides their own.

Limitations are an integral part of all research studies and this study is not an exception in this regard. Based on the limitations of the study, the following recommendations were made for further research.

First, in order to obtain different types of vocabulary learning strategy use, and to make the study more representative, further researches involving participants of different grades, genders, majors, and universities in other areas should be conducted.

Next, in addition to the impact of English proficiency on vocabulary learning strategy use, the effects of other affective factors such as attitudes, motivation, learning style, tolerance of ambiguity, and anxiety on vocabulary learning can be investigated in the further research.

Finally, other instruments to assess strategy use can be adopted for further relevant studies, such as interviews, directed diaries and classroom observations, which contribute to qualitative research. Moreover, adopting various instruments to gather data help decrease the possible bias in the data collection.

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The Effect of Critical Thinking on Developing Argumentative Essays by Iranian EFL University Students

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***Abstract*—This study tried to find out whether or not teaching techniques of critical thinking through writing to the Iranian English students at university level can lead them develop writing argumentative essays. We received the help of 63 university students in two classes at Islamic Azad University, with the average age of 21 whose major were translation. Those falling within two SD above and below the mean on TOEFL were chosen. Participants were asked to write two five-paragraph argumentative essays; one at the beginning of the term, and the other one after 6 sessions. Since the second session, for about four sessions and each session 30 minutes, the experimental group was received a treatment. Participants' papers were scored based on Unrau's scoring guide by two English teachers. T-tests were used to check the differences between experimental and control groups. This study's implication is that techniques of critical thinking can help the students to become critical thinkers because the improvement was positive, yet it cannot help them to write more argumentative essays, for the fact that the improvement was not significant.**

***Index Terms*—critical thinking, argumentative essays, thinking through writing**

I. Introduction

In recent years, as McGregor (2007) notes working on the critical thinking and its application in education have been developed mostly by Dewey's early writings. Dewey (1910) believed that critical thinking, in its best sense, should make the basis and foundation of all kinds of thoughts. Glaser (1941), as cited in McGregor (2007), expands this early notion of critical thinking to include the knowledge of the methods of logical inquiry and reasoning. Fisher (1990) recognizes the important universal nature of critical thinking and introduces it as the cornerstone of any academic maneuver and skills at learning a language such as reading and writing.

A major part of a formal education, in recent years, is essays. Secondary students are taught structured essay formats to improve their writing skills, and admission essays are often used by universities in selecting applications. Essays are used to judge the mastery and comprehension of material in both secondary and tertiary education, so students are asked to explain, comment on, or assess a topic of study in the form of an essay. Usually academic essays are more formal than literary ones. They may allow the presentation of the writer's own views, yet this is done in a logical and factual manner with the use of the first person often discouraged. (Glenn, 2004)

Education should aim to support the development of independent thinkers who are discerning problem solvers, and can use a range of cognitive skills and strategies, including critical thinking, to solve problems (McGregor, 2007). Summer (1940) defines critical thinking as the examination and test of propositions of any kind which are offered for acceptance, in order to find out whether they correspond to reality or not. Unrau (1997) defines critical thinking under the influence of Ennis' works as "a process of reasoned reflection on the meaning of claims about what to believe or what to do" (p.14).

A. Theories behind This Study

Two main theories related to this study are as follows: 1) theory of reflective language teaching, and 2) critical pedagogy. Both of them are categorized into pedagogy of being and are somehow umbrella terms for critical thinking.

B. Definitions of Reflective Teaching

Farrell (2007) believes that there are many different definitions of reflective teaching, but most of them can be contained within two main stances to reflective teaching. He notes that one of these stances emphasizes reflection only on classroom actions, while the other also includes reflections on matters outside the classroom. He gives definition of the former approach by quoting from Cruickshank and Applegate (1981, p.553) as a process that "helps teachers to

think about what happened, why it happened, and what else could have been done to reach their goals". He cites Schulman (1987, p.19) in suggesting when a teacher "reconstructs, reenacts and/or recaptures the events, emotions, and the accomplishments" of his or her teaching, reflection happens. For the latter stance he states the definition by Jay and Johnson (2002) which maintains, the linking teaching to the larger community called critical reflection. This critical reflection involves the broader historical, sociopolitical and moral context of schooling therefore reflective teachers can consider themselves as agents of change. By this definition the latter stance considers the school culture that includes the context in which the schooling is taking place.

Also Mason (2008) says that reflective judgment plays an important and crucial role in today's complex world. He continues that "the goals of critical thinking and of life-long and life-wide learning appear frequently in the rhetoric of current educational reform in many societies across the globe." (p.1)

C. Types of Reflective Teaching

According to Farrell (2007) there are three major types or moments of reflective practice where teachers can undertake reflection. The first moment is called *reflection-in-action* and it happens during the event, such as classroom teaching. The second moment is called *reflection-on-action* which is thinking about the event after it has happened. While the third moment is called *reflection-for-action* and it is where teachers think about future actions.

Reflection-on-action which is the second moment or type of reflection involves thinking back on what was done to find out how knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected action; hence, it would come to mean some kind of metacognitive action (Farrell, 2007). Unrau (1997) notes students need some skills to get through school and to know how to function properly at work. Therefore, he says there should be a kind of vision based on the development of critical thinking that puts meaningful reflection on what is learned ahead of storing information and passing tests. Consequently based on what Unrau (1997), and Farrell (2007) say, the researchers come to the point that reflection-on-action and critical thinking have the same goal, and are somehow complementary.

D. Definition of Critical Pedagogy

Wink (2000) describes critical pedagogy as a way of knowing during which students not only read the word but also the world. Reading the world means closely examining power structures and our roles within them (Reyes and Vallone, 2008).

E. Perspectives in Critical Pedagogy

According to Reyes and Vallone (2008) critical pedagogy is not a list of things \ to do in teaching, because it is not a teaching method, rather as the name implies, it is an art of teaching, or a way of teaching, in which the world is viewed through a critical lens.

They also note that critical pedagogy is not widely known by teachers, because of the standards-based educational environment in which teachers currently find themselves. They emphasize that objectives are defined already, and finding a way of teaching that encourages students to critically examine their reality can be a challenge.

Furthermore they mention that critical pedagogy cannot be examined without a discussion of Freire (1970) who wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in which he believes that education (at its worse) could be used to transmit knowledge working to favor the best interests of the *oppressor*.

F. The Concept of Critical Thinking

Garrison (1991) says that "in contrast to Sternberg's (1986) belief that there is a degree of consensus on the nature of critical thinking, McPeck (1981:1) states that 'it is not at all clear that people mean the same thing by critical thinking'" (p. 287).

Feuerstein (1999) mentions that critical thinking is one of the movements of thinking that was prominently developed during the 1980s with the idea and fact that schools should be less concerned with imparting information and requiring the memorization of empirical data. Feuerstein continues that the rationale behind critical thinking holds that an information society which is a society based on producing and promoting knowledge must be equipped with critical competence.

Williams (2005) believes that "critical thinking is important in all academic disciplines within democratic education, but it is indispensable in the field of teacher education" (p.164). he says that considering the number of students who go through our schools, eventually future teachers could affect the critical thinking skills of the whole society.

Lewis and Smith (1993), (as cited in Jeevanathan, 2005) distinguish between higher order thinking and critical thinking and problem solving. Jeevanathan mentions that Hager's (1991) distinction between low-level mental activities (for example, recalling, comparing and classifying) and high-level mental activities (for instance credibility evaluation, assumption identification and determination of the strength of arguments or claims), is by far more efficacious in the issue of dealing with critical thinking instead of higher or lower levels of critical thinking.

G. Research Question

This study's researchers believe that in Iran University students cannot write (properly) and develop argumentative essays, yet during their academic studies and for further education they need to write them. This study tried to find the answer to the following question:

Does Critical thinking develop writing argumentative essays by Iranian University EFL students?

H. Null-Hypothesis

The null hypothesis in this study is:

Hō: Critical thinking does not develop writing argumentative essays by Iranian University EFL students.

II. The Review of the Related Literature

Bailin, Case, Coombs, and Daniels (1999) mention that frequently critical thinking is conceptualized in the case of skills, processes, procedures and practice. Daniels *et al* (1999) continue that great amount of educational literature refers to cognitive or thinking skills or equates critical thinking with certain mental processes or procedural moves that can be improved through practice. They further say that courses and conferences concentrate on the development of thinking skills and references to skills appear in much of the literature. They state that "even leading theorists in the area of critical thinking conceptualize critical thinking largely in terms of skill" (p. 270)".

Unrau (1997) defines critical thinking under the influence of Ennis' works as "a process of reasoned reflection on the meaning of claims about what to believe or what to do" (p.14). He explains that some forms of reasoning occurs when a thinker reflects upon statements, and before anyone embraces a claim, s/he is going to look for good reasons to do so.

Sharma (1995) thinks that "the vehicle of all thinking is language, and therefore, so it is of critical thinking" (p. 35). Sharma also explains that critical thinking depends on the vocabulary of the participants which direction the thinking in argument or in discussion or in the writing process will take.

According to Zainuddin and Moore (2003), there are different definitions of critical thinking, ranging from ones which envisage critical thinking as a broad construct which centers primarily on reasonable and reflective thinking and is focused on what to do or believe, while others view it more narrowly, specific to a certain content area.

Based on the definition of Kabilan (2000), creative and critical language learners are those who have cognitive abilities to carry out tasks affectively. They must be able to carefully and deliberately determine to accept, reject or suspend judgment about a claim. In the mean time, critical language learners must be able to cite and identify good reasons for their answers and opinions; they should also correct themselves and others' methods and procedures, and cope with regularities, uniformities, irregular circumstances, special limitations, constraints and over-generalizations.

Wright (2002) says "when I discovered critical thinking, my teaching changed" (p.9). He notes that instead of focusing on questions which had "right" answers, he wanted children to think through situations where the answer was in doubt. He believes that critical thinking is beneficial in social studies along with music, in science when dealing with environmental problems, deciding whether animals should be used in research, or figuring out the best way to test a hypothesis, in literature study during judging the actions of characters in stories, and in all subject areas when deciding which sources of information were most reliable or how best to present information.

Also according to Wright (2002, p.43) the definition of critical thinking consists of the following:

1. Critical thinking is synonymous with problem solving.
2. Critical thinking is a skill.
3. Critical thinking involves asking questions at higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy-i.e. analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
4. Critical thinking means helping students criticize the arguments and conclusions of others; it is always negative. ("Critical" in the sense and meaning with which it is used in the term *critical thinking* is not simply negative.)
5. Critical thinking is applied only to factual matters; it is not applicable to values.
6. Critical thinking is not related to creative thinking.

Fisher (1990) notes that "Critical thinking describes *how* something is being thought about"(p.65). He adds that learning to think critically means: (a) learning how to question, when to question and what questions to ask, and (b) learning how to reason, when to use reasoning and what reasoning methods to use. Finally he mentions that being a critical thinker one should develop certain attitudes, such as a desire to reason, willingness to challenge and a passion for truth.

A. Some Studies Based on Critical Thinking

Kabilan (2000) in his article which is called *Creative and Critical Thinking in Language Classrooms* notes that only using the language and knowing the meaning is not enough, in order to become proficient in a language, learners need to use creative and critical thinking through the target language. He also believes that creative and critical thinking skills should not be taught separately as an isolated entity, yet embedded in the subject matter and presented in curriculum. Then he concludes that most of the teachers ignore the capabilities of their learners, and disregard learners' views and opinions; therefore, the learners would not be able to train and use their thinking skills. In the end he states that the remedy would be changing teachers' pedagogical views and choosing a more flexible attitude towards their teaching.

Kabilan (1999) says that Pedagogy of Question which is about posing questions to learners and listening to learners' questions can lead to producing critical and creative language learners that is by no means an easy task. Greenlaw and Deloach (2003) believe that in order to teach critical thinking effectively, an instructor must first be able to define it in ways appropriate to both the field of study and the medium to be used.

Scardamalia and Bereiter (1986, as cited in Unrau, 1997) in the planning of essays tested the effectiveness of an intervention strategy designed to facilitate reflective and critical thought. In intervention strategy they printed sentence openers, such as "A good point on the other side of the argument is that…", on index cards and gave them to students to use when planning their writing. They expected that students would finally internalize this external aid. In their study they found that the essays of students who received the cues displayed significantly more evidence of reflective thinking than those of students who did not receive the cues.

B. Essay Writing

"Essay writing is at the heart of most academic study" (Warburton, 2007, p.11). He thinks that *talking* about what you know is not enough; hence, you need to be able to make a clear and well-argued case in writings, based on appropriate research. He also believes that skills are built on good habits that are patterns of behavior that you don't need to think about, usually because you have practiced them many times before. And once you have got into a good habit, life gets easier. He mentions that if someone has a reasonable grasp of her/his subject and the will-power to practice writing, s/he can make significant improvements very quickly. "If you want to improve, then you need to *write*, not just read about writing." (p.3)

C. What is 'Argument' in an Argumentative Essay?

Bowell and Kemp (2002) define arguments as "to attempt to persuade by giving good reasons is to give an argument" (p.2). They further mention that critical thinkers primarily should be interested in arguments and whether they succeed in providing us with good reasons for acting or believing. They mention that it is surprising to think of an 'argument' as a term for giving someone a reason to do or believe something.

III. Methodology

This study is a kind of experimental research. Although randomized assignments of subjects to groups are ideal, it was not possible in practice for the researchers to do so in this study. Therefore they chose nonrandomized control group, pretest posttest design which is categorized under the quasi-experimental designs.

A. Participants

At the beginning of the study there were 63 freshmen university students in two essay writing classes in Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch with the same professor. After TOEFL test was administered the students who scored 2 standard deviations above and below the mean on the TOEFL were selected for the study. In this case one of the participants was dropped. Therefore the research was done with 59 homogeneous students.

B. Instruments

In order to measure the homogeneity of the students section two of the TOEFL test which consists of two parts of structure questions and written expression questions was administered. Due to practical reasons such as not having language laboratory for playing the CD or cassettes of the listening section available at the time of doing this study, the listening comprehension section was not administered. Furthermore, the time limitation did not allow the researcher to administer all other sections.

Section two of the TOEFL has got two parts. The first part has questions that are about structure, and the second part has written expression questions. The students answered them in 25 minutes.

Thesis-Analysis-Synthesis key (TASK) which is developed by Unrau (1997) was given to the students as a treatment. Also two passages of the book called *FOR AND AGAINST* by L. G. Alexander (1968) were given to the participants as a supplementary to the treatment.

The whiteboard was also used as an instructural aid for explanation of some parts.

C. Procedure, Data Collection, and Data Management

Section two of the TOEFL was copied and distributed to the students of the two groups on the first session of the study. Both experimental and control groups answered them in 25 minutes on the answering sheets, and then the papers were collected. After that students were asked to write a five paragraph argumentative essay on the same subject which is *Advantages and Disadvantages of Internet*, in about 30 minutes. The students' essays were scored based on Unrau's scoring guide by two English teachers.

Then the professor in 4 sessions taught the students English tenses, rules of writing five paragraph essays, and sentence connectors on both groups based on their course. Only the experimental group received the treatment. In detail saying, for about 4 sessions the students on the experimental group received 30 minutes of the treatment at the end of their sessions. The treatment was focused on the ten phases of the TASK and the techniques of critical thinking such as writing the ideas on a piece of paper called admit tickets, writing logs based on the taught materials as homework,

listing and clustering for certain concepts such as internet, and writing focused free-writes on a specific subject like television for about five minutes or so.

After the treatment was done, both groups were asked to write a five paragraph argumentative essay with the subject of *Advantages and Disadvantages of Cell-phones*, in about 30 minutes. Their papers were all gathered by the researcher, and the same two English teachers scored them based on Unrau's scoring guide.

The following tables are dealing with the statistical figures of the study. In table 1, mean scores of the experimental and control groups in pretest are presented. In table 2, results of the level of significance, t-tests in pretest are shown.

When there are two independent groups, their covariance should be checked. For checking the equality of variances the Levene's Test is used. According to the statistic of Levene's Test (F) which is 0.012, the level of significance which is 0.912, and comparing this level of significance with 0.05, it is obvious that the null hypothesis based on the equality of the variances in two groups is not rejected. So the data of the equal variances assumed, is used for the pretest.

TABLE 1
PRETEST/TOTAL 1

Group Statistics					
	Group	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
PRE_T	**1 Experimental**	29	71.8103	11.33690	2.10521
	2 Control	30	72.8667	10.67299	1.94861

TABLE 2
LEVENE'S TEST 1

Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		**t-test for Equality of Means**		
		F	**Sig.**	**t**	**Df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
PRE_T	**Equal variances assumed**	.012	.912	-.369	57	.714
	Equal variances not assumed			-.368	56.493	.714

According to the statistic of the T-Test which is -0.369, with the degree of freedom of 57, the level of significance of 0.714, and comparing this level of significance with α=0.05, it is obvious that the null hypothesis based on the equality of the total mean scores in two groups of experimental and control group is not rejected.

In tables 3 and 5, experimental and control groups' pretest and posttest means and standard deviations are presented respectively. Table 4 and 6 show the experimental and control groups' mean and standard deviation differences, respectively.

In tables 3 and 4 as you can see there is a meaningful difference between pretest and posttest in experimental group; it means the scores are developed and increased.

TABLE 3
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S PRETEST AND POSTTEST STATISTICS

Paired Samples Statistics(a)					
		Mean	**N**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Pair 1	**PRE_T**	71.7500	26	11.75946	2.30622
	POS_T	80.3462	26	9.98175	1.95758
a GROUP Group = 1 Experimental					

TABLE 4
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S MEAN/STANDARD DEVIATION/STANDARD ERROR MEAN SCORES

Paired Samples Test(a)							
		Paired Differences			**T**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
		Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**			
Pair 1	**PRE_T - POS_T**	-8.5962	8.77840	1.72159	-4.993	25	.000
a GROUP Group = 1 Experimental							

And by considering tables 5 and 6 it is cleared that there is a meaningful difference between pretest and posttest in control group; it means the control groups' scores are increased.

TABLE 5
CONTROL GROUP'S PRETEST AND POSTTEST STATISTICS

Paired Samples Statistics(a)					
		Mean	**N**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Pair 1	**PRE_T**	73.8393	28	10.37452	1.96060
	POS_T	79.0893	28	13.23229	2.50067
a GROUP Group = 2 Control					

TABLE 6
CONTROL GROUP'S MEAN/STANDARD DEVIATION/STANDARD ERROR MEAN SCORES

Paired Samples Test(a)							
		Paired Differences			**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
		Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**			
Pair 1	**PRE_T - POS_T**	-5.2500	10.36688	1.95916	-2.680	27	.012
a GROUP Group = 2 Control							

According to statistics the null hypothesis is not rejected, in other words critical thinking does not develop writing sustained argumentative essays by Iranian University EFL students. Based on the statistic of the T-test which is -0.369, with the degree of freedom of 57, the level of significance of 0.714, and comparing this level of significance with 0.05, it is obvious that the null hypothesis based on the equality of the total mean scores in two groups of experimental and control group is not rejected. There is a meaningful difference between pretest and posttest in experimental group; it means the scores are developed and increased. Also there is a meaningful difference between pretest and posttest in control group; it means the control group's scores are increased. But if we compare the experimental and control group with each other there is no significant increase. That is why although there was an improvement; it was not significant to reject the null-hypothesis.

IV. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Every educational activity should be in harmony with context and the need of the students. In Iran students are not interested in criticism. They are used to receiving their lessons traditionally by traditional teachers who are dominating them in their classes. Here in Iran teacher-centered education is common, and almost all of the students are not familiar with discussions about and criticizing over the stuff they are going to learn in the classrooms.

The remedy to changing teacher-centered education into learner-centered one is familiarizing the students with thinking and thinking critically. If students think critically about the stuff they are facing, they have something to say, they can express themselves, and also they can hear what their classmates say. In this way they share their thoughts, experiences and ideas with the whole class. They learn from each other and the teacher-centered classrooms gradually changes into modern classes where the teachers are no more dominators and they become animators who give life to the class and guide the students instead of imposing them what to do or what not to do.

If critical thinking techniques are taught in the classes, their values and roles can be seen on the essays. Critical thinkers can write argumentative essays.

V. CONCLUSION

This study was implemented on the basis of Unrau's TASK and scoring guide (1997). There were two main theories behind this work: reflective language teaching and critical pedagogy. The focus was on teaching techniques of critical thinking to the university freshmen students in order to make them think critically. Then the effect of these techniques was analyzed through writing argumentative essays.

According to statistics, the null hypothesis is not rejected, in other words critical thinking does not develop writing sustained argumentative essays by Iranian University EFL students. According to statistic of the T-test which is -0.369, with the degree of freedom of 57, the level of significance of 0.714, and comparing this level of significance with 0.05, it is obvious that the null hypothesis based on the equality of the total mean scores in two groups of experimental and control group is not rejected (Table 2). As it is shown in tables 3 and 4 there is a meaningful difference between pretest and posttest in experimental group; it means the scores are developed and increased. Also there is a meaningful difference between pretest and posttest in control group; it means the control group's scores are increased. But if we compare the experimental and control group with each other there is no significant increase. That is why although there was an improvement; it was not significant to reject the null-hypothesis.

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Individual Learner Differences and Second Language Acquisition: A Review

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***Abstract*—The level of second language acquisition depends on many factors controlled by nature or shaped by nurture. The present paper studies the role of individual learner differences in second language acquisition (SLA). The individual differences, viz., age, sex, aptitude, motivation, cognitive style, learning strategies, and personality are defined and classified. A detailed review of the studies conducted in relation to the seven individual differences follows. The paper concludes by emphasizing that a language teacher must recognize the individual differences in his/ her students in order to impart effective language learning.**

***Index Terms*—second language acquisition, individual learner difference, personality, age, sex, aptitude, motivation, cognitive style, learning strategies**

I. Introduction

Why do some people almost achieve the native speaker's levels of competence in a foreign language while others never seem to progress much beyond a beginner's level? Some second language learners make rapid and apparently effortless progress while others progress only very slowly and with great difficulty. The reason probably is that people are not homogenous! They have different personalities and styles. Thus, each individual is different from the other. These individual differences, according to Dörnyei, (2005) are, "enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree."

Humans differ from each other due to many biological or conditioned factors (affected by nature) or unconscious forces (affected by past experiences). The many ways in which one learns about these differences are usually similar, through introspection and interaction with other people, or by reading books and watching television or cinema. However, in order to conduct research in individual differences, it is necessary to have rigorous instruments, and a scientific way of providing reliable and valid. The differences that one can explore are:

A. Age
B. Sex
C. Aptitude
D. Motivation
E. Learning Styles
F. Learning Strategies
G. Personality

The above mentioned differences are intricately interlocked with each other and in totality play important roles in language learning. Language teachers should be aware of their effects. In compared to the linguistics factors, these non-linguistic factors are not given much importance in SLA research. Still many researchers over the years have made significant efforts at exploring the role of these factors. In a sequence, we will take a look at their role in second language learning.

II. Individual Differences and SLA

A. Age

Are children more successful second language learners than adults? Many would say yes, if we commonly observe the ease with which children, especially young children slip into the role of second language speakers. But Saville-Troike (2006) warns us against such easy assumptions and argues that that one must define the term 'success' (89). According to her, "Some define "success" as initial rate of learning while other studies define it as ultimate achievement. Also, some studies define "success" in terms of how close the learner's pronunciation is to a native speaker's, others in terms of how closely a learner approximates native grammaticality judgments and still others in

terms of fluency or functional competence (89)". She further warns that the evaluative criteria clearly must be kept clearly in mind while judging conflicting claims about success.

It is believed that there is a critical period for first language acquisition. Children are believed to have only a limited number of years during which normal acquisition is possible. Beyond that, physiological changes cause the brain to lose its plasticity, or capacity to assume the new functions that learning language demands. Individuals who for some reason are deprived of the linguistic input which is needed to trigger first language acquisition during the critical period will never learn any language normally. One famous case that provides rare evidence for this point is that of Genie, an abused girl who was kept isolated from all language input and interaction until she was thirteen years old. In spite of years of intensive efforts at remediation, Genie never developed linguistic knowledge and skills for her L1 (English) that were comparable to those of speakers who began acquisition in early childhood.

For a long time, a debate on the existence or absence of a critical period of language learning has been going on in the field of SLA. A critical period means that beyond a particular age successful acquisition of a second language is not possible due to physiological changes in the brain (Kim et al., 1997). Moreover, as one gets older, one becomes more self-conscious which hinders him/her from making full use of his/her language skills, especially speaking skills.

A more sophisticated version of the critical period hypothesis is the concept of 'sensitive' period for language learning by Slobin (1982). The sensitive period implies that there is a period in one's life (during childhood) when second language acquisition is optimized. Slobin (1982) argues that of the sensitive period of language learning is proven by the fact that the universal age of onset of production, rate of acquisition and age of completion of language learning is the same and it is relatively unaffected by the environmental variations and individual cognitive ability. It is hypnotized that once this critical/ sensitive period is over, a child deprived of input and chances to communicate is never able to regain his/her ability to acquire language as happened in the case of 'Genie' who after her release from solitary captivation since early childhood was not able to learn even the basic language skills after she was rescued at the age of thirteen.

So how much difference does age make? Long (1990) argues that for language learners of more than 15 years of age, it is difficult to acquire native like fluency and an absence of an 'accent'. Saville-Troike (2006) agrees with Long (1990) that, "some older learners can achieve native-like proficiency, although they definitely constitute a minority of second language learners (89)."

The critical/ sensitive period hypothesis is yet to be tested at the scientific level and SLA theorists have a long way to before the find a clear and final answer to the fascinating question of why and how children seem to be better (second) language learners.

B. Sex

Many studies (e.g., Oxford, 1993; Young & Oxford 1997) have found that gender can have a significant impact on how students learn a language. Although the study of gender as a variable in language learning is still at an early stage (Bacon & Finneman, 1992; Oxford, 1993; Ehrman & Oxford, 1995), studies of individual language learner differences related to sex (biological) or gender (socially constructed) have shown that females tend to show greater integrative motivation and more positive attitudes to L2, and use a wider range of learning strategies, particularly social strategies (Oxford, Nyikos & Ehrman, 1988). As a matter of fact, as for the problem whether difference exists between male and female in terms of learning a language, Larsen-Freeman & Long (2000) believed that in the process of first language acquisition female excel male, at least at the early stage. Zhuanglin (1989) highlighted that, it was generally believed that male and female are born with different linguistic advantages, such as, female learn to speak earlier than male, and female learn a foreign language faster and better than male, etc.

Studies of actual results suggest females are typically superior to males in nearly all aspects of language learning, except listening vocabulary (Boyle, 1987). Kimura (1992, as cited in Saville-Troike, 2006)), reports that higher levels of articulatory and motor ability have been associated in women with higher levels of estrogen level during the menstrual cycle.

C. Aptitude

Skehan, (1989) believes that aptitude has consistently been linked with L2 success, but remains one of the under investigated areas of SLA. Saville-Troike (2006) suggests that assumption that there is a talent which is specific to language learning has been widely held for many years. Many language aptitude tests like TOEFL, IELTS have been used for a long period to test the aptitude of a second language learner of English. Carroll (1963), who along with Sapon created the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) which was designed to predict success foreign language learning, provides us with the following four types of abilities that constitute aptitude:

i. Phonemic coding ability (discriminates and encodes foreign sounds)
ii. Grammatical sensitivity (recognizes functions of words in sentences)
iii. Inductive language learning ability (infers or induces rules from samples)
iv. Memory and learning (makes and recalls associations between words and phrases in L1 and L2)

Many scholars believe that aptitude alone does not determine the language learning ability of an individual. Skehan (1989) suggests that individual ability may vary by other factors. Other factors like personality, language learning style and motivation must be considered before taking into account. Skehan (1989) further concludes that language-learning

aptitude "is not completely distinct from general cognitive abilities, as represented by intelligence tests, but it is far from the same thing". Moreover, aptitude can only predict success in second language acquisition; it cannot explain the reasons behind it.

D. Motivation

Motivation to learn a language is considered one of the most plausible reasons of success at second language acquisition. According to Gardner (1985) Motivation = effort + desire to achieve goal + attitudes. Saville-Troike (2006) claims that motivation is the second strongest predictor (after aptitude) of second language success. She further argues that motivation largely determines the level of effort that learners expend at various stages in their L2 development, often a key to ultimate level of proficiency.

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) the following two types of motivation exist:

i. Integrative: found in individuals who want are interested in the second language in order to integrate with and become a part of a target community/ culture; here the learner wants to resemble and behave like the target community.
ii. Instrumental: found in individuals who want to get learn a second language with the objective of getting benefits from the second language skill. Objectives, such as business advancement, increase in professional status, educational goals etc. motivate an individual to learn a second language in this case.

Both the types of motivations have different roles to play. Both can lead to success. According to Saville-Troike (2006) the relative effect of one or the other is dependent on complex personal and social factors. L2 learning by a member of the dominant group in a society may benefit more from integrative motivation, and L2 learning by a subordinate group member may be more influenced by instrumental motivation.

In most of the motivation research, the relationship between motivation and second language achievement has been shown as a strong one. But whether the achievement drives motivation or motivation drives achievement is yet to be tested.

E. Learning Styles

Language learning styles refer to cognitive variations in learning a second language. It is about an individuals' preferred way of processing, that is, of perceiving, conceptualizing, organizing, and recalling information related to language learning. According to Cornett (1983) the language learning styles are the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behavior. Brown (2000) states that unlike factors of age, aptitude, and motivation, its role in explaining why some L2 learners are more successful than others has not been well established, it involves a complex (and as yet poorly understood) interaction with specific L2 social and learning contexts.

The following cognitive styles have been identified by Knowles (1972 as cited in Lochart & Richards, 1994):

1. Concrete learning style

Learners with a concrete learning style use active and direct means of taking in and processing information. They are interested in information that has immediate value. They are curious, spontaneous, and willing to take risks. They like variety and a constant change of pace. They dislike routine learning and written work, and prefer verbal or visual experiences. They like to be entertained, and like to be physically involved in learning.

2. Analytical learning style

Learners with an analytical style are independent, like to solve problems, and enjoy tracking down ideas and developing principles on their own. Such learners prefer a logical, systematic presentation of new learning material with opportunities for learners to follow up on their own. Analytical learners are serious, push themselves hard, and are vulnerable to failure.

3. Communicative learning style

Learners with a communicative learning style prefer a social approach to learning. They need personal feedback and interaction, and learn well from discussion and group activities. They thrive in a democratically run class.

4. Authority-oriented learning style

Learners with an authority-oriented style are said to be responsible and dependable. They like and need structure and sequential progression. They relate well to a traditional classroom. They prefer the teacher as an authority figure. They like to have clear instructions and to know exactly what they are doing; they are not comfortable with consensus-building discussion.

Another set of language learning style according to Witkin (1973), is the cognitive learning styles. These styles are of two types:

1. Field Independent (left brain dominance)
2. Field Dependent style (right brain dominance)

A learner with a field independent style is usually an independent and confident being who see parts and details from a whole. The rational, logical and mathematical side of his/her mind is more active during the process of learning. Such a learner thrives in a class full of activities and exercises. On the other hand, a field dependent learner is better at grasping the observing ideas and observing the whole situation. He is visually and emotionally oriented. For such a person communication and interaction help in second language acquisition as he is usually a social being.

It is important for a learner to be aware of one's learning style but Oxford (2003) warns us against being too rigid

about the types as they "are not dichotomous (black or white, present or absent). Learning styles generally operate on a continuum or on multiple, intersecting continua (p.3)."

F. Learning Strategies

The learning strategies are the strategies a learner selects for language acquisition. Brown (2000) argues that the choice of learning strategies is strongly influenced by the nature of their motivation, cognitive style, and personality, as well as by specific contexts of use and opportunities for learning.

Many studies in SLA have ventured out to identify which strategies are used by relatively good language learners, with the expectation that such strategies can be taught or otherwise applied to enhance learning. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990) strategies are the tools for active, self-directed involvement needed for developing L2 communicative ability. O'Malley and Chamot, (1990) have identified the following strategies:

1. Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies "operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning". Some of these strategies are

- Repetition: imitating other people's speech overtly or silently;
- Resourcing: making use of language materials such as dictionaries;
- Directed Physical Response: responding physically "as with directives";
- Translation: using the first language as a basis for understanding and/or producing the L2;
- Grouping: organizing learning on the basis of "common attributes";
- Note-taking: writing down the gist etc of texts;
- Deduction: conscious application of rules to processing the L2;
- Recombination: putting together smaller meaningful elements into new wholes;
- Imagery: visualizing information for memory storage;
- Auditory Representation: keeping a sound or sound sequence in the mind;
- Key Word: using key word memory techniques, such as identifying an L2 word with an L1 word that it sounds like;
- Contextualization: placing a word or phrase in a meaningful language sequence;
- Elaboration: relating new information to other concepts in memory;
- Transfer: using previous knowledge to help language learning;
- Inferencing: guessing meanings by using available information;
- Question for Clarification: asking a teacher or native speaker for explanation, help, etc..

2. Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies are skills used for planning, monitoring, and evaluating the learning activity; "they are strategies about learning rather than learning strategies themselves". The following are some of the metacognitive strategies

- Advance Organizers: planning the learning activity in advance;
- Directed Attention: deciding to concentrate on general aspects of a learning task;
- Selective Attention: deciding to pay attention to specific parts of the language input or the situation that will help learning;
- Self-management: trying to arrange the appropriate conditions for learning;
- Advance Preparation: planning the linguistic components for a forthcoming language task;
- Self-monitoring: checking one's performance as one speaks;
- Delayed Production: deliberately postponing speaking so that one may learn by listening;
- Self-evaluation: checking how well one is doing against one's own standards;
- Self- reinforcement: giving oneself rewards for success.

3. Social and affective strategies

Social and affective strategies involve interacting with another person to assist learning or using control to assist a learning task. These strategies are:

- Questioning for Clarification: Asking for explanation, verification, rephrasing, or examples about the material; asking for clarification or verification about the task; posing questions to the self.
- Cooperation: Working together with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral or written performance.
- Self-talk: Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel competent to do the learning task.

Distinction between styles and strategies

According to Lombaard (2006) Language learning styles characterize the consistent and rather enduring traits, tendencies, or preferences that may differentiate you from another person while strategies are specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, or plan designed for controlling and manipulating certain information. Strategies vary widely within an individual, while styles are more constant and predictable (20).

Oxford (2003) argues for need for awareness amongst teachers regarding the types of strategies used by students in a class as she believes that it foolhardy to think that a single L2 methodology could possibly fit an entire class filled with students who have a range of stylistic and strategic preferences.

G. Personality

Human personality in all its shapes and colors brings variety to this world. Personality studies have been the core of the study of human psychology for more than 150 years. Eminent psychologists like Freud, Skinner and Allport focused their studies on human personality. In SLA the study of the relation of personality and language learning has been the subject of scholars like Krashen (1985), Skehan (1989), Gass & Selinker, (1994) etc. one tends to agree with Ehrman (1996) when he suggests that there is a clear relationship between personality and SLA as personality determines what people feel comfortable with. As a result, people tend to choose and consequently do what they feel comfortable with and get better at the given skills (p.101). Thus, a second language learner will make choices of strategies and skills according to bent of his/her personality.

There are a number of personality characteristics that may affect L2 learning, such as:

1. Extroversion vs. introversion
2. Self esteem
3. Inhibition
4. Risk-taking
5. Anxiety

Each of the above aspects is discussed in the following sections:

1. Extroversion vs. Introversion

According to Dawaele and Furnham (1999) eextroversion and introversion are a part of a continuum. Extroverts are considered sociable and impulsive. They seem to dislike solitude, take risks, impulsive. Whereas, introverts are believed to be introspective, quiet, retiring and reserved. An extrovert is said to receive energy from outside sources, whereas an introvert is more concerned with the inner world of ideas and is more likely to be involved with solitary activities. This trait does not just describe whether a person is outgoing or shy, but considers whether a person prefers working alone or feels energized and at home working in a team.

The relationship between extroversion and learning was first studied by Eysenck who hypothysed that extroversion was not positively correlated with learning due to several neuro-chemical phenomena in the human brain. Thus he concluded that an introvert and not an extrovert would be a better language learner.

The SLA theorists, however, tend to disagree with Eysenck's conclusion. It is often argued that an extroverted person is well suited to language learning. SLA literature suggests that the more extravert language learners would increase the amount of input (Krashen, 1985), prefer communicative approaches (Cook, 2001), the more they are likely to join the group activities (McDonough, 1986). Therefore, they increase their interaction in the language which maximizes the language output (Swain, 1985), hence yield a better product i.e. language proficiency. However, research does not always support this conclusion. Some studies have found that learners' success in language learning is associated with extroversion such as assertiveness and adventurousness, while others have found that many successful language learners do not get high scores on measures of extroversion.

2. Self esteem

Many researchers claim that no successful learning activity can take place without some self- esteem and self confidence. Coopersmith (1967) defines self- esteem as a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individual holds towards himself/herself. Brodkey and Shore (1976) revealed that self-esteem appears to be an important variable in SLA, particularly in view of cross-cultural factors of second language learning.

Brodkey and Shore (1976), and Gardner and Lambert (1972) studied self esteem and concluded that it was an important factor in second language acquisition. Heyde's Self-Esteem Study (1979) also concluded that self esteem generated by high involvement of teachers let to better results in second language acquisition. MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clement, & Noels (1998) studies the role of self confidences in their model of "willingness to communicate" in a foreign language. Their results showed that a better ability to communicate did lead to more willingness to communicate. A number of factors appear to contribute to predisposing one learner to seek, and another learner to avoid, second language communication. They suggested that not one but many factors that lead to willingness to communicate. Of these, motivation, personality, intergroup climate, and two levels of self-confidence are a few. Of the two levels of self-confidence the first level resembles "state communicative self-confidence"; the second, an general level "L2 self-confidence". Both self-confidence factors assume important roles in determining one's willingness to communicate. But as has been the case with many other individual factors, it is believed that high self-esteem alone cannot cause language success or vice versa.

3. Inhibition

Inhibition is the set of defenses an individual builds to protect himself/herself. The presence of a language ego is considered to be a major hindrance to the process of second language acquisition. The process of making mistakes, learning from those mistakes and a consequent improvement in the language skills get inhibited by this ego. With an adaptive language ego, the learner lowers the inhibitions. An overtly self critical nature perceives the mistakes committed during language learning process as in insult and further slows down the process.

According to Brown (2000) language teaching approaches in the last three decades have been characterized by the creation of contexts in which students are made to feel free to take risks and to orally try out hypotheses. He further claims that it broke down some of the barriers that often make learners reluctant to try out their new language. One

would clearly agree with him when he argues that If we never ventured to speak a sentence until we were absolutely certain of its total correctness, we would likely never communicate productively at all (Brown, 2000).

4. Risk-taking

Risk-Taking is "the ability to make intelligent guesses" (Rubin & Thompson, 1994). Beebe (1983) described some of the reasons that create fear of risk-taking:

- In the classroom: a bad grade in the course, a fail on the exam, a reproach from the teacher, a smirk from a classmate, punishment or embarrassment imposed by oneself.
- Outside the classroom: fear of looking ridiculous, fear of the frustration coming from a listener's blank look, fear of the alienation of not being able to communicate and thereby get close to other human beings & fear of losing their identity.

Dufeu (1994) suggests teachers need to establish an adequate affective framework so that learners "feel comfortable" as they take their first public steps in the strange world of a foreign language.

To achieve this teachers have to create a climate of acceptance that will

- stimulate self-confidence
- encourage participants to experiment and to discover the target language

Though risk taking is useful to some extent, high risk-taking will not always yield positive results in second language learning. A number of studies have found that successful language learners make willing and accurate guesses. Thus, it is not always good to be impulsive.

5. Anxiety

Anxiety is a factor that is that is closely related with self-esteem and inhibition and risk-taking. Anxiety can play an important role in L2 learning if it interferes with the learning process. Even though it is a common feeling, it is not easy to define. It comes with the feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry. A learner's willingness to communicate has also been related to anxiety. It is often affected by the number of people present, the topic of conversation, and the formality of the circumstances.

The two types of anxiety have been identified are:

i. Trait anxiety: it is a more permanent tendency to be anxious
ii. State anxiety: it is a type of anxiety experienced in relation to some particular event or act which can be temporary and context-specific

According to MacIntyre and Gardner, (1991), Trait anxiety, because of its global and somewhat ambiguously defined nature, has not proved to be useful in predicting second language achievement. But, According to Brown (2000), recent research on language anxiety, as it has come to be known, focuses more specifically on the situational nature of state anxiety. Brown (2000) further states that three components of foreign language anxiety have been identified. They are:

i. Communication apprehension, arising from learners' inability to adequately express mature thoughts and ideas;
ii. Fear of negative social evaluation, arising from a learner's need to make a positive social impression on others;
iii. Test anxiety or apprehension over academic evaluation.

Recent research acknowledges that not all anxiety is bad and a certain amount of tension can have a positive effect and facilitate learning. According to its usefulness, two types of anxiety have been identified. They are:

i. Debilitative Anxiety (harmful anxiety)
ii. Facilitative Anxiety (helpful anxiety)

Facilitative anxiety, a positive factor, is the kind of anxiety, concern or apprehension needed to accomplish is. Brown (2000) suggests that it can keep one poised, alert, and just slightly unbalanced to the point that one cannot relax entirely (a symptom of just enough tension to get the job done). Bailey (1983) studied the benefits of facilitative anxiety in learning foreign languages and found that while competitiveness sometimes hindered her progress, at other times it motivated her to study harder. In Bailey's study of competitiveness and anxiety in second language learning, facilitative anxiety was one of the keys to success, closely related to competitiveness.

III. Conclusion

From the details in the sections given above, one can conclude that individual learner differences play a crucial role in the acquisition of second language. However, despite the efforts of many researchers at reaching a conclusive theory with regard to this, success has eluded them. At present, the scientific study of the role of these differences in second language learning may not be very sophisticated and advanced, but it can be hoped that the growing awareness of the need to focus on the individual student and his individuality in a language learning situation will fuel the need to study the phenomenon in a detailed and empirical manner. Moreover, the analysis of these differences reiterates the commonly held belief that a teacher, especially a language teacher, apart from imparting knowledge must also be a psychologist who can modify his/ her teaching methodology according to the factors related to the individual differences of his/ her students. It is not enough to just know that all students are different from each other. The teacher should also be skilled and willing enough to help the students use these differences to their advantage in the process of second language acquisition. Thus it is hoped that the study of individual differences and their pedagogical implications

will further lead to the kind of teaching practices that increase the success ratio at second language acquisition.

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Frequency of Textual Metadiscourse Resources (MTRs) in Two Original and Simplified Novels

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***Abstract*—The present study was carried out to compare the use of metadiscourse textual resources (MTRs) in terms of frequency in two original novels and their simplified counterparts (i.e., Wuthering Heights and Tess of the D'Urbervilles). The researchers were interested to understand how writers of original and simplified novels made use of metadiscourse elements and whether original and simplified novels differed in the use of these resources. The corpus used in this study was analyzed based on Hyland and Tse's (2004) model. The frequency of MTRs was calculated per 1,000 words and the difference in their distribution across original novels and their simplified versions was checked using the statistical analysis technique of Chi-Square. The findings indicated that there was not a significant difference in the frequency of MTRs between original and simplified novels analyzed here, implying that the writers of both original and simplified novels strived to provide a coherent text.**

***Index Terms*—metatexual resources, original novel, simplified novel, text analysis**

I. Introduction

As part of teaching and learning foreign languages, written language has been regarded as a primary means of communication for several centuries; and literature has been viewed as an example of linguistic excellence, mediated mainly through written language. The elucidation and teaching of rules of language, accordingly, has been restricted to written texts (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009). In the last two decades, interest in the written language has been extended to almost all kinds of writing in the field of teaching foreign languages. Texts, according to Widdowson (2007), are the noticeable traces of the process of mediating a message. In conversation, these traces are disjointed and vanish quickly. They can be taped but they do not need to be, and are not usually recorded. Consequently, texts are produced by participants in spoken communication without being recorded, and their negotiation is regulated on-line. Written text, however, is recorded by the writer and is interpreted as a separate process.

Although writing is one of the principal responsibilities of academics, and no one can overlook its importance in academic life, students of EFL will especially find writing a significant but a more demanding task to master than oral skills (Marandi, 2002). Therefore, conscious awareness of the rules and conventions that govern, for example scholarly communication, is a prerequisite for both effective written and oral production and processing of academic discourse (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009).

One aspect of such language awareness is metadiscourse awareness which specifically refers to "self-reflective linguistic material referring to the evolving text and to the writer and imagined reader of that text" (Hyland & Tse, 2004, p.156). According to Mauranen (1993, p.9), "through metatext, the writer steps in explicitly to make his or her presence felt in the text, to give guidance to the readers with respect to how the text is organized, to what functions different parts of it have, and to what the author's attitudes to the propositions are". According to Hyland (2005), students are often told that successful writing in English is 'reader-friendly'. It must fit together logically, be signposted to guide readers, and take their likely responses and processing difficulties into account. But it also needs to work for the writer too, as we communicate for a reason: we use language to persuade, inform, entertain or perhaps just engage an audience, and this means conveying an attitude to what we say and to our readers. These functions are collectively known as *metadiscourse:* the linguistic expressions which refer to the evolving text and to the writer and imagined readers of that text. Although the presence and function of metadiscourse markers has been examined in a number of different contexts, including textbooks (Hyland, 2000), student writing (Crismore, 1985), science popularizations (Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990), advertisements and research articles (Mauranen, 1993; Hyland, 2000), surprisingly little attention has been given to the genre of literary discourse. Accordingly, this study aimed to investigate the use of textual metadiscourse resources in two original novels and their simplified versions: Wuthering Heights (WH) and Tess of the D'Urbervilles (TD). In other words, this study was an attempt to find answers to the following questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between the original version of WH and its simplified version in the frequency of use of metadiscourse resources?

2. Is there any significant difference between the original version of TD and its simplified version in the frequency of use of metadiscourse resources?

II. Review of Related Literature

A. What is Metadiscourse?

In the 1970s, the study of texts shifted from formal aspects of writing to the organization and structuring of overall discourse. What followed was a "deeper and narrower" (Swales, 1990, p.3) approach which focused on specific genres and attempted to investigate not only formal features but also communicative aspects of written texts. By the early 1990s, linguists had begun to react against the strong emphasis on propositional meaning in text analysis. This movement resulted in a range of new perspectives on text, among which studies of metadiscourse have gained prominence. The term metadiscourse, according to Vande Kopple (2002), goes back to the work of linguist Zellig Harris in 1959 to offer a way of understanding language in use, representing a writer's or speaker's attempts to guide a receiver's perception of a text. The concept has been further developed by writers such as Williams (1981), and Vande Kopple (1985) and collects together a range of linguistic features such as hedges, connectives, and various forms of text commentary to show how writers and speakers intrude into their unfolding text to influence their interlocutor's reception of it (Hyland, 2005). The concept of metadiscourse derives from the postulate that people use language not only to convey ideational meaning, i.e. meaning based on information about the world, but that this referential meaning is complemented with other dimensions of linguistic meaning (Hempel & Degand, 2008). In 1987 Coates criticized the fact that studies about non-referential linguistic meanings are either scarce or not given the appropriate attention: "There has been a dangerous tendency among many linguists, philosophers and semanticists to concentrate on the referential function of language at the expense of all the others" (Coates, 1987, p. 113).

Halliday tried to capture these dimensions with his concept of metafunctions of language use which express "three rather distinct and independent sets of underlying options" called macro-functions (Halliday, 1973, p.66). He claims that adult persons attempt to combine these macro-functions in all different language levels in order to express their lived experience, their relationship to the interlocutor(s), and the organization of their discourse into coherent chunks.

B. Classification of Metalinguistic Devices

Within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), language is seen as being organized around and simultaneously realizing, three broad purposes or 'metafunctions' (Hyland, 2005). Halliday's (1994) macro-functions provide the most appropriate basis for classification of metalinguistic devices. In Halliday's grammatical theory, the ideational or referential function represents the external world, including not only the representation of physical experiences and internal/mental processes, such as, thoughts and feelings (the experiential subfunction, but also the fundamental logical relations that exist among these experiences and processes (the logical subfunction). The logical relations are expressed linguistically through syntactic devices of co-ordination, indirect speech, etc. The interpersonal function encompasses the relations between the addressor and the addressee in a discourse situation or speech event. Linguistically, the interpersonal function is realized through the use of first/second person pronouns and speech acts, such as, questions and directives. The textual function is concerned with the way language establishes links with itself and the situation to produce text that is linguistically cohesive and semantically coherent.

Generally, metadsicoursal comments are argued to have two main functions: textual and interpersonal. The first kind helps to organize the discourse by pointing out topic shifts, signaling sequences, cross referencing, connecting ideas, previewing material, and so on. The second kind modifies and highlights aspects of the text and gives the writer's attitude to it with hedges, boosters, self-reference, and features generally labeled as evaluation or appraisal. Broad functions are thus subdivided into more specific functions through which the writer regulates ongoing interaction and helps make the text comprehensible to a particular readership (Hyland & Tse, 2004). Recently Hyland and Tse (2004) claimed that all metadiscoursal categories are interpersonal, therefore they proposed interactive and interactional instead of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse respectively. Hyland and Tse's metadiscourse model entails two sub-divisions: Interactive resources and interactional resource. The interactional resources consist of five categories: Hedges, Boosters, Attitude markers, Self-mentions, Engagement markers. The interactive resources consist of the following categories:

1. Transitions markers: a set of devices which used to mark additive, contrastive, and consequential steps in the discourse, as opposed to the external world and help readers to interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument. They consist of items such as: *in addition, but, thus, and*, etc.

2. Frame markers: They are elements that show schematic text structure and composed of items used to sequence, to label text stages, to announce discourse goals, and to indicate topic shifts: *my purpose here is to, to conclude*, etc.

3. Endophoric markers: they are expression that refer to other parts of the text to make additional information available to the reader, such as: *noted above, see Fig, in section 2*

4. Evidentials: they are the source of information from other such as: *Z states, According to X*, etc.

5. Code glosses: elements that provide additional information by explaining, rephrasing or elaborating what has been said as: *in other words, e.g.*, etc.

C. Key Principles of Metadiscourse

Hyland (2005) proposes a functional model of metadiscourse. A model or theory which is based on the assumption that the rhetorical features of metadiscourse can be understood more clearly when they are used or identified in contexts in which they occur. Hence the analyses of metadiscourse have to be conducted as part of that particular context or as part of that particular community practices, values and ideas. The functional theoretical framework of metadiscourse defines writers as the conductors of interaction with the readers. The notion of the writer-reader interactions has underpinnings on the following three key principles of metadiscourse proposed by Hyland and Tse (2004):

- Metadiscourse is distinct from propositional aspects of discourse.
- Metadiscourse refers to aspects of the text that embody writer-reader interactions.
- Metadiscourse refers to relations only those are internal to the discourse. (p. 159)

The common thread in definitions of metadiscourse is that it concerns meanings other than propositional ones. Similarly Vande Kopple (1985) defines metadiscourse as 'the linguistic material which does not add propositional information but which signals the presence of an author', and Crismore (1983, p. 2) refers to it as "the author's intrusion into the discourse, either explicitly or non-explicitly, to direct rather than inform, showing readers how to understand what is said and meant in the primary discourse and how to "take" the author".. Halliday (1994, p. 70), for example, states that propositional material is something that can be argued about, affirmed, denied, doubted, insisted upon, qualified, tempered, regretted and so on. The role of metadiscourse is therefore to signal the writer's communicative intent in presenting propositional matter (Hyland, 2005).

The second principle of the model sees metadiscourse as embodying the interaction necessary for successful communication. As such it rejects the strict duality of textual and interpersonal functions found in much of the metadiscourse literature. Instead all metadiscourse is interpersonal in that it takes account of the reader's knowledge, textual experience, and processing needs and that it provides writers with an armory of rhetorical appeals to achieve this (Hyland & Tse, 2004). If it is accepted that textual items can realize either interpersonal or propositional functions depending on their context, then there is a need of a means of distinguishing their primary function in the discourse. According to Hyland and Tse (2004), an internal relation thus connects the situations described by the propositions and is solely communicative, while an external relation refers to those situations themselves

Dahl (2004) proposes a taxonomy consisting of two categories of metatextual elements. The first, called locational metatext, comprises linguistic elements which refer to the text itself or to parts of it. her second category has been termed rhetorical metatext. It includes meta-elements which assist the reader in the processing of the text by making explicit the rhetorical acts performed by the writer in the argumentation process. Rahman (2004) labeled the function of endophoric markers as discourse entities; furthermore, he divided Hyland and Tse's (2004) frame markers into four parts: discourse acts, discourse labels, illocutionary acts and topic shifting. Rahman (2004) labeled the function of endophoric markers as discourse entities; furthermore, he divided Hyland and Tse's (2004) frame markers into four parts: discourse acts, discourse labels, illocutionary acts and topic shifting. Dafouz-Milne's textual metadiscourse resources is divided into seven categories: logical markers, sequencers, reminders that refer back to previous sections in the text, topicalizers, code glosses, illocutionary markers, and announcements that refer forwards to future sections in the text.

D. Use of Literature in EFL Classrooms

There were many debates over the appropriateness of using literature in second language classrooms as a source in developing reading, writing and other skills (Widdowson, 1984). Following a long period of disfavor, interest in using literature in ESL has been steadily increasing. Widdowson (1975), one of the proponents of the use of literature, points to such writing as examples of authentic use of language as discourse. Povey (1972, as cited in Harper, 1990) believes that literature will extend vocabulary and syntactic knowledge of second language learners by providing examples of language use. But this is not the case.

Some researchers criticized the use of literature for second language instruction due to the huge number of vocabulary claiming that unfamiliar content does not act as a means of understanding the writer's message but it acts as an obstacle that makes comprehension more difficult. In addition, complex syntactical structures, as well as figurative use of language, increase the complexity of reading (Harper, 1990), so the simplified version is often used instead in EFL contexts. Results of reading in both first and second language reading have demonstrated that simplification of texts may actually increase the difficulty of reading a text. Deleting explicit cohesive and rhetorical structures reduces the natural redundancy of language, forcing the reader to make inferences to compensate for missing information. Results of research reviewed in Harper (1990) have proven that in most cases the simplified versions are more difficult for students to comprehend than the original texts. In literature, form and function are closely bound: syntactic and semantic simplification may actually work against the comprehensibility of the text. As it was mentioned earlier, Hyland (2000) believes that metadiscourse is recognized as an important means of facilitating communication, supporting a writer's position, and building a relationship with an audience. Thus this work sought to investigate how original and simplified versions of novels differ in the frequency of use of metadiscourse resources.

III. METHOD

A. Materials and Data Selection Criteria

The data for this study came from two original English novels and two simplified versions of those novels rewritten by either a native or a non-native writer. The text type to be analyzed was therefore English novels and their simplified versions. The choice of this type of literary writing was due to their importance in developing critical reading skills, cultural knowledge of the second language and writing skills. The choice of the novels was based on a number of criteria: the first criterion was the popularity of these novels such that a person who is familiar with literature knows these novels. The other criterion was their availability in most English bookstores; and the last criterion was the existence of their simplified versions for non-proficient readers. The texts selected based on such criteria were "Tess of The D'Urbervilles" (TD) by Thomas Hardy and its simplified version by Clare West, and "Wuthering Heights" (WH) by Emily Bronte and its simplified version by Clare West. Once the texts were selected, both versions were analyzed in terms of the frequency of metadiscourse textual resources (MTRs).

B. Procedures of Data Analysis

The main objective of this study was to examine the occurrence of MTRs in two original novels and their simplified versions. To this end, the original novels and their simplified versions were divided into three sections. Since the length of original novels was much more than that of their simplified versions, and also because what was to be analyzed in both simplified and original texts should have had similar content, based on the chapters of simplified versions, corresponding chapters of original novels were identified. For instance, after the original novels were such made into chapters based on the content of their simplified versions, these texts were divided into three sections. We deemed it appropriate to divide the novels into three parts (the beginning, the middle and the ending), and the choice of which third of which pair was to be analyzed was made randomly. The second third for "Tess of The D'Urbervilles" in both versions and the last third for "Wuthering Heights" in both versions were identified for further analysis. After these divisions were made, a chapter in the relevant third was selected randomly and that chapter was analyzed for the occurrence of MTRs in both original and simplified versions. To determine the frequency of MTRs, a list of such items was compiled from Hyland (2005), Dahl (2004), Rahman (2004), Hempel and Degand (2008) and Dafouz-Milne (2008). Then they were classified into seven categories of analysis mentioned above. Some other items found in the texts were also included.

It should be mentioned again that metadiscourse is closely linked to the context in which it appears, as Hyland (1996, p. 437) strengthened this issue by asserting that "the choice of a particular device does not always permit a single, unequivocal pragmatic interpretation". As a result, the functions of all items were examined qualitatively based on their actual occurrences in context. Therefore, particular attention was paid to the context in which MTRs were used. Counting of items was conducted manually. After determining the frequency of MTRs in the identified chapters and classifying them into seven categories of analysis, the total words used in each chapter were also counted. Since the size of identified section in each original and simplified versions varied, the frequency of MTRs was calculated per 1,000 words. Inferential statistics were used to find out whether the frequency of occurrences of MTRs was significantly different in original and simplified literary texts. The analysis technique employed was Chi-square, with a significance of P=0.05.

IV. Results and Discussion

In order to find out the differences between original and simplified novels in the frequency of use of MTRs, first, we calculated the distribution of MTRs in the identified sections of original and simplified novels, and then the frequency of MTRs was calculated per 1,000 words.

A. Rhetorical Distribution of MTRs in Original and Simplified Versions of WH

The first novel that was analyzed was *Wuthering Heights*: randomly the last third of this novel was identified and again randomly a part of this third was selected for analysis. In the simplified version of *Wuthering Heights*, chapter fifteen was analyzed that was equal to chapters twenty five, twenty six, twenty seven and twenty eight of the original novel. Table 1 presents the total number of words in the identified section, and the total frequency of MTRs in the original and simplified versions of *Wuthering Heights.* As it is shown in the table, the total use of MTRs in the original novel is 750 with a frequency rate of 73.15 per 1,000 words, while the total number of MTRs in the simplified version of *Wuthering Heights* is 110, in which the frequency rate per 1,000 words is 49.15 which is lower than that of the original one.

TABLE 1:
FREQUENCY OF MTRS IN ORIGINAL AND SIMPLIFIED VERSIONS OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS

W H		
Total words	Original	simplified
	10252	2238
Total devices of MTRs	750	110
F Per 1,000	73.15	49.15

Note: F= Frequency, MTRs= Metadiscourse Textual Resources, WH= Wuthering Heights

Chi-Square test was used to see whether the difference between original and simplified versions of WH in the use of MTRs is significant or not. The observed value of x^2 was 4.7 and which is more than its critical value:

$$\text{Observed } x^2 = 4.7 > \text{critical } x^2 = 3.84$$

Therefore, there is a significant difference between original and simplified versions of WH in the use of MTRs and the first null hypothesis is rejected in the case of WH.

B. Rhetorical Distribution of MTRs in Original and Simplified Versions of TD

The second novel that was analyzed was *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*; the second third of this novel was selected randomly and in this third, chapter ten was identified in the simplified version randomly that was equal to chapter eighteen in the original one. In Table 2, the total number of words and the total frequency of MTRs in original and simplified versions of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* are presented. The total frequency of MTRs in the original novel is 150, representing the frequency rate of 53.84 per 1,000 words, whereas the total frequency of MTRs in the simplified version is 71 with the frequency rate of 46.04 per 1,000 words which is lower than that of the original novel.

TABLE 2:
FREQUENCY OF MTRS IN ORIGINAL AND SIMPLIFIED VERSIONS OF TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

T D		
Total words	Original	Simplified
	2786	1542
Total devices of MTRs	150	71
F Per 1,000	53.84	46.04

Note: F= Frequency, MTRs= Metadiscourse Textual Resources, TD: Tess of the D U'rbervilles

In order to test whether the difference between original and simplified versions of TD in the use of MTRs is significant or not, Chi-Square test was used. The result of Chi-Square test showed that the observed value of x^2 is 0.6. According to the table of critical values (Hatch & Farhady, 1981, p. 279), critical value of x^2 for 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 level is 3.84. Because the critical value of x^2 is greater than the observed value of x^2, the second null hypothesis is accepted.

In order to provide a definite answer to the question of whether the differences between the frequencies of MTRs in original and simplified versions of the novels studied in this research (put together) were significant or not, an average frequency (out of 1,000 words) was calculated for both original novels and for both simplified versions and then Chi-Square was used to compare the average frequencies. Table 3 displays the average frequency of MTRs in original and simplified novels.

TABLE 3:
AVERAGE F FOR ALL ORIGINAL AND SIMPLIFIED NOVELS

	original	simplified
F per 1,000 w	63.49	47.59

Note: F= frequency per 1,000 words.

The observed value of x^2 calculated here is 2.26, which is less than the critical value of x^2:

$$\text{Observed } x^2 = 2.26 < \text{critical } x^2 = 3.84$$

The result of the test indicates that differences between original and simplified novels in the use of MTRs are not statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the simplified and original versions of the novels (put together) analyzed here in terms of the frequency of use of MTRs.

V. CONCLUSION

This study examined the frequency distribution of MTRs in original and simplified versions of WH and TD. Thus through Chi-Square test the hypotheses was tested to see whether there is a significant difference between original novels and their simplified versions in the frequency of use of MTRs. The findings suggested that while each novel acted differently, the frequency of MTRs was almost identical in original novels and their simplified versions when both novels are taken together. This can be explained by the fact that the writers of original and simplified versions seem to be aware of the norms of writing. In the case of WH, the use of MTRs in original novel was higher than the simplified version. Chi-Square test revealed that there was a significant difference between original and simplified versions of WH in the use of MTRs. This shows that the writer of the original version of WH tends to establish more coherent text, hence providing more guidance to the reader to comprehend the text. This study also examined the overall distribution of MTRs in original and simplified versions of TD. The results showed that the overall distribution of MTRs in both original and simplified versions is identical and there is no significant difference between them in the use of MTRs and this is due to the familiarity of writers with the norms of writing. Generally, we conclude that there is not a significant difference between original and simplified novels in the use of MTRs and the difficulty in the

comprehending of novels are not due to the lack of MTRs. And the writers in both versions tend to structure, segment and produce coherent texts.

We have been unable to identify any literature related to the analysis of literary genres in terms of MTRs. As far as other genres are concerned however, there is evidence, for example, Crismore and Fransworth (1990), that differences in text type influence the type of metadiscourse. According to Dafouz-Milne (2008), texts with a balanced number of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse are the most persuasive and texts with a low index of metadiscourse markers are less persuasive; and it seems that readers highly value texts that guide and show consideration toward the audience.

The results of the present study have obvious importance in increasing students' awareness of the way writers of original and simplified novels organize their writing. Metadiscourse is a valuable tool which provides rhetorical effects in the text such as providing logic and reliance in the text. Writers of both original and simplified novels use MTRs in their novels, so it is impossible to produce coherent texts without such resources. Metadiscoursal analysis is a useful means for the teachers to help students control their writing practices for effective writing.

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Textual Metadiscourse Resources (MTRs) in Original and Simplified Versions of *Oliver Twist*

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***Abstract*—The present study was carried out to compare the use of metadiscourse textual resources (MTRs) in terms of frequency and categorical distribution in an original novel and its simplified counterpart (i.e., Oliver Twist). The researchers were interested to understand how writers of original and simplified novels made use of metadiscourse elements and whether original and simplified novels differed in the use of these resources. The corpus used in this study was analyzed based on Hyland and Tse's (2004) model. The frequency and categorical distribution of MTRs was calculated per 1,000 words and the difference in their distribution across original novels and their simplified versions was checked using the statistical analysis technique of Chi-Square. The findings indicated that there was not a significant difference in the frequency and categorical distribution of MTRs between the original and simplified versions of Oliver Twist, implying that the writers of both original and simplified novels strived to provide a coherent text.**

***Index Terms*—metatexual resources, original novel, simplified novel, text analysis**

I. Introduction

Written language has been regarded as a primary means of communication for several centuries, and literature has been viewed as an example of linguistic excellence, mediated mainly through written language. The elucidation and teaching of the rules of language, accordingly, was restricted to written texts (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009). Narrative genre of writing in general and stories in particular are well-represented in some form in the language learners' schemata, and this may be a valuable touchstone in introducing interesting, authentic reading material in a form with which the reader is familiar (Harper, 1990). The debate over the appropriateness of using literature in second language classrooms as a relevant source in developing reading, writing and other skills is well-documented (Widdowson, 1984).

Critics of the use of literature for second language instruction cite the potential difficulties caused by the uncontrolled vocabulary of much native language literature. Unfamiliar or inappropriate content may serve as obstacles to comprehension rather than means toward understanding a writer's message. In addition, the stylistic nature of literature often involves the use of more complex syntactical structures, as well as figurative use of language, thus increasing the complexity of reading (Harper, 1990). In order to solve some of these problems associated with the use of original novels in EFL classes, their simplified versions are usually used which of course are not without their problems. For example persuasion is achieved differently in simplified and original novels. Persuasion, as a part of the rhetorical structure, is partly achieved by employing metadiscourse in all kinds of writing. Metadiscourse is the linguistic expressions which refer to the evolving text and to the writer and imagined readers of that text. Although the presence and function of metadiscourse markers has been examined in a number of different contexts, including textbooks (Hyland, 1999, 2000), student writing (Crismore, 1983), science popularizations (Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990) and research articles (Mauranen, 1993; Hyland, 1998, 1999, 2000), surprisingly little attention has been given to the genre of literary discourse. Thus, this study tries to investigate the use of textual metadiscourse resources in an original novel and its simplified version to find out whether there is any significant difference in the original and simplified version of Oliver Twist (OT). In other words, this study was an attempt to find answers to the following questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between the original version of OT and its simplified version in the frequency of use of metadiscourse resources?
2. Is there any significant difference in the type of metadiscourse resources employed in the original and simplified versions of OT?

The questions were tentatively answered in the form of null-hypotheses to be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

II. Review of the Related Literature

A. What is Metadiscourse?

In the 1970s, the study of texts shifted from formal aspects of writing to the organization and structuring of overall discourse. What followed was a "deeper and narrower" (Swales, 1990, p. 3) approach which focused on specific genres and attempted to investigate not only formal features but also communicative aspects of written texts. By the early 1990s, linguists had begun to react against the strong emphasis on propositional meaning in text analysis. This movement resulted in a range of new perspectives on text, among which studies of metadiscourse have gained prominence. The term metadiscourse, according to VandeKopple (2002), goes back to the work of linguist Zellig Harris in 1959 to offer a way of understanding language in use, representing a writer's or speaker's attempts to guide a receiver's perception of a text. According to Hyland (2005), students are often told that successful writing in English is 'reader-friendly'. It must fit together logically, be signposted to guide readers, and take their likely responses and processing difficulties into account. But it also needs to work for the writer too, as we communicate for a reason: we use language to persuade, inform, entertain or perhaps just engage an audience, and this means conveying an attitude to what we say and to our readers. The concept of metadiscourse derives from the postulate that people use language not only to convey ideational meaning, i.e. meaning based on information about the world, but that this referential meaning is complemented with other dimensions of linguistic meaning (Hempel & Degand, 2008).

B. Classification of Metalinguistic Devices

Within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), language is seen as being organized around, and simultaneously realizing, three broad purposes or 'metafunctions' (Hyland, 2005). Halliday's (1994) macro-functions provide the most appropriate basis for classification of metalinguistic devices. In Halliday's grammatical theory, the ideational or referential function represents the external world, including not only the representation of physical experiences and internal/mental processes, such as, thoughts and feelings (the experiential subfunction), but also the fundamental logical relations that exist among these experiences and processes (the logical subfunction). The logical relations are expressed linguistically through syntactic devices of co-ordination, indirect speech, etc. The interpersonal function encompasses the relations between the addressor and the addressee in a discourse situation or speech event. Linguistically, the interpersonal function is realized through the use of first/second person pronouns and speech acts, such as, questions and directives. The textual function is concerned with the way language establishes links with itself and the situation to produce text that is linguistically cohesive and semantically coherent.

Generally, metadsicoursal comments are argued to have two main functions: textual and interpersonal. The first kind helps to organize the discourse by pointing out topic shifts, signaling sequences, cross referencing, connecting ideas, previewing material, and so on. The second kind modifies and highlights aspects of the text and gives the writer's attitude to it with hedges, boosters, self-reference, and features generally labeled as evaluation or appraisal. Broad functions are thus subdivided into more specific functions through which the writer regulates ongoing interaction and helps make the text comprehensible to a particular readership (Hyland &Tse, 2004). Recently Hyland and Tse (2004) claimed that all metadiscoursal categories are interpersonal, therefore they proposed interactive and interactional instead of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse, respectively. Hyland and Tse's metadiscourse model entails two sub-divisions: Interactive resources and interactional resources. The interactional resources consist of five categories: Hedges, Boosters, Attitude markers, Self-mentions, and Engagement markers. The interactive resources consist of the following categories:

1. Transition markers: a set of devices which used to mark additive, contrastive, and consequential steps in the discourse, as opposed to the external world and help readers to interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument. They consist of items such as: *in addition, but, thus, and,* etc.
2. Frame markers: they are elements that show schematic text structure and are composed of items used to sequence, to label text stages, to announce discourse goals, and to indicate topic shifts: *my purpose here is to, to conclude,* etc.
3. Endophoric markers: they are expressions that refer to other parts of the text to make additional information available to the reader, such as: *as noted above, see Fig, in section 2,* etc.
4. Evidentials: they are the source of information from others such as: *Z states, According to X,* etc.
5. Code glosses: elements that provide additional information by explaining, rephrasing or elaborating what has been said as: *in other words, e.g.,* etc.

C. Key Principles of Metadiscourse

Hyland (2005) proposes a functional model of metadiscourse. A model or theory which is based on the assumption that the rhetorical features of metadiscourse can be understood more clearly when they are used or identified in contexts in which they occur. Hence the analyses of metadiscourse have to be conducted as part of that particular context or as part of that particular community practices, values and ideas. The functional theoretical framework of metadiscourse defines writers as the conductors of interaction with the readers. The notion of the writer-reader interactions has underpinnings on the following three key principles of metadiscourse proposed by Hyland and Tse (2004):

- Metadiscourse is distinct from propositional aspects of discourse.
- Metadiscourse refers to aspects of the text that embody writer-reader interactions.
- Metadiscourse refers to only those relations that are internal to the discourse. (p. 159)

The common thread in definitions of metadiscourse is that it concerns meanings other than propositions. VandeKopple's view (2002, p. 93) of different levels of meaning is as follows: "On one level we expand ideational

material. On the levels of metadiscourse, we do not expand ideational material but help our readers connect, organize, interpret, evaluate, and develop attitudes toward that material". Based on Hyland (2005), the point to be made here is that, VandeKopple and others are simply wrong in stating that metadiscourse is a separate 'level of meaning'. Texts are communicative acts, not lists of propositions. The meaning of a text depends on the integration of its component elements, both propositional and metadiscoursal, and these do not work independently of each other. Metadiscourse is an essential part of any text and contributes to the ways it is understood and acted upon; it is not a separate and separable set of stylistic devices that can either be included or not without affecting how a text is presented and read.

The second principle of the model sees metadiscourse as embodying the interaction necessary for successful communication. As such it rejects the strict duality of textual and interpersonal functions found in much of the metadiscourse literature. Instead all metadiscourse is interpersonal in that it takes account of the reader's knowledge, textual experience, and processing needs and that it provides writers with an armory of rhetorical appeals to achieve this (Hyland & Tse, 2004). Textual elements thus, have an enabling role (Halliday, 1994), facilitating the creation of discourse by allowing writers to generate texts which make sense within their contexts. Their role is crucial for expressing propositional and interpersonal functions, not something they do independently of them. If it is accepted that textual items can realize either interpersonal or propositional functions depending on their context, then there is a need of a means of distinguishing their primary function in the discourse. According to Hyland and Tse (2004), an internal relation thus connects the situations described by the propositions (which is solely communicative), while an external relation refers to those situations themselves.

Dahl (2004) proposes a taxonomy consisting of two categories of metatextual elements. The first, called locational metatext, comprises linguistic elements which refer to the text itself or to parts of it. Her second category has been termed rhetorical metatext. It includes meta-elements which assist the reader in the processing of the text by making explicit the rhetorical acts performed by the writer in the argumentation process. Rahman (2004) labeled the function of endophoric markers as discourse entities; furthermore, he divided Hyland and Tse's (2004) frame markers into four parts: discourse acts, discourse labels, illocutionary acts and topic shifting. Dafouz-Milne's (2008) textual metadiscourse resources are divided into seven categories: logical markers, sequencers, reminders that refer back to previous sections in the text, topicalizers, code glosses, illocutionary markers, and announcements that refer forwards to future sections in the text. Although the above classifications have been applied to the analysis of academic and other genres of writing, the researchers have been unable to locate any particular study in the literature specifically applying the above or any other similar classification to narrative genre in general and novels in particular.

III. Method

A. Materials and Data Selection Criteria

The data for this study came from an original English novel and the simplified version of that novel (i.e. Oliver Twist) written by a native writer (the original version by Charles Dickens and the simplified version by Latif Doss). The text type to be analyzed was, therefore, English novel and its simplified version. The choice of this type of literary writing was due to the importance in developing critical reading skills, as well as cultural knowledge of the second language and writing skills. The choice of the novel was based on a number of criteria: the first criterion was the popularity of this novel such that a person who is familiar with literature knows this novel. The other criterion was the availability of both simplified and original versions of the novel in most English bookstores in our country (Iran). Both versions were analyzed in terms of the frequency and categorical distribution of metadiscourse textual resources (MTRs).

B. Procedures of Data Analysis

The original novel and its simplified version were divided into three sections. Since the length of the original novel was much more than that of its simplified version, and also because what was to be analyzed in both simplified and original texts should have had similar content, based on the chapters of the simplified version, corresponding chapters of original novel was identified. After the original novel was such made into chapters based on the content of its simplified version, the texts were divided into three sections. Then a section was selected randomly in both the original and simplified versions. After these divisions were made, a chapter in the relevant third was selected randomly and that chapter was analyzed for the occurrence of MTRs in both the original and simplified versions. To determine the frequency of MTRs, a list of such items was compiled from Hyland (2005), Dahl (2004), Rahman (2004), Hempel and Degand (2008) and Dafouz-Milne (2008). Then they were classified into six categories of analysis mentioned above.

It should be mentioned again that metadiscourse is closely linked to the context in which it appears, as Hyland (1996, p. 437) asserts: "the choice of a particular device does not always permit a single, unequivocal pragmatic interpretation". As a result, the functions of all items were examined qualitatively based on their actual occurrences in context. After determining the frequency of MTRs in the identified chapters and classifying them into six categories of analysis, the total words used in each chapter were also counted. Counting of items was conducted manually. Since the size of identified section in the original and simplified versions varied, the frequency of MTRs was calculated per 1,000 words. Inferential statistics were used to find out whether the frequency of occurrences and the categorical distribution of MTRs were significantly different in the original and simplified literary texts. The analysis technique employed was Chi-square, with a significance of P=0.05.

IV. Results and Discussion

In order to find out the differences between the original and simplified versions of OT in the frequency of use and categorical distribution of MTRs, first, we calculated the distribution of MTRs in the identified section of the original and simplified novels, and then the frequency of MTRs was calculated per 1,000 words.

A. Rhetorical Distribution of MTRs

The novel that was analyzed was *Oliver Twist* in which the first third was selected randomly and in this third, a part was randomly selected in both the original and simplified versions which had the same content. In the first third of the simplified version, chapter five was selected that was equal to chapters five, six and seven of the original novel.

In this study a section for the original novel and its simplified version was randomly selected with the assumption that the identified section in both should have similar content, and then, the frequency of MTRs was calculated per 1,000 words. Table 4.1 presents the total number of words and the frequency of MTRs in the identified section of the original and simplified versions of *Oliver Twist*. As it is shown in Table 4.1, a total of 467 MTRs were used in the identified section of the original version of *Oliver Twist;* this represents a frequency rate of 54.96 per 1,000 words. Whereas in the simplified version of *Oliver Twist*, a total of 86 MTRs used in which the rate is lower, about 45.45 per 1,000 words.

TABLE 4.1:
FREQUENCY OF MTRS

Total words	Original	Simplified
	8497	1892
Total devices of MTRs	467	86
F Per 1,000	54.96	45.45

Note: F= Frequency, MTRs= Metadiscourse Textual Resources

Table 4.1 displays the observed frequency per 1,000 words. To be able to answer the relevant null hypothesis, that is, there is no significant difference between original and simplified versions of *Oliver Twist* in the frequency of the use of metadiscourse resources, we need to compare the observed frequency with the expected frequencies. Since there are 100.41 MTRs overall, the expected frequency would be 50.20. According to Hatch and Farhady (1981), when we have a definite hypothesis which we wish to test, we must then, test that hypothesis using inferential statistics. The Chi-Square is one test which allows us to do this; it is a test especially designed for nominal data. Thus, Chi-Square (x^2) is the most appropriate test to find out whether there is any significant difference between the frequency of MTRs in the original and simplified novels. The Chi-Square (x^2) was calculated using the following formula:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(\text{observed} - \text{expected})^2}{E}$$

According to Hatch and Farhady (1981), the degree of freedom will be based on the number of groups; there are two groups; so the degree of freedom will be 2-1= 1. The critical value of x^2 (Hatch & Farhady, 1981, p. 279) with 1 degree of freedom is 3.84 for the 0.05 level. The observed value of x^2 calculated here is 0.88, which is smaller than the critical value of x^2.

$$\text{Observed } x^2 = 0.88 < \text{critical } x^2 = 3.84$$

This observation indicates that the difference between the original and simplified versions of OT in the use of MTRs is not statistically significant. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is accepted.

B. Categorical Distribution of MTRs

In order to find out the distribution of six categories of MTRs in the original and simplified versions of OT, the frequency of MTRs in each category per 1,000 words and also their percentage were calculated.

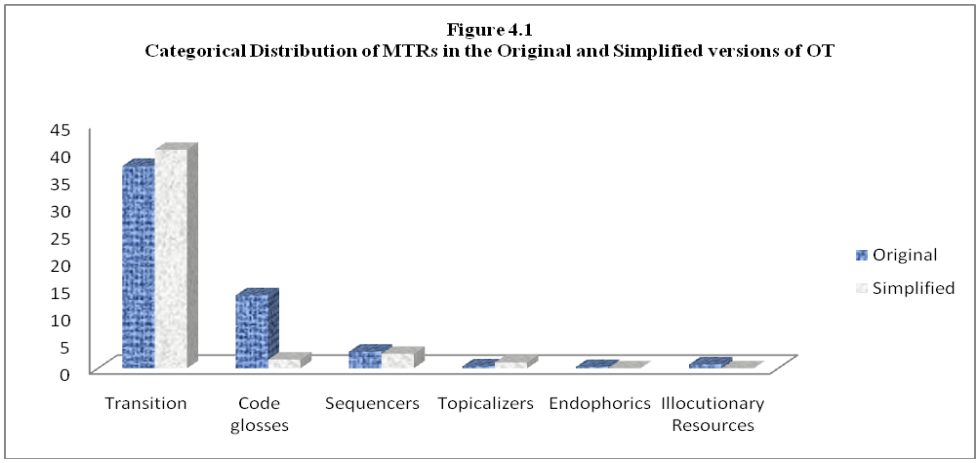
Table 4.2 shows the distribution of these six categories of MTRs in the original and simplified versions of *Oliver Twist*. According to the table, in the original version of *Oliver Twist*, two MTRs with the highest frequency rate are *transitions* (67.67%) and *code glosses* (24.41%); in the simplified version, the same applies for *transitions* with the frequency rate of 88.37% but not for *code glosses* whose frequency rate is 3.49%. Thus, *transitions* are the most frequently used category of MTRs in both the original and simplified versions of *Oliver Twist*. The frequency rate of *sequencers* is almost identical: in the original version their frequency rate is 5.57% and in the simplified novel it is 5.81%. The use of *illocutionary resources* and *endophorics* in the original version is very low while none of these categories exist in the simplified version. Table 4.2 summarizes all this information in one place based on frequencies out of 1000 words as well as their percentage.

TABLE 4.2:
DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF MTRS

	Original			Simplified		
Categories of MTRs	F Per 1,000 W	Percent	Raw	F Per 1,000 W	Percent	Raw
Transitions	37.19	67.67	316	40.17	88.37	76
Code glosses	13.42	24.41	114	1.59	3.49	3
Sequencers	3.06	5.57	26	2.64	5.81	5
Topicalizers	0.35	0.64	3	1.06	2.33	2
Endophorics	0.24	0.43	2	0.00	0.00	0
Illocutionary Resources	0.71	1.28	6	0.00	0.00	0
Total	54.97	100.00	467	45.46	100.00	86

Note: F= Frequency, MTRs= Metadiscourse Textual Resources, W= Words

The distributions of different categories of MTRs in the original and simplified versions of *Oliver Twist* are shown in Figure 4.1.



In this figure, *transitions* and *code glosses* in the original version and *transitions* in the simplified version of *Oliver Twist* are the most frequently used categories of MTRs.

In order to understand whether the differences between MTR category types in the original and simplified versions of OT were statistically significant, the Chi-square test was utilized. The degree of freedom for x^2 analyses is calculated by multiplying the number of categories in each row minus one by the number of categories in each column minus one:

$$DF= (row-1) (column-1) = (2-1) (6-1) = 5$$

The observed value of x^2 calculated here is 9.97, which is less than the critical value of x^2 for 5 degree of freedom at the 0.05 level:

$$\text{Observed } x^2 = 9.97 < \text{critical } x^2 = 11.07$$

Therefore, there is not a significant difference in the type of metadiscourse employed in the original and simplified versions of *Oliver Twist* and the second null hypothesis is also accepted.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the frequency distribution of MTRs in the original and simplified versions of OT. Thus, through Chi-Square test the hypotheses were tested to see whether there is a significant difference between an original novel and its simplified version in the frequency of use and categorical distribution of MTRs. The findings suggested that the frequency of MTRs was almost identical in the original novel and its simplified version. This can be explained by the fact that the writers of original and simplified versions seem to be aware of the norms of writing. Generally, we conclude that there is not a significant difference between original and simplified novels in the use of MTRs and the difficulty in comprehending novels is not due to the lack of MTRs. The writers in both versions tend to structure, segment and produce coherent texts. We have been unable to identify any literature related to the analysis of literary genres in terms of MTRs. As far as other genres are concerned however, there is evidence, for example, Crismore and Fransworth (1990), that differences in text type influence the type of metadiscourse. According to Dafouz-Milne (2008), texts with a balanced number of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse are the most persuasive and texts with a low index of metadiscourse markers are less persuasive; and it seems that readers highly value texts that guide and show consideration toward the audience.

In terms of categorical distribution of MTRs, the findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the type of MTRs employed in the original and simplified versions of OT, therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. The results showed a broad agreement in the use of *transitions* in both versions of OT, demonstrating that the principal

concern of writers was to present information clearly. In line with our findings, Dafouz-Milne (2008) regards *transition*s as the most frequently used items, the possible explanation could be linked to the way in which different communities view and construct their argumentation. Transitions tended to be more marked in soft fields due to discursive nature of these disciplines (Hyland & Tse, 2004).

Code glosses category in the original version had a higher frequency compared to the simplified version, which implies that the writer of the original version of OT presents the text more explicitly than the writer of the simplified version of OT. Dafouz-Milne (2008), regarding the high number of code glosses in the texts, mentions that writers are aware of the broad audience they are addressing and consequently they are also aware of the need to include a number of explicit reading cues as well as more exemplifications, thus, ensuring that the text is read as intended. There were correspondences in the low frequency of *sequencers* and *topicalizers* in the original and simplified versions of OT.

The frequency of *endophorics* and *illocutionary resources* in the original version was very low while there were no instances in the simplified version. In academic writing, there seems to be more *endophorics* as compared to novels. Hyland and Tse (2004), in their investigation of students' postgraduate writing, refer to the high occurrences of endophorics in the engineering discipline due to the fact that engineering's greater reliance is on multi-modality nature which requires frequent references to tables, figures, examples and equations. This is one of the differences between literary writings and academic writing. Dahl (2004) believes that there is a low frequency of references to the articles themselves in economics and linguistics. In fact, there are far more occurrences of the word study than paper or article. Since medical reporting is so formally organized, the content presented is forced into information categories in a given sequence, and no extra processing effort is needed by the expert reader to orient him or herself within the text. In the case of illocutionary resources, Dahl (2004) believes that in contrast to the medical writers, neither economists nor linguists have a standardized text format to rely on. The consequence is that articles within these two disciplines have a more heterogeneous organization which implies how the writer must signal which discourse act is being performed.

The results of the present study have obvious importance in increasing students' awareness of the way writers of original and simplified novels organize their writing. Metadiscourse is a valuable tool which provides rhetorical effects in the text such as providing logic and reliance in the text. Writers of both original and simplified novels use MTRs in their novels, so it is impossible to produce coherent texts without such resources. Metadiscoursal analysis can therefore be recommended to be used a useful means by the teachers to help students control their writing practices for effective writing.

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Using Sound in Teaching Reading in Early Childhood Education

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***Abstract*—Early childhood is as charming as ever. It is an age of imagination and fantasy. Therefore, it is natural that education at this stage should develop the child's imagination through literacy materials such as folk-tales, rhymes and songs etc. This paper is therefore intended to enthuse to the psychological view that children's success in life depends on the preparation they receive when younger. The paper upholds the view that a good preparation of children for life entails giving them the ability to read and write. The importance of literacy is measurable. Literacy is instrumental to the attainment of success of individuals in both career aspirations and quality of life. It is fundamental for learning in school. It impacts on individuals the ability to participate in society and understand important public issues. It also provides foundation upon which skills in the labour industry are built, etc. The paper concludes that literacy, which should start from infancy, could be better taught using the phonics methodology. This is because, in early childhood, education should involve more of playing, singing, clapping, etc, and that is the focal objectives of phonics method. This should be so to support the idea that literacy should not be boring but enjoyable especially as early as infancy, because it is a panacea for achieving life's goals.**

***Index Terms*—sound, literacy, early, childhood, education, phonics, pronunciation**

I. Definition of Literacy

Traditionally, it is considered as the ability to use written language actively and passively. Some definitions of literacy see it as the ability to read, write, spell, listen, and speak. Since the 1980's, some have argued that literacy is ideological which means that it always exits in a context, in tandem with the values associated with the context.

Literacy is a concept claimed and described by a range of different theoretical fields. The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNIESCO) defines literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written material associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals to develop their knowledge and potential and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

Wenner (2009) Hannon (2008), Moll and Harste (1994) said literacy has for instance expanded to include literacy in information technology etc. The definition of literacy has therefore become dynamic evolving, and reflects the continual changes in our society. Moll (1994) added that literacy is not isolated in bits but in students' growing ability to use language and literacy in more broader activities.

Literacy is also the ability to make and communicate meaning from a variety of contextual symbols. Within various levels of development activity, a literate person can derive and convey meaning, and use their knowledge to achieve a desired purpose or goal that requires the use of language skills, spoken or written. A literate person mediates his/her world by deliberately and flexibly orchestrating meaning from one knowledge base and applying it to another knowledge base. For example, knowing that letters symbolize sounds, and that those sounds make sense to which the reader can attach meaning, is an example of the cognitive orchestration of knowledge a literate conducts.

Some have argued that the definition of literacy should be expanded. For example, in the United States, the National Council of Teacher of English and the International Reading Association have added "Visual representing" to the traditional list of competencies. Similarly, in Scotland, literacy has been defined as the ability to read, write and use numeracy to handle information, to express ideas/opinions, to make decisions and solve problems, as family members, workers, citizens and life-long learners.

A basic literacy standard in many societies is the ability to read news papers. Increasingly, communication in commerce or society in general requires the ability to use computers and other digital technologies. Since the 1990s, when the internet came into wide use in the United States and later to other parts of the world, some have ascerted that the definition of literacy should include the ability to use tools associated with the internet. Similarly, other scholars

have it multimedia literacy, computer literacy, information literacy, etc. On the whole, it is argued that literacy includes the cultural, political and historical contexts of the community in which communication occurs.

II. Importance of Literacy

- Literacy is crucial to the success of individuals in both their career aspirations and their quality of life.
- It is more than a basic reading ability, but rather an indication of how adults use written information to function in society.
- Strong literacy skills are closely linked to the probability of having a good job, decent earnings, and access to training opportunities. Individuals with weak literacy skills are more likely to be unemployed, or if employed, to be in jobs that pay little or that offer poor hours or working conditions.
- Literacy is fundamental for learning in school. It has an impact on an individual's ability to participate in society and understand important public issues.
- It provides the foundation upon which skills needed in the labour market are built. A population's literacy skills also have a bearing on how well a country performs economically.
- Literacy enriches children's language. Children are affected by the language they hear and they gradually learn to approximate the variety spoken by those around them. Chomsky (1972) examined children's language in relation to the amount of reading done by them. He found out that children who are read to and who read more on their own have a greater knowledge of complex language structures than children that read less and are hardly read to.
- Literacy also facilitates learning to read. Lesslie (2007) found that children that learned to read early had been read to and had someone who answered their questions.
- It nourishes the child's imagination. Children that experience literacy are provided a rich source of idea for imagination.

They familiarize themselves with possibilities as they try out roles from literature. Young children can have valuable experiences with books if someone carefully guides them through these experiences which tend to develop children's minds, excite their curiosity, and make them interested in reading on their own.

III. Literacy in Early Childhood

The six years of primary school are crucial to the educational development of the child. This is when the child learns to read independently. It is also the time when he is likely to establish reading habits that will prevail through secondary school and adult life. A good primary school reading syllabus should provide for both the development of reading skills and the encouragement of reading for pleasure. Ideally, literacy in this early stage cuts across the entire course of study. There is need to take note of introducing literacy/literature to children since it involves the development of appreciation and taste.

Many Nigerian children now have more contacts and interests than their counterparts some decades ago. This is because, the television and other electronic devices have brought the World to their living rooms, and they watch and listen to various literacy programmes meant for their age and those of adults too. It is necessary to point out here that the home has a great contribution to make not only to the child's personality but also to his cognitive development, through child stimulation. Child stimulation starts as early as the child is born. The mother must not delay talking to the infant, thinking he/she is too small to understand. As soon as the senses begin to function, learning starts. That is why the care giver must start right from birth to appeal to all the senses through talking, singing, patting, decorating the baby's cot, etc. As the baby grows, other adults and children should be encouraged to play with the child. Through this socialization process, children learn to manifest such characteristics as confidence, competency cooperation and friendship. Yarrow, Rubinstein and Pederson (1995) in their study of "Childhood Education" added that toys and a variety of play materials significantly affect infant development in such areas as reading and grasping, and exploratory behaviour. Thus, the earlier the opportunities are provided for exploration of varied objects, spaces and places and, the stronger the development of curiosity, the better the inquisitiveness and questioning.

The role of the teacher of young children is to co-operate with nature in helping each child develop his/her potentials. The teacher, whether the indirect (parents/other adults) or the direct (the certified teacher) needs an understanding of some of the principles of child development as they are applied in traditional and modern education. Unoh (1983) argued in favour of this ascertion and says that education is the art of teaching and training the child to enhance his physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual development.

A generally acknowledgement need in Nigeria today is for skilled manpower, and the crucial question is how that supply can best be achieved (Adams 2008). Academically-oriented curricular provide the base for the development of this skilled manpower. This is done in various stages of development of the child, from nursery to the higher education and from childhood to adulthood.

The primary intentions are to introduce concepts and techniques that develop abilities, attitudes, skills and understanding that make youths and adults occupationally competent participants in the changing economic life of the nation, regardless of the level at which a person learns in school (Yusuf, 2010)

IV. Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education is the organized practice of educating those who are in early childhood which is one, one of the most vulnerable stages in life. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), it spans the human life from birth to eight years.

Early childhood, according to Bear and Johnston (2008), often focuses on children learning through play. According to UNESCO's Early Childhood Care and Education Unit (ECCE), early childhood is defined as the period from birth to about eight years old which is a time of remarkable brain development. These years lay the foundation for subsequent learning.

Templeton (2004) opined that researchers in the field and early childhood educators both view the parents as Early Childhood Education takes many forms depending on the beliefs of the education or parents. Much of the first two years of life are spent in the creation of a child's first "sense of self" or the building of a first identify. This is a crucial part of children's make-up how they first see themselves, how they think they should function, how they expect others to function in relation to them. For this reason, early care must ensure that in addition to employing carefully selected and trained caretakers, programmes policy must emphasize links with family, home culture, and home language; meaning that caregiver must uniquely care for each child using developmentally appropriate practice care to support families rather than a substitute for them. Yusuf (2010) added that if a young child doesn't receive sufficient nurturing, nutrition, parental/caregiver interaction, and stimulus during this crucial period, the child may be left with a developmental deficit that hampers his or her success in preschool, kindergarten/nursery, and beyond. Therefore, children must receive attention and affection needed to develop in a healthier manner.

A. Developmental Domains

There are five different developmental domains of children which all relate to one another and they are easily refered to as the SPICE of life:

- Social – refers mostly to the ability to form attachment, play with others, co-operation and sharing, and being able to create lasting relationship with others.
- Physical – Development of five and Gross motor skills
- Intellectual – The process of making sense of the World around them.
- Creative – The development of special abilities creating talents. Music, Art, Writing, Reading, and singing are all ways for creative development to take place.
- Emotional – Development of self-awareness, self-confidence, and coping with feelings as well as understanding them.

B. Objectives of Early Childhood Education

The objective of early childhood education according to the National Policy on Education (2007) is to

- effect a smooth transition from home to the school
- prepare the child for the primary level of education
- provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work, farms or market, etc.
- inculcate social norms in them.
- inculcate in the child the spirit of inquiry and creativity through the exploration of native, and the local environment, playing with toys, artistic and musical activities, etc
- teach co-operation and team spirit
- teach the rudiments of numbers, letters, shapes and colours, through play.
- Teach good habits, especially good health habits

According to Yusuf (2010), these objectives are laudable, but a lot has to be done to achieve them. For example, secondary school children in Nigeria are in critical stage of their development. She therefore stressed that they should be engaged in formulating a self-concept, establishing an identity, developing occupational skills and awareness, and encountering challenges in the world of education achievement. Educators must provide the right and timely assistance to enable the child develop the occupational competence that will make him/her viable in the society (P.47-49).

V. Scope of Children Literacy

The scope of children's literacy includes stories of real people of today and yesterday, realistic fiction tales, stories of animals, machines, and interventions, stories dealing with the world of nature, stories depicting everyday experience of children, folklore and books of poetry. Literacy materials necessary for this age group are examined below:

Folktale/Story Telling

The folktale is the most important and popular form of oral literature in Africa through which traditional customs such as those related to inheritance are recalled. The tales involve ethical teaching through which the child learns the values and norms of his/her society, and he/she thus grows up to fit properly into it. To understand more of African culture, one must know the folktale of his/her area because it illustrates, the people's perception of the world and their

environment (Okunade, 2005). It is therefore important to incorporate story telling into primary school curriculum because of its immense advantages. Knowledge and wisdom are derived by the child from stories by the child.

Picture Books and Picture Story Books

According to Okunade (2005), these visual art forms provide children with their first experiences in art and literature. Books in this category cover a wide range of topics, both factual and otherwise and these include books made of fabric, cardboard, picture books. In the story is told through illustration. The first time through an adult, possibly a teacher, and the children look at the book together, discovering the story and telling it to each other. Later, the children can read it to other children. It is essential to say here that, such books contribute to oral language development, serve as stimulus for creative story telling and develop a sense of story long before a child can read.

Poetry, Rhymes, Songs

Young children respond early and naturally to the language of poetry for it usually is a shared experience with the competent teacher. Poetry itself appeals to both young and old because of its elements like imagery, rhythm, metre, form and other aesthetic elements.

Rhymes are an indispensable part of a child's introduction to literature. Humorous incidents and characters are presented in verses with pleasurable rhythm and rhyme to delight the ear.

Children love to clap, tap, hop and to imitate objects and animals where rhythms lend themselves to such movement and actions. When a teacher reads aloud, he/she enjoys himself/herself and also create a shared experience between himself and the children.

Children could be made to perform some of the actions involved in the poem below:

My head, my shoulder
My knee, my toes
My head, my shoulder
My knee, my toes
My head, my shoulder
My knee, my toes
All belongs to God…

VI. Literacy in the 21ST Century

One needs simply to reflect on the nature of the communication being practised in reading this paper to understand the form of evolution in our understanding of literacy. We no longer rely on an individual or a small group of individuals to convey information.

Traditional news outlets are battling for popularity with blogs, forums, twitter,, and instant messaging aka sms. During the Iranian Revolution in June 2009, such news sources were so valuable that the United States' state department officials asked Twitter to postpone site maintenance which would stop the flow of information. This is an aspect of literacy, computer and information technology literacy.

This idea has forever changed the landscape of information access and it is integral in an understanding of literacy as a practice in the 21st Century. It is no longer sufficient to consider whether a student can read and write, but it is necessary to consider more meaningful aspects of literacy in education and in society as a whole, if we are to complete the transition we are in, from a society in which communication was never possible on the level of many to many, to one in which it is.

VII. Teaching Literacy

There are many approaches to teaching literacy. Each is shaped by its informing assumptions about what literacy is and how it is best learned by students. Phonics instruction, for example, focuses on reading at the level of the word. It teaches readers to attend to the letters or groups of letters that make up words

A common method of teaching phonics is synthetic phonics, in which a novice reader pronounces each individual sound and blends them to pronounce the whole word.

Another approach to phonics instruction is embedded phonics instruction, used more often in whole language reading instruction, in which novice readers learn about the individual letters in words on a just-in-time, just-in-place basis that is tailored to meet each student's reading and writing learning needs. That is, teachers provide phonics instructions opportunistically, within the context of stories or student writing that feature many instances of a particular letter or group of letters. Embedded instruction combines letter-sound knowledge with the use of meaningful context to read new and difficult words.

A. Teaching Literacy Using Phonics Method among Children

Phonics is a method for teaching speakers of English to read and write that language. It involves learning how to connect the sounds of spoken English with letters or groups of letters. For example, the sound /k/ can be represented by (c), (ck), (ch) or (q) spellings, and teaching them to blend the sounds of letters together to produce approximate pronunciation of unknown words.

Phonics is a widely used method in teaching to read and decode words. Children learn to read with phonics usually around the age 5 and 6. Teaching literacy using phonics requires pupils/students to learn the connections between letter patterns and the sounds they represent. Phonics instruction requires the teacher to provide pupils with a core body of information about phonics rules, or patterns.

B. Basic Rules of Phonics

Sub-lexical Reading

This involves teaching reading by associating characters or groups of character with sounds or by using phonics learning and teaching knowledge. It is sometimes argued to be in competition with whole language methods for instance "apple", spelt as /a/ + /p/ + /p/ + /l/ and /e/ could represent the letter /a/, while the drawing/painting of something that looks like a "king" or "lion" could be used to represent letters /k/ and /l/ respectively. So, anytime the child sees letter /a/, /k/, and /l/ etc, these words – apple, king and lion come to his senses. As he starts to read on his/her own, wherever he sees these words, he/she won't refer to you for its pronunciation. He/she has gained a substantial competence in its pronunciation and or orthography.

Lexical Reading

This involves acquiring words or phrases without attention to the characters or groups of characters that compose them or by using whole learning and teaching methodology.

Alphabetic Principle

English spelling is based on the alphabetic principle. In an alphabetic writing system, letters are used to represent speech sounds or phonemes. For example the word "pat" is spelled with three letters – p, a, and teach representing a phoneme respectively - /p/, /ae/, and /t/.

The spelling structures for some alphabetic languages, such as Spanish are comparatively orthographically transparent because there is nearly a one-to-one correspondence between sounds and the letter patterns that represent them. English spelling is more complex with a deep orthography, because it attempts to represent the 40+ phonemes of the spoken language with an alphabet composed of only 26 letters and no diacritics. As a result, two letters are often fused together into groups that represent distinct sounds referred to as digraphs.

English has absorbed many words from other languages, it therefore remains imparative to teach these words, its pronunciation, from early childhoods, at a time the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) is still flexible (Chomsky 1972). Hence children can be taught the following simplest forms: /c/, /a/, /t/ is cat.

However, "C" can be pronounce as k, ch, ck etc, while "a" is ae, ei etc as in "apple", able, ant, ape, etc. The same process is replicated in the /t/ sound and others.

Although the patterns are inconsistent, the teacher should make effort to pronounce these sounds as impeccable as possible.

C. Vowel Phonics Patterns

Short vowels There are five of them – a, e, I, o, u. They produce the sounds /ae/ as in cat, /e/ as in egg, /i/ as in sin, sit, /o/ as in hot, and /u/ as in cup. The term short vowel does not really mean that these vowels are pronounced for a particular short period of time, but they are not dip thongs like the long words and the teacher should take not of this.

Long vowels are homophonous with the names of simple letter vowels, such as /ei/ in body, /i/ in metre, /a/ in tiny, /ou/ in broken, and /ju/ in humour. These sounds come as /ei/, /I:/, /ai/, or /au/ and /ju/ respectively.

In the classrooms, teachers should teach children that a long vowel is realizable in the following words: say, hey, why, kite, fight, bounce, croak, fly, write, owl, etc.

Vowel digraphs are those spelling patterns wherein two letters are used to represent the vowel sound. The ai in sail is a vowel digraph.

Consonant Phonics Pattern

This is where children often find it difficult because alphabets here are often confusing, for example the consonant /c/ can sound as k, ch and ck. If one is not careful, as a teacher, the children/pupils will pronounce knife wrongly, the /k/ there will mislead them because of the earlier assumption. There is need to explain exceptions or simply do not use such confusing words initially or at the beginning. Start from the simple and as children mature such complex cases can be introduced gradually.

D. Different Phonics Approaches

Synthetic Phonics method was made popular by Diaz (2009).

This is a method to teach phonics to children when learning to read. This method involves examining every word individually as an individual sound and then blending those sounds together. For example "boy" would be read by pronouncing the sounds for each spelling and then blending those sounds orally to produce a spoken word that sounds as this [boiz] (Diaz,2009). The goal of synthetic phonics instruction is that pupils identify the sound –symbols and blend the phonemes automatically. Also, what is inferred here, is to teach pupils the sounds of the language, (ie) instead of the traditional ABC…, the teacher should tell these children that the letter/alphabet is pronounced as /ae/ sound and words such as – apple, axe, ant, arm, etc, can be realized from the sounds therefore, anywhere the child sees "a", he'she knows that the sound is /ae/, and so on.

The same is done in letters B,C and D. For instance, letter B is pronounced as (bu) as can be seen in – boy, bag, bus, bool, bird, band, etc. Letter C is pronounced as "k" as in – cake, etc.

Analytical Phonics

Here, children analyze sounds symbol correspondences, such as the /oi/ sound in 'boy'. Consonant blends are taught as units for example, in the word "chief" the ch would be taught as a unit/sound.

Embedded Phonics

This is the type of phonics instruction used in whole language programmes. Although phonics skills are de-emphasized in whole language programmes, some teachers still put it to practice in the context of literature. Short lessons are included based on phonics elements that pupils are having problem with, or on a new or difficult phonics pattern that appears in a class reading, homework/assignment. The focus on meaning is gradually maintained, but the mini lesson provides some time for focus on individual sounds and the symbols that represent them. According to Borowsky (2007), embedded phonics differs from other methods in that the instruction is always in the context of literature rather than in separate lessons, and the skills to be taught are identified opportunistically rather than systematically. Owing to the shifting debate over time, many school systems have made major changes in the method they have used to teach early reading. Today, most teachers combine phonics with the elements of whole language that focus on reading comprehension.

Yusuf (2004) advocated for a comprehensive reading programme that includes several different sub-skills. She called these a combined approach which gives a balanced literacy. Proponents of various approaches generally agree that a combined approach is important. A few Stalwarts favour isolated instruction in synthetic phonics and introduction to reading comprehension only after children have mastered sound-symbol correspondences. On the other side, some whole language supporters are unyielding in arguing that phonics should be taught little, but majority of authors endorse the phonics ideas; such as Bell, Chomsky, Crystal, and Torres, among others.

E. Tips on Using Phonics to Teach Literacy: Reading

In guiding pupils to understand what is taught to them in the classroom, the teacher would need to take the following steps as suggested by Oyetunde (2009).

Step 1: Stating clear objectives

The teacher should state his/her objectives in behavioural terms. He/she should then design learning activities that match each of the stated objectives in accordance with the age of the learner. For instance, a phonics lesson might have these objectives: (a) the pupil/student will demonstrate an understanding of the sounds by answering questions posed (b) pupils will be able to use two or more sounds and pronounce them accordingly. They can also be asked to combine sounds to form meaningful words.

Step II: Pre-Pronunciation practice

The teacher activates the pupil's background experience and guides them through a list of words as he/she pronounces them correctly, then learners repeat after the teacher.

Step III: Pupils read one after another

After the necessary pronunciation practice, the teacher may ask the pupils to point at the words, pronouncing them correctly. If a pupil cannot read the words on his/her own, then more practice still needs to be done.

Step IV: Evaluation/Testing

This is the stage for evaluating the pupil's mastery of some of the reading skills/ pronunciation drills the teacher has tried to inculcate. In Nursery/Primary School, the teacher can ask the learners to pronounce the words or write them in their books respectively. Learners may be asked to combine certain sounds to form a word. For example, the teacher may pronounce some sounds such as C, as "k", A as /ae/, and he/she then tells them to generate the correct letters for this word.

Step V: Follow-up Activities

Whatever the teacher does to encourage pupils or students to use the skills developed during the lesson is useful. For instance, they could be asked to attempt using some of the difficult words that could not be tested during the lesson. This might give the pupils further practice with the use of pronunciation drills to further develop and enhance the skills.

Through pronunciation activities, the child can be taught to develop skills based on interaction with practical materials such as apple, egg, cat, ant etc with the teacher serving as the stimulus.

VIII. Conclusion

Early childhood education is very significant in the growth and development of the child. Relevant education at this level will lay a solid foundation on which future efforts of the child as a useful member of this community will depend. It is therefore, recommended here that phonics methodology be employed in teaching these children. Instead of teaching them how to read and master the 26 alphabets – ABC-Z, it is suggested here that the sounds derived from these letters are taught them. For example, the alphabet "A" can be realized in the following words: apple /ae/, arm /a:/ etc. The former is sharp and short while the latter is a long vowel and so are other letters.

Furthermore, the C, Pronounced as "K" can be realized in these words – cake, lace, teach, etc. Emphasis here is and should be laid on the sounds. The teacher should be an authority in phonics so that the children are not misled. There

are cases where children may be tempted to call/pronounce the word 'chief' as 'keif' because the teacher has said 'C' is pronounced as 'K'. So, care should be taken in this complex cases in order to guide and direct the learners aright.

Also note that, children are constantly criticized if they cannot say something correctly and this is quite discouraging. Encouragement and praise, if used liberally, go a long way toward helping the child to develop adequate literacy skills.

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The Role of Output, Input Enhancement and Collaborative Output in the Acquisition of English Passive Forms

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***Abstract*—This study was set up to investigate whether various Focus on Form techniques facilitate L2 grammar learning. The study involved a pre-test–post-test design with treatment and control group and attempted to examine the relative effectiveness of three focus on form techniques, i.e. input enhancement, output and collaborative output, on learning English passive forms. Forty-four Iranian learners of English were selected to participate in the study. The participants were assigned to one of the four groups consisting of input enhancement (IE) (n=11), input enhancement together with individual text-editing task (IE+TE) (n=11), input enhancement together with collaborative text-editing task (IE+TE+CO) (n=12) and a control group (CG) (n=10). The pretests and posttests were administered using a multiple choice and a fill in the blank test in context. The result of the study showed that among the three treatment groups, IE+TE and IE+TE+CO outperformed the control group in the acquisition of passive forms. Furthermore, there was no significant difference between IE+TE and IE+TE+CO in the acquisition of passive forms.**

***Index Terms*—input enhancement, collaborative output, noticing, text-editing**

I. Introduction

Recent research has demonstrated the need for focused attention on grammar and morphosyntactic features of L2 to attain high levels of proficiency (Doughty, 2003; Swain, 1995, 1998). This has led to a resurgence of grammar teaching where its role in SLA has become the focus of much current investigation (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004). So, considering the worldwide importance of the use of English language accurately, the teaching of linguistic forms, especially grammar, continues to occupy a major place in language pedagogy. Discussion of how to teach form usually consists of accounts of the various pedagogical options available to teacher and the relative advantages of each option (see, e.g. Ellis, 1997 cited in Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen, 2002). The present study attempts to investigate various focus on form techniques to find out if input-enhancement with or without text-reconstruction has any positive effect on learning. Furthermore, drawing on sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000; Swain, 2000), the study investigates how individual text-reconstruction task compares with collaborative text-reconstruction task in terms of learning English passive forms by Iranian EFL learners.

II. Background

Considering the fact that attention plays a crucial role in language learning, many SLA researchers have tried different methods of focusing learners' attention to linguistic forms during meaning-focused activities. Some of these studies employed input enhancement as an implicit way to draw learners' attention to form (Izumi, 2002; Jourdenais et al., 1995; Lee, 2007; Leow et al., 2003; Radwan, 2005; Robinson, 1997; Santis, 2008; White, 1998; Wong, 2003). Results of these studies cast considerable doubt on the efficacy of input enhancement since most of the studies reported that input enhancement does not induce desired learning effects as intended by the researchers. Consequently, they concluded that providing learners with input enhancement alone is too implicit to both draw their attention to form and affect their learning (Izumi, 2002; Robinson, 1997; White, 1998; Wong, 2003). Few studies showed effective role of input enhancement on the acquisition of target forms (Jourdenais et al., 1995; Lee, 2007; Santis, 2008). Among these studies, only Izumi (2002) used input enhancement along with output – a reconstruction task involving learners in the production of input passage as accurately as possible after reading it.

Output, as Swain (1985) puts it, has been viewed not only as an end product of learning but also as an important factor that can promote L2 learning. It is argued that producing output provides learners with great opportunities for a level of processing (i.e. syntactic processing) which may be necessary for the development of target-like proficiency or

accuracy (see Izumi & Bigelow, 2000; Pica et al. 1989; Shehadeh, 2003; Song & Suh, 2008; Swain & Lapkin, 1995). By being 'pushed' to produce output, learners are required to pay attention to syntactic features of their language in order to formulate precise, meaningful and appropriate language. Furthermore, during the production of output, they formulate and test hypotheses about the accuracy of their language. It is argued that while producing output, learners are forced to process language more deeply than during input processing. In an experimental study, Izumi (2002) demonstrated that input enhancement, without any additional instructional technique, may assist learners only in the detection of highlighted target forms, but with an output task, it was adequate for engaging learners in further cognitive processing. The present study is an attempt to extend this line of research by providing learners with an output-oriented task, i.e. text editing task together with input enhancement.

As an additional way to encourage further processing of the form beyond noticing and immediate intake, Izumi and Izumi (2004) proposed 'collaborative dialogue'. Collaborative dialogue, advocated by Swain (1998), occurs when learners encounter linguistic problems and attempt to solve them together. Collaboration provides assistance in completing a task that the individual could not perform alone (Lantolf, 2000). A number of studies reported the effective role of collaboration on various aspects of second language learning (Lapkin, Swain & Smith, 2002; Lynch, 2001; Storch, 2005; Swain, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). However, few studies compared the effectiveness of collaborative output versus individual output (Garcia & Asenci ́on, 2001; Kim 2008; Nassaji & Tian, 2010; Reinders, 2009; Storch, 1999, 2005). Among them, Storch (1999) and Garcia and Asencion (2001) supported partially the benefits of collaborative tasks. Therefore, due to scarcity of studies conducted on the comparison of collaborative versus individual output tasks, this study also aims to fill this gap by comparing two groups of learners working on the enhanced text and editing task in collaboration and individually.

III. Key Concepts

A. The Role of Noticing

Many SLA researchers have emphasized the role of attention and 'noticing' in the process of L2 learning (Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1990, 2001; Tomlin & Villa, 1994). It is generally assumed that some level of attention to form is needed for language acquisition to take place (Radwan, 2005). Schmidt's (1990) view toward noticing was very strong when he claimed that noticing at the level of awareness is both necessary and sufficient for language learning to take place. Noticing was, initially, defined as the kind of conscious perception of linguistic features that is necessary for successful L2 learning. Later, Schmidt (2001, p. 21) proposed a weaker version of noticing and argued that "people learn about the things they attend to and do not learn much about the things they do not attend to".

According to Swain (1998), noticing has several levels, which could be exploited in formal L2 instruction in various ways. At one level, learners may reflect on their own output and notice the gap or mismatch between their interlanguage and the target language. Noticing the gap may trigger cognitive processes which might produce new linguistic knowledge or might consolidate the existing knowledge (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). This level of noticing corresponds to the 'notice the gap principle' introduced by Schmidt and Frota (1986). They suggested that input has an impact on interlanguage development if it is noticed. Furthermore, for the noticed input to become *intake*, learners have to compare what they have noticed in the input and what they are producing based on their current interlanguage. So, learners can benefit from input if they become consciously aware of the gap or mismatch between their interlanguage and the target language (Schmidt, 1990, 2001).

At another level, the act of producing target language might prompt learners to notice what they do not know or know partially about the target language (Swain, 1995). Swain and Lanpkin (1995) argued that even if learners are not provided with explicit or implicit feedback by their interlocutors, they may still notice the limitations in their interlanguage when they encounter problems in producing target language. That is, learners may *notice a* hole in their interlanguage when they do not know how to "express precisely the meaning they wish to convey at *the very moment of attempting to produce it"* (Swain, 2000, p.100, emphasis is original).

Finally, learners may notice salient and frequent linguistic features in the input. Accordingly, input might be seeded with high frequency of target features (e.g. input flooding) or the target features might be highlighted in the input through various formatting techniques (e.g. input enhancement) to draw learners' attention to specific features (Sharwood Smith, 1993; Doughty& Williams, 1998). Although, the concept of noticing has been examined in different ways, most of the scholars agree on the importance of noticing in SLA. If noticing is crucial for L2 acquisition, the key issue, therefore, is how to focus learners' attention on linguistic features in the input (or output) to promote the development of their interlanguage. The present study employs various techniques to tackle this issue.

B. The Role of Production

Swain (1985) proposed comprehensible output hypothesis as a complement to Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis. She believed that providing learners with comprehensible input alone is not sufficient for acquisition to take place as it was the case with French immersion students in Canada. She observed that immersion students did not move beyond their current level of interlanguage because they were not provided with the opportunities to 'stretch' their interlanguage. She argued that producing language (spoken or written) is an important part of the process of second language learning. As mentioned before, "it is *while attempting to produce* the target language (vocally or subvocally)

that learners may notice that they do not know how to say (or write) precisely the meaning they wish to convey" (Swain, 1997, p.5, emphasis is original). Swain emphasizes that under certain circumstances, the act of producing output may prompt L2 learners to become consciously aware of their linguistic problems. In this way, their attention may be directed to the relevant input, which may result in the generation of new knowledge or consolidation of existing knowledge about the target language (Swain & Lapkin, 1995).

Swain and Lapkin (1995) proposed three main functions for output in second language learning. The *noticing* function of output is defined as the process of learners becoming aware of their linguistic deficiencies in the course of producing output. That is, while they are producing language, they will notice a 'hole' between what they want to say and what they are able to say. The *hypothesis testing* function refers to the fact that producing language encourages learners to formulate and test their hypothesis about the correct use of the target language. By providing feedback, learners will make sure whether their hypothesis is right or wrong. Finally, *metatalk* or *metalinguistic* function refers to the ways in which learners consciously reflect on the language they produce, which promotes the chance of internalizing the target language. Metatalk, according to Swain and Lapkin (2002, p. 286), is one type of "collaborative dialogue" which is defined as a "dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem–solving and knowledge building" (Swain, 2000). The concept of collaborative dialogue─ which was extended from the output hypothesis (Swain & Lapkin, 1998─ and its possible impact on learning L2 features will be discussed in the next section.

C. The Role of Collaboration

Within sociocultural theory, "development based on collaboration and imitation is the source of all the specifically human characteristics of consciousness that develop in the child" (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 210). This cognitive development is outlined in Vygotsky's genetic law of cultural development. He explains that "any function in child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First, it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category" (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 163; cited in Ohta, 2000). While Vygotsky was speaking of children, this principle is recently applied to second language learner as well. It is argued that L2 learning occurs in two planes, at first in a dynamic sociocultural context where knowledge is first constructed interactively, that is, between the learner (novice) and a more knowledgeable other (teacher/expert peer) who is capable of guiding, supporting and 'scaffolding' the actions of the learner. Next, the co-constructed knowledge is internalized when the learner's mental processing becomes independent of external factors.

Adopting this Vygotskian view of development, Swain (2000, p. 113) extended the scope of the output hypothesis and introduced the concept of collaborative dialogue. She argued that "internal mental activity has its origins in external dialogic activity" and explained that collaborative dialogue is "where language use and language learning can co-occur" (p. 97). During this dialogue, learners use language as a mediating tool to build knowledge and to interact with each other. Collaborative dialogue, in fact, allows learners to draw attention to problems and verbalize alternative solutions. This verbalization, as Swain (2000) put it, objectifies thought and makes it available for further scrutiny. Swain argued that the analysis of collaborative dialogue gives researchers access to examine L2 learning in process. A detailed analysis of the process results in "an understanding of how language learning occurs in dialogue, not as a result of it" (Swain & Lapkin, 2002, p. 286), that is, "learning does not happen outside performance; it occurs *in* performance" (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p. 321, emphasis is original). Swain and her colleagues (Swain & Lapkin, 2002; Swain, Brooks, & Tocallli-Beller, 2002) have discussed the support of collaborative dialogue for providing opportunities for L2 development in a number of ways including (a) provision of 'scaffolded' support, (b) guidance through peer dialogue, (c) co-construction of linguistic knowledge, (d) consolidation and reorganization of existing L2 knowledge and finally (e) making this knowledge explicit for each other's benefit.

Several empirical studies have suggested that peer-peer collaborative dialogue is a crucial aspect of L2 learning. Following that, various collaborative tasks have been employed to enhance learning opportunities in different settings (e.g., Kowal & Swain, 1994; Leeser, 2004; Storch, 1999; 2005; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Although several studies have provided valuable insights regarding the effectiveness of collaborative tasks, very few of them investigated the output tasks in individual and collaborative setting. The present study attempts to investigate this issue by comparing individual and collaborative completion of an output task. The study specifically addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the effects of (1) input enhancement, (2) input enhancement followed by text-editing task, and (3) collaborative output via input enhancement and text-editing task on the acquisition of English passive forms?
2. Do these tasks differ in the amount of progress (if any) they make in the acquisition of English passive forms?

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

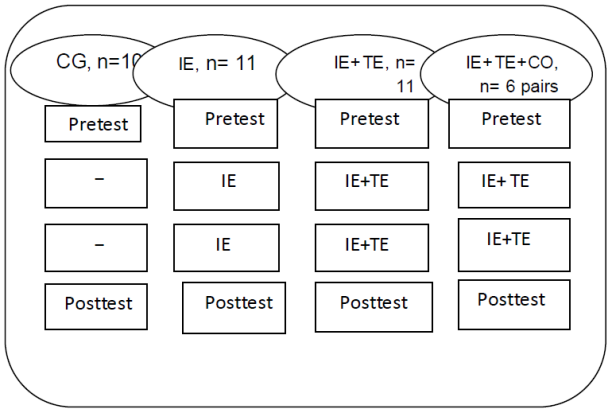
To accomplish the objectives of this study, 44 Persian learners of English, ranged in age from 18 to 23, were selected to participate. Although there were initially 48 participants, four learners were excluded from the study because of being absent in some stages of the treatment sessions. The placement test administered in the language institute indicated that all the participants were intermediate learners of English. All participants had the same language background (Farsi).

They were studying English in Iran and have not ever been in any English speaking countries. The present study was conducted in Kish Air Language Teaching Institute located in Babol, Iran.

B. Procedure and Design of the Study

An overview of the design of this study is presented in Table 1. The study was conducted within approximately one month, in four sessions. After analyzing pretest scores, the participants were randomly assigned into four groups, that is, input enhancement (IE), input enhancement and text-editing task (IE+TE), collaborative output via input enhancement and text editing task (IE+TE+CO) and control group. The importance of having a control group was taken into consideration to ascertain instructional effects (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

TABLE1.
DESIGN OF THE STUDY



Notes: CG (control group), IE (input enhancement), – (No treatment), TE (text- editing task), CO (collaborative output)

One week before the treatment session, all participants received the pretest which consisted of a comprehension-based multiple choice test and a production-based fill in the blank test. Following that, the three experimental groups received treatments within two sessions (the first treatment highlighted the present passive structure and the second treatment session focused on the past passive structure in English. One week after the treatments, all participants, including the control group, were administered a posttest.

C. Instruments

This study was conducted in four sessions within approximately one month period. All participants received a pretest in the first session. Next, they took part in two treatment sessions. Each treatment was administered with one week interval. In the fourth session, they were all given a posttest. In order to examine subjects' knowledge of passive forms and their appropriate use of this structure in both comprehension and production, two types of tests were administered: a production-based test i.e. a fill in the blank test and a comprehension-based test, i.e. a multiple-choice test. The tests were piloted with 12 students of similar proficiency level in order to determine item difficulty and test reliability. There were 30 items in the multiple choice test and 35 items in the fill in the blank test. Fifteen items in each test focused on passive structures; the rest of the items targeted active voice. Since the multiple choice test might provide participants with models for the production of target forms, it was administered after the fill in the blank test.

Regarding the treatment, the study employed several passages to draw the learners' attention to the target forms. These passages were piloted with 8 students of similar proficiency level. Based on the result and the feedback obtained from the students and their teachers, the readability of these passages was found to be high. So, they were modified in terms of vocabulary, sentence structure during the piloting sessions. To draw learners' attention to target forms, the target forms were enhanced through bolding and underlining. These enhanced passages were used for all three treatment groups i.e. input enhancement, input enhancement plus editing (output) and collaborative output. The next two passages were also selected after piloting to be used as editing tasks. These two passages, administered in the first and second treatment sessions, included some problems in present and past passive voice, respectively. Two of the experimental groups, that is, input enhancement plus editing and collaborative output group received the editing tasks.

After collecting the data, students' papers were objectively scored. Every correct answer (i.e. present or past passive forms) received one point. Partially correct responses were scored zero because based on the output hypothesis the correct and precise production of output can be a sign of learning (Swain, 1995).

V. RESULTS

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the three treatment types and the control group for the production and comprehension of passive forms on the pretest. To establish if all four groups are not different in their knowledge of passive forms, a one-way ANOVA was performed on the participants pretest scores. The result of this analysis

(presented in Table 3) showed no significant difference among the groups in terms of their knowledge of passive forms as measured through a multiple choice and a fill in the blank test.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICES FOR PRETEST SCORES

	Comprehension		Production	
	M	SD	M	SD
CG (*n=10*)	5.10	2.18	1.00	1.69
IE (*n=11*)	6.72	2.68	1.09	1.44
IE+TE (*n=11*)	6.45	3.23	1.27	2.68
IE+TE+CO (*n=12*)	6.66	2.60	1.25	1.95
Total	6.42	2.76	1.15	1.94

Notes: CG= control group; IE= Input enhancement; IE+TE= Input enhancement + text-editing task; CO= Collaborative output

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF ANOVAs FOR LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION AND PRODUCTION OF PASSIVE VERBS IN THE PRETEST

	Sources of variance	SS	df.	MS	F
Comprehension	Between groups	18.25	3	6.08	.826
(Multiple-choice)	Within groups	294	40	7.362	
Production	Between groups	.545	3	.182	.045
(Fill in the blank)	Within groups	161.34	40	4.03	

p<.05

Thus, it can be concluded that the four groups were similar in their knowledge of passive forms at the beginning of the study. Based on these results, it can be assumed that any measurable changes in the posttest were unlikely to be due to any preexisting differences among the groups and, instead, they could be attributed to the different treatments that the various groups experienced.

In order to determine the effect of the treatment types on the acquisition of passive forms, two paired t-tests were performed for each group to compare their pretest-posttest scores obtained from the two tests. The analysis for the effect of input enhancement treatment (see Table 4) showed no statistically significant difference between the pretest to posttest in both comprehension and production of target forms. In other words, the treatment did not result in any significant change on the acquisition of passive verbs as measured by their scores on the multiple choice and fill in the blank tests. Thus, we can conclude that the participants made no significant gains from pretest to posttest neither on comprehension (*df=10, p=.548*) nor on production (*df=10, p=.441*) of target forms.

TABLE 4
RESULTS OF PAIRED T-TESTS FOR LEARNERS' (IE) COMPREHENSION AND PRODUCTION OF PASSIVE VERBS

		N	M	SD	t value	df	sig.(2tailed)
Comprehension	pre test	11	6.72	2.68			
	posttest	11	7.27	2.79	.622	10	.548
Production	pre test	11	1.09	1.44			.
	posttest	11	1.45	1.91	.803	10	441

p<.05

Our first research question (1.2) addressed the effect of input enhancement and text-editing task on the learners' acquisition of passive forms. Results of two paired t-tests for this group (illustrated in Table 5) revealed statistically significant differences between their pretest and posttest scores. This means that the learners' scores improved significantly from pretest to posttest both in comprehension (*df=10, p=.043*) and in production (*df=10, p=.014*) of passive forms. This improvement, however, was more to the benefit of production than comprehension.

TABLE 5
RESULTS OF PAIRED T-TESTS FOR LEARNERS' (IE+TE) COMPREHENSION AND PRODUCTION OF PASSIVE VERBS

		N	M	SD	t value	df	sig.(2tailed)
Comprehension	pretest	11	6.45	3.23			
	posttest	11	9.90	2.77	2.316	10	.043
Production	pretest	11	1.27	2.68			
	posttest	11	5.81	3.99	2.962	10	.014

p<.05

The research question 1.3 addressed the effect of input enhancement and text-editing task completed in collaboration on the acquisition of English passive forms. The results of two paired t-tests on participants' pretest and posttest scores are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6
RESULTS OF PAIRED T-TESTS FOR LEARNERS' (IE+TE+CO) COMPREHENSION AND PRODUCTION OF PASSIVE VERBS

		N	M	SD	t value	df	sig.(2tailed)
Comprehension	pretest	12	6.66	2.60	2.432	11	.033
	posttest	12	9.25	2.63			
Production	pretest	12	1.25	1.95	3.228	11	.008
	posttest	12	4.25	2.09			

p<.05

The analyses revealed t values of 2.432 for comprehension and 3.228 for production with 11 df., which are statistically significant at the .05 level. The results of these tests lend substantial support to the claim that input enhancement and text-editing task completed collaboratively promote participants' acquisition of passive forms.

The second research question addressed the differences among the four groups (IE, IE+TE, IE+TE+CO and CG) in the progress they made in learning target forms. In order to answer this question, two ANOVAs were performed on the posttest scores of the four groups obtained from multiple choice and fill in the lank tests. The result of these tests revealed statistically significant effect for treatment type (*F (3, 40) = 9.072, p< .05*). Consequently, we can claim that significant group differences, with a level of probability of p< .05 were found with regard to the gains in comprehension of passive forms.

TABLE 7
ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION OF PASSIVE VERB IN THE POSTTEST

Source of variance	SS	d.f.	MS	F
Between groups	179.441	3	59.814	9.072
Within groups	263.741	40	6.594	

p<.05

To establish where the differences lie, *post-hoc LSD* analysis revealed the following contrasts (Table 8): (a) the three treatment groups (IE, IE+TE, IE+TE+CO) performed significantly better than the control group, (b) there was also a significant difference between IE and IE+TE, and (c) there was no significant difference between IE+TE and IE+TE+CO.

TABLE 8
LSD TEST FOR LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION OF PASSIVE VERB IN THE POSTTEST

CG	IE	IE+TE	IE+TE+CO
X= 4.60	X= 7.27	X=9.90	X=9.25
SD= 1.89	SD=2.79	SD=2.77	SD=2.63
Comparisons		Sig.	
CG vs. IE		.022*	
CG vs. IE+TE		.000*	
CG vs. IE+TE+CO		.000*	
IE vs. IE+TE		.021*	
IE vs. IE+TE+CO		.072	
IE+TE vs. IE+TE+CO		.542	

p< .05

Notes: CG (control group), IE (input enhancement), TE (text-editing task), CO (collaborative output)

So we can conclude that the three experimental groups (input enhancement, input enhancement plus text-editing task and input enhancement plus text-editing with collaboration) outperformed the control group in the comprehension of passive forms. There was also a significant difference between input enhancement group and input enhancement plus text-editing task group.

Next, an ANOVA was performed to establish if there was an effect for treatment type on the production of passive forms. Results of this analysis revealed statistically significant differences among the four groups in the posttest (*F (3, 40) = 9.581, p< .05*).

TABLE 9
ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR LEARNERS' PRODUCTION OF PASSIVE VERB IN THE POSTTEST

Source of variance	SS	d.f.	MS	F
Between groups	184.48	3	61.489	9.581
Within groups	256.714	40	6.418	

p<.05

In order to see where the differences lie, another *LSD* test was conducted (illustrated in Table 10). *Post hoc* analyses showed that: (a) among the three treatment groups, IE+TE and IE+TE+CO outperformed the control group, (b) there was also a significant difference between IE and IE+TE, with an advantage for the IE+TE over IE treatment, (c) there was no significant difference between IE and control group, and IE+TE and IE+TE+CO in the production of passive forms.

TABLE 10
LSD TEST FOR LEARNERS' PRODUCTION OF PASSIVE VERB IN THE POSTTEST

CG	IE	IE+TE	IE+TE+CO
X= .700	X1=.454	X= 5.818	X= 4.250
SD= 1.15	SD=1.916	SD= 3.995	SD= 2.094
Comparisons			Sig.
CG vs. IE			.499
CG vs. IE+TE			.000*
CG vs. IE+TE+CO			.002*
IE vs. IE+TE			.000*
IE vs. IE+TE+CO			.012*
IE+TE vs. IE+TE+CO			.149

p< .05

Notes: CG (control group), IE (input enhancement), TE (text-editing task), CO (collaborative output)

Therefore, the results show a significant advantage of the input enhancement and text editing task together both in collaborative and individual setting over the control group. It is also worth mentioning that input enhancement plus text-editing task outperformed input enhancement in the acquisition of passive forms. But we could not find a significant advantage for the collaborative over individual input enhancement plus text-editing treatment.

VI. Discussion

Results demonstrated that among the three treatment groups, input enhancement with text editing task completed individually and in collaboration were effective in promoting learners' acquisition of passive forms. Based on the results of this study, it can be stated that the development of L2 grammatical competence can be influenced through output and collaborative output techniques, but input enhancement, by itself, could not be regarded as an effective technique in the development of L2 English passive forms, though it can draw learners' attention to form.

It can be concluded that this study lends support to the use of output and collaborative output in teaching of grammar in the EFL classrooms. The results are consistent with the findings of the majority of previous studies on output (Izumi, 2002; Izumi et al., 1999; Pica et al., 1989; Shehadeh, 2003; Song &Suh, 2008; Swain & Lapkin, 1995) and collaborative output (de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Garcia &Asencion, 2001; Lapkin, Swain & Smith, 2002; Lynch, 2001; Spielman Davison, 2000 cited in Swain et.al 2002; Storch, 2005; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). On the other hand, this study does not support input enhancement as an effective technique in improving learners' acquisition of English passive forms, which is consistent with the previous studies (Alanen,1995; Al-Hejin, 2004; Comb, 2008; Izumi, 2002; Leow, 1997, 2001; Leow et al., 2003; Overstreet, 1998; Robinson, 1997; White, 1998; Wong, 2003), but not in support of studies which reported significant effect of IE on learners' acquisition of grammar (Jourdenais et al.,1995; Lee,2007; Santis, 2008).

There may be different explanations for these findings. The reason that output group (IE+TE) improved from pretest to posttest and also outperformed the control and input enhancement groups is that producing output might have engaged participants in a deeper level of processing of the target forms compared to the input enhancement alone. That is, output triggered deeper and more elaborate processing of the forms, which led them to establish a more durable memory trace (Izumi, 2002). According to Craik and Lockhart (1972), the quality of human memory trace depends on the level of processing, i.e. deeper level of analysis leads to more elaborate, longer lasting, and stronger traces. As Izumi (2002, p.569) explains, "maintaining information at one level of processing by rehearsing it repeatedly or by sustaining continued attention to certain aspects of the stimulus will not, by itself, lead to improved retention unless a shift to deeper levels of analysis occurs". This finding is consistent with the fundamental claim of the output hypothesis that producing output allows L2 learners to engage in syntactic as well as semantic processing (Swain, 1985). Learners produced the target forms through text editing task and then tested their hypotheses through the feedback they received in written form. Our result suggests that input enhancement alone does not have an important effect on the acquisition of the target forms. This result is also in support of Izumi's (2002) finding, stating that input enhancement which is solely connected with drawing learners' attention to form, does not necessarily engage further cognitive processing that may be necessary for acquisition. The result that input enhancement does not improve learners' acquisition of grammar is also compatible with Sharwood Smith (1993) that cautions enhancing input only increases the chances that learners will select the input as intake. Other researchers such as Radwan (2005) and Wong (2003) obtained similar results. Input enhancement activities required learners in three treatment groups to pay attention to the target structures while reading the enhanced text in order to find and solve the grammatical problems when they were working on text-editing tasks.

With respect to the collaborative output group, the results indicated an increase in the gains of this group from pretest to posttest both in comprehension and production of the target forms. *Post hoc* analysis showed that this group outperformed the control group. Therefore, this study is consistent with most of the previous studies carried out on the collaborative output (Storch, 2005; Swain et al. 2002). The reason for this outcome can be the fact that collaborative output provided opportunities for two types of feedback: internal auditory feedback as learners verbalized their own decisions, and external peer feedback (Storch, 1999). Kowal and Swain (1994) and Swain and Lapkin (1998) argued

that collaborative output tasks are beneficial in developing learners' grammatical competence, because the joint act of production generates metatalk and reflection about language choices. Such verbalization and reflection may serve to raise learners' attention to gaps in their knowledge or provide them with positive feedback and thus promote language learning.

There was also no significant difference between the collaborative and individual output groups in the acquisition of passive forms. This result is in support of the previous studies such as Nassaji and Tian (2010), Storch (2005). However, there might be several reasons for such findings. One reason can be that both groups received the same amount of time (i.e. thirty minutes) in performing the tasks while in previous studies (Storch, 1999; Garcia & Asencion, 2001) pair groups had more time than individual groups. Another reason might be related to the nature of the interaction that took place during pair work. Analysis of learners' interaction (the scope of this study did not allow us to include transcripts of learners' interaction) showed that although there were interactions among learners, in many cases, these interactions were mechanical, brief, and limited. Thus, although the learners were fairly successful in correcting the target forms in editing task, the interaction may not have been rich enough to lead to a better performance than when completing the task individually. Another reason could be related to the learners' limited skills of how to collaborate effectively with peers. Previous research has shown that the effectiveness of learners' collaboration depends on learners' ability to work and solve language-related problems collaboratively (Nassaji & Tian, 2010). So, in future studies, there should be some instruction and modeling on how to collaborate effectively before starting the treatment sessions.

VII. Conclusion

The present study has shown that different types of activities have differential effects on the comprehension and production of passive forms. There are, however, a number of limitations to this study. One of the limitations is related to the selection of two particular passive structures as target forms. In fact, these forms represent only a small part of the overall range of the passive structures. Subsequent research could additionally examine other linguistic structures to find possible effects of input-output treatment on learning those forms. The second limitation of the study concerns the small number of participants in each group which restricts the generalizability of the results. Moreover, all participants were female with an intermediate level of proficiency in English. Thus, the student individual variables may have influenced these results. Similarly, age and proficiency should be taken into consideration, which means that it is not clear how different younger, older, beginner or advanced learners would have performed in a similar way after receiving these focus on form instructions. A third limitation of this study deals with the short-term effects of the instructional treatment. It would have been interesting to employ a delayed post-test in order to determine whether learners' gains in passive forms have been retained some time after the instructional period took place. In addition, in this study learners were exposed to each passive form in just one single session. Therefore, employing multiple sessions over an extended period of time may have different results. Finally, the current study included only one task, i.e. text-editing. Future studies could extend this study by investigating the impact of other kinds of output tasks (e.g. dictolgoss and picture cued writing task) on learning English passive forms.

In light of the findings from this study, some pedagogical implications may be proposed. The use of output tasks on the development of grammatical competence is a beneficial aspect to be implemented in EFL classrooms. This study showed that simple typographical enhancement did not have a strong effect on the acquisition of target forms. Instead, a combination of input enhancement with text-editing task resulted in greater learning of the passive form. Therefore, a combination of implicit and explicit approaches (see Doughty & Williams, 1998) would possibility trigger learners' cognitive processes and reinforce acquisition of target forms more than a single implicit activity.

In conclusion and despite the above limitations, the present study has combined to the growing body of research investigating the effects of different instructional techniques on the acquisition of grammar. The results obtained in this study, although tentative, may expand the scope of enquiry in the field of grammar acquisition as well as open several lines of investigation to be examined in future research.

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The Relationship between Students' Strengths in Multiple Intelligences and Their Achievement in Learning English Language

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Abstract—**This article reports the findings of a study conducted in an urban secondary school in Perak, Malaysia. This study is about the relationship between students' strengths in multiple intelligences and achievement in learning English. Multiple intelligences, proposed by Gardner (1983), look at the multiple cognitive capacities across human thinking. They include the verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic intelligences. Findings from this study suggest that in a learning environment where multiple intelligences may not be actively used, there is a tendency to have weak and negative correlation between multiple intelligences and English language achievement. Yet, there are distinct differences in the relationship between the two streams of Science and Art regarding the subjects they take. Practical implications for these findings recommend that teachers ought to exploit multiple intelligences in the teaching and learning processes to provide opportunities for the students to enhance their multiple intelligences.**

Index Terms—**multiple intelligence, English language achievement, instructional strategy**

I. Introduction

Gardner (1983) proposed that '… there is not just one form of cognition which cuts across all human thinking. There are multiple intelligences with autonomous intelligences capacities.' It has since attracted a lot of attention in the field of education as it affects how learning takes place within the individual and its implication on teaching. Students have the capacity to progress in all of the intelligences provided that they are given the opportunity to activate them. This is the responsibility of the teachers as educators. If not most practitioners would agree that 'one size does not fit all'. This view concurs with Ebeling (2000) who said that teachers should expect that some students could not learn what has been taught because of their diversity of needs. A factor like this should be taken seriously in improving their achievement in the language. Invariably though, they will excel more in some of the intelligences than the others.

Gardner (1983) suggested that our instructional methods must undergo a revolution if we are to reach all students who have at least eight ways of knowing. This revolution must start with awareness of both learners and practitioners on the issue. The teacher has the key to unlock the learners' full potential by designing classroom activities to develop all of their multiple intelligences (Lazear, 1994). Once student adapts at using his intelligences effectively through practice and exposure, then learning can easily be an independent venture.

The innovative approach to the teaching of the English language has also affected the Malaysian education system. Multiple intelligences as a pedagogical consideration was first introduced into the Malaysian Smart-School Curriculum in 1998 (Kementerian Pendedikan Malaysia. Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 1997). It was later introduced as one of the pedagogical models during in service courses for the revised common syllabus for all Malaysian schools beginning with the 13 and 16 years old students (Kementerian Pendedikan Malaysia. Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 2007). Teachers were expected to teach the language using the suggested multiple intelligences approaches in their classes.

II. Review of Literature

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Reese (2002) rightly argued that there is no "right" or "wrong" way to learn and there is no "good or bad" learning style. What matters most is what works for an individual learner. A student who has found his own learning styles that best fits his or her own intelligences has found the "right" way to learn. This is an argument that both practitioners and learners should agree on. Most often in traditional schools the opportunity to use these multiple intelligences effectively is lacking. Armstrong (cited in Fogarty & Bellanca, 1995) lamented that schools have become 'worksheet wastelands' that are saturated with paper and pencil tasks.

The theory of multiple intelligences formulated by Gardner (1983) has great potential in revolutionizing our common concept of human capabilities (Christison, 1996). Fernie (cited in Fogarty & Bellanca, 1995) added that his ideas were also based on his vast experiences in synthesizing knowledge beyond conventions and also based on empirical evidences from his Project Zero. This project recorded child development in a learning environment that caters to multiple intelligences over a period of time with emphasis to improve on techniques and strategies used in the classroom (Fogarty & Bellanca, 1995). Only the first eight intelligences are considered for the purpose of this study since they are the currently popular ones. There are many definitions of the eight intelligences given by proponents of the theory. Here, the ones stated by Nolen (2003) are taken as reference for our deliberation.

A. Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence

This intelligence involves those with the mastery of language and they have the tendency to think in words and are highly skilled listeners. They are better memorizers of information and they enjoy storytelling and jokes. Their linguistic intelligences enable them to concentrate on grammar and vocabulary and they are efficient explainers, persuaders or entertainers. Teachers can give tasks on writing, reading and presenting oral reports about various aspects of their lives.

B. Logical/Mathematical Intelligence

This intelligence consists of the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, and think logically. It is noted that they are usually the ones who do well in traditional classrooms because they are able to follow logical sequencing from the teaching. This intelligence often shows up early in life like savants who greatly gifted in calculations.

C. Visual/Spatial Intelligence

Having these intelligences would enable one to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems. They perceive the visual world accurately, perform transformations and modifications on their perceptions, and are able to recreate them in the absence of any physical stimuli. Teachers should consider using pictures or photographs, films, diagrams and other visuals.

D. Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence

We can observe people with this intelligent quite commonly because they use their body in very expressive and skillful ways for a distinct purpose. They are able to understand the world through their own body. They display very fine motor skills of their fingers and hands and the overall control of their body movements. They are also characterized with the ability to manipulate objects and to carry out precise and delicate movements. Kinesthetic is the ability to act gracefully and to apprehend the actions of other people or objects directly. They are, therefore, good in the performing arts with the ability to capture emotions through their body movements. Teaching entails the use of manipulative and physical movement since they like to touch things in order to learn and are often restless. Learning tools should be used to accommodate their 'busy' hands.

E. Musical/Rhythmic Intelligence

Those individuals with high musical intelligence use sound to the fullest extent. They understand well, the pitch, rhythm and timbre of music and can convey their emotions through it. Most people discover this intelligence at an early age. They are usually able to read music, critique performances and use musical-critical categories. Though often neglected in our culture and especially formal education, they can act as a way of capturing feelings, of knowing and understanding feelings, which is also important in education. It is also tied to other intelligences because it contains elements of ratio and regularity, which are also representative of mathematical reasoning.

F. Interpersonal Intelligence

An individual's sense of self, which consists of personal feelings and aspirations and their special responses to others, can also impact on the way a person learns. The interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand, perceive and discriminate the moods, feelings, motives and intelligences of others. Those most often with such intelligence are: teachers, politicians, religious leaders, salesman, skilled parents, therapists or counselors. The learning and the use of a culture's symbolism can help develop this intelligent. It is mostly intrinsic to the individual and does not require much from others. Observation and the experience are the most suitable tools to improve this intelligence.

G. Intrapersonal Intelligence

Those who display intrapersonal intelligence are often imaginative, original, patient, disciplined, motivated and have a great deal of self-respect. They developed it from internal sources from within the person. In class, they need as much

praise as they can get. Its development depends on how the learner wishes to use it. Teachers must think about 'imagination' exercises that could reveal their inner thoughts, reflections and feelings. Long-term projects could also be useful in that they strengthen their abilities to be patient and follow procedure. They are able to see what needs to be done in their minds to eventually make it happen.

H. Naturalistic Intelligence

Like the personal intelligences, naturalists could also benefit from observation and experience. It involves the ability to understand the nature's symbols and to respect the delicate balance of nature that has allowed us to live. They genuinely appreciate the intertwining of natural forces. They consider the future of the world first and are very much concerned and alarmed at the destruction and disruption of our planet. They often show expertise in the recognition and classification of plants and animals since they are a natural part of the environment. These children benefit a lot from learning outdoors in activities like: observing nature, labeling and mounting specimens, noticing changes in the environment, sorting articles for nature, nature hike or field trips or caring for pets. They are very comfortable with hands-on activities that involve natural objects.

We may be able to sense what our intelligences are and have within ourselves the capacity to activate them but we may not know how to use them effectively. Thus, according to Nolen (2003), the theory requires teachers to adjust their instructional strategies towards meeting the students' individual needs. This will not only activate their learning but may even help them to discover how to do it effectively.

Many studies were carried out by researchers on the efficacy of using multiple intelligences activities to assist learning the English language. When reading comprehension skills of fourth grade students in an American metropolitan city were found to be deficient, Gaines and Lehmann (2002) reported that multiple intelligences strategies as intervention had improved the situation. Furthermore, Reidel et al. (2003) had similar findings in a study done in an Illinois elementary school where there was an increase in reading comprehension and skill mastery that built a stronger, more confident and motivated reader. Shah and Thomas (2002) studied a 12-week program to improve spelling through multiple intelligences strategies. The result was an increase in the retention of high spelling frequency words.

I. Research Questions

Many studies have revealed that multiple intelligences play an important role in the learning process. Thus, the purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between students' strengths in multiple intelligences and achievement in learning English. More specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between students' strengths in each of their multiple intelligences and their achievement in learning the English language?
2. Do students in the Arts and Science streams differ in the correlation of their strengths in multiple intelligences and their English language achievement?
3. Which of the multiple intelligences predicts the strongest influence on the students' English language achievement?
4. What are the differences between Science and Art streams students in their multiple intelligences strengths that predict the strongest influence on English language achievement?

III. METHODOLOGY

This research is exploratory in nature and as such as no attempt has been made to formulate hypothesis for the study. Both descriptive and inferential methods are used for the analysis. They include correlation and multiple regressions. These methods are to explain the research questions about the relationship between students' strength in each of their multiple intelligences and their achievement in learning the English language.

The variables consist of the multiple intelligences test scores and the students' English language final exam results. They are selected based on a theoretical basis and from personal experience and thus would make the interpretation of the results more meaningful (Gay & Airasian, 2009).

The target population for this study was Form 4 (16 years old) male secondary school students from an urban background. 120 Form 4 male students were randomly selected as the participants of this study. They consisted of 60 Form 4 Science students from three classes and another 60 Form 4 Art students from three other classes. These boys were of mixed abilities as far as their competency in the English language was concerned.

Firstly, the test was administered to all the Science and Art stream students. This would avoid the irksome situation of having some students feeling left out from the study. In any case, all of them would benefit from the knowledge of their own multiple intelligences profile.

Then, the required number of 60 students from each stream was chosen at random from the number taken. The randomly selected ones were then numbered sequentially for easier data analysis. This method was used because of the relatively small and manageable size of the sampling set for the study.

A. Multiple Intelligences Test

A multiple intelligent test adapted from an inventory designed by the Learning Disabilities Resources Community (LRDC), Ontario, Canada was used to determine the students' strength in their multiple intelligences (see the

Appendix). The organization could be contacted at: The Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRK), University of Toronto, 130, St. George Street, First Floor, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 3H1.

The instrument consisted of 80 items, 10 for each of the eight intelligences. Each item is a description of one of the multiple intelligences that is manifested in their behaviors, feelings and attitudes. For each item, the subjects were instructed to choose from a 5-level Likert scale. They had used this scale to indicate their level of agreement with the item concerned. As there are 10 items with a maximum of 5 marks for each item, the total score for each set of intelligence is 50. The intelligence with the highest total represents the student's strongest intelligence. This produced a multiple intelligences profile for each student.

Work then commenced on ensuring that the translated instrument was reliable. This was carried out through back-to-back translation and a pilot test on 35 students not from the chosen sample. Reliability analysis was carried out using the 'Cronbach Alpha' method. The test was based on an alpha limit higher than 0.6 to indicate reliability. All the collected data for the research was analyzed using the 'Statistical Package for Social Sciences' 11.0 versions (SPSS 11.0). It was used for both the instrument pilot testing stage and the actual data collection.

B. English Language Achievement Test

The students' Form 4 Final English Language Examination results were used for the achievement scores. The test scores represented each student's summative performance in the English language subject for that year. It showed the range of achievement between those who excelled in the language and those who did not. The exam paper was based on the format of the 1119 English language 1 & 2 SPM Examination papers used by the Examination Syndicate of the Malaysian Ministry of Education. It is designed to test the students' ability in using the English language in the productive skills of reading and writing. It is the content and subscription to the Malaysian Educational curriculum specifically through the Secondary Level English Language Syllabus.

IV. FINDINGS

A description of the respondents' multiple intelligences was made using descriptive analysis involving the use of means and standard of deviations. This can be seen in table 1 below. This statistical examination only looked at the multiple intelligences which at this point are not yet seen in relation to their English language achievement. It is noted that for easy reference, the acronyms (in brackets) after each word or phrase will be used henceforth in the later tables.

The analysis of data reveals that respondents from both streams have the highest disposition for the interpersonal intelligence (Mean = 3.38). This is followed by their intelligences in the logical/mathematical (Mean = 3.35); intrapersonal (Mean = 3.24); visual/spatial (Mean = 3.08) and the naturalistic (Mean =3.05).

On the other hand, the students' multiple intelligences that were less used by the respondents are the musical/rhythmic (Mean = 2.99), bodily/kinesthetic (Mean = 2.98) and the verbal/linguistic (Mean = 2.97).

TABLE 1
MEAN SCORES AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF RESPONDENTS MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Multiple Intelligences	Science & Arts (n=120)		Science (n=60)		Arts (n=60)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Verbal/Linguistic (VL)	2.97	0.63	2.81	0.57	3.14	0.65
Logical/Mathematical(LM)	3.35	0.71	3.31	0.65	3.38	0.78
Visual/Spatial (VS)	3.08	0.61	2.94	0.53	3.22	0.66
Bodily/Kinesthetic (BK)	2.98	0.66	2.82	0.53	3.14	0.74
Musical/Rhythmic (MR)	2.99	0.73	2.87	0.69	3.1	0.76
Interpersonal (INTERP)	3.38	0.63	3.37	0.54	3.39	0.72
Intrapersonal (INTRAP)	3.24	0.68	3.14	0.65	3.33	0.69
Naturalistic (NAT)	3.05	0.84	2.81	0.79	3.30	0.84

A similar distribution pattern could be seen for both the Science and Arts stream students. However, the total mean scores obtained from the Art students for each sub-scale of multiple intelligences shows a more definitive or consistent pattern as compared to the Science stream students. Therefore, to identify the differences in mean scores of the multiple intelligences statistically, a t-test for comparative analysis was carried out. The analyzed data for this purpose can be seen in table 2 below.

The analysis of t-test reveals that there is a significant difference for the multiple intelligences of verbal/linguistic ($t = -2.99$; $p = 0.003$); visual/spatial ($t = -2.51$; $p= 0.0013$), bodily/kinesthetic ($t = -2.67$; $p= 0.0009$) and naturalistic ($t = -3.24$; $p = 0.002$). Conversely, an analysis of the data shows that the multiple intelligences of logical/mathematical, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal and intrapersonal have no significant differences at the level $p<0.05$.

The below results explain that the mean scores for the multiple intelligences of verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic and naturalistic are higher for the Art students than for the Science students. In other words, the Art stream students have a stronger disposition for this multiple intelligences than their Science counterparts. Nevertheless, for the multiple intelligences of logical/mathematical, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal and intrapersonal, the statistical analysis proves that both Science and Art stream students have similar low degree of use for them.

TABLE 2
STATISTICAL DATA FOR T-TEST TO SEE THE DIFFERENCES IN THE MEAN SCORESOF THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES BETWEEN SCIENCE AND ART STUDENTS

Multiple Intelligences	Science & Arts (n=120)		Science (n=60)		t value	Sig.	F value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
VL	2.81	0.56	3.14	0.65	-2.99*	0.003	1.39
LM	3.31	0.65	3.38	0.78	-0.49	0.622	4.11*
VS	2.94	0.53	3.22	0.66	-2.51*	0.013	6.04*
BK	2.82	0.53	3.13	0.66	-2.67*	0.009	9.39*
MR	2.87	0.69	3.11	0.75	-1.75	0.082	1.10
INTERP	3.37	0.53	3.38	0.72	-0.129	0.898	7.83*
INTRAP	3.14	0.65	3.33	0.69	-1.47	0.142	0.697
NAT	2.81	6.79	3.3	0.83	-3.24*	0.002	1.56

*Sig. at p<0.05

To answer the first research question, the relationship between the variables are analyzed by using Pearson Correlation while the strength of the relationships are interpreted based on Gay and Airasian (2009), where a correlation of 0.8 and above is interpreted as 'very high', 0.6 to 0.8 as 'high', 0.4 to 0.6 as 'average' and less than 0.4 as 'weak' respectively.

TABLE 3
PEARSON CORRELATION ANALYSIS ON STUDENTS MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

	VL	LM	VS	BK	MR	INTER	INTRA	NAT	ACHV
VL	-								
LM	0.652*	-							
VS	0.447*	0.440*	-						
BK	0.329*	0.359*	0.567*	-					
MR	0.420*	0.303*	0.492*	0.461*	-				
INTER	0.675*	0.605*	0.469*	0.332*	0.421*	-			
INTRA	0.511*	0.449*	0.358*	0.293*	0.309*	0.537*	-		
NAT	0.677*	0.623*	0.546*	0.472*	0.445*	0.637*	0.568*	-	
Achievement (ACHV)	-0.222*	-0.015	-0.305*	-0.249*	-0.244*	-0.018	-0.112	-0.341*	-

*Sig. at level p<0.05

From the table above, it could be seen that for all the students there are significant correlations between some of their multiple intelligences and English language achievement. However, these relationships are negatively correlated: verbal/linguistic ($r = -0.222$; $p < 0.005$), visual/spatial ($r = -0.305$; $p < 0.05$), bodily/kinesthetic ($r = -0.249$; $p < 0.05$), musical/rhythmic ($r = -0.244$; $p < 0.05$), and naturalistic intelligence ($r = -0.341$; $p < 0.05$). Looking at the strengths among these relationships, their correlation coefficient values (r is less than 0.4) are all on the weak side. Nevertheless, the multiple intelligences for logical/mathematical, interpersonal and intrapersonal do not show any significant relationship with language achievement.

The second research question requires a comparative analysis of the correlation values for the variables in both Science and Art streams. Table 4 below helps with this investigation.

As indicated in table 4, for the Science stream students, only their logical/mathematical intelligence ($r = 0.268$; $p < 0.05$) have a significant positive relationship with their achievement in the language. However, the correlation coefficient value is small (r is less than 0.4) and thus it shows only a weak relationship. At the same time, it can be seen that in the Science stream, all the other multiple intelligences do not show a significant relationship with their English language achievement.

TABLE 4
PEARSON COEFFICIENT ANALYSIS ON THE COMPARISON BETWEEN SCIENCE AND ART STUDENTS' CORRELATION OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

		VL	LM	VS	BK	MR	INTER	INTRA	NAT	ACHV
VL	Sc.	-								
	Art	-								
LM	Sc.	0.521*	-							
	Art	0.770*	-							
VS	Sc.	0.142	0.136	-						
	Art	0.603*	0.649*	-						
BK	Sc.	0.100	0.006	0.324*	-					
	Art	0.401*	0.576*	0.670*	-					
MR	Sc.	0.321*	0.069	0.259*	0.308*	-				
	Art	0.457*	0.479*	0.635*	0.535*	-				
INTER	Sc.	0.501*	0.450*	0.178	0.077	0.258*	-			
	Art	0.826*	0.704*	0.658*	0.479*	0.542*	-			
INTRA	Sc.	0.302*	0.315*	0.075	0.152	0.042	0.244	-		
	Art	0.658*	0.553*	0.540*	0.355*	0.511*	0.753*	-		
NAT	Sc.	0.573*	0.534	0.343*	0.251	0.269*	0.509*	0.445*	-	
	Art	0.715*	0.720*	0.649*	0.564*	0.556*	0.776*	0.659*	-	
ACHV	Sc.	0.152	0.268*	-0.083	0.006	-0.132	0.072	0.187	-0.010	-
	Art	-0.154	-0.156	-0.323*	-0.172	0.261*	-0.081	-0.082	-0.371*	-

*Sig. at level $p < 0.05$

On the other hand, for the Art stream students, the analysis shows that their multiple intelligences for visual/spatial ($r = -0.323$; $p<0.05$); musical/rhythmic ($r = -0.261$; $p < 0.05$) and naturalistic ($r = -0.371$; $p < 0.05$) have significant relationships but are negatively correlated with the respondents language achievement. In addition, it could be seen that these relations have very low correlation coefficient (r is less than 0.4) and are, therefore, rather weak.

Regarding the third research question, the strengths in the relationship between the students multiple intelligences and their English language achievement could be predicted more accurately by using the multiple regression analysis as can be seen in the table 5 below.

The research findings show that as much as 29.2% of the variants were contributed by all the 8 multiple intelligences towards the variable for language achievement. It is also revealed that the multiple intelligences for verbal/linguistic ($\beta = -0.26$), logical/mathematical ($\beta = -0.33$), musical/rhythmic ($\beta = -0.08$), naturalistic ($\beta = -0.47$), and interpersonal ($\beta = -0.37$) have significant influences on language achievement.

Nevertheless, the analysis reveals that interpersonal intelligence predicts the strongest positive influence on language achievement as compared to logical/mathematical intelligence. At the same time, it can be seen that their naturalistic intelligence predicts the strongest negative influence on achievement as compared to verbal/linguistic and musical/rhythmic intelligences.

TABLE 5
MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON THE INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS' MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

Variables	B	β	T value	Sig.
(Constant)	64.44	-	4.34	0.00
VL	-10.59	-0.26	-2.00	0.04*
LM	11.96	0.33	2.83	0.00*
VS	-8.87	-0.21	-1.89	0.06
BK	-1.87	-0.04	-0.45	0.65
MR	-2.73	-0.08	-0.77	0.44
INTER	15.42	0.37	3.06	0.00*
INTRA	1.89	0.05	6.48	0.63
NAT	-14.49	-0.47	-3.58	0.00*
R= 0.541;	R square= 0.292;		Adj. R square= 0.24	

To answer the fourth research question, a multiple regression analysis was carried out on the data variables of both streams which is displayed in table 6 below.

TABLE 6
MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON THE INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS' MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT: COMPARISON BETWEEN SCIENCE AND ART STUDENTS

Variables	Science Stream			Art stream		
	B	BETA	T Value	B	Beta	T Value
(Constant)	39.46	-	1.981	41.42	-	4.027
VL	4.23	0.157	0.898	-3.25	-0.139	-0.588
LM	7.33	0.31	1.891	3.88	0.197	0.951
VS	-1.38	-0.048	-0.334	-9.25	-0.400	-2.081*
BK	2.96	0.102	0.717	3.39	0.164	0.972
MR	-3.27	-0.148	-1.015	-1.77	-0.088	-0.561
INTER	0.37	0.013	0.082	15.97	0.758	2.984*
INTRA	4.02	0.171	1.174	-1.95	-0.089	-0.492
NAT	-6.19	-0.319	-1.666	-13.27	-0.727	-3.513*
R = 0.409 R ²= 0.167 Adj. R ²= 0.037				R = 0.582 R ²= 0.339 Adj. R ²= 0.235		

*Sig. at level p<0.05

The analysis shows that for the Science stream students, there is not even one of their intelligences which is significantly influential on the respondents' English language achievement. In contrast, the students from the Art stream have three multiple intelligences that are significantly influential on their language achievement. They are the multiple intelligences of visual/spatial (β = -0.400), interpersonal (β = -0.758), and naturalistic (β = -0.727). Of the three multiple intelligences, the interpersonal predicts the strongest positive influence on the respondents' language achievement. It is also noted that the naturalistic intelligence has the strongest negative predictor on the Art students' language achievement.

V. Discussion

The four research questions have resulted in the revelation of the following findings:

Generally, for all the students it is discovered that there are some significant negative correlations between students' multiple intelligences and their English language achievement. They are the multiple intelligences of verbal/linguistics, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, and naturalistic intelligence. The strengths between these relationships are all quite weak. On the other hand, the multiple intelligences for logical/mathematical, interpersonal and intrapersonal do not show any significant relationship with language achievement.

For the Science stream students, only their logical/mathematical intelligence has a significant positive relationship with their achievement in the language. Nonetheless, the relationship is a weak one. All the other multiple intelligences do not show a significant relationship with their English language achievement. It is, however, different for the Art stream students. Their strengths in multiple intelligences for visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, and naturalistic have significant but negative and weak relationship with the respondents' language achievement.

All the eight multiple intelligences were shown to contribute the same predicted influence towards the students' language achievement. The interpersonal intelligence shows the strongest significant positive influence on language achievement followed by logical/mathematical intelligence. Whereas naturalistic intelligence shows the strongest significant but negative influence on language achievement, followed by the verbal/linguistic and musical/rhythmic intelligences.

For the Science stream students, there is not even one of their multiple intelligences that are predicted to have a significant influence on the respondents' English language achievement. This is in contrast to the Art stream students, where their interpersonal intelligence is the only significant predictor with the strongest positive influence on the respondents' language achievement. Yet, their naturalistic and visual/spatial intelligences predict significantly negative influence on their language achievement.

VI. Conclusion

This study investigates the relationship between the students' strength in multiple intelligences and their achievement in the English language. What the results can conclude for this study is that in an environment where multiple intelligences may not have a strong presence in the classroom practice, both learners and practitioners may be unable to gain the best results. In a nutshell, this study could help teachers to consider how best to teach English language with multiple intelligences in mind. They can organize the class activities in such a way to develop all students multiple intelligences. It could also encourage the learners to use multiple intelligences to learn English language as they become properly aware of the issue. Having adjusted at utilizing their intelligences efficiently through practice and experience, the learners can easily learn autonomously.

APPENDIX LRDC MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES TEST

What are my learning strengths?

Research shows that all human beings have at least eight different types of intelligences. Depending on your background and age, some intelligences are more developed than others. This activity will help you find out what your strengths are. Knowing this, you can work to strengthen the other intelligences that you do not use as often.

Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence	**Logical/Mathematical intelligence**
_____I enjoy telling stories and jokes _____I have a good memory for trivia _____I enjoy word games (e.g. Scrabble & puzzles) _____I read books just for fun _____I am a good speller (most of the time) _____In an argument I tent to use put- downs or sarcasm _____I like talking and writing about my ideas _____If I have to memorize something I create a rhyme or saying to help me remember. _____If something breaks and won't work, I read the instruction book first _____For a group presentation I prefer to do the writing and library research	_____I really enjoy math class _____I like logical math puzzles or brain teasers _____I find solving math problems to be fun _____If I have to memorize something I tend to place events in a logical order _____I like to find out how things work _____I enjoy computer and any math games _____I love playing chess, checkers or Monopoly _____In an argument, I try to find a fair and logical solution _____If something breaks and won't work, I look at the pieces and try to figure out how it works _____Foe a group presentation I prefer to create the charts and graphs

Visual/Spatial Intelligence	**Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence**
_____I prefer a map to written directions _____I day dream a lot _____I enjoys hobbies such as photography _____I like to draw and create _____If I have to memorize something I draw a diagram to help me remember _____I like to doodle on paper whenever I can _____In a magazine, I prefer looking at the pictures rather than reading the next _____In an argument I try to keep my distance, keep silence or visualize some solution _____If something breaks and won't work I tend to study the diagram of how it works _____For a group presentation I prefer to draw all the pictures	_____My favorite class is gym since I like sports _____I enjoys activities such as woodworking, sewing and building models _____When looking at things, I like touching them _____I have trouble sitting still for any length of time _____I use a lot of body movements when talking _____If I have to memorize something I write it out a number of times until I know it _____I tend to tap my fingers or play with my pencil during class _____In a argument I tend to strike out and hit or run away _____I something breaks and won't work I tend to play with the pieces to try to fit them together _____For a group presentation I prefer to move the props around, hold things up or build a model

Musical/Rhythmic Intelligence	**Interpersonal Intelligence**
_____I enjoy listening to CD's and the radio _____I tend to hum to myself when working _____I like to sing _____I play a musical instrument quite well _____I like to have music playing when doing homework or studying _____If I have to memorize something I try to create a rhyme about the event _____In an argument I tend to shout or punch or move in some sort of rhythm _____I can remember the melodies of many songs _____If something breaks and won't work I tent to tap my fingers to a beat while I figure it out _____For a group presentation I prefer to put new words to a popular tune or use music	_____I get along well with others _____I like to belong to clubs and organizations _____I have several very close friends _____I like helping teach other students _____I like working with others in groups _____Friends ask my advice because I seem to be a natural leader _____If I have to memorize something I ask someone to quiz me to see if I know it _____In an argument I tend ask a friend or some person in authority for help _____If something breaks and won't work I try to find someone who can help me _____For a group presentation I like to help organize the group's efforts

Intrapersonal Intelligence	**Naturalist Intelligence**
_____I like to work alone without anyone bothering me _____I like to keep a diary _____I like myself (most of the time) _____I don't like crowds _____I know what I am good at and what I am week at _____I find that I am strong-willed, independent and don't follow the crowds _____If I have to memorize something I tend to close my eyes and feel the situation _____In an argument I will usually walk away until I calm down _____If something breaks and won't work, I wonder if it's worth fixing up _____For a group presentation I like to contribute something that is uniquely mine, often based on how I feel	_____I am keenly aware of my surroundings and of what goes on around me _____I love to go walking in the woods and looking at the trees and flowers _____I enjoy gardening _____I like to collect things (e.g., rocks, sports cards, stamps, etc) _____As an adult, I think I would like to get away from the city and enjoy nature _____If I have to memorize something, I tend to organize it into categories _____I enjoy learning the names of living things in our environment, such as flowers and trees _____I an argument I tend to compare my opponent to someone or something I have read or heard about and react accordingly _____I something breaks down, I look around me to try and see what I can find to fix the problem _____For a group presentation I prefer to organize and classify the information into categories so it makes sense

TOTAL SCORE	
_____ **Verbal/Linguistic**	_____ **Musical/Rhythmic**
_____ **Logical/Mathematical**	_____ **Interpersonal**
_____ **Visual/Spatial**	_____ **Intrapersonal**
_____ **Bodily/Kinesthetic**	_____ **Naturalist**

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The Impact of Metadiscoursal Features on Online Reading Ability of EFL Learners

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***Abstract*—The internet has become essential in the education of learners of all ages across the world but it has become particularly significant in the reading development of EFL learners. The present study aims at investigating the role and importance of metadiscourses in online reading comprehension of EFL learners. To meet this purpose, a questionnaire of Metadiscourses was developed and given to all subjects. Also, all participants were required to take part in an online reading comprehension test named as DIALANG Diagnostic Language Testing Online. The findings of the study illustrated that about 75% of the variation in online reading ability can be explained by taking their level of metadiscourse awareness into account. Therefore; metadiscourse awareness is making a significant contribution to the prediction of online reading ability.**

***Index Terms*—online reading test, metadiscourse, DIALANG Diagnostic Language Testing Online**

I. Background to the Study

A. Complex Facets of Online Reading Comprehension

The Internet provides an abundance of potential benefits for learners with disabilities; however, certain characteristics of online reading comprehension present learners with greater challenges and further complexity than reading printed text. Unlimited amounts of information online are more complex for learners to locate relevant information (Abbott & Cribb (2001), Leu, Kinzer, Coiro & Cammack (2004), McKenzie (1995), and Pierce (1998). The main advantages of online reading activities are the following:

Access at any time, in any place, for unlimited number of times, for unlimited time, without any charge and grate abundance of topics to choose from, so every student may find something interesting, next, the other advantage is that most sites are fully interactive, in that they check students' answers, give correct ones and provide feedback on incorrect ones, due to these factors, students are able to develop their reading skills without the teacher, providing they have the access to the Internet. The online learning environment has become more and more popular for educators and learners, due to its multiple visual and audio representations. Reading online is further complicated by the need to critically evaluate online sources to determine the reliability of the information (Abbott & Cribb (2001), Bulger (2006), Leu, Kinzer, Coiro & Cammack (2004). online texts and reading contexts change rapidly, often from one day to the next. Designers update their websites and readers post new comments using social networking tools. This rapidly changing reading environment has implications for the reliability of assessments that measure online reading comprehension; however, online materials must be evaluated for reliability, which learners generally neglect, and make it as a controversial issue; therefore evaluation strategies must be taught (Pierce, 1998). In addition to the complexities of this issue that is both relevant and reliable, multimedia components imbedded in online reading adds to the complex nature of Internet reading because unique skills for processing multiple modes of information is required because it includes embedded links, graphics, and video that sometimes distract learners, causing a decrease in comprehension rather than the intended enhancement of comprehension and retention (Coiro(2005), Kennedy & Bolitho(1984), Leu, Kinzer , Coiro & Cammack (2004). Although barriers are present preventing progress towards improved online literacy for learners with disabilities, when efforts for integration are made, learners obtain considerable benefit from learning online reading comprehension skills and strategies.

B. Benefits of Integrating the Internet into Instruction

Although research is scarce, a body of literature identifies the advantageous nature of the Internet for improving the academic outcomes for learners with disabilities including: (a) unlimited access to various resources, (b) adaptability, (c) increased opportunities for communication, and (d) the motivational aspect. One such benefit of the Internet is the access at any time, in any place, for unlimited number of times, without any charge. Another noteworthy aspect of the Internet is the ease of adapting online materials for learners with disabilities, and availability of a large number of topics for students to choose, particularly for those learners with exceptionalities being educated in inclusive settings. Furthermore the website is fully interactive and can be used by students, thus improving positive social and interpersonal skills that learners with disabilities often lack (Burgstahler, (1997), Hutinger, Clark & Johnson (2001). A final and ubiquitous theme is found within relevant literature describing the motivational nature of Internet. Motivation has to come from within an individual and from external support. Incentive can be lost when people believe they have no control or choice, no skills or resources to be successful, and no external resources to turn to for help. A key to successfully motivating an online student is to meet individual needs in terms of control, competence and belonging. Due to the tremendous potential for improving academic and social outcomes for learners with disabilities and the barriers preventing more widespread and meaningful implementation of the Internet into instruction, a dire need to increase research and practice efforts of online reading comprehension exists. While small, the body of research in the area indicates that teaching online reading comprehension is generally a promising practice to enhance learning for learners with disabilities. However, barriers to implementing this promising practice, along with the unique nature of online reading, hinders both instruction and student achievement.

Recent trends in the study of written texts reflect a growing interest in interaction between readers and writers. Several studies have focused on metadiscourse as an important interactive feature that is believed to facilitate the reading process. With reference to Halliday (1985b), metafunctional theory of language, on the *interpersonal* level, (Schiffrin (1980), Hyland (2000), Crismore & Farnsworth (1990), both point out that metadiscourse allows written texts to take on some features of spoken language (e.g., personal pronouns to establish an "I-you" relationship), and thus become more "reader-friendly". On the *textual* level, (Crismore & Farnsworth (1990), Crismore (1989) note that Metadiscourse is a term that is used in philosophy to denote a discussion about a discussion (and so on), as opposed to a simple discussion about a given topic. The term metadiscourse is also used in writing to describe a word or phrase that comments on what is in the sentence, usually as an introductory adverbial clause. It is any phrase that is included within a clause or sentence that goes beyond the subject itself, often to examine the purpose of the sentence or a response from the author.

Metadiscourse occurs within the realm of writing, whose presence we may verify by words, sentences, and paragraphs. Definitions and classifications of metadiscourse have been proposed by (Williams & Joseph (1990), Crismore & Farnsworth (1990), Crismore & Vande Kopple (1997) and Hutchinson & Waters (1987) who explains its usefulness during the writing process toward helping readers interpret and understand textual content. Metadiscourse helps writers arrange content by providing cues and indicators that both help readers proceed through texts and influence its reader reception.

Expanding metadiscourse to the visual realm both alters and confirms the concept of metadiscourse as defined for text. An alteration of metadiscourse occurs in the distinction of metadiscourse words from the content on which they are applied. In the definition by Williams that metadiscourse is "writing about writing," we see a separation between the writing on one level and the other writing at a different level we call metadiscourse. Writing at the first level (Vande Kopple (1997) calls the propositional content and it may be affected by metadiscourse from any of his seven categories.

In a later study with ninth graders, (Crismore (1989) & Vande Kopple (1997) investigated the effects of hedging (e.g., metadiscursive devices that express the writer's commitment to the truth value of the proposition being made) on reading retention. Experimental groups read passages from both social studies and science textbooks containing various types of hedging, while a control group read corresponding passages in which all hedging had been removed. Even if other factors (e.g. gender, subject matter and type/position of hedging) were also found to have an influence on retention scores, the authors propose that, in general, learners learned more from reading science and social studies passages with hedging included. Hedging is a strategy in which you state conditions, qualifications, exceptions to an assertion you are making. Hedging is an admission that something out there might contradict your assertion; it is an up-front admission of doubt in your own assertion.

II. What is Metadiscourse?

Metadiscourse is talk about talk. The common term discourse refers to the pragmatic use of language (including nonverbal signs such as paralanguage and gestures in discourse) in extended texts or episodes of communication. Metadiscourse refers to the pragmatic use of language to comment reflexively on discourse itself. The prefix “meta” (from a Greek word meaning with, across, or after) here denotes a shift to a higher-order frame of reference. Metadiscourse shifts the focus of attention from ongoing communication, putting some stretch of discourse in a context or frame designed to influence the meaning and practical conduct of communication.

Williams (1990), gives a different definition of metadiscourse from the one developed by (Hyland, (2000), & Hyland, Ken (2005). It is ―the language we use when, in writing about some subject matter, we incidentally refer to the act and to the context of writing about it. He goes on give examples: verbs to announce what the writer will be doing; cohesion

markers to indicate steps in presentation; words to express logical connections; and words to hedge how certain the writer is about a claim. Williams (1990) then states: ―Though metadiscourse does not refer to what we are primarily saying about our subject, we need some metadiscourse in everything we write. ‖ His wording (―incidentally, ‖ ―not […] to what we are primarily saying, ‖ ―we need some metadiscourse ‖) reflects a fundamental distinction that a number of theorists have made between propositional content (considered more important) and metadiscourse (considered less important).

In his critique of metadiscourse theory, Hyland (2005) reacts against the above dichotomy: ― (…) language is not simply used to convey information about the world. It also acts to present this information through the organization of the text itself (…) and engage readers as to how they should understand it (…) ‖ (Hyland (2005), & Burgstahler (1997) sees these two communicative acts — presenting through organization of the text and engaging readers — as the core purpose of metadiscourse. Taking a largely functional, pragmatic and sociocognitive perspective, he opines that ―all discourse, no matter how explicitly informational, 'is created between participants who bring to the encounter certain affiliations, experiences, expectations and background understandings. These interpersonal dimensions influence how they will interpret and respond to the message and how they will engage in the interaction. This means, says (Hyland (2000), Hyland & ken (2005) that writing involves managing social relationships ―because a text communicates effectively only when the writer has correctly assessed both the reader's resources for interpreting it and their likely response to it. This is, in part, achieved through the use of metadiscourse. Here, Hyland's (2005) views echo Grice's Cooperative Principle and mesh with (Sperber, Dan, and Deidre Wilson (1995) & Williams (1990)'s Relevance Theory, according to which the speaker or writer has a communicative and an informative intention. For the reader to interpret the writer's communicative and informative intentions correctly (i.e. in the way the writer wants them to), the writer must ensure, to the extent possible, that they share the same cognitive and contextual environment by using a variety of linguistic cues, including connectors. In a sense, it is through metadiscourse, as defined by Hyland, that the writer activates his/her communicative intention, which is more often than not to convince the reader of the information being conveyed and/or to persuade the reader to act on that information.

Thus Hyland (2005)'s own definition of metadiscourse revolves around the construction of text, meaning and the management of the writer–reader relationship:

All speech and writing, whether professional, academic or personal, includes expressions which refer to the text producer, the imagined receiver and the evolving text itself.… These expressions provide information about the participants, the kind of discourse that is being constructed, and the context. These expressions are, collectively, referred to as metadiscourse: aspects of a text which explicitly organize a discourse or the writer's stance towards either its content or the reader.

Metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community (Sperber, Dan, and Deidre Wilson (1995) & Hyland (2005).

In (Hyland (2005)'s opinion, the writer uses metadiscourse precisely to bring the implicit, internalized dialogue to a satisfactory conclusion through the reader's acceptance of the argument.

A. Metadiscourse Typology

Hyland divides metadiscourse into two broad categories:

► *Interactive* — features used to organize propositional information in ways that the target reader should find coherent and convincing (Halliday(1985a).

► *Interactional* — features that draw the reader into the discourse and give them an opportunity to contribute to it and respond to it by alerting them to the writer's perspective on propositional information and orientation and intention with respect to that reader (Halliday (1985a) & Halliday (1985b).

B. Interactive Metadiscourse

There are five interactive features, which are briefly defined and exemplified below.

• *Code glosses* supply additional information by rephrasing, illustrating or explaining. They reflect the writer's assumptions about the reader's cognitive environment. Examples: *called, defined as, e.g., in other words, specifically*

• *Endophoric markers* refer to other parts of the text in order to make additional information available, provide supporting arguments, and thus steer the reader toward a preferred interpretation.

Examples: *(in) (this) Chapter; see Section X, Figure X, page X; as noted earlier*

• *Evidentials* are metalinguistic representations of an idea from another source and help to establish authorial command of the subject.

► Examples: *(to) quote X, according to X*

• *Frame markers* are used to sequence parts of the text or order arguments in the text. They serve four specific purposes:

(a) to sequence — *(in) Chapter X, first, next, lastly, I begin with, I end with*

(b) to label stages — *all in all, at this point, in conclusion, on the whole*

(c) to announce goals — *my focus, goal, objective is to, I seek to*

(d) to shift topic — *back to, in regard to, return to, turn to*

• *Transition markers* are primarily conjunctions and conjunctives that help the readers determine the logical relationships between propositions. Authorities have proposed a number of categorizations, including (Hutchinson & Waters(1987), Hyland (2005):

(a) Additive — *moreover, for example* (also an endophoric marker), *similarly*

(b) Causal — *therefore, as a result, it follows that*

(c) Adversative — *however, that being said, nevertheless*

(d) Temporal — *first, second, next, then, finally*

C. Interactional Metadiscourse

There are five interactional features too.

• *Attitude markers* indicate the writer's opinion or assessment of a proposition. Examples: *I agree, I am amazed, appropriate, correctly, dramatic, hopefully, unfortunately*

• *Self-mention* refers to explicit authorial presence in the text and gives information about his/her character and stance. Examples: *I, we, the author*

• *Engagement markers* explicitly address readers to draw them into the discourse. Examples: *we, our (inclusive), imperative mood*

• *Hedges* indicate the writer's decision to recognize other voices, viewpoints or possibilities and be (ostensibly) open to negotiation with the reader. Examples: *apparently, assume, doubt, estimate, from my perspective, in most cases, in my opinion, probably, suggests*

• *Boosters* allow the writer to anticipate and preclude alternative, conflicting arguments by expressing certainty instead of doubt. Examples: *beyond doubt, clearly, definitely, we found, we proved, it is an established fact*

III. Significance of the Study

Recent trends in the study of written texts reflect a growing interest in interaction between readers and writers. Several studies have focused on metadiscourse as an important interactive feature that is believed to smooth the progress of the reading comprehension. While several authors have studied metadiscourse from the descriptive and contrastive perspectives, there is a lack of experimental work on this topic.

The purpose of this research was to gain more insight into the influence of metadiscourse on online reading comprehension levels in an L2 setting: a group of Iranian EFL learners.

The following research question has been developed for the present study:

Q: Are L2 readers able to understand an online text containing more metadiscourse better than one with less?

IV. Methodology

A. Participants and Administration Procedures

The test and questionnaire were administered to two large sections (ranging from 100-120 learners) of the EFL reading course. From those sections, two groups of 55 participants were randomly selected. Learners can enroll in the course starting only from the third year of their degree program. The English proficiency level of the learners ranged from intermediate to upper intermediate. The experiment was conducted towards the end of the semester-long course to prepare learners for an online reading comprehension test. The participants took an online reading comprehension test and completed a questionnaire. The online test is called DIALANG Diagnostic Language Testing Online.

B. Instruments

An online reading comprehension test was used in the current study. This test should be downloaded from the website of the Lancaster University and after installing the software, all the learners can use it provided that they are connected to the internet. This test is named as DIALANG Diagnostic Language Testing Online. The second instrument was the questionnaire of metadiscourse that measured the EFL learners' degree of awareness of metadiscourse. Unlike the online reading comprehension test, the questionnaire was formulated in Persian (the native language of the learners) in an attempt to avoid any failure to understand or correctly interpret the questions.

V. Data Analysis and Discussion

As mentioned earlier, the necessary data for the present study was collected through one Questionnaires of Metadiscourse filled by the EFL Learners and an online reading comprehension test.

The descriptive statistics of metadiscourse questionnaire as the independent (predictor) variable and online reading comprehension test as the dependent (predicted) variables are illustrated in the following Tables (see Table 1):

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR METADISCOURSE QUESTIONNAIRE AND READING COMPREHENSION TEST

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Metadiscourse Q	55	11.00	20.00	15.0294	3.45549
Valid N (listwise)	55				
Online Reading	55	11.00	38.00	27.6471	8.72900

In order to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the metadiscourse questionnaire and online reading test, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was applied to find the relationship between the two variables. The results of the correlation coefficients between metadiscourse questionnaire and online reading test are reported in Table.2.

TABLE 2.
PEARSON'S CORRELATION MATRIX BETWEEN METADISCOURSE QUESTIONNAIRE & ONLINE READING TEST

	Metadiscourse Questionnaire	Online Reading Test
Metadiscourse Qquestionnaire	1.00	
Online Reading Test	.76(**)	1.00

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

As the results in Table 2 indicate, there is a positive correlation between the two instruments *(r = .76, p < .05)*, showing a significant relationship between the level of metadiscourse awareness and Online reading ability.

Regression Analysis for Metadiscourse Questionnaire and Online reading test

To analyze the data further, regression analysis was conducted. The results indicated that Metadiscourse Questionnaire is a positive predictor of the dependent variable (Online reading test). The results of regression analysis for Metadiscourse Questionnaire and Online reading test are reported in Table 3.

As the results of Table 3 reveal, the model containing scores of Metadiscourse Questionnaire can predict 71% of the conceptual learning from the text. The R value is .84 indicating a correlation between students' metadiscourse awareness level and their online reading abilities.

TABLE 3.
R SQUARE FOR READING ENGAGEMENT AS THE PREDICTOR OF CONCEPTUAL LEARNING FROM TEXT

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.651(a)	.757	.753	19.05734
Predictors: (Constant), Metadiscourse Questionnaire				

Table 3 shows the contribution of the independent variable (Metadiscourse Questionnaire) on the dependent variable (Online reading) equals .651. The square value is .75 showing that about 75% of the variation in online reading ability can be explained by taking their level of metadiscourse awareness into account. Therefore; metadiscourse awareness is making a significant contribution to the prediction of online reading ability.

VI. CONCLUSION

Today the reading situation of an adolescent has changed. While on the one hand the book exists as a conventional medium for the distribution and conception of knowledge, on the other hand, the web represents a new kind of reading room. Knowledge construction on the web needs the capability to lithely incorporate traditional reading comprehension skills with new strategic knowledge applications drawn out by the new reading field for processing, comprehending and sharing information. More accurately the web has become an essential source that extends the traditional reading comprehension picture into an open hypermedia and multimedia knowledge space where a set of online comprehension strategies are engaged to efficiently find, comprehend, and utilize the informational contents.

When learners are involved in Internet learning and communication activities, reading comprehension is influenced by the appearance of the contents to read: mail, blogs, social networks, multimedia and hypermedia contents introduce a primary alteration in the construction of acts of reading. In reality, reading comprehension becomes a more complex, ongoing, self regulated, decision process which involves selecting from different feasible links, possible texts, possible purposes and among different ways of interacting with information (Afflerbach & Cho (2009).

The present study aims at investigating the role and importance of metadiscourses in online reading comprehension of EFL learners. To meet this purpose, a questionnaire of Metadiscourses was developed and given to all subjects. Also, all participants were required to take part in an online reading comprehension test named as DIALANG Diagnostic Language Testing Online. The findings of the study illustrated that about 75% of the variation in online reading ability can be explained by taking their level of metadiscourse awareness into account. Therefore; metadiscourse awareness is making a significant contribution to the prediction of online reading ability.

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Sociocultural Perspectives on Foreign Language Learning

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***Abstract*—This paper aims at presenting a brief overview of the major theoretical claims of the sociocultural theory (SCT) of mind and mental development with particular attention to how it relates to the learning and teaching of second/foreign languages. The sociocultural perspective has profound implications for teaching, schooling, and education. The main idea of this psychological view of human development is that social interaction is responsible for the development of higher order functions. In this regard it is believed that just the individual's internal cognitive process cannot account for developmental process. The researchers should also consider the external social factors in the child's environment. Children participate in activities which entail the use of cognitive and communicative functions and by doing so, these functions scaffold and nurture them in their developmental process. Hence in language classrooms successful instructions should be within the child's zone of proximal development (ZPD) and also successful learning process cannot be an individual's unmediated or unassisted effort but a collaborative process.**

***Index Terms*—Sociocultural Theory, social interaction, internal cognitive process, external social factors, Zone of Proximal Development, collaborative process**

I. Introduction

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (SCT) has had an immense impact on the field of education. Although he does not deny the indispensable roles of biological factors in elementary processes to emerge, he maintains that sociocultural factors are also significant in the development of the human being's mental processes. Vygotsky (1978) regards sociocultural settings as the essential and determining factor in the development of higher mental activities including voluntary attention, intentional memory, logical thought, planning and problem solving. In sociocultural theory learning is thought of as a social event taking place as a result of interaction between the learner and the environment. Sociocultural theory has its origins in the writings of the Russian Psychologist L.S. Vygotsky and his colleagues. SCT considers human mental functioning as essentially a *mediated* process organized by cultural artifacts, activities and concepts (Lantolf, 2000). According to this view, the existing cultural artifacts enable human beings to regulate and modify his behavioral and biological activities. Language is also believed to be the primary means of mediation. Developmental processes occur as the outcome of child's participation in cultural, linguistic and historical settings such as getting involved in interactions within families, peer groups, educational institutions, workplaces, sport activities, etc. Although Vygotsky does not reject the neurobiological factors for higher level of thinking ability, he stresses on the importance of interactions within social contexts in the development of human's cognitive ability (Lantolf and Thorne, 2007).

II. The Theory and its Construct

Vygotsky's SCT was concerned with the crisis of the 20th century regarding the challenge between two main camps of psychologists –those who were advertising a naturalistic perspective (the behaviorists) and those who followed a humanistic approach in psychology and emphasized the description and understanding of mental activities. The followers of a naturalistic approach focused on the naturalistic endowments, the biological endowments that humans share with primates, which were largely involuntary and reflexive in the presence of stimuli. Vygotsky's concern was mainly focused on higher mental thinking, rational thought, problem-solving, planning, meaning- making, etc. Vygotsky proposed that human beings possess two different levels of biological foundations. One was lower-level activities and the higher-level abilities, which include consciousness. He stated that by employing higher level cultural tools, such as language, literacy, numeracy, logic, etc., humans are able to have voluntary control over his/her consciousness. The role of these tools is to act as a buffer between an individual and the environment and mediate between the person and his/her social/physical world (Lantolf and Thorne, 2007).

Sociocultural theory has a holistic approach towards learning. The theory emphasizes meaning as the central aspect of any teaching and holds that skills or knowledge must be taught in all its complex forms, rather than presented as isolated, discrete concepts (Turuk, 2008). Learners are thought to be active meaning-makers and problem-solvers in their learning process. The theory also lays great stress on the dynamic nature of interconnections among teachers, learners and tasks and advocates concept of learning which stems from interactions among individuals.

Ellis (2000) argues that sociocultural theory is based on the assumption that learning emerges not through interaction but in interaction. When learners get involved in doing certain tasks with the help of another learner or the teacher, they internalize the way to carry out the same task by themselves. Hence, social interaction is believed to facilitate or mediate the learning process. According to Ellis (2000) the interactions that help the learners with their learning process are those in which the learners scaffold the new tasks.

One of the key contributions of sociocultural theory to the issue of language learning is that of 'participation' (Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000, cited in Davies, 2007) which combines the social context with individual acquisition. In other words, In order for an individual to become a competent speaker of a language, the mere personal effort would not result in the mastery of the language unless he benefits from other people's (especially adult) participation to negotiate through the Zone of Proximal Development(ZPD).

A. Zone of Proximal Development

The concept of ZPD in sociocultural theory is expanded far beyond the original form of it which was introduced by Vygotsky (Cook, 2008).The dissatisfaction with two practical issues in educational psychology prompted Vygotsky to introduce the concept of ZPD. These issues included the assessment of a child's intellectual abilities and the evaluation of instructional practices (Turuk, 2008). Regarding the first issue, Vygotsky argues that the testing techniques used only assessed the actual level of development, yet ignored the potential abilities of the child. He maintained that psychology should be more concerned with the potential abilities of a child, i.e. what a child will be to accomplish in the future but he/she has not achieved yet. In order to predict the future abilities of children and the importance of it, he defined the concept of ZPD as "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Turuk, 2008, pp. 248-249).

ZPD contributes to shaping the mental functions of a child which has not become mature yet, but will develop in future. According to Cook (2008) the distinctive aspect of Vygotsky's ZPD lies in the fact that "the gap between the learner's current state and their future knowledge is bridged by assistance from others; learning demands social interaction so that the learner can internalize knowledge out of external action"(p. 229). ZPD is considered significant in the sense that it is the region in which the transition from interpsychological functions (between people) turns into intrapsychological functions (inside the child). It is believed that learning causes a variety of internal developmental functions to be activated and this process happens only when the child is interacting with his peers or the adults in his environment. When the internalization of the learning process occurs for the child, it becomes part of his/ her internal achievements. Vygotsky contends that instruction is not the only determining factor, the biological factors also play an important role in ZPD. These two processes are intertwined in such a complicated way that one cannot consider a distinct role for either instruction or development per se. Vygotsky maintains that the child's development and intellectual possibilities determine the boundaries of the child's possible development.

Shayer (2002, cited in Turuk 2008) suggests that

…good instruction should proceed ahead of development and should awaken and rouse to life an entire set of functions, which are in the stage of maturation and lie in the ZPD. It is in this way that instruction can play an extremely important role in development (p.249).

A major pedagogical implications of ZPD is its emphasis on the collaboration and social interaction. Newman, Gleitman, and Cole (1989, cited in Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) name dialogic interaction and social mediation as the necessary elements for learning and development to occur. They maintain that cognition change does not take place if the system is a closed one and it is because of the constructive process of the zone that production change is possible. After Bruner's introduction of scaffolding (1986), Donato(1994) extends the notion by suggesting that scaffolding is a framework for peer interaction and individuals can scaffold one another. He maintains that the dialogic interaction has potential to foster linguistic knowledge. Some examples of peer scaffolding can be dyadic interactions between students such as role-plays, translations and interview tasks. The notion of the ZPD also suggests that teachers, both in practice and in training, can achieve an insight to teaching through reflective practice and collaboration with other teachers. Furthermore, an enlarged notion of the ZPD implies that mediation is not limited to the scaffolding offered by other human beings but may come in the form of socially constructed semiotic artifacts, such as books, maps, and diagrams.

B. Internalization

Another sociocultural theory concept is the notion of internalization, that is, the process by which intermental functioning in the form of social relations among individuals and interaction with socially constructed artifacts is turned inwards and transformed into intramental functioning (Vygotsky,1978). A pedagogical implication of *internalization* for second/foreign language classrooms is the enhancement of interactions among the learners. Following the significance of interaction among the learners, it is also vital that teachers realize that the role of expert is not limited to

that of a teacher, but it can also be applied to those learners who have internalized an aspect of the language. To have the experts help the less able learners, reciprocal teaching can be adopted, where the expert learner takes on the teacher's role within a group. However, the concept of internalization raises another issue.

Over the years of studying at schools, there are various concepts that have been *internalized* for them. These issues include the role of the teachers, the roles of the learners, how classes should be handled and how instruction should take place. Therefore, it may seem to be hard for them to change their conception regarding the role of the teacher. Thus, when they are asked to have a learner-centered approach in their instruction or incorporate reciprocal teaching, it may conflict with their own internalized notions of the roles of teacher and student.

C. Mediation Theory

One of the most important aspects of sociocultural theory is the concept of *mediation*. As human beings use physical tools to make changes in their environment, and consequently upgrade the conditions of their lives, they also use symbolic tools, or signs, to mediate and regulate their relationships with the people in their surroundings and thus change the nature of their relations with them. Williams and Burden (1997) point out that

For Vygotsky and his followers, mediation refers to the use of 'tools'. Tools in this sense refer to anything that is used in order to help solve a problem or achieve a goal. The most important of these tools is symbolic language…, the use of meditational language to help learners move into and through their Zone of Proximal Development(ZPD) is of particular significance. (p. 65)

An example clarifying the psychological mediation is the effectiveness of the use of a tool, such as a shovel or a backhoe to dig a hole in the ground in comparison with the use of bare hands without the use of a tool for the same purpose. Because the above mentioned tools (a backhoe or a shovel) are culturally constructed, they give more power to the human beings to act more effectively and make changes in their lives. Likewise, we use symbolic artifacts to establish an indirect or mediated relationship with the world. Lantolf (2000) states that in Vygotsky's view the task of a psychologist is to discover how the world of human beings are affected through the use of "culturally constructed artifacts" (p. 4).

Turuk (2008) also elaborates on the issue of mediation, holding that not matter whether the tools are symbolic or not, they are artifacts mad under specific cultural and historical conditions, and as such they possess the characteristics of the culture from which they are originated. Their function is to solve problems that cannot be solved otherwise. In turn, they also have an impact on the individuals who use them in that they cause the previously unknown activities and previously unknown ways of conceptualizing phenomena in the world to emerge. Thus, they undergo changes and modifications as they are passed on from one generation to the next, and each generation reshape them to suit the purposes and aspirations of each community.

Sociocultural theory rejects the view regarding the unified nature of thinking and speaking. It also does not accept the communicative view of language which suggests that thinking and speaking are totally independent phenomena and that speaking acts as a transmitter of already shaped thoughts. Sociocultural theory suggests that thinking and speaking as independent units are closely connected. Lantolf (2000) holds that "while separate, thinking and speaking are tightly interrelated in a dialectic unity in which publicly derived speech completes privately initiated thought"(p.7). Therefore, one cannot explain thought without its relation with language and how it manifests itself through it and linguistic activities cannot be accounted for without considering what the related thought is. Vygotsky (1978) holds that

"Thought and speech are two intersecting circles. In their overlapping parts, thought and speech coincide to produce what is called verbal thought. Verbal thought does not include all forms of thought. There is a vast area of thought that has no direct relation to speech. The thinking manifested in the use of tools belongs in this area. As does practical intellect in general"(p. 87).

D. Activity Theory

Activity theory, as one of the components of SCT, was developed by one of Vygotsky's student, A. Leontev. It deals with the unified nature of human behavior, which is considered to be the result of the integration of social and cultural mediations. Lauria (1979) believes that mind is not the result of the activity occurring in the brain but a functional system shaped as the brain's electro-chemical processes come under control of our cultural artifacts, the most important of which is language. In line with Luria (1979), Lantolf (2000) also suggests that an activity is motivated by a need which might be either social, like the need to get literate or biological, such as the need for food, which is hunger. Therefore, it is believed that motives emerge through certain activities which are goal directed and are accomplished under certain conditions.

To explore the implications of activity theory for second/foreign language acquisitions, and to find out how activity theory brings new insights for language development, several studies have been conducted (Such as, Gillette, 1994; Parks, 2000). Coghlan and Duff (1994, cited in Wen, 2008) examined a task-based performance from the activity theory perspective. They contended that scholars always view tasks as being scientifically controllable and measurable, yet they expressed their doubt about the constant nature of a task and argued that tasks are quite variable. They contended that different people react differently to the same task. They proposed an active role for the learners and maintained that learners are active agents who, according to their own objectives, give specific directions to the activities and even different times and conditions have different impacts on their performance on the same task. "The activity becomes

unique for each learner because it emerges from the interaction between the speakers and the interviewer, the setting, the subjects' motivations and histories. Therefore, it cannot be separated from its sociocultural context, from which it is co-constructed" (Wen, 2008, p.20).

Gillette (1994) also probed into the issue of individual differences through a series of in-depth case studies in the activity of language acquisition and proposed that the learning outcome is closely linked to the learners' motives and that their motives are socially and historically constructed, for example some learners wish to acquire a second language as much as possible while others may acquire it just to meet certain purposes. She also highlighted the fact that the use value they ascribe to language arises from the contact with the world, for example while efficient learners travel a lot, less efficient learners may not. In other words, she attributed the degree of success in the language learning process to the learners' motive, his/her goal and value, which are socially and historically constructed. In line with Gillette (1994), Wen (2008) also views language learning through the lens of activity theory and believes that choosing certain tasks for language teaching is under the influence of the learners' motives, goals and condition of learning. He argues that "while task-based language learning and teaching could yield positive learning outcomes, there can be no guarantees, because what ultimately matters is how individual learners decided to engage with the task as an activity" (p. 22).

E. Scaffolding and ZPD

Scaffolding has been interpreted as social assistance, which is an idea offered mostly by Jerome Bruner (1986). He noticed that children acquire their first language while their parents offer scaffolding in the form of continuous help to them through conversational "formats".

Using Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of mind, Lantolf (2007) elaborates on the nature of collaborative interaction. Learners "scaffold" one another as they take part in collaborative activity and such collaboration would lead to the co-construction of linguistic knowledge. The concept of scaffolding suggests that the knowledgeable person (adult, teacher, or peer) help the less knowledgeable (child, or student) to accomplish a task which he or she would not otherwise be able to do by himself or herself. It is also interpreted as anything a learner benefits from or consults with, which might be a dictionary, grammar books, the traditional classroom technique of Initiation, Response, and Follow up (IRF) , or any corrective feedback offered by the teacher. Scaffolding has also been connected to Vygotsky's ZPD. The ZPD is defined as " the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential problem-solving abilities as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in cooperation with more capable peers"(Vygotsky 1978, p. 86). The fundamental idea is that for scaffolding to facilitate L2 learning, it needs to exist within a learner's ZPD. Cook (2008) finds it parallel to the teachability concept stating that "you cannot teach things that are currently out of the learner's reach" (p. 229). Teachability concept suggests that one cannot teach things which are beyond the learners' present level of knowledge.

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) conducted a study which explored the effect of corrective feedback within the ZPD on L2 learning. The result of the study revealed that corrective feedback should not be constant but rather be modified over time so that the learners can take the responsibility for their own learning. Furthermore, Nassaji and Swain (2000) in a follow-up study of Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), confirmed that corrective feedback provided within the learner's ZPD is more effective than the corrective feedback offered to the learners regardless of their ZPD. Brown (2007)also likens Krashen's Input Hypothesis to Vygotsky's ZPD, yet he believes that the ZPD is arisen from a social interactionist perspective laying stress on the role of others to help the learners acquire what they cannot do by themselves.

Cook (2008) asserts that the gap between the learners' present level of knowledge and what he/she is going to learn is removed by the assistance offered by the experts. He holds "learning demands social interaction so that the learner can internalize knowledge out of external action"(p.229).

In her study of scaffolding in learner-learner pairs, Storch (2002) studied who dyadic interaction worked between 10 pairs of adult ESL students taking part in three different joint writing tasks. In her study, she distinguished the interactions in terms of "mutuality" (i.e., level of engagement with each other's contribution) and "equality" (i.e., the degree of control or authority over the task). According to her analysis of the interactions, four patterns of dyadic interaction were distinguished: (1) collaborative; (2) dominant-dominant; (3) dominant-passive; and (4) expert-novice. In collaborative dyads, both mutuality and equality were high. That is, there were the elements of willingness and cooperation in their pair work. In dominant-dominant dyads, equality was high but mutuality was low. Both participants contributed to the task equally, yet they were unwilling or unable to fully engage with each other's contribution. In dominant-passive dyads, both mutuality and equality were relatively low. That is, one of the participants was dominant while the other had a passive role. In expert-novice dyads, equality was low or moderate but mutuality was moderate or high. That is, the more knowledgeable acted as an expert, having an encouraging role for the less knowledgeable (a novice) in the collaborative activity. Furthermore, Storch (2002) had a comparison between the results of the pair work and subsequent individual work on each task. She found more instances of transfer of L2 knowledge from pair work to subsequent individual work among the collaborative pair and the expert-novice pair than the other two pairs.

F. Inner Speech

Vygotsky (1986) perceives language development as a process which begins through social contact with others and then gradually moves inwards through a series of transitional stages towards the development of inner speech. In other words, the phenomenon of inner speech is rooted in the society, as internalized social speech. The importance of inner

speech can be realized in some psychologists' viewpoints when they describe thought as the inhibited, soundless speech (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky argues the driving force behind speech is communication among both adults and children. In its earliest stages in children, speech is believed to be a social phenomenon which has a singular purpose (communication) and is multifunctional. However, later, it turns into egocentric speech and communicative speech. Based on the results of a series of experiments on the egocentric speech of children conducted by Vygotsky, Lauria, Leontiev and Levina (1929, cited in Ehrich 2006), it was revealed that egocentric speech was a function directly related to thought and problem solving. Egocentric speech takes place at the time of the child's transfer of social behaviour patterns to his or her "…sphere of inner-personal psychic functions" (Vygotsky, 1986, p.35). Hence, the children's thinking is aloud. In fact, when they think, they utilize the social aspect of speech. Vygotsky (1986) suggests that the egocentric speech becomes inner speech and finally disappears at the age of seven or eight.

Inner speech arises in a developmental fashion: first there is social speech, then comes the egocentric speech of children and finally inner speech is formed. Vygotsky (1986) states, "…inner speech is speech for oneself: external speech is for others" (p. 225).

Private speech is a vital construct with regard to the role of interaction in L2 acquisition. Vygotskyian sociocultural theory suggests that learners initially use language for communicative interaction purposes with their interlocutors and, eventually, this interpersonal speech takes on an intrapersonal function in which the speech is directed to the self. Interpersonal (social) speech can have an intrapersonal (private) function (Lantolf, 2007).

III. Sociocultural Approaches to Tasks

A range of researchers have explored the significance of interaction itself for the collaborative building of meanings, i.e. the focus is not on the individual within interaction but on the joint interaction that develops as learners co-construct meanings (Gillette, 1994; Lantolf, 2000). These researchers seek to find out how tasks are reinterpreted by learners, maintaining that it is unrealistic to expect tasks to have predictable and dependable qualities (Gillette 1994; Coughlan and Duff, 1994, cited in Wen, 2008). Wen (2008) argues that in any given classroom setting, although all of the participants display the same or similar overt behaviors in a task, the activities might change from one moment to the next, this might be due to the fact that learners normally seek different goals in their language learning process (Lantolf, 2000).

In a study Van Lier and Matsuo (2000, cited in Skehan, 2007) seek to find an effective way of measuring the interaction when learners learn how to interact symmetrically rather than dominate. By using a sociocultural framework to explore the nature of different tasks, Nakahama et al. (2001, cited in Skehan, 2007) advocate the use of discussion tasks for they provide more learning opportunities than do the information exchange task. Finally, Swain and Lapkin (2001, cited in Skehan, 2007) explore how construction of meaning, in the case of dictogloss and jigsaw tasks, offer scaffolding to the learners so that they can collaboratively, notice aspects of the target language grammar only through the collaborative work.

IV. Instruction, Development, Assessment, and the ZPD

Vygotsky (1978) in his sociocultural theory considered human beings as social beings whose formation as humans depends necessarily and dialectically on joint social activity, as well as on careful empirical observation of the link between IQ and schooling. Vygotsky had observed that children entering school with low IQs, in comparison with those having a high IQ, generally had a significant increase in their scores as a result of instruction, while children that entered the same institution with high IQs usually did not show a remarkable progress. This led Vygotsky to develop the metaphor of the ZPD in order to account for what he observed in the school setting. An important implication of all this, particularly with regard to language pedagogy, is that instruction, learning, development, and assessment are inseparably interwoven. Vygotsky they did not assume classroom activities as discrete ones as in standard classroom practice, but viewed them as the same activity. To Vygotsky, it is not enough to know what an individual can do alone without assistance, as reflected in traditional approaches to testing: it is necessary to discover what the person can do through scaffolding (i.e., instruction), because it portrays what the person will eventually be able to do when that help has been internalized.

Two individuals, who score the same on a traditional test without overt assistance, may well perform completely differently when assistance is offered. One person may be able to do much more with help, while the other may not. That is why Vygotsky laid emphasis on a kind of instruction which was aimed at the future, at what the person cannot yet do. Recently, the new type of assessment instrument, *dynamic assessment* works within the framework of Vygotsky's claim on the dialectic unity of instruction, development, and assessment. Dynamic assessment characterizes a number of distinct approaches that use guided learning for the purpose of determining a learner's potential for change. While the traditional and static procedures are aimed at obtaining the products of assessment, dynamic assessment is concerned with the different ways in which individuals who earned the same score achieved that score. Furthermore, while traditional measures reveal only fully developed abilities, dynamic measures are concerned with how well a learner performs when assistance is offered. In dynamic assessment learners are first assessed based on a traditional

solo performance measure, which might be an IQ test, a math assessment, or a science test. Then, the assistance, in the form of implicit hints, clues or if necessary explicit instruction is offered to the learners. The assistance is then removed and the learners are reassessed, but not just on the original instrument; rather they are provided with a task that exceeds far beyond the original task so that the internalization of the assistance can be determined. Dynamic assessment suggests that both rate and pathway of development are likely to be different for different individuals. This claim from Vygotsky's standpoint presents a challenge to the current way of thinking about L2 learning— that there is a common route and rate at which acquisition takes place.

V. Concluding Remarks

Learning, in Vygotsky's view (1978), can be defined as what an individual is able to do with assistance of another person or an artifact created by others. Assistance can be offered in the form of direct and explicit instructions, such as those happening in schools or educational institutes; or indirect and implicit instruction, such as those occurring in the case of everyday unreflective activity. On the other hand, development can take place only when that assistance is adopted and internalized, which enables individuals to function independently and apply and extend what they have acquired to broader contexts. The relationship between assistance and self-regulated performance is portrayed in the concept of the ZPD.

Vygotsky's SCT also brings a new perspective to how researchers and teachers understand and promote language learning and teaching. One common belief within the framework of SCT is the notion that learning occurs effectively when students interact with one another in foreign language classrooms, yet SCT should not be viewed as a theory just for learners. The knowledge of SCT can also be useful for teachers to discover and create ways to set up tasks and activities which can allow for facilitation of language learning.

Another area that is especially exciting and relevant for L2 pedagogy is that which deals with the ZPD and dynamic assessment. Unlike the traditional assessment which focuses on the final product of what learners have achieved, dynamic assessment seeks to find out how internalization takes place when the assistance is provided. Hence, it holds that the rate and route of the learning for different individuals might differ.

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Negative Evidence in Iranian Children: How do Iranian Parents Correct Their Children's Errors?

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***Abstract*—The most acceptable assumption in the past in child language acquisition research was that parents do not correct the grammatical errors of their children. However, today scholars believe that parents use different kind of corrective responses. To address these issues, this study focuses on Iranian parents' correction of children's errors. The samples of the present study were 62 educated parents in the city of Babol who had children between the ages of 2 to 5. These parents were supposed to answer three main questions regarding children's error correction. 1) How do you usually correct your child errors? 2) What kind of errors do you mostly correct? 3) How do you understand your child recognized the correction? The results of the study revealed that although parents claimed that they are used to children's errors and even enjoy errors their children make, about 61% of parents corrected children's errors. The results also revealed that parents correct children's grammatical errors more than other kind of errors.**

***Index Terms*—negative evidence, positive input, feedback**

I. Introduction

We do not learn language in vacuum, we learn language in conversation. Children learn conventional forms and functions in conversations with others. They learn how to express their intentions and also how to interpret the intentions of others. Adults' speech to children act as the prerequisite environmental factor to trigger their innate language acquisition device (LAD).Some researchers believe that the speech children receive around them is too poor to learn from, so they have claimed that children have an innate language acquisition device (LAD).

There are different views about the input the child receives. Nativists believe that the only input resource available to the child is the linguistic information. They also claimed that negative evidence and positive input, will be identical from the child's point of view (Saxton, 1997). Saxton (1997, p.147) defined positive input and negative evidence as the following:

"Positive input is defined as any input utterance which models grammatical structures, excluding all instances of negative evidence and negative evidence supplies the correct adult model directly following a child error, while positive input supplies the correct form in all other discourse contexts."

He further mentioned that "Negative evidence occurs directly contingent on a child error, (syntactic or morphosyntactic), and is characterized by an immediate contrast between the child error and a correct alternative to the error, as supplied by the child's interlocutor" (p. 145).

As the definition shows a child can not correct his errors based on the positive inputs he is always encountered. He should also be exposed on some kind of negative evidence to correct his errors. In fact negative evidence according to Saxton (1997) is a prerequisite for child to get rid of errors. Negative evidence and positive input are the same in terms of the linguistic information they convey to the child, however they differ only in the context they are used, negative evidence only is immediately used after the child made an error.

II. Review of Related Literature

There is not a consensus on the role of negative evidence in language acquisition. Nativists completely reject negative evidence argument. They believe no one correct child's errors (Flevaris, 2011).They claim children can filter out the ungrammatical statements from grammatical statements based on their innate capacity and the frequency of these statements. Based on their innate knowledge children can guess possible grammatical structures. Furthermore grammatical structures are heard more frequently in the environment and that's the reason why children could easily correct their erroneous structures (Saxton et al. 2005). Morgan and Travis (1989 as cited in Morgan et al., 1995) argue that corrective responses do not occur with sufficient frequency or regularity in the input to be considered essential for learning. Very often, correction may not help at all. On the other hand non-nativist proponents believe negative input

has a crucial role in shaping the grammaticality of child's language. Chouinrad and Clark (2003) claim negative evidence is sufficient for children to correct their errors. Others like Saxton et al. (2005) believe on the existence of inner mechanism for language learning but do not completely reject the role of corrective like Nativist. Saxton (1997) provides evidence that the child's immediate responses to negative input are often consistent with its corrective function. Saxton (1997, p.146) provides the following examples:

1. Child: That policeman falled all the way down to the tiger.
Adult: He fell down.
Child: Yes, he did. He fell down 'cause he likes that tiger.
2. Child: It's even gooder than anything. (repeated 4 times)
Adult: Yes, it's better.
Child: Better, yeah.

He reaches the conclusion that "naturalistic data reveal that children sometimes shift from erroneous to correct versions of particular structures following the intervention of negative evidence" (p.147).

Saxton et al. (2005) believe that negative evidence is necessary for language learning and this is not at all in contrast to innate capacity. They believe that a rich input does not mean that there is no innate capacity for language learning:

"Logically, both could co-exist. Essentially, nativist theorists pose the question "what would the child's endowment for language look like if negative input were not available?" In so doing, one is more likely to discover the full nature and extent of innate structure in language acquisition." (P. 667).

A. Parental Error Correction

Children are exposed to many incorrect forms. When adults speak they usually change their minds, make slips of the tongue and so on. Parents also make grammatical errors when they speak. However all children grow up knowing the language perfectly. How is it possible? Do children retreat their grammatical errors on the basis of innate capacity or from the feedback they receive from adults?

Under the influence of Chomskyan paradigm scholars believe that parents do not usually correct their children's grammatical errors they usually correct the content of their children's speech rather than their grammatical errors. Grammatical errors are only rarely corrected.

Brown & Hanlon (1970 as cited in Marcus, 1993) found that children's grammatical errors were not corrected and they were supposed to make distinction between what is grammatical and what is not grammatical based on their LAD. In fact their findings provide empirical support for Chomsky's argument from the poverty of the stimulus. If children do not receive any support from the linguistic environment then they should definitely rely on their inner capacity.

Saxton et al. (2005) mentioned that parental correction encompasses a form of negative input that is the information about which statements are ungrammatical, such as corrections or other forms of feedback from a parent that tell the child about the ungrammaticality of his utterance. Children are bombarded with a special kind of speech that is simple, fluent, grammatically correct, and context bound. Children do not learn in isolation. Many parents help their children in conveying correct form of their intended meaning. Parents help their children to make full sentences, help them paraphrase or repeat the correct form of their utterances (Pinker, 1984). Although child directed speech can help children to extract the correct form of language, they differ from negative evidence (Snow, 1997).

Negative input can control language acquisition and help children to get rid of errors they make in the process of language acquisition. A well example of this kind is stated in Marcus, et al. (1992 as cited in Saxton et al. 2005) where children make errors with past tense forms of irregular verbs. The child grammar at that time permits both *breaked and broke, while adults' grammar only permit broke. In some phases of language acquisition as Saxton et al. (2005) claimed child's grammar permits two forms where the adult grammar allows only one. In this case negative inputs help child to understand which structures are obligatory.

B. Prerequisites of Adults' Correction of Children's Errors

Marcus (1993) mentioned that there are two ways that a child can understand his sentence is ungrammatical: external clues from others or internal mechanism. Parents can provide children with an explicit rejection of ungrammatical sentence that is explicit negative evidence or the child should be equipped with a mechanism which avoid ungrammatical sentences.

Negative evidence according to Saxton et al. (2005) creates a unique context for the child to understand the contrast between his utterance and those produced by adults. In order to make this contrast, the child needs two prerequisites. First, the child understands the form produced by the adult is grammatical and second, he should understand that his own utterance is ungrammatical.

C. Different Kinds of Negative Evidence

Marcus (1993) named three kinds of negative evidence: complete feedback, partial feedback and noisy feedback. Complete feedback is used only for ungrammatical sentences; it is not used for correct sentences. Partial feedback is followed by some ungrammatical sentences, but never is used after correct sentences. Noisy feedback "is a corrective signal provided after some errors and after some correct sentences, but in different proportions" (P. 59).

Marcus (1993) claimed that the only available feedback children receive is noisy feedback, which means children receive feedback following both grammatical and ungrammatical speech. Children almost certainly do not receive complete feedback or even partial feedback. "Nobody, though, has ever provided any evidence that children receive complete feedback; every reply type studied in the discourse studies is not provided for all ungrammatical sentences, and is provided for some grammatical sentences" (P. 60). Noisy feedback decreases with age. Hirsh-Pasek et al. (1984) mentioned "sensitivity to well-formedness is only apparent among [parents of] 2-year-olds.The same pattern of results failed to emerge at other ages" (p. 86).

D. Why do Children Rely on Adults Conventional Forms as the Correct Form?

When the child makes an error and adults correct it the child is exposed to two forms for the same meaning (Chouinard & Clark, 2003). Base on the Principle of Contrast, the same meaning cannot be carried by more than one form (Clark, 1993). So the child must choose only one form and since adults are the more expert speakers, children prefer the form produced by adults (Clark & Bernicot, 2008).

Sameness of meaning is very important. If the meaning proposed by children is not interpreted correctly by adults, the child tries verbally and non-verbally to inform the adults of her intended meaning (Chouinard & Clark, 2003). But when the child is sure that the two forms convey the same meaning, he would prefer adults' form. Saxton (1997) mentioned that if the corrective information is used in contingent to child erroneous utterance show the child the contrast between his erroneous utterance and the correct alternative produced by adult. Once children become aware that two forms convey the same meaning, they will adopt the adult conventional form instead of their own erroneous expression. According to Chouinard and Clark (2003) adult correction could have different meaning for children:

a) they made an error;
b) the place of that error, and
c) the correct form to be used instead.

In fact by comparison of their own utterance and adults form children will recognize the place of the error and "identify the conventional form that they should have used for that meaning" (p. 643). Saxton (1997) mentioned that "despite what other differences may exist between child and adult utterances, [children] adopt the form favoured by the adult in place of their own version"(p. 157).

Chouinard and Clark (2003) stated that children give evidence of attending to the adult reformulations they hear by repeating the corrected forms, by acknowledge them with responses like yeah or uh-huh. The important point according to Clark and Bernicot (2008) is that even if children don't use adults' conventional forms they would easily store adults' conventional forms in their memory so that after awhile they have the required potential to correct errors. Marchman and Bates (1994) believes that children have some threshold level of exposure before they fully adopt an adult form to replace their own form.

III. Research Questions

The nativist assumption in theories of child language acquisition is that parents do not correct the grammatical errors of their children. That is, the child is said to receive no negative evidence (Pinker, 1989). They believe there is no difference between positive input and negative evidence. They both shape the linguistic input the child is supposed to receive from environment. However according to Saxton (1997) the proponents of "Contrast Theory" believe that not only children can differentiate between positive input and negative evidence but also children react to them differently. Negative evidence seems to be more effective than positive input, because it encourages the child to use adults' correct forms.

To our knowledge, there seem to be few researches on parents' view in correcting their children erroneous utterances. So the researchers tried to check how Iranian parents mostly correct their children. The focus in the current article is different kinds of parental correcting on Iranian children acquiring Persian as their first language. Participants were supposed to answer the following questions:

1) How do you usually correct your child errors?
2) What kind of errors do you mostly correct?
3) How do you understand that your child accepted the correction?

IV. Method

A. Participants

The samples of the present study were 62 educated parents in the city of Babol who had children between the ages of 2 to 4. They were aged between 22-45 years old. Twenty one of them were having their first child, thirty six of them were having their second child, and five had their third child. They were supposed to answer to the above mentioned questions.

B. Design

It should be noted that this study is a descriptive one. According to Best and Kahn (2006) argue that descriptive research seek to find answers to "analysis of past events or the already existing conditions" (p. 133). It describes and interprets what exist. Because the researchers had no control over what has already happened to the subjects of the present study an Ex-Post Facto design was needed.

V. Data Analysis

In order to test the hypothesis, first parents answer the three above mentioned questions. Then, based on their answers the researchers divided them into ten separate elements to be studied separately. Each of these subcategories is discussed bellow.

In order to answer the first question on "How do you usually correct your child errors?" and based on the participants' answers the following answers were elicited.

As the following table shows a small part of participants stated that they correct their children's errors directly and about 69 percent of them rejected direct correction.

TABLE 1.
DO U CORRECT YOUR CHILD'S ERROR DIRECTLY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	19	30.6	30.6	30.6
	no	43	69.4	69.4	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

As the table 2 shows about 38 percent of participants neglected children's errors and about 61 percent of them corrected their children's errors.

TABLE 2.
DO NOT PAY ATTENTION TO ERRORS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	24	38.7	38.7	38.7
	no	38	61.3	61.3	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

As the table 3 shows 66 percent of the participants use some kinds of recast to correct their children's errors, while 33 percent of them used other kinds of correction such as expansion.

TABLE 3.
REPEAT THEIR SENTENCE WITH CORRECTION

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	41	66.1	66.1	66.1
	no	21	33.9	33.9	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Most of the parents in this study as shown in the following table believe that context is so rich that they don't need ask children for clarifications of their intended meaning.

TABLE 4.
DIRECTLY ASK CHILD TO CLARIFY WHAT THEY MEAN

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	25	40.3	40.3	40.3
	no	37	59.7	59.7	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

In order to answer the second question on "What kind of errors do you mostly correct?" Based on the elicited answers the researchers found that parents in most cases correct grammatical and phonological errors of children as they correct pragmatics errors. The following tables confirm these findings.

TABLE 5.
MOSTLY CORRECT THEIR PHONOLOGICAL ERRORS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	40	64.5	64.5	64.5
	no	22	35.5	35.5	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 6.
MOSTLY CORRECT THEIR GRAMMATICAL ERRORS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	43	69.4	69.4	69.4
	no	19	30.6	30.6	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 7.
MOSTLY CORRECT THEIR PRAGMATICS ERROR

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	18	29.0	29.0	29.0
	no	44	71.0	71.0	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Participants in answering to the last question "How do you understand that your child accepted the correction?" revealed some interesting results. Although most articles studied by the researchers found that children usually used head nods to inform adults that they understood the problem, this was somehow rare in the Iranian context. Most children under study only stop for short moments after correction and surprisingly this has not been mentioned in the previous articles done out of Iran. Children also used lots of side-sequence answers such as uh-hu and ok which they pronounce "khob" or "kha" in Persian in reaction to parents' correction.

TABLE 8.
ANSWERS LIKE YES/NO, UH-HU

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	42	67.7	67.7	67.7
	no	20	32.3	32.3	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 9.
HEAD NODS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	12	19.4	19.4	19.4
	no	50	80.6	80.6	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 10.
PAUSING AFTER CORRECTION

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	41	66.1	66.1	66.1
	no	21	33.9	33.9	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

VI. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The existence and effectiveness of negative evidence seems to be a very important question in the study of language acquisition, because by rejecting negative evidence in retreating child's error one would conclude the child is relying on his innate capacity to learn the language (Marcuse, 1993). There seem to be great controversies in the effectiveness of negative evidence. Saxton et al. (2005) consider negative input as unnecessary component of language acquisition. They quoted "Corrective input might facilitate language acquisition without being in any way essential" (p. 670). Marcus (1993) argues that parents provide noisy feedback for correcting children's utterances and it is hard to believe

children can use these noisy feedbacks to diminish their errors. He believes children seem to rely on their internal mechanisms. He concluded that "internal mechanisms are necessary to account for the unlearning of ungrammatical utterances" (p. 53). However non-nativist scholars like Chouinrad and Clark (2003) who assume that child learns language with no language-specific device view input as the primary source of all linguistic knowledge. They believe negative input has a crucial role in shaping the grammaticality of child's language. The results of their study shows that "adults reformulate erroneous child utterances often enough for learning to occur" (p. 667).

The finding of the present study shows that only 30% of Iranian parents correct their children's errors directly. The results also shows parents are sensitive to the kind of errors children make. They mostly correct syntactic and phonological problems of their children.

Studies have found that mothers retreat their children's ungrammatical statements no more than 34% of the time (Hirsh-Pasek, et al., 1984; Farrar, 1992) which according to Flevaris (2011) is not enough for the removal of errors. The findings of present study reject nativist assumptions of language acquisition which completely deny the role of negative evidence. It also rejects non-nativists views that place no role for innate mechanism. As the results show Iranian parents do correct their children and their correction seem to be facilitative for language learning but this cannot deny the role of innate mechanism. As Morgan et al. (1995) suggest negative evidence cannot replace internal mechanism. The child must have some mental mechanisms that rule out the grammatical utterances produced by adults. In sum our findings support Saxton (1997) views which mentioned negative input along with positive input and internal mechanism shapes the child language:

"The discovery that negative input plays a role in the recovery from errors would not allow one to conclude that innate factors and positive input have no role to play in the retreat from overgeneralization. In fact, it would not be surprising to discover that all three factors (innate attributes, positive input and negative input) contribute in some way" (p. 159).

It is important to note limitations of the current study and its findings. First, and most significant, this study has been conducted only in one city with about 62 participants. Definitely the greater number of participants from different regions can give us a better picture of error correction in Iranian children. In addition different socioeconomic characteristics of parents can significantly relate to their perception of children's errors and their corrections. Parents who participated in this study seem to be somehow from the same socioeconomic backgrounds. Other studies should be done within different socioeconomical levels. Finally replication studies in other sociocultural contexts, could serve as important future contrasts to the present studies.

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An Investigation on Translation Strategies Based on Think-aloud Protocols

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***Abstract*—The main concern of this paper is to explore the translation strategies employed by Chinese participants when they fulfill both E-C and C-E translation tasks. The major findings are as follows: Eighteen strategies of Kiraly's strategies (1997) have been more or less employed by the participants. In addition, six other strategies are identified in this study. Among the twenty-four strategies, the participants employ "Monitor for TL accuracy"; "Self-correction" more in E-C translation tasks than in C-E translation tasks. On the other hand, they employ "Accept interim solution"; "Identify problem"; "SL-TL dictionary search"; "Make intuitive acceptability judgment"; and "Rephrase ST Segment" more frequent in C-E translation tasks than in E-C translation tasks. The number of the strategies employed by the participants increases by the development of their bilingual proficiency and the experiences gained in translation training.**

***Index Terms*—translation strategies, cognitive, think-aloud protocols, C-E, E-C**

I. Introduction

There is no doubt that translation does play an extremely significant role in social reality. Some scholars start to carry out their research on every aspect of translation studies from various theoretical perspectives. Considerable experimental researches had been done in the area of cognitive translation processes all those years. They intended to understand what translators actually do compared to what they are assumed to be doing and tried to access the black box of what goes on during translating. They have focused on various aspects of the process-oriented translation studies and opened new areas in translation teaching field.

With those beliefs in mind, the author of the present research wants to investigate the translation strategies based on think-aloud protocols of twenty translation majors in China. Adopting Kiraly's psychological model (1997) of translation process as the theoretical foundation, mental processes of translation majors in China are explored. The study will contribute to the translator training and translation teaching.

II. Literature Review

A. Research Review of Translation Strategies Abroad

Wolfgang Lörscher (1991) defined a translation strategy as (the definition provided by Færch and Kasper, 1983) 'a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language into another.' Löscher (1986, 1991) had conducted a large-scale TAP study to ask 48 German learners of English produce a spoken translation of a written text while thinking aloud. A sequence of core elements constituted each strategy was reported. A series of strategies formed the translation process, which can also be combined in different ways. Despite individual differences, there are regularities that point at the possibility of establishing taxonomies of translation strategies. No translation-specific strategies were found.

Hans Peter Krings (1986) had carried out the experiment to study eight German learners of French as a foreign language translated a text either into or out of French. Krings focused attention on the translation problems and translation strategies based on TAPs. A series of 'problem indicators' were reported. And then, he classified the translation strategies as strategies of comprehension, equivalent retrieval, equivalent monitoring, decision-making and reduction.

Gerloff (1986) described 'text-processing strategies' as '…any metalinguistic or metacognitive comments made or specific problem-solving behaviors affected, during the decoding and rendering of the translation text'. She classified the translation strategies as problem identification, linguistic analysis, storage and retrieval, general search and selection, text inferencing and reasoning, text contextualization and task monitoring.

In 1991, Séguinot studied student translator at different levels of proficiency to translate two similar texts. They translated two advertisements from French into English. Séguinot reported that native speakers of English translating

into their mother tongue show more efficient monitoring and revising strategies, and work more at the textual level, whereas non-native speakers seem to rely more on learned principles and lexical-level processes.

Based on Lörscher's definition, Riitta Jääskeläinen (1993) classified the translation strategies into global strategies (applying to the whole task, namely style, readership etc.) and local strategies (applying to specific items, namely lexical searches). She reported that global strategies are much more frequently used by professionals and semi-professionals (translator trainees) than by non-professionals.

As far as lexical search strategies were concerned, Mondhal and Jensen (1996) distinguish production from evaluation strategies. Production strategies were divided into achievement strategies and reduction strategies (also studied by Chesterman, 1998). Spontaneous association and reformulation formed achievement strategies. Avoidance and unmarked rendering of marked items formed reduction strategies. Evaluation strategies reflected on the adequacy and acceptability of translation equivalents.

Séguinot (1996) studied two professional translators working together at the same task. Four types of translation strategies are identified in such a professional translation. Those strategies included interpersonal strategies (brainstorming, correction, phatic function), search strategies (dictionaries, world knowledge, words) inferencing strategies (rereading ST and TT, consult) and monitoring strategies (reread ST and TT, consult, compare units).

In addition, Donald Charles Kiraly (1997) reported studies on the strategies in the process of translating. The problem and strategy indicators are found and more strategies are differentiated. He had investigated the mental aspects of the translation process. The translation strategies drawn from Kiraly's research will be used in the present experiment.

Seen from what we have covered so far, a number of TAP studies, especially early ones, have tried to recognize and classify the translation strategies. And the researchers have concluded that the performance of professionals differs from that of non professionals with regards to the strategies use. Let us now turn to consider what the Chinese researchers had done about translation strategies by means of TAPs.

B. Research Review of Translation Strategies in China

To the knowledge of the author of present paper, not many Chinese scholars carried out the researches on the translation strategies. In the year of 2000, Hansong Cai stressed the great importance of research into translating process and briefly discussed the origin and classification of verbal protocols. Then it dealt with the specific procedure in the application. He attempted an investigation into the thinking process of three subjects in the given task of translating English sentences of cause-effect relations into Chinese. To broaden the research scope, Hansong Cai and Jiayao Guo conducted the psycholinguistic case study on the translating process of three subjects in the given task of translating English sentences of double negation into Chinese.

In 2002, Jinquan Wang carried out the research of translating English sentences with attributive clause into Chinese. Jun Wen explained the concept of "translation competence", introduced "linguistic/text competence", "strategic-competence" and "self-monitoring competence" by adopting concrete examples in 2004. In the same year, Min Han found that domestic and foreign theorists of translation studies applied the learning strategies from three aspects. Dechao Li (2004) reviewed the development of TAPs translation research over the past years, he pointed out its operational pitfalls and methodological limitations despite its marginal success in some areas. His research concluded by offering some suggestions for the future development of TAPs translation research.

Chen Gao (2007) studied the translation strategies of the translators when dealing with CSIs. The small-scale investigation involved an experiment to elicit TAPs from six participants, two competent professional translators, and four advanced language students. Their TAPs were coded and analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively, with regards to their translation strategies of CSIs, namely the problem-solving strategies and the manipulation strategies. Junxia Dai (2009) made a review on the tapping translation process by applying the theory and method in psychology. Qiulan Zhai (2009) reported the translation strategies of the 32 student translators when dealing with CSIs.

Dandan Tao (2010) adopted TAPs methods to explore the subjects' use of translation strategies and their relation to the translation performances in TEM8. It is found that the two strategies, namely "back translate" and "recontextualize", are not used in CE or EC translation, and that "rephrase" is more frequently applied in CE than in EC. Besides, strategies used by participants of higher scores out number those of lower scores. Gaoyan Liang (2010) carried out an experiment to find out translating behaviors and translating strategies between experienced translators and inexperienced translators.

After such a brief scanning, a conclusion can be drawn: at the very beginning, the researchers focused their attention not on translation strategies but on metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies in SLA. Then, most researches were conducted from empirical perspective. In spite of some think-aloud protocols experiments, the present researcher tried to conduct this research as a contribution to the translation strategies.

III. Research Design

The current research will take Donald Charles Kiraly's model as the theoretical foundation, which is based on the introspective data collected from the experiment of think-aloud-protocols. Kiraly's strategy indicators will be applied to analyze the data from think-aloud protocols although it is still a challenge to discover how the mental mechanisms function in the translating process.

A. Aim of the Research

Therefore, this research explores into translation process empirically both with qualitative and quantitative analysis. After data collecting, the qualitative analysis, that is, the mental translation strategies used by the participants will be recorded, described, and analyzed, will be done as well as a quantitative analysis using the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS15.0). Then, the use of translation strategies in the translation process can be explored further.

B. Research Questions

More specifically, the present study will answer the following questions:

- Which prevailing translation strategies can be identified in the translation process of Chinese students?
- Which strategies have pronounced tendency in the E-C and C-E translation process?
- What is the difference in the translation strategy use in terms of different students?

C. Research Method

Think-aloud means a special case of introspecting. Regarding translation process as a problem-solving process, some researchers have made the suggestion that it should be possible to study it by means of TAPs. The theoretical framework for TAP experiments comes from *Protocol Analysis--verbal reports as data* by Ericsson and Simon (1993), who work with a model of human cognition as information processing. So far, TAPs have focused on translation strategies (Lörscher 1986 and 1991; Gerloff 1986; Jääaskeläinen 1993; Krings 1986; Seguinot 1991 and 1996), automaticity of processing (Jääiskeläinen and Tirkkonen-Condit 1991: Jääskeläinen 1993 and 1997, Ivanova1998) and affective factors (Kussmaul1991; Laukkanen1996; Jääskeläinen1997; Tirkkonen-Condit l997).

D. Participants

With the aim of presenting the actual process of translation, the translation major students will be selected for the present protocols. This study collected TAPs data from two groups of participants. First of all, ten fourth-year translation majors, who have agreed to act as test subjects. The first five are called higher-score group; the last five are named low-score group. Then, ten second-year translation majors are chosen from total number of thirty-one according to their English proficiency: the first five are called higher-score group; the last five are named low-score group. All of them have Chinese as their mother tongue and have also received a period of time of translating training in university.

E. Testing Materials

Strategic-translating involved problem-solving. It is necessary to use the texts containing translation problems for the solutions of which the subjects must consider the problems solvable and ensure that they can make an effort to solve them by employing strategies. With those ideas in mind, four pieces of translating texts were chosen. Two English texts need to be translated into Chinese. Two Chinese texts need to be translated into English. Text One and Text Three may be much easier for the students while Text Two and Text four are very difficult for them. In addition, ten English majors were randomly selected for the pilot think-aloud translating task of all these texts. Thus, the enough time restriction was found: one hour for each text.

F. Instruments

1. Aiding devices of think-aloud protocol

The participants of each group were taken, in turn, to language lab with audio-recording device on each desk. Each of the subjects translated aloud and an audio-record device was employed to record the words either in English or Chinese uttered by the subjects. Furthermore, two cameramen carried their video cameras to give a shot of the whole experiment process, which facilitate a more detailed analysis for these various processing activities. Eventually, their cooperation proved to be a success in data collecting and think-aloud protocols coding.

2. Observation notes

Two video devices were at the same time applied while the participants doing the translation. One was panoramic camera in order to obtain the translating process of the whole lab. The other was used for close-up shot so as to observe some details and special features of certain subject. Five assistants of the researcher paid close attention to each subject and took observation notes carefully and clear some doubts with the participants after the translating tasks. Then, the researcher also made observation notes of the videotapes. Ultimately, a discussion concerning these notes was held between the assistants and the researcher, which could result in the in-depth study upon the translation behaviors. Thus, it is feasible to investigate the subjects' translation strategies.

3. Rating scale

The rating scale of translation product is adopted from *Practice Tests and Lectures for English Majors (Grade Eight)* edited by Zhu Yanhua, which is supposed to show the quality of the translation in detail. The translation product of the participants was rated in light of five grades.

4. Post-translating questionnaire and interview

There are two types of post-translating questionnaires, one (A) for English-Chinese translation; the other (B) for Chinese-English translation, each of them consists of two parts. The questionnaire is conducted after the translation task,

which first deal with the information on subjects' background, impression on the task, comment on their work and time-consuming, and retrospection of the translation process.

G. Procedures

1. Think-aloud training

The researcher talked in Chinese with each group of participants respectively, making a brief self-introduction, explaining the think-aloud method, reassuring the subjects that the translation would be rated by some researchers who would have no access to their names, the results of the research would be used for research purposes only. The participants are instructed to verbalize all the thoughts that occurred to them while translating. After the instruction, the researcher then explained tape-recording and videotaping to assure the subjects that they are the helper of the research, but not a disturbance. The researcher showed the subject how to think aloud by reading a passage from a Chinese material. After the demonstration, the researcher thanked the subjects for their cooperation and promised to deliver each of them an elegant souvenir at the end of the experiment.

2. Data collection

Each of the subjects translated aloud and an audio-record device was employed to record the words either in English or Chinese uttered by the subjects. Then the questionnaires (a & b) and the interview were followed. The data collected from the experiment fall into two main categories, namely the translation products and the think-aloud protocols. Each of the translation products was rated by two teachers, and the final score was the average of the two scores given by the experienced teachers. The intersubjective validity of the score is 0.8964. Then, the scores were kept for the consequent data analysis. The researcher transcribed the exact words of the think-aloud protocol, marked the time span of the pauses and coded them according to twenty translation strategy indicators proposed by Donald Charles Kiraly (1997). Some different strategies are identified during the whole analysis process.

The quantitative analysis of the data in this research was implemented by SPSS (15.0). It was employed to find the co-relationship between the scores of different grades, groups, together with the relationship between the strategy use and the texts with different difficulties, as well as the different translation tasks. Software of Word 2007 and Excel 2007 were applied to calculate some minor problems in data analysis.

IV. Data Analysis and Discussion

A. The Reliability and Validity of the Data

The present study is based on think-aloud protocol, so the reliability and validity of this method should be conformed first. The information gotten from the twenty participants showed that the think-aloud method did not interfere them very much. Most of them finished the translation tasks within the limited time (one hour for each text). As for the noticeable pause, all these subjects kept silent less than 20% of the whole translating time, and the average percentage of their pause is 9.5% of their translating task (just for one text). This meant each subject's thought elicited was sufficient for the think-aloud protocol and available for analysis, and on average, more than 90% of the subjects' thought could be captured and analyzed for the study.

B. Data Analysis and Discussion

1. On the score of translation products

When it comes to the ultimate score of all the E-C and C-E translation products produced by participants, the researcher classified them into four groups: $High_{high}$ (H_h) referred to the first group with the highest score; $High_{low}$ (H_l) and Low_{high} (L_h) referred to the second and third groups with medium score; Low_{low} (L_l) referred to the last group with the lowest score. This result was consistent with the original groups: high-score (4A1-4A5) and low-score (4B1-4B5) groups of Grade Four together with the high-score (2A1-2A5) and low-score (2B1-2B5) groups of Grade Two. (r=0.913, P=0.000).

a. Taking the testing materials (E-C; C-E), the degree of difficulty (Easy; Difficult), the grades of participants (Grade Four; Grade Two) and original groups (high-score and low-score groups) as independent variables and the scores of the translation product as dependent variable, an Univariate ANOVA suggested that there existed an significant interaction only between the testing materials, the grades of participants and the scores of the translation product. (See Table 1) Therefore, it could be argued that the translation scores varied with the change of the testing materials (E-C; C-E) and also with the growth of university grades (Grade Four; Grade Two).

TABLE 1
UNIVARIATE ANOVA OF TRANSLATION SCORES

Source	Hypothesis df	Error df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
materials+grade	1.000	15.000	669.338	8.310	.011*

F(1,15)=8.310, * p=0.011<0.05

b. Based on the above data, Independent Sample Test was conducted on the differences between second-year students and fourth-year students on the four testing materials (T1; T2; T3; T4). The results suggested, concerning the testing materials of T1 and T2, there was reliably significance on the two grades of participants and fourth-year students were

significantly better than the second-year students. (See Table 2a) As to the testing materials of T3 and T4, there was no significant difference. Though the fourth-year students were better than the second-year students, there existed no significance in statistical sense.

TABLE 2A
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF THE PARTICIPANTS FROM TWO GRADES

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
T1	-2.951	18	.009*	-21.7000	7.3525
T2	-2.878	18	.010*	-18.3000	6.3579
T3	-1.492	18	.153	-10.9000	7.3064
T4	-1.636	18	.119	-10.6000	6.4799

t (18) =-2.951 * p=0.009<0.05; *t* (18) = -2.878, *p=0.010<0.05
Notes: T1---Easy E-C Translation T2--- Difficult E-C Translation T3--- Easy C-E Translation T4---- Difficult C-E Translation

c. Not taking the difficulty degree of the testing materials into account, but only the texts of these materials (E-C, C-E), the results suggested that there was reliably significance on the two grades of participants and the fourth-year students were significantly better than the second-year students (See Table 2b)

TABLE 2B
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST ON THE PARTICIPANTS FROM TWO GRADES

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
T1& T2	-4.220	38	.000*	-20.0000	4.7389
T3 & T4	-2.222	38	.032*	-10.7500	4.8373

t (38) =-4.220 * p=0.000<0.05; *t* (38) = -2.222, *p=0.032<0.05
Notes: T1 & T2--- E-C Translation T3 &T4---- C-E Translation

All in all, concerning whether the testing materials or the difficulty degree, the participants' translation score was becoming better and better with the growth of university grades. There was positive correlation with the translation competence and the training periods of those student translators. With the development of their English proficiency, the cognitive potentials of both native and foreign languages, and experiences gained both from books and outside world, their translation competence was also improved. The participants did better in E-C translation materials better than that of C-E. That is to say, they had no trouble in the receiving of SL (English as their foreign language) and the producing of TL (Chinese as their native language). Such E-C translation tasks were comparatively much easier to them. On the other hand, the researcher found that it turned to be painstaking for them to fulfill the C-E translation tasks. To investigate it deeply from the thinking model perspective, the participants had no trouble in the receiving of SL (Chinese as their native language), but had great difficulty in the producing of TL (English as their foreign language). As far as the semantic generation was concerned, it was easy to understand the meaning of the ST. Meanwhile, as to the TT production, they were not so experienced in dealing with the sentence structure and textual construction in English. As a consequence, the C-E translation tasks appeared to be more difficult for them. The implication in translation teaching was that more attention should be paid to the textual teaching of English and the improvement of English proficiency of the translation majors.

2. On the application of translation strategies

Translation strategies in translating process were the major concern of the present study. The application and distribution of translation strategies proposed by Kiraly and other strategies proposed by the researcher were totally investigated here and below.

a. Taking the two types of testing materials E-C (T1;T2) and C-E (T3;T4) into account, Chi-Square Tests on each strategy (S1-S26) employed by participants from different grades were conducted respectively. The results suggested that there was reliably significance on the participants in employing the following eight strategies. (See table 3a) At the same time, no significance was shown on the participants in employing the other strategies when they dealt with E-C and C-E testing materials. Moreover, there did not show any appearance in the application of S3 and S5. It could be concluded that the Chinese participants in this study did not employ such strategies as "Back Translate" and "Break off translation and start over".

TABLE 3A
CHI-SQUARE TESTS OF STRATEGY APPLICATION

Strategy	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
S8	6.149	1	.013*
S11	3.869	1	.049*
S12	4.540	1	.033*
S14	4.748	1	.029*
S17	13.780	1	.000*
S22	6.091	1	.014*
S24	12.014	1	.001*
S25	4.305	1	.038*

* p < 0.05

As to the application of S8, the participant employed this strategy "SL-TL dictionary search" 257 times of the total number 436 (59%) in E-C translation tasks; while 265 times of the total number 394 (67%) in C-E translation tasks. It could be seen that they were more likely to resort to dictionary search in C-E translation in order to make sure of the TL production. While the automatic production of native language played an important role in E-C translation. As for the application of S11, the participant employed this strategy "Monitor for TL accuracy" 44 times of the total number 436 (10%) in E-C translation tasks; while 25 times of the total number 394 (6%) in C-E translation tasks. It seemed that they wanted the monitor the production of the native language, but not that of foreign language, for they were more confident in the manipulation of native language. As to the application of S14, the participant employed this strategy "Recontextualize" 19 times of the total number 436 (4%) in E-C translation tasks; while 7 times of the total number 394 (2%) in C-E translation tasks. The difference was not so distinct that many efforts should be made to strengthen the textual teaching of translation. As for the application of S17, the participant employed this strategy "Rephrase ST Segment" 3 times of the total number 436 (0.6%) in E-C translation tasks; while 18 times of the total number 394(4.6%) in C-E translation tasks. The participants had much trouble in rephrase the segment of source language as English; while they took it easy to rephrase the segment of SL as Chinese, their native language, because they could put native language at their disposal. As to the application of S22, the participant employed this strategy "Postpone attempt" 26 times of the total number 436 (6%) in E-C translation tasks; while 10 times of the total number 394 (2.5%) in C-E translation tasks. As for the application of S24, the participant employed this strategy "Read ST segment " 32 times of the total number 436 (7.3%) in E-C translation tasks; while 9 times of the total number 394 (2.3%) in C-E translation tasks. The participants read English so many times so as to get a better understanding of the SL; while they just took interim solution during the C-E translation tasks. This undoubtedly reflects the students' had more need to comprehend the source text as foreign language than the source language as Chinese, since they held more spacious cognitions in their native language. As to the application of S25, the participant employed this strategy "Self-correction" 45 times of the total number 436 (10.3%) in E-C translation tasks; while 25 times of the total number 394 (6.3%) in C-E translation tasks. In this respect, the participants were good at the self-correction of their TT in Chinese; while not so certain in the monitoring of TT in English.

As to the application of S1, the participants employed this strategy "Accept interim solution" 327 times of the total number 436 (75%) in E-C translation tasks; while 302 times of the total number 394 (77%) in C-E translation tasks. Seen from this, the participants frequently accept interim solution, which was a solid proof for the theory that translating process is a mental process which should consult to the psychology field in order to study it further and deeper. As for the application of S7, the participant employed this strategy "Identify problem" 395 times of the total number 436 (91%) in E-C translation tasks; while 352 times of the total number 394 (89%) in C-E translation tasks. Judge from these, to classify the translation problem was very important for the participants both in E-C and C-E translation. Is it of a pragmatic (situation and style, speech act and illocution, culture, text type conventions) or a semantic (denotative and connotative meaning) nature? One and the same word, phrase, utterance or passage may present different types of problems. They often confronted such situation and identified various problems during translating. As to the application of S10, the participant employed this strategy "Make intuitive acceptability judgment" 229 times of the total number 436 (53%) in E-C translation tasks; while 220 times of the total number 394 (56%) in C-E translation tasks. These data still told us that translation, in some sense, was a kind of mental processing, which made the participants to make some decision. As for the application of S18, the participant employed this strategy "Uncertainty regarding acceptability" 70 times of the total number 436 (16%) in E-C translation tasks; while 50 times of the total number 394 (13%) in C-E translation tasks. It was showed that little monitoring was done to the whole translation process both in E-C and C-E translation tasks.

b. Taking the difficulty degree of testing materials (T1; T3) and C-E (T2; T4) into account, Chi-Square Tests on each strategy (S1-S26) employed by participants from the two grades were conducted respectively. The results suggested that there was reliably significance on the participants while employ the following eight strategies while they dealt with the easy and difficult translation tasks. (See table 3b) At the same time, no significance was shown on the participants while employ the other strategies.

TABLE 3B
CHI-SQUARE TESTS OF STRATEGY APPLICATION

Strategy	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
S1	9.545	1	.002*
S7	19.321	1	.000*
S12	7.518	1	.006*
S13	5.145	1	.023*
S17	3.996	1	.046*
S19	9.302	1	.002*
S22	5.697	1	.017*
S25	4.920	1	.027*

* $p < 0.05$

As to the application of S1, the participant employed this strategy "Accept interim solution" 297 times of the total number 417 (71%) in easy translation tasks; while 332 times of the total number 413 (80%) in difficult translation tasks.

Because the difficult translation tasks were beyond their control, they just accepted interim solution to solve the translation problems. However, in dealing with the easy ones, they could apply the other strategies. As for the application of S7, the participant employed this strategy "Identify problem" 394 times of the total number 417 (94%) in easy translation tasks; while 353 times of the total number 413 (85%) in difficult translation tasks. It seemed that they could identify more problems in easy task than in difficult one. That was just because the easy task did not bring much psychological burden to the subjects while the difficult one did. When it comes to S19, the participant employed this strategy "Uncontrolled interim unit production" 285 times of the total number 417 (68%) in easy translation tasks; while 321 times of the total number 413 (78%) in difficult translation tasks. That was the same case with S1. As to the application of S25, the participant employed this strategy "Self-correction" 44 times of the total number 417 (11%) in easy translation tasks; while 26 times of the total number 413 (6 %) in difficult translation tasks. Judging from these data, the participants were afraid of the difficult tasks, thus, they just put them away as long as finishing them. Meanwhile, more care were taken to the easy tasks, therefore, the self-correction frequently appeared.

Chosen from the other strategies, three of them should be especially mentioned here: S6, S8, and S10. As for the application of S6, the participant employed this strategy "Employ mnemonic aid" 62 times of the total number 417 (15%) in easy translation tasks; while 43 times of the total number 413 (10%) in difficult translation tasks. Because the easy tasks could stimulate the long-term memory of the participants, they often use the mnemonic aid to help them produce the TT. Whereas, they felt worried about difficult ones, less mnemonic aid was applied by them. As to the application of S8, the participant employed this strategy "SL-TL dictionary search" 272 times of the total number 417 (65%) in easy translation tasks; while 250 times of the total number 413 (61%) in difficult translation tasks. Dictionary-dependence was an interesting finding in the present study. Whether E-C translation or C-E translation and whether the easy task or the difficult one, this strategy was employed everywhere. The participants depended on dictionary search to a great degree. The teachers should try to teach the students how to consult dictionary in a correct way and appreciate time. As to the application of S10, the participant employed this strategy "Make intuitive acceptability judgment" 230 times of the total number 417 (55%) in easy translation tasks; while 219 times of the total number 413 (53%) in difficult translation tasks. Since translation process is a kind of decision-making process, the participants often make intuitive judgment to produce the TT.

3. On questionnaire A and questionnaire B

The descriptive statistics of Questionnaire A & B were obtained so as to explore the frequency of strategy use both in E-C and C-E translation process. The questionnaire was composed of two parts: the first part was their self-estimated frequency of strategy use when they fulfilled E-C translation tasks (Questionnaire A) and C-E translation tasks (Questionnaire B), which will be discussed in table 4; the second part reflected their self-estimated time-consuming and proportion of thought uttered, as well as their feeling towards the influence of the think-aloud method.

TABLE 4
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF QUESTIONNAIRE A & B

Questionnaires A	
High Frequency	S13 > S7 > S2 > S8 > S6 >
Medium Frequency	S1 > S11 = S14 > S10 =S16 > S17 > S19 > S20 > S18 > S15 >
Low Frequency	S9 > S5 > S4 > S12 > S3
Questionnaires B	
High Frequency	S 7 > S2 = S 17 > S6 = S8 >
Medium Frequency	S14 > S19 > S1 =S13 > S10 = S11 > S16 > S18 > S20 > S12>
Low Frequency	S15 > S9 > S4 > S5 > S3

As to Questionnaires A, the strategies employed in high frequency were: S6 (Employ mnemonic aid), S7 (Identify problem), S8 (SL-TL dictionary search), S13 (Proposed dictionary solution) and S2 (Attempt syntactic reconstruction) while those of low frequency were: S9 (Make extra linguistic judgment), S12 (TL - SL dictionary search), and S3 (Back translate), S5 (Break off translation and start over), S4 (Break off attempt). As to Questionnaires B, the strategies employed in high frequency were: S6 (Employ mnemonic aid), S7 (Identify problem), S8 (SL-TL dictionary search), S17 (Rephrase ST segment) and S2 (Attempt syntactic reconstruction) while those of low frequency were: S4 (Break off attempt), S5 (Break off translation and start over), S3 (Back translate), S9 (Make extra linguistic judgment) and S15 (Reduce meaning). The high frequency of S6, S7, and S8 was consistent with the data from TAPs. S17 was employed more frequent in C-E than E-C translation. Yet, their self-estimation of the use of S2 was not consistent with the data from TAPs. In effect, the participants seldom applied this strategy. On the other hand, the low frequency of S4, S9, S12 and S15 was consistent with the data from TAPs. Apart from these strategies, there was no appearance of S3 and S5. In a word, the participants were self-estimated that they always depended on the mnemonic aid and dictionary search as long as they met with translation problems. Since they had the larger cognitive space in their native language, they often rephrased Chinese segment to obtain the good comprehension of the source text. They realized that the extra linguistic judgment was hardly used in translation process. Thus, more attention should be paid to the extra linguistic training in translation teaching.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Now that the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the TAPs data have been finished, the aim of this study has largely been achieved. The translation strategies, as well as their levels and the phases of translation process were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Some findings are presented here also as answers to the research questions put forward at the very beginning of the research design. Findings below are based on the analysis of the think-aloud protocols and the answers to post-translating questionnaires of the twenty Chinese college level translation majors under the present study:

There were not any appearance in the application of Kiraly's third strategy "Back Translate" and the fifth one "Break off translation and start over" in the translation process of Chinese participants. And all the other eighteen strategies proposed by Kiraly have been more or less employed by the participants in this study. In addition, six other strategies were identified in this study, they were as follows: Interim Selection; Postpone Attempt; Tentative Solution; Self-correction; Read ST Segment and Read the Whole ST. Among the twenty-four strategies, Accept Interim Solution; Identify Problem; Employ Mnemonic Aid; SL-TL Dictionary Search and Uncontrolled Interim Unit Production were applied frequently.

There was reliably difference on the participants in employing these eight strategies (S8, S11, S12, S14, S17, S22, S24, and S25), but no significance was shown on the participants in employing the other strategies when they fulfilled E-C and C-E translation tasks. There was reliably significance on the participants while employ the following eight strategies (S1, S7, S12, S13, S17, S19, S22, S25) while they dealt with the easy and difficult translation tasks. And no significance was shown on the participants while they employed the other strategies. The participant employed the strategy of "Monitor for TL accuracy"; "Self-correction" more in E-C translation tasks than in C-E translation tasks. On the other hand, the participant employed the strategy "Accept interim solution"; "Identify problem"; "SL-TL dictionary search"; "Make intuitive acceptability judgment"; and "Rephrase ST Segment" more frequent in C-E translation tasks than in E-C translation tasks. "Employ mnemonic aid"; "Identify problem"; "SL-TL dictionary search"; "Make intuitive acceptability judgment" and "Self-correction" more frequent in easy translation tasks than in difficult translation tasks. On the other hand, the strategy of "Accept interim solution" and "Uncontrolled interim unit production" was employed more frequent in the difficult translation tasks than in the easy translation tasks.

There existed a significant interaction only between the scores of the translation product and the testing materials as well as the grades of participants. Therefore, it could be argued that the translation scores varied with the change of the testing materials (E-C; C-E) and also with the growth of university grades (Grade Four; Grade Two). Concerning the testing materials of T1 and T2, there was reliably significance on the two grades of participants and fourth-year students were significantly better than the second-year students. As to the testing materials of T3 and T4, there was no significant difference. Though the fourth-year students were better than the second-year students, there existed no significance in statistical sense. The entire participants felt more painstaking in C-E translating process than in E-C translating process. They did fairly well in E-C translation than in C-E translation. The number of the strategies employed by participants increased by the development of the participants' bilingual proficiency and the experiences gained in translation training.

Judging from the participants' self-estimation, they thought that S6 (Employ mnemonic aid), S7 (Identify problem) and S8 (SL-TL dictionary search) were frequently employed in E-C and C-E translation. S17 (Rephrase ST segment) was employed more frequent in C-E than E-C translation. Yet, their self-estimation of the use of S2 (Attempt syntactic reconstruction) was not consistent with the data revealed in TAPs. In effect, the participants seldom applied this strategy. On the other hand, they thought that S3 (Back translate), S5 (Break off translation and start over), S4 (Break off attempt), S9 (Make extralinguistic judgment), S12 (TL - SL dictionary search) and S15 (Reduce meaning) were seldom employed in E-C and C-E translation. In fact, there was no appearance of S3 and S5 in the present experiment.

In summary, the present study demonstrates the significant role TAPs play in discovering the nature of translation process, to shed light on the methodology in translation, and to contribute to the translator training. Such a study, a good attempt to study TAPs and its application to C-E and E-C translation practice, remains open to criticism and still needs further research, just because of its confinements, such as the strictly demanded experiment condition as well as the limited time and resource.

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The Effect of Dictogloss Technique on Learners' Writing Improvement in Terms of Writing Coherent Texts

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***Abstract*—Considering the communicative framework of language teaching, writing has an advantage- a person can give a variety of information to a close or distant, known or unknown reader or readers. Such way of communicating is highly important in the modern world, whether the communication is in the form of paper-and-pencil writing or advanced electronic writing. Therefore, this skill should be encouraged and nurtured during the language teaching course. Writing consists of different aspects like outline, structure, use of words, etc. which should be considered while teaching and practicing. Among those aspects, one is the focus of this study which is the use of cohesive devices to create a coherent text. Two techniques of teaching these devices, explicit teaching and dictogloss, are evaluated among intermediate Iranian language learners to see which one is more effective in helping them to improve the coherence of their compositions. The conclusion is that both techniques are effective but dictogloss seems to be more useful in case of these participants.**

***Index Terms*—dictogloss, explicit instruction, cohesive devices**

I. Introduction

One of the productive skills in learning a foreign language is writing. In comparison to the skill of speaking, writing demands more competence, since it lacks immediate feedback from the addressee as a kind of guide. Because of lacking this guide, the writer should anticipate the readers' reaction and try to produce a text that according to Grice (1975) is clear, relevant, truthful, informative, interesting, and memorable. In order to meet the efficacy of this communicative act, linguistic accuracy, clear presentation, and organized ideas should be taken into consideration. Much research has been conducted focusing on all these aspects. They are more or less addressed at all levels of learning a foreign language. In this study organizing ideas is the one which is evaluated under some circumstances. In spite of following linguistic rules and applying highly accurate structures in the text and also suitable choice of words, learners may still have problems in conveying their message clearly. Therefore, it is seen that although some learners, especially the ones at the higher levels of learning, have a good command of English knowledge; they cannot organize and relate their ideas in their texts to create a coherent writing. This lack of connection among ideas lies in the fact that learners cannot use the connecting devices properly.

Halliday and hasan (1976) categorized connecting devices into five groups: lexical cohesion, substitution, reference, ellipsis, and conjunction. While English learners need to learn how to identify and use all these connecting devices, it seems that in order to overcome their main problem in making a smooth interaction with the reader, they need a careful instruction of conjunctions.

Intersentential linguistic devices (Mackay, 1979), markers of cohesion (Cohen, et al. 1979), cohesive conjunctions (Halliday and Hasan, 1976), and discourse markers (Labov, 1972 and Schiffrin, 1987) are other terms which are used for conjunctions.

Xin-hong (2007) found that teaching cohesion in general using some exercises can help Chinese learners improve their writing. He studied all aspects of cohesion except collocations since it is somewhat a vague area to be studied.

Without conjunctions it would be hard to comprehend the connection among ideas. This aspect of writing has been found to be very problematic for English language learners. It was found by Dublin and Olshtain (1980, 3056-62) that

although native speakers of English can learn and use these cohesive elements as they do other aspects of the language, it seems hard for English language students to master them.

According to Cohen et al. (1979), non-native English speakers had problems with cohesive markers in their reading. Many teachers have seen English learners' compositions as vague and unclear texts because of lacking conjunctions or as a result of inappropriate use of them whether semantically or syntactically.

This lacking or inappropriate use of conjunctions can have different reasons. One of them may be the method of teaching these conjunctions which can be misleading. In fact, many of course books and methods somewhat ignore cohesive devices and offer them to students just as a list of functions not in a comprehensive way. Teachers also teach them mostly out of context and in this way of teaching students cannot recognize the real functions of these conjunctions since presenting a list of cohesive devices does not indicate the logical relationship they can cause among ideas. This will lead to inadequacy of the teaching method which results in lack of knowledge in using the conjunctions appropriately and then creating texts without coherence.

To solve this problem, it seems that teachers should approach and apply a kind of technique which introduces conjunctions to learners in a context-based way. One of these context-based methods is dictogloss which is a new version of dictation first introduced by Wajnryb in 1990. It is a consciousness-raising task which encourages language learners to interact and construct a linguistically acceptable text cooperatively and this text is similar to the one read to them before and they have taken some notes on, both in case of content and style. Therefore, the constructed text is not a replication of the original one since students use their notes, share their ideas with their group-mates, and utilize their own background knowledge to create a text.

The steps followed in dictogloss tasks are described as:

1) Preparation: Students will be prepared for the task by being involved in a discussion and vocabulary presentation related to the topic.

2) Dictation: Teacher will read the text twice at natural speed. Students will take notes while listening in order to be able to reconstruct the text read to them.

3) Reconstruction: Students will be arranged in small groups or pairs. They will pool their notes and reconstruct their own version of the passage. During this step, teacher will not provide them with any information.

4) Analysis/ Feedback: During this stage, students' writings will be corrected first by the teacher just by giving them some codes, and then students will compare their own version with the original one to be informed about their mistakes and be able to correct them.

Swain and her colleague found that dictogloss was effective in helping students internalize their linguistic knowledge by making them aware of language form and function (Kowal & Swain, 1994).

Lee and Jacobs, in 2001, considered the collaboration aspect of the dictogloss task and based on the journals and questionnaires collected from the students, they found that it has a positive effect on the learners in case of both recognition and effect. They concluded that a collaborative task like dictogloss can help learners be satisfied with working in groups, have better feelings and therefore learn better.

Leow (1998, 51) found that when learners direct a task and their exposure to the grammatical points, they are able to improve their accuracy. Therefore, it was concluded that learners' autonomy and negotiation would help learners be more accurate.

Collins (2007) in her article examined the issues of L1 influence and common developmental patterns in the domain of verb tense and aspect. It was found that Dictogloss and interpreting contexts seem to be useful as activities for verb tenses in a Japanese classroom.

Kuiken and Vedder (2003) in their paper evaluated the effect of interaction between learners of English as a second language during a dictogloss task on the acquisition of the passive form. A qualitative analysis made clear that numerous instances of interaction led to the noticing of passive forms.

Different kinds of research, in which dictogloss were used, focused basically whether on the effect of collaboration on learners in this task or grammar, mainly verb tenses, prepositions, adjectives, etc. It seems that this context-based technique has not been utilized to focus more on content especially using cohesive devices as connecting tools of ideas.

This study highlights the effect of applying dictogloss task in English teaching environments on improving learners' compositions in terms of writing coherent texts.

Statement of the Problem

Based on what was discussed in the introduction, the problem which is going to be examined in this study is how effective a special teaching technique called dictogloss is on learners' writing improvement in terms of coherence. In line with this problem these questions will be answered:

1. Is there a relation between dictogloss technique and learners' writing improvement in terms of writing coherent texts?

2. Which approach is more effective, dictogloss or explicit instruction of cohesive devices?

II. Methodology

A. Participants

The number of participants was 19, both male and female, selected from among language learners at a private Language Institute in Iran, Isfahan. Based on the institute placement test, students who were enrolled at intermediate level classes were selected as participants of this study. They were pre-tested on a composition writing test and were homogenized based on their scores. There were two reasons for selecting these groups of learners. Firstly, it seems that most of the students at this level have an almost enough command of English knowledge to write a text; however, they have a problem in relating the sentences semantically in their writings. They mostly use appropriate vocabulary and correct grammatical sentences, nevertheless, their produced texts are not coherent enough and the expected integration among text elements is lacking. Following many teachers' experiences, this lack of coherence seems to result from unawareness or inappropriate use of conjunctions to link sentences. Secondly, students at lower levels could not take part in this study since their problems are more of vocabulary and correct use of structures. Also, students at higher levels were not suitable either because they are informative enough of both grammatical and semantic use of words to write a coherent and meaningful text.

B. Procedure

In order to investigate the effect of applying dictogloss technique in classrooms on improving learners' writing coherent texts and also compare it with the traditional way of teaching, which is explicit instruction, an experimental environment was used to carry out this study. Therefore, students were divided in two groups; ten as the dictogloss group and nine as the explicit instruction group. Students in the dictogloss group were introduced to the dictogloss technique beforehand and were familiar with the four steps of this technique.

During the treatment period which lasted for about two months, each week one short text which consisted of some cohesive devices were read twice to the students by the teacher at normal speed. Students took notes while listening and discussed the topic of the text after listening to be sure that they comprehended the text completely in terms of content and vocabulary. Then they started working in pairs to reconstruct the original text. They negotiated and shared their notes and then wrote their own texts. They did not receive any information related to the text from the teacher. After about ten minutes they delivered their texts to the teacher. In order to give a feedback to the students, teacher did not correct any mistakes in their writings, either content-based mistakes or form-based ones. Mistakes were just highlighted by the teacher and the texts along with the original one were given back to students so that they were able to compare them and by using the clues provided by the teacher they could correct their mistakes. This way, students were informed about their lack or misuse of the cohesive devices indirectly. The focus of the feedbacks was mainly on cohesive devices.

In the explicit instruction group, the procedure was like most writing classes in which the teacher chose some cohesive devices similar to those in the short texts used in the dictogloss group. They were taught to the students explicitly by referring to some written examples or by making some statements using those cohesive devices and some exercises related to those conjunctions were done to make sure that the students had learnt their functions and usages. Thus, the mistakes were corrected by the teacher directly and on the spot.

In both groups, students practiced using cohesive devices in their writings during the treatment period which lasted about four consecutive weeks. After this period, all students in both groups were post-tested. For the post-test, students were given a topic to write about. Compositions of the students were scored based on the number of compulsory conjunctions they were supposed to use to write their texts. After ten days, a delayed post-test was run to evaluate whether the effect of treatment after a period of time remained or not. The same procedure in scoring the writings as in immediate post-test was done for the delayed post-test, too. As a result, for each group there were three sets of scores; one for the pre-test and the other two for immediate and delayed post-tests.

C. Material

The materials used in this study were taken from a writing course book titled Improve Your IELTS Writing Skills by *Sam McCarter and Norman Whitby (2007).* It is a complete preparation course for the Academic Writing paper of the International English Language Testing System. All texts were taken from this book. Choice of topic was based on the students' likely interest and background knowledge in that topic. The content was also a concern since the focus of the study was on conjunctions so those texts containing more conjunctions were of priority. Texts were short because students had to remember them and rewrite them, this way, they could keep them in their minds during the process of rewriting. The topics of the texts were kind of clue for the explicit instruction group to teach them how to use the conjunctions.

D. Scoring and Data Analysis

To achieve the objectives of this study an experimental method was conducted. There was one experimental group and one control group. Scoring procedure for all pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test was based on the number of conjunctions used by the students in relation to the compulsory use of conjunctions. As a result, all scores were not out of a pre-determined score like 20 or 100. The scores were fractions in which the denominators were the number of compulsory conjunctions which students were supposed to use to have a coherent text and the numerators were the number of used conjunctions by the students. Therefore each student's score was different from that of another. Thus, if one student was supposed to use five conjunctions in one composition but had written three, the score was given as 3/5.

During the same session another student received 1/3 because of fewer numbers of compulsory conjunctions needed to write a coherent text. In order to compare the scores of the students easily, fractions were changed to percentages.

The performance of both groups on the pre-test and immediate and delayed post-tests was analyzed using the statistical procedure of t-Test.

To answer the first research question a paired sample t-test was conducted to evaluate the impact of dictogloss on students' writing improvement in terms of coherence. Table 1 shows the dictogloss group's performance in pre-test and immediate post-test.

TABLE 1:
T-TEST RESULTS FOR DICTOGLOSS GROUP IN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test - Post-test	-41.9	15.53	5.18	-53.79	-29.91	-8.08	8	.000

According to this table, the probability value of pair one, which shows the mean comparison of the scores obtained by the participants of dictogloss group in pre-test and immediate post-test in terms of coherence is t= -8.08, and sig= 0. Therefore, we could claim that regarding the participants performance in terms of coherence in short term, there was a statistically significant difference in students' scores from pre-test to immediate post-test.

Table 2 represents the dictogloss group's performance during a long term period.

TABLE 2:
T-TEST RESULTS FOR DICTOGLOSS GROUP IN IMMEDIATE POST-TEST AND DELAYED POST-TEST

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper			
Pair1	Post-test Delayed post-test	.166	8.028	2.53	-5.57	5.90	.065	9	.949

Based on this table, the probability value of pair one, which shows the mean comparison of the scores obtained by the participants of dictogloss group in immediate post-test and delayed post-test in terms of coherence is t=.065, and sig=.949. Thus there is no significant difference in students' scores obtained from immediate post-test and delayed post-test. So we can claim that dictogloss method was also effective in improving students' writing ability in terms of coherence in long term.

Table 3 shows the result of T-test comparing the mean scores obtained from the performance of explicit instruction group in short term.

TABLE 3:
T-TEST RESULTS FOR EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION GROUP IN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test post-test	-41.85	15.53	5.17	-53.79	-29.91	-8.08	8	.000

As it is shown in Table 3, the explicit instruction method seems to be effective in improving learners' writing ability in terms of using cohesive conjunctions to create coherent texts since there is significant difference in the scores of immediate post-test for Group 1; because as it is evident in the Table, the probability value is substantially smaller than the specified critical value for the total scores. (t= -8.08, Sig. =.0) Therefore, the effect of this method is considered positive in short term period.

Table 4 shows the result of T-test comparing the mean scores obtained from the performance of explicit instruction group in long term.

TABLE 4:
T-TEST RESULTS FOR EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION GROUP IN POST-TEST AND DELAYED POST-TEST

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper			
Pair 1Post-test delayed post-test	6.483	12.760	4.253	-3.3251	16.291	1.5	8	.166

According to Table 4, - in which the probability value is bigger than the specified critical value for the total scores- it is concluded that the method of explicit instruction was effective in long term period as well since there is no significant difference between immediate post-test and delayed post-test. (t= 1.5, sig= .166)

Fig. 1 shows the comparison of the results obtained for both groups in the pre-test, immediate, and delayed post-tests.

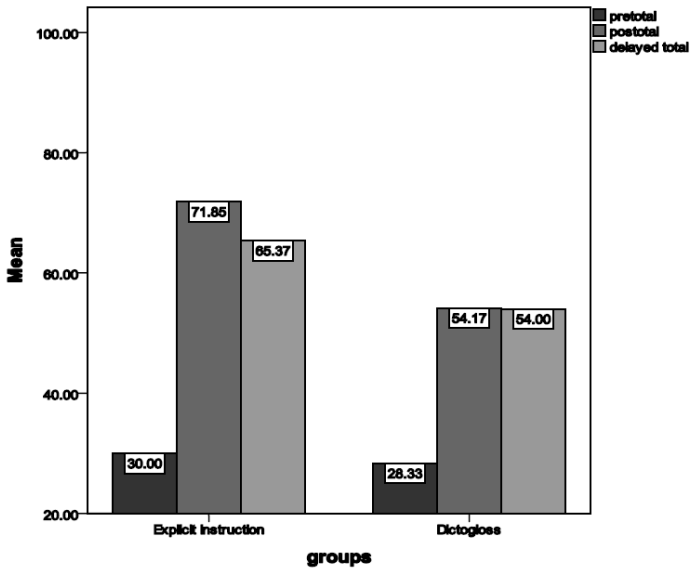

Figure 1: Mean scores of pre-test, immediate, and delayed post-tests in both groups

Fig. 1 shows the mean scores of each test in percentage to clarify the effect of these two techniques on improving students' coherent writing. Since the improvement for the explicit instruction group was 71.85% in the immediate post-test which is more than that in the other group, explicit teaching proved to be more helpful in increasing students writing ability in terms of coherence. However, dictogloss (54.17%) was also a useful task in this regard. Although the mean score of the dictogloss group was lower than that of the other group in immediate post-test, students gained almost the same scores during the delayed post-test. However, in the explicit instruction group, students' scores descended which shows that learning in the dictogloss group was more permanent than that in the explicit instruction group. Therefore, we can claim that dictogloss technique not only can help learners improve their writing skill in terms of coherence, but also it proved to be more effective than explicit instruction technique even though it was an indirect way of teaching cohesive devices.

III. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of dictogloss technique on English learners' writing improvement in terms of using conjunctions. Conjunctions and dictogloss technique are two areas which have been taken into consideration in many studies. Regarding conjunctions, most of the researchers were concerned about either their frequency in writing or speaking or their effect on learners' comprehension (Schleppegrell, 1996, Blagoeva, 2000). In case of dictogloss, most of the concern has been about focus on form in dictogloss or using this task as a collaborative one to see the effect of collaboration on learning English especially tenses (Jacobs, 2001, Leow, 1998, Collins, 2007).

This study, in fact, combined these two areas to find out whether applying dictogloss in English classrooms would be helpful in terms of teaching cohesive devices or not. Based on the scores obtained during the immediate and delayed post-tests (fig. 1) for both explicit instruction group and dictogloss group, it can be concluded that performing dictogloss technique in classrooms can cause less forgetting than teaching students explicitly. Explicit instruction proved to be effective. This is in line with the result obtained by Xin-hong (2007). However, considering a long term period, dictogloss seems to be more helpful since learners' scores were not as lower as those in the other group during the delayed post-test.

Despite these results, some problems and areas that can be further studied should be considered.

Firstly, the number of participants in this study was limited so maybe the findings cannot be generalized for other learners with other first languages. Further studies can be done both with more number of learners and among learners with other first languages or those who want to learn languages other than English.

Secondly, since conjunctions are very important in conveying the writers' point of view, it seems advisable to conduct the same study for students at lower levels of learning English e.g. pre-intermediate level.

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A Comparative Study of Product, Process, and Post-process Approaches in Iranian EFL Students' Writing Skill

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***Abstract*—The purpose of the present study is to find the possible difference among Iranian EFL learner's writing ability in terms of three writing approaches of product, process, and post-process. The participants of the study included 60 EFL sophomores who were non-randomly selected out of 100 students at Azad University. The students had similar educational backgrounds in that they had been exposed to Writing Course I as prerequisite to Writing Course II. The participants' ages ranged from 19-26. They were all TEFL bilinguals (Azari and Persian) who were taking writing course (II) at Islamic Azad University. The researchers divided research sample into three groups of 20. All three groups were exposed to three different approaches. The first group was exposed to the product approach, the second group to the process approach and the third group exposed to the post-process approach respectively. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of three different writing approaches, the researcher gave two identical post-tests (cause–effect and procedural) to all three groups. The findings of the study revealed that post process approach did not show any significant priorities over process approach, but they both indicated remarkable priority over product approach. Finally implications were drawn for EFL teachers, students, and syllabus designers.**

***Index Terms*—EFL writing, post-process writing, process writing, product writing**

I. Introduction

Writing is an essential learning tool because it helps students to better understand ideas and concepts. It is obvious that writing occupies a noticeable place in research and pedagogy due to the ever-growing number of students enrolled in higher-education institutions in English speaking countries and also to the recognition of changes in global realities. In fact, the field of second language writing is an area affecting the lives of many people at institutions around the world where they must submit high quality written work in a language they did not learn as native speakers. There are several reasons that the ability to speak and write a second language is a crucial important tool or a significant skill for people of all works of life in today's global community.

Weigle (2002) states that teaching and measuring of writing is a specific component of English language teaching. A study done by Sommers (2002, cited in Foo, 2007) and a team of researchers at Harvard University traced the writing experiences of more than four hundred undergraduates undergoing different courses over a period of four years, showed the majority of the students believe that writing helps them understand and apply the ideas of a course. Although students may read to gather information, it is finally through writing that their ideas are made clear and their thoughts made perceptible. Writing is one of the important tools by which students actively change the passive knowledge and information in their minds into their own language. Chandrasegaran (1991, cited in Foo, 2007) points out the importance of being able to write coherent, well organized expository essays at university because academic assessment is almost completely based on these written products in coursework and examinations throughout the period of the courses.

Now, a range of approaches can be pulled to teaching writing by EFL teachers. Over the last twenty years, *process* and *product approaches* have dominated much of the teaching of writing that take place in the EFL classroom. In the last ten years, *post process approaches* have gained several advocates (e.g., see Swales 1990; Tribble 1996).

One of the most explicit descriptions of *product approaches* is provided by Pincas (1982, cited in Badger & White, 2000). She views writing as being mainly about linguistic knowledge, with attention paid on the proper use of vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devices.

Process-oriented pedagogy is encouraged through practices such as requiring multiple drafts, peer review, and portfolio-based class assessment. Tribble (1996) suggested that process approaches stress "Writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through to the 'publication' of a finished text" (p.

37).Hedge (1988, cited in Badger & White, 2000) identified four elements of the context that pre-writing activities should focus on: the audience, the generation of ideas, the organization of the text, and its purpose.

Sinor and Huston (2004, cited in He, 2005) stated that *post-process* does not abandon the writing steps; in fact, working through the writing steps is a crucial component while instruction is centered on the social, political, and contextual forces that surround writing. Some scholars as social constructionists see writing as "a social artifact with political as well as social implications" (Santos, 1992, cited in He, 2005, p.31).

With the development of second language literacy research, writing in ESL/EFL settings has gained much attention. Scholars and researchers are trying to find ways of teaching writing to a growing number of ESL and EFL students. What kind of teaching pedagogy should teachers apply to L2 writing classes? How can teachers teach writing to ESL/ EFL students? Should teachers focus on the writing product, on the writing process, or on the writing post process? The answer to these questions is the most challenging one in the field of L2 teaching writing.

II. Review of the Related Literature

Though applied linguists have come to recognize the importance of writing in its own right and complexity, in general, writing remains one of the least well-understood subjects in applied linguistics. One reason is the ambiguity of the term writing which has been used in referring to orthography, written discourse, and the act of writing or even literature and the prevalence of the definition of writing as mere orthography in linguistic sciences during the last two centuries. Although the body of research in applied linguistics focusing on writing and writing instruction has grown exponentially over the last few decades, writing continues to be marginalized in mainstream second language acquisition research (Harklau, 2000; Leki, 2000, both cited in Schmitt, 2002) and many well-known introductory linguistics textbooks still perpetuate the view of writing as an orthographic representation of speech.

Harmer (2004) indicated that writing has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English language. However, it can be used for a variety of purpose, ranging from being merely a 'backup' for grammar teaching to a major syllabus strand in its own right, where mastering the ability to write effectively is considered as a crucial important tool for learners. One of the most important achievements of education is to help students to write well. Beyond writing's role in work success (Dempsy, Pytlikzillig, & Bruning, 2009), writing is a key factor in the development of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

The EFL writing class may be regarded as a workshop for students to learn to create academic essays through mastering techniques for getting started and generating ideas, drafting papers which they will anticipate revising, and learning to use feedback from the teacher and other students in the class to improve the writing assignment at hand. The goal of every course should be individual student progress in writing proficiency, and the goal of the total curriculum should be that student writers learn to become informed and independent readers of their own texts with the ability to create, revise, and reshape papers to meet the needs of whatever writing tasks they are assigned (Kroll, 2001, cited in Ferris & Hedgcock 2005).

A. Feedback on EFL Writing

As Nunan (2001) pointed, feedback is the provision of information to speakers about the message they have conveyed. Neutral feedback informs the speaker that the message has been received. It may be verbal or nonverbal.

As Ferris &Hedgcock (2005) stated teacher response to student writing is important at all levels and in all instructional contexts. However, responding effectively to student writing is a skill that can elude even experienced teachers.

B. Product Writing

Pincas (1982, cited in Badger & White, 2000) realizes learning as assisted imitation, and adopts many techniques (e.g. substitution tables), where learners respond to a stimulus provided by the teacher. However, her comment that, at the stage of free writing, students should feel as if they are creating something of their own suggests a view of learners as being ready to show rather more initiative. In short, product-based approaches see writing as mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development as mostly the result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher.

C. Process Writing

The 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s witnessed a highly influential trend in L1 composition pedagogy and research. Raimes (1985) and Zamel (1982) were among the strongest voices calling for process writing.

Zamel (1982) claims that the composing processes of L1 writers can be suitable to ESL writers, but teacher-guided revision is the main focus of instruction in ESL classes. Process approaches, as they now are generally labeled, emphasized the individual writer as a creator of original ideas. It was believed that written discourse encoded these ideas, helping as a vehicle for exploring one, conveying one's thoughts, and claiming one's individual voice, or authorial persona, as a writer. Process-oriented writing pedagogies focused particular attention on procedures for solving problems, discovering ideas, expressing them in writing, and revising emergent texts—typically, in isolation from any cultural, educational, or sociopolitical contexts in which writing might take place.

Zamel (1982) also points out that writing is a process of discovering and making meaning and that the writing process is recursive, nonlinear, and convoluted.

D. Post-process Writing

The term post-process arose in composition studies during the early 1990s and quickly became one of the significant keywords, shaping the development of an intellectual current in the field. Atkinson locates the origin of the term in Trimbur's (1994, cited in Matsuda, 2003) review article in College Composition and Communication, although, as he notes, the critique of the process movement had begun much earlier.

Atkinson (2003) defines post process as including everything that follows, generally speaking, the period of L2 writing instruction and research that focused primarily on writing as a cognitive or internal, multi-staged process, and in which by far the major dynamic of learning was through doing, with the teacher taking a background role.

III. Statement of the Problem

Although the teaching of writing has undergone major changes in the last two decades, Iranian EFL students still seem to be receiving inadequate or outmoded writing instruction. In Iranian writing classes, little instruction in writing is offered at school levels and that writing is seen as an ancillary skill supporting the learning of grammar and, rarely as a means of expressing comprehension.

One question relevant to this study can be finding the strengths and weaknesses of product, process, and post-process approaches to writing in terms of their view of writing and how they see the development of writing in Iranian classes and which approach is better for Iranian academic writing classes. In Iran, no researches carried out around this problem. Based on some foreign researches, there are some L2 writing lacks in covering this problem. Clearly, there needs to be an approach that bridges the essential differences between product, process and post process approaches.

IV. Research Question

The overall aim of this study is formed into more specific objective, which is expressed in the form of the research question and hypothesis below:

- Is there any significant difference among Iranian EFL learners' writing ability in terms of product, process, and post process writing approaches?

V. Research Hypothesis

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated from the above research question:

- There are significant differences among Iranians' writing ability in terms of product, process, and post-process writing approaches.

VI. Methodology

A. Participants

The participants of the study included 60 EFL sophomores who were non- randomly selected out of 100 students at Islamic Azad University. The students had similar educational backgrounds in that they had been exposed to writing course I as prerequisite to writing course II. The participants' ages ranged from 19-26. They were all TEFL bilinguals (Azari and Persian) who were taking writing course II at Islamic Azad University, Khoy branch. The researcher divided research sample into three groups of 20. All three groups were exposed to three different approaches. The first group was exposed to the product approach, the second group to the process approach and the third group to post process approach.

B. Instrumentation

This study proceeded in applying three instruments:

First, Textbook: The research textbook is entitle *Paragraph Development* by Arnodet and Barret (1981).

Second, Final Exam: In order to evaluate the effectiveness of three different writing approaches, the researcher gave two identical post-tests (cause–effect and procedural) to all three groups. The post test was two identical writing topics for all participants in all three groups.

Third, Analytic Rating Scale: This questionnaire included two main sections. Section one was based on Ashweel (2000) and included five different sections of ability to communicate, logical organization, purpose of each paragraph, smooth ideas, and finally relevant supportive ideas. Each of the major sections was divided into six subsections and the raters chose a point along a scale (4-point Likert scale) that corresponded to their understanding of examinees' knowledge and improvement in writing ability.

Section two was based on Lee (2006); Song and August (2002). This section included three different sections of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Each of the major sections was divided into four subsections and the raters chose a point along a scale (4-point Likert scale).

Procedures

Sixty EFL students were non- randomly selected out of 100 EFL sophomores studying at Azad University. Then the sample divided into three major groups of product group, process group, and post process group. Each group exposed to experimental treatment for sixteen sessions in an academic term. The teacher and the textbook were the same for all 3 groups. The researcher evaluated the students' progress through final exams.

The first group, *product* approach was a traditional approach, in which students were encouraged to mimic a model text, which was presented and analyzed at an early stage. In this approach, there were pre-writing and writing only. There were four stages in product writing. *Familiarization* aimed to make learners aware of certain features of a particular text. In *Controlled writing*, students produced some simple sentences about the topic from a substitution table. According to Ferris and Hedgcock (2005), the teacher in controlled writing exercises also provided a single paragraph to students and asked them to do some changes, for example change the paragraph into past tense. In *Guided writing*, students had a sample paragraph or series of drawings. Then they had to write another paragraph for themselves. The students might answer some questions to get ideas for the paragraph. Finally, in *free writing* stage students were ready to write a paragraph.

The second group, *process writing*, was seen as predominantly to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there was much less emphasis on linguistic knowledge, such as knowledge about grammar and text structure. There were five stages in producing a piece of writing. In *prewriting*, in order to help students to write and gather information about the topic, the researchers used making a list technique. The teacher, with the help of the students, started to write some sentences on the board. In *Composing/drafting* stage, the students selected and structured the result of the brainstorming session to provide a plan to write. This guided the first draft of writing. *A*fter finishing their first draft, students *revised* them individually and in collaboration with peers. Then they had their second and third drafts. *Editing* stage required the students to edit their revising drafts to find their errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling. Finally, the researcher read the students' papers and provided *feedback* to them. Feedback in this stage included written indirect coded feedback.

The third group received *post-process or genre* approach. One of the central insights of genre analysis is that writing is embedded in a social situation, so that a piece of writing is meant to achieve a particular purpose which comes out of a particular situation. There were five stages in this group and the researchers followed the principles and stages of post-process writing approach. In stage one, *collaborative learning*, the teacher divided the participants into groups of four. All participants in each group were formed on the basis of some commonality or homogeneity (Jacobs, 2006). Next, the teacher used Numbered Heads Together (Kagan, 1994, cited in Wilhelm, 2006). In stage two, *genre awareness*, post-process writing and a model of a particular genre was introduced and analyzed by the researcher .In Stage three, *Real Purpose/ Needs analysis*, in order to identify students' needs and their interests, a questioner should be distributed in stage three, but it was ignored in the present study since it was limited only to cause/effect and procedural genre. In stage four, the teacher applied *socio-affective strategies* in the classroom. She encouraged the students to use the following strategies: 1. Questions for clarification 2. Cooperation 3. Self-talk 4. Self-reinforcement. Finally, in stage five, the teacher held collaborative teacher to student *conferencing* with the individual students about completed work or about work in progress.

VII. Results

As stated earlier, 60 EFL students were non-randomly selected out of 100 EFL students. The researchers controlled and matched all the 60 students based on three controlled variables of *sex*, *age*, and students' *previous scores* in last writing course. The students' assignments into three groups were nearly the same from viewpoint of sex and age but their previous sores in last writing term were nearly different. That is why the researchers labeled students' previous scores in last writing course as *Previous Groups (Writing I)* and the groups under study as *Experimental Groups*. The researchers aimed to prove that post experimental differences are attributed to the conditions of the experiment, rather than to preexisting subject differences, such as sex and previous writing score in previous term. To do so, first, the researchers measured the significant differences among three groups in terms of their previous scores in previous writing term.

Descriptive Statistics for both Previous and Experimental Scores in Three Groups

TABLE I
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Experimental -Product	20	14.3000	2.69698	8.00	19.00
Experimental -Process	20	16.1500	2.18307	12.00	20.00
Experimental –Post-process	20	16.5500	2.11449	12.00	20.00
Previous-Product	20	14.1500	1.26803	13.00	17.00
Previous -Process	20	15.0500	1.70062	13.00	18.00
Previous –Post-process	20	15.1000	1.48324	13.00	18.00

Table I shows that the maximum and minimum mean belong to experimental post process (16.55) and previous product (14.15) respectively. In order to examine if the scores in both previous and experimental three groups were normally distributed, One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (K.S) was calculated.

The Result of One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for all Three Groups in both Previous and Experimental Test Administrations

TABLE II
ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST

		Experimental PRODUCT	Experimental - PROCESS	Experimental POST-PROCESS	Previous-PRODUCT	Previous-PROCESS	Previous-POST PROCESS
N		20	20	20	20	20	20
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	14.3000	16.1500	16.5500	14.1500	15.0500	15.1000
	Std. Deviation	2069698	2.18307	2.11449	1.26803	1.70062	1.48324
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.152	.149	.166	.297	.162	.177
	Positive	.098	.149	.166	.297	.162	.177
	Negative	-.152	-.104	-.134	-.182	-.124	-.123
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.682	.664	.741	1.329	.723	.791
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.742	.770	.642	.059	.672	.559

a. Test distribution is Normal
b. Calculated from data.

Table II illustrates that there are not any significant differences among scores in each group.

P value for all groups are higher than 0.05 (sig. for all groups are respectively= .742, .770, .642, .059, .672, .550 > 0.05). We conclude that the scores in each three groups, both previous and experimental groups, were normally distributed and we are allowed to use One Way Parametric ANOVA Test for both test administration.

Statistics for Three Groups in Previous Test administration (the writing scores of previous term)

The Result of Descriptive Statistics for One Way ANOVA for all Three Groups in Previous test Administration

TABLE III
DESCRIPTIVES: PERVIOUS TEST ADMINISTRATION

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
PRODUCT	20	14.1500	1.26803	.28354	13.5565	14.7435	13.00	17.00
PROCESS	20	15.0500	1.70062	.38027	14.2541	15.8459	13.00	18.00
POST-PROCESS	20	15.1000	1.48324	.33166	14.4058	15.7942	13.00	18.00
Total	60	14.7667	1.53343	.19797	14.3705	15.1628	13.00	18.00

Table III shows that the maximum and minimum mean belong to post process writing (15.10) and product writing (14.15) respectively.

Test of Homogeneity of Variance

TABLE IV
PERVIOUS TEST ADMINISTRATION

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.166	2	57	.319

Levene's test for homogeneity of variance with a significance value of (.319> 0.05) indicates that variances for all three groups in previous test administrations do not differ significantly. The result allows the researcher to use the slightly more powerful test, called One Way ANOVA.

The Result of One Way ANOVA Test for Three Groups in Previous Test Administration

TABLE V
ANOVA: PERVIOUS TEST ADMINISTRATION

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.433	2	5.717	2.560	.086
Within Groups	127.300	57	2.233		
Total	138.733	59			

One Way ANOVA test with a significance value of (.086 > 0.05) indicates that scores for all three groups in previous test administrations do not differ significantly and there are not any significant differences among the scores of three groups in previous test administration.

As a Post Hoc to One Way ANOVA, the researchers used Scheffe test to measure the significant differences between two groups (multiple comparisons).

The Result of Post Hoc Tests: Scheffe (Multiple Comparisons) for Groups in Previous Test Administration

TABLE VI
PREVIOUS TEST ADMINISTRATION

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PRODUCT	PROCESS	-.90000	.47258	.172	-2.0878	.2878
	POST-PROCESS	-.95000	.47258	.142	-2.1378	.2378
PROCESS	PRODUCT	.90000	.47258	.172	-.2878	2.0878
	POST-PROCESS	-.05000	.47258	.994	-1.2378	1.1378
POST-PROCESS	PRODUCT	.95000	.47258	.142	-.2378	2.1378
	PROCESS	.05000	.47258	.994	-1.1378	1.2378

Scheffe test with significance values of (.172, .142, .172, .994, .142, .994 > 0.05) indicates that there are not any significant differences between the scores of three groups in previous test administration.

Statistics for Three Groups in Experimental Test administration (the writing scores for experimental groups)

TABLE VII
THE RESULT OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ONE WAY ANOVA FOR ALL THREE GROUPS IN EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
PRODUCT	20	14.3000	2.69698	.60306	13.0378	15.5622	8.00	19.00
PROCESS	20	16.1500	2.18307	.48815	15.1283	17.1717	12.00	20.00
POST-PROCESS	20	16.5500	2.11449	.47281	15.5604	17.5396	12.00	20.00
Total	60	15.6667	2.50874	.32388	15.0186	16.3147	8.00	20.00

Table VII shows that the maximum and minimum mean belong to post process (16.55) and product (14.30) respectively.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

TABLE VIII
FOLLOWING TEST ADMINISTRATION(EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS)

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.606	2	57	.549

Levene's test for homogeneity of variance with a significance value of (.549> 0.05) indicates that variances for all three groups in experimental groups do not differ significantly. The result allows the researcher to use the slightly more powerful test, called One Way ANOVA.

The Result of One Way ANOVA Test for Three Groups in Following Test Administration (Experimental Groups)

TABLE IX
ANOVA: FOLLOWING TEST ADMINISTRATION (EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	57.633	2	28.817	5.236	.008
Within Groups	313.700	57	5.504		
Total	371.333	59			

One Way ANOVA test with a significance value of (.086 > 0.008) indicates that scores for all three groups in experimental groups do differ significantly and there are significant differences among the scores of three groups in following test administration.

As a Post Hoc to One Way ANOVA, the researcher used Scheffe test to measure the significant differences between two groups (multiple comparisons).

TABLE X
THE RESULT OF POST HOC TESTS: SCHEFFE (MULTIPLE COMPARISONS) FOR GROUPS IN FOLLOWING TEST ADMINISTRATION (EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS)

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PRODUCT	PROCESS	-1.85000	.74186	.052	-3.7147	.0147
	POST-PROCESS	-2.25000*	.74186	.014	-4.1147	-.3853
PROCESS	PRODUCT	1.85000	.74186	.052	-.0147	3.7147
	POST-PROCESS	-.40000	.74186	.865	-2.2647	1.4647
POST-PROCESS	PRODUCT	2.25000*	.74186	.014	.3853	4.1147
	PROCESS	.40000	.74186	.865	-1.4647	2.2647

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The result of Scheffe test indicates that there is significant difference only between product and post process approaches in following test administration.

VIII. Discussion

As stated earlier, 60 EFL students were non-randomly selected out of 100 EFL students. The researcher controlled and matched all the 60 students based on two controlled variables of *sex, age,* and students *previous scores* in last writing course. The students were divided into three groups and were nearly the same from viewpoint of sex but their previous sores in previous writing term were different. The result of statistics confirmed Hypothesis 1 and showed that there are significant differences among Iranian EFL learners' writing ability in terms of product, process, and post process writing approaches.

The researcher selected nearly equal number of female and male in all three groups and she measured all students' previous scores in previous writing term. Since there were not any significant differences among three groups in terms of their previous scores in previous writing term, it is concluded that post experimental differences are attributed to the conditions of the experiment, different types of writing approaches in this study, rather than to preexisting subject differences, such as sex and previous writing score in previous term.

The findings of the research rejects Kamimura's (2000) idea that L2 writing instruction should maintain a balance between process and product orientations to meet the needs of various L2 writers who come from non-English discourse communities. The researcher in this study proved priority of process approach over product approach.

The findings of the present study confirm Lee (2006). He emphasized process writing in his classes. Results of his study showed that students produced their final drafts in a more coherent manner with complex sentences, as indicated by increased analytic as well as holistic scores, T-units, and a global level of revision.

The findings of the study rejects He (2005) suggestions for using post process approach in writing classes. He (2005) strongly proposed a shift of the pedagogical focus in EFL writing instruction used in China. Instead of combined sentences in prescribed formula, students need a 'live' language, a powerful instrument to weave streams of thought. The present study did not show any priorities of post process approach over process approach.

IX. Conclusion

The result of this study uncovered the following:

1. There are significant differences among Iranian EFL learners' writing ability in terms of product, process, and post process writing approaches.
2. There are significant differences among Iranian EFL learners' writing ability in terms of product and process writing approaches.
3. There are significant differences among Iranian EFL learners' writing ability in terms of product and post process writing approaches.
4. There are not significant differences among Iranian EFL learners' writing ability in terms of process and post process writing approaches.
5. Since there were not any significant differences among three groups in terms of their previous scores in previous writing term, we conclude that post experimental differences are attributed to the conditions of the experiment, different types of writing approaches in this study, rather than to preexisting subject differences, such as sex and previous writing score in previous term.
6. Post process approach did not show any significant priorities over process approach, but they both indicated remarkable priority over product approach.

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On Some Dialogue Translation Mistakes in *Little Women (1933)*—From the Perspective of Skopos Theory

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***Abstract*—According to Skopos Theory, the Skopos of translation determines the methods and the strategies in translation. Films are created for the audience with the audience's acceptance and appreciation as the basic principle. Thus the specialty of films requires that translators are supposed to consider more about the audience's expectation horizon, aesthetic taste and ability of acceptance rather than only the source language and cultural information. Adopting German functional classical theory, Skopos theory, as the theoretical base and the previous studies of various aspects of film translation as the practical requirements, this paper attempts to construct a tentative analysis of dialogue translation mistakes in *Little Women (1933)*, with an attempt to illustrate some strategies rather than literal translation should be adopted in film translation to meet its specified requirements and to follow the flow of film.**

Index Terms*—film translation, Skopos Theory, *Little Women (1933)

I. Introduction

With the tendency of globalization, international culture exchanges have become more and more popular and significant. One of the most important carriers of human culture, film, has gained fast development and becomes a main method of learning a foreign language. They are also one of the most important elements in the world's cultural communication, which can be regarded as an effective way of promoting mutual understanding between different counties.

Compared to general translation, film translation has its peculiar characteristics—three channels of message transference for translator: visual channel, aural channel and written channel; and harmony between verbal and non-verbal elements for the audience to comprehend and appreciate the translation.

As a primary componential part, film dialogue has its special features. In some films, two or more languages are spoken, while in some others, strong dialects are used to create the dramatic effects. What's more, film dialogues are usually interactive, short, incomplete and informal, and individualized. Excellent translated film can bring to the audience great satisfaction and appreciation both in eyes and ears.

The aim of film dialogue translation is to make the target audience accept and fully appreciate the charm of an authentic foreign film. Film dialogue translation is not only is transference of two languages, but also is a process of transplantation of another culture. It is a purposeful target-culture-audience-oriented translation.

Little Women is of the best-loved books of all times. This great classical novel is written by Lousia May Alcott, an extremely talented American author. Based on Lousia May Alcott's childhood, this lively portrait of nineteenth-century family life story possesses a lasting vitality that has endeared it to generations of readers. The audience has had very deep impression of each individualized character.

This classical literature work has been put onto screen five times, all of which are striking and have left on millions and millions of audience very deep impressions. The first version, *Little Women (1933)* is still the best interpretation of the original literature work. It won 10 Best Films in 1933 *Film Daily* and 1933 *New York Times*, and it also win the Oscar for Best Writing (Adaptation) and was also nominated for Best Picture. This version was such a success that it was a huge box-office hit, and broke all the records to that time.

Although the dialogue translated skillfully, there exist some controversial mistakes. This paper attempts to construct a tentative analysis of dialogue translation mistakes in *Little Women (1933)*, in terms of German functional classical theory, Skopos Theory.

II. Skopos Theory

"Skopos" is the Greek word for "aim" or "purpose" and was introduced into translation theory in the1970s by Hans J. Vermeer as a technical term for the Purpose of a translation and of the action of translating. (Vermeer, 2000)

Skopos theory proposes that the translated text may have the same or different functions with the source-text functions. The task of the translator is to produce a new text which can meet the cultural expectations of the receivers on

the basis of the source-text, with a specific function.

The main idea of Skopos theory is that translation should be purpose-oriented. The most practical part is the principles of Skopos theory which can be applied in the translation practice: the Skopos Rule, the Coherence Rule and the Fidelity Rule.

A. Skopos Rule

The top-ranking rule for any translation is thus the "Skopos rule"—translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables the text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function. Translational action is determined by its Skopos, that is, "the end justifies the means". According to Skopos theories, translation approach and strategy must be determined by the expected (or demanded) function of the translated text. The aim that the translation is going to reach determines the whole translation process. Vermeer explains, each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose.

B. Coherence Rule (Intratextual Rule)

The target-text should conform to the standard of "intratextual coherence" which is the second important rule. This means the receiver should be able to understand it; it should make sense in the communicative situation and culture in which it is received. A communicative interaction can only be regarded as successful if the receivers interpret it as being sufficiently coherent within their situation. Accordingly, coherence rule specifies that a translation should be acceptable in a sense that it is coherent with the receivers' situation.

C. Fidelity Rule (Intertextual Rule)

Since a translation is an offer of information about a preceding offer of information, it is expected to bear some kind of relationship with the corresponding source text. This is called "intertextual coherence" or "fidelity". Intertextual coherence should exist between source and target text, while the form it takes depends both on the translator's interpretation of the source text and on the translation skopos.

The German functionalist skopos therory is purpose-oriented and noted for advocating the plurality of translation criteria. The decisive factor here is the purpose, the skopos, of the communication in a given situation. In a word, just like a glimpse of sunshine, Skopos theory offers valuable enlightenment to translation study. Thus it seems to have broadened our horizon and helped us to get further comprehension of translation study.

So Skopos theory can account for different strategies in different translation situation, in which source-texts are not the only factor involved. It is pragmatic, accounting for the situational conditions of communicative interaction, and accordingly, for the needs and expectations of the addressees or prospective receivers of the target-text, and even making the target receiver the most important yardstick of translational decisions; it is also consistent, able to establish a coherent theoretical and methodological framework that could serve as a guideline for an inter-subjective justification of the translator's decisions in any type or form of translation task, permitting any translation procedures that would lead to a functional target-text. Thus, it can give the translator a guideline as to the best or safest ways to attain a particular translation purpose.

In skopos rule, intertextual coherence is key point that should lie between source and target text, while the form it takes depends on both translators' interpretation of the source text and on the translation skopos. Intertextual coherence is considered subordinate to intratextual coherence, and both are subordinate to the skopos rule.

III. Dialogue Translation Mistakes in *Little Women (1933)*

Although *"Little Women" (1933)* is such a hit, the translated version has some controversial problems if thoroughly studied. In this section, here are some ill-translated examples in this film and analysis of them from the point of view of Skopos Theory with suggestive solutions. The comments and suggestions tend to be suggestive and they are open to criticism.

This film focuses on the personal interactions family members have with each other, as well as with their friends and neighbors, in order to create a portrait of an idealized, loving family held together during trying times. As translators, we can make clear the formality of the situation, the age and the educational level of the interlocutors, the relationship of the parties at each scenes, as well as the speaker's intention and attitude. And in addition to that, different rules and norms governing their usage in different cultures should also be taken into consideration. All these constitute part of the translation belief in the point of view of Skopos Theory.

A. Example One

Teacher: School is dismissed!
Teacher: Amy March! You may close the door!
Girl 1: That'll teach her not to cut up didoes.
Girl 2: It serves that stuck-up Amy March right.
Girl 3: What's he going to do to her?
Teacher: I can see there's nothing for me to do but to stop by and show your mother how instead of doing your sums, you cover your slate with *sketches.* And most uncomplimentary sketches.

Amy: Please, Mr. Davis. I'll never do it again, sir. And she'd be so disappointed in me. Please. Please.
Teacher: Well, I should hate to spoil her Christmas and for that reason alone, young lady, I shall overlook it.
Amy: Thank you, Mr. Davis!
Teacher: You may go.
Amy: Thank you, Mr. Davis. Thank you very much indeed! Thank you, sir.
Girls: Here she is.
What did he do?
What did he say?
Come on, tell us, what happened?
Amy: I just said that if ever told my mother the way he treated me, she'd take me out of his old school. S*he's never been "reconciliated" anyway, since my father lost his money and she's had to suffer the "degradation" of me being thrown in a lot of ill-mannered girls, who stick their nose in refined people's business.*

In this classic movie, we enjoy the four little girls' experiences and fates respectively. At first Amy, the youngest daughter, studies in a school of old fashion and inflexible rules. She is not well disciplined, which we can figure out from her scribbling at class and her classmates' comments about her. She is almost fed up with all of these. In this scene, Amy was being criticized by her strict teacher after class.

In class Amy was not concentrated, she drew a pejorative picture of the high-nosed poor-sighted teacher, which made the rigid teacher very angry and annoyed. "I can see nothing for me to do but to stop by and show your mother how instead of doing your sums, you cover your slate with sketches. And most uncomplimentary sketches." "Sketches" here is translated as "鬼画符", which is a success of domestication for Chinese audiences, since it conforms to Chinese convention so well that it seems natural! The response of the angry, rigid teacher has been explicitly imaged out in front of us, vivid and impressive. Although Amy luckily won the teacher's forgiveness with her sincere begging and request, she could not resist the other schoolgirl's gossips and satires. When getting out of the classroom, she was surrounded by all the other annoying girls who had been waiting outside for quite a long time, asking questions about this and that, which made her so frustrated. Amy was not timid and frail; she didn't tell what had really happened on her by the teacher. She pretended to be so strong to be afraid of nothing; she even told the other girls what would happen if her mother knew her treatment in such a rubbish school. Everything would be just the opposite of their expectation! Her mother would not be "reconciliated", since her father "lost his money" and she had to deal with ill-mannered classmates who were gossiping about others all day long. As we all know from the story, her father has gone to battlefield for the Civil War, it can be analyzed out that "lost his money" here means her father had to be away off his job at home and could not earn any more money. Thus the literal Chinese translation "自从他掉了钱以后……"is obviously not appropriate at all, which will make Chinese audiences a little confused. In terms of skopos rule, intertextual coherence is a key point that should lie between source and target text, while the form it takes depends on both translators' interpretation of the source text and on the translation skopos. Intratextual coherence requires the receivers can understand without difficulty. According to Skopos Theory, taking the constraints of film dialogue translation, timing and spacing, into consideration, we can conclude that it can be adjusted to "自从他参战没了收入以后，…… " and this seems much more natural with Amy's facial expression.

B. Example Two

Here is the conversation between Jo and Amy after getting the money from Aunty March.

Jo: *What would you do if you were shut up all day with an old crosspatch who flies off the handle every move you make?*
Amy: Jo, don't use slang. Beside, don't forget she gave us the dollar. I'm sure neither of you suffer as I do. You don't have to go to that nasty old Davis' school with impertinent girls who laugh at you and *"label"* your father 'cause he isn't rich.
Jo: *"Libel", "libel". Don't say "label" as if Papa were a pickle bottle.*
Amy: I know what I mean and you needn't be "satirical" about it. It's proper to use good words to improve your "vocabulary".
Jo (whistling): Aren't we elegant?
Amy: You'd never be thought so with your slang.
Jo: I hope not. I don't want to be elegant.
Amy: You needn't whistle like a boy.
Jo: That's why I do it. (whistle again)
Amy: I detest rude, unladylike girls.
Jo: *And I hate affected, niminy-piminy chicks.*
Beth: Birds in their little nest agree.
(Jo and Amy look at each other and smile.)

Here Jo complained about whom she was with everyday. She used two attributes to describe the troublesome old woman, "*What would you do if you were shut up all day with an old crosspatch who flies off the handle every move you make?"* One is an adjective phrase and the other is an attributive clause. According to Chinese way of understanding

and thinking, as well as the film translation features, the dialogue translator put them into two attributive adjectives standing along side by side, which are more convenient for Chinese audience to grasp the information conveyed by the informational source conversation. We can conclude that "一个爱挑剔脾气坏的老女人"is a good version for the principle of naturalness and legibility in film translation. And this part fits well in the whole sentence "如果你得整天和一个爱挑剔、脾气坏的老女人闷在一起，你会是什么感受？"

Amy considered herself even unluckier, "You don't have to go to the nasty old Davis' school with impertinent girls who laugh at you and 'label' your father 'cause he isn't rich." " 'Libel', 'libel'. Don't say 'label' as if Papa were a pickle bottle." said Jo. This interesting conversation lies in the confusion of Amy about the words "label" and "libel". She intended to take the use of "libel" meaning "slander" or "defame", bur she took "label" instead, which means "put label on something, such as a pickle bottle". Jo, as a quick-witted and sharp-toughed addressee, who was also annoyed by the reputation-damaging words by Amy's ill-mannered classmates, could not hold on her patience any more. She corrected Amy; shouting, "'libel', 'libel'" clarifying that she should make clear of these two words. These two sentences are of authentic audio effects with evident English language linguistic features. This is the Chinese translation: "你们又不用去那又烂又老的达维斯学校，跟那些没教养、还嘲笑你的衣着，并'诽谤'你的父亲是穷人的女同学一起上课." "是'定义'才对吧，别把爸爸念成泡菜罐头的名字." It has to be admitted that the problem exists in the English-Chinese linguistic difference and it would be absolutely infeasible if we put the words literally. So the translation here is unsuccessful and unsatisfactory. According to Skopos Theory and dynamic concept, text is made meaningful by its receivers and for its receivers. Here, it is a typical demonstration of film as a multimedia source, a more complicated information source. Vermeer sums text as "an offer of information" from which the receiver selects the items they find interesting and important, or "adequate to the desired purposes". If the dialogue is translated like the original subtitle, the skopos of the film producer has not been smoothly transferred, much less to say the intertextual coherence and the intratextual coherence. Chinese audience would be puzzled with the abrupt mention of "泡菜罐头". Under this kind of situation, we need to employ some translation skills. We can delete some of the original information for the sake of the skopos rule. In all, the literal translation is not acceptable here. In this circumstance, the skill of a good translator is of great importance.

As we all know, shortness and informality is one of the major characteristics of film dialogue. When reproached by Amy for rudeness and inelegance, Jo showed no sign of confession and acknowledgement, she denied, "I hate affected, niminy-piminy chicks" which created out a vivid image of Jo with her individualized personality. Taking all these into consideration, "chicks" here is put into "毛头姑娘", which is lexically accurate and contextually appropriate and natural. The images in our mind are so vivid and impressive, and of more appeal.

C. Example Three

Finally, Meg married Brooke despite of Jo's reluctance. After Meg's wedding, Jo alone sat under a big tree, weeping. Laurie, who has been loving her since knowing her, came to give her consolation and he expressed his admiration.

Jo: I can't, Laurie. I'm sorry. So desperately sorry. I'm so grateful to you, and so proud and fond of you. I don't know why I can't love you the way you want me to. I've tried, but I can't change the feeling, and it would be a lie to say I do if I don't.

Laurie: Really truly, Jo?

Jo: Really truly, dear. I don't think I'll ever marry.

Laurie: Yes, you will. You'll meet some good-for-nothing, no-account idiot and you'll fall in love with him, and work, live and die for him. I know you will. It's your way. *And I'll have to stand by and see it. Well, I'll be hanged if I do.*

Jo: Laurie, where are you going?

Laurie: To the devil, and I hope you'll be sorry.

Jo: Laurie, please…

The Issue of Jo and Laurie is a hot topic in this classical literature. Laurie loved Jo ever since he had known her. He had tried to show it, but Jo had always kept away from him. Under a big tress, Jo felt depressed of Meg's marriage out of the family circle, Laurie came to console her. Instead of beating about the bush, Laurie came straight to the point. But Jo didn't get caught up in Laurie's passion. She loved him, yes, but as a dear dear brother---- not as a husband or lover. Frankly speaking, I felt sorry that Jo denied Laurie; I still wish Jo could of married to Laurie, since Laurie was really a gentleman and he loved Jo with all his heart. After getting Jo's refusal, Laurie was terrible hurt, and did not believe that Jo would never marry. "Yes, you will. You'll meet some good-for-nothing, no-account idiot and you'll fall in love with him, and work, live and die for him. I know you will. It's your way. And I'll have to stand by and see it. Well, I'll be hanged if I do." This is the Chinese translation: "不，你会的。有天你会碰上一个一无是处、不能依赖的笨蛋，你会爱上他，为他工作一辈子，然后就这样死去。我知道你会的，这就是你要的方式。我会站在你身旁看好戏的。我一定会这样做，就算会被吊死!" It is somewhat mistaken, since the gentleman was not in such a terrible mood. He meant seeing Jo loving another man he would have nothing to do, he would have no way out, but to see Jo marry him, and he was sure it would be as pains-taking as being hanged. The original translation in the film will provoke an illusion that Laurie's affection would explode into resentment, he would went to another extreme. So the suggested translation

version is "……我会站在你的身旁，看着这一切，哦，我将像受绞刑一样悲惨的！"

As for Jo, she was strong enough to resist what must have been terrible pressure, especially considering that Laurie was wealthy. She was very sensible and she is a wonderful role mode for women who are independent and know what they want and what's truly best for them.

D. Example Four

Many years later, Laurie married Amy, who was suited for him. In this scene, Jo met Laurie with surprise and happiness.

Jo: Laurie. Oh, my Laurie!

Laurie: Jo dear. Are you glad to see me?

Jo: Glad? My blessed boy! Words can't express my gladness. And where is your wife?

Laurie: They all stopped in at Meg's, but I couldn't wait to see you. They'll be along presently.

Jo: Let me look at you.

Laurie: Don't I look like a married man and the head of a family?

Jo: *Not a bit, and you never will, although you have grown bigger and bonnier. But you're the same scapegrace as ever, despite that very elegant mustache. You can't fool me.*

Laurie: You have to treat me with more respect.

Laurie: Jo, dear. I want to say one thing, then we'll put it by forever.

Jo: No, Laurie, please. I think it was always meant to be, you and Amy. It would have come about naturally if only you'd waited.

Laurie: As you tried to make me understand.

Jo: But you never could be patient.

Laurie: So then we can go back to the happy old times? The way you wanted it, when we first knew one another.

Jo: We never can be a boy and a girl again, Laurie. Those happy old times can't come back.

We shouldn't expect them to. We are man and woman now; we can't be playmates any longer. But we can be brother and sister, to love and help one another, all rest of our lives, can't we, Laurie?

Although they were not young and they were not lovers any more, they were still brother and sister, and there still maintained good friendship between them. In Jo's eyes, Laurie was still the same as before. "Not a bit, and you never will, although you have grown bigger and bonnier. But you're the same scapegrace as ever, despite that very elegant mustache. You can't fool me." Those happy old times would remain forever in their sweet memory. In the original film, it is translated as: "一点不像，你永远也不会像。但你却长大了，变得开朗了，没错，你仍旧和以前一样优雅，尽管你留了好看的八字胡，你骗不了我的。" Obviously, "scapegrace" has been mistakenly translated as "开朗", in fact, the Chinese equivalence for it is "饭桶；不可救药的恶棍；流氓". "Scapegrace" has been used by Jo to make a joke and to show casualness and familiarity with her old intimate friend, whom she had not met for so long. In terms of skopos rule, in order to accomplish the purpose of this whole sentence and the specific function of this word, we can cut "scapegrace" as "臭小子" in Chinese. The sentence by Jo comes into: "一点不像，但你却长壮了、结实了。不过你还和以前一样，一臭小子，尽管你留了好看的八字胡，你才骗不了我！" Thus the intratextual and intertextual coherence here can be achieved, which can accord with the following Laurie's response, "You have to treat me with more respect." Otherwise, Chinese audience would be in the dark of "with more respect". Didn't Jo respect him? The source information has been transferred with fidelity. Everything conforms to logical thinking. Their dialogue helps to image the characters so vivid and live that audience can enjoy the warmth and beauty of domestic life and the great bountiful felicity in the March family. Jo and Laurie's sentiment was so pure and so respectful that they could be brother and sister, to love and help one another. In this scene, we can also find that Jo has stood as an example for the power of women in the nineteenth century and by not marrying anyone, i.e. neither the gentleman nor Laurie, she could show to the world that women can live happily without the support of any man. I adore this book with all my heart, quite sure that I shall cherish it for as long as I shall live.

E. Example Five

Beth was seriously ill with scarlet fever, lying on the bed, more or less invalid. After doctor's visiting, Jo was weeping alone.

Laurie: Is that bad?

Jo: She doesn't know me. She doesn't look like my Beth. How are we going to bear it? Mother and Father, they seem so far away.

Laurie: I'm here. Hold on to me, Jo, dear. Poor Jo, you are all worn out. What does the doctor say?

Jo: We are sending to Marmee. If she were only here.

Laurie: She will be. Grandfather and I got fidgety and thought your mother ought to know. She' d just never forgive us if Beth… Well, if anything happened… So I telegraphed yesterday. She'll be here, on the 2:00 train tonight, and I'm going to meet her.

Jo: Oh, Laurie! Oh, Marmee!

(Jo is so excited to kiss Laurie.)

Jo: I beg your pardon, but you're such a dear. I couldn't help flying at you.
Laurie: Fly at me again. I'd rather like it.
Jo: Laurie, you are so silly.
Laurie: I'd better go.

Laurie asked Jo, "What does the doctor say?" "We are sending to Marmee. If she were only here." said Jo. Here "we are sending to Marmee" is a present continuous tense, combining it Laurie's question, we can conclude that it was used not to describe the present situation, but to express what they should do. "我们得给妈妈发个电报，她能在这儿就好了!"could be more suitable and natural in the context.

As has been discussed ahead, film, is a kind of multimedia, both a visual medium and an aural one. Audience of film watch what characters are doing and hear what they are talking about, messages reach the audience through visual and acoustic channels. Obviously the fascination of film lies in harmonious cooperation between visual and acoustic channels, which demands the target language should cope with the original images in the film as naturally as possible. From cognitive study, messages in films are supposed to act directly on the sense of sight of the audience, not on the sense of hearing. The translation of utterance should be synchronized with the settings of the scenes, the identity of the characters, their movements, gestures, facial expressions, pauses and lip movements. So the original translation of "I beg your pardon, but you're such a dear. I couldn't help flying at you.", "哦，我对不起你，你是这么好的人，我却无法跟你一同飞翔." can not meet the basic requirement. From Jo's movements, we can figure it out that "fly at you" here is a rhetorical saying, which means "hug you" or "hold on to you", since Laurie was such a big comfort for Jo in depression. Personally speaking, we can make it as "哦，真不好意思，你真是太好了，我忍不住要抱着你!", then the principle of synchronization in terms of extralinguistic and paralinguistic factors in the art of film can be assured.

IV. Conclusion

As movies are playing an increasingly indispensable role in the intercultural communication, film translation has become more and more important. In film translation academic studies, the issue is always discussed from the traditional perspective of faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance, which limits the study of film title translation and ignores the special requirements. In practice, there are many problems. However, the development of Skopos theory provides a new perspective for film title translation.

Based on Skopos Theory, which puts particular emphasis on the transfer of "skopos" or "purpose" into target text, different strategies should be adopted in different circumstances. As for their detailed analysis on roles in translation, it has to be pointed that the most crucial one is the receptor of the target text, the target film audience in film translation. Thus the film translation should be target-audience-oriented. The audience's expectation for the original film must also be probed into. The three principles of Skopos Theory—the Skopos Rule, the Coherence Rule and the Fidelity Rule—are very illuminating for film dialogue translation.

This applicability of Skopos Theory and the special principles have been verified and supported by the case study of the film *Little Women (1933)*. Some ways of translation have also been suggested after examining some ill-considered translated dialogues.

In a word, just like a glimpse of sunshine, Skopos theory offers valuable enlightenment to translation study. With comprehensive cultural background knowledge to completely understand the source book and with target-audience-oriented Skopos in mind will help us open our vision, improve the ability to read and gain a satisfying target language version. Then the film dialogue translators can successfully transfer the information as well as the artistic appeal of the foreign films for the target-culture-audience.

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Repairing Conversation and Foreign Language Proficiency

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***Abstract*—This study explored whether there was a relationship between the level of language proficiency and repairing conversation in English classes. For this purpose, sixty participants learning English as foreign language were divided into four coed classes, i.e., two intermediate and two advanced classes, and two sessions of each class were recorded during an academic term offered in a private language school in Mashhad, Iran. The cases of repair in the conversations of these learners were identified and transcribed separately for both groups during the term. They were then categorized based on the place of repair initiation and the type of repair completion. The frequencies of cases were then subjected to statistical tests conducted via the S-PLUS program. The results showed that both intermediate and advanced learners prefer self-repair over other repair. It was also found that they differ significantly from each other not only in the number of times they allow self-and-other repairs to occur but also in the frequency with which repair-initiations and repair-completions are combined. The findings are discussed within a foreign language context.**

***Index Terms*—repair initiation, repair-completion, self-repair, other-repair, S-PLUS, preference**

I. Introduction

Conversation is one form of spoken interaction upon which language use is based. It is one of the most prevalent uses of human language through which people interact with each other, so all human societies depend on conversation to function in the most efficient way. According to Goodwin and Heritage (1990), "social interaction is the primordial means through which the business of the social world is transacted, the identities of its participants are affirmed or denied, and its cultures are transmitted, renewed and modified" (p.283).

Conversation has been of great importance to writers over a long period of time, but most of them have treated it on the basis of some prescriptive rules which should be taken into account during every social interaction. These rules show what is appropriate and what is not in different situations; however, what constitutes good or appropriate conversation rules varies from culture to culture and changes over time (Burke, 1993).

A. Conversation Analysis

The term conversation analysis (CA) has been used to describe a field that is informed by a broad range of disciplinary perspectives, including pragmatics, speech act theory, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology, and the ethnography of communication, variation analysis, communication theory, and social psychology (Schiffrin, 1991). In this study, those practices that have been carried out within an ethnomethodological tradition were followed in general and Stubbs (1983) in particular. The CA, according to Stubbs, is almost always used as a synonym for an ethnomethodological orientation to what Markee (2000) calls analysis of conversational data (ACD) which includes CA and other disciplinary perspectives.

The ideas explored in the CA were mainly influenced by two theories; the first was put forward by Goffman (1959) who emphasized the importance of face-to-face interaction. According to McKay and Hornberger (1996), "Goffman viewed interaction in terms of strategy and ritual and emphasized the importance of situation– the encounter as an attentionally focused gathering in which some aspects of the presentation of self are salient and others are downplayed or concealed" (p.285). The second and more powerful influence was from the works of Garfinkel (1967) and ethnomethodology. According to Ten Have (2004):

Ethnomethodology is a special kind of social inquiry, dedicated to explicating the ways in which members collectively create and maintain a sense of order and intelligibility in their social life. It has emerged as a distinctive perspective and style of social research in the teachings and publications of Harold Garfinkel (p.14).

Some conversation analysts (see Bilmes, 1992, 1993; Cicourel, 1992; Mehan, 1993; Moerman, 1988; Wilson, 1991) include ethnographic information into their analyses claiming that such information is necessary for a complete understanding of talk-in-interaction. In contrast, another group of researchers (e.g., Schegloff, 1987, 1990, 1991; 1992a)

ignore ethnographic information of members' cultures or biographies to make an argument unless there is internal evidence in the conversational data to provide a warrant for the inclusion of such data.

The CA started with focus on casual, mundane conversation between friends and acquaintances, but now all forms of spoken interaction, including those in institutional contexts such as classrooms, doctor's surgeries, and courtrooms are also targets of analysts' attention (Drew & Heritage, 1992). In all contexts, whether institutional or not, participants take turns usually one at a time, order and organize their talk sequentially and repair the problems they face in interaction in order to achieve their goals. The main concern of CA is these interactional arrangements and what participants do to accomplish their goals. Therefore, the main focus of CA analysts is on the organization of talk in interaction including: turn-taking, sequence organization and repair (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005).

B. Repair

According to Liddicoat (2007), repair, which is relevant to all levels of talk, is itself a mechanism of conversation. It refers to the processes available to speakers through which they can deal with the problems which arise in their talk. Repair is a broader concept than simply the correction of errors in talk by replacing an incorrect form with a correct one, although such corrections are a part of repair. In fact many cases of repair seem to involve situations in which there is no error made by the speaker at all (Jefferson, 1987).

According to Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977), the organization of repair can be analyzed based on three different terms:

(1) The position of repair in relation to an initial trouble source

(2) The person who initiates repair (self or other) and who completes it (again self or other)

(3) Whether a repair is successful or unsuccessful.

As Liddicoat (2007) noted, "repair can be initiated by the speaker of the repairable (self-initiated repair) or it may be initiated by its recipient (other-initiated repair). In addition, a repair can be made by the speaker of the repairable item (self-repair) or it may be made by the recipient of the item (other-repair)" (p. 173). The combination of repair initiation and repair completion allows for possibility of four types of repair:

1. *Self-initiated self-repair*: the speaker of the repairable item both indicates a problem in the talk and resolves the problem.

2. *Self-initiated other-repair:* the speaker of the repairable item indicates a problem in the talk, but the recipient resolves the problem.

3. *Other-initiated self-repair*: the recipient of the repairable item indicates a problem in the talk and the speaker resolves the problem.

4. *Other-initiated other-repair:* the recipient of the repairable item both indicates a problem in the talk and resolves the problem.

Liddicoat (2007) also believed that repair is designed to resolve the trouble as quickly as possible and locations for repair are locations relative to the trouble source, so it is possible to identify five positions for repair, i.e., *Same turn repair* (in the same turn as the trouble source), *Transition space repair* (in the transition space following the turn containing the trouble source), *Second position repair*, *Third position repair* and *Fourth position repair*.

C. Preference for Self-repair

The positions mentioned for repair interact with repair initiation in such a way that each position provides an opportunity for a particular participant to initiate the repair. This means that self-initiation and other-initiation are also organized in terms of their positions sequentially. As shown in Figure 1, these two types of initiation are ordered so that possibilities for self-initiation come before possibilities for other initiation (Schegloff et al., 1977). According to Liddicoat (2007), the ordering provides a set of alternating possibilities in a way that each of these possible positions is available for repairing the same types of trouble source. They can be seen as a set of ordered possibilities for initiating repair in which the speaker (i.e. producer of the trouble) has the first opportunity to initiate a repair, either within the current turn or just after the current turn in the transition space (p.175).

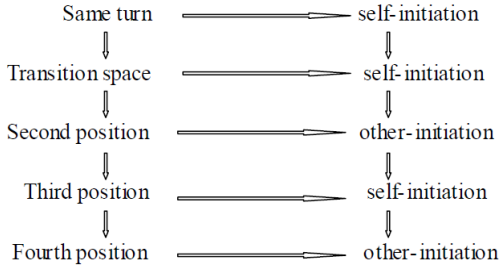

Figure 1. Order of initiations

Schegloff (1992b) believed that if there was a problem with the original turn, it may be indicated in the second position, so responses to turns at talk are opportunities to display understanding or misunderstandings of prior talk. This means that talk in a turn in the second position may indicate a trouble source in the earlier turn i.e. same turn. When this

happens, the speaker of the original trouble source may initiate repair in the next turn i.e. in third position in relation to the original turn. Talk in the second position may indicate a misunderstanding, but this misunderstanding may not become apparent until the third position. In this case, the recipient of the original turn may initiate repair in the next turn i.e. in fourth position relative to the original trouble (Liddicoat, 2007).

According to Schegloff et al. (1977), the fact that other-initiation normally occurs in the next turn after the trouble source is not an accidental artifact of turn-taking. It is, for example, possible for repair to occur during the turn in which the trouble source occurs when a recipient interrupts the current speaker. Other-initiated repair, however, does not normally occur during such a turn. This means that the typical first possible position for other-initiation is not simply the next turn, but it is also not sooner than the next. Furthermore, Schegloff et al. (1977) also argued that other-initiation may often be delayed in its own turn to allow an expanded transition space in which self-initiation could potentially occur. To sum up, it is not simply true that other-initiation is found after self-initiation; rather the repair system is organized to achieve such an ordering.

Schegloff et al. (1977) have also identified a preference for self-repair in conversation. They argue that this preference is not simply a matter of more number of instances of self-repair. Rather it is based on a system which is designed to achieve self-repair. The most salient feature of the system that favors self-repair is that the positions in which self-repair can happen precede the positions in which other repair take place, providing a structurally first opportunity for speakers to repair their own trouble sources. The first two possible repair positions (within the turn and within the transition space) are the possibilities for the speaker to initiate repair. To sum up, three of the five possible locations for repair are provided for the speaker who produced the trouble source and that these three positions represent three of the four possible spaces. The predominance of first locations for possible self-repair is further supported by the more number of success of repairs themselves. This means that many repairs are resolved before the possibility of other repair even arises. Besides, further possibilities for self-repair are created by the division of repair work into initiation and repair. Other-initiated repair most commonly leads to self-repair rather than other-repair. Particularly, second position other-initiated repair is usually designed to provide for self-repair.

According to Liddicoat(2007), most other-initiated repair techniques indicate that there was a trouble in the prior talk, but do not perform any operations on that talk. In some cases other-initiated repair does no more than indicating of a trouble while in other cases the repair initiator more explicitly identifies the trouble source. These second position turns are typically occupied only with initiating repair and pass the work of the repair itself to the next positioned turn, i.e., the first speaker who produced the trouble source. Based on this argument, the four repair types discussed above - self-initiated self-repair, self-initiated other-repair, other-initiated self-repair and other-initiated other-repair- are not interactionally equal options because there is a strong preference for some of these types over the others.

Preferring certain types of repair does not, however, affect who initiates repair and the need to deal with trouble in talk applies equally to all participants if conversation is to work as a self-regulating system, so self-initiation and other-initiation are alternatives responding to different interactional needs. Self-repair and other-repair are not though alternatives in the same way and the preference organization involved in repair is such that self-repair is favored over other-repair. Therefore, other-repair is not preferred and usually shows interactional modifications which affect the turn shape in which other-repair is found. Other-repairs are often done in a mitigated way, e.g., they may contain makers of uncertainty or they may be produced in question form. Markee (2000) also believed that there is a preference for self over other-correction in first language conversations and there is a strong possibility of it in second language talk. The present study attempts to explore the preference within a context in which English is learned as a foreign language (EFL).

II. Methods

A. Participants

Sixty, 30 male and 30 female, Iranian learners of English participated voluntarily in the study. Their age ranged between 16 and 27. The participants were divided into four coed classes, i.e., two intermediate and two advanced classes, so that their conversation repairing could not recorded as exactly as possible. They attended English classes twice a week for 20 sessions in a private language institute in Mashhad, Iran. Persian was the first language of all the participants and they learned English as a foreign language because they neither spoke nor heard it in their everyday conversations in the society.

B. Procedure

Before the term started, the researchers decided to record two sessions of both intermediate and advanced classes in which English was taught as a foreign language. The fourth and seventeenth sessions of these classes were chosen to get a representative sample of the participants' interactions with their teachers during the term. These sessions were recorded entirely from the beginning to the end. The recorded materials were then listened several times and the cases of repair were chosen separately for intermediate and advanced groups. The symbols and signs designed by Jefferson and published by Lerner (2004) were utilized to transcribe the cases of repair. They were then categorized two times, i.e., once based on the place of repair initiation and the other time based on the type of repair completion.

C. Data Analysis

The cases of repair made in various positions by intermediate and advanced learners were counted and subjected to Chi-Square Test as well as Binomial Nonparametric Test. All data analyses were conducted in S-PLUS whose power lies in its convenient and useful way of organizing data, its wide variety of classical and modern modeling techniques, and its way of specifying models (MathSoft, 1999). The statistical tests were employed to test the following research hypotheses.

H1 There is a significant preference for self over other-repair among intermediate EFL learners.

H2 There is a significant preference for self over other-repair among advanced EFL learners.

H3. Intermediate and advanced EFL learners will not differ significantly from each other in their preference for self over other-repair.

III. Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and binomial test of self-repairs (SRs) as well as other-repairs (ORs) made by intermediate EFL learners. As can be seen, the frequency of SRs, i.e., 99, is higher than ORs, i.e., 50. The Chi-Square Test showed that the difference in the frequency is significant, i.e., $\chi^2 = 16.114$, df = 1, p <.001. As it can also be seen, there is a 66% preference for SR over 34% of OR among the learners. The results thus confirm the first hypothesis that *there is a significant preference for self over other-repair among Iranian intermediate EFL learners*.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND BINOMIAL TEST OF REPAIRS MADE BY INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS

Category	N	Expected N	Residual	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
SR	99	74.5	24.5	.66	.50	.000
OR	50	74.5	-24.5	.34	.50	
Total	149			1.00		

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and Chi-Square test of the four types of repair resulting from the combination of repair-initiation and repair-completion (RI-RC), i.e., self-initiation self repair (SISR), self-initiation other-repair (SIOR), other-initiation self-repair (OISR) and other-initiation other-repair (OIOR). As can be seen, between the two types of repair completion for self-repair, the SISR is more frequent, i.e., 88, than the SIOR, i.e., 10. However, for other completion, OIOR is more frequent, i.e., 40, OISR, i.e., 11. The Chi-Square Test showed that the differences in the four types are significant, i.e., $\chi^2 = 107.779$, df = 3, p <.001. These results provide more evidence to *confirm* the first hypothesis.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE FOUR OF REPAIRS MADE BY INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
SISR	88	37.3	50.8	.59	.25	.000
SIOR	10	37.3	-27.3	.07		
OISR	11	37.3	-26.3	.07		
OIOR	40	37.3	2.8	.27		
Total	149					

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics and binomial test of SRs and ORs made by advanced EFL learners. As can be seen, the frequency of SRs, i.e., 143, is much higher than ORs, i.e., 21. The Chi-Square Test showed that the difference in the frequency is significant, i.e., $\chi^2 = 90.756$, df = 1, p <.001. As it can also be seen, there is a 87% preference for SR over 13% of OR among the learners. The results thus confirm the second hypothesis that *there is a significant preference for self over other-repair among Iranian advanced EFL learners*.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND BINOMIAL TEST OF REPAIRS MADE BY ADVANCED LEARNERS

Category	N	Expected N	Residual	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
SR	143	82.0	61.0	.87	.50	.000
OR	21	82.0	-61.0	.13		
Total	164			1.00		

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics and Chi-Square test of the four types of repair, i.e., SISR, SIOR, OISR, and OIOR, made by advanced learners. As can be seen, the SISR and OIOR claim for the first and second highest frequencies among the combinations, i.e., 125 (78%) and 19 (12%), respectively. The Chi-Square Test showed that the differences in the occurrence of the four types are significant, i.e., $\chi^2 = 250.0$, df = 3, p <.001, and thus provided further support for the psychological reality of establishing the four types of repair in conversational analyses.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE FOUR OF REPAIRS MADE BY ADVANCED LEARNERS

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
SISR	128	41.0	87.0	.78	.25	.000
SIOR	15	41.0	-26.0	.09		
OISR	2	41.0	-39.0	.01		
OIOR	19	41.0	-22.0	.12		
Total	164					

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics and Chi-Square Test of SRs and ORs made by intermediate and advanced EFL learners. As can be seen, the number of SRs made by the advanced learners is more than the intermediate. The number of ORs made by the intermediate learners is, however, more than that of the advance. The Chi-Square Test showed that the differences in the occurrence of the SRs and Ors are significant and thus disconfirmed the third hypothesis that *intermediate and advanced EFL learners will not differ significantly from each other in their preference for self over other-repair*.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE REPAIRS MADE BY INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED LEARNERS

Category	Group		Total	Chi-Square Test
	Advanced	Intermediate		
SR	143	99	242	$\chi^2 = 19.170$
OR	21	50	71	df = 1
Total	164	149	313	p <.001

Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics and Chi-Square test of the four types of repair, i.e., SISR, SIOR, OISR, and OIOR, made by advanced learners. As can be seen, both groups show the same order in the two types of repair in that the first and second highest numbers of repairs have occurred in SISR and OIOR. However, while almost the same percentage of repair occurred in SIOR and OISR positions for intermediate learners, the number of advanced learners who allowed SIOR to occur, i.e., 15 (9%), was more than OISR, i.e., 2 (1%). The Chi-square test showed that the difference in the combination of repair initiation and completion was significant, i.e., $\chi^2 = 21.443$, df = 3, p <.001 and thus provided further support to *disconfirm* the third hypothesis.

TABLE 6
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE FOUR TYPES OF REPAIR MADE BY ADVANCED AND INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

Types of repair		Group		Total
		Advanced	Intermediate	
SISR	Count	**128_a**	**88_b**	216
	% within Same Turn	59.3%	40.7%	100.0%
	% within Group	78.0%	59.1%	69.0%
SIOR	Count	15_a	10_a	25
	% within Same Turn	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	% within Group	9.1%	6.7%	8.0%
OISR	Count	2_a	**11_b**	13
	% within Same Turn	15.4%	84.6%	100.0%
	% within Group	1.2%	7.4%	4.2%
OIOR	Count	**19_a**	40_b	59
	% within Same Turn	32.2%	67.8%	100.0%
	% within Group	11.6%	26.8%	18.8%
Total	Count	164	149	313
	% within Same Turn	52.4%	47.6%	100.0%
	% within Group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Group categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The results of the present study provide not only enough evidence to support speakers preference of SR over OR, but also shed light on their nature in terms of foreign language learners' proficiency level. Although both intermediate and advanced learners prefer SRs, the number of SISRs made by intermediate learners is significantly fewer than those made by the advanced learners because they are basically syntactic in nature. After codifying the words/phrases comprising certain units of three textbooks, i.e., schemata, into three domains, i.e., semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic, Khodadady, Pishghadam and Fakhar (2010) found that syntactic schemata make up only 9.4% of all the units analyzed and taught as instructional material. As shown in Example 1, its intermediate producer had difficulty deciding which possessive determiner must be employed and, therefore, used the syntactic schema *his* first. However, she cut herself off in the middle of schema *his* and replaced it with *her* to agree with the agent of the Example, i.e., she.

Example 1 (SISR): Intermediate

Learner: She cleaned hi- her room.

Khodadady (1997) and Khodadady and Herriman (2000) were the first scholars who treated repairs such as *his* and *her* as syntactic *schemata*, traditionally known as words. For these researchers *schemata* represent their utterers' ongoing personal experiences with words as they are employed in speech/writing under real conditions in real places at real time and for real purposes. Since the producer of Example 1, for example, employs a single possessive determiner for both female and male agents in her mother language, i.e., OU in Persian, she finds herself in a challenging situation when she refers to an agent calling for the obligatory selection of *her* instead of *his* in English. Because she has not had enough experiences with the two syntactic schemata to express herself, she employs *his* for both genders first and then repairs herself to reveal her developing proficiency level.

The proficiency-dependent nature of repairs is not limited to SRs. It is also reflected in ORs as shown in Example 2. The learner uses forget instead of forgot and her teacher corrects her by saying, "You mean you forgot." Although the schema *forget* is semantic in nature, the learner finds it difficult to add the element of time and thus reveals her developing syntactic knowledge of tense in English. In contrast to words, schemata not only contain semantic load but also depend syntactically on other schemata when they enter into discoursal relationships with each other. Although the learner does know what the schema *forget* represents she still needs to improve her proficiency by modifying its morph in order to agree with the discoursal schemata *was* and *yesterday*.

Example 2 (OIOR): Intermediate

Learner: I was busy yesterday and forget to write it

Teacher: You mean forgot. It's past

Learner: Yeah

However, as learners gain enough experience with the foreign language, the nature of repairs they make changes. Example 3 below was, for example, uttered by an advanced learner in the same position as Example 1, i.e., SISR. He had raised a question before and when he realized that the conversation between his classmates and teacher had shifted to a different topic, he produced the example as an indirect question requiring a certain repair on the part of teacher. The requested repair is not of a syntactic nature because it calls for a noun schema such as *context*. While syntactic schemata such as *his* and *her* are few in type but many in frequency, the semantic noun schemata such as *context* and *place* are many in type but few in frequency.

Example 3 (SISR): Advanced

Learner: My question was out of- I (.) just wanted to know

Although the producer of Example 3 did not repair himself directly and thus announced his indirect agreement with a change in topic, Example 4 shows how advanced learners paraphrase themselves to convey their messages. It provides a clear evidence for the argument that repairs are sometime made when no errors are committed (Jefferson, 1987). Some repairs are in fact made in order to reach a mutual agreement as regards what a speaker says and what the listener understands. In other words, conversation repairs are made to ensure that the schemata produced by addressers in their speech match the schemata their addressees retrieve from their personally developed repertoire. The closer the experiences of the addresser and addressee with the schemata negotiated, the more mutual the negotiation of meaning and the better they will understand each other.

Example 4 (SIOR): Advanced

Learner: You know all kind of - - this feeling is not bad there is uhm: the:: kind you want something fo::r you and others too

Teacher: Envy

Learner: Yeah thanks

V. Conclusion

The present study explored the type of repairs made by intermediate and advanced learners of English as a foreign language and showed that they prefer self-repair over other repair in their conversations. However, when both groups were compared with each other it was found that in spite of preferring self over other repair, advanced learners allow for significantly higher percentage of self-initiated other repair than their intermediate counterparts, indicating that the more proficiency the learners gain in their foreign language the more self-confident they become in seeking their addressees' contribution to the conversation. Since the addressees in this study were, however, teachers and hence occupied an authoritative position, further research is required to find out whether similar patterns will occur with peer addressees.

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Effect of CALL-based and Non-CALL Based Methods of Teaching on L2 Vocabulary Learning

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***Abstract*—The use of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in the field of education has increased remarkably in recent years due to the swift and modern changes in language software. However, CALL is not widely employed in the field of second/foreign (L2) language learning in Iran. Interested in the application of CALL, this study examines two methods of vocabulary teaching/learning (CALL-based versus non-CALL based) in the short and long-term learning in the area of L2 vocabulary. It seeks to see which method is more effective for teaching English vocabulary to young elementary Iranian EFL learners. To this end, 61 female Iranian EFL learners participated in the study through a purposive sampling. They were randomly assigned into CALL-users (n = 32) and non-CALL users (n = 29) and posttest control group design was employed. To collect data, a proficiency test was used to homogenize the participants and a multiple-choice vocabulary test was used as immediate and delayed posttests to find out the effectiveness of the methods in a shorter and longer period of time. The results of *t*-tests indicated that there was not a significant difference between the vocabulary scores of the CALL-users and non-CALL users in both short-term and long-term learning despite the fact that both methods appeared to be effective. Furthermore, both methods were found to be more effective in the short-term learning. Finally, the pedagogical implications of this study for L2 teachers and learners are presented.**

***Index Terms*—CALL, CALL-users, non-CALL users, L2 vocabulary learning, long-term learning, short-term learning**

I. Introduction

According to Richards and Renandya (2002) vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency, and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different contexts, reading or watching television. As Schmitt (2000) states, learning vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a second/foreign (L2) for both students and teachers. Concerning English, Zhang (2009) states that the effective learning of new English lexical items seems to be one of the major aims for learners of English. It is difficult to conduct a message or communicate in English with those who may know some grammar, but their vocabulary knowledge is poor. Research on vocabulary in recent years has done a great deal to clarify the levels of vocabulary learning learners need to achieve in order to read both simplified and non-simplified materials and to process different kinds of oral and written texts, as well as the kinds of strategies learners use in understanding, using, and remembering the words.

In addition, incorporating technology, such as computers, into the learning process as well as the wide access to internet might assist learners to improve their L2. According to Bangs and Cantos (2004), in the age of information and communication technology (ICT), computer literacy is a demand. The university needs to produce graduates equipped with ICT skills. Hence, integrating computers into the language learning process, which can offer a more powerful and authentic language learning environment, might be one of the ways to assist EFL learners to meet their demands for language skill and vocabulary learning. According to Ahmad, Corbett, Rogers and Sussex (1985), using computers offers certain advantages to language teachers as they allow teachers to process and present authentic materials with flexibility. One way of vocabulary learning, which might be of interest to language instructors and learners, is Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). CALL is an approach to language teaching and learning in which the computer is used as an aid to the presentation, reinforcement and assessment of material to be learned, usually including

a substantial interactive element (Davis, 2002). It is the search for and study of application of computer in language teaching and learning. As Seljan, Banek, and Spirance (2009) states, CALL has entered the integrative phase where computer is not only used as media for delivering instructions as in behavioristic phase or as a tool in communicative phase, but integrates multimedia packages, CD- ROMs and internet supporting skill-based activities, interactive learning and self-asses as an approach in teaching and learning . According to Levy (1997), vocabulary learning has always been a popular subject in CALL programs, especially in the early stages of CALL when technology was relatively simple and it was thought that vocabulary learning could be easily integrated into CALL program.

Since English is an international language, and the number of people who are learning it is increasing across the world, and one important component of every language is learning its vocabulary, the present research seek to apply CALL in the area of vocabulary learning, which is rarely researched in an EFL context in Iran. This study puts two methods of vocabulary learning (i.e., CALL-based and non-CALL) under spotlight and explores which of these two methods of vocabulary learning, help EFL learners to maximize their range of vocabulary in a short and longer period of time. In doing so, it draws attention to the (in)effectiveness of CALL for L2 vocabulary learning/teaching. Based upon a few studies on CALL, it is assumed that learning English vocabulary via CALL helps EFL learners to maximize their knowledge of vocabulary in short and long term-learning. However, the findings on the above issue are not quite consistent.

II. Literature Review

Computers entered the educational system in the early 1960s when they could be found in some of universities which had the departments of computer sciences. CALL is one of the fields whose progress has been influenced by the advancement in technology. During the first two decades of computer use, CALL was based on programmed instructions, which was teacher-centered. It originated from Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI), which was first viewed as an aid for teachers in 1960's (Lepper & Gurtner, 1989). CAI allowed for dynamic presentation of materials, individualized instruction and a level of engagement in the learning process that might not be possible in a more traditional classroom setting. According to Mathes, Torgesen, and Allor (2001), CAI could provide immediate feedback regarding correct responses, reinforcement where appropriate and modeling when needed.

Up until the late 1970s, as Davies, Hewer, Rendall, and Walker (2004) state, CALL projects were confined mainly to universities, where computer programs were developed on large mainframe computers. In the late 1970, the arrival of personal computer (PC) brought computers within the range of a wider audience, resulting in a boom in the development of CALL programs. Consequently, Computer Assisted Language Instruction (CALI), which was the earlier name of CALL, changed into a new term (i.e., Computer Assisted Language learning or CALL). The philosophy of CALL put a strong emphasis on student-centered lessons that allowed the learners to learn on their own using structured and unstructured interactive lessons. These lessons carried two important features: bidirectional (interactive) learning and individualized learning. During 198s, CALL widened its scope, embracing the communicative approach and range of new technologies. CALL has now established itself as an important area of research in higher education and is used for learning various skills and components of language by the use of multimedia software.

Accordingly, there are different approaches to CALL. Traditional CALL programs, according to Matthew (1994), present a stimulus to which the learner had to provide a response. In early CALL programs, the stimulus was in the form of text presented on screen, and the only way in which the learner could respond was by entering an answer at the key board. Some programs were very imaginative in the way text was presented, making use of color to highlight grammatical features and movements to illustrate points of syntax. Discrete error analysis and feedback were a common feature of traditional CALL. Explorative CALL, which is a more recent approach to CALL, favors a learner-centered rather than a teacher- centered drill-based approach to CALL. The explorative approach is characterized by the use of concordance programs in the language classroom (Davies, et al. 2004). Multimedia CALL makes it possible combine sound, photography, still images and video recording in imaginative presentations. In this approach, learners can use interactive video discs. According to Davies et al.(2004), a feature of many multimedia CALL programs is the role-play activity, in which the learner can record his/her own voice and play it back as part of a continuous dialogue with a native speaker. Web-based CALL makes use of web activities in language learning and teaching. Web-based CALL approach can be integrated with other approaches to create hybrid approaches to CALL.

Using computer technology with the aim of helping language learners to learn vocabulary is one of the ways in which CALL has been used in language education. Licenjacka and Filologia (2007) investigated two alternative methods of learning words (i.e., traditional and CALL-based). The control group was asked to study a series of adjectives within a period of seven days without any access to technological equipment and the word processing software. They were left free to memorize the lexis in the way they chose themselves. But, the experimental group was given the access to the word processing and the opportunity to learn the new lexicon via computers in seven days. The results of the study showed that the experimental group had a better performance in terms of learning adjectives. Also, Pelletreau (2006) examined the opportunities in which intermediate English as second language learners had to acquire vocabulary while reading preselected texts using a computer program as part of their course in an English language institute. Students received an individualized series of documents containing target words. The target words consisted of a list of academic words that students did not know. Students were told explicitly to try to learn the meanings of their target vocabulary

words by clicking on them in order to view online dictionary definitions. Students were engaged in the explicit learning of target words, though in doing so, they were given the opportunity to use the same online dictionary to look up other non-target words. Data was collected through observations of students, teacher feedback and student-student interviews. The quantitative and qualitative analysis revealed a variety of student learning outcomes and behaviors. There was no relation between non-target and target vocabulary learning outcomes. Students exhibited one of two distinct vocabulary-learning behaviors: One group of students took notes while reading and focusing more on target words and the other mainly asked their teacher vocabulary questions while reading.

Getkham (2004) compared the vocabulary performance of two groups of students: One group used a multimedia computer program and the other one used traditional printed texts. Results indicated that both groups improved their vocabulary knowledge after practicing vocabulary exercises, but the students in both groups forgot some words after one month. However, the degree of forgetting of vocabulary in the group which used multimedia was less than that of the group which used printed texts. This was determined by comparing the results of an immediate posttest and a delayed posttest. The researcher concluded that a multimedia computer program could help students retain vocabulary information.

In another study, Aist (2002) used computer-assisted oral reading to help children learn vocabulary. He built a project LISTENN'S Reading Tutor, a computer program that would adapt automatic speech recognition to listen to children reading aloud, and helps them to learn to read. To learn a word from reading with the Reading Tutor, students had to encounter the word and learn the meaning of the word in context. He compared the Reading Tutor to classroom instruction and to human-assisted oral reading as part of a yearlong study with 144 second and third graders. He found that second graders did about the same on word learning in all three conditions. However, third graders who read with the Reading Tutor performed significantly better than other third graders in a classroom control and even comparably with other third graders who read one-by-one with human tutors.

Also, Iheanacho (1997) examined the effects of two multimedia CALL programs on vocabulary acquisition. Participants were 86 intermediate level English as a second language (ESL) students. They were randomly assigned to one of two treatment groups. Students in group one viewed a program with *Motion Graphics* and text. Students in group two viewed a program that had *Still Graphics* and text. Their task was to study the names of objects and tools. Both groups took the pretest, viewed the video of the tools and had an immediate posttest and a two-week delayed posttest. The results yielded no treatment effects. Further analysis revealed significant time effects, but no significant interaction between the treatment and time. Students who learned through *Motion Graphics* performed significantly better on the recall tests than those who learned through *Still Graphics*.

Gan, Low and Yaakub (1996) conducted a comparative study on the effectiveness of computers in teaching vocabulary. Forty-eight subjects were randomly divided into the control and experimental groups. A pretest posttest experimental design was used. The treatment was carried out in two stages, each of which lasted for five weeks. In each stage, the subjects were involved in five 2-hour sessions of computer assisted exercises. The control group participants were taught the vocabulary in a conventional manner, while the experimental group students were instructed by both conventional and computer mediated methods. Besides posttest exams, a questionnaire was administered at the end of the treatment to find out about the students' preferences regarding the two methods of instruction. The posttest results showed that vocabulary skills were more effectively taught by the computer assisted approach than with the conventional classroom instructional approach. The answers of the students to the questionnaire questions revealed that they preferred computer-assisted approach to be used as a complement to conventional classroom instruction in vocabulary skills. The researchers concluded that computer assisted approach could enrich the multi-context vocabulary learning experience.

In an Iranian EFL context, Shahrokni (2009) studied the effect of online textual, pictorial, and textual pictorial glosses on the incidental vocabulary learning of 90 adult elementary Iranian EFL learners. The participants were selected from a pool of 140 volunteers based on their performance on an English placement test as well as the knowledge test of the target words in the study. They were randomly assigned to three groups of 30 and subsequently exposed to the research treatment. During three sessions of instruction, five computerized reading texts including 25 target words were studied. The participants read the text for comprehension and, at the same time, were able to consult the glosses attached to the target words. Having read each text under each research condition, the participants were tested on their incidental vocabulary learning through two research instruments, word and picture recognition tests. The results of a one-way ANOVA analysis of the data indicated that a combination of text and still images resulted in significantly better incidental learning, confirming the Dual-Coding Theory. In another study, Ghabanchi and Anbarestani (2008) investigated whether CALL programs have any effect on the long-term retention in vocabulary learning, and whether CALL programs have a better effect on contextualized vocabulary learning than the ordinary method of learning vocabulary in isolation through bilingual lists. Fifty-six EFL students participated in their study. Among the participants, nearly 28 students who had access to personal computers at home were voluntarily selected. This group made the experimental group, and the others made the control group. The experimental group used technological apparatus and computerized facilities at home to find meaning and definition of nearly taught words and to use them. However, the control group followed the ordinary method for finding the meaning of new words. This group used desktop dictionaries and students could make a bilingual list of new words to memorize them. The teacher

taught every session 30 new words. He gave both groups their definition, pronunciation, and some synonyms and antonyms. The result indicated that learners had an intensive mental processing in using CALL, which resulted in long-term recall of words. CALL also produced better results in contextualized vocabulary learning and pronunciation. However, the scores on the immediate test were considerably higher for the control group, but the scores on the delayed tests were significantly lower for the control one.

In summary, CALL, particularly multimedia CALL, is the result of advancement in computer technology, which has made it possible to simultaneously present the different modalities to the language learners. Despite the fact that most studies on vocabulary learning support the use of CALL and point out to its positive effects, there are some studies in which non-CALL methods prove to be significant as a rival to CALL-based methods. That is the reason we should be cautious about the wild claims made on the extent of its application in L2 learning. Besides, the review of studies in the field of L2 vocabulary suggest that language researchers have carried out fewer CALL-based studies, compared with non-CALL based studies. To move further, there are fewer studies on CALL and vocabulary learning in EFL contexts such as Iran. In light of these views, it becomes clear that more research is required to shed more light on the effect of CALL on L2 vocabulary learning.

III. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Utilizing computers has demonstrated significant effects on the achievement levels of language learners in recent years. This study shines light on the application of CALL in the area of L2 vocabulary. The main purpose of the study is to determine which method of vocabulary learning, (i.e., a CALL-based versus a non-CALL based method) yields in better results in teaching /learning L2 vocabulary (i.e., English vocabulary) in a short and longer period of time. In other words, the effectiveness of the above methods is investigated. Language software called *Phonics* constitutes the backbone of the CALL-based method, which is less familiar to young EFL learners in Iran. Therefore, the following research questions are formulated:

1. Is CALL-based instruction more effective than non-CALL-based instruction in the short-term vocabulary learning?
2. Is CALL-based instruction more effective than non-CALL based instruction in the long-term vocabulary learning?
3. Is the effect of the CALL-based and non-CALL based instruction in L2 learning retained over time?

Accordingly, the following null hypotheses were derived from the research questions of the study:

H_{01}: CALL-based instruction is not more effective than non-CALL based instruction in the short-term vocabulary learning.

$H_{02:}$ CALL-based instruction is not more effective than non-CALL based instruction in the long-term vocabulary learning.

$H_{03:}$ The effect of the CALL-based and non-CALL based instruction in L2 learning is not retained over time

IV. Method

A. Participants

The main participants of the study included 61 Iranian EFL learners from a private language institute in Isfahan, Iran. They were all females and their age ranged from eleven to thirteen. They had taken two elementary language courses in the institute, which mainly focused on conversational skills. The participants who were selected through a proficiency placement test consisted of 32 CALL-users and 29 non-CALL users. They attended the language class twice a week.

B. Instruments

This study used two instruments for data collection: a proficiency placement test and a vocabulary test. In order to make sure that all participants in the study enjoyed the same level of language ability, a proficiency placement test, which was a modified version of the test developed by Lesley, Hansen & Zukowski/Faust (2005), was used. It should be noted that the institute where the data was collected use this test, together with an interview, to place new comers into different language levels. The test included 20 multiple-choice listening, 20 multiple-choice reading and 30 multiple-choice language use items. The participants whose score were low were selected for the main trial of the study. Following the scoring guidelines by Lesley, et al. (2005), the scores below 12 (i.e., rating 3) were considered as the elementary level. The vocabulary test, which was used posttests, included 40 multiple-choice items and had a good coverage of the instruction in the course. The score of the test ranged 0-40, with each item receiving one mark for the correct answer. The validity of the vocabulary test was investigated by the expert judgments. Two experts checked the suitability of the words in test. The reliability of the whole vocabulary test, as measured by Cronbach alpha coefficient on the pretest scores with a sample of 61 participants, was .82, which is commensurate with the requirements for the reliable scoring by Larson-Hall (2010, p. 171) and Hatch and Lazaraton (1991, p. 441). The reason for this reliability of the test can be related to its good internal consistency, and homogeneity of items.

C. Procedure

In order to collect data for this study several steps were taken. First, the proficiency placement test was administered to 90 EFL learners in Sokhansara Language Institute in Esfahan in order to select a more homogenous group. Based on

the proficiency scores, 81 elementary level EFL learners, whose scores were low, were selected from the sample. It should be noted that all the participants had also been interviewed by the head of the language institute before and were placed into elementary level language courses. Second, the developed vocabulary test, which had a good coverage of the instruction in two groups, was given to 20 EFL participants selected from the sample to check that the target words were unfamiliar to them. All 20 participants indicated that they did not know the meaning of the words. Thus, the desirability of the items was confirmed. Third, except two participants, who could attend only the CALL group, all other participants were randomly assigned into two groups: CALL and non-CALL. Instruction was given to the CALL group in a language laboratory equipped with 32 computers. This group used an instructional software program called *phonics*; the phonics software helps learners to learn pronunciation and vocabulary. Through this software, learners can also play vocabulary games. For instance, learners can do super star activity. In this activity, learners are asked questions and their correct answers are recorded in the right answer box. Every time a learner does it, he/she receives a star. If the activity is done without any wrong answers, the learner receives a gold star. If there is a wrong answer, he/she receives a silver star. It is possible for the participants to see the pictures of words, spellings of words and examples in context. Also, it is possible to practice the pronunciation of words via computers. The participants in the CALL group could learn up to thirteen words every session. They also had a regular review of the words taught in the previous session.

The non-CALL group practiced the same vocabulary taught in the CALL group, but they did it in the classroom. The teacher used paper pictures, cassette player, flash cards and other realia to teach vocabulary. Similarly, the participants in the non-CALL group could learn up to thirteen words every session. They also had a review of the words taught in the previous session. Every session, the teacher introduced new words through pictures, wrote the spellings of the words, and practiced them with the participants via a cassette player. The participants had the opportunity to use flashcards in pair group works to reinforce their learning.

Fourth, in order to check their immediate learning, the vocabulary test was administered in both groups after twenty sessions of instructions. Finally, to see the effectiveness of instructions in both groups, 20 days later the same vocabulary test was given to both groups as delayed posttests.

V. Results

In order to compare the performance of CALL-users and non-CALL users in the short term, the means and standard deviations of immediate posttests in the CALL and non-CALL groups were obtained. The descriptive statistics of both groups are reported in Table 1. As the table displays, the mean scores of the CALL and non-CALL groups were 28.80 and 27. 50, respectively, which were rather high since the possible range of vocabulary scores, as stated before, were from 0 to 40. Also, the vocabulary mean scores of both groups were close, indicating that the performances of both groups were not much different. In the same line, the standard deviations and standard errors of means were pretty high, but not much different, indicating that the variance in both groups was similar and vocabulary scores in both groups were widely spread.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CALL AND NON-CALL GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
CALL	32	28.80	6.49	1.14
Non-CALL	29	27.50	5.91	1.09

In order to address the first null hypothesis of the study, stating that CALL-based instruction is not more effective than non-CALL based instruction in the short-term vocabulary learning, an independent *t* test was conducted on the immediate posttest vocabulary mean scores of the CALL and non-CALL groups. As shown in Table 2, the difference between the mean scores was not statistically significant, t (59) = .790, p = .433. The observed t (.790) was small and level of significance was larger than .05.

TABLE 2.
T TEST ON THE IMMEDIATE POSTTEST VOCABULARY MEAN SCORES OF CALL AND NON-CALL GROUPS

Group	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
CALL and Non-CALL	1.26	1.59	.790	59	.433

In order to compare the performance of CALL-users and non-CALL users in the long term, the means and standard deviations of delayed posttests in the CALL and non-CALL groups were obtained. The descriptive statistics of both groups are reported in Table 3. As the table displays, the mean scores of the CALL and non-CALL groups were 24.96 and 24.20, respectively, which were rather high since the vocabulary scores, as stated before, could range from 0 to 40. However, the mean scores of both groups were smaller than the immediate posttest mean scores. Also, the vocabulary mean scores of both groups were not much different, indicating that the performances of both groups were not much different. In the same line, the standard deviations and standard errors of means in the two groups were pretty high, but

not much different from each other, indicating that the variance in both groups was similar and vocabulary scores in both groups were widely spread.

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CALL AND NON-CALL GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
CALL	32	24.96	5.54	.98
Non-CALL	29	24.20	6.42	1.19

In order to address the second null hypothesis of the study, stating that CALL-based instruction is not more effective than non-CALL based instruction in the long-term vocabulary learning, an independent *t* test was conducted on the delayed posttest vocabulary mean scores of the CALL and non-CALL groups. As demonstrated in Table 4, the observed *t* value (.497) was small and level of significance was larger than .05. Thus, the difference between the mean scores was not statistically significant, t (59) = .497, p = .621.

TABLE 4.
T TEST ON THE DELAYED POSTTEST VOCABULARY MEAN SCORES OF CALL AND NON-CALL GROUPS

Group	Mean Difference	Std. Error of Difference	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
CALL and Non-CALL	0.761	1.53	.497	59	.621

In order to address the third null hypothesis of the study, stating that the effect of the CALL-based and non-CALL based instruction in L2 learning is not retained over time, two paired *t* tests were. The first one was run on the immediate and delayed posttest vocabulary mean scores of the CALL group. The second one was run on the immediate and delayed posttest vocabulary mean scores of the non-CALL group. As displayed in Table 5, the observed *t* value in the first test (4.27) was large and level of significance was smaller than .05. Thus, the difference between the mean scores of immediate and delayed posttests in the CALL group (i.e., 3.84) was statistically significant, t (31) = 4.27, $*p < .05$. Similarly, the mean difference between immediate and delayed posttests in the non-CALL group (i.e., 3.34) was found to be significant, t (28) = 5.63, $*p < .05$.

TABLE 5.
T TEST ON THE IMMEDIATE AND DELAYED POSTTEST VOCABULARY MEAN SCORES OF CALL AND NON-CALL GROUPS

	Paired Differences			*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. dev.	Std. Error Mean			
Immediate Posttest- Delayed Posttest (CALL Group)	3.84	5.09	0.90	4.27	31	0.00
Immediate Posttest- Delayed Posttest (Non-CALL Group)	3.34	3.20	0.59	5.63	28	0.00

VI. DISCUSSION

Vocabulary teaching and learning were given little priority in second language programs in the past (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The present research, however, has provided detailed and practical information about utilizing technology, in particular CALL, in the area of L2 vocabulary teaching/learning. Before the instructions (i.e., treatments) in the CALL and non-CALL groups were carried out, the participants of the study did not know the meanings of the words or had very little knowledge of the target words in the vocabulary test, but after the instructions were given to both groups, their knowledge of the target vocabulary improved greatly. This improvement in L2 vocabulary ability was demonstrated through their mean scores of both groups in the immediate posttests (28.80 and 27. 50), which were somehow closer to the maximum score rather than the minimum zero. The above result highlights the major role of the explicit teaching of vocabulary for L2 learners. Vocabulary learning is sometimes left to look after itself and receives only incidental attention in many textbooks and language programs. L2 curricula are often quite specific about aspects of teaching grammar and reading, but little specification is given to the role of vocabulary. The results of this study imply that the status of teaching vocabulary should change and more attention should be given to it. Besides, the above results suggests that both CALL-based and non-CALL based methods can be utilized in developing L2 lexical competence. The decision to select one should be left to other factors such as the competence of language teachers and analysis of situation or context in which a method is used.

Nonetheless, the first research question was formulated to see whether the CALL-based instruction would be more effective than the non-CALL based instruction in the short term vocabulary learning. The results of this study, as reported in Table 2, demonstrated that the performances of the CALL users and non-CALL users on the L2 vocabulary test were not significantly different in the immediate posttests. Thus, the first null hypothesis of the study is not rejected. This finding indicates that both CALL-based and non-CALL based methods significantly improved their L2 lexical knowledge in the short run. The above result suggests that computers can be used along with other traditional techniques to foster young L2 learners' lexical competence. The idea of sitting down on a chair and keeping the attention focused to a person or to a book is sometimes boring when it comes to children, so applying CALL in L2

vocabulary learning plays an important role to solve this problem. However, there should not be exaggeration about the application of CALL in L2 learning. CALL can be used as an alternative classroom instructional tool. However, we should not expect great changes through implementing CALL, as compared with the traditional method of teaching vocabulary. By implication, when possible, L2 teachers can make use of computers in fostering young learners' lexical competence and adding variety to classroom activities, but when such facilities are not available, as it is often the case in Iran, they can still rely on the conventional method of using picture, cassette players, flashcards and other realia to teach vocabulary to young language learners.

Concerning the use of computers in L2 vocabulary learning, the results obtained in this study are not in agreement with the results obtained by Ghabanchi and Anbarestani (2008) and Licencjacka and Filologia (2007). In Ghabanchi and Anbarestani's study, the CALL-users used computerized facilities at home to practice and find the definitions of newly taught words, but the non-CALL users followed traditional approaches such as using desktop dictionaries to find the meanings of new words and memorizing a bilingual list of new words. The results of their study showed that the non-CALL users performed better on the immediate vocabulary test. Also, in Licencjacka and Filologia's study, the control group was asked to study a series of adjectives within a period of seven days without any access to computers, but the experimental group was given access to the words processing application and the opportunity to learn the new lexicon via computers in seven days. The results of the study showed that the superiority of the experimental group in learning adjectives. It seems that the type of CALL, proficiency and the age of learners might play a role in obtaining different results. Unlike their study, the current study used *Phoni*cs with the young elementary EFL learners. Meanwhile, a CALL-based method was used in the present study to teach the concrete words. Thus, the type of words the study is concerned with might be another reason for inconsistency of results.

On the other hand, the results obtain in the present study support the results obtained by Getkham (2004). This researcher compared the vocabulary performance of two groups of students: One group used a multimedia computer program and the other one used traditional printed texts. Results indicated that both groups improved their vocabulary knowledge after the instructions. Similarly, the young second graders in Aist's (2002) study had the same performance when used computer-assisted oral reading and human-assisted oral reading to learn vocabulary. That is, the participants' performance was not significantly different when they used the computer program and traditional method to help to learn word meanings in reading.

The second question of the research was formulated to see whether CALL-based instruction would be more effective than non-CALL based instruction in the long-term vocabulary learning. The results of this study, as reported in Table 3, demonstrated that the performances of the CALL users and non-CALL users on the L2 vocabulary test were not significantly different in the delayed posttests. Thus, the second null hypothesis of the study is not rejected. This finding indicates that both CALL-based and non-CALL based methods significantly improved their L2 lexical knowledge in the long run, given that the participants had little knowledge of the target words before the treatments of the study (i.e., instructions) were carried out. Meanwhile, the mean scores of both groups, as displayed in Table 3, decreased from the immediate posttests to the delayed posttests. This suggests that some forgetting, as expected, took place. However, the decrease in the mean scores was observed in both CALL and non-CALL groups. Hence, no significant difference in the mean scores of both groups in the delayed posttests was observed. Getkham (2004), who compared the vocabulary performance of those using a multimedia computer program and those using traditional printed texts, reported that both groups forgot some words after some time in the delayed posttests. However, contrary to the above results, his findings indicated the degree of forgetting vocabulary in the group which used the multimedia computer program was less than that of the group which used printed texts.

The third question of the research was posed to see whether the effect of CALL-based and non-CALL based instructions would be retained after a period of time. The results of this study, as reported in Table 5, demonstrated that the mean differences between the immediate and delayed posttests was large enough in both CALL and non-CALL groups. The mean scores decreased significantly from the immediate to delayed posttests. That is, the performance of both groups was lower in the delayed posttests, compared with the immediate posttests. This indicates that the effect of CALL and non-CALL based methods was not retained over time. The results obtained in the present study do not support the findings of Ghabanchi and Anbarestani's (2008) study. They investigated whether CALL programs would have any effect on the long-term retention in vocabulary learning. They found out that in the immediate vocabulary posttests, the control group (i.e., non-CALL users) had a higher mean and lower standard deviation in comparison with the experimental group (i.e., CALL-users), but in the delayed posttest, there was a significant decrease in the mean of control group. In other words, the participants who had used CALL programs had a better performance in the delayed posttests. That is, they had an intensive mental processing, which resulted in long-term recall of words. The contradictory results might be due to the type of computer programs used in various studies. The language learner variable can be another factor affecting the inconsistent results about long-term vocabulary learning. As stated before, the participants in the current study, unlike the above studies, were young and had low level of proficiency. Besides, the time interval between immediate posttests and delayed posttests vary from one study to another study. The time interval was 20 days in this study while it was 30 days in Getkham's (2004) study.

The above issue suggests the need for more research before any strong claim is made about the effect of CALL-based and non-CALL based methods in the long-term language learning. Besides, the results of this study imply that

vocabulary learning is a long and continuous process which needs reinforcement and practice. If EFL learners do not pay attention to this aspect of language throughout their language courses, their vocabulary performance will get worse over time. L2 teachers, learners and materials developers should use or advocate a sound method to develop lexical competence. According to the results of this study, this method for young EFL learners in Iran can be either a CALL-based one, which is in line with the fast pace of technology and generates motivation among EFL learners to improve their lexical knowledge, or a non-CALL based one, which is legitimate to use in contexts where CALL is not applicable. Both methods, however, have short-term effects on lexical competence. What seems to more guarantee success in vocabulary learning is how long or how much the above methods can sustain L2 learners in vocabulary learning. Short-term intensive vocabulary teaching courses, which are advertised by some language institutes, are not recommended. Rather, what the results of this study make us recommend is long-term programs for vocabulary learning which are juxtaposed with other language skill courses so that the transition from dependent to independent learning gradually takes place in the long process of L2 vocabulary learning.

VII. Conclusion

Learning vocabulary in a foreign language is not an easy task, especially for beginning. It seems that using a sound method for teaching/learning vocabulary is indispensible. The use of multimedia technology and, in particular, CALL has recently inspired some research in the various area of vocabulary teaching/learning. In light of these views, this research put CALL under spotlight to see whether it would have potential to improve the lexical competence of EFL learners who were at the elementary level of proficiency. More specifically, it explored the effectiveness of two methods (i.e., CALL-based and non-CALL based) to teach English vocabulary to low level Iranian EFL learners. The results demonstrated that both CALL and non-CALL users benefited from the above methods in the short and long-term learning of English vocabulary; both methods had the potential to actively engage the EFL Learners in learning English vocabulary. In addition, the performances of the two groups on vocabulary were not significantly different both in the short and longer period of time. However, both groups exhibited a lower performance on the vocabulary test in the delayed posttest in comparison with the immediate posttest, indicating that the effect of instructions was not retained over time. By implication, L2 teachers should not let technological revolution pass by without using it to serve their vocabulary teaching goals whenever possible. Both CALL and non-CALL based methods can be effectively implemented in EFL classrooms if the need arises. More important, CALL or non-CALL approach should develop students into motivated, independent, reflective, strategic, confident, and competent lifetime learners of vocabulary.

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A Cross-linguistic Study on Expressions of Gratitude by Native and Non-native English Speakers

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***Abstract*—This paper attempts to investigate whether advanced ESL and EFL learners are able to express gratitude appropriately in different situations and whether there exists any difference in expressing gratitude among speakers from various language and cultural background. The participant in this study were ten 6 native-English speakers who were born and raised in the United States, and ten 10 Filipinos who were ESL learners, and 28 EFL learners with Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, and Japanese background who have lived in the Philippines at least one year. The written data from native and non-native speakers were coded and analyzed. It is concluded by the result of the study that native speakers' expression of gratitude is appropriately a speech act set. On the other hand, non-native speakers' data showed that advanced-level non-native learners of English, to some extent, have difficulty in expressing gratitude successfully. The reason of the failure is fully discussed in this study.**

***Index Terms*—expressions of gratitude, native and non-native English speakers, ESL learners, EFL learners**

I. Introduction

What is the worth of saying "Thank you"? It is priceless when it is said in sincerity. The magic power of a simple expression of gratitude has almost limitless potentials. Expressing appreciation to those who do things for you is also a way to make people happy. Expressions of gratitude can be a happy experience for both the giver and receiver. Expressing gratitude is a language function that has important social value in American English (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986, p.165). They noted that the mark of the importance was that adults in western countries spent a lot of time and effort in teaching gratitude to small children how and when to thank others. Failure to express gratitude adequately can sometimes result in ruining the relationship of speaker and listener.

Because of the high social value of the expression of gratitude, it is important for non-native speakers (NNSs) of English express the function adequately. The author expected advanced-level non-native speakers who have learned English as Second Language (ESL) or those who have learned English as Foreign Language (EFL) for quite long time and have already lived in ESL country at least one year would express gratitude quite adequately. The purpose of the paper is to investigate whether advanced ESL learners and EFL learners are able to express gratitude appropriately in different situation and whether there exists any difference in expressing gratitude among speakers from a variety of linguistic and cultural background.

Some researchers have been investigated both across cultural groups and among speakers of American. Searle (1969) defined thanking as and illocutionary act performed by a speaker which is based on a past act performed by the hearer (Searle, 1969, cited in Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986, p.165). Leech (1983) investigated thanking from a more socially oriented perspective. Leech describes thanking as a 'convivial function' whose illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal of establishing and maintaining a polite and friendly social atmosphere (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986, p.166).

In addition to the theoretical approach to describing thinking, some empirical studies also conducted by researchers. Grief and Gleason (1980) conducted a laboratory study which suggested that sex differences might influence the frequency with which thanks were given. They found out that women were more likely to thank than men under laboratory conditions (Wolfson, 1989, p.103).

Coulmas (1981) has reported study conducted in Europe and Japan. He made the point that both thanking and apologizing are linked to the notion of indebtedness, through gratitude and regret respectively. He noted that in Japanese culture, the concept of gifts and favors focuses on the trouble they have caused the benefactor rather than the aspects which are pleasing to the recipient. Rubin's (1983) empirical study conducted in Hawaii in which she and her students gathered natural data on use of the words 'thank you' from a range of people and a variety of situations reported than 'thank you' can refer not only to gratitude but also to other language functions, such as complimenting of signaling the conclusion of a conversation. One of the most common forms of 'thank' she referred to was what she called 'bald' thank you -- a quick, almost automatic thanks -- typical of service encounters. The study also found out expressions of appreciation were longer and more embellished either when the giver had apparently invested a large

amount of time, money, or effort, or when the recipient felt that the action had been especially helpful.

The most comprehensive studies in this area have been conducted by Eisenstein and Bodman in 1986 (Wolfson, 1989, p.102). Eisenstein & Bodman (1986) looked at 7 different situations out of 14, administered first to 56 native speakers (NSs) and then revised and administered to 67 non-native speakers (NNSs) from five countries. The study found native speakers to show consistent use of expressions of gratitude within specifically defined contexts, often in the form of speech act sets. In addition, Eisenstein & Bodman (1995) has pointed out that expressing gratitude is a complex act, potentially involving both positive as well as negative feelings on the part of the giver and receiver. They noted that thanking is a face-threatening act in which the speaker acknowledges a debt to the hearer – thus threatening the speaker's negative face. Thus the very nature of thanking, which can engender feelings of warmth and solidarity among interlocutors, stands as well to threaten negative face (a desire to be unimpeded in one's actions). They concluded that expressing gratitude involves a complex series of interactions and encodes cultural values and customs.

Ferrara's (1994) report on two studies suggested that the Americans tended to use thanks where a quasi-apology form was the preferred token by Japanese. When a professor is given a small gift, Americans chose to give thanks whereas Japanese would apologize for being unworthy. The study offered the recommendation of more overt instruction in cultural differences.

Hinkel (1994) has reviewed several cultural differences in the implications of expressing thanks, e.g., in South and East Asian languages. Hinkel found that in some languages expression of thanks implies social indebtedness that is not connoted by a thank-you in Chinese or English. In some Arabic cultures, certain forms of thanking establish a social debt while others do not. Gender differences exist as well, e.g., in Hispanic countries (p.75-76). Knowledge of how to say thanks in a second language does not necessarily translate into knowledge of *when* a statement of thanks is appropriate (p.73-74). To examine NNSs'use of thanking with respect to NSs' norms in English, a study was conducted with 233 graduate and undergraduate students at Ohio State University, with 1 to 5 years of residence in the U.S. The study suggested that NNSs who have resided in the U.S. for long periods still may not render a thank-you appropriately (p.83-84). The implication for teaching is that appropriate pragmatic use of thanks and other speech acts must be explicitly taught and is not acquired incidentally. This begins with making NNSs aware of the implications of their non-native-like productions. NNSs can also learn from observing NSs offering thanks and taking note of what is said in what contexts. While the pragmatics of thanking are quite complex, their relative linguistic simplicity allows them to be presented at intermediate, as opposed to advanced, levels of language learning (p.84-85).

Ide (1998) has examined the social and metapragmatic functions of *sumimasen* (Japanese: 'there is no end' or 'it is not enough'), a conventional expression of apology in Japanese that is also used to express the feeling of thanks. This paper first describes seven pragmatic functions of *sumimasen* based on 51 instances of *sumimasen* recorded through ethnographic participant/non-participant observations of discourse in an ophthalmology clinic in Tokyo. The professionals were two female doctors, a female nurse, and a female receptionist. Fifty-eight patients participated, males and females of many ages. The seven functions were: 1) a sincere apology, 2) quasi-thanks and apology, 3) a request marker, 4) an attention-getter, 5) a leave-taking devise, 6) an affirmative and confirmational response, and 7) a reciprocal exchange of acknowledgment (as a ritualized formulas to facilitate public face-to-face communication). These seven functions are presented not as mutually exclusive but rather as overlapping concepts, ranging from remedial, remedial and supportive, to supportive in discourse. The author also cites Kumatoridani (1999), Coulmas (1981), and others to account for the concept of indebtedness that emerges from the shift of point of view from the speaker to the listener. The paper also demonstrates the exchange of *sumimasen* as a metapragmatic ritual activity, an anticipated and habitual behavior in public discourse in Japanese society.

Kim (1994) used a questionnaire to survey 20 native speakers of Japanese in their 20's to 30's (younger generation) in comparison with another 20 in their 50's to 60's (older generation) regarding their use of apologizing and thanking expressions. The frequency of the expressions and intensifiers (adverbials such as *doumo, taihen, hontouni, makotoni*) were analyzed in terms of: the semantic categories (apology, or thanks, although sometimes combined), magnitude of thanks and apology, and status of the interlocutors. Among the younger speakers, the prototypical expressions of thanks were variants of *arigatou*, whereas typical apology expressions (variants of *gomen, sumanai*, and *moushiwake nai*) were sometimes used for thanks as well. The larger the magnitude of thanks/apology was and the older the hearer was than the speaker, the more intensifiers were likely to be used and apologetic expressions were preferred (rather than pure expressions of thanks like variants of *arigatou*).

Takashi Naito, Janjira Wangwan, Motoko Tani (2005) surveyed 212 university students in Japan and 284 university students in Thailand, using a multiaspect questionnaire that was designed to investigate cultural similarities and differences in gratitude. The questionnaire included the items involved in hypothetical helping situations: (a) perceived gains of recipients, cost to benefactors, and obligation to help as antecedent variables of gratitude; (b) both positive feelings of gratitude and feelings of indebtedness; and (c) requital to benefactors and increased prosocial motivation of recipients as an outcome of gratitude. In both Japanese and Thai students, positive feelings co-related with facial and verbal expressions of gratitude and increased prosocial motivation. However, the variable of feelings of indebtedness was positively related to increased prosocial motivation only in Japanese male students

The work done so far has provided us with valuable and unexpected information, stimulating our interest in the ways of expressing and responding to thanks by native speakers and non-native speakers of English.

To sum up, there are many factors that are related to the expression of gratitude by speakers from a variety of language backgrounds. The goal of this present paper is to investigate a variety of factors that influence the expression of gratitude by speakers of native and non-native speakers of English. This paper collected qualitative data from native and non-native speakers: (1) to see how this speech act is realized by them; (2) to explore whether they express gratitude differently in the same situation; (3) to investigate whether advanced ESL and EFL learners are able to approximate native English-speaking norms in expressing gratitude; (4) to determine if the gender is one of the factors which may effect the way the gratitude is expressed.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participant of the study were six native-English speakers who were born and raised in the United States, and ten Filipinos who were ESL learners, and ten Chinese, ten Koreans, six Indonesian, and two Japanese, who have lived in the Philippines more than one year. The native speakers were all the members of an Institute of Linguistics in the Philippines. The non-native speakers were all advanced-level ESL and EFL learners of graduate students at the universities in the Philippines. The ten Filipino ESL learners all announced that they were exposed to English since they were born or from kindergarten. And all of the EFL learners said that they started learning English from junior high school and had been exposed to English setting one to two years (See TABEL I).

TABLE I:
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON NATIONAL GROUPS

	YLE		*YIP*	
	Range	*Average*	*Range*	*Average*
Chinese	11 to 25years	18.3years	4months to 1.6years	1.3years
Korean	7 to 21years	13.5years	2months to 5years	2.6years
Indonesian	17 to 28years	20.8years	1.4years to 3years	2years
Japanese	9 to 17years	13years	2months to 2.5years	1.4years

YLE: years of learning English; YIP: years in the Philippines

As advanced English learners, the ESL and EFL participants have learned how to express gratitude appropriately in English.

B. Framework of Analysis

The author modified the questionnaire which was developed by Eisenstein and Bodman (1986). Among the twenty-five situations, The author only chose seven situations which can arouse the most detailed, varied, and sincere responses, not those situations which can raise the response what Rubin (1983) called the 'bald' thank you.

The author presented the situations in written form to the participants and asked them to write what they would say orally if they were in these situations. I also asked them to write as much or as little as they want to say to made it as natural as possible. In addition, the participants were asked to fill out the Profile Sheet which includes information about their demographic data and the norm of expressing gratitude (verbal or nonverbal) in their own language setting. It was helpful to investigate the variables which might influence their way of expressing thanks. After the participants filled out the questionnaires, follow-up interviews were conducted by the author. It was helpful to obtain more useful information which might not be included in the questionnaire.

This approach has distinct disadvantages. First, since the participants have enough time to write down their possibly best answers, the response may not be as natural as oral response. However, Eisenstein & Bodman (1995) found that the role plays contained the same words and semantic formulas as in the written data, confirming that the written data were representative of oral language use as well. Secondly, this written response did not allow for nonverbal cues and prosodic features which could soften the response, like tone, facial expression, or other body movement. Thus, the Profile Sheet of the participant and the follow-up interviews could make up the limitation to an extent.

In order to investigate whether ESL and EFL learners are able to approximate native English-speaking norm in expressing gratitude, the author modified the rating scale developed by Eisenstein & Bodman (1986). Thomas (1983), after having analyzed the range of errors in the speech of second language learners, proposed a distinction between instances of pragma-linguistic failure (errors resulting from non-native speakers knowing the correct thing to say, not knowing how to say it correctly) and socio-pragmatic failure (errors resulting from non-native speakers not knowing what to say or not saying the appropriate thing as a result of transferring incongruent social rules, values and belief systems from their native language and cultures). Considering these failures and with the native speakers' data as a basis for comparison, Eisenstein & Bodman (1986, p.172) had developed six rating scale to code the responses of the non-native participants: *not acceptable*, *problematic*, *acceptable*, *native-like/perfect*, *not comprehensible*, and *resistant*.

Since the scales are not mutually excusive and there was not resistant (refusing to answer) in my data, I applied the three rating scales: (1) NATIVE-LIKE (close to native in content and lexicon, with minimal or no grammatical problems) (2) ACCEPTABLE (clear and appropriate, but with a small error or errors) (3) NOT ACCEPTABLE (a violation of a social norm; with errors that might cause misunderstanding; you couldn't make sense of it, if you didn't look at the response for awhile). I invited one native speaker of American English as the inter-rater[1] to investigate the acceptability of ESL

and EFL students' expression gratitude.

C. Units of Analysis

According to Rubin (1983) expressions of appreciation were longer and more embellished either when the giver had apparently invested a large amount of time, money, or effort, or when the recipient felt that the action had been especially helpful. And Grief and Gleason's (1980) laboratory study suggested that sex differences might influence the frequency with which thanks were given.

In order to investigate the relationship between the length of the expression and the variables like, time, money, effort and gender, we need a unit of analyzing the data. Considering the fact that each expression conveys separate and independent ideas, I thought of analyzing the data per *idea unit*. An idea unit as defined by Kroll (1977) is chunk of information which is viewed by the speaker/writer cohesively as it is given a surface form…related… to psychological reality for the encoder (Kroll, 1977).

Kroll (1977) characterized an idea unit as containing the following criteria: (1) the subject and verb is counted as one idea with the presence of a direct object, prepositional phrase, adverbial element, or mark of subordination; (2) full relative clauses are counted as one idea unit when the relative pronoun is present; (3) phrases which occurred in sentence initial position followed by a comma or which is set off from the sentence with commas are counted as separate idea units; (4) verbs whose structure requires or allows a verbal element as object are counted with both verbal elements is counted as one idea unit; (5) reduced clauses in which a subordinator was followed by a non-finite verb element are counted as one idea unit; (6) post nominal *–ing* phrases used as modifiers counted as one unit; (7) other types elements counted as idea units are absolutes, appositives, and verbal.

III. Result

Formulas of Expressing Gratitude

1. Data for Native Speakers

Looking at the data of native-speakers, we can find that the expression of gratitude is appropriately a speech act set. In addition to expressing the simple function of thanking (*Thank you so much*), they regularly expected other functions such as complimenting (Y*ou made just the perfect choice*), reassuring (*Blue is one of my favorite colors*), promising to repay (*I'll try to repay you as soon as I can*), expressing surprise and delight (*Wow! Wonderful!*), expressing a lack of necessity of obligation (*You should not have taken time to do that*), expressing a desire to continue the relationship (*I'll be in touch soon and would like you to come to my place some time)*. These groups of functions were consistent with the findings of Eisenstein & Bodman (1986), which they noted as the combination of forming the higher-level speech act set of expressing gratitude (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986. p.171). Depending on the situation, the formulas ranges in length from one function (expressing thanks - e.g. *thanks*) to five functions (expressing surprise+expressing delight+complimenting the object+expressing pleasure+complimenting the giver+expressing the preference - e.g. *Wow! Wonderful! My favorite color too. How did you know my favorite color? And a sweater too. Just what I need for this cold weather*.).

2. Data for Non-native Speakers

Expectedly, these five functions (expressing surprise+thanking+expressing pleasure+complimenting+expressing a desire to continue the relationship or repay the favor) could be easily found in ESL and EFL data. For example,

Oh, *thank you so much. I promise I'll pay you back on Monday*. (Filipino data)

It's very beautiful. I like the color very much. Thank you very much. (Chinese data)

Oh! Thank you, but you don't need to do. (Korean data)

Thank you so much for inviting me. The meal was wonderful, and I really had a great time. Good night! (Indonesian data)

Thank you very much. I'm very happy. I'm looking forward the farewell party for me. (Japanese data)

An interesting finding in Filipino data was that many participants used exaggerations to emphasize the depth of their gratitude, like "*You are a lifesaver", "There's nothing as satisfying as getting a free real good meal. Thank you so much for the real good meal*", and "*Oh my, you shouldn't have. I don't like being the center of 'distraction' but thanks anyways. Let's go*". Such expressions were also found in native speakers' data in Eisenstein & Bodman (1986). And such expressions as "*You are a blessing*", "*You are my angel today"* were also found only in Filipino dada, which has a religious undertone.

Another finding from the ESL and EFL data was that they all contained expressions of indebtedness except for Indonesian data. We can see that expressing indebtedness is also a way to express gratitude in some languages, especially in the situations which is needed to show sincere thanks. For example,

Thank you so much. I owe you a lot. You are my angel today. (Filipino data: 100peso)

Thank you. I know a friend in need is a friend in deed. You are real my friend. I'll remember you for my whole life. You help me a lot. (Chinese data: 10,000peso)

Really? Thank you! I didn't expect that. I never forget your kindness. (Korean data: Farewell)

I'm sorry to put you to a lot of trouble. I'll pay back soon without fail. Thank you very much. (Japanese: 10,000peso)

The data in Japanese showed the quasi-apologetic thanks. It is caused by their native language and cultural. In

Japanese culture, the indebtedness implies an expression of gratitude. And the participant from Japan said it is generally acceptable to use expression of indebtedness to show sincere thanks to the giver.

3. Number of Idea Unit

As previously talked about, expressions of appreciation were longer and more embellished either when the giver had apparently invested a large amount of time, money, or effort, or when the recipient felt that the action had been especially helpful (Rubin, 1983). And gender differences might also influence the frequency of expression of gratitude (Grief & Gleason's, 1980). In order to investigate the relationship between the length of the expression and the variables like, time, money, effort and gender, the data was analyzed by means of *idea unit*.

The data from Japanese speakers were excluded in this analysis because the only two participants were both female. The gender of non-native participants in each language groups was not even. However, we could still get some suggestive understanding through the following analyses.

As can be seen in TABLE II, the average number of idea unit ranged from 1.82 (100 peso) to 3.06 (Sweater) depending on the situation. Obviously, the situations which made the receiver fell especially indebted or surprised produced a more lengthy speech act set. 10,000 peso situation (2.8) has apparently more lengthy number of idea unit than 100 peso situation (1.82).

Data for native speakers didn't show the gender differences. They equally produced the same speech act set. The data for the rest of the language groups, to an extent, suggested gender differences. The data for non-native speakers showed that the number of idea unit produced by female participants were higher than those of male participants in each language groups. It suggested that generally women are more likely to express thanks than man.

TABLE II:
NUMBER OF IDEA UNIT

Participants \ Prompt		1 100peso	2 Sweater	3 Raise	4 10,000peso	5 Lunch	6 Party	7 Dinner	Average/ person
Native	Total(6)	2.2	3.5	3	3	2.5	2.7	3.3	**2.9**
Filipino	Total(10)	2	3	2.9	2.7	2.2	2	2.3	**2.4**
Chinese	Total(10)	2	3.2	2.2	3.1	1.7	2.3	2.8	**2.5**
Korean	Total(10)	1.7	2.3	1.9	2.5	2.4	2	2.3	**2.2**
Indonesian	Total(6)	1.2	3.3	2	2.5	1.8	2.5	2	**2.2**
	Average / situation	**1.82**	**3.06**	**2.4**	**2.8**	**2.1**	**2.3**	**2.54**	

Another finding from the analysis was that, looking at the average number of the idea unit produced per person, the native speakers' data (2.9) was higher than the data from the rest of the language groups (Finipino-2.4; Chinese-2.5; Korean-2.2; Indonesian-2.2) all situation of the native speaker. During the interview, most of the participants of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese language backgrounds complained about their limit of vocabulary to express properly in the situation. It suggested that limitation of vocabulary might influence the length of the expression of gratitude.

4. Acceptability

The response of non-native speakers was coded according to the three rating scales: (1) NATIVE-LIKE (close to native in content and lexicon, with minimal or no grammatical problems) (2) ACCEPTABLE (clear and appropriate, but with a small error or errors) (3) NOT ACCEPTABLE (a violation of a social norm; with errors that might cause misunderstanding; you couldn't make sense of it, if you didn't look at the response for awhile).

Table 3 shows the percentages of participants scoring NATIVE-LIKE, ACCEPTABLE, and NOT ACCEPTABLE among four language groups. Filipino participants, as ESL learners, performed best of all the non-native language groups (80% of NATIVE LIKE). Their responses were much more native-like than the other groups. However, they also had 4.3% of responses rated as NON ACCEPTABLE. Looking at those responses, they all violated social norm, especially threaten the positive face of the givers. For example,

This is the Philippines. Where am I going to use a sweater. Thank you though. (Filipino data: Sweater)

No, I don't think so. (Filipino data: 10,000 peso)

I don't think it necessary. (Filipino data: Farewell)

These are not accurate conventionalized expression of gratitude, which will be considered over-aggressive and abrupt.

The Korean responses were rated as the lowest (55.7%) in terms of the NATIVE-LIKE, and the highest (5.7%) in terms of NOT ACCEPTABLE. In addition to a violation of a social norm, syntactic and lexical problems appeared in the data. For example,

You shouldn't do that! I'm honor to hear that. (Korean data: Raise)

I am feeling flattered for being praised by you. (Korean data: Raise)

Thank you for dinner. I'll buy you next time. Don't waste your money next time. Here is too expensive. (Korean data: Lunch)

I had such a wonderful time. I'm looking forward to you soon! (Korean data: Dinner)

These pragma-linguistic failure as well as socio-pragmatic failure appeared in the responses of all the advanced-level ESL and EFL learners. The syntactic and lexical problems were more significant. For example,

I'm sorry to put you to a lot of trouble. (influence of native language and culture)

I'm full. It is the biggest meal I have ever had. (influence of native language and culture)
I can't take it. It's good for me and for you. I know your mind. (influence of native language and culture)
Thank you. I'll return you next Monday. (preposition)
Thank you. I return it to you tomorrow. (tense)
You know I really want a sweater such this one. (misused idiom)
Thanks, the dishes are really delicious. (plural form)
It's really nice sweater. (article)
I am deeply greateful. (choice of words or misspelling)
I had a very very nice meal. (superabundance)
I'll pay you back on Monday without fail. (transform from L1)

It suggested that even advanced-level learners are not often able to use the conventional expressions of English appropriately without syntactic errors.

TABEL III:
RESULTS OF ACCEPTABILITY

Language background	Not acceptable	Acceptable	Native-like
Filipino (10)	3 (4.3%)	11 (15.7%)	56 (80%)
Chinese (10)	0 (0%)	30 (42.9%)	40 (57.1%)
Korean (10)	4 (5.7%)	27 (38.6%)	39 (55.7%)
Indonesian (6)	0 (0%)	15 (35.7%)	27 (64.3%)

IV. Discussion

Culture consists of all the shared products of human society. This means not only such material things as cities, organizations and schools, but also non-material things such as ideas, customs, family patterns, languages. The term 'culture' generally refers to the total pattern of beliefs, customs, institutions, objects, and techniques that characterize the life of a human community.

Language is intimately tied to man's feelings and activity. It is bound up with nationality, religion, and the feeling of self. So language is a part of culture and plays a very important role in the society. Some social scientists consider it the keystone of culture. Without language, they maintain, culture would not be possible. On the other hand, language is influenced and shaped by culture; it reflects culture. In the broadest sense, language is the symbolic representation of a people, and it comprises their historical and cultural backgrounds as well as their approach to life and their ways of living and thinking.

There are many differences in language and culture among different language groups. For example, between Chinese and native speakers of English, there are many differences in language and culture, such as language, manners of dress, conduct in public, eating habits and so on.

And there are differences of national origin, class, geographical region, occupation, age and sex. However, there are certain attitudes and ideas, certain culturally prescribed rules of behavior that seem to be accepted by most Americans and Englishmen, certain ways of social interaction that are generally observed.

Turing to China, the problem is similar. Chinese language and culture have their local variations. Both Chinese and English have expressions for gratitude, for example, '*xiexie*' in Chinese and '*Thank you*' in English. On the whole, they are quite similar and present no problem. However, even among these there are certain differences.

Thank you is used more widely than the Chinese *xiexie*. For minor favors like borrowing a pencil, asking directions, requesting someone to pass on a message, calling a person to the telephone, etc, such polite expressions are often omitted by Chinese, especially among close friends and members of the family. The more frequent use of *Thank you* by Westerners is often regarded as unnecessary and even tiresome by many Chinese. On the other hand, the Chinese attitude - that appreciation is understood and need not be expressed - is sometimes taken for rudeness or lack of consideration by Westerners.

Compared to the speakers of English and many other languages tend to rely on a limited set of fixed expressions for everyday spoken pleasantries, such as *Thank you*, Koreans like Chinese also use the equivalent of the expressions much less, preferring instead a wider variety of phrases depending on the specific situation. If you go around saying *Kamsahamnida* (Korean, meaning *thank you*) for every little thing to Korean people in Korean, it seems really funny and strange. Other ways of expressing thanks are more appropriate in many situations. For example, when someone has done some work for you, you say, *Sugohasyesmnida* ('You have taken much trouble'), if someone has treated you to a meal, you say, *Zalmogosunida* ('I am full' or 'I've eaten well').

And when you leaving a dinner in a Japanese home we might say, *O-jama itashimashita* 'I have intruded on you.' The response, *Iie, iie, do itashimashite* 'No, no, don't mention it', is a responder for both apologies and thanks. As Coulmas (1981) noted that *sumimasen* 'Thank you' or 'I'm sorry' tends to be appropriate for a host of occasions. It is noted that in Japan the gratitude is equated with a feeling of guilt. As presented previously, in Japanese culture, the concept of gifts and favors focuses on the trouble they have caused the benefactor rather than the aspects which are pleasing to the recipient. So, the Japanese language has a large range of routine formulae for exhibiting sensitivity to

mutual obligations, responsibilities, and moral indebtedness.

V. Conclusion

The data from native speakers showed that the expression of gratitude is appropriately a speech act set. In addition to expressing the simple function of thanking, they regularly expressed other functions such as complimenting, reassuring, promising to repay, expressing surprise and delight, expressing a lack of necessity of obligation, expressing a desire to continue the relationship. Secondly, native speakers' data showed no function of indebtedness, as had been found in all the rest of non-native speakers' data except for Indonesian data. We can see than showing indebtedness is not a conventional expression of gratitude for the native speakers of English. Thirdly, no gender differences has been found in native speakers' data. Thirdly, native speakers produced lengthy speech act of expressing gratitude than the non-native speakers, which suggested that lack of vocabulary is also a factor of expressing thanks.

Non-native speakers' data showed that advanced-level non-native learners of English to an extent have difficulty in expressing gratitude successfully. The failure mainly caused by the misuse of convention and syntactic errors. Filipino data showed that as advanced ESL learners they can use the conventional everyday expressions of English nearly perfectly. The Chinese, Korean, Indonesian and Korean data showed that, as advanced EFL learners, they had yet difficulty in expressing themselves in a native-like manner. Secondly, non-native speakers' data showed more or less the influence of their native language and culture, for example expressing indebtedness, direct transformation from their native language. Thirdly, non-native speakers' data suggested gender differences in expressing gratitude. It showed that female participants tended to use lengthy expressions than male participants when giving thanks.

The data showed that in all language groups expressions of appreciation were longer and more embellished either when the giver had apparently invested a large amount of time, money, or effort, or when the recipient felt that the action had been especially helpful, which is consistent with the finding in previous study by Rubin (1983).

The giving and receiving of thanks, as well as responding appropriately, are some of the ways that feelings of solidarity can be built. The expression of gratitude has been found to be yet problematic for even advanced ESL and EFL learners. This is because the social norms for thanks giving/receiving are to some extent specific to a culture and a language. The lack of cross-cultural distinctiveness could lead to instances of pragmatic failure.

Learning a foreign language well means more than merely mastering the pronunciation, grammar, words and idioms. It means learning also to see the world as native speakers of that language see it, learning the ways in which their language reflects the ideas, customs, and behavior of their society, learning to understand their language of the mind. Learning a language, in fact, is inseparable from learning its culture.

Social scientists tell us that cultures differ from one another, that each culture is unique. As cultures are diverse, so languages are diverse. Understanding is not always easy. So it is very important to aware the culture differences between languages and the difference between daily conversation is only one part of it. The present study will be of interest and of possible use and helpful to ESL and EFL learners as well as teachers.

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Comprehending a Non-text: A Study of Gender-based Differences in EFL Reading Comprehension

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***Abstract*—The present study investigated the gender-based differences in EFL reading comprehension in the Iranian EFL context. To illuminate the possible effect of background knowledge, the study focused on a non-text. The non-text was followed by 10 reading comprehension questions. Eight questions focused on the antecedent-reference relationship; one question asked for the topic of the text and one for the main idea. A total of 53 intermediate university students took part in the study. They were indicated to be at the intermediate level of reading proficiency after taking a reading comprehension test. The results indicated that males were more successful in constructing the meaning for the non-text in general and in performing on the three types of items in particular. In other words, they were more successful in dealing with a context of ambiguity. It was concluded that readers compensate for the lack of meaning in a text by making themselves activate a possibly related schemata and as such even meaningless texts will carry meaning.**

***Index Terms*—non-text, gender-based differences, schema, reading comprehension**

I. Introduction

Recent models of text comprehension agree on the idea that reading comprehension embraces three components: text, mental representation (world knowledge), and integrated situation model (Prestin, 2008). The reader decodes the words to get a mental representation of the text, but this gives him a superficial understanding of the text. The reader has to integrate the text-based knowledge and world knowledge to get a deeper understanding. This integration is accomplished through building a situation model (e.g. Perfetti, Landi, and Oakhill, 2005). What all these models of reading comprehension suggest is that reading comprehension is an interactive process of making meaning and requires effort on the part of readers (Anderson, 1999; Grabe, & Stoller, 2002; Erten and Razı, 2009). The reader integrates different sources of knowledge to construct a cognitive representation of the text information (Alptekin, 2006; Donin et al., 2004; Ehrlich, 1990; Fukkink et al., 2005; Kintsch, 1998; McNamara, 2001; McNamara & Kintsch, 1996; Salmero´n, Kintsch, & Can˜as, 2006; Van den Broek, Rapp, & Kendeou, 2005; Wei, 2009). However, this cognitive representation may not be realized completely since different factors may distort the comprehension. A number of such factors have been studied in terms of their effect on reading comprehension.

For example, reading comprehension has been studied in terms of its relation to readers' attitude (McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth, 1995; Smith and Wilhelm, 2002), reading strategies (Anderson, 1991; Barnett, 1988; Brantmeier, 2002; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Pearson & Fielding, 1991; Pressley, 2000; Pressley, Wharton-McDonald, Mistretta-Hampston, & Echevarria, 1998; Sarig, 1987; Singhal, 2001;), EFL proficiency (Alderson, 2000; Keshavarz, Atai, and Ahmadi, 2007), and cultural familiarity (Alptekin, 2006; Erten, and Razi, 2009; Johnson, 1981). Among these, the effect of background knowledge (schema) on reading comprehension has received special attention, and a good number of studies have been conducted in this regard. All these studies underline the key role that background knowledge plays in reading comprehension (Afflerbach, 1990a, 1990b; Anderson and Pearson, 1984; Armand, 2001; Bernhardt, 1991; Brantmeier, 2003 & 2004; Carrell, 1987; Carrell, Devine, & Eskey, 1988; Fincher-Kiefer, 1992; Fincher-Kiefer, Post, Greene and Voss, 1988; Grabe, 1991; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Keshavarz, Atai, and Ahmadi, 2007; Koda, 2005, & 2007; Nassaji, 2002; Pressley, 2000; Rumelhart, 1980; Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes, 1991; Van Oostendorp,1991; Voss, Vesonder & Spilich, 1980). It has been mentioned that no other factor influences understanding more than prior knowledge (Alexander and Jetton, 2000). "Prior knowledge, also termed world knowledge or background knowledge, is generally defined as the sum of what a person knows about the content of a text" (Brandao, & Oakhill, 2005, pp. 1-2). It includes whatever readers already know about events, ideas or objects described to them, and influences the meaning that they construct from the text. The importance of the prior knowledge is represented in schema theory of reading (Anderson and Pearson, 1984), which holds that "comprehension occurs when the reader builds up systems of relationships between existing schemas and the information presented in the text" (Kozminsky and

Kozminsky, 2001, p.2).

Prior knowledge is closely related to text coherence (Kintsch, 1994). To construct integrated and coherent text representation, readers should anchor onto their prior knowledge to fill the gaps in the text. "In other words, they need to build links between the text and their prior knowledge to fill in information that is left implicit" (Brandao, & Oakhill, 2005; p.2).

It has also been found that the limited capacity of the working memory may be overloaded by the extra efforts that readers make when reading. Micro-level linguistic features may place so much demand on the readers that not enough resources can be allocated to macro-level textual analysis (Afflerbach, 1990b; Alptekin, 2006). However, the cognitive load can be reduced by activation of the background knowledge (Carrell, 1988; Ellis, 2001; Nassaji, 2002; Pulido, 2004) and hence readers can allocate more attentional space for textual analysis and interpretation of more unfamiliar and newer elements in the text.

An important implication of all these studies is that probably the first factor to explain individual differences in reading comprehension is background knowledge. However, background knowledge is not the only factor that may explain the individual differences in reading comprehension. There are other factors responsible for such differences especially when background knowledge is more or less the same across individuals. One of such factors which has been focused on to explain the extent of success or failure in reading comprehension is gender. The issue of gender-based differences in reading comprehension is depicted in a number of studies. These studies have reached different conclusions, most favoring females, some favoring males and several others indicating no significant difference between genders (Brantmeier, 2001, 2003; Bügel and Buunk, 1996; Carlton and Harris (1992); Cole (1997); Hyde and Linn, 1988; Myers, 2002; Pae, 2004; Rosén, 2001; Yongqi, 2002).

Different explanations have also been put forward for gender differences in reading comprehension. Connell and Gunzelmann (2004) consider the relationship between gender and reading as a complex problem which is influenced by many factors including social, cultural, biological, etc. Brain-based gender differences suggest that boys and girls use different parts of their brain, with each group exhibiting both stronger left-hemisphere and right-hemisphere capacities. The left hemisphere strength of girls favors them in speaking, reading and writing in the early grades whereas the left-hemisphere strength of boys favors them in categorizing and recalling factual information. Girls get the benefit of their right-hemisphere strength in being more empathetic and more understanding and reflective of others' feelings than boys, while boys use their right-hemisphere strength to outperform girls in subjects such as science, math and geography (Connell and Gunzelmann, 2004).

Smith and Wilhelm (2002) explain gender differences based on attitude whereas Brantmeier (2001 &2003) claims that gender and passage content are key variables that are associated with individual differences in L2 reading comprehension.

Similarly, Bügel and Buunk (1996) had formerly found that the topic of text is an important factor explaining gender-based differences in the reading part of the national foreign language examination. Males outperformed females on MC comprehension items for essays about laser thermometers, volcanoes, cars, and football players. Females outperformed males on the comprehension tests for essays on topics such as midwives, a sad story, and a housewife's dilemma.

Pae (2004) found that passage content was not a reliable factor to explain the interaction between gender and performance in reading comprehension, and that item type might provide a better index in this regard. Studying the Korean students taking the Korean National Entrance Exam, Pae found that items classified as Mood/Impression/Tone tended to be easier for females, whereas items classified as Logical Inference were more likely to favor males regardless of item content.

In a review article, Al-Shumaimeri (2005) claimed that most of reading comprehension studies use gender-oriented reading texts and that there was a need for more research on L2/FL reading comprehension using gender-neutral text,; although, some studies like Bügel and Buunk (1996) had formerly indicated a gender-based difference even with neutral texts. They included a gender-neutral text in their study and found that males performed significantly better than females.

Finally, some other studies have related gender differences in reading comprehension to different strategies that readers employ (Abu-Rabia, 2004; Bacon, 1992; Chavez, 2001; Kaylani, 1996; Oxford et al, 1996; Oxford et al, 1993; Sheorey, 1999;).

The review of gender studies indicates controversial findings about gender differences. It also pinpoints the need for more studies to be conducted on gender-neutral text to provide us with a better picture as to the gender differences in reading comprehension. This is because text familiarity has an influential effect on comprehension and may distort the picture presented about gender differences. The present study is an attempt in this regard to fill the gap in gender studies on neutral texts. However, the present study is basically different from the other studies in the sense that a non-text has been used in the study to control for the effect of background knowledge. That is, contrary to other reading comprehension studies, the present study has focused on a non-text created by the researcher to see how different genders react to it.

The study may provide the literature with valuable information concerning the issue of gender differences in reading comprehension since it is carried out in an Iranian EFL context which embraces few studies in this regard. It can

provide information as to whether the gender differences in reading comprehension are transferable across borders. This is what is claimed by Rosen (2001) who found in his study that gender differences existed across different countries with almost consistent pattern of female advantage.

II. Research Questions

This study aimed at investigating the role of gender in EFL reading comprehension. However, as mentioned before, the study utilized a non-text to examine gender differences. The following questions were hence put forward:

1. What is the effect of gender on the students' performance on items focusing on antecedent-reference relationship in a non-text?
2. What is the effect of gender on assigning a topic to a non-text?
3. What is the effect of gender on finding the main idea of a non-text?

III. Method

A. Participants

A total of 53 intermediate university students took part in this study. The majority of the students were female (40 females and 13 males). This is the usual norm in the Iranian universities. Today, most of the Iranian university students in different fields of study are females. Similarly, about 70% of the students majoring in the English Language (TEFL, English Literature, English Translation, and Linguistics) are females. Therefore a balance of males and females, though desirable for statistical analysis, was not possible in the present study as two intact EFL classes (71 students) were selected based on convenience sampling. At first, they took a reading comprehension test based on which 53 were selected as the final sample.

B. Instruments

The English Non-text

A fabricated English non-text was the basic data collection instrument used in the present study (Appendix A). It consisted of 10 separate sentences taken from different texts. These sentences were put together in a way to create a seemingly coherent and cohesive text. Attempt was made to choose the sentences that seemed to make a unified text when put together. That is, it was tried to create a text that was not obviously nonsense; otherwise the participants could guess the research purpose and wouldn't provide any answers and therefore the whole text would be useless. Most of these sentences included a pronoun such as a demonstrative pronoun. Overall, a text of 133 words was made in which 8 pronouns or words were underlined in order for the students to find their appropriate references. Students were also expected to find an appropriate topic for the text, a general concept around which the paragraph revolved, and also to find the main idea of the text. Therefore, overall this non-text was followed by 10 reading comprehension questions, one question asked for the main idea of the text, one asked for the general topic or subject of the text, and 8 others asked for the reference of a particular word or pronoun. All the texts from which sentences were taken came from the textbook "Mosaic II" (by Werner, & Nelson, 2007) which is written for intermediate students. All the sentences were taken from texts that seemed neutral to both genders. This was to reduce any possible effect of the background knowledge although the final product was a non-text.

The reason why such a non-text was created instead of using a real text was to reduce the possible effect of content familiarity or background knowledge.

The non-text was not examined for its difficulty level because first of all it was not a real coherent text and therefore using readability formulae didn't make much sense, and second because the study just aimed at finding the differences in reading comprehension based on gender.

Interview

About 20% of the participants (five males and five females) were randomly selected and interviewed after the test to see how they viewed the non-text. They were randomly selected from among the 53 participants who sat for the reading comprehension test.

C. Data Collection Procedure

The data of this study came from the participants' answers to ten reading comprehension questions of the fabricated text. It took students about 20 minutes to read the text and answer the questions. They were not aware of the purpose of research nor did they know anything about the fact that the text was not a real text or else their reaction to the questions would be different. Complementary data also came from those students interviewed after the test.

D. Data Analysis

The data collected underwent careful analysis. At first the papers were divided into two groups based on gender, and then the answers were carefully analyzed to find any patterns in the answers. All the answers were studied in three categories of the topic (subject), main idea, and antecedent-reference relationship and the frequency of each answer type was calculated and compared to the others.

IV. Results

The results of the study are depicted in Tables 1-3 for reference, topic and main idea respectively. Table 1. depicts the results for the antecedent-reference category. There were eight items in this category. Since all the items were of the same type, the answers to the items were added and summarized as in Table 1. As indicated, males have resorted to exophoric references for only 5.77% of the time. Almost the same is true for females who have used exophoric references 4.69% of the time. In contrast, endophoric reference has been used much more by the participants (92.30% by males and 89.06% by females). That is to say, regardless of their gender, participants have preferred assigning endophoric references to exophoric references. Since the text was mostly incomprehensible and the words had no real references in the text; it's interesting to see that the participants have made themselves find a reference within the text rather than outside the text.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE ANTECEDENT-REFERENCE QUESTIONS

	Male	Female
Endophoric	92.3%	89.06%
Anaphoric	84.60%	83.75%
Cataphoric	7.70%	5.31%
Exophoric	5.77%	4.69%
No answer	1.92%	6.25%

The Table also indicates that, within the endophoric references participants have preferred anaphoric references to cataphoric references.

The last point concerning the reference system as indicated in Table 1 is the row named "no answer". This row indicates the proportion of times that participants were not able to assign any reference to the target term. It is interesting that males were successful for 98.08% of the time. They failed to assign a reference less than 2% of the time. Females, however, were less successful in this regard. The Table indicates that they failed more than 6% of the time. Table 1 indicates that males have slightly excelled females in the use of all types of references and overall they have been more successful in trying to make references for the specified terms.

Table 2 below indicates the results of the study concerning the difference between males and females in applying a topic to the non-text. The participants were told to select a general concept that they thought was the focus of the text or that could stand as the title of the text. It is interesting to note that overall 25% of the female participants could not select a topic for the text. All the males, however, assigned a topic to the text. So the difference that was found between males and females in the previous section concerning assigning appropriate references to the specified words was also noticed in finding a topic. But the difference found in this section is much more noticeable.

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE TOPIC SELECTION

	Male	Female
Taken from the 1st sentence	30.80%	32.50%
Taken from the Last sentence	7.70%	10.00%
Taken from the 1st and last sentence combined	7.70%	00.00%
Others	53.80%	32.50%
No answer	00.00%	25.00%

The Table also indicates that about 30.80% of the males selected the topic from the first sentence of the text. Females, however, have been slightly more dependent on the first sentence as providing them with a topic for the whole text (32.50%). The last sentence of the text was also used as a source of information. Ten percent of females and 7.7% of males relied on this sentence to find a topic for the text. Also 7.7% of the males used a combination of the first and the last sentence as a source for the text topic. Examples of such topics were "society and change" or "children and change" in which the participant had selected a key term from the first sentence and a key term from the last sentence and had presented the combination of them as the text topic. None of the females, however, applied such a procedure. Overall, Table 2 indicates that 42.5% of females have selected the topic from either the first or the last sentence of the text, and only 32.5% preferred other parts of the text as a source for the topic. Males have treated a bit different in this regard. It can be seen in Table 2 that, although more or less the same finding is true for males in selecting the first or the last sentence as the source of topic, most of the males (53.8%) have resorted to other parts of the text to find an appropriate topic for the text. Probably, that's why all the males were able to find a topic whereas 25% of females failed in this regard. This is also confirmed by comparing the last two rows of Table 2.

Table 3 depicts the differences between males and females in terms of selection of a main idea for the non-text. Similar to what they did in finding a topic, 12.5% of females were not able to find a main idea for the text whereas all the males were able to do so. Many females (42.5%) selected the first sentence or a reformulation of it as the main idea and only 7.7 % considered the last sentence as the main idea. In contrast, males preferred the last sentence over the first sentence. Table 3 indicates that15.40% have expressed the first sentence as the main idea whereas 23.10% of males have preferred the last sentence. More or less the same percent of males and females have combined the first and the last sentence to make the main idea of the text. However, by and large, more females have used the first, the last or a

combination of both as the main idea than males (57.5% vs 46.2%). In return more males, almost twice the number of females, have referred to other parts of the text or have used their information of the whole text to write an appropriate main idea for the text. The difference between males and females is quite outstanding in this regard, (53.80% vs 30.00%). This finding is in line with the results found in the previous section about topic selection.

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE MAIN IDEA SELECTION

	Male	Female
Taken from the 1st sentence	15.40 %	42.50 %
Taken from the Last sentence	23.10 %	7.50 %
Taken from the 1st and last combined	7.70 %	7.50 %
Others	53.80 %	30.00 %
No answer	00.00 %	12.50 %

V. Discussion

The present study investigated gender-based differences in EFL reading comprehension. To illuminate the effect of background knowledge, the study focused on a non-text. The non-text was formed through putting together of ten irrelevant sentences, but each sentence was meaningful when considered in isolation. This may mean that the text had some ideas to transfer to students at sentential level but overall as a text it very probably lacked coherence and unity. As a whole, males were found to be more successful in assigning meaning to the incoherent non-text and therefore had a higher comprehension of it. That is, the majority of male students were able to answer most of the reading comprehension questions which were in completion format, whereas females were stuck in some questions and had a lower performance on the test.

In particular, the study indicated that all the males and most of the females were able to find the main idea behind the text and also a topic for the text. As participants were dealing with a non-text, their background text knowledge could be assumed to be zero or very negligible, but the fact that most of the students were able to assign a topic to the non-text or find the main idea behind it means that they have considered the non-text as a coherent text and in turn this means that probably they have activated a particular schema in their mind in assigning meaning to the whole non-text and creating a text instead. "If new information is incomplete, the reader makes inferences on the basis of the selected schema in order to fill in the missing parts" (Al-Shumaimeri, 2005). Evidence from those interviewed confirms this conclusion since most of them stated that the text was strange or complicated to grasp, however, none said it was non-sense (non-text). This is very interesting and could provide evidence for the powerful and of course complicated human ability in comprehending a text. It can be said that no matter how difficult the text is, since no text is more difficult to understand than a non-text, people can make sense of it. This can be justified as meaning does not reside just in the text rather it is constructed by the active participation of the readers in integrating different sources of knowledge. In other words, even if the text is meaningless, human beings try their best to find some meaning in it and activate a related schema. That's why the majority of participants in this study were successful in constructing meaning for the non-text. Of course this calls for more qualitative research in studying the mental process of comprehending a text on the part of males and females.

It is also interesting to note that the first sentence had a key role in activating the students' schema since many had tried to relate the main idea and topic of the text to the first sentence. This may indicate the effect of instruction. The students who took part in this study were basically familiar with the writing structure of English and had passed such courses as "paragraph writing", "advanced writing", and "English grammar". Therefore, they were expected to be familiar with issues like a topic sentence in a paragraph, the concluding sentence, etc. The fact that the appearance of the topic sentence or main idea in the first sentence is more common led many students to select the main idea and the topic of the text from this sentence. Similarly, since the last sentence usually provides the conclusion of a text, this sentence was also considered as a possible good source for the main idea and topic of the text.

The study also indicated that more males felt relaxed in using other parts of the text and not just the first or the last sentence as the possible sources for the main idea and topic (about 53% vs about 32%). Probably that's why all the males were able to assign a topic to the text or find a main idea whereas 25% and 12.5% of females could not do so respectively. This may mean that males are more flexible in their attempt to find a topic for the text. About eight percent of the males presented a combination of the terms in the first and the last sentence as the topic. In contrast females seem to look for pre-specified organization or framework in the text (that e.g. the first or the last sentence of a text usually provides more important information and are the most probable candidates for the topic). This is made clear when we notice that none of the females in this study used a combination of the first and the last line to form the topic. This point could also be confirmed by the results obtained from the items focusing on the antecedent-reference relationship (Table 1). More males anchored on non-common references, namely, exophoric and cataphoric references.

Another point about the present study is that since the non-text was not related to a specific topic, the idea that probably the text content had been more male oriented and therefore had helped males to perform better is not warranted. Of course, some previous studies had indicated that in neutral texts males were better performers in reading comprehension (Bugel and Buunk, 1996). So, one may speculate that a non-text is similar to a neutral text in the sense

that males indicate better performance on non-texts. However, the idea of neutral text is an under-studied area and needs more research before sound conclusions can be made in this regard (Al-Shumaimeri, 2005; Bugel and Buunk, 1996).

The present study also indicated that in general both males and males had a successful performance on referential questions asking for the reference of specific words or pronouns in the text, though again males out-performed females in this area. Most of the participants tended to choose anaphoric references over exophoric references. This is interesting since in spite of the fact that in many cases the references assigned were not in line with the given words in terms of number or gender, and that they had no real references in the text. 19.23% of the references assigned by males and 20% of the references assigned by females were not in agreement with the specified pronouns in terms of number or gender. The participants had preferred to use endophoric references than to rely on or create exaphroic references. Within the endophoric references, males and females indicated the same pattern of choosing anaphoric references over cataphoric references. This is probably due to the fact that the anaphoric reference is more common than the cataphoric reference and in turn endophoric reference is more common than exophoric reference in daily language and especially in written discourse. Therefore students had selected the more common (salient) features in assigning reference to a given word. Many explanations have been put forward in the literature to account for the way we interpret pronoun-reference relationship. For example:

Parallelism: the entity in the same grammatical function in the previous clause is the antecedent. (Arnold 1995a; Caramazza and Gupta 1979; Sheldon 1974).

Subject as default antecedent: the most salient entity is the antecedent and grammatical subject is the most salient position. (Kuno 1976).

First mention as default antecedent: the most salient entity is the antecedent and the first entity in the utterance is the most salient (Gernsbacher & Hargreaves 1988; Stevenson et al. 1994;).

Thematic roles: some thematic roles are more likely to be pronoun antecedents than others (Arnold 1995b; Stevenson et al. 1994).

It seems that the role of saliency is emphasized in some of these explanations. Also the most salient position for the antecedent of a given entity is in the same or preceding clause. This is exactly what found for many of the antecedents in the present study.

Several other explanations may be presented to account for the results of the present study. It can be said that males are more risk takers in performing on language tests. It has been suggested that girls are more reluctant to guess on multiple-choice questions than boys; boys overestimate their likelihood of success and hence take risks unknowingly, for which they are rewarded (Linn, et al. 1987. Similarly, males tend to guess more on multiple-choice exams whereas girls tend to omit the items they are not sure about (Bolger and Kellaghan, 1990). Of course the questions in the present test were in completion format, but it's possible that what Linn, et al. and Bolger and Kellaghan say about boy's risk taking is also true for completion type of items; that is, males do their best to write an answer even if they are not much sure about what they write whereas girls prefer to have a high level of certainty about the right answer. In other words, females tend to be more accurate and prefer everything to be orderly and organized. Lack of organization or framework as such may hinder them from presenting their real abilities. When interviewed for their answers, most of females stated that the text was confusing and that they could not find a good topic for the text, or the main idea behind it, so they preferred to leave it unanswered. Males also expressed the same idea that the text was very confusing. However, they said, they had done their best to find a topic and write their best guess or answer. Girls who had succeeded in finding a topic for the text (two out of five interviewed) also had a similar idea to the boys that they were not much sure but sticked to their best guess. So overall it seems that males are more successful in tolerating or making sense of a non-text.

Still another explanation for the results obtained in this study may come from the test form. In his study of Spanish students, Brantmeier (2003), found that males performed better on the passage about boxing than on the passage about the housewife when the dependent variable was written recall, but males performed worse on the boxing passage than on the housewife passage when the dependent variable was multiple choice question. Hence the effect of test form was indicated to be more important than the effect of content familiarity. Similarly, the fact that only completion items were used in the present study can, at least partly, explain the results. It's possible that a similar study with different test forms provides different results in this regard. Equity concerns would also demand for a mix of different types of assessment instruments (Mazzeo, Schmitt, and Bleistein, 1993)

In line with the test form, item type may also have an important role in interpreting the results of such studies. Anderson et al (1991) found that test items affect how readers interact with the text and hence the type of answers they provide. Alptekin (2006) also found that when items required inference on the part of readers their reliance on the text reduced and they tried to relate the textual content to their reasoning and pragmatic knowledge to have a meaningful mental representation of the text. Pae (2004) also found that items classified as Mood/Impression/Tone tended to be easier for females, whereas items classified as Logical Inference were more likely to favor males regardless of item content. The questions in the present study were of two kinds, some asking the readers to find the topic or the main idea of the text, and some others asking for the reference of some given words. Probably a similar study with other types of questions produces different results.

VI. Conclusion

This study focused on the issue of gender differences in EFL reading comprehension. The study utilized a non-text to see how different genders would react to it. The majority of the participants were successful in making sense of the text or in finding antecedents for the given words or pronouns. It was concluded that no text is completely non-sense and that human beings are able to pull all their linguistic and cognitive resources together to make sense of the most complicated or even meaningless and fabricated texts The results of all the sections especially those related to finding a topic and main idea were very closely related and lent support to the conclusion that males are more successful in dealing with context of ambiguity or in making sense of the non-texts. The study indicated that 25% and 12.5% of females were not able to find any appropriate topic or main idea for the text respectively, whereas all the males, with no exception, were able to find a topic or a main idea for the text. The only case in which males failed to come up with an answer was in assigning references to the specified pronouns or words and even in that case males were still out-performers.

VII. Implications

The present study may help the literature on gender-based differences in reading comprehension by providing information about an under-studied context, Iranian EFL context, and by focusing on a different type of text, a non-text, which may give us new information about gender issues.

The results may also provide some hints, though mostly theoretical, for materials developers to consider and be aware of the gender differences in the selection of appropriate texts for reading comprehension.

Teachers may also benefit from the results. As stated by Brantmeier (2003, p. 10)

Course instructors… cannot change the gender or the background of the learners, but they can provide in-class activities that inform readers of new information they are required to process in the text. An instructor can explain and clarify cultural as well as linguistic meanings that are relevant to the reading experience. Although an instructor cannot teach all the possible instances in which gender-related differences in subject matter may affect comprehension, some of the appropriate cultural schemata that the student lacks can be effectively taught.

In general, one can say that at least teachers who are equipped with the knowledge of gender differences in reading comprehension are more likely to be successful in dealing with those differences when they appear in their reading comprehension classes. They could also be more realistic in assessing their students' reading ability.

The study may also help test constructors. Caution should be employed in using test content and item types which provide us with an assessment as fair as possible. This may mean that we need to rely on different test formats and item types to reduce the bias.

VIII. Limitations of the Study

The findings of the present study should be treated cautiously before one can make any generalizations. First of all, the study is limited due to the small sample used. Although, use was also made of interview to somehow compensate for the sample size; it is, by no means, enough. Further, the study suffers from the fact that only one text with 10 questions was selected to compare the gender differences. This was done because the text was a fabricated one; however, a similar study with more texts and questions would be more informative.

Appendix

Read the following text carefully and fill in the blanks with the appropriate answers. Write only one answer for each question. For question 1, specify a general concept about which the text is talking and for question 2 write the main idea of the text in a sentence.

Society teaches children to act like male or females at a young age. As a matter of fact they are essential. Something that we know for certain is that even the ancients were fascinated by ideas of this. For example, personality traits such as shyness seem to be inherited. The primitive, often brutal, struggle to reach the top is an irresistible challenge to the human need for adventure. This is true of some animals, and it is especially true of human beings. In the last several decades, however, researchers have been so active in this area that we understand more about the mind today than we ever imagined possible. Yet the reason for this gap has little to do with natural ability. Today, change is virtually unavoidable. Some of these changes are radical.

1. The topic of this paragraph is ……..
2. The main idea of this text is ……
3. The word "they" in line 2 refers to ……
4. The word "this" in line 3 refers to ……
5. The word "the top" in line 4 means the top of ……
6. The word "this" in line 5 refers to ……
7. The word "it" in line 5 refers to ……
8. The word "this" in line 7 refers to ……

9. The word “this gap” in line 8 means the gap between …… and …….
10. The word change in line 8 means change of/to ……

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The Relationship between Iranian English Language Learners' Learning Styles and Strategies

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***Abstract*—The present study aimed at finding the degree of relationship between Iranian learners' learning styles and their preferences in using specific language learning strategies. The study was conducted on female EFL learners at the Iran Language Institute (ILI) in advanced levels and also university students of English teaching at Azad University of Mashhad. By employing such instrumentation as the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and also Language Learning Style (LLS) questionnaire the investigator found a significant relationship between learning styles and learning strategies used by the learners. Based on the results it can be concluded that learners scoring higher on the SILL performed better on the LLS, leading to the conclusion that SILL has a significant impact on LLS. Based on the factor analysis it was found out that cognitive, metacognitive, and most of all affective strategies showed a great correlation with the auditory style of learning. Also, metacognitive and most of all memory and social strategies showed a great correlation with the kinesthetic style.**

***Index Terms*—language learning, learning styles, learning strategies, good learners, individual differences**

I. Introduction

Unlike the primeval teaching methodologies, today's methodologies have shifted their stress from the language and teachers to learners and their learning. In traditional classrooms learners typically did not learn how to become better learners on their own. But in modern views that are learner-centred the attempt is to let learners know their own learning style and choose strategies which are more appropriate to them.

Thus, to provide a more efficient teaching situation several concerns about the language learners and their relation with the content, method, and media of the instruction are to be accounted for. In other words, learners must be encouraged and expected to play a more active role in their learning. Several individual characteristics influence learning and performance in an academic setting. Littlewood (1995) argues that although there is one unique way of language development, learners take different pathways due to the individual differences. One of the individual differences includes learning styles.

Furthermore, according to Stern (1992), learning strategy concept is very much dependent on the proposal of learners' cognisant engagement in classroom activities in order to achieve pre-specified goals. Stern defines learning strategies as broadly conceived intentional directions and learning techniques. Language learners use language learning strategies either consciously or unconsciously for information processing and task performance. However, many researchers have described successful language learners and their strategies. One major finding among them is that successful language learners in general use more and better learning strategies than do poorer learners. This result has appeared consistently in L2 learning strategy studies (Stern 1975; Rubin 1975; Hosenfeld 1977; Naiman et al., 1978). These early researchers tended to make lists of strategies presumed to be essential for all good language learners.

II. Review of Literature

A. Language Learning Styles and Their Assessment

Ever since 1970s many factors are identified which account for the learning differences. Research on learning styles is based on the assumption that learners receive information through their senses and prefer some senses over others in specific situations (O'Brien 1989, Oxford and Ehrman, 1988). Usually, students learn more effectively when they learn through their own initiatives. Style refers to individual preferences, and closely relates to the personality and intellectual functioning. Thus, students preferentially take in and process information in different ways: by seeing and hearing, reflecting and acting, reasoning logically and intuitively, and analyzing and visualizing. Accordingly, learning style is a persistent inborn concept which unifies such elements like cognitive, affective, and behavioural (Oxford et al. 1988). According to Shipman and Shipman (1985), at least twenty dimensions of learning styles have been identified. In the following paragraph some of the dimensions will be briefly reviewed.

One of the most widely researched dimensions of learning style is "field independence vs. dependence". Field

independent learners easily separate key details from a complex or confusing background, while their field dependent peers have trouble doing this (Hansen & Stansfield 1981; Chapelle & Roberts, 1986). The Myers-Briggs Type indicator (Myers & McCaulley 1985) contributes four more dimensions to learning style including extraversion vs. introversion, sensing vs. intuition, thinking vs. feeling, and judging vs. perceiving. Kolb's 1984 (cited in Marlow & Shaw, 1999) category divides learning styles into four categories of divergers, assimilators, convergers, and accommodators. Though many learning-style models have emerged, for non-native speakers of English, Reid's (1984) Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ), O'Brien's (1990) Learning Channel Preference Checklist and Oxford's (1993) Style Analysis Survey are among the better known of the learning style assessment instruments in the ESL/EFL field (Wintergersta et al, 2001). Thus, the learning style taxonomy referred to in the present study is Ried's (1987) in which he encompasses the following categories: Visual learning or the tendency to learn via visual channel, Auditory learning or the tendency to learn via auditory sense, Kinesthetic learning or the tendency to learn via body movements, Individual or group learning or the tendency to learn better individually or within the group.

Kelly (2010) mentions three major types of learning styles with their definitions. As she mentions a learner with a visual learning style "think[s] in terms of pictures"; thus, they learn best through visual or handouts. Auditory learners can learn best if they listen. So, for such students lectures and classroom discussions can work best. Moreover this type of learners may need to read the written texts aloud in order to learn. The last group of learners are kinaesthetic or tactile learners who can learn best when they touch, feel, or experience. So, the best way of learning for them is through hands-on experiments.

However, another category is introduced by Cassidy, et al (2010) which includes four types of styles as visual, auditory, tactile-kinesthetic, and kinesthetic. In their categorization they distinguish a learner who has tactile-kinesthetic learning style from a kinesthetic one in that the former likes to write things down and incorporate his/her fine motor skills. Moreover, they like taking notes while listening and at the same time keeping their hands busy, while the latter needs to involve his/her body in the learning process. So such learners prefer doing to watching or listening in order to gain understanding. Learners with Kinetshetic style prefer activities which demand their full involvement such as doing projects, acting dramas, or designing.

Discussing the importance of learning styles, Hickcox (1995) refers to two reasons for the significance of assessing learning styles particularly in higher education contexts and for adult learners. Firstly, he believes that researchers propose that by assessing learning styles, teachers' awareness regarding learners' preferences will be broadened and could be used in to simulate students' learning more effectively. Secondly, he mentions that learners' self-knowledge will be increased if after the administration of a learning style inventory teachers explain how students can use their knowledge about their own learning styles.

B. Language Learning Strategy and the Assessment

Research into language learning strategies began in the 1960s. Particularly, cognitive psychology developments influenced the research done on language learning strategies to a large extent. From early examples of research such as the studies carried out by Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975), to taxonomies of strategies which were drawn up by Oxford (1990b), to theories of language acquisition which include strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), a great deal of work has been done in attempting to identify what might be good language learning strategies, and in trying to establish a relationship between these and successful language learning.

Richards and Platt (2008) define learning strategies as "intentional behaviours and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information". Faerch & Kasper (1983) stress that a learning strategy is the effort made by the learners in order to build up their linguistic and sociolinguistic competence. For Cohen (1998), strategies are the conscious moves made by learners either in using or learning a target language. Being unobservable and mentalistic processes, special assessment methods such as oral interviews, written questionnaires, observation, verbal report, diaries and dialog journals are needed to asses. Oxford and Burry (1995)mention that different scholars of the field proposed different inventories:

Bialystok (1981) used a 12-item, structured, untitled rating scale for strategy assessment. The scale asked questions about the extent to which strategies were used for both oral and written tasks both in communicative settings and in formal classroom settings. However, reliability and validity data were absent for this instrument.

Politzer (1983) published a strategy scale including 51 items divided into three groups: general behaviours, classroom behaviours, and interactions outside of the class. Politzer and McGroaty (1985) used a somewhat similar Behaviour Questionnaire containing 66 items divided into three groups: individual study behaviours, classroom behaviours, and interactions outside of class. However, reliability was marginally acceptable (.51, .61, and .63) for their scale. According to Oxford and Burry (1995) one of the most prevalent ways to assess the use of language learning strategies is to use a summative rating scale, popularly known as a questionnaire, an inventory, or a survey.

III. The Present Study

A. Methodology

1. Purpose of the study

The present study attempted to seek whether there is any significant correlation between the learners' learning styles

and the use of specific strategies in language learning. That is, it sought to find if there is a relationship between the learner's preferences in learning a language (visual, auditory, and kinetic) which is proposed by Reid (1987) and the strategies used by learners which were mainly based on Oxford (1990 a) that was enriched by ideas from Green and Oxford (1995), and Khaldie (2000) which consisted of strategies including memory, cognitive, compensation, meta-cognitive, affective, and social.

2. Participants

The total number of the sampled population in the present study included 200 female Iranian college students of ages between 17 and 22 studying English Teaching at Mashhad Azad University and also English language learners learning English at the Iran Language Institute (ILI) in advanced levels. Based on the subjects' scores on the test of Michigan, the number reduced to 120 since only those who got the score above 75 were selected as proficient.

B. Instruments

1. Michigan State University English Language Exam

It consisted of 100 items, 40 items on structure, 40 items on vocabulary, and 20 items on reading comprehension.

2. The Learning Styles Inventory (LSI)

Reid's questionnaire consisted of 30 items. In the form of statements and the items were divided into five major categories including: group (Qs: 3, 4, 5, 21, 23), individual (Qs: 13, 18, 27, 28, 30), visual (Qs: 6, 10, 12, 24, 29), auditory (Qs: 1, 7, 9, 17, 20), and tactile/Kinesthetic (Qs: 2, 8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19, 22, 25, 26)

3. The Language Learning Strategy Inventory

A 99-item questionnaire based on Oxford's 80-item Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 8, enriched with ideas taken from Green and Oxford (1995), and Khaldie (2000), all of which were ultimately based on Oxford's (1990a) was used. The questionnaire included memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies.

C. Data Collection and Scoring

The data collection procedure was carried out in two sessions. The first session a Michigan proficiency test was administered to determine the levels of proficiency of the participants to ensure homogeneity on the part of language proficiency. In the second session the subjects were given the two questionnaires on styles and strategies. The first was Reid's (1987) learning style questionnaire. The other instrument was Strategy Inventory for Language Learning taken from Oxford's (80-item strategy inventory for language learning (SILL), enriched by ideas from Green and Oxford (1995), and Khaldie (2000), which was ultimately based on Oxford's (1990a) classification of language learning strategies.

D. Data Analysis

A one-way ANOVA was run to investigate the effect of styles on strategy uses. Also a factor analysis through the varimax rotation method was carried out to investigate the underlying constructs of the components of LSI and LLS questionnaires.

IV. Results

In order to find out if there is any relationship between the Iranian EFL learners' learning styles and their use of specific learning strategies, it was first necessary to convert the LSI scores to nominal ones. Based on the 33rd and 66th percentile ranks, the subjects were divided into three groups based on the SIL scores. Those scoring 45 and above formed the high group. Those scoring 41 and below formed the low group and the rest constituted the mid group.

A one-way ANOVA was run to investigate the effect of the SIL on LLS. The F observed value, 134.13 at 2 and 717 degrees of freedom was much greater than the critical F-value, i.e. 3.01 (table 1). Thus, the conclusion could be drawn that the styles of learning have a significant impact on the learning strategies.

TABLE 1.
ONE-WAY ANOVA LLS BY SIL

ANOVA SCORES

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	1074.043	2	537.021	134.315	.000
Within Groups	2866.733	717	3.998		
Total	3940.775	719			

Furthermore, the results of the post-hoc Scheffe's tests (table.2) indicate that:

a. The high group (mean = 14.11) performed better than the low group (mean = 11.12),

b. The high group (mean = 14.11) performed better than the mid group (mean = 12.78),

c. The mid group (mean = 12.78) performed better than the low group (mean = 11.12).

TABLE 2.
POST-HOC SCHEFFE'S TESTS

Multiple Comparisons
Dependent Variable: SCORES Scheffe

(I) SILCODE	(J) SILCODE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
High	**mid**	1.3299(*)	.18253	.000	.8822	1.7776
	low	2.9858(*)	.18253	.000	2.5381	3.4335
mid	**high**	-1.3299(*)	.18253	.000	-1.7776	-.8822

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Based on these results it could be concluded that those scoring higher on the SIL performed better on the LLS, leading to the conclusion that SIL has a significant impact on LLS. Later factor analysis will be another proof for this hypothesis.

In addition, a factor analysis through the varimax rotation method was carried out to investigate the underlying constructs of the components of the Michigan test, and LSI and LLS questionnaires. The SPSS extracted four factors that are displayed in Table 3, which account for 58.02 percent of the total variance.

TABLE 3.
TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.759	25.086	25.086	2.759	25.086	25.086	2.214	20.131	20.131
2	1.407	12.791	37.877	1.407	12.791	37.877	1.785	16.223	36.354
3	1.178	10.706	48.582	1.178	10.706	48.582	1.208	10.978	47.332
4	1.037	9.430	58.012	1.037	9.430	58.012	1.175	10.680	58.012
5	.985	8.957	66.969						
6	.875	7.954	74.923						
7	.731	6.650	81.573						
8	.677	6.158	87.731						
9	.575	5.228	92.958						
10	.451	4.096	97.054						
11	.324	2.946	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Factor loadings are displayed in Table 4. Four sections of the LLS, i.e. social, compensation, metacognitive, and memory load on the first factor together with the kinesthetic section of the LSI. The affective and the cognitive sections of the LLS together with the auditory section of the LSI load on the second factor. It can be concluded that except for the first four factors mentioned which belong to the LLS, the LSI and Michigan have not shown stable underlying constructs, because four sections of the language learning strategies load on the first factor, i.e. social, compensatory, metacognitive and memory, while affective and cognitive load on the second factor. While three sections of the learning styles load on three different factors. That is, kinesthetic on the first, auditory on the second, and the visual on the third factors.

TABLE 4.
FACTOR EXTRACTION

Rotated Component Matrix(a)				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
SOCIAL	.798			
COMPENS	.722			
METACOG	.559	.406		
MEMORY	.532	.434		.361
KINEST	.465			.365
AFFECT		.814		
AUDIT		.655		
COGNIT	.473	.569		
VISUAL			.793	
VOCSTR			-.651	
READING				.867
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a Rotation converged in 5 iterations.				

Finally, Table 5 displays the correlation matrix of the variables investigated in this study. The coefficients with one asterisk are significant at.05 level, and those with two asterisks are significant at .001 level. The critical value of r at 118 degrees of freedom is 0.19.

TABLE 5.
CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlations		visual	audit	kinest	memory	cognit	compens	metacog	affect	social
visual	Pearson Correlation	1	.036	.084	-.112	-.008	.138	-.116	-.060	-.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.699	.364	.224	.932	.133	.206	.518	.598
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
audit	Pearson Correlation	.036	1	.101	.117	.221(*)	.042	.202(*)	.307(**)	.084
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.699	.	.274	.202	.015	.648	.027	.001	.361
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
kinest	Pearson Correlation	.084	.101	1	.253(**)	.130	.124	.227(*)	.034	.364(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.364	.274	.	.005	.156	.177	.013	.711	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
memo	Pearson Correlation	-.112	.117	.253(**)	1	.557(**)	.269(**)	.417(**)	.254(**)	.340(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.224	.202	.005	.	.000	.003	.000	.005	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
cognit	Pearson Correlation	-.008	.221(*)	.130	.557(**)	1	.154	.398(**)	.295(**)	.396(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.932	.015	.156	.000	.	.093	.000	.001	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
compe	Pearson Correlation	.138	.042	.124	.269(**)	.154	1	.267(**)	-.011	.350(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.133	.648	.177	.003	.093	.	.003	.907	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
metac	Pearson Correlation	-.116	.202(*)	.227(*)	.417(**)	.398(**)	.267(**)	1	.233(*)	.350(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.206	.027	.013	.000	.000	.003	.	.010	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
affect	Pearson Correlation	-.060	.307(**)	.034	.254(**)	.295(**)	-.011	.233(*)	1	-.087
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.518	.001	.711	.005	.001	.907	.010	.	.345
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
social	Pearson Correlation	-.049	.084	.364(**)	.340(**)	.396(**)	.350(**)	.350(**)	-.087	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.598	.361	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.345	.
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

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

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Cognitive, metacognitive, and most of all affective strategies showed a great correlation with the auditory style of learning. Also, metacognitive and most of all memory and social strategies showed a great correlation with the kinesthetic style. Visual learning style did not show any correlation with the other factors. Moreover, it is possible to put the strategies in a hierarchy of importance by placing memory strategies together with metacognitive strategies at the top. The next level includes social, affective, and compensation strategies. However, by finding out more about the good language learners' strategy preferences, teachers can teach the poor ones the strategies that the successful language learners use. Moreover, by finding out about learners' learning styles as an inherent capacity both teachers and learners may benefit by gaining more knowledge about the ways of learning that better match their style and preferences.

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Study of the Open Structure in *Oracle Night* as a Metafiction

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***Abstract*—Paul Auster is one of America's most inventive and original postmodernist writers, whose novels have received worldwide popularity. His new piece *Oracle Night* was written in 2003 when the literary postmodernism has become a prominent literary tendency and when metafiction has been a typically postmodernist writing model. This thesis aims to study metafictional structural features of Paul Auster's *Oracle Night*, which has not been given due critical attention to both in China and in foreign countries. Based on detailed textual analysis, the study contends that *Oracle Night* holds the structural features as a metafiction by attempting to explore the representative one, namely, the Open Structure exploited in this novel. According to the thesis, Auster violates normal narrative standards and creates a metafictional structure by subverting the "closed" structure into an Open Structure, which altogether accomplishes one of the fundamental features of metafictional writing.**

***Index Terms*—Paul Auster, metafiction, open beginning, open ending, plots**

I. Introduction

Often regarded as a postmodernist writer, a default classification due to his experimental techniques and ironic posturing, Paul Auster (1947-) is noted for his idiosyncratic work, which resists simple categorization. His experimentation in writing techniques such as the handling of narrative point of view, and the controlling of narrative time, multilayer narratives, as well as metafictionality, but he is still not widely known, especially to Chinese people. Till now, many accolades have been given to this thriving writer, such as 1989 Prix France Culture de Littérature Étrangère, 1990 Morton Dauwen Zabel Award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, 1996 John William Corrington Award for Literary Excellence, 2006 Prince of Asturias Award for Literature and so on.

The present thesis takes metafictional structural uniqueness as the research topic, so the theoretical background of the research and a literature review on *Oracle Night* are essential and fundamental to be offered in the first place.

Metafiction is a mode of writing within a broader cultural movement often referred to as postmodernism. As Patricia Waugh puts it,

"Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text." (Waugh, 1984, p. 2).

And several Chinese critics have also generalized some features of metafictional narration from different perspectives. [1]To sum up, metafiction covers the following six major characteristics: juxtaposition of narrative and commentary discourses, open form, parody, fragmented collage, blurring of reality and fiction, random sequences of time and place.[2] These elements provide the reader with various perspectives through which the reader is able to better read and appreciate metafictional narratives.

Literally, structure refers to either the way in which something is put together and organized or the framework or essential parts of a building (Zhang, 2006). On the part of the author of compositions, structure means the order of what they have written. According to McKee, "Structure is the order in which the novel presents the plot, a selection of events from characters life stories that is composed into a strategic sequence to arouse specific emotions and to express a specific view of life." (McKee, 1997, p. 33). In regard to literary works, structure generally means the shape of a single text, be it novel or poem. It has become a consensus among writers that good writers should have an overall design for the work before they start writing. It is emphasized to be the hidden spine on which the piece of writing is supported.

If we sum up the characteristics of metafiction from the aspect of the structure, we can conclude them as follows. Metafictionalists doubt any kind of continuity, asserting that the "closed" form of writing constructed by the coherence of meaning, the continuity of characters' actions and the coherence of plots in traditional writing must be broken down

1 Hu Quansheng, British and American Postmodernist Fiction: Reseach into Narrative Structure (Shanghai: Fudan University Publishing House, 2002, pp.30-41.
Tong Yanping, "On Metafiction," Foreign Literature Review 3, 1994, pp.13-19.
2 Gan wenping, "On Robert Stone and Tim O'Brien: American Fiction of the Vietnam War within and beyond", Xiamen: Xiamen UP, 2003, p110.

so as to shape a kind of writing of being open. Metafiction is a kind of non-linear novel which can be read in some different orders other than from beginning to end; most metafictional writings defy the closed ending and gift open endings or indeterminate endings, just as Conrad says of Henry James, "satisfying but not final…we get the multiple ending, the false ending, the mock ending or parody ending." (Lodge, 1977, p. 226) *Oracle Night* ends with the destiny and identity of the protagonist unsolved, which puts the whole novel in openness. By challenging the closed ending of classical realism as well as rejecting totalized, single, and determined narratives, the novel advocates the openness and pluralism of metafictional writing.

Since first being published in the US, *Oracle Night* has become popular as a best-seller. The author of the thesis finds that major issues which have already been studied concerning this novel mainly center on the postmodernist features, themes in the novel and the experimental narrative style.

From the above analysis which will be conducted in more extended form in the following chapters, it begins with supposition that *Oracle Night* is a metafiction. As Kate Liu[3] states, "Contemporary author Paul Auster has made metafiction the central focus of his writing and is probably the best known active novelist specializing in the genre." And *Oracle Night* holds the essentiality to be analyzed more elaborately as a metafiction.

The author of traditional fiction often brings the characters and the reader totally under his control. What the reader has to do is to set him a goal of understanding what the author wants to express. However, metafiction varies from traditional fiction in that "The author of metafiction often invites the reader to participate in and make comments on his novels, thus constructing a new relationship between author, text and reader" (Gan, 2003, p. 114). In order to represent the disintegrated world full of contradictions in his eyes, Auster creates an open and pluralistic world in his novels.

Aristotle demands that the story does not start anywhere: well constructed stories would neither begin nor end at any chance point. However, Aristotelian logic and reasoning cannot be applied to the disjointed metafiction of Auster.

Open structure indicates that plots and the narrative structure have the following properties, namely, uncertainty, disconnection, chanciness and arbitrariness. (Lodge, 1988) No integrated and close-related plot or definite ending exist there. Also, narrative time is not limited to one style. The whole novel appears to be in an open, arbitrary and fragmented art form.

Auster's stories in Oracle Night branch out in all directions, without a beginning, middle or end like some structureless "rhizome."[4] It reflects typically postmodern central emptiness under the absent god (Žižek, 1995). Absence of the ultimate divine truth, like the absence of an organizing center or a frame, gives way to pagan proliferation of the meaning of the text. As a writer of metafiction which exists alone "with no before or after," (Barone, 1995, p. 86) Auster disrupts the linear progression of the story and relies on chance to move the plot forward. Thus, complexity opposes earlier linear continuity of cause and effect.

II. Open Beginning and Ending

Beginning is an issue that belongs to the category of literary structure, and a heated issue among literary critics. As early as the period of ancient Greece, Plato states that any literary work is "an organic whole" and that every work contains its compulsory parts, i.e. the beginning, the middle and the end.

Then, Aristotle again claims in his *Poetic*:

Now a whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not necessarily come after something else, although something else exists or comes after it. And end, on the contrary, is that which naturally follows something else either as a necessary or as a usual consequence, and is not itself followed by anything." (Aristotle, 2007, p. 28)

This concept has been obeyed as a convention. Traditional fiction always puts its trust in the synthesized order of beginnings and endings, while postmodernist fiction feels free to dispense with these arbitrary conventions.

As J. Hillis Miller (1998) indicates in Reading Narrative, "there is no such thing as beginning in narrative literature." (p. 103) A beginning exists only in condition that some events happen at present or beforehand, which lay a foundation for the development of the story. Again the events happening beforehand should still have events ahead. Thuswise, we may find that there is no real beginning in this kind of writing. And the links between different plots become looser and looser, so open structure is infused into the novel, scattered among the plots and lines of the novel.

From which point does the author start the story? How does the author begin the narration? And what is the point of starting the story like this? The very beginning of Oracle Night suggests the answer.

I had been sick for a long time. When the day came for me to leave the hospital, I barely knew how to walk anymore, could barely remember who I was supposed to be. Make an effort, the doctor said, and in three or four months you'll be back in the swing of things. I didn't believe him, but I followed his advice anyway. They had given me up for dead, and now that I had confounded their predictions and mysteriously failed to die, what choice did I have but to live as though a future life were waiting for me? (*Oracle Night* 1)

Oracle Night begins casually for no apparent reason. Readers are confused to ask such questions as what is the relationship between his illness and things coming next. The opening paragraph indicates two possibilities for Sidney.

3 Kate Liu, Associate Professor, English Department of Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan.

4 Deleuze, Guattari and A.Philips Griffiths (ed.), Concept as Mentioned in Contemporary French Philosophy, 1987, p. 134.

One is that he is very likely to recover from the fatal disease, and regains everything, including his talent in writing; the other one is that though he regains his life, he becomes a handicapped man with no desire to write. Using the opening paragraph, Auster drops a hint to the readers that postmodern life is full of chanciness and uncertainty.

What is more, Auster deliberately designs a circular structure. Near the end of the novel, "I" again walk in and out of the hospital, which is also what "I" do at the beginning of the novel. So without coincidences, there would be no stories. Moreover, like most postmodernist writers, the novelist begins with an absurd opening plot and a stunning description, because of which readers take up the novel with an invincible motive without any historical background. In Oracle Night, the novelist does not tell the readers why "I" fall ill, what kind of illness "I" have, why "I" should buy the blue notebook, and what forces "me" to write unconsciously on the notebook or even to lose "myself" in the writing. So, all these interrogations running through the whole novel do not work as the beginning. The "free I" open the book and yet do not begin the story or the writing process that the novel delineates. "What choice did I have but to live as though a future life were waiting for me?" (p. 1) is a sign to express Sidney's feeling about the somber future. This expression will induce readers to do the further reading and has left much space for the development of plots.

Therefore, because of the indefinite beginning, the commonly expected story with complete and definite theme becomes doubtful. Along with the reading, we may find that Sidney's recovery from illness and his future life with others is not the centre of Oracle Night, but only functions as a framework onto which other stories will hang. To a certain extent, it only works as an excuse to keep the narration going. In order to live over again, he takes up his old trade as a writer to start with a story about Bowen. In the story, he models characters based on the personalities, professions and appearances of his acquaintances. And some made stories in Oracle Night also begin unexpectedly, which can hardly make up an organic whole. *Oracle Night* stretches in several directions and quite a few stories within are overlapping. The finding of an old-fashioned plotline in this novel seems impossible; as a result, it is impossible to pinpoint a definite ending of the text.

The openness of metafiction also means that there is no definite ending about a character's story. Or, different characters have different story versions concerning the same person. All of the versions are equally possible and acceptable. A traditional text is often characterized by order and organization of beginning, middle, and end. Despite its complication, the plot is mostly organized in such a way that it leads to a proper ending. The narrative movement always ends with a closure. "Endings", the "exits" of fictions, are particularly significant in this connection. We can say that it emphasizes the continuity of meaning, character's behavior and the continuity of plots, which can be regarded as writing in closed form.

Instead of the closed ending of the traditional novel in which mystery is explained and fortunes are settled, and instead of the open ending of the modernist novel, "satisfying but not final" as Conrad says of Henry James, "we get the multiple ending, the false ending, the mock ending or parody ending." A fictional piece may have no ending at all, or circle back to its own beginning. As a story-telling technique, open endings are unsatisfying for most readers in that the pay-off of the novel's conflict never arrives. Authors appreciate this technique just because they doubt there is a real possibility of a solution to the problem and conflict they have just explored. They take the risk of using them because they believe strongly that this is how they must end the novel. We may feel that "A moment before we expect the climax in the obligatory scene to happen, the novel is just over" (Delaney, 1958, p. 27). *Oracle Night*, by challenging the closed ending and rejecting those totalized, single, and determined narratives, advocates the openness and pluralism of metafictional writing.

In *Oracle Night*, there are several open endings, for the novel is multilayered. First, we should look at the end of the major story, that is, the story of the narrator, Sidney Orr, and his composing process and the relationship with his wife, John Trause and Jacob, and so on.

In Chapter 8, in Sidney Orr's story about Bowen's fatal destiny, Orr says:

……with no other option available to him, Bowen settles in to wait out his solitary confinement, hoping to discover enough patience and fortitude to bear up to his absurd predicament […] the bulb in the overhead light burns out, and Nick finds himself sitting alone in the darkness, staring at the glowing orange coils of the electric heater. (p. 94)

Here, the author indicates that Bowen's life is definitely trapped into a dead end. However, the author does not mean to create a story like this. So in Chapter 18, Orr writes that "Bowen would be trapped in the room forever, and I decided that the moment had finally come to abandon my efforts to rescue him." (p. 96) This sentence suggests that the author is not to create a fatal destiny for Bowen, but as the writing process goes on, the author has no other choice. Still, other possibilities may take place: what if Edward would come back to his sense. There would be another ending for Bowen's destiny.

Another example for an open ending is found through the analysis of the main story line, that is, the development of the Sidney Orr's fate. Several months into his recovery from a near-fatal illness, Sidney Orr enters a stationery shop in the Cobble Hill section of Brooklyn and buys a blue notebook. It is September 18, 1982, and for the next nine days Orr will live under the spell of this blank book, trapped in a world of eerie premonitions and bewildering events that threaten to destroy his marriage and undermine his faith in reality. In *Oracle Night*, the reader may figure out many possible endings for Sidney Orr. Auster leaves us many possibilities of the relevant person in the novel; for example, we never know who the father of the aborted fetus is and we have no idea about the future of Orr and his wife. In short, the answer is uncertain and open for the good and proper.

In summary, each time one story ends, another story starts or has started to take over the torch. Such never-ending pattern just reflects the main feature of the 20th century daily life. No matter what happens, life has yet to go on, notwithstanding accompanied with hurts, deceits or even deaths.

III. Open Links among Plots

Authors of metafiction are opposed to close structure, the logicality and continuity of traditional plots which, in their opinion, are not based on the common daily life. So what they should do is to break the closed structure of plots and replace it with the Open Structure of plots. In the composing process, they often "violate the narrative levels by intruding into the narration to comment on the writing process or involving him or herself with fictional characters" (Stuart, 2005, p.117). They also reverse the time of the past, the present and the future at their will. By changing the time order, they break up the realistic and physical space and create a novel with various plots in an arbitrary and psychological way. In this regard, we can name it Open Structure of plots.

A middle is that which follows something else, and is itself followed by something. Thus well-constructed plots must neither begin nor end in a haphazard way, but must conform to the pattern I have been describing. (Aristotle, 2007)

Component elements ought to be so firmly compacted that if any one of them is shifted to another place and removed, the whole is loosened up and dislocated. (Aristotle, 2007)

But for metafiction, or *Oracle Night* more specifically, plots are not arranged in a "well-constructed" way as Aristotle proposes. They do not develop from one plot to the next in a causal relation. The aim of the novel is not to bring the reader from one point to the next in a logical way. On the contrary, the author often breaks up or ceases the continuity of the developing plot in some ways, such as the insertion of paragraph of comment or stream-of-consciousness; describing another story that is logically irrelevant to the previous story both in time and spatial order. William G. Little states that "Auster's stories are not plotless but the plots are constantly foiled." "In a story in which nothing happens, waiting for some sign or a message is equally futile, like *Waiting for Godot*."[5] In the meantime, events have become increasingly obscure, characters drop off the pages without explanation, but meaning proliferates from the process.

In Oracle Night, the creator often subverts the continuity of the spatio-temporal sequence and forms a sense of trans-placement. He replaces the orders of the stories which happen at different time and links the stories under the notion of Open Structure. Open links are presented at three different aspects. In the first place, judging from the links of different chapters, we can easily find that different chapters are not closely connected. The first six chapters are narratives about Sidney Orr, his social relationships with other people and his writing process about a new story on Bowen. Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 are about story contents on Bowen. And the following chapters are again about some events about Sidney Orr. Some chapters start without any clue about why it will be arranged in that order. Different chapters often start like this "next morning", "back to last Wednesday", "I slept late the next morning", and the like. From the above examples, we may know that each chapter can be rearranged, that is, the latter chapter can be arranged beforehand, and the former chapter can also be arranged afterward. So the links of order among different chapters can be considered as open. In the second place, the links between different stories also appear to be open. As the present thesis puts forward, *Oracle Night* consists of many stories, some of which are closely related to its body, while others are about its background information, still some others are not so closely connected to the theme of the whole novel. In this respect, we can say that some stories can be rearranged as the writer likes. For example, in Chapter 9, Auster inserts a news report with the title "BORN IN A TOILET, BABY DISCARDED," which has not so much relationship with the main stream of the narration. In Chapter 10, "The Time Machine" and the story thereafter are also other stories of the similar effect. Besides, stories in the footnotes work as complementary contents to the whole. Analysis of the novel elucidates that there are a series of mysteries in the novel which Auster does not make clear at all. This invites the reader onto a journey of seeking for and finding out the clues. In the third place, the narrator intentionally exposes him as the author of the story between whiles. Thereby, the links of stories would appear to be open for the intrusiveness of narrators. The narrator, Sidney Orr claims for several times in the novel that he is the author of the story. And the clues are as follows.

At the beginning of this novel, he says:

I hadn't written anything since coming home from hospital in May—not a sentence, not a word—and hadn't felt the slightest inclination to do so. Now, after four months of apathy and silence, I suddenly got it into my head to stock up on a fresh set of supplies […] (p. 3)

From this short narration, we can learn about Sidney Orr that he is a writer who has dropped writing for a relatively long period and that he wants to resume his old profession as a writer. We would unavoidably think that he would compose some pieces of fiction or other forms of writing.

As we expect, the creation process begins from the paragraph below:

I sat at my desk for the first time in almost nine months, staring at my newly acquired notebook and struggling to come up with an opening sentence that wouldn't embarrass me or rob me of my courage, I decided to give the old Flitcraft episode a shot […] so I removed the cap from my pen, pressed the point against the top line of the first page in the blue notebook, and started to write. (p. 13)

5 "Contemporary Literature", Spring 1997, Vol 38, No1.

And still after the composing intention, he begins to create the story about Nick Bowen, in which he moulds characters following the example of Hammett's prototype. On the one hand, he continues the creation of Bowen; on the other hand, he takes his acquaintances as the main source. Meanwhile, he does not forget to tell readers that he is composing stories after nine months of fatal disease. Obviously, this narration interrupts the continuity of the novel creation, which is a transparent presentation of open plots.

He puts it like this:

He is necessarily good at his job, admired by his colleagues, financially secure, happy in his marriage, and so on. Or so it would appear to a casual observer, but as my version of the story begins, trouble has been stirring in Bowen for some time […] (p. 13)

On Page 32, the narrator again states his intention of writing "that's why I've been telling you (the reader) all this—in order to get to Richard's story." His fractured narrative promotes us to go beyond what we first read and moves us into a new narrative boundary. Thus, such constant narrative technique increases the readers' expectations. By creating a maze of desire, Auster lures readers deeper into the core of the story.

In Chapter 5, the narrator states:

I was eager to return to the blue notebook […] ten minutes later, I was in the apartment, sitting at my desk in the room at the end of the hall. I opened the notebook, turned to the page where I had left off on Saturday, and settled down to work. I didn't bother to read over what I had written so far. I just picked up the pen and started to write. (p. 52)

By applying this paragraph, the inner narrator, Sidney jumps in to remind us that it is just a process of composing a story, and to bring us back to the actual writing situation. He is not a character of the novel, but a narrator or writer. By this means, the comments and indicative words make the plots differently discontinuous. And it makes readers understand that the novel is unreliable and it can be overturned by anyone instead of the author.

I opened the notebook, and when I glanced down at the page in front of me, I realized that I was lost, that I didn't know what I was doing anymore. I had put Bowen into the room […] but once I'd pushed the story in that direction, I had diverged from the original premise of the exercise. My hero was no longer walking the same path that Flitcraft had followed. (p. 96)

The narrator doubts his narrative process, which proposes a kind of self-reflexivity. In this way, the author of Oracle Night makes the reader aware that what they read is actually not real life but instead a representation or fiction. It successfully eliminates the co-existence of several plots and solves the borderline of the intersection of truth and falsity in the story. Sidney, as well as the author, combining the world created in the novel together with his protagonist's fantastic world to make readers feel as if seeing a rapid channel-switching. It makes readers accept the abrupt disconnection and randomness with no preparations. The story of Sidney Orr is connected by his story, and from the story and the inner mysterious elements and atmosphere, it can be concluded that the whole novel is a mystery and all things just happen by chance.

As Brendan Martin says in *Paul Auster's Postmodernity*, "Auster's postmodern worldview encompasses an overwhelming lack of cognitive certainty, foundational indeterminacy, ontological skepticism, and the open play of story." (Martin, 2008, p. 103) In *Oracle Night*, stories are not organized around a concrete theme or according to a series of clues. The world we live in is full of possibilities, so when it comes to novels, readers also become more involved in the story than ever before. The story of Sidney Orr is connected by his stories and from the story and the inner mysterious elements and atmosphere, readers can conclude that the whole novel is a mystery and all things just happen by chance. In this way, the author leaves enough room in the novel for the reader to inhabit. And readers thus have more room to figure out which way is more reasonable.

IV. Conclusion

Oracle Night, a triumph for Auster, cements his growing reputation as one of America's most inventive and original writers. And Auster shines as a fabulist and story-teller, putting a high-modernist gloss on noir. He again demonstrates the full extent of his writing skills in this intricate novel. The metafictional structure subverts the traditional narrative structure, breaks up the traditional aesthetic approach and forms a new type of literature.

The creator of *Oracle Night* breaks the fiction tradition characterized by order and organization of beginning, middle, and end and forms an opened narrative, which is a significant structural feature of metafiction. By challenging the "closed" structure of classical realism, rejecting totalized, single, and determined narratives, the novel advocates the openness of metafictional writing.

Therefore, the challenging conflict is not between chesses in a board game, but between the chess players, the random arrangement and insertion of plots and stories endow the novel with a flavor of openness, hence, inviting or forcing readers to exert their imagination to integrate the pieces into an organic whole.

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Language Learning Beliefs of Non-English Majors: Examining the Role of English Language Proficiency

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***Abstract*—This study investigates language learning beliefs of non-English majors with different levels of English language proficiency on language learning. The participants surveyed in this study were 125 (86 female and 39 male) Iranian non-English majors who were studying in biology, geography, accounting and science. Two instruments, i.e. the Michigan Language Proficiency Test (ECPE) and the translated version of Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) were administered to collect the required data sets. Statistical procedures used to analyze data revealed that proficiency level had a significant effect on the motivation of students. The more proficient participants reported holding strong beliefs in the category of ''motivation and expectations''. Also results indicate that there is a significant difference among the aptitude of the four groups of participants. The results obtained in this study also demonstrate that no statistical significance was observed between male and female non-English majors' beliefs in English language learning. The interaction between male and female students in these disciplines shows that these are significantly different in the foreign language aptitude and the nature of language learning.**

***Index Terms*—learners' beliefs about language learning, beliefs about language learning, learning beliefs, language learning beliefs, beliefs, attitude**

I. Introduction

Student centered learning received attention in recent years, when research interest in foreign language learning has shifted from teacher directed instruction to the learners' perspective, in which learner-related variables were examined. Beliefs of language learners about language learning, as one of these variables, demand more investigations. White (1999) stresses how awareness of the complexity of learner beliefs and expectations can help us to understand the realities of the early stages of self-instruction in language learners (cited in Hurd, 2003). Beliefs, according to Richardson (1996) are "psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true" (cited in Bernat, 2006, p.2).

In the classroom context, the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and metacognitive knowledge that students bring to the learning situation have been recognized as a significant contributory factor in the learning process and ultimate success (Breen, 2001 cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005). For example, in the context of second or foreign language learning, students may hold strong beliefs about the nature of the language under study, its relative difficulty, the process of its acquisition, the usefulness of various learning strategies, the existence of aptitude, the length of time it takes to acquire a foreign language, their own expectations about achievement and teaching methodologies. These beliefs influence the learners' attitudes to language and learning, their motivation and shape their experiences in the classroom. Consequently, they interrupt or promote the learners' ultimate success in the acquisition of a new language and diminish the length of time committed to language learning. As Bernat & Gvozdenko (2005) claimed, identification of these beliefs and their reflection on their potential impact on language learning and teaching can inform future syllabuses design and teacher practice in the course.

The present study is an attempt to investigate the relationship between learning beliefs of non-English majors and their English language proficiency in language learning.

II. Review of the Related Literature

It is generally agreed that individual language learners hold different beliefs about how language is learned. Individual beliefs about language learning may consciously or unconsciously influence learners' approaches to language learning (Mokhtari, 2007). As Horwitz (1985, 1987 & 1999) claimed, it is important to understand learner beliefs to better understand learner approaches to language learning, and learners' use of learning strategies to better plan language instruction (cited in Mokhtari, 2007).

Since the mid 1980s, a number of studies in second or foreign language learning were devoted to beliefs that language learners hold. Impetus for these studies was given by the pioneering research of Elaine Horwitz of the

University of Texas at Austin. In 1980, Horwitz conducted her research among students and instructors by her designed instrument (BALLI) at the University of Texas at Austin. According to Nikitina &Furuoka (2006), Park (1995) investigated beliefs of English language learners at two universities in Korea.

Victori and Lockhart (1995) discuss differences between " insightful beliefs" which successful learners hold, and the negative or limited beliefs" which poor learners hold, state that:

… if students develop or maintain misconceptions about their own learning, if they attribute undue importance to factors that are external to their own action… they are not likely to adopt a responsible and active attitude in their approach to learning and may never become autonomous (cited in Tercanlioglu, 2005, p.225).

A. Classifications of Beliefs about Language Learning

According to Mokhtari (2007), among researchers, Horwitz (1987) is considered the first researcher to attempt to identify language learners' beliefs in a systematic way. Based on free-recall tasks and focus group discussions with both foreign language and ESL teachers and students, she developed a 34 Likert-scale questionnaire, called the beliefs about language learning Inventory (BALLI) to identify student beliefs. The BALLI assesses students' beliefs in five major areas: (1) foreign language aptitude; (2) the difficulty of language learning; (3) the nature of language learning ;(4) learning and communication strategies; and (5) motivation and expectations (Horwitz, 1987).The BALLI instrument has been employed in a number of subsequent studies (Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992; Kern, 1995; Park 1995; Truitt, 1995; Oh, 1996; Kuntz, 1996; Kuntz, 1996; Kunt, 1997; Kim-Yoon, 2000; Kim 2001; and Hong 2006) showing that various beliefs are widespread but also culture-bounded at least to an extent.

B. Studies on Beliefs in an ESL Context

Cotterall (1995) emphasized on determining learners' readiness for autonomy and explored the relationship between ESL learners' beliefs about language learning and their autonomous language learning behavior, i.e. their readiness for autonomy.

Breen (2001) investigated how learners' attributes such as beliefs, aptitude, personality, or the concept of identity affect their conceptions of themselves and the learning environment. The author asserts that learners work selectively within their learning environment, and upon the linguistics and communicative data made available to them in that environment. This selectively derives from the learners' conceptualizations of the conditions that they believe to be facilitating or hindering their learning and their conceptualizations of the language to be learned. He also points out that such conceptualizations are imbued with the learners' feelings and attitudes, leading to the conclusion that affect, inter alia, shape one's cognitive conceptualizations or beliefs (cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005).

Successful learners develop insights into beliefs about the language learning processes and the use of affective learning strategies. Learners need to be aware of their beliefs and change their beliefs to make learning more effective.

147 Japanese learners were investigated in Lambert (2001) study by responding to questions concerning their beliefs and opinions about language learning. In order to determine their viability as input for L2 course design, the amount of agreement in learners' responses to 126 items concerning five major aspects of L2 courses was compared over a period of two weeks , and again over a period of one year. The findings showed that such knowledge might be used more productively in the classroom as a basis for dialogue between teachers and learners.

Another study by Bernat (2004) used BALLI to explore 20 adult Vietnamese ESL learner beliefs about language learning. The findings indicated that all of respondents (100%) either strongly agreed or agreed the importance to repeat and practice the target language being acquired as well as better English proficiency was likely to bring greater job opportunities most of them (80%) endorsed the importance of excellent pronunciations. Only 55% learners agreed the statement “it is necessary to know about English speaking cultures to speak English” (cited in Chiou, 2006).

Conscious or not, beliefs about language learning may influence the way learners approach language learning and types of learning tasks that are likely to produce problems or difficulties instead of helping to achieve goals, as they build up misconceptions about language learning (Oz, 2007).

C. Studies on Beliefs in an EFL Context

The study of Sakui and Gaies (1999) with 1300 Japanese EFL learners at tertiary level on their communicative and traditional orientation to learning the quality and sufficiency of classroom instruction, and foreign Language aptitude and difficulty. They stated that the most learner beliefs correspond to the distinction between traditional and contemporary views of language teaching and learning, language aptitude and difficulty.

Tanaka's study (2004 cited in Ellis, 2008), investigated the relationship between beliefs and language proficiency in 132 Japanese learners of English divided into two groups:

The New Zealand Group_ 63 Japanese students studying English in an Auckland tertiary institute for 12 weeks.

The Japanese group_69 Japanese students who were studying English in a Japanese university in Tokyo.

Tanaka administrated the belief questionnaire consisting of 27 Likert scale items, interview, diary, oxford placement test and oral narrative task. According the findings, most of the students were very dissatisfied with their English proficiency at the beginning of the study, which they attributed to the poor English language education they had received in Japan. Tanaka found that overall the relationships between beliefs and proficiency measures were very weak. The NZ Japanese students who reinforced their beliefs relating to experiential learning during study abroad tended to

advance more in general proficiency but not in speaking ability. Changes in beliefs relating to analytic learning and affective states did not affect either general proficiency or speaking ability.

Zhang & Zhou (2005) explored the relationship between language learners' beliefs and autonomous learning in the Chinese learning context so as to cultivate the students learning autonomy and self-awareness, to improve their learning efficiency and to solve the problem of "teaching students how to learn". It must be accepted that language learning and teaching is a part of the total educational process, which means the development of autonomy through students being given practice in decision-making and thus accepting responsibility for their own learning and gaining experience which enables them to learn a third or fourth language.

Oz (2007) investigated metacognitive knowledge or beliefs about language learning of 470 Turkish EFL learners in secondary education. The primary aims of his study were to explore what beliefs Turkish students in secondary education held about learning English as a foreign language (EFL), how their beliefs systems were organized and whether there were significant differences in belief systems among learner groups according to variables such as social and school contexts, gender, age and grade level. Structured questionnaire based on Horwitz's Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) (1987) used to collect required data sets. The results of this study showed that learners' metacognitive knowledge or beliefs about language learning have variability in terms of social and educational contexts, age, gender, and stages of language.

Bernat & Lloyd (2007) investigated the relationship between beliefs about language learning and gender. The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) and Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test administrated to 155 female and 107 male English as a Foreign Language students. Results show that overall males and females held similar beliefs about language learning, with only one item being statistically significant and another one being marginally significant.

Peacock (2007) conducted an investigation on the Links between learner beliefs, teacher beliefs, and EFL proficiency on 202 students in ten EFL classes and 45 teachers in the department of English, at the City University of Hong-Kong. The aim of this study was to carry out how far learner beliefs differ from those held by EFL teachers, whether those differences affect language learning (and in particular, whether incorrect beliefs are associated with lower proficiency levels), and how they might be eliminated. The initial set of data was collected using Horwitz BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory BALLI). Further data were collected during learner interviews, a proficiency test, and from essays. An additional aim of the study was to develop hypothesis about the origins of Hong Kong learner beliefs about language learning. Two further beliefs about language learning were also investigated; first, learners were asked to self-rate proficiency, making it possible to check the correlation between learners self-rated proficiency and tested proficiency. Second, the 25 most proficient and the 25 least proficient learners were asked for their opinions on the best way to learn EFL, and answers compared.

It has become obvious, by examining scores for self-rated proficiency, that almost all the students researched have a rather low opinion of their own abilities. Most rated themselves 'fair' in all areas, and only 8 percent rated themselves 'good' (there were almost no differences by gender). Certainly these students' actual ability is better than they estimate; this (as did certain results from the BALLI) also indicates a degree of lack of confidence. Another interesting finding that emerged from the correlations between tested and self-rated proficiency is that for these learners, there was a significant difference by gender in skill at estimating (1) their overall ability, and (2) their ability in listening and in reading (though not in grammar or in writing) . Females were considerably more skilled, or more honest, at this than males. Two possible reasons for the differences are that males were conspicuously worse than females at estimating, or conspicuously worse at admitting, their own strengths and weaknesses. The findings of this study suggest that teachers examine their learners' beliefs and do what they can to reduce learner misunderstanding and dissatisfaction.

Rieley (2009) study investigated the beliefs about English language learning of 661 first-year university students and their 34 English teachers at a Japanese university. The focus of the article is the shifts in reported student beliefs over a nine-month period of English study between two administrations of the Sakui and Gaies (1999) beliefs survey instrument. Beliefs are usually considered as resilient constructs, self-perpetuating in nature. In this study, however, significant differences were found in student responses to almost a quarter of the items on the questionnaire. Two student discussion groups were also formed which provided further evidence of shifts in student beliefs about language learning during the nine-month period of English study.

D. Studies on Beliefs in an FL context

Mantle-Bromley (1995) investigated the link between the beliefs and attitudes of Spanish and French learners and found that many young learners bring to the language classroom misconceptions or erroneous beliefs likely to impede their learning progress. Mantle-Bromley (1995) explained that learner with positive beliefs are more likely to perform better in class.

Horwitz (1988, cited in Mokhtari, 2007) conducted a study on American students of foreign languages. She administrated the BALLI to 241 foreign language students at the University of Texas at Austin. Three language learning groups; German, French, and Spanish were used for comparison. Horwitz found a similarity of beliefs among the different target language groups; the findings did not reveal statistically significant differences in beliefs. However, the responses indicated several small differences in beliefs among the groups. Horwitz explained that" such small differences among groups could result from measurement error, Differences in populations, the special nature of learning the target language, or the instructional content of specific classes" (p.291). She argued that knowledge of

learner beliefs may be useful to educators to understand how learners approach language learning. The findings may clarify some misconceptions about language learning which lead learners to use less effective strategies.

Kuntz (1996) explored the beliefs about language learning by 424 first-month university students enrolled in both commonly taught languages (French, German and Spanish) and less commonly taught languages (Arabic and Swahili), using BALLI. This study identified some learning beliefs that were significantly different between the two groups. Findings of this study provided strong evidence that the language studies do influence the beliefs of student's concerning foreign language learning. Students of Arabic and Swahili showed a preference for statements associated with communication strategies and people of the target language countries. According to Kuntz, the language in this study as well as culture and social environment may have shaped beliefs of students (cited in Nikitina & Furuoka, 2007).

In another study, Kuntz (1999) investigated beliefs about language learning among schoolchildren of different languages (French, German, Latin, Spanish) at five levels of language instruction. Though the learners in her research were of much younger age than university students, the results provide some useful for the present study insights. Kuntz assessed beliefs that had been most commonly shared by the students of different languages at different levels of instruction as well as beliefs that had differed significantly between the groups of learners. She concluded that learners' assumptions about foreign language learning do change with the length of instruction, and some beliefs weaken while others grow stronger. Especially, beliefs concerning communication strategies underwent most significant changes. For example, Students of all languages at more advanced levels expressed stronger disagreement with the statements that learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translation, and that one has to know all the words for a good reading comprehension. Also, the students acquired more realistic beliefs about time spending needed for learning a foreign language. Kuntz concludes that "these changes may reflect program activities and personal experiences" (cited in Nikitina & Furuoka, 2007, p.33).

III. Method

A. Participants

The participants surveyed in this study were 125 (N=125) Iranian non-English majors, both male and female. As indicated in Table 1, they were majoring in biology, geography, accounting and science. They were selected from among non-English majors studying for a B.A. degree at Azad University of Marand.

TABLE 1:
DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS

		Sex of participants		Total
		Female	Male	
Field of study	biology	29	9	38
	geography	15	16	31
	accounting	23	12	35
	science	19	2	21
Total		86	39	125

B. Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between language proficiency levels of non-English majors and their beliefs in English language learning?
2. Is there any significant difference between the field of study and non-English majors' beliefs in English language learning?
3. Is there any significant difference between male and female non-English majors' beliefs in English language learning?

C. Instruments

1. The translated version of Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

The beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) were developed by Horwitz (1987) to elicit learners' beliefs about language learning. It contains thirty-four items relating to beliefs within five major areas:

1. foreign language aptitude
2. the difficulty of language learning
3. the nature of language learning
4. learning and communication strategies, and
5. motivation and expectations

Since my participants were not highly proficient, the researcher used the translated version of belief questionnaire including thirty-two items. For any single question or item in the questionnaire, we need to argue for its construct. In other words, what does it test? As Table 2 shows, there is one construct for any bunch of statements or items in the belief questionnaire as follows:

TABLE 2:
DISTRIBUTION OF THE ITEMS OF BELIEF QUESTIONNAIRE BASED ON THE CONSTRUCT

Construct	Items
foreign language aptitude	1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 14, 17, 28, 31
the difficulty of language learning	3, 23, 32,
the nature of language learning	7,11,15,21,25,26
learning and communication strategies	6,8,12,13,16,19,20,24
motivation and expectations	4, 18,22,27,29,30

2. The Michigan Language Proficiency Test

From among the possible language proficiency tests (TOEFL, IELTS, Nelson Reading Checklist, and the University Michigan Language Proficiency Test (ECPE), a decision had to be made on one of these tests as an indicator of the readers' language proficiency. Given the fact the students' major was not English; it was assumed that TOEFL and IELTS might be very difficult. Moreover, Nelson Reading Checklist lacks reading comprehension section which is actually a major component of language proficiency. However, the Michigan test battery has some cloze passages which are considered to be good predictors of language proficiency. Therefore, it was supposed that the Michigan Language Proficiency Test may be a better candidate for the purposes of the present study.

The University of Michigan language proficiency test battery consisted of 70 items; 10 items constituted a cloze reading passage, 25 items tested knowledge of grammar, and 25 dealt with vocabulary. Also, this test included two reading comprehension passages each followed by five reading comprehension items. The test items were randomly selected from the University of Michigan ECPE test battery. The test was used to assign the participants to the three different proficiency levels of Low, Intermediate, and High.

IV. RESULTS

This section is devoted to the analyses of data collected for the purpose of this study. The quantitative analysis of this study used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 for MS Windows XP.

A. Descriptive Analysis of Michigan Test

The result of descriptive analysis of Michigan test, as appeared in Table 3, shows that multiple-choice grammar has the highest mean and is more homogeneous. While reading comprehension has the lowest mean and is more heterogeneous.

TABLE 3:
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF MICHIGAN TEST

Statistics				
	Cloze grammar	**Vocabulary**	**Reading comprehension**	**Multiple choice grammar**
N	126	126`	125	126
Mean	20.71	21.5238	19.4400	24.31
Std. Deviation	13.27	9.39	14.15	9.07

B. Descriptive Analysis of Belief Questionnaire

As indicated in Table 4, the results of descriptive analysis of belief questionnaire show that the highest mean belonged to the "motivation and expectations" category, while the lowest mean belonged to the "foreign language aptitude".

TABLE 4:
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF BELIEF QUESTIONNAIRE

	aptitude	**difficulty**	**motivation**	**nature**	**communication strategies**
N	115	120	114	107	111
Mean	73.2560	77.0000	84.0351	81.1838	76.3514
Std. Deviation	9.89409	12.54981	12.66367	10.19981	9.31631

C. Levels of Language Proficiency

In order to classify participants into three groups (Low, Intermediate and High) their total scores were used.

In order to have a relatively similar number of participants in each level half of SD (SD=3.15) were added and subtracted from mean scores. Therefore, the low proficient group scored between 15.7 to18.85 and intermediate participants scored 18.86 to 25.15 and finally advance group scored 25.26 and higher. The distribution of the participants in each group according to their proficiency level appeared in Table 5.

TABLE 5:
DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO THEIR PROFICIENCY LEVEL

proflevel					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	35	27.8	28.0	28.0
	Intermediate	54	42.9	43.2	71.2
	High	36	28.6	28.8	100.0
	Total	125	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.8		
Total		126	100.0		

D. Descriptive Analyses of Sections of Belief Questionnaire

1. Aptitude

In order to examine the views of participants on the items expected to examine the aptitude of participants on learning, a chi-square analysis was performed. As indicated in Table 6, the results show that the participants have more agreement on items b1, b2, and b31. The participants' view on items b1, b2, and b28 are more homogenous. The chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant difference among the responses of participants to these items.

TABLE 6:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ITEMS EXAMINING APTITUDE

Items	Content	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
b1ap	It's easier for children than adults to learn a second language.	126	4.6905	.57221	1.734E2[a]	3	.000
b2ap	Some people have a special ability for learning second language.	124	4.3065	.88508	1.189E2[b]	4	.000
b5ap	People in my country are very good at learning second languages.	124	3.2984	1.09678	34.952[b]	4	.000
b9ap	It's easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	126	3.5317	1.19121	25.508[c]	4	.000
b10ap	People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.	125	2.3120	1.14593	38.160[d]	4	.000
b14ap	I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.	123	3.2033	1.10853	49.154[e]	4	.000
b17ap	Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.	124	3.3226	1.23991	40.677[b]	4	.000
b28ap	People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.	122	3.9836	.97898	72.262[f]	4	.000
b31ap	Everyone can learn to speak a second language.	122	4.2541	1.09515	122.344[f]	4	.000

2. Difficulty of language learning

To investigate the views of participants on the items expected to examine the difficulty of participants on learning, a chi-square analysis was performed. The results, appeared in Table 7, show that the participants have more agreement on item b 32. The homogeneity of the views of participants on these items is relatively the same. The chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant difference among the responses of participants to these items.

TABLE 7:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ITEMS EXAMINING DIFFICULTY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Items	Content	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
b3dif	Some languages are easier than others.	126	3.9365	1.04878	61.540[a]	4	.000
b23dif	It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.	122	3.3770	1.20143	23.820[b]	4	.000
b32dif	It is easier to read than to write a foreign language.	121	4.2149	1.03446	1.036E2[c]	4	.000

3. Nature of language learning

In order to examine the views of participants on the items expected to examine the nature of language learning of participants on learning, a chi-square analysis was performed. The results, appeared in Table 8, shows that the participants have more agreement on items b11, b15, and b25. The participants' view on items b11, b15 are more homogenous. The chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant difference among the responses of participants to these items.

TABLE 8:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ITEMS EXAMINING NATURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Items	Content	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
b7nat	**It is necessary to learn about English-speaking cultures to speak English.**	121	3.7355	1.21634	34.826[a]	4	.000
b11nat	**It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.**	124	4.7823	.60567	3.289E2[b]	4	.000
b15nat	**The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning new words.**	121	4.3719	.85763	1.303E2[a]	4	.000
b21nat	**The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning grammar.**	124	3.5161	1.26545	23.016[b]	4	.000
b25nat	**Learning a foreign language is different than learning other academic subjects.**	117	4.0427	1.01194	66.718[c]	4	.000
b26nat	**The most important part of learning English is learning to translate from my own language.**	120	3.8083	1.13978	41.750[d]	4	.000

4. Learning and communication Strategies

To investigate the views of participants on the items expected to examine the learning and communication strategies of participants on learning, a chi-square analysis was performed. Table 9 shows that the participants have more agreement on items b6, b16, and b24. The participants' view on items b16, b24 are more homogenous. The chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant difference among the responses of participants to these items. However, as Table 9 shows, the views of participants on b8 are not statistically significant.

TABLE 9:
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF ITEMS EXAMINING LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Items	Content	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
b6cs	**It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation.**	122	4.3033	1.001	1.262E2[a]	4	.000
b8cs	**You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.**	126	3.2619	1.47610	7.175[b]	4	.127
b12cs	**I enjoy practicing English.**	125	3.5920	1.25142	36.160[c]	4	.000
b13cs	**It's ok to guess if you don't know a word in English.**	123	3.5772	1.29948	24.033[d]	4	.000
b16cs	**It is important to repeat and practice a lot.**	125	4.8720	.45748	2.928E2[e]	3	.000
b19cs	**I feel shy speaking English with other people.**	122	3.0164	1.50472	2.754[a]	4	.600
b20cs	**If beginning students are allowed to make mistakes in English it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.**	119	3.5294	1.26775	19.950[f]	4	.001
b24cs	**It is important to practice with cassettes/ tapes, or CD ROMs.**	123	4.4146	.97448	1.654E2[d]	4	.000

5. Motivation and expectations

In order to investigate the views of participants on the items expected to examine the motivation and expectations of participants on learning, a chi-square analysis was performed. The results, appeared in Table 10, shows that the participants have more agreement on items b18, b22, b27, b29 and b30. The participants' view on items b18, b22, and b29 are more homogenous. The chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant difference among the responses of participants to these items.

TABLE 10:
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF ITEMS EXAMINING MOTIVATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Items	Content	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
b4mot	**I believe I will learn to speak English very well.**	124	3.7258	1.00680	63.097[a]	4	.000
b18mot	**People in my country feel that it is important to speak English.**	125	4.1120	.98551	81.280[b]	4	.000
b22mot	**I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English people better.**	123	4.5041	.92660	1.974E2[c]	4	.000
b27mot	**If I learn to speak English very well. I will have better job opportunities.**	121	4.3140	1.02496	1.314E2[d]	4	.000
b29mot	**I want to learn to speak English very well.**	120	4.5583	.81782	2.024E2[e]	4	.000
b30mot	**I would like to have English friends.**	120	4.0583	1.10989	73.083[e]	4	.000

6. Within Subject Difference

In order to examine the differences among the views of participants on the five sections of belief questionnaire, a repeated measure ANOVA was performed. The Multivariate tests within subject effect reveals that there is a significant difference (F (4, 90) =18.87, p=0.000) in how these sections are rated by the participants. The Tests of within Subject Effects, as appeared in Table 11, shows that there is a significant difference (F (3.64, 321.38) =16.22, p=0.000) among the responses of the participants on these sections.

TABLE 11:
TESTS OF WITHIN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS FOR FIVE SECTIONS OF BELIEF QUESTIONNAIRE

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
factor1	Sphericity Assumed	5841.273	4	1460.318	16.220	.000	.149
	Greenhouse-Geisser	5841.273	3.455	1690.914	16.220	.000	.149
	Huynh-Feldt	5841.273	3.604	1620.767	16.220	.000	.149
	Lower-bound	5841.273	1.000	5841.273	16.220	.000	.149
Error(factor1)	Sphericity Assumed	33491.381	372	90.031			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	33491.381	321.269	104.247			

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The current study is the first research attempt to investigate the beliefs of non-English majors with different English proficiency levels about language learning. The first research question in the present study, as stated in method, explores the relationship between English language proficiency and learners' beliefs about English language learning. Considering the performance of four groups of participants on Michigan test and belief questionnaire, and based on data analysis results, it was found that there is a significant difference between the level of language proficiency and motivation. There is no significant difference among the levels of language proficiency and the other sections of belief questionnaire.

In addition, the tests of within subject effects show that there is a significant difference among the responses of the participants on the five sections of belief questionnaire.

The second research question of the current study investigates whether or not the field of study influences the beliefs of non-English majors in English language learning. Based on data analysis results, there is a significant difference among the aptitude of the four groups of participants. The students of the four fields of study (biology, geography, accounting and science) did not express different views concerning difficulty, nature, communication strategies and motivation.

The third research question of this study examines the difference between the learning belief of males and females who are studying in biology, geography, accounting and science. The results show that there is no significant difference among the belief of students in different fields of study on these five sections of belief questionnaire. There is also no significant difference between males and females. The interaction between male and female students in these disciplines shows that these are significantly different in the aptitude and the nature of language learning.

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Critical Thinking and Iranian EFL Context

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Abstract—**The advent of the information diffusion emanating from the information technology of the third millennium along with the revamped concept of literacy and intellectual understanding, and the demand for accountability as one of the prerequisites of modern societies has given birth to a movement resting on the idea that schools should be less concerned with imparting information and requiring the memorization of empirical data. Dealing with the extraordinary challenges of today's information society requires autonomous citizens equipped with "critical competence" (Feuerstein, 1999) whose meta-knowing is to be ameliorated through curriculum. The present study is an attempt to sketch the concept of critical thinking as a viable alternative in language education in Iranian EFL context. First, a number of definitions, along with the dimensions, of the concept from various scholars' viewpoints are put forward. Second, the typical features of critical thinkers and what resources they need are introduced. Third, the relation between critical thinking and learner autonomy is examined. Fourth, the relation between critical thinking and the instructional process is investigated. And finally, the issue from both theoretical and pedagogical standpoints in the contemporary Iranian EFL context is reviewed.**

Index Terms—**autonomy, critical thinking, Iranian EFL Context, meta-knowing**

I. Introduction

Traditionally, it was thought that higher education led to literate and sophisticated individuals able to deal with the intricacies in their careers and personal lives since it was believed that education, and higher education in particular, sowed the seeds of much needed intellectual abilities rendering informed and successful citizens. However, with the advent of the information diffusion emanating from the information technology marking the onset of the third millennium, the newly-clothed concept of literacy and intellectual understanding, and the demand for accountability as one of the prerequisites of modern societies (Kuhn, 1999), academically successful students are no longer solely defined as individuals who are able to memorize facts and learn fixed routines and procedures, instead as individuals who can pool their resources to think critically and creatively both when they run into difficulties and about what they are learning (Chaffee, 1992).

If today's learners are to effectively deal with complex changes, increased demands, intellectual challenges, and greater accountability of the modern life, they must become skilled in higher level thinking and reasoning abilities. Skills in critical thinking can pave the way for the necessary broader outlook, creative solutions and multiple pathways needed for successful quality improvement initiatives. Therefore, as Huitt (1998) pronounced, critical thinking is a very important element of schooling in the 21st century since in the information age, thinking plays a significant role in one's success in life. He further says that the movement toward the information age has shifted attention to good thinking as a significant element of life success. These changing conditions require new outcomes, such as critical thinking, to be embarked upon as a focus of schooling (Rezaei et al., 2011).

In spite of the fact that critical thinking abilities, such as solving problems, generating and organizing ideas and concepts, designing systematic plans of action, constructing, analyzing and evaluating arguments, exploring issues from multiple perspectives, and critically evaluating the logic and validity of information, are clearly needed for academic study and future career preparation, and even though teachers are eager to teach critical thinking as an educational ideal, critical thinking is barely taught explicitly and systematically within the educational framework (Chaffee, 1992). Routinely, the trend practiced in the academic world views education as the transfer of information from the full container – the teacher – to the empty container – the students – through the funnel of teaching. The task of the teacher in this view of education is to first and foremost cover the content of instructional materials rather encourage them to ponder over what they are learning. Teachers are regarded as the source of knowledge, the know-all, who are going to deliver another generation of passive know-it-alls, stuffed with what-to-do information, rather rendering an active, dynamic generation equipped with the much needed know-how discovering and exploring issues (Schafersman, 1991). Hence, the old view of education does not live up to the demands of the sophisticated modern societies which require leadership, management and decision skills among others for its citizens so that they can

develop a progressive understanding of the process used in their field of study or career to both generate and think about information (Paul, 1990).

The current paper aims to review the literature on critical thinking, examine the dimensions of critical thinking, find out who is a critical thinker and what resources they need, examine the relation between critical thinking and learner autonomy, investigate the relation between critical thinking and the instructional process, and finally reviews the issue from both theoretical and pedagogical standpoints in the contemporary Iranian EFL context.

II. Critical Thinking

What do critical thinking proponents generally have in mind when they talk about critical thinking? What skills do individuals accomplish in to be critical thinkers? How does this critical thinking accomplishment manifest itself? What are the components or states of such accomplishment? Viewed as an accomplishment means that not just any thinking however aimed at deciding what to believe or do can count as critical thinking. This suggests that thinking about what to believe or do must meet appropriate *standards* if it is to be regarded as critical thinking (Bailin et al., 1999). Thus, it seems relevant here to approach these questions through considering what types of thinking and standards per se educators typically would/would not regard as critical thinking.

As a concept, critical thinking has been elaborated in several ways. A major influence in critical thinking traces back to the work of the American educational philosopher John Dewey. To John Dewey, schools are laboratories of human development in arranged environments. Dewey held that the goal of education could only be development (or what he called "growth"); Education "means supplying the conditions which foster growth" (Dewey, 1916, as cited in Kuhn, 1999), not toward a predetermined end but rather in the direction of "an increase in the range and complexity of situations to which the child is capable of applying reasoned inquiry" (Cahan, 1994, as cited in Kuhn, 1999). In fact, the educator's task is seen as a process of connecting with the young child's interests and purposes, but that one could not stop there. Dewey said, "The real problem of intellectual education is the transformation of more or less casual curiosity and sporadic suggestion into attitudes of alert, cautious, and thorough inquiry" (Dewey, 1933, as cited in Kuhn, 1999).

Reviewing the many definitions of critical thinking, Richard Paul (1990) delineated it as:

Critical thinking is disciplined, self-directed thinking which exemplifies the perfections of thinking appropriate to a particular mode or domain of thought. It comes in two forms. If disciplined to serve the interests of a particular individual or group, to the exclusion of other relevant persons and groups, it is sophistic or weak sense critical thinking. If disciplined to take into account the interests of diverse persons or groups, it is fair-minded or strong sense critical thinking.

Taking a closer look at the above-mentioned definition, one would find out that the definition highlights three crucial dimensions of critical thought: 1) the perfections of thought; 2) the elements of thought; and, 3) the domains of thought. According to Paul (1990), in thinking critically we use our command of the elements of thought to adjust our thinking to the logical demands of a type or mode of thought. As we come to habitually think critically in the strong sense we develop special traits of mind: intellectual humility, intellectual courage, intellectual perseverance, intellectual integrity, and confidence in reason. A sophistic or weak sense critical thinker develops these traits only narrowly in accordance with egocentric and sociocentric commitments. By perfections of thought, Paul refers to features such as clarity, accuracy, adequacy, specificity, consistency, precision, and fairness.

Paul is critical of the definitions of other educational philosophers, for instance, Ennis' (1987; Norris & Ennis, 1989, as cited in Paul, 1990) definition of critical thinking as "reasonable and reflective thinking concerned with what to do or believe" or Siegel's (1988, as cited in Paul, 1990) definition as thinking "appropriately moved by reasons", since Paul believes that these definitions rely on concepts such as reasonableness or reflectivity that are not themselves well defined.

The second position put forward here belongs to Kuhn (1999) who holds that developing cognitive competencies most relevant to critical thinking are metacognitive – rather than cognitive – competencies. Metacognitive skills are higher-order meta-knowing skills which help individuals to know about their own and that of others' knowing. As such, they are in contrast to lower-order cognitive skills which enable individuals to know about the world since "thinking about one's thought – in contrast to simply engaging in it – opens up a whole new plane of cognitive operations that do not exist at a simple first-order level of cognition" (Kuhn, 1999).

Kuhn's meta-knowing entails three broad categories: metastrategic, metacognitive and epistemological. Briefly elaborating, the distinction between metastrategic and metacognitive knowing is the same as the widely-employed dichotomy in cognitive psychology between procedural knowing (knowing how) and declarative knowing (knowing that): Procedural or strategic knowing entails the exercise of strategies to achieve certain goals, thus invoking a *metastrategic* form of knowing which selects and monitors the strategies from the repertoire of potentially available strategies; *Metacognitive* knowing operates on the basis of declarative knowledge. Simply put: What do I know, and how do I know it? Finally, *epistemological* knowing is related to an individual's broader understanding of knowledge and knowing: "It has both a general, philosophical aspect – How does anyone know? – and a personal aspect – What do I know about my own knowing?" (Kuhn, 1999).

The development of metacognitive understanding is essential to critical thinking because "critical thinking by definition involves reflecting on what is known and how that knowledge is justified" (Kuhn, 1999). Therefore,

individuals with well-developed metacognitive skills take control of their own beliefs so that they can exercise conscious control over their evolution in the face of external influences. In other words, they both know what they think and can justify why.

Metastrategic skill is also essential to critical thinking since this skill help individuals apply consistent standards of evaluation across time and situations and do not fall for one favored assertion as more probable than its alternatives because of its favored status; in other words, these individuals resist the temptation of "local interpretation" (Klahr, Fay, & Dunbar, 1993, as cited in Kuhn, 1999) of an isolated piece of evidence as supportive since context to which it belongs is absent in such an interpretation.

Last but not least, the development of epistemological understanding plays the pivotal role among the constituents of critical thinking. Epistemologically speaking, there are three stances: the *absolutist*s who conceive that knowledge is entirely objective, certain, and simply accumulates, unconnected to the human minds that do this knowing; the *multiplists* who conceive that knowledge is entirely subjective, subject only to the tastes and wishes of the knower; and finally the *evaluative* epistemology, in which all opinions are not equal and knowing is understood as a process that entails judgment, evaluation, and argument (Kuhn, 1991, as cited in Kuhn, 1999).

To evaluative epistemologists some views can be more right than others. They weigh alternative claims in a process of reasoned debate as the path to informed opinion, and they understand that arguments can be evaluated and compared based on their merit (Kuhn, 1991, as cited in Kuhn, 1999); as a result, to absolutists and multiplists critical thinking skills are taxed to a lesser extent than those of the evaluative epistemologists.

Kuhn suggests that developing competence in all three categories of meta-knowing entails attention as a major component of cognitive development. As a result of such development, thought becomes increasingly aware of itself and under the individual's control. If one is to "know how one knows", one should take charge of one's own knowing, of deciding what to believe and why and of updating and revising those beliefs as one regards much needed. To get to this high level of awareness and control of their own thinking is arguably the most important way in which people both individually and collectively take control of their lives (Kuhn, 1999).

Now one question arises: Is critical thinking limited to the cognitive aspect of reasoning? Or does the affective side of individuals have a say too? Mc Peck (1981, as cited in Garrison, 1991) conceives of critical thinking as involving both a propensity and skill – "one must develop the disposition to use those skills", hence, teaching someone to be a critical thinker entails both the cognitive and the affective domains of reasoning. Furthermore, Brookfield (1987, as cited in Simpson & Courtney, 2002) proposes that critical thinking entails more than cognitive skills, such as logical reasoning or scrutinizing arguments. Brookfield agrees that emotions are paramount to the critical thinking process, because as one attempts to think critically and assist others to do so, one cannot help but become conscious of the importance of one's emotions to this activity (Simpson & Courtney, 2002).

As such, critical thinking comprises two dimensions: (a) cognitive skills and (b) affective dispositions. Having the requisite cognitive critical thinking skills is essential to being a good critical thinker, but it is not enough. The concept of critical thinking has also to do with a set of personal attitudes or dispositions that can be used to describe an individual who is inclined to use critical thinking. Therefore, in thinking critically, not only does a person attempt to determine judiciously what to do or what to believe, but a person is also able to apply the core critical thinking skills to one another. In other words, in thinking critically, one may analyze one's own inferences, explain one's own interpretation or evaluate one's own analysis (Simpson & Courtney, 2002).

A word of caution needs to be mentioned here. Different scholars have their own varying definitions for critical thinking with certain unique elements such as knowledge, active argumentation, reasoning, initiative, intuition, application, analyzing complex meanings, identification of problems, seeking alternatives and making related value judgments. However, critical thinking is substantially larger than the sum of its parts, because it is a developmental process – an orientation of mind –, rather a static product or method to be learned, that promotes attitudes to continuously explore, redefine or understand (Simpson & Courtney, 2002).

III. Critical Thinker

Prior to answering this question, let's take a look at who an uncritical thinker is. The uncritical thinker is often "unclear, imprecise, vague, illogical, unreflective, superficial, inconsistent, inaccurate, or trivial" (Paul, 1990). If one is going to move away from being an uncritical thinker and become a critical thinker, s/he requires some command of the elements of thought. These elements include an understanding of and an ability to formulate, analyze, and assess:

1. The problem or question at issue;
2. The purpose or goal of the thinking;
3. The frame of reference or points of view involved;
4. Assumptions made;
5. Central concepts and ideas involved;
6. Principles or theories used;
7. Evidence, data, or reasons advanced;
8. Interpretations and claims made;
9. Inferences, reasoning, and lines of formulated thought; and

10. Implications and consequences which follow. (Paul, 1990)

Brookfield (1987, as cited in Simpson & Courtney, 2002) suggests that critical thinkers are typically individuals who are involved in productive and positive activity, in that they are actively involved with life and perceive themselves as creative and being re-creative in aspects of their personal, workplace and political lives. Furthermore, critical thinkers view their thinking as a process, rather than an outcome: A critical thinker is continually questioning the veracity of assumptions since critical thinking is not a static phenomenon. As King (1995) believes, a critical thinker has an "inquiring mind." Good (critical) thinkers are good questioners. Whatever they see, hear, read, or experience, they are constantly analyzing it, puzzling over its significance, searching for explanations, and speculating about relations between that experience and what they already know (king, 1995).

IV. Intellectual Resources to Be a Critical Thinker

The best way to characterize who a real critical thinker might be is in terms of the required intellectual resources. These are as follows:

(1) Background knowledge

The quality of thinking individuals are able to do about a particular problem or question is determined by what they already know about it and about the context in which it must be resolved. Moreover, critical thinking always takes place in the context of already existing concepts, beliefs, values, and ways of acting. This context plays a crucial role in specifying what will count as reasonable application of standards and principles of good thinking. Hence, the depth of this background knowledge is a significant determinant of the degree to which they are capable of thinking critically in that area (Bailin et al., 1999).

(2) Operational knowledge of the standards of good thinking

As it was mentioned earlier, there need to be some standards in carrying out thinking tasks of critical thinking; otherwise, it would be haphazard. Therefore, the operational level of knowledge of the standards that govern critical deliberation and judgment is essential for anyone who would embark on thinking critically. Two kinds of standards seem relevant here: (1) standards that are relevant to *judging intellectual products* (e.g. arguments, theories, legal judgments, work of art), and (2) principles that are relevant to *guiding practices of deliberation or inquiry* (Bailin et al., 1999). In other words, one should:

- consider as many plausible alternative courses of action as is reasonable given the context of the decision, its significance, and one's prior reasoning about similar decisions;
- attempt to discover and take into account as much relevant information about the nature and consequences of each alternative as is reasonable given the context of the decision; and
- make a reasonable attempt to acquire an awareness of the point of view and presuppositions underlying one's thinking, and the possible biases to which this may give rise.(Coombs, 1997, as cited in Bailin et al., 1999)

(3) Heuristics

To effectively deal with thinking tasks, the critical thinker requires a rich repertoire of heuristic devices such as problem-solving procedure, Socratic Questioning and Dialogical Discussion.

(4) Habits of mind

To be a critical thinker, not only should one have the intellectual resources necessary for critical thinking, but one also must have certain commitments, attitudes or habits of mind that dispose him/her to use these resources to fulfill relevant standards and principles of good thinking (Bailin et al., 1999). Some attitudes or commitments that have been characterized by Paul (1990) and Bailin et al. (1999) include respect for reasons and truth, open-mindedness, fair-mindedness, independent-mindedness, and an intellectual work-ethic.

V. Critical Thinking and Learner Autonomy

Critical thinking has also something to do with the concept of learner autonomy. Autonomy lies at the very center of Enlightenment thinking began in the (European) Enlightenment period (Schmenk, 2005). Most notably, it was the philosopher Kant (1933, as cited in Schmenk, 2005) who developed the concept of personal autonomy to characterize the human potential to make rational decisions individually while respecting other persons' autonomy. Autonomy does not, therefore, imply freedom of action on any given occasion, but rather a more general idea that the individual should "freely direct the course of his or her own life" (Young 1986, as cited in Benson, 2008). As such, the concept of autonomy defines the senses in which a liberal society should value and protect individual freedom (Benson, 2008; Trebbi, 2008). The emergence of the Enlightenment ideals of autonomy and independence, and its subsequent application in education, recognizes the right of individuals to use their own capacity to make reasonable decisions of and on their own to think and act independently, be able to resist domination and move toward emancipation (Schmenk, 2005, Trebbi, 2008). Critical thinking with its libratory promise paves the way to achieve the ideal of emancipation as Brookfield (1988, as cited in Garrison, 1991) suggests emancipatory learning "places critical thinking squarely in the context of adult life".

VI. Critical Thinking/Thinker and Instructional Process

To enhance critical thinking, we should not simply make our students master information, but we should also help them develop an unceasing process of thinking about that information. If we teach students this way, they will realize that their field of study is not merely a repertoire of knowledge to be memorized. Instead, they come to realize that each discipline is a dynamic, creative thinking process. If students learn "how to think", they will know new ways of perceiving the world around themselves.

Now one question arises: Should critical thinking be addressed as a distinct subject or it may be regarded as an indispensible part of specific disciplines? Glaser (1984, as cited in Garrison, 1991) holds that "as individuals acquire knowledge, they also should be empowered to think and reason." In short, as McPeck (1981, as cited in Garrison, 1991) believes "there is no universal skill properly to be called critical thinking"; therefore, critical thinking skills are not generalizable and are specific to the context in which the process is exercised. Accordingly, if we take the idea put forward by McPeck, we can teach critical thinking in much the same way that other skills are teachable, namely, through drills, exercises or problem solving in an area.

Considering that critical thinking skills are best developed contextually within certain disciplines, the most challenging responsibility lies with the teacher. Teacher's role is to both encourage and develop critical thinking skills. Learners may find resources and even organize their own learning processes, but breaking out of deeply-rooted long-held beliefs, mindsets, or perspectives about the way things are, entails an unusual ability and discipline (Garrison, 1991). Hence teacher plays the role of a facilitator in that s/he encourages the learner to challenge ideas, beliefs and norms through collaborative dialogue, to accept responsibility for their own leaning, to examine ideas and issues and to make worthy judgments. In fact, all this process of contextual development of critical thinking takes place through what Brookfield (1987, as cited in Garrison, 1991) calls a "learning conversation" in that both teacher and learner are involved in a reciprocal interactive challenge for which they need to take risk, be spontaneous and resolve their disagreements.

The "learning conversation" phrase mentioned earlier places emphasis on the importance and necessity of dialogic discussion between teacher and student. If we recall what King (1995) conceives of a critical thinker as an inquiring mind who asks thought-provoking questions, then as Glaser (1984, as cited in Garrison, 1991) states "interactive inquiry methods are powerful tools for teaching thinking in the context of subject matter" since they help teachers develop a critical spirit in students. However, as Siegel (1988, as cited in Garrison, 1991) believes, helping students develop their own critical spirit happens if their teachers adopt a critical manner in the first place. In other words, teachers should be willing to subject all his/her own beliefs and practices to scrutiny and critical analysis, and so to allow students the genuine opportunities to understand the role reasons play in the justification of thought and action. In short, the most important role of the teacher is to model critical thinking. This critical spirit does not realize provided that teachers may themselves freely participate in critical discussion in the first place. As such, critical thinking is challenging to teach and model. It puts greater demands on faculty and students than traditional education.

VII. Critical Thinking in Iranian EFL Context

It is discouraging to know that despite all efforts and costs of foreign language teaching in Iran, students suffer from difficulties in language learning skills (Fahim & Sa'eepour, 2011). The problem seems, as Shuffersman (1991) was quoted earlier, to be lying with the educational system that teachers, still informed by the traditional mindset, do their best to teach "what to think" rather than "how to think" effectively about the subject matters. In fact in such educational system, students gain lower order learning skills such as associative and rote memorization resulting in misunderstanding, prejudice, and discouragement in which students develop techniques for short term memorization and performance (Paul, 1990). These techniques hamper the students' thinking seriously about what they learn.

Unfortunately, the situation in Iran is not a dissimilar one. Iranian students are not educated as critical thinkers in their first language educational system since teachers, based on traditional teaching framework, disregard the learners' views and opinions and do not give them the chance to express themselves. Consequently, students do not learn to use their thinking skills (Fahim & Sa'eepour, 2011).

Despite this, efforts have been being made across the country in recent years firstly to investigate the issue of critical thinking and its relationship with other constructs, and secondly to find out whether teaching critical skills could help students improve their language proficiency.

Sheikhy Behdani (2009) conducted a research study exploring the relationship between autonomy, critical thinking ability, and reading comprehension of the Iranian EFL learners. The results showed that there existed a significant relationship between critical thinking ability of learners and their performance on reading comprehension; simply put, the higher the critical thinking ability, the higher the reading comprehension. The findings of the study also indicated that critical thinking and autonomy of students were highly correlated.

In another study, the relationship between critical thinking and lexical inferencing of EFL learners was examined by Mirzaie (2008). Here, the researcher found out there was a relationship between critical thinking levels and lexical inferencing of learners. The study confirmed that when confronted with unknown words while reading, those learners who had higher levels of critical thinking demonstrated more ability of lexical inferencing.

Kamali and Fahim's (2011) study investigated the relationship between critical thinking ability, resilience, and reading comprehension of texts containing unknown vocabulary items. To them, resilience, which is a newly-developed

psychological construct considered as a personality factor of individual learners, has come to mean "a measure of successful stress-coping ability" (Connor & Davidson, 2003, as cited in Kamali & Fahim, 2011), which enables individuals to overcome difficult or traumatic circumstances and grow up to become healthy, educated, and successful citizens. In fact, tackling stressful challenging and demanding world in which individuals, and L2 learners in particular, live is required to obtain academic and social success. The results of their study revealed that there is a significant relationship between critical thinking ability, resilience, and reading comprehension suggesting that good internal resources such as high levels of critical thinking ability and resilience can affect academic performance, i.e. competence in reading, and may be considered as protective factors among L2 readers. Their findings also suggest that the presence of such a strong relationship may be due to the fact that critical thinking and reading are both cognitive abilities which have some identifiable cognitive skills in common.

Still in another research, Fahim and Sa'eepour (2011) conducted a study intending to investigate the impact of teaching critical thinking skills on reading comprehension ability, as well as the effect of applying debate on critical thinking of EFL learners. Their findings showed that incorporating critical thinking skills in language classroom is vital to improve language teaching and learning. They concluded that every effort students made including being involved in reading materials, searching different sources, sharing opinions with others, cooperating in the classroom, and taking part in the argumentation for debate was a considerable contribution to triggering their thinking skills, in other words, activating their cognitive ability which led to the improvement of their reading comprehension. In fact, their results are in line with the studies confirming the positive relationship between critical thinking ability and language proficiency indicating that teaching critical thinking skills in EFL context can improve language learning.

Furthermore, Nikoopour et al. (2011) carried out a study investigating the relationship between critical thinking and the use of direct and indirect language learning strategies by Iranian learners. Results from their study showed that critical thinkers did show a significant relationship with the overall direct language learning strategies on the one hand. The critical thinkers, on the other hand, showed a significant relationship with cognitive strategy. In other words, critical thinkers preferred the cognitive language learning strategies. However, no significant relationship was found between critical thinking and other direct strategies that are compensation and memory strategies. As far as the relationship between critical thinking and indirect language learning strategies is concerned, the findings of the study indicate that critical thinkers preferred the metacognitive and social language learning strategies. However, no significant relationship was found between critical thinking and the other class of indirect strategies; that is, affective language learning strategies.

In another research study, Fahim & Azarnioushi (2011) tried to see whether there is any relationship between the critical thinking ability of language learners and their performances using rule driven/ discovery learning approaches to teaching grammar. The results of the results of their study showed that there was a positive correlation between the critical thinking ability of the learners and their grammar test scores in the inductive period. However, as for the deductive teaching method, no special relationship could be found between the critical thinking ability of the learners and their grammar test scores. In other words, the results of the study indicated that learners with a higher critical thinking ability prefer inductive methods of teaching grammar while in deductive methods of teaching grammar, there seems to be no difference between learners with high or low critical thinking abilities.

The findings of a study conducted by Khorasani and Farimani (2010) suggest that the Iranian educational setting is more or less in line with the old metaphor of "teacher as both a full container and a funnel, and learner as an empty container", and does not support educational practitioners in their educational endeavors towards training critical thinkers and autonomous learners. Furthermore, the educational books currently used in the Iranian schools do not support critical thinking either; therefore, critical thinking is not in large part regarded as an educational goal. In another study Jamshidian and Farahani (2010) showed that there is no significant relationship between critical thinking and either gender or the age of the learners. Despite this, it is still a question why in this single setting we have different learners in term of being critical or non-critical thinkers, and why do we still have critical thinkers in Iran in the first place?

According to Khorasani and Farimani (2010), the reason we have both critical thinkers and non-critical thinkers in the Iranian setting is that, and in spite of books playing as the non-critical-thinking-inducing variable, the whole educational agenda is more of a teacher-dependent entity. Things in the classroom are defined and refined by teachers. The majority of teachers are themselves brought up by this old view of education and view education mainly as filling their students' memory banks with bits of information, so they cannot take their students any further than what they themselves are. But there are teachers who do not belong to the mainstream view of education and do not consider themselves as the only voice in the classroom (Pishghadam, 2008). Khorasani and Farimani (2010) showed that teachers, who come from democratic families, favor divergent thinking, organize and lead both political, social and scientific discussions, and try to have as many voices as possible in the classrooms instead of them being the only voice, are able to sow seeds of critical thinking in their students. This latter group of teachers do their best prepare the classroom atmosphere in such a way that students can (learn to) express their own ideas. They make the same books and educational materials but with a different attitude. As such, critical thinkers in Iran are not formally and officially trained to be critical thinkers, and critical thinking is in fact a style whose status varies from person to person depending on the training learners received from various teachers.

VIII. Conclusion

Teaching Critical Thinking – the movement resting on the idea that schools should be less concerned with imparting information and requiring the memorization of empirical data – marks a new chapter in today's education since in an ever-changing world where almost nothing can be taken on faith for long, "critical thinking" seems to be a solution (Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010). Dealing with the extraordinary challenges of today's information society which is based on producing and promoting knowledge requires citizens equipped with "critical competence" (Feuerstein, 1999). Within such framework, ameliorating students' meta-knowing should be a focal point in the curriculum in order to enable these individuals to form autonomous outlooks on life (Gordon, 1995, as cited in Feuerstein, 1999). Drawing learners' attention to the different purposes of critical thinking can help achieve more collaborative and constructive approaches to thinking, learning and assessment (Smith, 2011).

From the evidence of the various studies mentioned earlier, some implications may be drawn. Informed by the study conducted by Kamali and Fahim's (2011) whose findings indicated that levels of critical thinking have significant effects on both resilience and reading ability of texts with unknown words, it can be concluded that the utilization of critical thinking strategies would help learners read more effectively and improve their resilience and stress-management skills. Therefore, it is crucial for EFL/ESL teachers to encourage students to use their thinking abilities and provide them with challenging opportunities to reflect, grow, and learn. In other words, it is the responsibility of teachers to educate students for inquiry, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, and reflection which can contribute to their progress in language learning (Kamali & Fahim, 2011); however, students should also be made aware that the discreetly personal critical thinking is crafted at one's own pace and to one's own taste.

The prime pedagogical suggestion would be directed for syllabus designers and materials developers since language learners are in dire need of course books and materials that invoke critical thinking. Therefore, materials developers need to not only make an effort to create lessons that promote critical thinking as one of the effective elements in both academic and future career success and encourage students to reflect on their progress and take charge of their own thinking, but also include critical thinking issues as an essential aspect in teacher education since they have an enormous responsibility in the classroom (Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010). Teachers' effective use of questions, involving students in discussions over challenging and motivating topics and various forms of reflection conducted on the basis of mutual respect could engage students in meaningful critical thinking processes (Rezaei et al., 2011). Hence, materials developers should incorporate activities and practices which stimulate and build features of critical competence, preparing both learners and teachers to function well in the society as competent, autonomous, and accountable citizens.

The next suggestion would implicate the Iranian education department. They can do two things: firstly to include critical thinking as one of the requirements for the future employment, and secondly to hold in-service training classes to hone critical thinking skills of the incumbent teachers.

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Using Games to Improve Students' Communicative Ability

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***Abstract*—It is believed that the communicative language teaching approach (abbreviated as CLTA) is one of the most effective methods to keep away from the weaknesses of the traditional English teaching method in developing students' communicative ability. Using games, which is communicative in essence, are often considered effective in developing students' communicative ability. In order to help English teachers put the communicative language teaching approach into practice, this paper, on the basis of pointing out the weaknesses of the traditional English teaching method, discusses what the communicative language teaching approach is, states the value and importance of using games in English-teaching class, introduces eight types of games that could be used in class, and presents some suggestions when using the games.**

***Index Terms*—communicative ability, games, suggestions**

I. Introduction

Many have been said about the weaknesses of the traditional English teaching method in China, and the strengths of the communicative language teaching approach. However, the general situation of China's English teaching and learning at present is not very satisfactory, as "dumb English" is still stubbornly rooted in a large number of English learners. So it is safe to say that there is still a long way to go in English teaching reform and improving the English teaching quality of China. Sometimes it is easy to get a new method like the communicative language teaching approach heard but difficult to get it accepted, understood and applied to practical classroom teaching in the end. Therefore, it is not out of date to discuss the techniques of applying the communicative language teaching approach to classroom teaching. In this paper, the author, on the basis of pointing out the disadvantages of the traditional teaching method, discusses and explores one way to teach students effectively – using games in the English class, which is often considered as one of the best way to get the students involved in the classroom activities in which their communicative ability is practised and improved. Language games, as one of the most valuable and effective techniques in English language teaching, have been used for a long time by many western teachers. However, they are less used in China, especially in College English Teaching classrooms. Most teachers and students think games are a waste of time or just a fun activity for children. In this article, the author proposes to talk about the importance of using games in College English Teaching and list eight types of games to practise students' speaking and listening. Finally, some considerations are put forward on using games and the success of using games is stated.

II. Traditional Teaching Method

For years, the main method of teaching English in China is like this: firstly, the teacher explains the new words in the vocabulary list by giving definitions and examples. Then he/she will give a brief introduction to the background of the text. When dealing with the text, the teacher always explains and translates it sentence by sentence or even word by word, sometimes with a few questions which seldom elicit answers or responses from students. Finally, a reciting task or translation exercise is given to the students. In short, the traditional way of English teaching is teacher-centered and language-knowledge-focused. The way of teaching English is similar to that of teaching mathematics: new words presented, related grammar explained, and then written exercises assigned; if students can do the exercises well, it means that they have learned the language knowledge well, and then the lesson moves on. Under such pattern of teaching, students are passive information receiver and written exercises doer. They can remember large numbers of words and grammatical rules, and they can do very well in exams, but they scarcely have chances to express themselves in the target language and test their understanding of the received information about the language. And they are found having a lot of difficulty in communicating with others in English. This phenomenon is ironically defined as "Dumb English", which is the "product" of long hard work of both teachers and students.

III. Communicative Language Teaching Approach

As the foreign language pedagogy has developed over the past few decades, we have experienced a number of methods and approaches to language teaching. Out of them the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (abbreviated as CLTA), at length, characterizes the present era.

CLTA is best understood as an approach, not a method. It is based on the theory of the nature of language and of language learning and teaching. Language in nature is communicative for different purposes. It is a system for the expression of meaning. Its primary function is for interaction and communication. So the goal of language learning and teaching is to develop communicative competence. This communicative competence, in Canale and Swain's view (1980), includes grammar competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The acquisition of these competences, therefore, involves both cognitive and behavioral aspects, and the developments of the four basic skills at the same time. As we can see, this reasonable theoretical basis, perhaps, is just the reason why CLTA is attractive or popular.

CLTA emphasizes the importance of using authentic language. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. So such communicative activities as authentic texts, scrambled sentences, language games, picture strip stories, role-play, should be used. Learners must be provided with ample opportunities to use the language themselves for communicative purposes. They are encouraged to deal with unrehearsed situations under the guidance of the teacher. The teacher's main tasks are to facilitate the communication process between the learners in the classroom and also to act as an independent learner within the learning-teaching group. The teacher should be, therefore, an organizer, a guide, a researcher, a needs analyst, a counselor, a group process manager, and a learner too, but not a controller. The instructional materials are text-based, task-based and realia. "Communicating to learn" and "learning to communicate" is the best description of CLTA.

CLTA, as a teaching approach, takes in all the new achievements in pedagogy, psychology and linguistics, so it is excellent in theory and beneficial to language learning and teaching. As for its operability, it is actually a matter of different variables according to different persons in different situations. CLTA is usually regarded as a guiding thought, which should be carried out in language learning and teaching activities. So how to put the guiding thought into practice becomes an ever-lasting topic for English teachers and researchers to work on, and the study of this topic can never be exhaustive.

IV. The Value and Importance of Using Games

There are many good ideas about English teaching. Among these, using games in the English class is the one which is most easily accepted by students and which is also a very useful and helpful aspect of communicative method. As is known to everyone, game is an activity providing entertainment or amusement; it's a competitive activity or sport in which players contend with each other according to a set of rules. "A game is an activity carried out by co-operating or competing decision-makers, seeking to achieve, within a set of rules, their objectives" (Rixon 1981). A game is an activity that both the teacher and students enjoy doing. It is student-centered and as appealing as playing in the playground.

Using games in English class can get students relaxed and enjoying using the language. It may be argued that college students, unlike children, having grown up, do not need games to relax themselves. On the contrary, adults sometimes feel more nervous than children when they face new things, and they are more afraid of losing their face as the sense of face develops with their age. In this sense, they do need games or any other activity that help them relaxed and innocent like children to the new language without being afraid of making mistakes. According Stephen Krashen (1982), second language acquisition is influenced by affective factors either positively or negatively. One of the teacher's tasks is to create a situation where students' affective filter is lowered so that the comprehensible input could be taken in. The first aim of using games in class is just to create such a situation.

Games are communicative in essence, and so using game in English teaching and learning can well realize the fundamental idea of the communicative language teaching approach. Using games is a good way to improve students' various skills, as Wright, Betteridge and Buckby (2006) say, "Games can be found to give practice in all the skills, in all the stages of the teaching and learning and for many types of communication". In playing language games, students have to know and well understand the rules of the games, and should be clear about what has been, is being and will be done or said, and what is more important, they have to take some actions – doing or saying something, to compete in the games. In so doing, they can practise their skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing comprehensively, and especially they get more practice in listening and speaking, which are poor in the traditional teaching method. Littlewood (1981) proposed that through games, teachers should help learners go beyond the mastery of structures, to the point where they can use them to communicate meaning in real situations.

Game playing is effective in developing students' communicative ability in that it is a dynamic process of communication in which students as thinking beings, emotional beings and communicators instead of knowledge receptacles, try to get their ideas, concepts, thoughts, emotions and feelings expressed, based on their own life experiences. Psychologist Piaget (2001) proposes that movement produces "thought". He believes that movement is the beginning of learning, and that cognitive frame is built up step by step whose joint is the movement but not the consciousness.

In addition, games may help and encourage many learners to support their interest and work (Wright 2006). Games can increase motivation to learn the language as students, especially the weaker ones, feel a real sense of achievement when they manipulate a game (Hubbard 1987). Games can provide quite extensive knowledge input. Games can increase students' communication and co-operation with each other. And games can act as a testing mechanism through

which they will expose areas of weakness and the need for remedial work.

Furthermore, games can be used at any stage in a lesson: at the beginning to diagnose what the students can or cannot do; during the lesson for language practice purposes; or at the end as reinforcement and 'reward'. Students playing language games are encouraged to express their ideas for certain purpose, and they can use different types of games at different stages appropriate for different types of language learning.

V. Types of Games

As stated above, the main purpose of using games in English classes is to practise students' different skills, especially their communicative ability. Here, eight types of games from published sources (Carrier 1980, Ellis 1986, Harmer 1985, Kallsen 1982, Klippel 1984, MaCallum 1980, Porter-Ladousse 1987, Stern 2002, Willis 1982, etc.) are identified, discussed and explored.

A. Guessing Games

The basic role of guessing games is very simple: one person knows something that another one wants to find out. The thing to be guessed can differ greatly from game to game. It can be a word, an object, an activity or many other things. Guessing games are useful in helping students practise logical thinking and asking questions. 3-item story is one example of a guessing game. One person in a group knows the story in which there are three items given to the other members of the group. Depending on the three items, they have to ask questions to find the story. The person who holds the story can only give yes or no answers. The guessing members have to use their questioning skills to get the answer. To give an example of pun: the teacher gives the students a question to explain: "Why do they tie a horse to a post before a race?" The students have to widen their thinking instead of being occupied in a narrow way and be told to think of more than one sense of a word or a sentence. Then after a period of thinking, they are likely to find the answer: "Because they want to make the horse fast." Here, fast has two meaning which can be firmly fixed or quick.

B. Picture Games

Picture games include several types:
Comparing and contrasting pictures;
Considering differences or similarities;
Considering possible relationships between pictures, such as narrative sequence;
Describing key features so that someone else may identify them or represent them in a similar way;
Making a story according to the given picture.

Most of these picture games involve the learners in the relatively free use of all the language at their command and at the same time give them the opportunity to practise their speaking and listening.

C. Sound Games

Sound effects can create in the listeners' mind an impression of people, places and actions. There is a demand for the listener to contribute through the imagination. This inevitably leads to individual interpretations which mean that the listeners can exchange their points of view and express opinions and ideas. This kind of games can stimulate students' imagination and thinking, and offer them a chance to practise their listening and speaking. Students can make guess at the object described by sound, or make dialogue or a story.

D. Mime

Mimes can be done in pairs, groups or even by the whole class. One side has to perform the mimes for the other side so that the answer can be found. It can be an object, action or person. So miming activities are valuable language-learning situations. Guessing something is linked with the real desire to find out and thus is a true communication situation. Miming trains the students' skill of observation and improvisation. It emphasizes the importance of gesture and facial expression in communication. For example:

A guest in a hotel in an English-speaking country has a very bad cold and has lost his voice. He wants the receptionist to help him turn on the heating. But he has to mime because of his voice. He tries to make the receptionist understand him by using gestures and expressions. The receptionist makes guesses by asking questions in order to find out what he wants. The activity will not stop until the receptionist gets exactly what the guest wants to do. This game can be done in pairs or in groups.

E. Fact-finding Games

This mainly deals with general knowledge and is a very practical exercise. Everyday, there is something important happening, so the students can be asked what happened on a day in history. It may be a historical accident, a birthday of a famous person, or something strange or marvelous. Then further details can be asked. The students can discuss in pairs or groups in order to find much more information.

If the students have a class on 16 April, the teacher can ask the students to do the following activity. Let the students sit in groups. Ask the question, "Do you know who the main actor in the films 'Modern Times', 'The Gold Rush' and 'The Great Dictator' is?" The students are sure to name Chaplin, because the films are very famous. Then the teacher

tells the students that that day is his birthday and that it is necessary for the students to know something about him. After that, more work can be done by drawing a typical picture of him and describing his appearance. At last, the teacher can ask the students to think why Chaplin is loved by people all over the world and why his films are so popular. Now the students have had a chance to really think about what they know about the person.

F. Debates

In this activity, a topic is given and two sides are set up, one supporting the idea and the other opposing it. Then they argue giving their evidence. The aim of this activity is to get the students to talk and stimulate their interest and competitive spirit. Such activities make the students think about their values and priorities. There is no doubt that this activity will improve students' conversation and eloquence.

G. Jigsaw Games

Each participant in a jigsaw task holds one part of a solution, which may be a story, a factual text or a picture. They are equally important. They should work together to fit their pieces together to find the solution. They, therefore, improve co-operation and mutual acceptance within the group. Participants in this game have to do a lot of talking before they are able to fit the pieces together in the right way. Wright (2006) also claims that these games practise two very different areas of skill in the foreign language: "Firstly, the students have to understand the bits of information they are given and describe them to the rest of the group." This helps them realize the importance of pronunciation and intonation in making oneself understood. "Secondly, the students have to organize the process of finding the solution and a lot of interactional language is needed."

H. Role Plays

Role plays often consist of short scenes, which can be realistic or pure fantasy. Role plays may be enacted around everyday situations as well as around topical problems. One easily-obtained role play is from the text, which may be actual role play material. After learning the text, students can be asked to give a performance of it. This can improve their oral performance generally and, of course, help students to understand what they have learned in an easy way. Furthermore, role plays are useful for generating free expression and the feeling of spontaneity in the language classroom.

VI. Suggestions on Using Games

There are four elements which should be taken into consideration when playing games in English class. Teachers should keep them in mind and apply the above discussed games to the practical situation appropriately in order to achieve the best results.

A. Time

The amount of teaching time devoted to games depends on the individual teaching content, but it will probably be a relatively small proportion of the total teaching time. They can be used to open or close a lesson in a stimulation way, to punctuate a lesson, to relieve tension after a test or concentrated practice session, or at any time that the teacher feels appropriate. It is important that they are used positively, to give students enjoyment and useful practice.

B. Choice

In each category of game mentioned above, there are different kinds of games. So the teacher must take many factors into account when deciding which game would be most appropriate and most successful with his or her students at any time. He or she should consider the level of the students, the main aim of having a game, the interest of the students, the appropriate time to use a game and the availability of aids and materials.

C. Preparation

Games may be good fun but they need to be carefully prepared and organized. Firstly, the teacher should find a good game in a book or invent one. Then he or she must be sure that the necessary facilities are available. An overhead projector can be very useful if one is available. If not, a typewriter and cards and the objects needed should be prepared in advance. Also, the teacher should ensure clear handwriting on paper or cards so that the students will take the teacher's intentions seriously. Finally, the teacher must work out how the game is to proceed, what the students will need to do and how they will be instructed in what to do. It is important to try to anticipate any logistic or linguistic problems that may occur in order to be able to deal with them effectively.

D. Management

The teacher must decide in advance how to organize the students and the classroom so that the setting up of a game can be carried out as quickly and smoothly as possible. It is advisable to encourage pair and group work where possible, as this will increase student participation and the amount of language practice offered to each student will be much greater. While the students are working, it is useful for the teacher to keep a close eye on pairs or groups to help, correct or stimulate less active students. The teacher should stop a game and change to something else before the students

become tired of it. In this way, their willingness and concentration are retained.

VII. Conclusion

From the above analysis, a conclusion can be drawn that teaching and learning English by means of language games is effective and efficient in improving students' communicative ability. While in the traditional method of teaching English, students sit still listening to teachers talking about English language and try their best to remember English words and grammatical rules by rote memory, in the communicative language teaching approach they are actively involved in playing games which in turn can arouse and maintain their interest in learning, promote their motivation of study, and at the same time get lots of opportunities to have their basic skills of listening and speaking practiced. Admittedly, there are many difficulties in using games in most English classes, but it is possible to use them as long as both teachers and students appreciate their value and function. When using games, such factors as the time, choice, preparation and management should be put into consideration, which is the guarantee of successful use of language games in class. In a word, using games in English teaching very well represents the theme of the communicative language teaching approach – "Communicating to learn" and "learning to communicate".

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Cognitive Styles and Performance on Schema-based Cloze Multiple Choice Item Tests: A Fairness Issue

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***Abstract*—This study reports the performance of 253 undergraduate and graduate students of English on the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) and a schema-based cloze multiple choice item test (SBCMCIT) and its subtests as measures of cognitive styles and English language proficiency, respectively. Although field independent (FI) test takers outperformed their field dependent (FD) counterparts on the SBCMCIT, their performance showed relatively weaker and unexpectedly negative relationships with the GEFT. Assigning the participants to low, middle, and high proficiency groups on the basis of their standardized scores on the SBCMCIT and correlating them with the GEFT, however, showed that neither low nor high proficiency groups employed their cognitive styles because their performance on the two tests did not reveal any significant correlations. The middle proficiency group, however, employed both FD and FI cognitive styles to compensate for their partially acquired language proficiency and thus their scores on the SBCMCIT and two of its subtests showed significant correlations with the GEFT. The results are discussed in terms of cognitive styles and fairness in language testing.**

***Index Terms*—cognitive styles, field dependency, field independency, schema theory, fairness**

I. Introduction

The study of cognitive styles started late in the 19th century when some scholars noticed that learners adopt different approaches towards understanding a single phenomenon (Dornyei, 2005). This observation resulted in the identification of a number of cognitive styles particularly at the beginning of 20th century. After reviewing the literature Keefe (1979) declared that a given cognitive style is adopted when a link is established between personality and cognition and thus related it to learning in general and adopting a particular approach towards solving problems in particular.

Goldstein and Blackman (1978) gave cognitive styles an explanatory power by viewing them as hypothetical constructs which are, according to Hayes and Allinson (1998), related to the manner in which people interact with their environment, organize and interpret what they understand from the interaction and employ their interpretations to take appropriate actions. As constructs, cognitive styles not only influence learning from interactions but also play an important role in the way learners function in the society psychologically and socially (Kahtz & Kling, 1999).

Jarvis (2005) provided an exhaustive list of cognitive styles which can be consulted for further study. Table 1, however, summarizes the literature on cognitive styles by relating them to particular manners in which scholars have treated the same cognitive styles. They believe the adoption a certain style determines the possible effect of individual differences on learning. As can be seen, the differences are basically dichotomies in nature and depend on the approach a given researcher adopts in describing the cognitive styles, e.g., perceptual Witkin (1974) or logical (Hudson, 1966).

TABLE 1
THE DICHOTOMOUS CATEGORIZATION OF COGNITIVE STYLES

Reference	Styles	Description
Witkin & Goodenough (1981)	Field dependent	Perception of an object or situation is altered by its context
	Field independent	Perception is more independent of its context
Hudson (1966)	Converger	Logical deductive approach to problem-solving
	Diverger	Intuitive and imaginative image to problems
Pask (1976, 1988)	Serialist	Working through a task one piece at a time
	Wholist	Viewing a task or situation as a whole
Gregorc, 1982; Allinson & Hayes (1966)	Active	Learns thorough experience
	Reflective	Learns thorough reflection
Paivio (1971, 1986)	Verbaliser	Information is most easily processed in verbal form
	Visualiser	Information is most easily processed in visual form

Among the categorizations specified in Table 1, field dependent (FD) and field independent (FI) cognitive styles have gained wider popularity particularly because they are measured by a non-linguistic test called the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT). (It will be described in some details in the instrumentation section.) Salmani-Nodoushan (2007), for example, administered the GEFT along with the 1990 version of the IELTS to 1743 freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior students of English at various universities and colleges in Iran. His results showed that "FD participants outperformed their FI counterparts on true-false, outlining, and elicitation tasks; on the contrary, FI participants outperformed FD participants on sentence-completion and scanning tasks" (p. 103).

In order to explain his findings, Salmani-Nodoushan (2007) opined that the difference in the performance of FD and FI participants might be attributed to the nature of tasks. In other words, tasks such as true-false questions require a cognitive style different from other tasks such as completing sentences. If this argument holds true, then employing language tests which employ certain type of questions such as multiple choice items would not be fair because they might favour the test takers whose cognitive styles are compatible with the nature of questions.

Schema-based cloze multiple choice item tests (SBCMCITs) are, for example, one of the most recently developed measures of achievement as well as proficiency which are confirmed to be superior to their traditional counterparts because of their strong theoretical foundation (Khodadady, 1997, 1999a; Khodadady & Herriman 2000). Instead of being based on the intuition of test designers, the writers of SBCMCITs view each and all words/phrases comprising texts as schemata and divide them into three main domains, i.e., semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic.

The semantic domain of schemata consists of four genera which carry the message expressed in the text, i.e., adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs. Similarly, each semantic genus comprises species which contain their own types. The adjective genus of semantic domain is, for example, subsumed by agentive, complex, comparative, dative, derivational, nominal, simple, and superlative species. The agentive species of adjective genus forming a text may, for example, consist of types such as *fascinating* and *encouraging*.

While semantic schemata are many in type but few in frequency, the syntactic schemata are few in types but many in frequency. As the first genus of syntactic domain, conjunctions, for example, consist of just two species, i.e., phrasal and simple. The simple conjunction species of syntactic domain contribute schemata such as *and* and *or* to the formation of given texts. Similarly, determiners, prepositions, pronouns, and syntactic verbs consist of species whose types are few but frequently employed to connect the semantic schemata together cohesively and coherently. Khodadady's (2008) findings, for example, showed that only ***twelve*** types of syntactic verbs had been employed in the entire textbook called *Reading Media Texts: Iran-America Relations* (Khodadady, 1999b).

The parasyntactic domain of schemata consist of seven genera, i.e., abbreviations, interjections, names, numerals, para-adverbs, particles, and symbols whose type and frequency might be many, however, they have the same function as the syntactic schemata. For example, as many as 343 different names had been used in *Reading Media Texts: Iran-America Relations* (Khodadady, 1999b). In spite of being many in types, names are similar to pronouns in that the reader must know who they refer to in order to understand what is expressed in relation to presidents such as Bush and Khatami.

Based on the distinctions made regarding schema domains, Gholami (2006) designed a study to find out whether developing a SBCMCIT on each and all of the four semantic genera, i.e., adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs, will bring about any significant differences in the performance of test takers. To fulfill the objective, she administered the disclosed TOEFL to 92 undergraduate students majoring in English in two universities in Mashhad and employed their total scores on the TOEFL to establish five groups of test takers being homogeneous in their language proficiency. Then she developed 60 items on ***each*** of the four semantic ***genera*** comprising the authentic and unmodified text "why don't we just kiss and make up" (Dugatkin, 2005) and thus came up with a SBCMCIT in four versions. Gholami also developed a fifth version on the semantic ***domain*** which included a proportionately balanced number of all the semantic genera comprising the text and then administered the tests to the five homogenous groups. (The results will be presented in the Instrumentation section shortly.) In the present study the fifth version developed on the semantic ***domain*** was employed to explore whether there is any significant relationship between cognitive styles and performance on the SBCMICT.

II. METHOD

A. Participants

Two hundred fifty three undergraduate and graduate students majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, English Language and Literature, and English Translation at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Imam Reza University, Khayyam University, Mashhad Azad University, and Tehran University along with one hundred twenty seven students of FCE and CAE1 at Aryanpour College participated in the study voluntarily. The latter were studying agriculture, architecture, chemistry, dentistry, engineering, geology, management, medicine, nursing, Persian literature, pharmacy, and physics at various universities. One hundred and forty one (55.7%) were female and 112 (44.3%) were male whose age ranged from 18 to 53 (Mean = 24.52, SD = 4.470). All the participants spoke Persian as their mother language.

B. Instruments

Two instruments were employed in this study:

Group Embedded Figure Test

Witkin, Oltman, Raskin, and Karp (1971) developed the group embedded figure test (GEFT) and reported the reliability coefficient of 0.82 for the test. It comprises three sections with 25 complex figures from which participants identify eight sample forms. While section one of the GEFT includes seven figures mainly designed to warm up the test takers, sections two and three include nine complex figures each. The participants' are provided with sample form labeled A to H and required to locate them within the 25 complex figures by tracing the given forms over the lines of the complex figures in the same direction, size and proportion with a pencil. The complex figure is considered the dominant visual field and a given test taker's ability to identify the labeled sample form within the complex figures measures if s/he is dominated by the visual field or not. The first seven questions are treated as practice items and the remaining 18 questions are scored to determine the test takers' cognitive style. The total possible score on the GEFT is, therefore, 18 with a mean of 11. The test takers achieving a GEFT score below and above the mean are labeled FD and FI, respectively (e.g., Luk, 1998). Figure 1 provides a sample GEFT item requiring test-takers trace figure G in a complex figure.

Figure 1. An example GEFT item requiring tracing a given figure

Semantic Domain Schema-Based Cloze Multiple Choice Item Test

Gholami (2006) developed four versions of a close multiple choice item test (CMCIT) on 60 adjectives, 60 adverbs, 60 nouns and 60 verbs comprising the authentic and unmodified text "why don't we just kiss and make up" (Dugatkin, 2005). Since the three choices comprising the CMCIT had semantic and syntactic relations with the keyed response and their selection depended on understanding the keyed response within the context of the passage, she called them schema-based CMCITs (SBCMCITs). She also developed a fifth test called semantic domain SBCMCIT in her study. It consists of 14 adjectives, seven adverbs, 24 nouns and 15 verbs of the same text. When she administered the five SBCMCITs to 92 undergraduate students of English she obtained the results presented in Table 2. As can be seen, the verb and semantic domain SBCMCITs are the most and least reliable among the versions, i.e., .92 and .64, respectively. Since the reliability coefficient of the semantic domain SBCMCIT is .82 in the present study, the low reliability coefficient obtained by Gholami can be attributed to her small sample and the test's being the most difficult among the SBCMCITs as reflected in its mean, i.e., 20.3.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS AMONG THE FIVE VERSIONS OF THE SBCMCIT

SBCMCITs	# of items	Mean	SD	Alpha	TOEFL	Structure	Written expressions	Reading
Adjective	60	21.2	9.1	.87	.551*	.571*	.265	.607*
Adverb	60	24.7	10.7	.90	.700**	.504*	.633**	.628**
Noun	60	24.2	9.6	.87	.191	.125	.049	.256
Verb	60	22.0	12.1	.92	.193	-.133	.283	.205
Semantic domain	60	20.3	5.8	.64	.841**	.559*	.766**	.741**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As it is also shown in Table 2, the adverb SBCMCIT is the only test which correlated significantly with the TOEFL (0.70, p <.01) and its structure (0.50, p <.05), written expression (0.63, p <.01) and reading (0.63, p <.01). However, the semantic domain SBCMCIT showed the highest significant correlations not only with the TOEFL (0.84, p <.01) but

also with its structure (0.56, p <.05), written expression (0.77, p <.01) and reading (0.74, p <.01). Due to these highly significant correlations the semantic domain SBCMCIT was employed in the present study to find out whether the participants' cognitive styles will bear any significant relationship with their performance on semantic domain SBCMCIT.

C. Procedure

After coordinating with the authorities of some universities and colleges and receiving their instructors' verbal approval, the GEFT and the semantic domain SBCMCIT were administered on two different occasions with an interval of one and/or two weeks. One of the researchers was always present at testing sessions and answered whatever questions the participants raised in Persian. The tests were held under standard conditions.

D. Data Analysis

Following Khodadady (2008) all the schemata comprising "why don't we just kiss and make up" (Dugatkin, 2005) were parsed and codified according to their domains, genera, species, types and tokens in order to determine their frequency and percentage. The *p*-value, i.e., the number of correct answers divided by the total number of responses, and the point biserial correlation coefficients (r_{pbi}) of items comprising the semantic domain SBCMCIT were estimated to specify its well functioning items and establish its adjective, adverb, noun and verb subtests. For correlating the SBCMCIT and its subtests with GEFT, the scores obtained on the former were changed into standardized values by employing the Descriptives command of the SPSS and saving the standardized values as variables. This function helped change all the raw scores into Z scores. By employing the Z scores, the participants who scored -1 and below, +1 and higher, and those falling between -1 and +1 on the semantic domain SBCMCIT were classified as low, high and middle proficiency test takers. One way ANOVA analysis was also utilized to find out whether the mean scores on the GEFT and semantic domain SBCMCIT and its subtests differed significantly. All the estimates and tests were conducted via SPSS version 19 to test the following five hypotheses.

H1. The FD and FI test takers will perform significantly differently on the semantic domain SBCMCIT and its subtests.

H2. The GEFT, semantic domain SBCMCIT and its subtests will correlate significantly with each other.

H3. The correlations of FI test takers' scores on the SBCMCITs and its subtests will be significant and higher than those of the FDs.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 3 presents the schema domains, genera, tokens and their types. As can be seen, 1715 schema tokens or words constitute the entire text upon which the SBCMCIT is developed. This statistics is not, however, helpful in developing a test. The syntactic conjunction ***and***, for example, has a token of 40, i.e., it has been used 40 times in the text. Similarly, the semantic noun ***animal*** has a token of six. Many scholars relate the token of words to their difficulty level, i.e., the less frequent a given word, the more difficult it is to be learned (e.g., Fountain & Nation, 2000). In other words, selecting items on the basis of tokens will result in developing several items on the same schema and thus render them too easy.

TABLE 3
SCHEMA DOMAINS, GENERA AND TOKENS AND TYPES COMPRISING THE TEXT OF SBCMCIT

Schema Domain	Schema Genus	Tokens	Percent	Types	Percent
Semantic	Adjectives	141	8.2	97	13.8
	Adverbs	43	2.5	34	4.8
	Nouns	417	24.3	209	29.8
	Verbs	265	15.5	158	22.5
	Total	**866**	**50.5**	**498**	**70.9**
Syntactic	Conjunctions	116	6.8	13	1.9
	Determiners	153	8.9	24	3.4
	Prepositions	203	11.8	31	4.4
	Pronouns	113	6.6	32	4.6
	Syntactic verbs	53	3.1	21	3.0
	Total	**638**	**37.2**	**121**	**17.2**
Parasyntactic	Abbreviations	8	.5	5	0.7
	Names	41	2.4	28	4.0
	Numerals	4	.2	4	0.6
	Para-adverbs	117	6.8	45	6.4
	Particles	41	2.4	1	0.1
	Total	**211**	**12.3**	**83**	**11.8**
Total Schemata		1715	100.0	702	100.0

One of the greatest contributions of schema theory to language testing is its dependence on schema types rather than tokens. It requires tabulating and choosing the least frequent types on the basis of the percentage with which they constitute the text under comprehension. As can be seen in Table 3, 702 schema types constitute the text "why don't we just kiss and make up" (Dugatkin, 2005) out of which 498 (70.9%) are semantic in nature. This means that whatever messages are conveyed in the text, they lie in these 498 semantic schemata and they must, therefore, form seventy one percent of the test if not one hundred.

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the semantic domain SBCMCIT and its subtests developed on adjective, adverb, noun and verb schemata as well as GEFT. As can be seen, the percentage of item types in the former test follows the percentage of semantic schema types comprising the text. The percentage of noun-based items (40%) is, for example, the largest as noun schemata form the largest percentage (42%) of semantic schemata used in the text, i.e., 209 ÷ 498. The very unique feature of semantic domain SBCMCITs in accommodating a representative percentage of adjective, adverb, noun and verb schema types in its development has made it a very reliable test (α = .82).

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE SEMANTIC DOMAIN SBCMCIT, ITS SUBTESTS AND GEFT

SBCMCITs	N of items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean p-value	Mean r_{pbi}	Alpha
Adjective	14 (23%)	7.16	2.298	.51	.27	.40
Adverb	7 (12%)	4.22	1.414	.60	.29	.25
Noun	24 (40%)	11.66	3.426	.51	.28	.59
Verb	15 (25%)	6.91	2.830	.46	.33	.60
Semantic domain	60	30.35	8.350	.51	.29	.82
GEFT	18	9.60	4.580	.53	.54	.87

Table 5 presents the FD and FI group statistics on the adjective, adverb, noun, verb and semantic domain SBCMCIT as well as the result of one way ANOVA analysis. (The table belonging to ANOVA analysis has ***not*** been given to save space.). As can be seen, the mean scores of FI test takers are significantly higher than those of FD's not only on the semantic domain SBCMCITs but also on its subtests. These results *confirm* the first hypothesis that *the FD and FI test takers will perform significantly differently semantic domain SBCMCITs and its subtests.*

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF FD AND FI TEST TAKERS' SCORES ON THE SBCMCITS AND THEIR ANOVA ANALYSIS

Genus	Field	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	ANOVA
Adjective	Dependent	149	6.52	2.321	.190	F=31.372, df=1, p <.0001
	Independent	104	8.08	1.934	.190	
Adverb	Dependent	149	3.91	1.454	.119	F=19.345, df=1, p <.0001
	Independent	104	4.67	1.226	.120	
Nouns	Dependent	149	10.59	3.128	.256	F=41.26, df=1, p <.0001
	Independent	104	13.20	3.257	.319	
Verbs	Dependent	149	5.95	2.590	.212	F=48.828, df=1, p <.0001
	Independent	104	8.27	2.600	.255	
Semantic domain	Dependent	149	27.34	7.853	.643	F=57.669, df=1, p <.0001
	Independent	104	34.66	7.079	.694	

Table 6 presents the correlations among the GEFT, the semantic domain SBCMCITs and its subtests. As can be seen, the GEFT correlates significantly with the SBCMCITs developed on semantic genera and domain and thus confirm the second hypothesis that *the GEFT, semantic domain SBCMCIT and its subtests will correlate significantly with each other.* As can be seen, the correlation coefficient of the GEFT with the semantic domain SBCMCIT is 0.44 ($p < .01$), indicating that about 19% percent of test takers performance on the latter can be explained by the former. And most interestingly, the verb SBCMCIT shows the second highest correlation with the GEFT, i.e., .40 ($p < .01$), while its constituting items are fewer than the noun SBCMCIT, i.e., 15 and 24, respectively, revealing a previously unknown process in language learning, i.e., test takers employ their cognitive styles to answer verb items more than the nouns. In other words *verb schemata are more context-bound or field dependent than noun schemata*.

TABLE 6
CORRELATIONS AMONG THE GEFT, SEMANTIC DOMAIN SBCMCITS AND ITS SUBTESTS

Style	N	Adjective	Adverb	Noun	Verb	Semantic domain
Dependent	148	.213**	.157	.191*	.230**	.247**
Independent	105	-.163	-.082	-.185	-.208*	-.223*
GEFT	253	.351**	.291**	.377**	.401**	.441**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

As it can also be seen in Table 6, the adjective (r=.21, p<.01), noun (r=.19, p<.05), verb (r=.23, p<.01), and semantic domain SBCMCITs (r=.25, p<.01) show significant relationships with the FD test takers' performance on the GEFT

whereas only the verb and semantic domain SBCMCIT of the FI test takers show negatively significant correlations with the GEFT, i.e., -.21 ($p < .05$) and -.22 ($p < .05$), respectively. These results *disconfirm* the third hypothesis that *the correlations of FI test takers' scores on the SBCMCITs will be significant and higher than those of the FDs*. Although the mean scores of FI test takers were significantly higher than those of FDs, the latter's cognitive styles show unexpectedly higher and more significant relationships with the semantic domain SBCMCIT and its subtests, implying that their level of language proficiency was higher than those of the FIs.

In order to explain the negative relationship between the GEFT and the FI test takers' performance on the verb and semantic domain SBCMCITs, all test takers were divided into three low, middle and high proficiency groups on the basis of their z-scores on the semantic domain SBCMCIT. Table 7 presents the mean scores of the three proficiency groups on the SBCMCIT. It also shows the mean score of these test takers on the GEFT. As can be seen, the mean score of high proficiency test takers, i.e., 43.2, is higher than the middle, i.e., 30.9, and the low, i.e., 19.5, on the SBCMCIT. The one way ANOVA test revealed that the mean scores of low, middle and high proficiency groups were significantly different ($F=398.185$, $df=2$, $p < .0001$).

TABLE 7
THE MEAN SCORES OF LOW, MIDDLE AND HIGH PROFICIENCY PARTICIPANTS ON THE GEFT AND SBCMCIT

Proficiency	N	Mean		Std. Deviation		Std. Error	
		GEFT	SBCMCIT	GEFT	SBCMCIT	GEFT	SBCMCIT
Low	56	6.29	19.48	4.207	2.157	.562	.288
Middle	156	10.12	30.89	4.319	4.682	.346	.375
High	41	12.17	43.15	3.514	3.692	.549	.577
Total	253	9.60	30.35	4.580	8.350	.288	.525

As it can also be seen in Table 7, the mean scores obtained by low, middle and high proficiency groups on the GEFT are different. The one way ANOVA test revealed that the difference is significant at the highest level possible, i.e. $F=26.634$, $df=2$, $p < .0001$, among the three groups of proficiency. In order to be sure that the significant difference existed among each and all of the three different proficiency groups, not just the three as a whole, the Scheffe post hoc test presented in Table 8 was run on the mean scores on both the SBCMCIT and GEFT. As can be seen, the mean scores of the three groups were significantly different from each other on both cognitive styles and language proficiency tests.

TABLE 8
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF THE SBCMCITS AND GEFT CONDUCTED VIA SCHEFFE POST HOC TEST

(I) Proficiency Level	(J) Proficiency Level	SBCMCIT			GEFT		
		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Middle	-11.409*	.638	.000	-3.836*	.650	.000
	High	-23.664*	.842	.000	-5.885*	.858	.000
Middle	Low	11.409*	.638	.000	3.836*	.650	.000
	High	-12.255*	.719	.000	-2.049*	.733	.021
High	Low	23.664*	.842	.000	5.885*	.858	.000
	Middle	12.255*	.719	.000	2.049*	.733	.021

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results presented in Table 7 also indicate that the classification of participants into FD and FI on the basis of their *raw* scores on the GEFT is misleading because middle proficiency test takers employ FD and FI cognitive styles as compensatory strategies to reach the desired proficiency level. It is, therefore, suggested that the exploration of the relationship between the GEFT and an ability measure such as the SBCMCIT must be based on the mean scores obtained by predefined groups rather than raw scores on the GEFT. The mean of the middle proficiency participants on the GEFT, for example, is 10.12. However, a look at their raw scores on the GEFT shows that they range from 1 to 17. In other words, determining the relationship between cognitive styles and abilities such as language proficiency must be based on the mean GEFT in relation to a defined level of ability, e.g., low, middle and high, rather than the ability as a whole.

Table 9 presents the correlation coefficients obtained among the GEFT, semantic domain SBCMCIT and its subtests. As can be seen, all test takers' scores on the GEFT show significant correlations not only with semantic domain SBCMCIT but also with its four subtests. The significant correlations, however, disappear when proficiency levels are considered separately, implying that it is the language proficiency level measured by the SBCMCITs which entails the employment of certain cognitive styles rather than vice versa.

TABLE 9
CORRELATIONS OBTAINED AMONG THE GEFT, SEMANTIC DOMAIN SBCMCIT AND ITS SUBTESTS

Proficiency groups	Adjective	Adverb	Noun	Verb	Semantic
Low Proficiency	.198	-.043	.000	.042	.199
Middle Proficiency	.136	.150	.194*	.236**	.280**
High Proficiency	-.235	-.125	-.164	-.027	-.264
All Proficiencies	.351**	.291**	.377**	.401**	.441**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Since low proficiency learners have little knowledge of the semantic schemata to comprehend the passage, their cognitive styles fails to play any significant role on the SBCMCITs. Similarly, the highly proficient learners depend *solely* on their schema-based knowledge to cope with the reading comprehension task. The middle proficiency learners are the only group who employ their cognitive styles to compensate for their missing knowledge in answering verb and noun SBCMCITs in particular and the semantic domain SBCMCIT in general. In other words, the application of both FD and FI cognitive styles by middle proficiency learners of English explains approximately eight percent of their performance on the semantic domain SBCMICT. Since the mean score of the middle proficiency group is 10.12 on the GEFT, it indicates that half of the test takers in this group employ their field dependency to find the keyed response on the SBCMCIT while the other half utilize their field independency to fulfill the same function.

IV. CONCLUSION

A cloze multiple choice item test (MCIT) developed on the adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs constituting the semantic domain of an unmodified and authentic text was administered to 253 undergraduate and graduate students of English to determine whether there is a significant relationship between their cognitive styles and language proficiency. In contrast to traditional cloze MCITs whose four choices are constructed intuitively, the test employed in this study consisted of items whose three choices had syntactic, semantic and discoursal relationships with the keyed response and it was, therefore, referred to as schema-based cloze multiple choice item test (SBCMCIT). The choices of the SBCMCITs are called *competitives* in the literature in order to differentiate them from *distracters* as their traditional counterparts. The results showed that the SBCMICT is a fair measure of language proficiency because the performance of neither low nor high proficiency test takes' on the SBCMCIT showed any significant relationships with the GEFT as a widely employed measure of field dependency (FD) and independency (FI) cognitive styles.

Since choosing the keyed response from among the three syntactically, semantically and discoursely related *competitives* on the SBCMCIT does require focusing not only on the *competitives* themselves, i.e., field independence, but also on the context in which the keyed response appears, i.e., field dependency, the performance of low and high proficiency test takers on the SBCMCIT and GEFT do not show any significant relationships with each other. Both FD and FI middle proficiency test takers, however, employ their cognitive styles to compensate for their lack of language proficiency required to comprehend the reading passage and thus their scores on the noun, verb and semantic domain SBCMCITs and GEFT correlate significantly with each other. The findings of this study, therefore, show that the SBCMICTs are not only valid and reliable but also fair measures of language proficiency because they do not favor any specific cognitive style over another. A replication study is, however, required to find out whether similar results will be obtained if the SBCMCITs and GEFT are administered to a similar but larger sample and/or the proficiency level of the test takers is determined by another test such as the TOEFL and IELTS before the SBCMCITs are administered.

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Does Direct Instruction Develop Pragmatic Competence? Teaching Refusals to EFL Learners of English

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***Abstract*—To achieve communicative competence, L2 learners' need to develop their pragmatic competence and this may be fostered with the help the learners receive from their teachers. This paper is an attempt to investigate the efficacy of explicit instruction of refusal at pragmatic level to four types of acts- invitations, suggestions, offers and requests. Adopting a pretest/posttest design as with treatment and control group, the two groups in this study were exposed to the treatment. Data collected by means of written Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as well as written self report suggest that the instructional approach resulted in gain in L2 pragmatic ability of the experimental group. The delayed posttest used in the study confirmed the findings. The findings may contribute to the interlanguage pragmatic pedagogy, especially in the EFL context and suggest that meta-pragmatic information the L2 learners received through pedagogy may lead to learners' L2 pragmatic development.**

***Index Terms*—pragmatics, pragmatic competence, explicit instruction, refusals**

After long years of equating second language learning with linguistic accuracy, there is now a general consensus that while grammatical competence is an integral part of language competence, it cannot be equated with grammatical knowledge. Based on different models of communicative competence proposed in the history of applied linguistics in order to be communicatively competent a second language learner needs something more than grammatical knowledge. With the redefinition of the communicative competence and inception of communicative approach, primary importance was given to the functional abilities in the second language. This functional ability has the purpose of understanding and producing language that is appropriate to communicative situations in accordance with specific sociocultural factors (Rueda, 2006). Meanwhile, there is the issue of pragmatic competence as another aspect of communicative competence which is concerned with factors affecting the meaning of utterances produced by interlocutors. Pragmatic competence is defined as knowledge of communicative action, how to carry it out, and the ability to use language appropriately according to contextual factors (Kasper, 1997). It is believed that whenever there is a failure to observe these parameters communication breakdowns or misunderstanding may occur (Thomas, 1983). Therefore, in case of second language learners' their utterances may be regarded as meaningless or rude.

Non-native speakers of a language do not often demonstrate their capability of using such ability and it has been suggested that explicit pragmatic instruction be incorporated in the second language curricula to help second language learners with the deficiency (e.g. Vásquez et al., 2009). This includes both pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics as the two areas of pragmatics which should be acquired by second language learners for the purpose of achieving full communicative competence in a target language.

Justification for direct instruction has been provided with cognitive psychology. The prevalent assumption of 1980's that language learning can take place without some degree of consciousness is not theoretically viable and hotly debated (Nassaji and Fotos, 2004). Based on Ellis (2008), the role of *unconscious learning* has been exaggerated in this decade neglecting the fact that conscious attention to form, or what has been called "noticing" is a necessary condition for language learning (Nassaji and Fotos 2004). According to Schmidt (1995), acquisition must entail awareness and that "learning requires awareness *at the time of learning*" (p. 26). To stress the importance of consciousness, Schmidt (1995) also states that "whatever is noticed in the input will become intake for learning" (p. 20), whether this noticing is unintentional or deliberate; if it is noticed it will become intake. (Schmidt, 1995). It is such view of noticing which may provide the rationale for the explicit teaching of pragmatics in second language context.

Instructional suggestions as to the role of pragmatics have also been supported by scholars such as Kasper & Schmidt (1996) and Bardovi-Harlig (1999). Rueda (2006) holds that the findings of such studies back up the assumption about the positive effect of pedagogical intervention, and, as he maintains, "in this way the view that pragmatic ability can be systematically developed through planned classroom activities" (p. 170). Kasper & Rose (2001) also refer to different current studies which have aimed at investigating learners' use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic ability mention that the findings suggest that pragmatic ability can be taught. (Yoshimi, 2001).

It is assumed that second language contexts is more advantageous than foreign language settings for learning pragmatic rules this is, as Kasper (2001) notes, learners in a second language context are fully exposed to the target language in the real-life situation and they have opportunity to use it in the appropriate contexts. As Martinez-Flor and Uso Juan (2006) note "[T]his fact allows them to develop their pragmatic ability, since they may become involved in situations where they are required to interpret utterances in context or interact with a variety of participants in different environments" (p. 51). Contrary to second language learners in the real-life context, learners who are learning the language in a foreign language context do not have the chance to get involved in communicative situations in order to fully develop their language competence. Furthermore, they rarely have the opportunity to see native speakers communicating in their language. Therefore, creating conditions to developing learners' pragmatic competence is not only necessary for both those who are studying the foreign language contexts, but also for the learners in the second language context. Martinez-Flor and Uso Juan (2006) put it in this way

Indeed, in spite of all the advantages that these particular settings may offer for pragmatic development, it has been claimed that, even after a long period of contact with the target language, some pragmatic aspects still continue to be incomplete (p. 51).

It should be mentioned that pragmatic competence is not just synonymous with appropriate use of language. Brock and Nagasaka (2005) explain what pragmatic competence includes by saying that,

[it] encompasses a variety of abilities in the use and interpretation of language in context…. These include a speaker's ability to use language for different purposes (such as greeting, requesting, informing, demanding and so on), the speaker's ability to adapt or change language according to the needs or expectations of the listener or situation, and the speaker's ability to follow accepted rules; the maxims, if you will, for conversation and narrative. (p. 19).

In this sense, a growing body of research has focused on the importance of pragmatics in second language acquisition. A substantial body of these studies has demonstrated that there is a need for explicit pragmatics instruction. For example, Tanaka (1997) found that in order to gain mastery of communicative competence, L2 learners have to acquire pragmatic competence. In a similar study, Koike (1997) concluded that although adult second language learners have gained a satisfactory command of the L2 grammatical and lexical knowledge, they are often not able to produce pragmatically appropriate utterances.

One of the sensitive pragmatic issues, among others, is the refusal involved in daily communication of native speakers. In refusal situations a variety of forms are employed. If second language learners are not familiar with different ways of offering refusals, their addresses in the second language context may misunderstand them. But what is refusal? As Al-Kahtani (2005) explains "a refusal is to respond negatively to an offer, request, invitation, etc." (p. 3). He adds that "since expressing 'no' is not easy for non-native speakers, how one says 'no' is more important in many societies than the answer itself" (p. 3). Lingli and Wannaruk (2010) refer to Brown & Levinson (1987) who define refusal as "a face-threatening and affectively negative speech act and can be characterized as a response to another's act (e.g., request, invitation, offer, suggestion), rather than as an act initiated by the speaker" (p. 94). They are considered to be face threatening since the listener's or speaker's positive or negative face is at risk whenever a refusal is called for or carried out. Lingli and Wannaruk maintain that since refusals are typically used by the second pair in the interaction, preplanning for them is not possible and demanding. This makes them more sensitive and complicated to be incorporated in an instructional course.

Related literature shows that a few studies have dealt with the explicit instruction of refusals in English (i.e., King & Silver, 1993; Morrow, 1995; Silva, 2003) especially in foreign language context. The main feature of the studies conducted on explicit teaching of pragmatics is that the instructional time is relatively short. Moreover, none of these studies employed control group in their design. The teaching procedures in different studies on the issue also vary, and such variation may have contributed to different results of the studies. Furthermore, to the authors' knowledge, nearly all of these studies are just of qualitative design.

Due to the delimitations of the studies carried out on refusals in the English language and because of the fact that such studies in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, especially in the context of Iran is quite limited, the present study was carried out with the purpose of investigating the effect of teaching refusals explicitly to Iranian University students. Therefore, the question to be answered was as follows:

1. Does explicit instruction have a significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' production of linguistically accurate and pragmatically appropriate requests?

I. Method

A. Participants

The participants in this study were 64 Iranian intermediate university students, age, 19-25. Because the necessity of working with intact groups makes random assignment impossible, the research was an intervention study; therefore, it was quasi-experimental.

B. Instructional Targets

Different kinds of English refusals have been found. These refusals, based on Lingli and Wannaruk (2010) include four types: refusing suggestions, refusing invitations, refusing requests, and refusing offers. Each type of these refusals has different kinds of statuses. For example, refusing a person of higher status differs from refusing a person of lower status. The instructional targets in this study were manly chosen from Wannaruk (2008). Based on Wannaruk refusal strategies are classified based on refusal types, refuser statuses, and refusals strategies. "I'll be doing my homework that night." is an example for "explanation" strategy.

C. The Instruction

To investigate the research question, an explicit instruction was used I the study. Following Yoshimi (2001), the following steps were taken to teach pragmatics to learners.

1. Presentation of learning targets:
a. Learners listen to the dialogue in which segment of the speech act-here refusal-is embedded.
b. Learners answer some questions which are meaning focused.
2. Explaining learning targets:
a. Teacher explaining explicitly about the function and use of refusal strategies
b. Teacher leading a discussion and comparison of Farsi and American English refusals strategies
3. Planning sessions
a. Learners planning the production nonformal, extended discourse
b. Learners listening to the dialogues again
c. Learners preparing for role play based on the situation in the dialogues
d. Learners working in pairs
e. Teacher offering an explicit use in refusal strategies whenever learners need
4. Communication session
a. Learners having communicative practice of the target items in conjunction with extended discourse
b. Teacher selecting several pairs to act out the dialogue
5. Feedback
a. Corrective feedback: providing feedback on the use of target items and the production of extended discourse
b. Teacher correcting explicitly any inappropriate use

The most important stage of the instruction is explaining learning targets. Based on this stage, the function and use of refusal strategies was explained by the teacher and later refusal strategies were compared in the source and target languages (Lingli and Wannaruk, 2010). The second stage which was of a great importance was the feedback stage which led the participants create their utterances using the speech acts. This was followed by the teacher's necessary correction of inappropriate utterances made by the students.

II. Procedure

The experimenter randomly assigned the 64 participants to one of two experimental and control group. The two groups were tested with a pretest and a posttest. The pretest was conducted two weeks prior to treatment. The posttest was conducted one day after the treatment and the posttest two weeks after the posttest. Both the pretest, posttest and the delayed posttest were the same written Discourse Completion Task (DCT) (see Appendix). The DCT was adapted from a study by Lingli and Wannaruk (2010).There were some necessary changes in the questionnaire; some items were deleted and substituted with those which were in line with the purpose of the study and some ambiguous ones were paraphrased. DCT items typically include a situational description which is followed by a brief dialogue. In these kinds of tests, the participant is required to complete an open slot so that a specific communicative act is elicited.

To answer the test, 30 minutes time was given to the participants. However, when they found any point unclear, they could ask the teacher for help.

There were four aspects of appropriacy as rating criteria and the analytic Likert 5 for marking was employed. Therefore, the scale of 5 indicates "completely appropriate"; the scale of 4 refers to "mostly appropriate"; the scale of 3 as "generally appropriate"; the scale of 2 means "not very appropriate but acceptable"; the scale of 1 indicates "not appropriate and not acceptable".

For the DCT scoring, two bilingual English speaking ELT teachers residing in Iran were chosen.

To confirm participants' answers to the written DCT (Kasper & Rose, 2002) and in order to triangulate the data, a written self report was conducted after the delayed posttest. The self report was taken from Duan (2008) and modified. These reports presented learners' views of the appropriateness of refusals they had been instructed (See the Appendix). The self report consisted of four questions and participants were required to answer the questions either in Farsi.

To categorize the self-report data the following steps were taken. Firstly, the participants were allowed to answer the questions either in Farsi or English. Secondly every single opinion was identified in detail. Thirdly, the researcher was careful to find the differences and similarities between the participants' statements in order to classify them. Fifthly, these statements were grouped roughly into different categories and finally, the conclusions were drawn from the categories made.

III. Results

If we take a look at Table 1 which is named "Descriptive statistics of the pre-test taken by both control and experimental groups", we will realize that the difference between the two groups regarding their mean and SD is not significant. As we see, the SD of Control Group Pre-test is 2. 75897 and the SD of Experimental Pre-test is 2.99395. The range in both of them is 10 and their mean is approximately the same (Control Group Pre-test Mean is 14.5313 and Experimental Pre-test Mean is 14.5625). Nevertheless, if we see Table 2., we will realize that in Post-Test Control Group Standard Deviation is 2.29919 while Post-Test Experimental Group Standard Deviation is 4.60616 (Which is approximately double that of the Post-Test Control Group SD). In the meantime, both groups have very much different Means. Put another way, Post-Test Control Group Mean is 14.5625 but Post-Test Experimental Group Mean is 51.5938. This shows a drastic change in the performance of the Experimental Group

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PRE-TEST CONTROL/EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
PreCGroup	32	10.00	10.00	20.00	14.5313	2. 75897	7.612
PreEGroup	32	10.00	10.00	20.00	14.5625	2.99395	8.964
Valid N (listwise)	32						

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF POST-TEST CONTROL/EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
PoCGroup	32	8.00	11.00	19.00	14.5625	2.29919	5.286
PoEGroup	32	15.00	43.00	58.00	51.5938	4.60616	21.217
Valid N (listwise)	32						

Meanwhile, if we take a look at Table 3., we will notice the results based on paired t-test which showed that there was no significant difference between the performance of subjects in the Pre-test Control Group and that of the Experimental Group. The amount of Observed T with 95% Confidence interval of the differences with 31 degree of freedom was -.111 which is by far lower than what it should be to show a meaningful difference between the performance of the Control and Experimental Groups. (To be meaningful, the amount of Observed T with 95% Confidence interval of the differences with 31 degree of freedom must be at least 2.040). So, it can be concluded that the difference between the two groups regarding their performance was not significant. Put another way, no superiority of one group over the other was observed. However, Table 4. (Post-test Control/Experimental groups Paired t-test), shows us a major difference between the performance of subjects in the two groups. In other words the amount of Observed T with 95% Confidence interval of the differences with 31 degree of freedom was -40.756 which provides a significant difference between the two groups (The Experimental Group performed by far much better that the Control Group).

TABLE 3.
PAIRED T-TEST OF PRE-TEST CONTROL/EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 PreCGroup/PreEGroup	-.03125	1.59605	.28214	-.60669	-.54419	-.111	31	.913

TABLE 4.
PAIRED T-TEST OF POST-TEST CONTROL/EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 PostCGroup/PostEGroup	-37.03125	5.13988	.90861	-38.88437	-35.17813	-40.756	31	.000

To be more confident, certain and sure that the treatment was the only reason for the difference made between the two groups and nothing else a second post test called "The Delayed Post-Test" was administered in which both The Control and The Experimental Group took the test for the third time with the results shown in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5. shows that there is still a big difference between the Control and Experimental Groups' Means in the Delayed Post Test (14.3437 vs. 50.5000). Meanwhile, the Control Group Standard Deviation in the Delayed Post Test is almost half of that of the Experimental Group (2.45750 vs. 4.72468).

Meanwhile, regarding the paired t-test results gained for the Control/Experimental Groups' Delayed Post-Test (as seen in Table 6), we can see that the amount of observed t is still -40.106 which means that there is still a significant difference between the two groups regarding their performance on the test results. In other words, after two weeks, still the Experimental Group had a much higher performance than the Control Group in the test given after the treatment. So, we can be more confident that the results gained are due to the treatment.

TABLE 5.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CONTROL/EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS' DELAYED POST-TEST

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
DPosCGroup	32	9.00	10.00	19.00	14.3437	.43443	2.45750
DPosEGroup	32	17.00	41.00	58.00	50.5000	.83521	4.72468
Valid N (listwise)	32						

TABLE 6.
PAIRED T-TEST OF CONTROL/EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS' DELAYED POST-TEST

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 DPosCGroup/DPosEGroup	-36.15625	5.09971	.90151	-37.99489	-34.31761	-40.106	31	.000

IV. DISCUSSION

The research question sought to investigate the effect of explicit teaching of refusals to EFL learners. Based on the findings, it can be argued that instruction has a significantly affected participants' use of refusal. This study seems to provide evidence supporting Schmidt's (1990) idea which regarded noticing as an important condition for acquisition. According to Schmidt, awareness is required for learning to take place and noticing is needed to input to intake. Regarding the present study, explicit teaching of grammar during different stages of the treatment leads learners notice the pragmatic aspects of language.

It could also be argued that teachers should not suffice to assume that linguistic mastery of language is the ultimate goal of foreign language instruction. Foreign language learners who are away from the real context, where they can have contact with native speakers, should be taught to make use of pragmalinguistic features of language. Such features could be incorporated into the classroom activities while making use of films, videos as well as authentic materials.

Based on the theoretical assumptions which provided the underlying foundation for the present study and the findings, further longitudinal times series research is needed to investigate the effect of the treatment in the long run and make sure whether the obtained results are due to the treatment and whether they have turned to be part of the learner's input.

APPENDIX

Table: Instructional Targets

Stimulus Types	Refuser Status	Refusals Strategies	Typical Expressions	Situation
Refusals to Invitations	L-H	1. Positive feeling 2. Negative ability 3. Explanation	I'd love to (positive feeling), but I can't (negative feeling), I have to work (explanation).	Refusing a teacher's /a boss's invitation to a party
	E-E	1. No 2. Gratitude, Future acceptance 3. Explanation	No (No), thanks (gratitude), maybe next time (future acceptance), I need to get back and work on my project (explanation).	Refusing a friend's invitation to see a movie
	H-L	1. Gratitude 2. Regret 3. Explanation	Oh, thanks for the invitation (gratitude), Sorry (regret), but I'm not prepared enough to address the group (explanation).	Refusing a junior student's or an employee's invitation to speak for a lecture
Refusals to Suggestions	L-H	1. Negative ability, Pause filler 2. Explanation 3. Alternative	Well, Hmm…(pause filler), I would rather not (negative ability). I had planned to take another course next semester (explanation). I'll take the stats after that (alternative).	Refusing an advisor's suggestion to study another course
	E-E	1. Pause filler 2. Positive feeling 3. Explanation	Hum…(pause filler). That would be nice if I had time (positive feeling). I'm tired of working on it (explanation).	Refusing a friend's suggestions about a research topic or to try a new design
	H-L	1. Negative ability 2. Explanation 3. Alternative	Well, no (negative ability). Actually it's very important that we review it anyway (explanation). I'll change the design next time (alternative).	Refusing a student's suggestion to skip the details
Refusals to Offers	L-H	1. Ppositive feeling (Negative ability), 2. Gratitude 3. Explanation	It sounds like a great opportunity (positive feeling), but I'm going to have to pass on it (negative ability). No, Thanks (gratitude). I have a number of other things I want to focus on (explanation).	Refusing a dean's offer or a boss's offer
	E-E	1. No 2. Gratitude 3. Explanation	No (No). Thank you you're very kind (gratitude). I don't have far to go and I will be okay (explanation).	Refusing a friend's offer for a ride/a piece of cake
	H-L	1. Give a comfort 2. Letting the interlocutor off the hook.	Don't worry (give a comfort). I know it was an accident (letting the interlocutor off the hook).	Refusing a cleaning lady's paying for broken vase
Refusals to Requests	L-H	1. Explanation 2. Alternative 3. Regret	I have that doctor's appointment (explanation). Can't Carrie (sister) do that for you? (alternative). I'm sorry Mom (regret).	Refusing a mother's request
	E-E	1. Regret 2. Expanation 3. Alternative	I'm sorry (regret), but I need to be glued to this computer until tomorrow morning (explanation). Perhaps someone else does not have such a tight deadline (alternative).	Refusing a friend's request to use a computer
	H-L	1. Positive feeling 2. Regret 3. Explanation	I'd really like to help you out(positive feeling) but, sorry, I'm afraid (regret), I'm really strapped for time right now and can't really afford to (explanation).	Refusing a junior member's request to interview

L-H=a lower refuser to a higher interlocutor, E-E= an equal refuser to an equal interlocutor, H-L= a higher refuser to a lower interlocutor (adopted from Wannaruk, 2008).

Written DCT
In this set of questionnaire, there are some communication situations and you are supposed to interact with someone; however, you should act so real as if you are the person in that situation. You are required to refuse anything you are told, be it a request, a suggestion, an invitation, or an offer. Write down whatever response that you would give in a real condition.
1. You are discussing with your professor about your final paper which should be submitted in two weeks. Your professor states that in his/her next class, there is going to be a guest speaker and invites you to be in his class too, but you cannot. (Invitation: refusal to higher status) Your professor: Listen, a guest speaker is coming to my next class. He will be talking about a topic pertinent to your paper. Would you like to attend the class? What you say in refusal:
2. One of your friends asks you to be with them for dinner; however, you can't bear his/her husband/wife. (Invitation: refusal to equal status) Your friend: Would you like to come for dinner Sunday night? We are going to have a small get together. The way you refuse:
3. Being a senior student in the department, a freshman you have met before invites you to have lunch with him/her, but you don't like it. (Invitation: refusing to lower status) Freshman: Can I invite you to have lunch with me? What you say as refusal:
4. Your boss has asked you to find a report and you are looking for it through the piles of stuffs on your desk. At this time, your boss arrives. (Suggestion: refusing to higher status) Your boss: I suggest you to make a better organization in your job. Like me, you can try to make notes for yourself not to forget things. Your refusal:
5. At a friend's house, you are watching TV. He/she offers you a snack. You reject it and say that you are getting fat and are not satisfied with it. Your friend: This is the diet I told you about before. Do you like to try it? You can lose weight. What you reply for refusal:
6. You teach language at a university. In the middle of the term, one of your students wants to talk to you. Student: Sorry, some of my classmates and I were talking about an issue. We think it would be better if you could kindly work more on conversation and less on grammar. (Suggestions: refusing to equal status) The way you refuse:
7. You are working in an advertising agency. Your boss offers you a raise in salary and also a promotion if you go to a new office. You like to stay where you are. Your boss calls you to his office today. (Offer: refusing to higher status) Boss: What about an executive position in our new Hickton office which is three hours from here by plane. You will also get a good raise in your salary. What you say as refusal:
8. You have some money problems. Though your friend offers you some financial help, you don't like to accept it. (Offer: refusing to equal status) Your friend: I know you money problem and I want to help you as you have always helped me when I was in need. Can I offer you a $20 help? Your refusal reply:
9. You are in your house with one of your friends talking admiringly about the pen you got from your father. Your friend puts the pen on a low table where your nanny goes past and this causes the pen to fall on the floor and get ruined. (Offer: refusing to lower status) Nanny: I'm really sorry. I will buy you a new one. What you say as refusal:
10. Your professor asks you to help him in planning a class party, but have a busy week ahead. (Request: refusing to high status) Your professor: We need some friends for planning a class party. Can we count on you? The way you refuse:
11. One of your classmates who is usually absent from classes asks for your class notes, but you don't like to give him the notes. (Request: refusing to equal status) Your classmate: Unfortunately, I was absent in the previous class. Could you kindly lend me your notes? What you say in refusal:
12. Tomorrow you are going to have final exam. As you are studying, a relative of yours asks you to help him with his studies, but you can't do it. (Request: refusing to lower status) Your relative: I have some problems with my studies. Could you please help me with them? The way you refuse:

Written Self-Report

Name_____ Class_____
1. Do you feel any difference in your communication in English after the instruction? Can you give some examples? 2. Do you think that such an instruction was needed? Why? 3. What is your opinion about the method used in teaching American refusals? 4. Do you think that if you are in a real conversation with an English native speaker, you can use the refusal expressions taught here? Do you think the instruction would cause a great difference? Why?

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