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# Making the Dream of a Sámi School Come True: Voices from the Field

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**Abstract**—The development of the Sámi's own schooling system has been hindered by the history of assimilation, colonialism, and power relations. In Finland, there is no model of an independent Sámi School that is based on the Sámi culture. In this article, opinions of the experts of Sámi education (N=64) on the model of a possible Sámi School and its core obstacles and methods of development are introduced. The data were collected through individual writings and group discussions. Sámi education should hold a more autonomous position and it should have a special Sámi curriculum where the Sámi language would have a central role. The macro level of education should be developed so that sovereign Sámi education could be realized. An attitudinal change is also called for in order to perceive the importance and special nature of Sámi education. A model of a Sámi drum that strengthens the position of Sámi education is introduced as the conclusion.

**Index Terms**—Sámi education, Sámi pedagogy, cultural sensitivity in education, Sámi teachers, indigenous culture, indigenous teachers

## I. INTRODUCTION

The first national Sámi Pedagogy Conference was held in Inari, Finnish Lapland, in 8-9 December 2011. The conference was organized by units that provide Sámi research and education: University of Lapland, Regional State Administrative Agency of Lapland, The Sámi Education Institute and Giellagas Institute. The purpose was to gather Sámi-speaking teachers and educational authorities of the Sámi administrative district and discuss the connection between research and education. The aim was to listen to experts of Sámi education and try to figure out means to support their role and to develop pedagogical methods in Sámi teaching. This article includes analyses of schooling questions in the field of Sámi education in Finland but the issue as such is of importance for indigenous peoples' possibilities to develop their culture sensitive teaching based on their own circumstances.

This article is a part of the authors' joint project that aims at developing northern teacher education and which is a part of the Love-based leadership – interdisciplinary approach research project (see University of Lapland, 2011). Kaarina Määttä works as the professor of educational psychology at the University of Lapland and has supervised dozens of doctoral theses, including Pigga Keskitalo's and Satu Uusiautti's theses. University of Lapland provides teacher education and one of the strategic emphases of the university is the northern dimension as the strength. Dr. Keskitalo has worked in the field of Sámi teacher education, in Kautokeino, Norway, for years. She is a Sámi teacher and researcher interested in developing culturally relevant education. Dr. Uusiautti works as a post-doc researcher at the University of Lapland and her special field is in human strengths and positive strategies that enhance human well-being at various areas of life. As a research group, we form a team of experts who share a desire to create models that could further development of teaching and education. Educational research supports intercultural dialogue that we wanted to participate in through writing back together idea. It is important to share the information with the community—both the mainstream society and the Sámi communities—through scientific research.

Indigenous cultures, languages and ways of life are under constant threat of discrimination and lack educational opportunities. Giving voice to experts of indigenous peoples' education is important when aiming at promoting development that respects indigenous peoples' values and traditions. We support the idea that the aim of educational research is to support and protect human rights and fundamental freedom and right to pursue social and economic development.

## II. THE PRESENT STATUS OF SÁMI EDUCATION

The Sámi form a heterogeneous group of approximately 70,000–100,000 people (depending on the method of assessment) who share linguistic ties and some cultural features. The Sámi live in a wide area called Sápmi which

means the geographical area populated traditionally by the Sámi. The Sámi residential area expands to the northern regions of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia, and the border area between south and middle Sweden and Norway. At the moment, nine different language groups are left in the Sámi regions of the Nordic countries and Russia. The Sámi languages are categorized as endangered (Magga et al., 2005).

The Constitution of Finland section 17 says that the Sámi, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Provisions for the Sámi's right to use the Sámi language with authorities are laid down by an act in the Sámi domicile area and in court and with other authorities. Enontekiö, Inari, northern Sodankylä (Vuotso area), and Utsjoki municipalities form the Sámi domicile area in Finland (Constitution of Finland, 1999; see Figure 1).

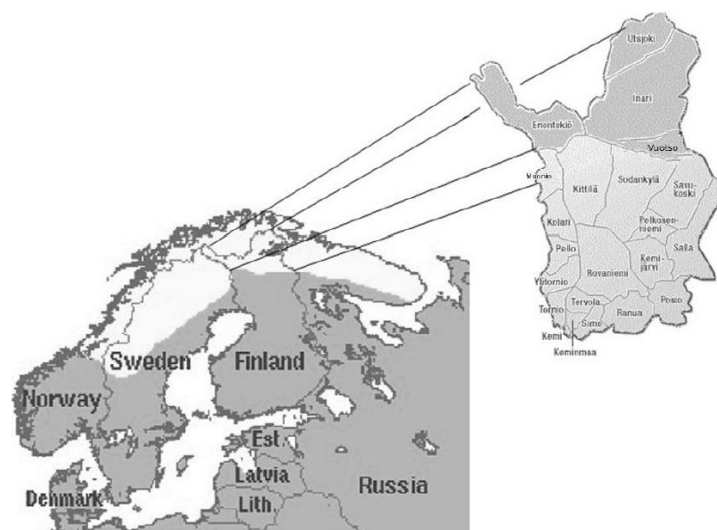


Figure 1. The Sámi domicile area in Finland and its neighboring countries.

Of the countries with a Sámi population, Norway has developed Sámi education the most. In the Sámi administrative district of Norway, the Sámi have a special Sámi comprehensive school that follows a Sámi curriculum with the emphasis on the idea of multicultural, integrated school. In Finland, Sámi education is organized so that schools follow the national Finnish curriculum and Sámi children study together with Finnish children in the same schools. Separate Sámi grades are arranged in the Sámi domicile area. Sámi children are taught the Sámi language for two hours a week outside the Sámi domicile area. Yet, about 75 % of under-10-year-old Sámi-speaking children live outside traditional area and lack proper support and strong pedagogy for their native language.

### III. METHODS

The data were obtained at the Sámi Pedagogy Conference among people who work with Sámi education. The participants of the research (N= 64) participated in the conference and were asked to share their experiences of Sámi education. The participants were teachers from the schools and daycare centers of the Sámi domicile area, local school authorities and representatives of the Finnish and Norwegian Sámi Parliaments and higher education. In this article, we call them experts of Sámi education just to have a common name for the participants of the research.

This article answers two main questions:

- (1) What are the most salient disincentives to the realization of Sámi pedagogy in the opinions of the experts of Sámi education?
- (2) How could the originality of Sámi pedagogy be furthered according to the perceptions of the experts of Sámi education?

Adhering to the abovementioned research questions, the empirical data were obtained in three phases. The participants first answered the first question by listing factors that they thought that could hinder or impede the realization of Sámi pedagogy. The participants were asked to write as many-sided and ample list as possible. Factors from the questionnaires were grouped by the researchers after which the second data were gathered through group interviews: the participants were divided into groups of 6-10 that were asked to discuss the second research question, the means of removing the obstacles of the realization of Sámi pedagogy. At the third phase, groups introduced their discussions to other conference participants and the plenary speakers summed up the themes.

Research involving indigenous people is being undertaken by researchers, who bring forward worldviews that shape the approach of the research, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and the epistemology, methodology, and ethics. Many times such research bridges western practices and indigenous knowledge; however, bringing together these two worldviews can also present challenges. It might be challenging to find a way of bringing together Indigenous ways of knowing and western ways of conducting research, specifically qualitative inquiry. (Lavallée, 2009.) We try to meet



this challenge as a research team that consists of both indigenous and non-indigenous researchers. We as researchers are aware of our position and want to show humble respect for this task. Yet, we want to share our experiences and expertise to develop the field through our collaboration. Simultaneously, we are aware that there are educational developmental projects going on in each country with a Sámi population. We want to contribute to this discussion and to the growing scholarly work of bridging indigenous ways of knowing and western principles (see Smith, 1999).

We applied here the qualitative content analysis method with emphases on taking account indigenous research framework (see Smith, 1999). The results from individual writings and group discussions were transcribed. The data were analyzed with qualitative methods: qualitative content analysis was applied to categorize the data into themes that emerged from the answers, such as lack of teachers or the influence of the national curriculum as disincentives and cultural-sensitive teaching arrangements and the Sámi curriculum as factors that promote Sámi education. Finally, the results were put together and illustrated in the form of a Sámi drum. Participants' writings varied from a 15-item list of problematic issues to a short list of five issues. The group discussions provided a holistic exposition of the second research theme.

Qualitative data come in the form of words rather than in numbers. The issue, then, is how these words were transformed into data analysis (Silverman, 2005). Because the form or the contents of the participants' lists and interviews, the most natural way of analyzing the data was inductive content analysis. The purpose of qualitative inductive content analysis is to describe the data verbally and to create a theoretical entity of the phenomenon.

As the data collection happened in a special situation, it is worth discussing some reliability issues. Participants could write their answers to the first research question anonymously without the fear of becoming recognized. In group discussion, individual viewpoints were not in that central role as the purpose of the groups was to bring out common perspectives on the developmental work.

Because of the special focus of the conference, the participants already had a certain bias. However, these participants were unquestionably experts who know the field, its problems and opportunities. Therefore, they seemed to be not only suitable but also quite a special and unique group of informants and their experiences were considered the most valuable. As far as we know, these Sámi educators' voices have not brought out before on this large scale in Finland. The data collected among these participants make a significant add to the discussion about indigenous peoples' education.

#### IV. RESULTS

##### A. *Disincentives to the Realization of Sámi Pedagogy*

The participants list included disincentives to the realization of Sámi pedagogy and they could be categorized into ten categories.

###### 1) Economic resources

The learning material office of the Sámi Parliament is responsible for the learning material production in the Sámi language. The state subsidy covers teachers' hiring costs for the municipalities that provide Sámi-speaking teaching and the teaching of Sámi language in the Sámi domicile area. These municipalities get other state subsidies, too, and municipalities are responsible for the practical expenses of education such as acquisitions of teaching materials and other relative costs, such as excursions.

Many participants brought out that Sámi education requires resources and consequently also financial support. Being such a small and special target group, finding finance from the schools' and municipalities' pocket can be difficult. Participants' answers highlighted the need for two kinds of extra-resources: extra-investment to ensure the cultural content so that particular pedagogical practices could be changed at the teaching level and on the other hand, support and understanding is needed so that teachers could participate in further education. This was expressed, for example, as follows:

*Municipal authorities do not always understand that Sámi education costs if the aim is to realize Sámi education within its own cultural context.*

Distances are long and means of communication are often difficult. Collaboration with parents and other partners, such as extra resources in teaching personnel, causes extra-costs:

*Co-operation with parents requires travelling and money.*

*If we are to exit the classroom, we need a ride, money, and permission.*

Likewise, school heads', rectors', and teachers' actual training can be impeded by the lack of training appropriations. Usually, Sámi teachers' continuing training is free of charge. However, the municipalities normally have to cover teachers' travelling expenses.

###### 2) Teachers' loneliness and isolation

Sámi teachers work often alone, far away, and apart. They have a huge responsibility to bear. Yet, the support they get at the school level varies. In this research, experts of Sámi education listed various measures of support that are needed: a forum where teachers could share experiences and a system that would support Sámi education in a holistic manner.

Often, communication happens via internet but internet connections do not always work in schools nor can they compensate face-to-face meetings. In addition, teachers do not have time or resources to coordinate these measures of support by themselves but separate actions are needed.

*Although we do have distance education, the network does not work in a sufficiently flexible way.*

The lack of co-operation occurred at many levels from the school and municipal levels to the state and international levels. The field of Sámi education is relatively scattered, unorganized, and politically unstandardized. A political program for Sámi education is missing. In addition to the Saami Parliamentary Council, Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish Saami Parliaments have entered developmental needs of Sámi education. However, any actual measures to harmonize educational issues or practical co-operation at the comprehensive school level have not succeeded:

*It would necessitate a great, revolutionary change in the whole school organization: every level, all the way from the director of education to teachers.*

### 3) Bias and lack of information

To realize Sámi education adequately, a more positive attitude and more information about the special traits of Sámi education are needed. Many of the participants highlighted the importance of having a clear definition of Sámi pedagogy because otherwise it is not possible to implement it:

*We do not have enough training to know what Sámi pedagogy is.*

*We should know what we mean by Sámi pedagogy, in other words we need training.*

It is not enough that teachers are aware of the concept. The general attitude, support, and understanding are crucial as well. Some participants also expressed their concern about the lack of societal appreciation, prejudices, and even the envy of mainstream population.

It seemed that some people in schools and communities did not understand the meaning of positive discrimination for Sámi education. Resulting from assimilation, the Sámi have lost some of their linguistic and cultural special characteristics including their traditional knowledge system, and that has affected the economic-social well-being of individuals and communities. It takes time to remedy the situation. However, the extra support Sámi education needs is often denied at the municipal decision-making level or at school level by teachers:

*Lack of general appreciation of Sámi pedagogy at school.*

Due to lack of information, some people may consider Sámi education even a threat. Prejudices may be based on the more general disdain toward multiculturalism and multilingualism:

*Lack of pluralism. How to live in a pluralist manner?*

*Attitudes and strain from the environment: what knowledge/skills are important and appreciated?*

### 4) Lack of qualified Sámi teachers

The number of Sámi teachers is low and most of them will retire in the near future. Many of the participants were concerned of the availability of qualified Sámi teachers:

*Lack of skillful teachers, multiply skilled persons.*

*Lack of qualified Sámi-speaking teachers.*

At the moment, Sámi-speaking teachers are being educated in many institutions. In Finland, there are special quotas for Sámi-speaking teacher students at the Universities of Lapland and Oulu. Norway has provided special Sámi-speaking teacher training already since 1989. Otherwise, it is possible to have the Sámi language as a major in Oulu, Troms ø, Norway, and Ume å Sweden. Some studies in Sámi language are provided by the University of Helsinki, Finland, as well.

### 5) Lack of Sámi pupils

Furthermore, there is lack of Sámi pupils and age groups are small. Often, their school commutes are very long. In addition, it is difficult to reach Sámi children who live in the southern Finland. On the other hand, teaching is not even always available. Therefore, they have not participated in Sámi education sufficiently.

*Reaching Sámi children who live outside the Sámi domicile area is problematic because there is no system to remedy the problem.*

Most of the Sámi-speaking children do not have Sámi-speaking teaching outside the official Sámi domicile area. The situation is extremely threatening for the continuity of Sámi language. Many generations are lost and proper revitalization measures have not been launched yet systematically and extensively enough.

### 6) The chains of the national core curriculum

In Finland, the national core curriculum for comprehensive schools has been appraised even internationally. However, according to the participants in this research, it does not pay attention to the special traits of Sámi culture. Still, all schools are obliged to follow the national core curriculum:

*The control: laws and decrees control the Finnish school system that also the Sámi education has to follow.*

*Finns believe that the Finnish school is the best as is; they think that if you do not study along the Finnish model, you will not succeed.*

Sámi teachers are between a rock and a hard place: even if they wanted to teach according to the principles of Sámi pedagogy, they would have to sacrifice the national core curriculum.

Although the curriculum is meant to support and guide teaching, Sámi teachers regarded it as restricting. Likewise, the time for teaching is limited:

*There is not enough time to plan teaching alone and together.*

*Sámi education is often in a contradictory situation: which one is more important—Sáminess or realization of the obligatory curriculum?*

7) Restricting and inflexible practical teaching arrangements

In this research, experts of Sámi education pointed out that teaching practices are based on the traditional Finnish classroom teaching which is usually teacher-led and organized into 45-minute-long lessons.

*Time problem: the lesson is 45 minutes, 6 hours a day.*

*The culture of working along (1 teacher per classroom).*

The Sámi's different conception of time cannot be implemented in the traditional lesson and semester model. Not only teacher colleagues but also pupils find it difficult to be flexible. Sámi model would have student- and task-oriented way of organizing lessons and breaks and semesters.

*Too deep-rooted models control the school system too much.*

*The Finnishized school—too much classroom teaching when we should design teaching together with all classes, in themes.*

*Time is bound to other teachers' lessons; we would need time for projects but they are difficult to realize because there are other subjects, e.g. English, and other teachers would not like that.*

8) Lack of learning materials

There is not enough learning material in the Sámi language or it is old and not culturally relevant.

*Lack of learning materials in schools in all three [Sámi] languages.*

Often, Sámi teachers prepare learning materials by themselves but they do not have enough time for all this. Similarly, there are no teachers' manuals in the Sámi language except for a few school subjects. Moreover, the problem in translated materials is their weak cultural basis. All in all, there is not enough material to support teaching, not enough producers of learning materials, or work force to adjust the existing materials to Sámi pedagogy:

*Lack of ancillary staff.*

*Overall, the school provides little information about the Sámi.*

9) Lack of the Sámi language proficiency

Language is the foundation of teaching and culture. If there are no Sámi speakers, the whole Sámi pedagogy is shaken.

There is lack of qualified Sámi-speaking subject teachers. Pupils' language proficiency varies greatly and parents do not necessarily speak the Sámi language at home or with other relatives. Sámi families' language policy can be partly undefined because of the history of assimilation.

*According to the act of education, only part of education is provided in the Sámi language and that is too little.*

*There is no Sámi School in Finland (although there should be). There is just the Finnish School.*

10) The Sámi's insecurity

Many of the participants recognized their own responsibility as promoters of Sámi education but were insecure. And yet, without the Sámi people selves being active and setting the example, Sámi education cannot strengthen:

*The feeling that I cannot realize it (what if I hurt the children in case I cannot act in the right way).*

*You could trust in your own Sáminess and want out Finnishness that affects everything, even your thoughts. You should dare to be Sámi at your work place as well.*

Moreover, teachers' activity is not enough but parents and children have to participate. Without their participation, teachers have too many responsibilities to bear:

*Parents do not participate in school activities.*

## B. Means to Strengthen Sámi Pedagogy

The participants were asked to discuss how to strengthen Sámi education. Their practical experiences, thoughts, and ideas were categorized into four partly overlapping groups.

1) Positive attitudes and resources

Positive attitudes toward Sámi pedagogy were considered a salient factor in the realization of Sámi education. According to group discussions, Sámi pedagogy should become appreciated by the school community and also wider in the society.

*The school administration should commit to Sámi pedagogy so that Sámi teachers were not left alone when implementing teaching.*

The participants of this study highlighted that the arousal of positive attitudes necessitates knowledge of Sámi pedagogy. Schools should provide in-service and continuing education in Sáminess and its educational special traits. Sámi teachers are true multiple skilled people who should also be recruited as prospective teachers' in-service educators and learning material producers.

Certain practical means could promote positive attitudes, too. Sáminess could be brought out in a positive manner in theme days at school and for example, the Sámi national day could be celebrated and consciously highlight Sámi culture in an appreciative way.

*In Inari, they presented a Sámi-speaking Christmas play in which all 1 and 2 –graders participated and at least pupils did not see any problem in it.*

*Sámi education should not be spared.*

2) A Sámi curriculum and the Sámi language

It was considered essential to create and implement a Sámi curriculum where the Sámi language has a central role. The curriculum cannot just be an application of the Finnish curriculum but it should be based on the Sámi's premises.

The core principle of curriculum design should be equality and parity. Sámi children should have the same rights to have education that is based on their own culture than other children have—and equality should not be used against Sámi children:

*As the dominant language at school is Finnish, Sámi children remain a minority.*

*We need a totally separate and own Sámi School.*

3) Cultural-sensitive teaching arrangements

According to the data, Sámi teachers among other experts of Sámi education wanted to wreck stereotype conceptions or prejudices concerning Sámi children's background or future.

*Not all Sámi people are fishermen or reindeer herders.*

Traditional livelihoods are plied also as compound livelihoods, for example together with tourism and other service industry. The proportion of natural livelihoods in revenue and workforce is not very large but the cultural meaning is significant. They are not just livelihoods or professions but parts of a unique life style. Some of the Sámi still earn their living in traditional livelihoods but a considerable proportion of the Sámi work in modern professions (Saami Parliament, 2008). Still, the old myths seem to hinder the development also in the Sámi's own cultural context.

The Sámi conception of time, place, and knowledge necessitates a breakaway from the Finnish teaching practices. Even the smallest details make a good example:

*The classroom curtains could illustrate Sámi craftsmanship and colors.*

The school decoration could exploit traditional handicrafts (Sámi national dresses, guksi- carved birch drinking cup, Sámi knives, jewelry, tools, drums, decorations, etc.) that everyone had to be able to prepare previously. Pupils' handicrafts should be laid out as it also increases pupils' motivation at school (see Pollack & Shuster, 2001). The Sámi construction culture and seasons were previously tied to their nomadic living style and hunting culture. It can also be taken into account in teaching arrangements:

*Pupils should be able to spend time in a tepee by the fire, do things that are part of Sámi culture and learn new.*

All this should happen through a holistic educational idea rather than offering just singular parts of Sámi culture. The Sámi group is small and therefore, new practices should be developed to make teaching more integrated and stable. It would be important to try new approaches—a sort of pedagogical revolution:

*Why could you not teach math and handicraft simultaneously?*

*...nor would Sámi classes be forced to beg money for handicraft materials.*

4) The ideal Sámi School

The participants described their idea of an ideal Sámi School where everyone would speak the Sámi language and their language proficiency would be furthered through constant usage:

*There would be learning materials and various stages and levels to enhance language proficiency.*

This school would be everyone's school and "not a lonely island". The school would support Sámi families and strengthen the family-centeredness which is typical of the Sámi culture. Thus, the school would support the Sámi's story-telling tradition that would transmit traditions from one generation to another:

*There would be a day care center and a retirement home with the school premises.*

Likewise, the principles of peer learning, joint learning and action could be reinforced:

*Older pupils could guide the younger ones—and learn something new themselves.*

Togetherness, trust, appreciation, and responsibility for various school tasks would enhance pupils' positive self-image and be based on the Sámi story-telling tradition. Consequently, school premises and physical environment would be molded to represent the Sámi culture. The connection with nature should be preserved and thus, nature education and "night schools" would support the understanding of nature—the nature has offered the setting for life and livelihoods.

*What would be the physical environment—there would not be a school building but an eternal camping school.*

Everyone should share the knowledge and understanding about the objectives and goals of school and education and all this would result in the well-being of Sámi culture and Sámi children:

*...so that the child would do well and have a strong self-esteem.*

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The conference participants' answers showed that the core of the Sámi School is to secure the Sámi language and the Sámi language teaching. In addition, it is important to strengthen the special characteristics of the Sámi culture and the contents of the Sámi pedagogy that are drawn from the culture (see also Darnell & Höm, 1996). Instead of providing singular pieces of the Sámi culture, the Sámi School is an entity and its values and operation are based on the Sámi values and way of thinking and the needs of the Sámi community and the multicultural society.

These research results correspond to the recent publications that have brought out epistemological questions about research on indigenous peoples as well as special questions about rearing and education (e.g. Aikio-Puoskari, 2005; Balto, 2008; Hirvonen, 2004/2003; Kuokkanen, 2007; Smith, 2005). Studies on indigenous peoples' teaching and

education around the world seem to elicit information that concerns our research as well (see Darnell & Hoëm, 1996; Lipka et al., 1998).

Furthermore, this study proves the need for the creation and realization of the Sámi School system toward the similar direction with the ones in Norway and Sweden. According to Rauna Kuokkanen (2000), indigenous peoples' education necessitates paradigmatic change that alters the theory of knowledge and methods of acquisition of information toward the holistic nature that is typical of indigenous peoples. This requires the context where the cultural and linguistic reality at school is taken into consideration.

Based on the perceptions from the field, we designed a model, a Sámi education developmental drum (see Figure 2) adopted from the Sámi culture. This drum symbolizes a thought that it is about the time to develop Sámi pedagogy, to use the drum for the Sámi-speaking Sámi education. All Finnish Sámi drums represent a three-dimensional worldview: upper, middle, and lower worlds. First they had transcendental meanings but later on more practical ones. Here, the drum also has three worlds. The Sámi language is located in the middle as it is considered the most important factor. Other significant features represent teaching and other practical issues taking place at school while the third dimension covers societal environment and conditions.

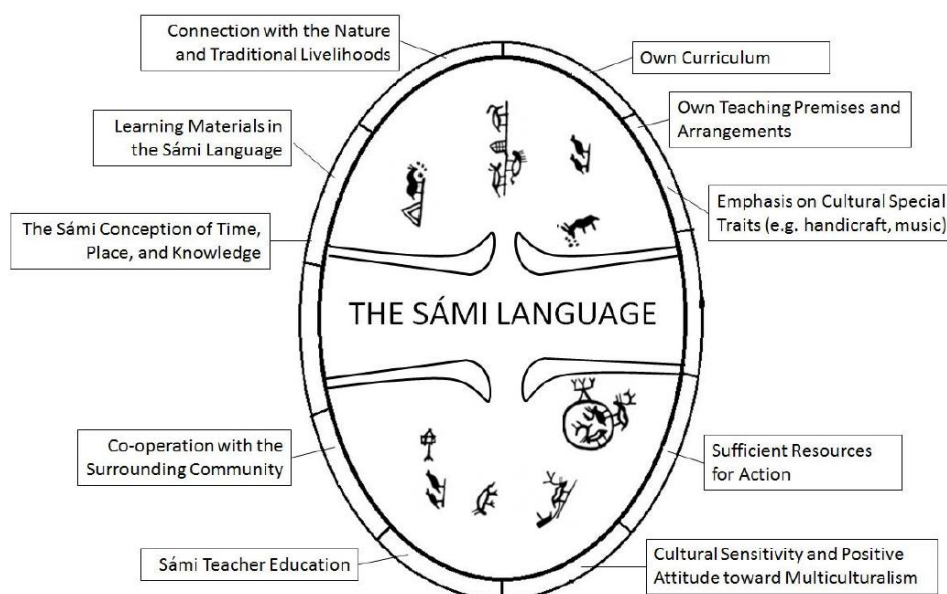


Figure 2. The developmental drum of Sámi education

Language is one of the most significant factors of identity and its importance cannot be undermined when discussing the future of the Sámi as an indigenous people (Keskitalo & Määttä 2011c). Thus, it is placed in the center of the model, in the middle world. In Finland, pupils who speak the Sámi language are taught mainly in the Sámi language. This wording may lead to a decrease in the Sámi language teaching among the decreasing number of Sámi pupils. In order to avoid the extinction of the Sámi language, strengthen its development and avoid language change and assimilation trends, teaching in one's native language should be guaranteed at every school level unequivocally. Furthermore, it is important to promote positive attitudes toward indigenous peoples among other populations. At the Sámi School, the Sámi language would be the teaching language of every school subject. Naturally, it is the question of economic investments, too: the organization of Sámi education should be financially supported even when provided outside the Sámi domicile area.

The sustenance and development of language nest and language immersion methods are crucial when aiming at strengthening the Sámi language (see also Keskitalo, Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011; 2012). They are important but need to be accompanied with language revitalization (see Sarivaara, 2012). Sámi language courses should be arranged as in-service training so that employees' ability to speak and write in the Sámi language would improve and simultaneously they would appreciate their own language more.

The school level, the upper world in the drum, includes special school-level arrangements. In order to not lose out to the Finnish language and the Finnish curriculum and school system, the Sámi School needs a curriculum, teaching premises and arrangements, and Sámi learning materials of its own. The Sámi selves have to be active and highlight the necessity of strengthening their own culture within school practices. Thus, their own history and knowledge about the modern Sámi community, Sámi craftsmanship (duodji), Sámi art, music (luohti, leuđđ) and story-telling tradition (mánnas) have a central role. The connection with the nature, the coexistence of the human being with the nature and traditional livelihoods is important. It means that reindeer pasturage, fishing waters, courses, small-scale agriculture, picking culture and handicrafts are considered a part of cultural knowledge. The question is about appreciating cultural capital in schools (see Yosso, 2006).

Likewise, the Sámi conception of time, place, and knowledge can mold the realization of teaching (Keskitalo, 2010; Keskitalo & Määttä 2011b). Pupils should be provided with positive experiences related to their own culture through play, story-telling, action, and participation. Teaching should be adjusted with the yearly cycle of the local Sámi community, traditional seasonal work and changes that take place in the nature (Rasmus, 2004). If pupils cannot participate in reindeer herding and seasonal activities related to it (e.g. reindeer roundup) or if they are not allowed to see items that represent the Sámi culture, handicrafts, art, or other objects, at school, they will not learn to appreciate their cultural heritage (see also Chacón, Yanez, & Larriva, 2010).

The central task of the school is to support the Sámi pupils' identity: the school must provide chances to the development of a healthy self-esteem so that the Sámi pupils can have their Sámi identity without assimilation in the mainstream population (Keskitalo, Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012).

To sum, it is necessary to take action to rationalize teacher education (cf. Cuban, 1993), strengthen virtual education, and create language revitalization programs. Consequently, the third world in the drum represents the overall conditions that make the Sámi education possible.

Sufficient economic resources are needed to start the action. Sámi-speaking teacher education should pay special attention to the teaching methods suitable for teaching pupils with various linguistic backgrounds, to the forms of highlighting the Sámi culture, and to the problems of minority cultures. This kind of extra training should be arranged in the Sámi domicile area when it would be possible to participate in the training alongside work without high expenses (cf. Näkkäläjärvi & Rahko, 2007). Natural providers of education would be the Sámi University College (Kautokeino, Norway), Sámi Education Institute (Inari, Finland), University of Lapland (Rovaniemi, Finland), and Giellagas Institute at the University of Oulu (Oulu, Finland)—in collaboration. Likewise, early childhood education needs Sámi-speaking early childhood educators and preschool teachers.

The starting point of Sámi education is challenging compared to the mainstream culture because it does not have all the material and support that are normally provided for language teaching. Actually the worldview differs from the mainstream culture inasmuch that knowledge about learning should be constructed from a new point of view. Teachers' in-service training could seize on this situation. Teachers should be informed of indigenous educational practices. Indeed, according to Barbara Seidl and Gloria Friend (2002) "the development of sophisticated, culturally relevant pedagogies is a process that requires commitment over time and lived experience" (p. 427).

Because most of the Sámi children live outside the Sámi domicile area, it would be important to develop virtual education and provide necessary personnel and material resources to implement it. The Sámi Education Institute has already started this work.

In addition, the results suggest that co-operation with the wider Nordic community is valuable both to Sámi teachers and pupils. Teaching should support pupils' identify with their national cultural heritage and their sense of solidarity with the Sámi people who live in different countries (see also Cajete, 1994). Respect for the Sámi culture means also respect for multiculturalism (see also King & Schielmann, 2004; Macfarlane, 2004). Indeed, Sámi education could get new stimuli from the cultural sensitive education in North-America and New Zealand where students' culture and experienced are given emphasis (e.g. Kirkeness, 1992; 2003; Lipka et al., 1998; Macfarlane, 2004). For example, the community elders take part in education as the bearers and transmitters of culture (Stiegelbauer, 1996). The aim is to enculturate children in the surrounding culture.

## VI. DISCUSSION

It was not until the 1970s when the Sámi education took root in school and the Sámi's own opinions were taken into account in educational planning since the missionary period (Aikio-Puoskari, 2005) – partly due to the awakening of Sáminess and the Sámi's political rise. Our study showed that many things should still change to make the Sámi School reform according to the guidelines that the participants of the conference talked about. Is this kind of a change possible? The school system is guided by world-wide economic, political, and social tensions: schools have become places where teachers and pupils are controlled, supervised, compared, and considered liable for their action (see Youdell, 2011).

There are many theorists whose ideas encourage us to interfere in today's educational practices, shake inequality and dissolve ideas of normative knowledge, meanings, and subjects. Let us mention Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1987) concepts of the assemblage, becoming, and rhizomatics. Michel Foucault's (e.g. 1982) writings about resistances, practices of the self, and parrhesia/fearless speech and Judith Butler's (1997) thoughts about performative politics, discursive agency, and collectivities. At times, these concepts seem arcane but their purpose is to introduce ways of interfering or question the prevailing "normality" of the school. Besides, Deleuze and Guattari noted that they do not even want to become understood but actually misunderstood!

Education is one of the most powerful state structures that instill and renew the dominant ideology. Education and rearing have conscious and unconscious influence on us. Education does not teach just practical skills, such as reading and math, but embeds societal moral rules, norms, and culture that teach how to speak and think right (see Hier, 2003). Consequently, it is possible to look for optional phrasings of question and challenge normative interpretations and ideologies. Indeed, unspoken viewpoints in the field of education and rearing belong to this category as well. If become informed of these issues, we are aware and realize what kinds of appreciations, practices, models, hidden effects,

resources, and social relationships are included in the daily schooling. At its best, awareness leads to critical discussions and enables us see new perspectives.

In order to develop the Sámi School, it is necessary to listen to the active realizers of Sámi education, namely Sámi teachers. Not only do they have plenty of tacit knowledge but also “conscious silence” that we have to listen to and take into account when aiming at strengthening Sámi pedagogy. At the Sámi teachers’ ideal school, premises are open, accessible and welcome to everyone; a place where everyone listens, hears, discusses; where teachers have time and interest in pupils’ ideas, thoughts, experiences, feelings, fantasies, and hopes; where mutual trust between various generations and genders is present; where the conception of knowledge and knowing has new forms; and where experiential and communal learning are given space (cf. Youdell, 2011). The ideal school is the one where cultural sensitivity and policies are recognized and acknowledged and which strengthens the cultural identity of its members.

The Sámi culture has already seen glimpses of this kind of a school and therefore educational researchers and developers should not give up on looking for a better education. We want to provide starting points for a discussion that would hopefully lead to the more positive utilization of aspects of Sámi culture in the education system in Finland, and perhaps, it would contribute to the similar discussion in the whole indigenous world. The dream of a Sámi School and Sámi pedagogy is realistic.

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# Gender and Language Education Research: A Review

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**Abstract**—Gender and language education studies have multiplied in the past one decade. However, it does not appear that any state-of-the-art article has reviewed the various undertakings. This paper attempts to fill this gap by focusing on gender representation in learning materials and classroom interaction studies globally within gender and education literature. Selected studies from the 70s to date are reviewed under three phases and suggestions for further investigation are made with the anticipation that learning materials and classroom interaction studies would help facilitate the achievement of the goal of gender equality in and through education.

**Index Terms**—language education, gender, research, review

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since Holmes's (1991) and Sunderland's (2000) state of the art articles on gender and language studies, it appears that no similar undertaking (nor a follow-up article) has been published till date, at least to cover the gap. In this present review, I plan to fill this gap by focusing on a narrower area of gender and language education studies, that is, gender in learning materials and classroom interactions research.

Holmes and Sunderland among others provide state of the art articles on gender and language studies up to the latter part of twentieth century. While Holmes (1991) provides a broad view of gender and language studies, Sunderland's dwells on specific areas and reviews studies within the wider area that Holmes (1991) addresses. Thus while Holmes dwells on language and gender and lists many references, Sunderland (2000), starting from the previous works, narrows her review to language and gender in second and foreign language education highlighting on areas such as - gender and language learning; gender, language learning and ability.; second/foreign language acquisition and the four skills; motivation/investment; language learning styles and strategies; classroom interaction; the 'what' of teaching: English as a non-sexist language?; teaching materials; language testing; teachers, professional organisations and gender, what can teachers do? teacher action and teacher education; new theorisations of language and gender; language learners' identities; masculinities: boys, men and language learning; and future research.

Interestingly, one of the areas that Sunderland reviews in her article - gender and education has attracted so many studies that any exhaustive review of studies in the area might yield volumes and might triple what Sunderland (2000) did. Thus, in this present review, I shall focus on gender representation in learning materials and classroom interactions across languages which parallel Sunderland's (2000) "the what of teaching: English as a non-sexist language".

Sunderland's (2000) state of the art article particularly addresses gender and language education covering large areas (though she notes that it is not comprehensive comparing what had been done in the area with the coverage of her article). However, it might be near impossible to attempt another of its kind today after a decade since the review was published in *Language Education* in 2000. Yet as Sunderland rightly observes, her review is quite selective and restrictive to second and foreign language education although in passing she lists some works on first languages (e.g. German, French, and Spanish). In this present review, I shall extend my coverage to include studies in first languages such as German, French among others. Thus my review covers some first languages but shall be restricted to one area out of the many areas that Sunderland (2000) addresses and shall include studies from the 70s to the present.

Although there are studies in the social sciences that have addressed gender in education, I shall concern myself with those that are domiciled in language studies. This restriction is necessary because of the fast growing number of research being done on the subject matter in response to recurrent calls from and funding by government agencies, international organisations (UN, World Bank, Commonwealth of Nations among others) and other non-governmental organisations.

## II. BACKGROUND

Studies in this area (within gender difference and identity paradigms) have multiplied and are still growing for a number of reasons. One of the reasons is that government bodies in Europe, America, and Asia and in some developing countries including some international organisations have picked interest in the area. This interest is in response to United Nations declarations under its human rights programmes that are geared towards bringing about gender equality

in and through education for males and females...not only in terms of parity (gender-balance in enrolment) but also in the quality of education on offer for boys and girls. In fact, UN, Commonwealth of Nations, Ford Foundation among others have called for and sponsored research undertakings in the area. For example, the Ford Foundation funded the research project into gender representation in textbooks used for learners in China and also funded the follow-up actions that saw the publications of gender-fair textbooks for its education sector (Ross and Shi, 2003; Zhang, 2003; Zhao, 2002).

Another reason is closely associated with the activities of the feminist movement. According to Cameron (1998), research in this area was sparked off by feminist movement in the 1960s when what they might contribute in linguistic sphere dawned on its members. Feminist researchers' demand for a combination of reflection and practice that they refer to as 'praxis' Freire (1970) and a need for experts in various areas of language teaching to expose and transform social injustice through research and pedagogical practices within classroom, schools, communities, and society at large (Davis and Skilton-Sylvester, 2004, p. 398 cited in Mukundan and Nimehchisalem, 2008, p. 156) were welcomed and taken up with attendant studies that abound in the literature.

It might be added that the responses that have attended the findings of many of these studies (as follow-up activities) in Europe, America and some parts of Asia such as the reformation of gender-biased texts, the production of guidelines and plan of actions, the co-operation of authors and publishers that followed guidelines that ensure gender-fairness in textbooks also encouraged further studies in under-researched sites. Gender fairness in learning materials advocates for equal treatment and opportunities, and representation of both sexes. It discountenances every form of gender-stereotypes, discrimination against any sex group in any form of invisibility and domination by the other sex group. It seeks to present both female and male characters as complementary members of society each capable of making meaningful contributions towards local and national development.

One common denominator in all these studies is the belief that learning materials are laden with gender-biasness, a feature that is inimical to the achievement of gender equality in human society. At the centre of these undertakings are the arguments about and discontent with the ways the sexes (females and males) are represented which are rather imbalanced or unfair especially to women. And the kind of biased representation reported in the literature might directly or indirectly shape gender identities that will not augur well with the educational goals of our contemporary society, especially the need for gender equality in qualitative education and empowerment of women for social, economic and national development. In addition, teachers' role (their talk around the text) in the classroom has been brought under scrutiny as their part in entrenching the dominant culture (gender unfairness) of society also contributes towards gender inequality.

However, it appears that 'text' studies has occupied the centre stage as there are more 'text' studies than 'talk' studies, the latter being a follow-up of the former. The important role that school activities and materials play in socializing learners is underlined in Holmes's (2009, p. 3) observation that "social institutions such as family, school, the workplace and the media teach us that girls should act in certain ways, such as being caring and boys in different ways, such as being strong and independent".

### III. THE IMPORTANCE/ROLES OF TEXTBOOKS

The place of textbooks in socializing learners cannot be overemphasized, especially as textbooks are often viewed by learners as authoritative, and therefore have the potential to influence a significantly large and impressionable audience (Foshay, 1990; Robson, 2001). In addition, textbooks serve as a "means to facilitate the integration of content about ethnically, racially and culturally diverse populations" (Sileo and Prater, 1998, p. 05). To Mustedanagic (2010), whenever a text is read, an interpretation is made by the reader and meaning is constructed. Comparing language teaching with building a house, she says that "the text represents our material ... therefore, bad material, bad building".

Stressing the place of textbooks, Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) noted that the textbooks...young people focus on repeatedly during the classroom practice, follow-up assignments or projects, and preparation for examination exert influence on the learner in terms of the quality of education they receive, their understanding of social equality and national unity. Putting it very strongly, both Poulou (1997) and Treichler and Frank (1989) reported that linguistic sexism in textbooks creates deleterious real-world and damaging pedagogical consequences especially for women and girls.

The role that textbooks play in educating learners has attracted the attention of other scholars. For example, Stromquist, Lee and Brock-Utne (1998) noted that

educational institutions are powerful ideological institutions that transmit dominant values, and function as mechanisms of social control...schools transmit values that not only reproduce social class but also main gender structures...the formal school system contributes to the reproduction of gender inequalities through such mechanisms as selective access to schooling, the content of what is being taught and what is not and how it is taught and the kinds of knowledge men and women (and boys and girls) get (p. 83).

Their paper drew attention to what goes on in the educational system/process and how this impacts on the learner. Stromquist, Lee and Brock-Utne (1998) claim that the formal curriculum covers the knowledge and skills school officially seeks to transmit via their program of studies, courses and textbooks. To them, not many studies have explored the effects textbooks have on learners; consequently they call for longitudinal research tracing influences over

time. They conclude that observers and educators acknowledge that textbooks and curricular content leave lasting influences in our memories, as phrases and stories heard, read and written about men and women condition our minds (Stromquist, *et al.*, 1998, p. 83-97).

#### IV. THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

These observations opened up what had hitherto been hidden to many researchers. Thus studies that gave serious attention to the influence of textbooks on learners suggest that such influences are subtle... thus the term 'hidden curriculum'. Talking about hidden curriculum, Stromquist *et al.* (1998, p. 398) noted that the informal curriculum, popularly called hidden curriculum is the set of knowledge that is transmitted through the roles men and women play in the staffing of schools, the way teachers treat male and female students, and the manner in which adults interact with others. Some scholars have added another dimension to the hidden curriculum, which is the expectations teachers have of boys and girls regarding occupational and family roles, the differential vocational advice given to boys and girls, the behavioural norms and disciplinary sanctions enforced at school, and the re-creation within the school of norms and values concerning masculinity and femininity by the peer group. Stromquist, *et al.* (1998, p. 401) further distinguished between two kinds of curriculum from feminist perspective - non-sexist curriculum - one that is free of gender stereotypes and other forms of distortions and an antisexist curriculum - one that seeks to destroy stereotypes and to build a new way of perceiving and establishing social relations between men and women.

Zeroing in on textbooks, Stromquist *et al.* (1998) affirmed that textbooks are significant mechanism for the transmission of the informal curriculum. In addition to certain subjects, knowledge, and skills, books disseminate sexual bias, prejudice, and discrimination through the ways in which men and women are depicted in stories and from illustrations. By focusing on some and ignoring others, the identity of persons may be strengthened or weakened accordingly. Responses to these observations resulted in serious attention being directed at how textbooks help to foster imbalance gender education in the formal setting of learning.

Setting the agenda, a group of scholars set the goal, which was to produce gender-balanced curriculum/textbooks (which requires collaborated effort and co-operation) that will alter the contents of the present gender-biased curriculum/textbooks so that males and females can see each other as sources of help and support, share their learning experiences, and learn to be responsible for one another's learning.

Working towards gender equality in education should not only focus on equal access to or provision of education to males and females (gender parity), the content of schooling should be given attention. Improving on school enrolment among boys and girls should be pursued especially in developing countries where enrolment gap between boys and girls has been very wide. However, considering the way "school narratives are constructed in basic terms that contrast and oppose masculinity and femininity" particularly "the oppression of women by men should not be seen as a nonissue" rather they are crucial issues that demand urgent attention. Therefore, because "the formal curriculum, through textbook content and instructional dynamics, continues to promote the creation of gendered identities of asymmetrical nature... textbooks should continue to be a prime target in strategies to modify the curriculum (Stromquist *et al.*, 1998, p. 405).

For Renner (1997), it is important to eliminate sexism in the language use in order to provide an environment where every pupil can learn on equal terms. Essentially, the need to change the structure that supports sexism in language use became important. Stressing the need to reform and gain thereby, Mills (1995, p. 95) mentioned that a gender-free language contributes to the acceptance of each human being, without dominance from one group. Similarly, Stromquist *et al.* (1998, p. 405) note that the creation of a new social identity by means of school interventions necessitates the recognition of the value of endogenous culture, but it also requires the courage to discard traditional elements that are conducive to the oppression of women, whether in the name of culture or religion.

It is noted that prior to these discussions many studies have been done beginning from 1946. One of the earliest studies on record known to the writer was carried out by Child, Potter and Levine (1960) which discovered that primary textbooks are often portrayed rather negatively and stereotypically e.g., manipulative. According to Blumberg (2007), with the advent of second wave women movement, studies multiplied and in 1971, activist Marjorie U'Ren published a content analysis of the 'The image of woman in textbooks' in an iconic feminist reader where she analyzed 30 of the newest textbooks adopted or recommended for use in second to sixth grade California schools. However, these discussions prompted increased interest in empirical studies of gender representations in textbooks in order to draw attention to gender imbalance and call for reform in the discriminatory representation of men and women in textbooks, reforms that will bring about equality or gender fairness - a way of engendering equality not only in the way we view both sexes but also in the way they are treated or given opportunities in human society. In what follows, we shall review three phases of research works that have been done together with methodological issues that have arisen before we suggest areas for further research and improvements.

#### V. PHASES OF RESEARCH

In this paper, I have identified three phases of studies for review - first phase studies that create awareness of gender imbalance in learning materials; second phase studies that served as follow-up studies by assessing responses and

reforms in learning materials and the third phase - studies that extend the focus beyond textbook representations to talks around the text in classroom.

#### A. First Phase Studies

The need to reform language use and consequently change people's view about men and women moved gender and language researchers (especially feminists) to consider not just gender differences in language use (in day-to-day interactions) but also in language use in textbooks which is thought of as a form of social practice that is used by patriarchal society to entrench (as a way of gendering learners into stereotype masculinity and femininity) gender parity and inequality to the detriment of women in society.

Consequently in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s (Cincotta, 1978; Hellinger, 1980; U'ren, 1971) many studies were carried out and their findings indicate that texts, especially language textbooks were biased against femininity. Males were portrayed in the bright of importance in occupations, public/social life, and decision makers in companies, corporations and government bodies. On the other hand, women were rendered invisible, or at lowest representation far less than men. For example, Cincotta (1978) revealed that both males and females perform gender stereotypical activities; Hartman and Judd (1978) showed that men were made more visible than women; women on the other hand tend to be stereotypically emotional and are more likely than male characters to be the butt of jokes. Hellinger (1980) found that males are over-represented while Porecca (1984) reported that men tend to occupy both more powerful and a greater range of occupational roles than women. There are other studies that reported similar findings.

From the studies carried out thus far in Jamaican, Malaysia, Greece, Spain and other places (Bailey & Parkes, 1995; Cerezal, 1991; Chandran and Abdullah, 2003; Kanemaru, 1998; Mukundan, 2003; Poulou 1997; Seng, 2003; Talansky, 1986; Whiteley, 1996) gender imbalance in textbooks includes invisibility (fewer males than females or vice versa), occupational stereotyping (females in fewer and more menial occupational roles); relationship stereotyping (women are more in relation with men than men with women); personal characteristic stereotyping (women as emotional and timid); disempowering discourse roles (more males talking first and dominating roles in interactions) degradation (blatant sexism to the point of misogyny) (Sunderland, 1994, p. 55-56). Some other areas of gender imbalance in language have been highlighted from feminist perspective. For example, Mills (1995) noted that phallocentrism prevails in gender and literature since generic sexism usage in language at the morphological, phrasal and sentential levels abounds e.g., affixes in occupational terms and generic pronouns in literature betray the lack of fairness to womenfolk.

Subsequently, as follow-up actions on the findings of many studies at this phase, guidelines for effecting corrective recommendations were produced. For example, McCormick's (1994) guidelines which were intended for stakeholders in the teaching sphere offer what Mustedanagic (2010) calls theoretical and practical guidelines for implementing a non-sexist classroom environment. UNESCO produced guidelines for text authors and publishers. Mills (1995) also provided guidelines for gender-free language. Government bodies and their education sectors were tasked with ensuring that gender balance in the process of curriculum development, text production and teaching/learning activities for educating the child. For example in Sweden, the country's LPO 94 under the Swedish National Agency for Education stipulates that "The school should promote an understanding for others and the ability to empathize. Activities should be characterised by care of the individual's well-being and development. No one should be subject to discrimination at school based on gender, ethnic belonging, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or disability, or subject to other degrading treatment" (cited in Mustedanagic, 2008, p. 3). It appears that most of the first phase studies are largely content-based (analysis of the linguistic and non-linguistic representations in the textbooks) that did not address subjects of interactions between teachers and learners in the classroom.

#### B. Second Phase Research

Interestingly findings and recommendations from studies in the United States and Europe (where the studies kicked off) and in some parts of Asia yielded some desirable results although there are areas that are yet to be addressed or rather thinly investigated. For example, Sunderland (1994b) (pedagogical and other filters) reported changes in some of the textbooks she examined in Britain where newer grammar books from 1988 onwards encourage readers towards the avoidance of gender-specific language.

According to Blumerg (2007) by 1990s various second generation studies began to analyze the persistent (or not) of gender bias in a variety of substantive fields. Most showed modest improvements (sometimes very modest) handling texts at the high school, children's illustrated books and teacher training textbooks. For example, Zittleman and Sadker (2002) followed up Sadker and Sadker's (1980) study of gender bias in teacher training materials. The re-study, according to Blumerg (2007) involved 23 textbooks published from 1998-2001. Using the 1980 study evaluation methods, they found progress to be 'minimal' and disappointing. But despite the quantitative data showing that textbooks are far from gender-equitable, they also found that 'today's' textbooks are less offensive than those published more than 20 years ago.

Similarly, Mukundan and Nimehchisalem's (2008) is a follow-up on earlier studies by Seng (2003) and Chandran and Adbudllah (2003) in Malaysia while Healy (2009) is a follow-up on studies done in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s (Byrd, 2001; Hartman and Judd, 1978; Jones *et al.*, 1997; Porecca, 1984). These studies fall within what we have categorized as second phase studies. They assessed progress made in ensuring gender balance in textbooks and further suggested areas that have not been covered by authors/publishers. For example, Healy (2009) reported that in the textbook that she

examined the authors have managed to represent both sexes fairly evenly in the amount of talk - thus avoiding gender bias. Similarly, Sano, Iida and Hardy (2001) notes that although recent moves toward gender equality might have changed lexical choices made in Japanese EFL junior high school textbooks, and might have prompted the exclusion of explicit representations of stereotypical assumptions from previous editions, regarding gender roles, however, implicit and metalinguistic messages in the existing texts suggest the need for a thorough analysis to evaluate the balance of gender representation. Their study reported that: "obviously, gender-imbalanced language has been substantially eliminated from EFL textbooks since 1990. There are no occurrences of gender-biased language such as chairman.... (however)...reading through the texts reveals prominence in the number of features focusing on male characters" (Sano, Iida & Hardy 2001, p. 903-904).

Sweden and China appear to have achieved a higher measure of success. Blumerg (2007) noted that the initiative in China (funded by the Ford Foundation resulted in the development of 49 sets of non-biased primary and secondary school teaching materials, covering 20 subjects). The overall findings, according to Blumerg (2007, p. 22) showed that China's road to eliminate gender bias in textbooks and curricula will not be a short one, despite an official state of policy of achieving gender equity in education. (see Hui, 2003; Ross and Shi, 2003; Yi, 2002; Yi, 2003; Zhang, 2002; Zhang, 2003; Zhao, 2002). Similar success has been reported in Latin America (see Drayton, 1997; Gozalez, 1990).

In addition, it has been reported that the Nordic countries have been successful in decreasing male stereotypes and improving male parenting skills through various school interventions (see, Carlson, 2007; SIDA, 2007) These studies led to the production of what has been described as 'progressive texts' although two major questions have been asked for which satisfactory answers are yet to be provided. The questions are whether gender representations in texts should reflect the goings in their contemporary society or the desired/expected gender balanced society that is far from what learners experience in their day-to-day life. The production of progressive texts that was reported in the West and in some parts of Asia, however, has not been reported in many parts of Africa, since pioneering studies (that would create awareness) are yet to be carried out. However, the shortcomings of the use of progressive texts were soon highlighted and taken up in subsequent research that characterise the third phase studies.

### C. *Third Phase Studies*

Following the success recorded from studies on representations of gender in textbooks in Europe, America and some parts of Asia, researchers' attention has been drawn to some of the limitations of reformed or progressive textbooks. It has been argued that gender-balanced textbooks might still be turned around in the classroom by teachers or rather opposed by sexist female and male teachers who see themselves as agents of patriarchal society. These teachers tend to perpetrate the dominant culture they are used to thereby rendering reformed texts ineffective so that rather than reinforce the system of progressive texts they inhibit them.

Thus, Sunderland (2000) raised a germane question that suggested that research on gender representations in textbooks should not mark the end of the road. She did ask whether gender bias in textbooks does matter. In her answer, Sunderland (2000) observed that "it may not matter as much as these studies assumed - not because gender bias is unimportant (it will always matter to those who have principled objections to sexism in any shape or form), but because to focus on gender bias in a text may be to miss the point as far as learners and learning are concerned" (p. 153). She went further to buttress this position with the claim that:

...we cannot predict what a teacher will do from a text itself. A focus on gendered text alone, which assumes teacher treatment of the text is somehow evident from the text, would thus seem misguided. A text is arguably as good or as bad as the treatment it receives from the teacher who is using it; in particular, a text riddled with gender bias can be rescued and that bias put to good effect, pedagogic and otherwise (Sunderland, 2000, p. 155).

Sunderland's (2000) position, to us, rather than discredits what has been done on texts, pointed the way forward in gender and language education research. And that way forward is often tagged 'teacher talk around the text'. That means studies in some countries (excluding under-researched sites) should focus on how teachers use texts in learning environment. Sunderland (2000) observed that empirical studies are needed for teachers' use of texts. This new area is important for achieving the balanced or quality education that is at the centre of the whole efforts of gender equality. The focus on the teacher - what they do with texts in the classroom is important judging from what has been reported in the literature. For example, Bonkowski (cited in Alderson, 1997, p. 12) reported that language teachers often distort textbook authors' intentions, interpreting those intentions through their own models of language, language learning and language teaching. Similarly Shattuck (1996) (cited Sunderland, 2000, p. 155) also found that at a British Council School in Portugal, the teacher chose not to stick to the text but went beyond it, contributing observations of his own about the topic of discussion. Therefore teachers' treatment of gendered texts and learners' interpretations or handling of gendered texts should be researched.

Although this new area has been taken up by a number of researchers but it has been noted that gender and language learning in classrooms has under-researched sites in developing countries in Africa, Islamic countries, Eastern Europe, South America, and China (Sunderland, 2000). Interestingly, in the past decade, some studies have emerged from some of these under-researched sites (Ansary and Babaii, 2003; Birjandi and Anabi, 2006; Gharbavi and Mousavi, 2012; Hamdan, 2010; Jafri, 1993; Khurshid, Gillani & Hashmi, 2010; Lee and Collins, 2008; Lee, 2007; Madu and Kasanga, 2005; Sabir, 2008; Zhang, 2003; Zhao, 2003).

Thus, research activities in the third phase studies indicate advancement and budding scholarship in the area especially in Europe. Concern with talks around the text is expected to complement the use of progressive texts in order to avoid loopholes in achieving elimination of every form of discrimination against any sex group either in text or in talk. However, it appears that while we look forward to seeing more studies on talk in some parts of Asia where progressive texts have been produced *en masse*, it does not appear that textbook research has attracted scholars' attention in Africa (barring South Africa and some parts of East Africa).

With the volume of studies on gender and learning materials and the largely common findings from the various studies across Europe, America, Asia and Latin America, one would anticipate a proposal for universals in gender and language education although more studies are still needed from Africa. Any proposal for universals, (barring the dearth of studies in some parts of Africa) might be hampered not only by the dearth of studies in Africa but also by the consideration that heterogeneity characterise the modes of data collection and analysis most of the studies done thus far are far. Thus the subject of methodology has attracted the attention of some scholars (Brugeilles and Cromer, 2009; Lee, 2011)

## VI. ISSUES OF METHODOLOGY

One aspect of gender representations in textbook studies that has been very thorny has to do with methods of data collection and analysis. The argument surrounds heterogeneity of methods (content analysis, linguistic analysis, narrative approach, systemic functional approach, computer concordancing, collocation, transitivity, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, role analysis, critical image analysis, elicitation method task method among others. Some scholars have argued that this is quite unwholesome. For example, Lee (2011) noted that focusing on different aspects, various researchers around the globe have used their own methodology in analysis. To Lee (2011, p. 149), in the past two decades, the research literature assessing gender role portrayal in school textbooks has continued to be markedly heterogeneous and has failed to achieve any noticeable improvement.

While some studies (Graci, 1989; Gupta and Lee, 1990; Hunter and Chick, 2005; Lee and Collins, 2008; Leskin, 2001;) have concentrated on quantifiable features for analysis - the number of female and male characters is a common feature of analysis, others (e.g., Johansson & Malmsjo, 2009; Poulou, 1997; Stockdale, 2006) have examined less quantifiable features, such as the extent to which male or female characters are primarily responsible for "requesting", "seeking information", and "giving directives", Leskin (1998) applies 'systemic function grammar in analyzing EFL textbooks. Thomson and Otsuji (2003) examined business Japanese textbooks from both macro (social practices) and micro (linguistic discourses) level perspectives, using critical discourse analysis as the framework of their study. Another development in methods of gender analysis in school textbooks is computer concordancing (e.g., Carrol and Kowitz, 1994). Lee (2011) concluded that if individual researchers continue to use their own research methods, it will be difficult to make a scientific comparison of studies across different disciplines; thus the call for a standardized evaluative instrument in the concerted effort to combat sexism.

However, it is noted here that this call for a standardised method would have been inevitable if the goal were to propose gender in language learning universals as we have in other branches of linguistics e.g., language universals, gender and language universals. However, where the objective is to spotlight the undesirability of gender insensitiveness in learning materials and classroom interactions and call for revision, the empirical nature of every investigation and its data should determine the method. A new researcher might prefer the method used by earlier researchers just as Schmitz's (1975) proposed four categories for detecting sexism exclusion (proportion of content about males and females); subordination (roles or occupations assigned to women); distortion (reinforcement of gender stereotypes); and degradation (condescending statements or generalizations about women) have been used by other researchers.

The difficulties that Graci (1989) (reported in Lee, 2011) encountered in the comparative study of 20 studies of foreign language textbooks from 1975 and 1984 might be difficult to generalise to all the other studies that have been done till date. Time-frame, funding, research tools and other materials available to a researcher or group of researchers, the expertise of the researcher and the choice of data to work with might determine methodology. Thus it might be difficult to place a bar on methods or impose a particular method on researchers as doing so would be counter-productive. Perhaps, we should consider heterogeneity of methods as a healthy scholarship phenomenon. Therefore, Brugeilles and Cromer's (2009) contributions to textbook gender analysis should be welcomed and adapted just as any other method that is systematic should be recommended for use by other researchers. In fact, Brugeilles and Cromer's (2009) method addresses one aspect of textbooks - character "a new approach to capturing social representation through the character". This involves detailed examination of characterisation techniques in text passages and dialogues. In addition, with such undertaking, I would suggest other areas of social representation in sentence structures by looking at elements of transitivity, collocation, discourse patterns, image representation among others.

## VII. AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

In her recommendations, Blumerg (2007) suggested that after decades, it is time to move beyond studies that describe gender bias in textbooks to research that evaluates the level and type of impact of such bias on female – and males. She

added that the place to start this gender sensitization is during teacher training... therefore it is recommended that wherever teacher training includes some form of practice teaching, exercises of the sort designed in such profusion by Kalia (1986) be incorporated into their training.

Coming to developing countries (Africa), it is on record that the World Bank between 1990–2005 funded educational sector initiatives with specific gender components or an exclusively female clientele (Tembon, 2007). The programme targeted (i) provision of infrastructure to increase educational access (constructing rehabilitating schools and classrooms, building separate latrines for girls and boys) and (ii) learning interventions (increasing the numbers of female teachers, curriculum and textbooks reform, provision of textbooks and other educational materials and gender sensitization of personnel. The programme covered Nepal, Bangladesh, Chad, Guinea and Ghana. These educational initiatives were claimed to have had explicit components or activities aimed at eliminating gender bias from curricula and or textbooks.

Aside from the above co-ordinated programmes, it appears that very little has been done in this area in Africa, (barring Ansary and Babaii, 2009; Lamidi, 2009; Madu and Kasanga, 2005; McKinney, 2005; Tembo, 1984; Tourouzou, 2006; Page and Jha, 2009; the British Council, 2012).

The UBE scheme, in consonance with UNESCO gender equality goals, has amongst its goals equal accessibility to quality education by the year 2015. Although it is driving towards achieving numerical gender balance (bridging the gap between boys and girls enrolment), it appears that the stakeholders are oblivious of the other aspect of gender equality in education (quality not just quantity in education). In her recommendations, Blumerg (2007) stated that as countries succeed in achieving gender parity in enrolment, i.e., succeed at access, they should be encouraged to tackle – and monitor and evaluate – “second level” problems, such as gender bias in textbooks and curricula. It is at this second level that studies in Sub-Sahara, the far East and other countries where little or no work has been done in this area are needed before moving on to talk studies. And since reductions in the intensity of gender bias in textbooks is considered as a useful indicator of gender equity in society (Blumerg, 2007), it is anticipated findings would not only create awareness but lead to plan of actions that will facilitate implementation (of the actions) of producing progressive textbooks by authors and publishers with the support of government agents who are to monitor and enforce the implementation.

In addition to these gaps that are to be filled, there are other gaps that subsequent studies might find interesting. Amongst them are collecting data from actors and stakeholders in the educational process. This includes teachers, learners, guardians and parents, government representatives and non-governmental organisations and authors and publishers of textbooks. For example, the uptakes of learners about their texts - the contents and how these contents affect/influence them in terms of their gender identity, gender roles are part of the areas to be considered in the research. Learners should be brought into focus groups to discuss their texts in relation to themselves and their society. Similarly, teachers' views about gender representations in texts that they select for teaching in the classroom should also be incorporated into future research. The usefulness of guidelines for teachers (teacher handbooks) that accompany texts for children should be brought to focus - they should be scrutinised for the inclusion/exclusion of gender issues.

It won't be out of place to harness parents/guardians' views about gender issues in the texts that are being used to teach their children just as the printed materials used by religious bodies for teaching children/youth classes in their meetings might be another source of data for investigation. Government representatives and NGOs who are involved in the education process including trainers of teachers are not to be left out in discussing gender issues in learning materials selected for use in the classroom just as authors and publishers' uptake on these issues might be topics worth investigating.

Where preliminary studies of texts have reached a measurable stage with attendant results of the production of progressive texts (gender-fair textbooks) studies on talk around the text in the classroom between teachers and learners should naturally follow. And where the latter has been done, further studies on teachers' compliance might be necessary in order to ensure that no stone is left unturned in achieving gender equality in and through education.

Method-wise, it might be very difficult to be prescriptive. Textbooks contain many language and communicative tools - pictures, characterization, language structures, vocabulary development, speech production exercise and others. Researchers' chosen aspects of the text, their objectives among others should determine the method of analysis.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

It is interesting to note that the concern about gender in language education studies (in learning materials and environment) that started not many years ago has grown so large and results of the undertakings have not only impacted on the educational sector but also on society at large with the attendant outcome of empowering women for national development in some countries. Government bodies and international organizations and non-governmental organizations recognize the contributions these studies make and have been funding research in the area with follow-up actions that have made tangible contributions to development. Since most studies are scattered in journals, monographs and websites, a handy textbook of collection of materials/studies from various countries might be a welcome idea in the near future. Gender in learning materials should continue in under-researched sites just as studies on talk around the text should follow text studies. However, the impact of sexist and progressive texts should also be examined together with the uptakes of stakeholders on text and talks. Bar-placing on methods (data collection and analysis) might not be necessary if we are to promote flexibility that will create the atmosphere for robust research.



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# Giving Invitations Is Like Borrowing Money for Chinese Speakers of English: A Cognitive Sociolinguistic Study of Email Invitations

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**Abstract**—Cognitive linguists have recently made great efforts to integrate their research interests with Labovian sociolinguistics. One of the promising areas of investigation in cognitive sociolinguistics is metaphor variation. In this study, we aimed to compare metaphor differences in email invitations from Chinese speakers of English and native speakers of English. Twenty-nine college students in Taiwan were recruited to write English email invitations in four hypothetical situations, so a total of 114 invitation emails were collected, which constituted the Chinese English corpus. These students were also asked to download 56 email invitations from the Internet to constitute the non-Chinese English corpus. Our preliminary observations led us to identify two metaphors for the respective corpora: “Giving invitation is borrowing money” for the Chinese English corpus, while “Giving invitation is delivering messages” for the non-Chinese English corpus. To test our hypothesis, we compared these two sets of data in terms of information sequencing and verb usage. For information sequencing, Chinese speakers of English tend to locate their invitation sentences in the later part of an email because they consider invitation as a face-threatening act, which requires small talk before they actually state their purposes. As for verb usage, Chinese speakers of English preferred to use WANT, NEED, and HOPE in their invitation sentences since these three verbs express their personal needs. A VARBRUL analysis was conducted to identify three factor groups that could best account for the use of these three verbs: i.e., email sender’s role, gender and perceived distance between the sender and the recipient.

**Index Terms**—cognitive sociolinguistics, invitation, email, information sequencing

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, writing emails in English has become one of the most important communication tools in our daily life. We use English invitation emails widely in the occasions such as weddings, conferences, and business. It is important to know how to write an email invitation not only to show our politeness but also to successfully get other people to join the activities we hold.

As email is a new issue, previous research focusing on request emails has shown that many students are unable to make requests in emails appropriately. The reasons for this could be that students have not mastered English or they are unaware of the cultural differences between L1 and L2. As Chen (2006) pointed out, “For L2 learners, the challenge of composing this type of e-mail can be greater due not only to their limited linguistic ability but also their unfamiliarity with the target culture’s norms and values” (p. 35). However, there has not been any study on email invitation, although several papers have investigated the speech act of “invitation” and the strategies of refusing/declining invitations. For example, Garc ía (1996) focused on teaching the performance of declining an invitation. As a guidance paper of making an oral invitation, Garc ía (1999) mentioned different stages and types of invitations and responses of Venezuelan Spanish. The three stages were “making an invitation”, “insistence-response”, and “wrap-up”. Félix-Brasdefer (2003) investigated the direct and indirect invitation strategies used by native speakers and advanced non-native speakers of Spanish when they declined an invitation in three different situations. This study not only discussed declining an invitation but also put emphasis on cross-cultural investigation of pragmatic strategies in American English and Latin American Spanish. The result showed that Americans were more direct when they were speaking English (ENG-ENG) than Latin Americans when they were speaking Spanish (SPN-SPN). For instance, the SPN-SPN group of people would adopt the indirect strategy like: “Perfect. I’ll come by after I finish the exam”, even if he could not attend the graduation dinner of his student. However, no one used this *Explicit Acceptance strategy* in the ENG-ENG group. On the other hand, the ENG-ENG group of participants preferred using direct strategies such as *Excuse/Explanation strategy*: “...but, I just have a prior commitment.” Salmani-Nodoushan (2006) conducted a study that contrasted the differences between

two language strategies. Based on Clark and Isaacs' (1990) work, he conducted a comparative sociopragmatic study to test if Persian ostensible and genuine invitations could be distinguished by the features including pretense, mutual recognition, collusion, ambivalence and off-record purpose. The findings confirmed his hypothesis. Another study on invitation was also conducted by Felix-Brasdefer (2008). In his study, the learners had to role-play how to decline an invitation and verbally report their retrospections immediately after the role-plays. This study helped us understand the strategies the Spanish learners used and the cognitive processes and perceptions of Spanish learners when they refused invitations from a person of equal and higher status.

Although previous studies compared and listed the different strategies of invitations, the cognitive concepts of invitation have rarely been addressed. Hummert (1999) suggested that social cognitive processes are important to understand the complex impact on our self perception and interpersonal interactions. One issue she mentioned was age stereotypes as person perception schemas. Her approach was different from the traditional way of sociology to investigate stereotypes. She argued that using the traditional perspectives, i.e., the sociocultural and psychodynamic perspectives, to discuss age stereotypes would discourage us from acknowledging the ways in which age stereotypes influence our own perceptions and behaviors (p.177). Thus, she believed people can know more about age stereotypes from social cognitive perspective. Wolf (2008) mentioned two advantages of a cognitive sociolinguistic approach in her discussion of World Englishes. First and foremost, the conceptualizations underlying language are systematic in their universal and culture-specific dimensions. Therefore, cognitive sociolinguistics can explain culture-specific patterns such as keywords, prototypical differences, and conceptualizations.

However, the schema of people is not fixed but there are some variations due to factors such as gender, class, or age. Labov (1972) has demonstrated to us that linguistic variations exist within a given group. In his experiment, he went to three levels of department stores to investigate the use of (r) by New York people. His hypothesis was that if any two subgroups of New York City speakers are ranked in a scale of social stratification, they would be ranked in the same order by their differential use of (r). The result revealed that the salespeople in the highest-ranked store had the highest values of (r); and those in the lowest-ranked store showed the lowest values. One approach to address linguistic variations is to use metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) mentioned that metaphor is everywhere in our daily life because our conceptual system is largely metaphorical. Although we may not be aware of our conceptual system, our act and thought are influenced by the system. Fiksdal (2008) used metaphors to describe seminars, and she found that variations exist when the metaphors are categorized by the genders of the speakers. However, her study was primarily qualitative without providing any quantitative analysis to strengthen her argument.

In sum, the above review indicates that the research on invitations initiated by Chinese English speakers has been scarce. Furthermore, as pointed out by Hummert (1999), cognitive sociolinguistics can provide us the information of how perceptions and behaviors become so salient during interactions. Therefore, we would like to test our assumptions of metaphorical concepts of invitations. The tests are conducted from two perspectives—information sequencing and invitation sentence verbs because we consider the metaphorical assumptions can be revealed from the construction of an entire email and the verb choice in the invitation sentences. This is important because only when we know the metaphors and schemata toward invitation emails of the target language can we control the skills and write appropriate English email invitations.

Therefore, three research questions are posed:

1. Is there any difference in the information sequencing expressions of invitation emails between Chinese and English? Can the difference be accounted for by their different cognitive concepts of invitation? If the answer is yes, then what features are reflected from the different information sequencing expressions?
2. Is there any difference in the use of verbs in the main invitation sentences? If the answer is yes, then what are the special verbs they used?
3. Can the difference in the use of verbs in the main invitation sentences be accounted for by distance between the receivers and the senders, the gender of the sender, or the representation of the sender?

## II. METHOD

Since the aim of this paper was to investigate the conceptualization of making an invitation by comparing the corpus data with students' works to explain the different usages of their email invitations, we would like to assume that invitation concepts can be described by metaphors and the variations of metaphors can be accounted for by linguistic and social variables (Geeraerts, Kristiansen and Peirsman, 2010; Kristiansen and Dirven, 2008).

### A. Participants

The participants were twenty-nine college students. The students consisted of 20 sophomores and 9 juniors who were recruited from the department of applied English of a university of technology in Taiwan. They had taken the writing courses for at least one year.

### B. Instrument

A Discourse Completion Task (DCT) with four situations was designed as prompts to elicit email invitations from the students. The situations were selected based on what they would probably encounter in their campus life. For

instance, a situation involved students asking one of their course teachers to be an external reviewer for the oral defense after they finish the graduation project writing. The emails were divided into four situations according to the combination of two variables  $\pm R$  (Representation) and  $\pm D$  (Distance). *Representation* refers to whether the email sender is writing the email for himself/herself or as the representative of a group. *Distance* refers to the relationship between the student (the sender) and the professor (the receiver), particularly in terms of whether they know each other or not. Table 1 shows the four DCT situations for the email invitations (see also Chen and Huang, 2012, pp.208-209).

TABLE 1.  
THE DCT SITUATIONS

<b>Situation 1:</b> You are the member of the Student Association. At the upcoming School Anniversary celebrations, the association will sponsor a series of contests. You would like to invite one of your course teachers to be a judge in the English Speech Contest. How would you write the invitation by email? (+R, -D)
<b>Situation 2:</b> You are a senior student. After you finish the graduation project writing, you need to invite one of your course teachers to be an external reviewer for the oral defense. How would you write the invitation by email? (-R, -D)
<b>Situation 3:</b> You are the head of the Student Association. During the upcoming Christmas vacation, the association will organize an English Camp. You would like to invite the president of SK to give the opening speech. Although you are a student at SK, you have never had a chance to talk to the president in person. How would you write the invitation by email? (+R, +D)
<b>Situation 4:</b> You are a senior student. You are asked to invite a guest speaker to give a speech on job interviews. How would you write the invitation by email? (-R, +D)

### C. Data Collection

In this study, the student participants were asked to respond to the four email invitation situations under the exam condition for their Creative English Writing course. Each student was also asked to find three invitation letters on the Internet as their homework assignment. As a result, two corpora were constructed: one with 114 students' invitation emails (one of the students only responded to situations 1 and 2) and the other with 56 Internet downloads. The Internet data came from three different sources: real invitation emails, the sample emails provided by the teaching websites, and finally, the emails which cyber friends would ask how to write invitation emails in the Yahoo Knowledge and Baidu. The advantage of the Internet data is that the data is easily accessible. However, its disadvantage is that we lacked the background of the email such as the relationship between the receivers and the senders.

### D. Data Analysis

First of all, we read the invitation emails of the Internet corpus data and tried to explore the verb usage of the main invitation sentences. However, we needed to know which sentence issues the major invitation. We considered the main invitation sentence to be the one in which the first referee "you" refers to the email receiver, and the sentence has the words or phrases such as "invite you", "could you come...", or "we hope you can come..." Having located the main invitation sentences, we not only focused on the verbs of invitation sentences but also looked at the sentences which are positioned prior to invitation sentences in order to know how people sequence the information. That is, in order to know information sequencing, we would also examine the place of the invitation sentences. Then, we counted all of the verbs in the invitation sentences. When an invitation sentence used two verbs, we counted them as two different types of tokens. For instance, in an invitation sentence "We would invite you to be a judge in the English Speech Contest, hope you can take it", there are two types of verbs: the WOULD LIKE TO type and also HOPE type. After that, we used VARBRUL, a logistic regression analysis, to examine whether there were variations in the writing of email invitations.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An overview of the entire data led us to make two different metaphorical assumptions: for Chinese, invitation is like "borrowing money," so Chinese tend to make an invitation after they provide reasons and motivations of their requests. On the other hand, for native English speakers, invitation is like "delivering a message", so they tend to make the invitation right in the beginning of an invitation email.

Our assumptions were examined from three perspectives, each of which provides answers to our research questions. For research question 1, we provide the differences between Chinese and English in terms of information sequencing in invitation emails. For research question 2, we provide different verb usages of Chinese EFL students and Internet corpus data when they make an invitation sentence. For research question 3, we conducted statistical analyses to see if the cognitive variations can be accounted for by the distance between receivers and the senders, the gender, or the representation of the sender.

### A. Differences in Information Sequencing

#### 1. Chinese students' invitations: Giving motivations and reasons before invitation

The Chinese students tended to provide the background of the invitation first, such as the motivations and the reasons why they had to make the invitations before they actually issued the invitations. In the data, there were 81 cases (71.05%) of students' productions using the "motivation + invitation" sequence when they made an invitation. We can see such type of information sequencing in (1):

(1) Dear president of SK:

I am the head of Student Association in SK University of Technology. The Student Association will organize an English Camp during the upcoming Christmas vacation. It is the biggest activity for school. Therefore, **I would like to invite you to give opening speech on 12/25/11 Sunday 10:00 a.m.** It is my pleasure to invite you to give opening speech during English camp. R.S.V.P.

Wish you have a wonderful day.

Sincerely, Sophia

This finding is in line with Zhang (1995), who argued that Chinese indirectness is associated with information sequencing. And there are two approaches to be adopted to compare the degree of indirectness of one's utterances. Firstly, we can examine whether the inviter starts his/her intended proposition with small talk or supportive moves. Secondly, we can examine how many words the person uses to convey his/her communicative intention before bringing out the major invitation. As Zhang argued: "The degree of indirectness is determined by the length of the supportive moves which do not contain explicitly the intended proposition" (p. 82).

Zhang's argument is also supported by Chen (2006), who did a longitudinal case study of a Taiwanese student who wrote English request emails to her professors. Chen's findings revealed that the student tended to write a lot of reasons before requesting because the student considered herself to be an indirect and polite person; thus, she assumed that it would be polite for her to make a request with the "reason + request" sequence. This strategy is similar to that found in the invitation emails of our Chinese students. Compared to native speakers of English, Chinese students tended to invite the invitees in the sentences that followed. This phenomenon can explain our cognitive assumption. For Chinese, invitation is like what we have to request others to do. When we invite others, we might be afraid of wasting the invitee's time on the things we request. Therefore, invitation is like borrowing money, which is a face-threatening act. As a result, Chinese have to provide many reasons and small talks before starting the main topic: invitation. Such a finding of information sequencing is similar to that of Chang and Hsu (1998), who compared the email request strategies of Chinese English learners and native English speakers. They provided the schemata and strategies that an email request should contain. Specifically, they found that Chinese learners of English used indirect structures while native speakers of English used direct structures. For example, in one English email request, a Chinese hedged for several sentences, and finally wrote his/her request using the words "Please give me a ride on March 5 to the airport." The hedging strategy is called indirect structure. On the other hand, native speakers of English tend to request directly at the beginning of the email without hedging.

## II. Internet corpus invitations: Direct Invitation right after the self-introduction

In Internet corpus data, the inviters tended to make invitations right after their self-introduction, as shown in (2):

(2) Dear Mr. Moriarity:<sup>1</sup>

**The purpose of this letter is to formally invite you, on behalf of the Board of Directors, to be the Closing Keynote Speaker at the upcoming 2010 IDCRI Conference.**

The theme of this conference is "Disabling the Disability - Looking It Straight In the Eye". It will be held at the Mountainview Conference Facility, in Montpelier, Vermont from December 3 to 5, 2010.

[...]

In closing, we would be pleased and honored if you would consent to be our closing speaker at the 2010 IDCRI Conference.

I will call you in a week or so to follow up on this.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Bagnall

In the Internet corpus invitations, the self-introductions include the inviters' names, and the organizations/groups they represent. Then, their motivations or the activity information are shown in the invitation sentence. There are 45 cases (80.36%) of corpus invitations using this strategy. This figure can demonstrate that for the inviters of the corpus data, invitation is like delivering a message, so they would express it in a direct way.

## B. Differences in Verb Usages

We also found that the verb usages can prove our metaphorical assumptions of invitations. That is, the different conceptualizations of Chinese and English also cause the different verb usages of invitation sentences.

For Internet corpus, the emails would use the phrases: "It's a pleasure to invite you", "We would like to invite you", and "The purpose of this letter is to invite you to..." to invite the email receivers in their main invitation sentence.

On the other hand, specifically, the Chinese learners of English would use the verbs: "WANT", "NEED", and "HOPE" as the verbs to invite the invitees in their main invitation sentences. However, there is not any invitation sentence which uses this verb in corpus data. This is the most salient difference between Chinese learners of English and native speakers of English when writing invitation letters. Sample 3 is the example of Chinese students who used WANT to make an invitation while sample 4 is the example of Chinese students who used the verb NEED to make an invitation. And sample 5 is the example of HOPE invitation sentence of a Chinese student's email.

(3) Dear Ms. Sue Wang,

Hello, teacher! I'm Moira. I'm the member of the student association. Our school's anniversary celebration is coming,

<sup>1</sup> The deleted sections refer to the other speakers of the conference, which are irrelevant to this study.

and we'll sponsor a series of contests. I **want** to invite you to be our judge for the English speech contest. It'll be held on October, 23.

I looking forward to you.

Yours sincerely,

Moira Cheng

(4) Dear Mr.Lee

We will hold the School Anniversary celebrations and sponsor a series of contests. And we need a judge in English Speech Contest. We think you are the best choice for us. We **need** you very much. If you have the free time, please make contact with us.

Yours truly,

STUDENT Mickey.

(5) Dear Mr. Huang

We will invite teachers to be a judge in the English speech Contest. We **hope** that you can come to be us judge.

I look forward to hearing from you

Sincerely yours,

Gordon

The three main verbs "WANT", "NEED", and "HOPE" which Chinese students would use in invitation sentences associate with the needs of individuals. Just like people are borrowing money, they would satisfy their own personal needs: Be not short of money. In addition, when the phrases "I want..." (wǒ xiǎng...), "I need..." (wǒ xū yào...), and "I hope..." (wǒ xī wàng...) are translated into Chinese, they are meaningful and acceptable in Chinese invitations. Our previous study (Li, Chen, and Rau, 2011) also showed that that learners tended to use these three verbs in their email requests to their professors.

### C. Differences in Verb Usage with Respect to Social Variables

To answer research question 3, we would like to know in this section if the three verbs WANT, NEED, and HOPE used by the Chinese learners are subject to the distance of receivers and the senders, the gender of the sender, and the representation of the sender of those Chinese students.

#### 1. WANT, NEED and HOPE with respect to gender

Table 2 shows VARBRUL result of factors for email invitations. Although the chance of informants' choice of the verb HOPE was averagely only 11%, the total value of Chi-square is 7.0798 (df= 3; chi-square=7.82,  $p < 0.05$ ), which did not exceed the critical value. Therefore, the result is reliable, and it shows the distance, representation, and gender are independent variables and they do not interact with each other.

TABLE 2.  
VARBRUL RESULT OF FACTORS FOR THE USE OF "HOPE" IN EMAIL INVITATIONS

	Input= 0.111		Number/Total
	Weight	%	
- Distance	[0.431]	12.1	7/58
+Distance	[0.571]	14.3	8/56
- Representation	[0.578]	15.8	9/57
+Representation	[0.422]	10.5	6/57
Gender			
Male	0.985	83.3	5/6
Female	0.442	9.3	10/108
Range	.527		
Token = 114			
Total Chi-square = 7.0798			
Chi-square/cell = 0.8850			
Log likelihood = -35.192			

In Table 2, it shows that males prefer using HOPE as the invitation verb. In addition, we can see the gender significance = 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ) from step-up and step-down procedure analysis, which means that the factor "gender" has significance. Consequently, this result shows that there are clear distinctions between males and females in the use of HOPE because the factor weights of males and females are 0.985 and 0.442, respectively.

From the VARBRUL results, we know that males prefer HOPE, and Table 3 shows the frequencies of occurrence of the three verbs used by males and females. Figure 1 shows the verb usages of females when making invitations and it also shows us the verb preference of males.

TABLE 3.  
GENDER BY VERB TYPE

External Factor	Variations					
	[+WANT]	[-WANT]	[+NEED]	[-NEED]	[+HOPE]	[- HOPE]
Male	0	6	0	6	5	1
Female	31	77	7	101	10	98
Total	31	83	7	107	15	99



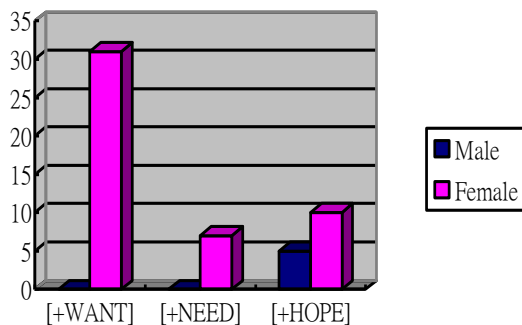


Figure 1: The Frequency of Gender by Verb Type

Table 3 indicates the raw frequencies of occurrence of each invitation verb used by males and females. In Figure 1, it shows that females would use WANT and NEED while males would use HOPE. The possible reasons for the gender preferences of the verbs may be caused by the different concept for the verbs in Chinese culture. Although these three verbs are considered to show people’s requirement, there are still some differences when the verb is transferred to Chinese. When WANT and NEED are translated into Chinese “xiǎng yào” and “xū yào”, the verbs express more about personal needs. Therefore, when these two verbs are used, the status of the inviter becomes lower. However, the Chinese verb HOPE “xī wàng” does not contain the meaning of lowering the inviter’s own status. On the other hand, when a person says “I hope...,” it would not lower the inviter’s status but may even raise it because it is the invitee who should do something for him/her. In addition, females would tend to reveal their own problems more, so they would use the two verbs, WANT and NEED, to invite. On the contrary, males tend not to say their own personal needs, so they would not use WANT and NEED as invitation verb. When it comes to cognitive concept, we would think that males do not reveal their problems, especially if the problem is to borrow money, which is seen as an act threatening others’ face. When they try to use the verbs “WANT and NEED”, they would feel they are showing their weaknesses and put themselves in a lower position, but females tend not to be afraid of showing their weakness. Howden (1994) also mentioned in her study that boys avoid talking about feelings for fear of showing weaknesses, but girls discuss feelings and events in detail, seeking sympathy and support from close friends. Thus, we can know that females tend to show their weaknesses in order to seek sympathy and support from their friends.

II. WANT, NEED, and HOPE with respect to representation

Table 4 shows the raw frequencies of the three verbs when the variable is Representation. Figure 2 shows the trend of the three verb usages with respect to the representation factor.

TABLE 4. REPRESENTATION BY VERB TYPE

External Factor	Variations					
	[+WANT]	[-WANT]	[+NEED]	[-NEED]	[+HOPE]	[- HOPE]
[+R]	13	44	3	54	6	51
[- R]	18	39	4	53	9	48
Total	31	83	7	107	15	99

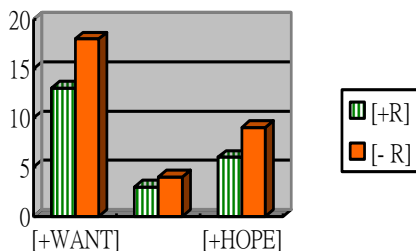


Figure 2: The Frequency of Representation by Verb Type

In Table 4, we can see the raw frequency of occurrence of each verb when the inviters are representatives of a group or not. In Figure 2, we can see easily that when the variable is [-R], the students would use these three verbs more frequently. That is, when Chinese students wrote emails on behalf of themselves, they would use the three verbs more frequently; on the other hand, when they wrote emails on behalf of a group, some of the students would not choose these verbs. One explanation could be that the meanings of the verbs in Chinese express personal needs to a fuller extent, so students would use the three verbs when writing emails for themselves. As for the cognitive concept of Chinese and English emails, we also have the speculation that when Chinese have to borrow money for their personal needs, they tend to say more about their own problems, how pitiful they are, and why they need the money. Therefore,

when they send the invitation emails by themselves, they would use the three verbs more often to show their personal requirements. On the other hand, when people have to borrow money on behalf of their companies or organizations, they would not use this strategy to put themselves in such a low status. They would instead explain their purpose by the words which do not directly represent their requirements but show their politeness (e.g., “We sincerely would like to invite you to attend our opening ceremony...”)

### III. WANT, NEED, and HOPE with respect to distance

Table 5 shows the number of the tokens of WANT and NEED with respect to the distance variable. In Figure 3, it shows us directly that Chinese students use more WANT and NEED when they do not know the email receiver.

TABLE 5.  
DISTANCE BY VERB TYPE (WANT AND NEED)

Variations	[+WANT]	[-WANT]	[+NEED]	[-NEED]
External Factor				
[+D]	<b>14</b>	42	<b>0</b>	0
[-D]	<b>17</b>	41	<b>7</b>	107
Total	31	83	7	107

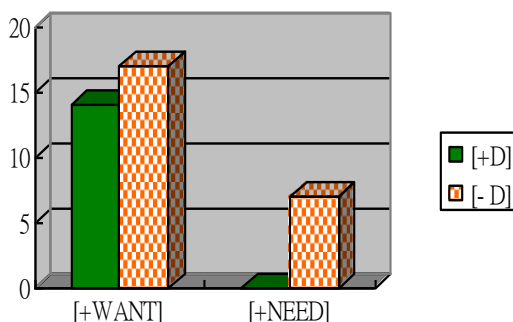


Figure 3: The Frequency of Distance by Verb Type (WANT and NEED)

Table 5 indicates that the verbs of Chinese students' invitation emails were related to social distance. We can know this clearly in Figure 3. When the email senders and receivers do not know each other, the email senders would tend to use the verbs WANT less often or do not use any NEED. On the other hand, they would use these two verbs more frequently when they know the invitees.

Generally speaking, the invitation verbs, WANT and NEED, which were not used in student corpus emails, are used more in [-D] situations. This is an interesting finding because it is a counter example of Chen (2001), who has found that American students would use different strategies of address terms to show politeness or solidarity. For instance, they would use titles and last names to show deference politeness, but when students would like to show solidarity politeness, they would use first names to be the address forms. In contrast, due to Chinese culture, the learners tended to use formal address forms to show respect to their teachers. However, our research shows that students may show their distinction between politeness and solidarity in the verbs they used. Furthermore, we can know from Table 3 that WANT and NEED are only used by females. When email senders know the receivers, females tended to use more WANT and NEED. We can know that females are more likely to reveal their own personal needs, especially for the people they know. This is also the same as the argument of Howden (1994). She pointed out that “Girls discuss feelings and events in detail, seeking sympathy and support from close friends” (p. 50).

Therefore, from the cognitive sociolinguistic perspective, we would like to know the reasons why distance plays an important role in email invitations. We speculate that inviting someone they know is just like borrowing money from someone they know because the inviters are willing to tell the people their own problems to seek sympathy. Besides, for Chinese, as an old saying goes, “Once a teacher, always a father”, which means that the relationship between teachers and students are like kinship (father and son), especially in most situations in which students have to invite their teachers or university president, so making invitations is just like children asking their parents for money. This could explain why the WANT and NEED verbs are used more in [-D] situations.

However, HOPE is an opposite example to the other two verbs, as shown in Table 6 and Figure 4:

TABLE 6.  
DISTANCE BY THE VERB “HOPE”

Variations	[+HOPE]	[-HOPE]
External Factor		
[+D]	8	48
[-D]	7	51
Total	15	99

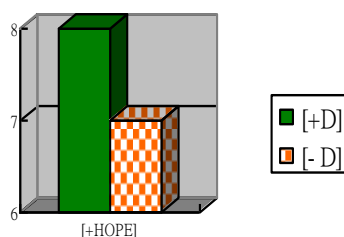


Figure 4: The Frequency of Distance by Verb Type (HOPE)

From Table 6, in contrast, when the verb is HOPE, the Chinese students would use it more often when they do not know the invitees. We can see this clearly in Figure 4. Thus, we think that for students, maybe they think HOPE is a more formal verb than the other two verbs. This table at least shows that the verb HOPE is different from WANT and NEED.

We believe that this result can be linked to Table 3, in which HOPE and WANT/NEED are used by different genders. In Table 3, we know that Chinese meanings of WANT and NEED “xiǎng yào” and “xū yào” are only used by females; on the other hand, most of the males use the Chinese verb HOPE “xī wàng”. Thus, in this case, we know that WANT and NEED are not the same as HOPE, which has the same result as this. The possible answer is that the verbs “WANT and NEED” would express personal needs more while the verb HOPE would not. That is also the reason why males used more HOPE when making an invitation because it is a verb which does not express personal needs like WANT and NEED do.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, we use metaphors to describe the influence of different cultures on email invitations. After analyzing the data, we found that an invitation email for Chinese is, in fact, like borrowing money; while an invitation email for native speakers of English is more like delivering messages. Our metaphor has been proven to be tenable from the perspective of information sequencing. According to our data, native speakers of English would make direct invitations in an email since they regard invitation as delivering information. On the other hand, Chinese would put their invitation sentences in the later part of an email because they consider invitation is like borrowing money, a face-threatening act, so they need some warm-ups and small talks before they announce their purposes. Secondly, the metaphorical assumptions can also be proven by the invitation verbs. Chinese would use WANT, NEED, and HOPE in their invitation sentences while the corpus data did not show such use. However, variations also occurred in the use of the three verbs. With respect to gender, females would use WANT and NEED more frequently while males tend to use HOPE. In terms of the REPRESENTATION variable, when the person is not the representative of a group, he or she would use these three verbs more frequently. Finally, DISTANCE also plays an important role in the use of the verbs. That is, WANT and NEED were used more in the [-D] situations, while HOPE is used more often in [+D] the situations. All these variations come from the fact that “WANT and NEED” can express more about the inviter’s personal needs but making his or her status become lower at the same time; however, the verb “HOPE” does not contain such a connotation, and therefore the inviter’s status would not become lower. All in all, this study is an attempt to examine speech acts from the cognitive sociolinguistic perspective and hopes to provide a new research avenue for cross-cultural pragmatics research.

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# EFL/ESL Learners' Language Related Episodes (LREs) during Performing Collaborative Writing Tasks

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**Abstract**—This paper examined how the homogeneous dyads-- two EFL (i.e. Iranian) dyads and two ESL (i.e., Malaysian) dyads--consciously reflected on their language in the course of performing collaborative writing tasks. To this end, the dyads were asked to do fifteen writing tasks collaboratively. The pair talk was audio-recorded and transcribed for each dyad. It was revealed that EFL/ESL dyads had different orientations towards metatalk; EFL dyads tended to focus considerably more on meta-linguistic features of language than ESL dyads. The findings are discussed with a reference to the different status of the English language in the two contexts of Iran and Malaysia (i.e., EFL vs. ESL) as well as the effect of previous educational experiences of the learners. The findings of the study could be of pedagogical help and significance to educationists and practitioners.

**Index Terms**—language-related episodes, EFL/ESL, collaborative writing

## I. INTRODUCTION

Applying Vygotskian perspective to L2 learning, Swain (2000) extended her concept of output hypothesis (Swain, 1995; Swain, Gass, & Madden, 1985) and proposed the notion of collaborative dialogue. Collaborative dialogue is the dialogue in which “learners work together to solve linguistic problems and/or co-construct language or knowledge about language (Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli-Beller, 2002, p. 172). Swain (2000, p.51) recommends “conscious focus on language from” in contexts in which the learners are engaged in the process of meaning making or natural communication. In order to further emphasize the significance of output and producing language during collaborative engagements, Swain (2006, 2010) proposed the concept of languaging. She believes that languaging mediates both internalizing and externalizing psychological activity. According to her, under such circumstances in which learners are required to produce language, besides certain pedagogical gains (e.g., noticing the gap), the language produced is also made available for analysis and reflection by the researchers. Language Related Episodes (LREs) have been used as a measurement and analysis tool to such an end. LREs are segments of collaborative dialogue where the collaborators deliberate about language (lexical choices, grammar, and mechanics) while trying to perform the task (Swain & Lapkin, 2001). Based on Swain and Lapkin’s (2002) extended definition of LREs, “LREs are a group of utterances or any segment of dialog in which the group members are talking about the language they have produced or are producing, correct themselves or others, or question or reflect on their language use.”

## II. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

A number of researchers have investigated upon the description of collaborative dynamics among the peers while doing group writing. For example, some studies (Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Nelson & Murphy,

1992) have shown that L2 learners reflect on different aspects of a text when they do joint writing; they discuss a variety of textual issues. Nelson and Murphy (1992) found that in the course of peer response activities ESL learners focused most of their verbal interactions on the task. According to them, 70% -80% of the utterances exchanged were related to “the analysis of word order, rhetorical organization, lexical ties, cohesive devices, style, and usage” (p. 187). Mendonca and Johnson (1994) who conducted their study with six ESL dyads found that in the course of peer-response activities the learners spoke primarily about language issues such as vocabulary, and more global discourse issues such as essay organization.

Investigating the effect of task type on the collaboration process, Storch's (1997) study showed that in a peer-editing activity the focus of ESL learners' discussion was more on language-related issues, particularly grammatical choices, rather than on discussing ideas. The study indicated that the type of the collaborative task (e.g., editing task) may affect the kinds of text issues that collaborators discuss. Storch's (2005) classroom-based study of nine dyads who were asked to collaboratively describe a graphic prompt showed that the learners focused a considerable share of the total time (53%) on idea generation (ideational aspects) followed by language issues (25%). Lockhart and Ng (1995) likewise reported that in their peer-response study a bigger proportion of verbal interactions was dedicated to discussing ideational aspects. Building on the earlier works of Storch (2001) and Swain and Lapkin (2001), De la Colina and Garcia Mayo (2007) compared LREs generated by the learners in the course of completing three different kinds of tasks: jigsaw, text reconstruction and dictogloss. Unlike earlier studies (i.e., Storch and Swain and Lapkin's studies), de la Colina and Garcia Mayo's study was conducted in an EFL context (Spain) and with low-proficiency L2 learners. The study indicated that different task types could differently draw learners' attention to language. Text reconstruction task which is a more structured task compared to jigsaw and dictogloss elicited more LREs from the learners.

Storch and Wigglesworth (2007) compared the LREs generated by two types of meaning-focused writing tasks: (a data commentary report vs. an argumentative essay) among advanced level English learners. The study found that learners had more lexical LREs than grammar-focused LREs. The researchers attributed the learners' higher degree of attention to lexical choices (rather than to accuracy) to the meaning-focused nature of the tasks used in the study as well as the participants' advanced level of proficiency.

The L2 proficiency of learners has been seen as another important factor that can affect the quantity and quality of the LREs. Williams' (1999, 2001) studies are reckoned among the early studies examining the effect of proficiency on the LREs. She investigated whether English L2 learners from different proficiency levels differed in terms of the occurrence and the resolution of LREs during collaborative activities. Analyzing the collaborative negotiations of eight learners from four proficiency levels (beginning, intermediate, high-intermediate and advanced) indicated that the learners tended to discuss lexical items more often than grammatical items, and the overall rate of occurrence of LREs increased as the proficiency of the participants increased. The study also found that learners from higher proficiency levels may be more likely to have more metatalk and to reach more correct resolutions to their linguistic problems during collaborative engagements compared to their less proficient counterparts.

Leeser (2004) similarly investigated the effect of proficiency on the occurrence and the outcome of the LREs in an EFL context (i.e., Spain). Ten L2 learners were assigned into five dyads; two of the dyads included pairs of high proficiency (two high-high); two of the dyads included pairs of low proficiency (two low-low). The other dyad was a mixed proficiency dyad (high-low). All the dyads were asked to complete a dictogloss task collaboratively. The pair talk of the participants' was analyzed for the number and type of LREs (i.e., lexical or grammar-based) as well as their resolution. The results of the study showed that the grouping of learners according to their proficiency level affected not only the number of the LREs they produced, but also the types of LREs they focused on, as well as the outcome of the LREs.

Building on Leeser's work, subsequent studies looked into the effect of proficiency on the generation of LREs as well as the relationship that the learners formed when working in pairs of similar or mixed proficiency. In an interesting research design, Watanabe and Swain (2007) sought to find out whether the occurrence of LREs differed when the same four English learners of their study interacted with peers of lower and higher language proficiency. The study showed that the learners produced more LREs when they interacted with a high-level interlocutor. In a similar study, Kim and McDonough (2008) paired eight intermediate Korean L2 learners with fellow intermediate learners and then with advanced interlocutors to complete a dictogloss task. The researchers found that the number of LREs produced were higher when the learners interacted with advanced interlocutors rather than intermediate ones; also, a greater proportion of these LREs were lexical.

Aldosari (2008) in his doctoral research which was carried out in an EFL context sought to investigate the effect of proficiency, task type and relationships learners formed on the quantity and the type of LREs that collaborative writing tasks elicited. Three types of tasks were used in the study: jigsaw, composition and editing. The researcher, based on the EFL instructor's assessment of students' level of proficiency, put the participants into pairs of high-high, high-low, and low-low. The findings of the study showed that the task type affected the type of LREs generated between the learners; whereas the tasks of more meaning-oriented nature (jigsaw and composition) elicited more learners' attention to lexis, the editing task (a task of less meaning-oriented nature) generated more grammar-based LREs. The study also found that the role of relationship formed between the interlocutors could be more important than the effect of proficiency.

The number of LREs was higher in collaborative pairs than in pairs with asymmetrical patterns of interaction (dominant-passive or expert-novice).

Overall, the above reviews show that all the studies have addressed the study of LREs among either ESL or EFL learners, and a study has yet to be conducted to comparatively investigate the occurrence of LREs among ESL and EFL learners. This study is a small attempt in this direction, being crystallized around the following research question:

What are the Language Related Episodes (LREs) of Iranian (EFL) and Malaysian (ESL) learners like in the course of collaborative writing sessions?

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

The study included 4 female Malaysian and 4 female Iranian students at a private university in Kuala Lumpur. These participants, who were selected from among about twenty students, met certain selection criteria: 1. An attempt was made to choose the participants from similar disciplines. 2. Their most recent English proficiency test result (IELTS) was used for proficiency level judgment. A writing proficiency test adapted from IELTS (IELTS Academic Module task 1) was also administered to them to be further assured of their homogeneity of writing proficiency. All the participants' score for the IELTS Academic Module writing task 1 was 6, and 3. In addition to their proficiency level, the participants' gender was considered as one of the selection criteria as well because according to Chavez (2000) and Gass and Varonis (1986), sex of interactants could affect the interaction and group dynamics.

The 8 participants were divided into 4 dyads (the smallest formation of a group): 2 Malaysian dyads and 2 Iranian dyads. The Iranian dyads were named dyad A and dyad B, and the Malaysian dyads were named dyads C and D.

#### B. Instrumentation

In order to scrutinize the verbal interactions (Process) of the participants, it was necessary to elicit, record, transcribe and analyze the pair talk of Iranian dyads and Malaysian dyads. For the purpose of output elicitation, task 1 of IELTS Academic Module was utilized. Swain and her colleagues (Kowal & Swain, 1994; Swain, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998) have proposed the use of tasks which require collaborative written output as a means of drawing learners' attention to meta-linguistic features within a communicative context. The reason could be the function of collaborative writing in encouraging "learners to language, that is, to reflect on language use in the process of producing language" (Storch, 2011, p. 277). Some researchers (Adams & Ross-Feldman, 2008; Doughty & Williams, 1998; Swain, et al., 2002; J. Williams, 2008) basically consider writing essential for language learning on the grounds that writing is more likely to encourage learners to reflect on their language use in the process of producing language.

#### C. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection took place within the semester break of second semester in 2010. At the outset of the study, the general aim of the study was explained to the participants. Data collection took place in fifteen sessions and lasted about 6 weeks. In each session the four dyads of the study were provided with the same graphic prompt (IELTS Academic Module task 1) and were asked to collaboratively perform the tasks in not more than thirty minutes. The verbal interactions taking place between the peers in each dyad were recorded for the later analysis. It is worth mentioning that each dyad chose a time convenient for them to meet; therefore, data collection took place at different times for the dyads.

#### D. Data Analysis

The pair talk data from eleven collaborative sessions (out of fifteen sessions) was transcribed for each of the dyads. Pair talks of sessions one, five, six and fifteen were not transcribed. Session one was deliberately excluded from transcription because it was the beginning session, and despite explanations provided by the researcher, the participants did not seem to have a sufficient familiarity with the procedure of performing the task. Pair talk of session five was not transcribed because the pair talk of dyad C had not been recorded by the device. The interactive discourse of session six for dyad B was not audible enough because of the background noise (construction work), so transcription was not carried out. The last session (session fifteen) was not transcribed because one of the members of dyad B, who had gone back her country, did not attend. The reason behind having an equal number of collaborative session for all the dyads was to accurately quantify and reflect the linguistic features of the participants' collaborative discourse within the equal number of sessions. It is important to note that as about 75% of the whole data set (i.e., eleven sessions) was transcribed, the researcher had some concerns about the adequacy of this amount of data transcription. Therefore, a well-known authority in qualitative research (i.e., Merriam, 2011) was requested to comment on. She pointed out that "This large data set [transcribed pair talk of 11 sessions] generated by the eight participants is more than enough data to address the study's research questions" (personal correspondence).

As stated above, in this study an LRE was defined as any part of collaborative discourse in which the peers talked about language they were producing or had produced, and the corrections they made to their own language or their partner's. For the purpose of coding the transcripts for language related episodes, the researcher read and re-read all the transcripts. After establishing the codes, inter-rater and intra-rater reliability was checked. In order to check inter-rater

reliability, eight randomly selected transcripts (over a third of the entire data) were coded by a PhD student of TESL. Inter-rater reliability averaged 83%. The researcher was initially concerned about the level of inter-rater reliability as it was below the figure of 90% recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994). However, reading through the literature indicated that the reliability scores between 80% and 90% have been recognized to be the norm in the studies dealing with the interactive discourse (e.g., Brooks, Donato, & McGlonem, 1997; Cumming, 1989). Intra-rater reliability was taken care of as well. In order to check the intra-rater reliability, eight transcripts were randomly selected and were coded again about ten days after the initial coding. The figure averaged 92%.

#### IV. FINDINGS

Three types of LREs were found in the specified transcribed data: Form-oriented LRE (FO-LRE), Lexis-oriented LRE (LO-LRE), and Mechanics-oriented LRE (MO-LRE). A few examples are provided below.

##### a) Form-oriented LREs (FO-LRE)

In the present study, any segment in the collaborative discourse of the peers dealing with grammatical accuracy was categorized as Form-oriented LRE. The episodes dealing with form and tense of the verb, the articles, prepositions, linking devices and word order fall in the category of FO-LREs. Some examples from the Form-oriented LREs in the pair talk data of the dyads are presented:

Excerpt 16: An FO-LRE dealing with the tense of a verb  
 143 Negar: Start from 10 there is an increasing in number of people the number of passengers who use underground station...  
 144 Niloofer: Who use?!  
 145 Negar: Yes, number of passengers who use...yes...  
 146 Negar: 'Who use' is correct or 'who is using?' What do you think?  
 147 Niloofer: 'Who use' is correct...I think  
 148 Negar: Ok. 'who use'  
 [Dyad B, Task B, L 143-148]

Excerpt 17: An FO-LRE dealing with the tense of a verb  
 31 Niloofer: ...in 2005 there are less than...  
 32 Negar: In 2005 there were.....  
 [Dyad B, Task A, L 31-32]

##### b) Lexis-Oriented LREs (LO-LREs)

Those segments in the protocol of the collaborative discourse which were dealing with word choice, word's meaning, or alternative ways of expressing an idea were categorized as Lexis-Oriented LREs.

Excerpt 21: An LO-LRE dealing with the choice of a word  
 176 Niloofer: It means the chance of...  
 177 Negar: having job...  
 178 Niloofer: finding job...  
 179 Negar: Why finding?...having job is better  
 180 Niloofer: having is not chance...finding is chance  
 [Dyad B, Task A, L 176-180]

##### c) Mechanics-Oriented LREs (MO-LREs)

LREs dealing with spelling, pronunciation, and punctuation were categorized as Mechanics-oriented LREs. The following LREs exemplify MO-LREs:

Excerpt 22: An MO-LRE dealing with punctuation  
 302 Negar: so this... here we can just use full-stop...full-stop doesn't need 'and'  
 [Dyad, B, Task C, L 302]

Excerpt 23: An MO-LRE dealing with punctuation  
 199 Mei: So, we just put a full stop there?  
 200 Teng: Ok. Yup.  
 [Dyad C, Task B, L 199-200]

Excerpt 24: An MO-LRE dealing with spelling  
 125 Niloofer: Ok...it's abvi.....spelling of 'obvious'...Oh my God, I forget the spelling  
 124 Negar: 'O'... It starts with 'O'  
 [Dyad B, Task A, L124-125]

LREs in the transcripts were analyzed for grammar, lexis and mechanics. The quantified values pertinent to the nature of metatalk (LREs) are presented for each dyad below.



TABLE 1:  
TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF LRES FOR THE DYADS

Frequency \ Type	Grammar	Lexis	Mechanics	Total
Dyad A	71	91	14	176
Dyad B	93	96	23	212
Dyad C	45	62	16	123
Dyad D	39	51	12	102

V. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS FOR LRES

The results of this study indicate that the Malaysian and Iranian learners of equal language proficiency had different orientations towards metatalk (see Table 4-15). Iranians tended to focus considerably more on meta-linguistic features of language as opposed to their Malaysian counterparts. Such a tendency among Malaysian participants was reported by Shahkarami (2011) as well. His study found that Malaysian learners “paid more attention to the communicative aspect of language and cared less about the language forms” (pp.124-25).

In the present study with everything almost equal among the dyads (e.g. gender, age, language proficiency), the two possible explanations for the LRE discrepancy between Iranian and Malaysian participants could be the different status of the English language in the two contexts of Iran and Malaysia as well as the effect of previous educational experiences of the learners.

As far as the status of the English language in the two contexts of Iran and Malaysia is concerned, Malaysian participants came from a background where English carries a high instrumental value and as Baker (2008, p. 132) states English in Malaysia-along with the two countries of India and the Philippines- “is used as an institutionalized additional language” and is considered a second language. However, in Iran English is considered a foreign language (Yarmohammadi, 2005) and does not have the communicational function it does in Malaysia. Not to mention that it is hardly used in the context of Iranian society.

It is a truism to say that English has permeated the very fabric of Malaysian society and is seen as a handy communicational means rather than a set of complicated grammar rules to be mastered. Shahkarami’s (2011) study found that “Neither accuracy nor fluency seemed to be important to them [Malaysian students]; the only important part of the language was its ability to connect them to others for effortless communication” (p.125). However, the most important channel for learning English in Iran is through the structure-based English curriculum at schools. Therefore, it seems reasonable to believe that due to the Iranian students’ long-time exposure to the structure-based English education as well as the lack of authentic environmental contexts for using the language for communicative purposes, Iranian students are unconsciously more inclined to structural aspects of language rather than the communicative dimensions of language. Such an argumentation is supported by the participants’ English learning histories.

As said in the preceding chapter, despite certain similarities, the Malaysian and Iranian participants of the present study had different English learning histories. As far as the areas of focus in their language classes were concerned, Malaysian participants said in their English classes language teaching focused on the four skills of language (reading, writing, listening, speaking) as well grammar and vocabulary. For example, Gin said, “in high schools, we were taught to write an essay. Also, we had reading. We were tested on listening and oral skill aside from paper-based exam.” Teng stated that in some of their English classes the students were encouraged to converse in English and those who broke the rule had to pay the penalty.

However, Iranian participants unanimously stated that the focus of instruction in their English classes was on grammar exercises, vocabulary and translation from English (L2) into Persian (L1). The focus of the textbooks was grammar, vocabulary and reading. For example, Negar alluded to the negative washback effect of the National University Entrance Exam (NUEE) on teaching and stated that the focus in the English section of the NUEE is on vocabulary, grammar and reading; therefore, all teachers as well as students are excessively obsessed with grammar and vocabulary, and accordingly the focus of the classes is on these language components. Niloofar made the point that seldom was there any attention to conversation in her classes and vocabulary items were mostly presented to the students with their L1 equivalents on the board. Eslami-Rasekh and Valizadeh (2004) and Mahmoudi and Yazdi (2011) have reported similar findings about areas of focus in English classes of Iran’s educational system.

Thus, based on the foregoing, the learners’ English learning histories along with the socio-contextual status of the English language in Malaysia and Iran sound two possible explanations for Iranians’ form-focused and Malaysians’ communication-focused tendencies. Concerning the importance of prior experiences and socio-contextual variables, Watson-Gegeo (1992) asserted that “Participants in an interaction always bring with them previous experiences and learning shaped by a variety of institutional practices in the family, school, community and nation” (p.253).

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study indicated that learners possessing a similar level of proficiency, but with different cultural background and English learning histories could come up with totally discrepant sets of LREs. Therefore, the

universalistic perception that learners of similar proficiency dealing with the identical tasks generate more or less similar patterns of LREs was challenged in the present study.

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# Syntactic Behavior of Subordinate Clauses of Time and Condition in Zubairi Arabic

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**Abstract**—Of all outstanding areas of syntax, subordinate clauses of time and condition play a great role in arising linguists' interests. These types of clauses are of idiosyncratic nature in general and in Zubairi Arabic in particular, since they tend to be difficult and complex in comparison with other languages and dialects. The present study is an attempt to examine how conditional and time clauses behave syntactically in Zubairi Arabic. It is based mainly on conversation of two Zubairi Speakers from. Looking at this type of conversational speech illustrates a wider range of syntactic structures, and some speakers have more conservative dialect than others, but generally all are Zubairi in character.

**Index Terms**—past punctual, perfective, open punctual, open habitual, open stative and unfulfilled

## I. INTRODUCTION

A number of recent studies have examined conditional clauses in Classical Arabic. However, a little has been devoted to the study of these structures in its colloquial dialects. In Arabic linguistic studies, interest notably increases in scrutinizing such types of clauses, since they represent an area of syntax, which seems more difficult and complex in comparison with that of other languages, say English, for example (Palva, 1980; Peled, 1987). A further point of interest that leads to investigate this area, particularly in the domain of Zubairi Arabic, is the multiplicity of conditional and time particles including *in*, *lō* and *kān* signifying 'if', *lamma* and *jōm* signifying 'when' and *ila* signifying 'if' or 'when'. It is worth underlying that factors may be found to condition the choice of these particles. However, in this dialect, conditional and time structures sometimes come very close together and are in some cases indistinguishable, or to put it in another way, they may be translated into English with 'if' or 'when'. The two types of these clauses also share various characteristics which will be pointed out in some detail below, but in particular, many of them show a marker on both the main and subordinate clause.

To some extent, Zubairi conditional and time clauses are treated here as being sub-types of one general class of clause, because they are structurally distinguished from the other main type of time clause, the *hāl* or 'clause of attendant circumstance', equivalent to a present continuous time clause introduced by 'when' or 'while' in English (Wright, 1975, p. 330). Here, the time clause is introduced by the linking *w-* 'and', followed by a noun or pronoun and shows a verb in the imperfective, a participle or a non-verbal clause following the main clause.

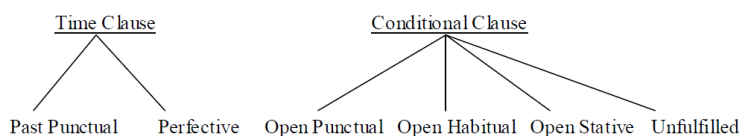
The present study is an attempt to examine how conditional and time clauses behave syntactically in Zubairi Arabic. It is based mainly on a home conversation between two Zubairi speakers, which was recorded in 2008. The speech is presented in a form of phonemic transcriptions and then translated into English (see Appendix (1)). Looking at this two-speaker conversation illustrates a wider range of syntactic structures, and one of speakers has more conservative dialect than the other, but generally both are Zubairi in character.

## II. CONDITION AND TIME CLAUSES: AN OVERVIEW

Examining these condition and time sentences in general entails that the areas of structure, function and reference must be taken into account. The term 'structure' refers to the actual form of the syntactic unit being considered, expressed in terms of the order of the elements of main and subordinate clauses, in the form of the verbal elements occurring and in the initial marker of the subordinate (Peled, 1985, p. 213). The term 'function' covers the grammatical component of meaning and terms such as 'past punctual' and 'unfulfilled condition' used below are terms operating on the level of function. Certain distinct structures are regarded as having identical function so that it is not true that each structure may have its own exclusive function. The term 'reference' involves the contextual component of meaning or that area not signaled by the form of the words themselves (Lewin, 1976, p. 148). Some sentence types which are similar in structure and function may have different reference, and consideration of reference is particularly important in dealing with condition and time structures, since in some cases, the time reference can be inferred only from the context and above all 'reality' or 'unreality' of a condition may also be inferable from context. Thus, in these cases, the extra-linguistic and linguistic context provides the other component of the meaning of the sentence (Davies, 1987, p. 31).

A time clause can be defined as "one where the occurrence of the action is not in question, but where the time of occurrence is, at least in future events, not known. A conditional clause on the other hand is one where the occurrence of the action is itself in doubt" (Ingham, 1994, p. 132). These types of clauses can be thought of as systems of

commuting terms and a set of two interrelated systems are recognized in that both take a verb in the perfective and precede the main clause. Adopting the Arabic conception of these types of subordinate clauses discussed by Stewart (1987: 65) gives the following schema:



In Zubairi Arabic system, it seems that all future events (being uncertain) are looked upon as conditionals, although in some cases like *ila barad alwaqt...*, “when winter comes...” the arrival of winter is a total certainty. In this type, there is no distinction between ‘if’ and ‘when’ clauses in the future when marked by *ila*. For example, such a sentence as:

*ila faṛēna fajj lib isnāh bittanāwab*

can be rendered into English as either: “if we buy anything (clothes), we wear it in turns” or “whenever we buy anything, we wear it in turns”.

The clause types are dealt with below under their two main headings Conditional and Time Clause. Conditionals are treated first because of their greater complexity, which makes it easier to understand Time clauses within the context of Conditional clauses than vice versa. It is worth noting that certain markers are specialized for time/aspect reference. Thus, *in* generally refers to the future, *kān* denotes the present stative, and *jōm* stands for the past punctual. The particle *ila* is the most general and can refer to future, present, habitual present or past. In this regard, Sawayan (1990, p. 53) gives a full account of this type of clause, stating that the verb of the subordinate clause introduced by *jōm* is generally (but not always) in the perfect. If the verb of the following main clause is in the perfect then no particles intervene between the two clauses, but if the verb of the main clause is in the imperfect or if the main clause is non-verbal then it is separated from the subordinate clause by such particles as *tāri* and *ilja tāri*.

### III. CONDITIONAL CLAUSES

#### A. Open Punctual Condition

These types include clauses which have reference to the future marked by *ila*, *in* and *lō* or to the general present marked by *ila* all being followed by a verb in the perfective. They are termed punctual in order to distinguish them from the stative and habitual types. The inclusion of the particle *lō* in this group may be surprising in view of its usual association in Standard Arabic with unfulfilled or remote condition. However, it is not often possible to differentiate any element of unreality in condition though an element of hesitancy or uncertainty is there making the use of *lō* rather than *in* or *ila* a matter of register signifying politeness or formality. It has been noticed that there is no formal marking of the difference between future conditions and general present conditions marked with *ila*, and the difference is one of semantic reference rather than grammatical function, which is, in turn, obvious only through a context. In some sentences, no particle occurs at all, but the verb in the main clause is perfective; it resembles a conditional sentence in all except the presence of the particle which can be taken to be there via implication. The following are sentences in which particles *in*, *kān* or *lō* are deleted:

(in) *ma fiḥ fajj, firibt itṭfāj w tuwakkal ṣala llah*  
 “(If) there is nothing (to do), I will drink some tea and leave”.

(kān/lō) *ma tabīn ih, ra ḍḍaḍaḥ irrāḥijt ih w ma sār fajj*  
 “(If) you (f.) don’t want it, you give it back to its owner and it is as if nothing happened”.

**(a) Sentences marked by *ila*:**

*ila barad alwaqt in/āllah, banēna min jidīd*  
 “When winter comes, God willing, we will build a new”.

*ila jat, ma ṣād rḍaḍat lahalha*  
 “If she comes (here) he will never again go back to her family”.

A number of examples show Open Punctual clauses marked by *ila* with a non-verbal main clause, and one also with imperfective verb preceded by the presentative particle *wila* (translated as “behold”):

*hatta ila jīt in/āllah bātḥir assubḥ, wila-hi ḍḍāh za*  
 “When you come, God willing, tomorrow morning (behold) it will be ready”

*al-akil ila jma nākilih, wila-l filfil akḥar min al-timan alli fīha*  
 “When we come to eat the food (behold) the pepper in it is more than the rice”.

*ṣala/ān ila ṣaffēnāha, wila-hi tinṣaff*  
 “So that when we stack them (behold) they will be stackable”.

*ila ja jōm alxamīs al ṣasur in/āllah, wila-k mwallim aḥṛāḍik w intuwakkaḥ ṣala llah*

“When Thursday afternoon arrives, God willing, (behold) you will get your things ready and we will set off”.

It is possible that the use of *wila* in these sentences precludes the conditional interpretation and marks them as time clauses, since the presentatives occur regularly following a Past Punctual Time clause. However, it is difficult to elicit contrastive examples in these cases. The above sentences have future time reference, but the same formal structure may have universal or general time reference as in:

wila ṣaṭētih, jiṣṭi yērik

“And when you give it to him, he passes it on to somebody else”.

ila ja dōrik, tāxiḍ

“If your turn comes, you take (one)”.

ila ṣār ma ṣindih taṣrīh, ma tas maḥūn-lih

“If he has no a permission you do not allow him (to do it)”.

ja zēn ila ṣār xaṣmik min ahal dīratk

“How good it is if you adversary is of your own country”.

The element *ṣār* “to become” occurs where the following clause is non-verbal or has an imperfective verbal form. In this function, it seems to be parallel to the use of *kān*, which introduces a stative conditional clause. In fact, it is not easy to distinguish a difference of meaning between the two alternatives, but it may be stated that the use of *ṣār* introduces a further stage of remoteness meaning “if it happens that ...” in comparison with *kān tabi* “if you want...” (now), in *baḡēt* “if you want...” (at any time) and *la ṣirt tabi* “if it happens that you want...” (in any eventuality). In other areas of the conditional sentences, a number of alternative structures can be used as semantic equivalents. Similarly, some English speakers have three stylistic alternatives for the conditional structures, i.e. “if you want...”, “should you want...” and “in the eventuality that you should want...” (Quirk et al, 1985).

#### (b) Sentences marked by *in*:

Though less common than *ila*, the particle *in* is frequently used to signify ‘if’ in this dialect. It differs from *ila* in being definitely conditional and not being susceptible to translation like ‘when’. It always has future reference and is followed by a verb in the perfective:

in liḡēt kibdah ṣala darbik, jīb maṣēk

“If you find any liver on your way, bring it (i.e. buy it)”.

in allah jābha, za waḍḍnāh.

“If God brings him, we make him get married”.

Here, the possibility of the perfective in the main clause indicates future, which does not occur in the structures showing *ila*. The use of the particle *in* is the norm with the verb *baḡa* “to want” as in *in baḡēt* “if you want”.

#### (c) Sentences marked by *lō*:

As stated above, the particle *lō* in these sentences does not in all cases have the meaning of remote condition associated with it in Standard Arabic. In Zubairi Arabic, it passes into the realm of stylistic difference marking hesitation on the part of the speaker. Sometimes, it has the sense of a hypothetical condition, i.e. one that can be speculated about but which is not necessarily within the domain of likelihood. The verb following *lō* may be in the perfective or imperfective without any discernible difference of meaning. In fact, *lō* can be considered a true exception to the rule that Time and Conditional clauses have a verb in the perfective. It may be followed by *inn-* “that” with no apparent change of meaning, for example:

##### (i) *With the perfective:*

lō inn wāḥid liḡālih ṭalab ṣala darbik, jwaṣṣilih

“If one finds an errand along the way, he completes it”.

##### (ii) *With the imperfective:*

lō jmurrūn ṣalēk aḡḡillah, jḡūlūnik “gōh” gilt “ḥāḍir”

“If your friends come by and say ‘let’s go’, you say ‘alright’”.

lō inn abī wāḥdin jrakkibli azrār, ma liḡēt

“If I want someone to sew on a button, I don’t find (anyone)”.

### B. Open Habitual Condition

Habitual or repetitive actions are represented by *ila* with a perfective verb in the conditional clause and the main one. It is worth mentioning that this structure is only partially differentiated from structure Open Punctual, which may also have a perfective in the main clause. Here, one clause type stands for sentences that can be translated into English sometimes with “if” and sometimes with “when” or “whenever” signaling a habitual action. It may be past or present in its time reference depending on context, for instance:

iḍa ṭlaṣat farriḍḍat, wiḍa farriḍḍat laḡgaḥmāh inḡallah

“When it (the bud of the palm tree) sprouts it splits, and when it splits, if God wills, we fertilize it”.

ila ḥāwaṣṣat misak iktāb

“Whenever I scolded/scold him he picked/picks up a book”.

Some examples of structure Open Punctual conditions can also be interpreted as having general time reference, so that an overlap may be expected in reference.

### C. Open Stative Condition

The particle *kān* occurs preceding a participle, a non-verbal clause, an imperfective verbal form or a perfective verbal one. All of these can be regarded as stative clauses in contrast to the action clauses covered before. At first sight, another exception may be looked upon to the rule of Conditional and Time clauses having a verb in the perfective. However, if *kān* is considered as being derived from *in kān* “if it is” in which *kān* is a perfective verbal form, then these structures follow a general rule. This particle can also be followed by personal pronoun suffixes giving forms such as *kān-ih* “if he”, *kān-ik* “if you” etc. In this dialect and in contrast to some Arabic varieties, the particle *kān* does not inflect for person as seen in the following examples:

(i) With a participle:

inkānih mkassirin fajj, jllih ih

“If he has broken something, he will mend it”.

jatk, inkānha mwāfiḡah

“She will come to you, if she is in agreement”.

(ii) With a non-verbal clause:

inkān inni fajkat ḡajatik ḡaḡih ...

“If I am really the partner of your life ...”

(iii) With an imperfective verbal form:

inkān innik tabi bint xālik, kallammāha

“If you want (to marry) your cousin, we will speak to her”

(iv) With a perfective verbal form:

inkān inni hawwant halmarrāh, fant dʒid hawwant alf marrah

“If I have refused this time, you have refused (in the past) a thousand times”.

### D. Unfulfilled Condition

When *lō* marks an unreal or unfulfilled condition it will have *kān* as a marker on the main clause, which may be followed by a verb in the perfective, an active participle, a non-verbal clause or more rarely an imperfective verb as in:

lō inni ma biḡtih, kān raddētih ḡalēk

“If I had not sold it, I would have given it back to you”.

lō almiddah tuwīlah, kān aḡūl ma jxālif

“If the period was long, I would say ‘It does not matter’”.

However, some sentences are without *kān*, for example:

lō ḡiltlik, minti mḡaddiḡni

“If I told you, you wouldn’t believe me”.

lō ma taḡaḡḡēt, ma ḡaraft adarris alḡijāl

“If I did not have dinner, I would not be able to teach children”.

## IV. TIME CLAUSES

### A. Past Punctual

These types of sentences are commonly marked by the particle *jōm* “day” which has punctual significance. If the main clause following the time clause is non-verbal, it must be preceded by one of the ‘presentative’ particles (i.e. *ila*, *wila mēr*, *winn*). These particles are equivalent to the Standard *iḡā bi*, a deictic particle usually translated ‘behold’ or ‘lo’. In fact, their occurrence is syntactically limited to give them some sort of heavy semantic load when translated as ‘behold’. The main purpose they serve is to mark the second clause in a complex structure. In the following examples, the most common presentative occurring here is *wila*, which is again translated as ‘behold so as to ease recognition of its place in the sentence:

jōm wagḡaft, wilāh kātbin wriḡah b xatt ḡarīd

“When I stopped, (behold) he had written a note in large handwriting”.

u jōm jōh, wila nasah tiḡil u tiḡfi

“And when they came to him, (behold) his relatives were charging back and forth”.

In certain contexts, *jōm* may be followed by an imperfective verb form with past time reference in sentence initial position. This use can be interpreted either as a distinct function or a purely variant of the Past Punctual. Nevertheless, Sentences of this structure tend not to be Time clauses in the same sense as the others, since the clause with *jōm* does not actually set the time frame of what followed. It is a merely general subordinator giving the meaning of “the fact that...”, for instance:

ḡinna jōm nḡallimk windarrisk win xallik tāxḡīn fajhāda, muhu bḡala fān tiḡtaylīn

“When we taught you, gave you lessons and let you take certificates, it was not that you would work”.

jōm ink tadrīsīn, aḡul ma ṡalēh

“When you studied, I (used to) say: ‘It doesn’t matter’”.

However, these sentences may constitute a different sub-type conveying Past Continuous meaning, for example:

(i) With the perfective in the main clause:

jōm kiṡaf ṡalēh, ḡāl...

“When he examined him medically, he said...”.

jōm ḡarrubat alimt ihānāt, bidaw jdrūsūn

“When the time of exams approached, they began to study”.

jōm daxalt, yaḡjar abūj madṡra lḡadīθ

“When I entered, my father changed the direction of the conversation”.

(ii) With the imperfective and non-initial as a sentence component:

xubri min ṡharēn, jōm adṡaddid ḡṡawāzi

“My knowledge of this was two months ago, when I renewed my passport”.

ana lḡām jōm arūḡ lilhind, liḡēthum...

“Last year when I went to India, I found that they...”.

ḡiltlik jōm tanzil,...

“I told you when you were going downstairs,...”.

(iii) With the perfective and following the main clause:

istiḡēt min abūj, jōm baḡēt adza wwaḡṡ immik

“I was ashamed in front of my father, when I wished to get married your mother”.

### B. Perfective

The particle *ila* can also be followed by *min* “from” plus a personal pronoun suffix. This indicates that the action of the time clause precedes that of the main clause, which can be in the future or the past. If past, the verb of the main clause will be in the perfective and if future (or general present), it will be in the imperfective as in:

(i) With future reference:

kūd innih wila minnih ṡāf ḡaṡṡāḡib, ḡḡaddirih

“Perhaps when he sees this old man, he will respect him”.

wila minnih alla aḡnāk, traddihin

“When God has enriched you, you may give them back”.

wila minnik banēt, ḡāk ḡassaḡ fih alf ḡall

“When you built it, then there will be a thousand solutions”.

(ii) With past reference:

ilja minni ṡikēt alḡimil, ṡālih

“When I complained of the burden, he took it up”.

ilja minnik aṡarrāti ṡalēh, wiṡtabīn ih ḡsawwi

“When you pressed him, what did you expect him to do?”

## V. CONCLUSIONS

In general, the subordinate system gives choices in the dimension of probability and reality, i.e. open condition versus unfulfilled and of aspect, i.e. punctual versus habitual, stative or perfective. In the subordinate clause, a perfective verb form is preferred and indicates a punctual action following the time/condition particle. In some cases, the perfective can be replaced by an imperfective when this follows the main clause without any change in time reference. In the main clause, the perfective and imperfective have more reference to time in that the former usually refers to the past while the latter to the future or general present. The significance of the choice of perfective versus imperfective in the main clause plays a vital role in Open Punctual and Open Habitual because it is the major marker of the distinction between the two.

### Phonemic Symbols (After Ibrahim, 2006)

#### 1. The Vowels

i as in miṡā “he went”

ī as in tabīn “you want?”

ē as in lēt “I wish”

a as in aṡalli “I prayer”

ā as in nām “he slept”



ō as in zōd “extra”  
 u as in muṭar “rain”  
 ū as in aḡūl “I say”

## 2. *The Consonants*

b as in bard “cold”	ḍ as in ḍāk “that”	h as in hnāk “there”
t as in tu mir “you pass”	ḍ as in ḍarf “envelop”	ḍ as in ḍah “he came”
ṭ as in ṭabx “cooking”	s as in sūr “fence”	m as in mafi “nothing”
d as in darēt “I hnew”	ṣ as in salih “good”	n as in nūr “light”
ḍ as in ḍahir “noon”	z as in zēn “well”	l as in lēl “night”
k as in kallam “He talked”	f as in fūf “see”	w as in wad “send”
g as in aḡbil “He comes”	x as in xōf “fear”	j as in jōm “day”
ʔ as in ʔamal “hope”	ɣ as in ɣani “rich”	ʧ as in ʧāj “tea”
f as in faham “He understood”	ḥ as in ḥar “hot”	
θ as in θaruwa “worth”	ʃ as in ʃām “general”	

### APPENDIX (1)

The text is a home conversation of two Zubairi speakers: the first was the husband addressed as Abu Mahmud (symbolized as A) and the second was the wife addressed as Umm Mahmud (symbolized as U).

A: hāh ju mm maḥmūd wiʃindikum min ilʃlūm

U: ma ʃindina wallahi illa lbiga

A: xēr warākum ju mm maḥmūd ʃasa ma ʃarr

U: abad miθil ma tʃūf dirāsa w ana widdi wallah inni aṭlaʃ bhal ʃijāl ʃwajj awassiʃ ʃudūrhum

A: ma ʃindi māniʃ bass wēn tabūn trūḥūnih ʃallmūni

U: li-ajj makān nwassiʃ bih ʃudūr ilʃijāl

A: ana ʃindi fikrah ju mm maḥmūd

U: xēr wiʃhi jabu maḥmūd

A: wara ma nimurr bētixti ḥuṣṣah u nāxiḍha hi w iʃjālha w inwaddīkum lil malāhi u xallu lʃijāl jilʃabūn u jistānsūn ilēn tiḡūlūn bass

U: wallāhi innaha fikrah mimitāzah u ʃasallah jxallīk lina jabu maḥmūd

A: ʃjal inti nādi lʃijāl u xallīhum jistiʃiddūn w ana baka lim uxti axallīha tistaʃidd hi wa ʃjālaha fima nimurhum

U: zēn ma jxālif rabbi jxallīk lina jabu maḥmūd

A: bsurʃa ju mm maḥmūd tara ma ʃindina waḡt

U: wala jhimmik ʃafar daḡājig u tilḡāna rākbīn issajjārah

A: jallah tuwakkili ʃala llah

U: hāh jabu maḥmūd kallamt ḥuṣṣah

A: aj naʃam u ḡiltiha ttwallam hi w iʃjālha

U: ʃasāha bass ma tiṭawwil

A: ana mʃallimha u ḡājliha tarāj aji w adrib būri w inkānkum wālmīn rakkabtkum bissajjārah u riḥtibkum w inkān ma wallamtumriḥt u xallētkum

U: walaw ḡiltalha halkalām ma fīh fājdah

A: ibʃiru fīh ju mm maḥmūd u ʃart in ma naṣālhum illa wa hi w iʃjālha wāḡfīn wara lbāb jintirūna

### *Translation*

A: What news do you have, Umm Mahmud?

U: By God, we have no news except that we remain alive.

A: I hope there is nothing wrong, Umm Mahmud.

U: Nothing, it is as you see all studying and revision and I would really like to take the children out for a while and give them some amusement.

A: I have no objection, but where do you want to go. Tell me.

U: Anywhere we can give the children some amusement.

A: I have an idea, Umm Mahmud.

U: Well, what is it, Abu Mahmud?

A: Why don't we call on my sister Hussah and take her and her children and I take you all to the Fun Fair and let the children play and enjoy themselves as much as you want.

U: Well, it seems like a marvelous idea. God preserve you for us Abu Mahmud.

A: So, you can call the children and let them get ready and I will call my sister and let them get ready and in the meantime we will drive over there.

U: Good that is alright. God preserve you for us Abu Mahmud.

A: Hurry Umm Mahmud, because there is no much time.

U: Do not worry within ten minutes we will be ready in the car.

A: Come on then let's go.

U: Abu Mahmud, did you speak to Hussah?

A: Yes, and I told her to get ready with her children.

U: I hope she will not be late.

A: I have told her and said to her that I will be coming by and will sound the horn and if you are ready I will put you in the car and take you with me, but if you are not ready I will go and leave you.

U: If you tell her this, it will be of no use.

A: I hope that it will not happen Umm Mahmud and I warrant that as soon as we reach their house, they will be down by the door waiting us.

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# The Effects of Word Frequency and Contextual Types on Vocabulary Acquisition from Extensive Reading: A Case Study

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**Abstract**—L1 research has indicated that learners acquire most of their vocabulary by means of incidental learning, in which the learners learn different aspects of lexical knowledge through repeated exposures as well as the surrounding contextual information of the unfamiliar words. However, L2 learners are at a disadvantage of this incidental learning due to their limited opportunities to repeatedly encounter the same target words in different contexts. As a result, researchers encourage L2 learners to use extensive reading as a route to promote and complement their vocabulary learning. This case study investigated the effects of word exposures and contextual richness on the acquisition of different aspects of vocabulary knowledge from extensive reading. Three aspects of knowledge are examined: orthography, form-meaning connection, and grammatical functions. The results indicated that word frequency affected more on orthographical knowledge than on the other two aspects, whereas contextual richness had a greater impact on form-meaning connections and grammatical functions. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for future studies are suggested.

**Index Terms**—word frequency, contextual types, vocabulary acquisition

## I. Introduction

The study of L2 vocabulary has generated wide interest in L2 acquisition theory and research since the 1990s. A specific area that has received much attention in vocabulary acquisition is learning through reading and inferring word meanings from context (Chern, 1993; Haynes, 1993; Huckin & Bloch, 1993; Paribakht & Wesche, 1999; Rott, 1999). It is suggested that most L1 vocabulary learning may take place incidentally and mainly in the course of L1 reading comprehension (Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985; Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987). Despite evidence for the effectiveness of incidental vocabulary learning in L1 acquisition, there has been a debate regarding the extent to which incidental learning contributes to L2 vocabulary acquisition. This has been mainly because of the L2 learners' limited exposure to enriching incidental vocabulary learning opportunities (Horst, Cobb, & Meara, 1998). However, this drawback of limited exposures to the words can be supplemented by an extensive reading program in which the L2 learners are able to gain vocabulary knowledge incrementally with repeated encounters of words in different contexts (Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Webb, 2007, 2008; Pellicer-Sanchez & Schmitt, 2010). Research has indicated that L2 learners benefit from extensive reading not only in their sight vocabulary (Coady, 1997; Nation & Coady, 1988; Horst, 2005; Parry, 1993, 1997) but also in opportunities to encounter the words in different context use (Thornbury, 2002; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006). That is, L2 learners can not only strengthen the form and meaning mappings but also increase the likelihood of gaining the usage of word collocations through contextualized input. As claimed by Nation (2001), "the use of reading and other input sources may be the only practical options for out of class development for some learners" (p. 155), especially in EFL contexts. The present study aimed to investigate the effects of word frequency and contextual information on L2 learners' incidental vocabulary acquisition.

## II. Literature Review

### A. *The Relationship between L2 Reading and Vocabulary Learning*

Though it is widely acknowledged that reading is a valuable source of vocabulary acquisition for L1 learners, L2 researchers have not reached any consensus regarding the same issue. As a proponent of incidental vocabulary acquisition, Krashen (1989) proposed an Input Hypothesis to acknowledge the importance of comprehensible input in L2 vocabulary acquisition. Krashen (1989, 1993) also advocates 'free voluntary reading' as the main route for acquiring new vocabulary. As claimed, "the best hypothesis is that competence in spelling and vocabulary is most efficiently attained by comprehensible input in the form of reading, a position argued by several others (Krashen, 1989, p. 440)." However, other researchers hold different views from those made by Krashen. First, as claimed by Grabe and Stoller (2002), much of the naturally written text is not comprehensible for most L2 learners due to their limited sight vocabulary size. Second, studies on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading usually asked participants to read only a text or a short passage and then tested learners on selected words (Day, Omura, & Hiramatsu, 1991; Dupuy & Krashen, 1993; Pitts, White, & Krashen, 1989). This procedure of testing is criticized to be unable to reflect the natural extensive reading process—in which the words are encountered repeatedly in different contexts and the words are

gained incrementally. Third, there is a distinction between correct guessing of word meaning and retention of its meaning along with other aspects of lexical knowledge acquisition (de Bot, K., Paribakht, T. S., & Wesche, M. B., 1997; Mondria & Wit-de Boer, 1991). That is, learners may comprehend the meaning of the word during the reading process but they have difficulty retaining its meaning after a specific period of time. De Bot et al (1997) argued that a word surrounded by rich contextual cues is often easily comprehended, but this may result in less attention. This happens because of insufficient processing of the word and its properties, in particular with single exposure words. Based on the above concerns, L2 researchers suggest learners focusing on extensive reading to acquire vocabulary knowledge as a supplement beyond their language courses. As defined by Grabe and Stoller (2002), extensive reading is “reading that exposes learners to large quantities of material within their linguistic competence” (p. 259). Graded readers, imposed with controlled vocabulary and syntactical structures, are considered to be a suitable source, in particular for low- to intermediate-level students, in an extensive reading program. Nation (2001) suggests that 95% text coverage is the minimum threshold for vocabulary learning to occur. Nation and Wang (1999) further suggest that the 95% threshold level can be satisfied if learners select simplified materials on an appropriate level. However, a lack of consensus still remains on some basic questions regarding the contribution of reading to L2 vocabulary acquisition. One is the number of word to be encountered for varied aspects of knowledge to be learned, and the other concerns the types of contexts that are conducive to word learning.

### B. What Does Knowing a “Word” Mean

From the perspective of “learning burden” by Nation (2001, p. 24), there are more than the aspects of word’s form and its meaning for a word to be acquired. In Nation’s (2001) words, “the more a word represents patterns and knowledge that learners are already familiar with, the lighter its burden” (p. 24). That is, learners are expected to exert less depth of processing for the words with which they are already familiar. As a result, they can pay more attention to the unfamiliar aspects of the word, which can enhance the subsequent vocabulary learning. For example, it is easier for an English learner of French to know the word *controverse* (controversial in English) than an English learner of Chinese, in that the former can refer to knowledge of cognates for information. Nation characterizes knowing a word as involving its form, meaning, and function (use). He further classifies the three items into nine subcategories. Table 1 is simplified and adapted from the different aspects of Nation’s (2001) framework.

TABLE 1.  
DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF KNOWING A WORD

<b>Meaning</b>	Form and meaning	Is the word a loan word in L1?
	Concepts and referents	Is there an L1 word with roughly the same meaning? Does the word fall into the same structure as an L1 word with a similar meaning?
	Associations	
<b>Form</b>	Spoken form	Can the learners repeat the word accurately when they hear it? Can the learners write the word correctly when they hear it?
	Written form	Can the learners identify known affixes in the word?
	Word parts	
<b>Use</b>	Grammatical functions	Does the word fit into predictable grammar patterns? Does the word have the same collocations as an L1 word of similar meaning?
	Collocations	Does the word have the same restrictions on its use as an L1 word of similar meaning?
	Constraints on use	

Nagy et al. (1985) have pointed out that vocabulary learning is a gradual process because bits of information are accumulated upon each encounter of the word. Thus, it makes sense to distinguish partial knowledge from full knowledge in the process of vocabulary acquisition. In other words, the learner’s knowledge of certain lexical items can move from mere word recognition, through different degrees of partial knowledge, toward precise comprehension. One major aspect examined in the present study was the number of encounters required for different aspects of vocabulary knowledge acquisition, that is, orthography, form-meaning connections, and grammatical functions.

### C. The Effect of Word Frequency on Vocabulary Acquisition

Two corpus-based studies investigated the potential contribution of graded readers to vocabulary learning by examining word frequency (Nation & Wang, 1999; Wodinsky & Nation, 1988). The results indicated that graded readers can be an important source of vocabulary learning for second language learners, but the researchers suggested that the findings should be followed by experimental research to testify the results. An L2 original study demonstrating vocabulary gains from extensive reading was conducted by Saragi, Nation, and Meister (1978), who found substantial amount of vocabulary learning by English learners of Russian with a learning rate of 76%. They also suggested that “the minimum numbers of repetitions for words to be learned in a reader should be somewhere around 10” (p. 76). Horst, Cobb, and Meara (1998) replicated the study of Saragi et al.’s study and 34 L2 learners read a simplified novel. Upon finishing the novel, participants were given a test focusing on word definitions by a multiple choice test, with a pick-up rate of about 1 out of every 5 new words. Their study also found that 8 exposures of the target words were essential for substantial learning to take place. Participants in Horst’s (2005) study showed some encouraging learning

results, with over half of the unfamiliar words being retained from reading the 20-page extracts of simplified readers.

Huang and Liou (2007) selected 16 articles from the computer corpus of a local Chinese-English magazine in Taiwan (i.e., *Sinorama*) and used them to construct an online English extensive reading program, named as the *Textgrader*. The design was aimed to supplement two major difficulties L2 learners face in processing unsimplified texts: limited vocabulary knowledge and insufficient word exposures. The target words were highlighted in red and glossed with Chinese translations. The words were then highlighted in green with Chinese translations after the first encounter. To ensure repeated exposures of the target words, the computer searched for a text that not only contained the highest number of familiar words and the smallest number of target words, but one that also contained the highest number of words in the Exposed Word List. The 16 texts contained 233 target words, which had different numbers of occurrences from 1-2 times to 9 times the most. To specifically measure the target words with different numbers of occurrences, Huang and Liou divided them into five groups. The results showed that a certain degree of word knowledge was gained in all five groups, and the groups with words appearing the most frequently achieved the highest mean score. However, their study also suggested that an exposure amount of at least 15 times are required for learners to recall the word meanings in an online extensive reading environment.

Noticing that acquisition of word meaning was the focus of earlier studies, recent research has attempted to examine the effects of word frequency on varying aspects of vocabulary knowledge and obtained different results. For example, Pigada and Schmitt (2006) explored how a learner of French gained different aspects of vocabulary knowledge (i.e., spelling, meaning, and grammatical usage) by means of extensive reading. The exposures of the 133 target words ranged from 1 to more than 20 occurrences. The results indicated that there was the least gain with the knowledge of word meanings for words with single exposure, and spelling was the most strongly enhanced even with a small number of exposures. Their study also found that there was a noticeable increase for words with more than 10 occurrences. Webb (2007) examined 10 aspects of word knowledge by controlling the word exposures to 1, 3, 7 and 10 times. The results indicated that all knowledge aspects improved with increasing repetitions, but knowledge of meaning developed more slowly than other aspects. Another significant finding was that part of speech gained much better after 7 to 10 exposures, suggesting that 7 might be the threshold for this type of knowledge.

Replicating Webb's (2007) study, Chen and Truscott (2010) investigated the effect of repeated encounters (i.e., 1, 3, and 7) with target words on seven aspects of lexical knowledge and also the effect of L1 lexicalization on acquisition of word meaning. The results indicated that repetition facilitated vocabulary acquisition, in which grammatical function was retained better than receptive knowledge after a 2-week period. In particular, orthographic knowledge benefited from 3 exposures the most but grammatical function grew steadily with the increasing encounters. For semantic gains, acquisition took place with words between 3 and 7 exposures. The study also found that L2 words not lexicalized in learners' L1 posed more learning difficulty, even for words with repeated encounters up to 7 times.

Pellicer-Sanchez and Schmitt (2010) examined the degree to which advanced L2 learners acquire different lexical knowledge aspects from reading an authentic novel. Their study suggested that there appears to be a threshold level for frequency bandings in which learning rate accelerates from (5-8) to (10-17) exposures, and significant differences were found across all four knowledge aspects. In particular, words with more than 10 exposures were learned substantially than those with fewer exposures. Furthermore, words with more than 28 exposures were learned at a rate less than those from (5-8) to (10-17) occurrences. That is, the learning rates for words with too many exposures might be debilitated to a descending extent.

Previous studies examining the effect of word frequency on vocabulary learning demonstrated different results, ranging from 3 to 17 exposures for acquisition of varied aspects of word knowledge to take place. Further, Rott (1999) found a positive effect for frequency of exposure during L2 incidental reading and she partly attributed the students' gains to the rich contextual clues in the text. Her findings suggested that context plus repeated exposures may have an enhancing effect on word learning.

#### D. *The Role of Context on Vocabulary Learning*

The role of context has always been controversial to both L1 and L2 vocabulary acquisition. For example, Beck, McKeown, and McCaslin (1983) proposed that many authentic texts do not contain supportive information and sometimes are even misleading for L1 word learning purposes. However, Nagy and his colleagues (Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985; Nagy & Herman, 1987) found that contexts are facilitative for L1 vocabulary learning. The conflicting contribution of context remains indecisive in L2 research as well.

Webb (2008) designed a study to investigate the effect of context (i.e., more informative vs. less informative) and word frequency on incidental vocabulary acquisition, with short contexts each containing a single target word. Four aspects of lexical knowledge were examined: recall of form, recognition of form, recall of meaning, and recognition of meaning. The findings indicate that the quality of the context rather than the number of encounters with target words may have a greater effect on gaining knowledge of word meaning. Instead, the number of encounters has a greater impact on knowledge of form. Webb concluded that these findings may provide a better explanation of why the number of exposures for meaning knowledge acquisition in previous research varied from word by word. These findings appeared to be contradictory with those in Pigada and Schmitt (2006), in which word spelling was the least affected by exposures. The reasons, however, could be attributed to the words in Pigada and Schmitt's (2006) study appeared in consistent contexts but those in Webb (2008) were in separate pieces of contexts without any connections among them,

thus debilitating the chances of word forms without sufficient exposures being paid attention to and acquired.

On the other hand, another line of L2 inquiry demonstrated different results from those in Webb's (2008) study. For example, Mondria and Wit-de Boer (1991) investigated the effects of sentence-based contexts on guessing and retention of words that appeared in a text with a range of contextual clues. The results showed that successful inferences in those contexts did not have a positive relationship with retention. Hu and Nassaji (2012) also found that ease of inferring had a negative effect on word retention. De Bot and his colleagues (1997) argued that a word surrounded by rich contextual cues is often easily comprehended, but this may result in less retention. This happens because of insufficient processing of the word and its properties (Pulido, 2009; Bolger & Zapata, 2011). Zahar, Cobb, and Spada (2001) further suggested that for a word to be best learned, a potential mechanism is that "an unclear or semi-clear context opens up a learning need, or conceptual gap, which is then reactivated when the word is eventually meeting a clear context" (p. 556).

#### E. *The Present Study*

To date, previous research examining the relationship between word frequency and vocabulary learning of Taiwanese learners focused on word meanings only (e.g., Huang & Liou, 2007), rather than on varied aspects of word knowledge. Furthermore, few of them investigated the effect of context on the acquisition of vocabulary knowledge. The purpose of this case study is to fill in the gaps mentioned above by addressing the following research questions.

1. How does word occurrence affect the Taiwanese college learners' different aspects of word knowledge (i.e., orthography, form-meaning connection, and grammatical functions) from extensive reading?
2. How do the contextual types affect different aspects of word knowledge?

### III. METHOD

#### A. *The Participant*

The participant in this case study was recruited from the college-level learners at a university of Technology. Prior to conducting the study, the participant was tested on her vocabulary knowledge by using Nation's 2000 Vocabulary Levels Test and the results indicated that she was a low-intermediate learner with a medium level of vocabulary knowledge (13 out of 18 words correct on the 2000 Levels Test). This participant was chosen because she was a well-motivated learner with great interests in learning English.

#### B. *The Readers*

Graded readers were used in this case study as they are designed in terms of controlled grammatical structures and vocabulary levels. Above all, the readers ensure that the target words are repeated several times so that participants will have opportunities to meet and retrieve the words in different contexts. The level of the readers was selected after determining the participant's vocabulary level. The participant picked up a reader randomly to decide the percentage of unknown words, and the appropriate level that contains around 95% familiar text coverage was used for the study. The four readers selected were *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, *Casino Royale*, and *The Princess Diaries 3* by Macmillan Publishers. All four readers were at a pre-intermediate level. The number of words at this level, as indicated, is about 1,400 basic words. The participant was asked to read four graded readers during a period of 6 weeks once the difficulty level was determined, with approximate one reader per a week and half to finish a specific level. To ensure that the participant would not be able to check the words in the glossary, the readers were scanned onto a computer and re-printed without the glossaries. She was also asked to infer but not to look up the unfamiliar words in the reading process. The researcher met with the participant after she finished reading the four readers and gave her the posttest.

#### C. *The Target Words*

Before the study began, 91 target words were selected from the glossary by the researcher, who decided that those words might be unknown to the participant based on her proficiency level. Then the participant was given a dictation test with the target words, pronounced in English, to measure her knowledge of orthography, and the words spelled correctly were excluded from the study. Then she was given a list of words, including 19 distracters, to evaluate her knowledge of form-meaning connection by providing a correct Chinese translation of the word. Knowledge of grammatical functions was assessed by asking the participant to construct a sentence. Those with correct Chinese translations and accurate grammatical functions were not included in this study. There were 63 words remaining for the post-test in the end.

#### D. *Instruments*

In this study, the participant was tested on her knowledge of orthography, form-meaning connections, and grammatical functions after she finished the four readers. The procedure and sequence of each measure in the posttest was described as follows. First, the participant was given a dictation test measuring her knowledge of spelling (i.e., orthography). Each target word was pronounced twice, and then she had to write it down on a blank piece of paper. Any incorrect spelling at the scoring procedure was considered to be wrong. Second, the participant was given a list of words,

including 19 distracters, to evaluate her knowledge of form-meaning connection. The correct answer had to be one that matched the context within the reader. Finally, using the target word on the list, she had to make a sentence to assess her knowledge of grammatical functions. Responses were considered appropriate if the word was used as the correct grammatical function in the sentences. The sequence was arranged to avoid any possibility of learning effect (Webb, 2007; Chen & Truscott, 2010). For example, the test of grammatical function and orthography was given prior to the test of form-meaning connection, from which the participant may have acquired the knowledge of form. The scoring measures were made by two raters, and the inter-rater reliability was .95.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For research question 1, “How does the frequency of word occurrence affect Taiwanese college learners’ different aspects of word knowledge (i.e., orthography, form-meaning connections, and grammatical functions) from extensive reading?” the target words were first divided into five frequency groups and the numbers of words distributed among the different frequency groups were calculated in Table 2. To fit the occurrences of the words appearing in the text, the distribution of different frequency bands was decided as below.

TABLE 2.  
NUMBERS OF WORDS WITHIN FIVE FREQUENCY BANDS

	Frequency bands	Number of words
	1	17
	2-4	22
	5-8	17
	9-17	4
	18 or more	3
Total	5	63

Table 3 shows the percentage of learning outcomes with the target words in terms of the four aspects: no learning gains, orthography, form-meaning connections, and grammatical functions. All aspects were measured based on the frequencies of word occurrence. It is interesting to note that no matter how frequently the word occurred across the four readers, some of the words were not acquired at all (i.e., with the five frequency bands of 41%, 23%, 18%, 25%, and 33% respectively). On the other hand, the same extreme frequency effect took place with the aspect of knowledge of grammatical function as well (i.e., with the five frequency bands of 41%, 36%, 35%, 25%, 67%). The results also suggested that knowledge of orthography may occur prior to meaning, and knowledge of meaning is dependent on the form. Furthermore, the frequency bands between (2-4) and (5-8) appeared to be the strongest thresholds for the overall word learning.

TABLE 3.  
LEARNING OUTCOMES DETERMINED BY KNOWLEDGE ASPECTS AND WORD FREQUENCY

Frequency of occurrence (the number of words)	no learning gains	orthography	form-meaning connection	grammatical functions
1 (17)	41%	12%	6%	41%
2-4 (22)	23%	23%	18%	36%
5-8 (17)	18%	26%	21%	35%
9-17 (4)	25%	0%	50%	25%
18 (3)	33%	0%	0%	67%
Mean number of words (Max =63)	17.08	11.52	10.55	23.85

A Kruskal-Wallis comparison was conducted between the frequency bands and word knowledge to examine if there were any differences among knowledge of orthography, form-meaning connections, and grammatical functions. However, the significant difference was found with only knowledge of orthography [ $\chi^2 = 9.921, p < 0.05$ ]. This finding appeared to be partially consistent with those in Webb’s (2007, 2008) studies, in which the number of word encounters affected the learning of form rather than learning of meaning. However, it was surprising to see that some words with fewer repetitions were acquired better than those with more repetitions, indicating an inverse relationship between knowledge of orthography and repetitions. This finding also confirmed those in previous research (Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Chen & Truscott, 2010), which suggested that the benefits come with the first few exposures for orthographic knowledge. It is possible that words with exposures between 2 to 8 facilitate knowledge of orthography to a sufficient degree, but too frequent repetitions may hamper the participant’s willingness to pay attention to the word and thus ignore it in the end (see Table 3).

Though improved gradually with word repetitions, form-meaning connection appeared to be the most difficultly acquired knowledge aspect (N = 10.55). This finding also confirmed those in previous studies (Chen & Truscott, 2010; Pellicer-Sanchez & Schmitt, 2010; Webb, 2007, 2008), in which semantic knowledge showed slow but steady development with increasing exposures.

As the best gained knowledge aspect, the pattern of grammatical functions was the most astonishing in that it declined with word frequency in the top four bands, with acquisition rates ranging from 41% to 25%. This pattern appeared to be contradictory with most of earlier research, which indicated that knowledge of grammatical functions

could be improved incrementally with increasing word exposures. One possibility that frequency had a negative effect on acquisition of grammatical functions in this study could be that the words with fewer exposures in this study inherited salient morphological features so that the participant might be able to easily recognize their parts of speeches and construct them in a sentence but vice versa for those words with more exposures.

To answer research question 2, “How do the contextual types affect different aspects of word knowledge?” the investigation was focused on the words within each of the four aspects: words without any learning gains, words with knowledge of orthography, words with form- meaning connection, and finally words with correct grammatical functions. First three words were picked up from each of the four aspects, with 12 words in total chosen for analyses. These 12 words were analyzed for their levels of contextual richness, adapted from both Beck et. al’s (1983) model of contextual support and Webb’s (2008) criteria on informative versus less informative contexts. The four levels are described as below:

1. Mis-directive contexts: The text contains misleading contextual clues (e.g., **Kidnapped** (shown as the subtitle within the text). The entrance to the Roi Galant was in a corner of the roulette room. The night club was small and dark. A band-guitar, piano and drums-was playing in a corner.).

2. Non-directive contexts: The text contains no direct information about the target word (e.g., “*Because they were working on that stupid computer program for the **carnival**,*” said Lilly).

3. General contexts: The text contains some information that may lead to partial knowledge of the target word’s meaning (e.g., When Annabella **flirts**, her husband becomes angry and she knows this).

4. Directive contexts: The text contains either implicit or explicit information that may lead to a good understanding of the target word’s meaning (e.g. He used the money to make bad **investments**. These **investments** are now worth nothing).

Then two raters assessed the contextual richness of these 12 words and categorized them into four groups in terms of their knowledge aspects (Table 4). Overall, only the local contexts containing the target words were selected for evaluation. The inter-rater reliability was .94.

TABLE 4.  
THE FREQUENCY AND CONTEXTUAL RATINGS OF THE TWELVE WORDS WITHIN THE FOUR KNOWLEDGE ASPECTS

Words without learning gains	Frequency	Mean of richness ratings (S.D.)
carnival	18	2.2 (.48)
flirts	3	2 (.44)
vicar	5	2 (.50)
<b>Words with correct orthographical knowledge</b>		
suspect	4	2.75 (.43)
suspend	2	2 (.00)
tedious	2	2.4 (.20)
<b>Words with correct form-meaning connection</b>		
investment	2	4 (.00)
gloomy	5	3.8 (.32)
mocking	6	2.8 (.54)
<b>Words with correct grammatical functions</b>		
injure	3	4 (.00)
scandal	8	3.2 (.46)
permission	5	3.8 (.48)

A notable pattern in this table is that the first two categories (i.e., words without learning gains and with correct orthographical knowledge) appeared to have lower means than the bottom two (i.e., words with correct form-meaning connection and grammatical functions), indicating that contextual richness has a stronger impact on the latter. This finding also confirmed the previous one in which frequency affected more on knowledge of spelling than on the other two aspects.

Afterward, a textual analysis was done to further analyze and confirm the potential effects of different contextual types on the acquisition of varied knowledge aspects. Four words were picked up from each of the four aspects respectively: *carnival*, *suspect*, *investment*, and *injure*. The numbers within the parentheses indicated the word frequency in the texts.

The first word examined is *carnival*, which appeared 18 times in one reader but did not result in any aspect of knowledge being acquired at all. It is found that the word is mostly associated with the word *Winter*, and 13 associations appeared in the subtitles within the contexts, which were mostly categorized as either non-directive or general contexts. The bolded text types were those appearing in the subtitles.

*Carnival (18)*

1. **Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. Still at the Winter Carnival**

2. **Even Later on Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. Still at the Winter Carnival**

3. “*Because they were working on that stupid computer program for the **carnival**,*” said Lilly. “*Judith already has a boyfriend.*”

4. “*Then why did you behave in that weird way at the **carnival** today?*” he asked.

One possibility that there was no acquisition with this word was that the participant might have inferred it to be a



proper noun based on its position within the context (e.g., Winter Carnival) and thus did not pay special attention to it.

Next, a word with correct orthographical knowledge (*suspect*) was further checked, and it was found that there was only one directive context out of four, with the remaining three categorized as either nondirective or general contexts.

*Suspect (4)*

1. He says it's because he's busy studying for Finals, but I *suspect* something else.

2. But...well, I've *suspected* for a long time there was someone else. That's why you never wanted to kiss me.

3. "I first *suspected* it at the restaurant. And if I *suspected* it, so will other people. You don't want someone else to tell her."

Then a word with correct form-meaning connection (*investment*) was selected. It can be seen that the directive contexts clearly indicated that *investment* means something related to money and the money invested could come to nothing.

*Investment (2)*

1. He used the money to make bad *investments*. These *investments* are now worth nothing.

The final step was to screen one word with correct grammatical function: *injure*, and the directive contexts provided sufficient clues that *injure* refers to a verb meaning being hurt by external forces.

*Injure (3)*

1. Soon everyone had heard the news about Lawrence's fall. He was badly *injured* and lay in his bed for several days. People said that his pony had thrown him onto the ground. No one had seen us together on the road. So no one knew that I had hit him and *injured* him.

2. I am writing to tell you that Arthur is ill. He fell from his horse when he was drunk. He has *injured* his leg badly. He is not dying, but he has been in bed for many days.

In sum, the words without any learning gains and with correct orthographical knowledge were surrounded mostly by nondirective or general contexts, but those with correct form-meaning connection and grammatical function were more likely to appear in directive contexts.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigated whether word frequency and contextual richness affected the acquisition of different lexical knowledge aspects (i.e., orthography, form-meaning connections, and grammatical functions), and the results indicated that spelling of the word form was the only aspect with statistically significant difference among the varied facets of word knowledge. The results were consistent with those in previous studies, which suggested that repeated exposures of words affect more on orthographical knowledge than on other knowledge aspects (Chen & Truscott, 2010; Pellicer-Sanchez & Schmitt, 2010; Webb, 2007, 2008). Another coherent finding with earlier research was that the form-meaning connection, though with the lowest gains among the three aspects, still showed gradual development with increasing repetitions of the words. The most contradictory finding to other studies was that the acquisition of grammatical functions was negatively influenced by word frequency. That is, the more exposures of a word, the less likely it is to be acquired. All these findings point out to a consensus that lexical acquisition process is multifaceted and complex, and different factors might be mediating and interacting with one another.

The number of times required for learning a word from reading in previous research varied considerably, and the present study still left this question unanswered as frequency appeared to affect acquisition of varied aspects of word knowledge to different extents. In this respect Nation (2001) pointed out that "Repetition is only one of a number of factors affecting vocabulary learning and the correlations between repetitions and learning generally are only moderate (p. 81)." Different studies have demonstrated that the effect of frequency is negligible when the learner is not ready, when the form is not salient, when it requires explicit learning, or when it is processed in a different way (VanPatten, Williams, & Rott, 2004). Research on learning and memory has also shown that for repetition to be effective, it should be distributed across a period of time rather than massed together: the space between exposures should become larger, with initial repetitions being closer in time and later repetitions much further apart (Baddeley, 1999).

As to the effect of context on different aspects of word knowledge, the findings suggested that the contextual richness appeared to affect the acquisition of form-meaning connections and grammatical functions more. However, some recent research demonstrated that rich and informative context inhibits the chances of words being learned and retained as the learners could easily comprehend the text without paying special attention to the words (Pulido, 2009; Bolger & Zapata, 2011). The role of context on vocabulary learning still needs further exploration in studies which have to consider the effects of different types of context (e.g., context within authentic reading materials for native speakers vs. contrived context specifically designed for meaning-guessing practice for L2 learners).

This study was based on four graded readers of the same difficulty level, and it was found that even some of glossed words appeared only once out of the four readers and almost one-fourth (17.08/63) of the words were not acquired at all. Thus it was impractical to expect the learners to achieve the target words at a mastery level via the authentic incidental learning process in which the opportunities to meet repeated exposures of the unfamiliar words may take a very long time. Furthermore, some recent research has argued that noticing of a form is an essential step in vocabulary learning and effective learning additionally requires focused attention and elaborate processing (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Peters, Hulstijn, Sercu, & Lutjeharms, 2009; Pulido, 2009; Schmidt, 1990). During reading, a learner

may be able to comprehend an unknown word with the help of the surrounding context but sometimes at the cost of not paying enough attention to the word itself. For an unfamiliar word to be acquired, it has been suggested that the word must not only be noticed and but also be processed to a sufficient degree (Fraser, 1999; Hu & Nassaji, 2012; Huckin & Bloch, 1993; Hulstijn, 2001). In other words, attention must be focused not only on the connection between the word form and its meaning but also how it is used in the context (de Bot et al., 1997). Researchers have argued that the more attention being paid to different features of a word, the more associations are made between the existing and new information and hence more retention and learning occurs (Fraser, 1999; Hulstijn & Laufer 2001; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Rott, 2005, 2007; Rott & Williams, 2003). Unfortunately, the words in most graded readers were not made explicit by textual enhancements, such as bolding or highlighting. As a result the learners may not notice the target words and their awareness of the words is not being raised in the reading process. This debate leaves the editors of graded readers a dilemma of whether to highlight the words to draw learners' attention or leave the books clear to ensure the flow of reading not to be interrupted. Nonetheless, recently some series of graded readers (e.g., Oxford University Press' Dominoes) have started to do the former in their elementary level Readers that integrate an intensive reading approach into an extensive reading one.

Responding to the above mixed design in the graded readers, the results further suggested that the most feasible approach for L2 vocabulary acquisition may be to combine both explicit (i.e., intentional) and implicit (i.e., incidental) learning. Recent research supports this view by demonstrating that post-reading tasks, such as answering comprehension questions or text-based vocabulary exercises, consolidate and enhance knowledge of those words initially met during reading (Elgort, 2011; Min, 2008; Paribakht & Wesche, 1997; Pellicer-Sanchez & Schmitt, 2010; Peters, Hulstijn, Sercu, & Lutjeharms, 2009; Schmitt, 2008). As claimed by Peters et. al. (2009), "the low incidence of vocabulary acquisition through reading (input only) can be substantially boosted by techniques that make students *look up the meaning* of unknown words, *process* their form-meaning relationship *elaborately*, and process them *again* after reading (input plus)." (p. 145). Beyond employing a combined approach to complement learners' vocabulary learning, Walters (2004, 2006) suggested using specific strategy training to teach students infer meaning from context. The three types of strategy training include: general strategy, specific context clues, and practice opportunities with cloze exercises followed by feedback.

Based on the findings in this study, it is very likely that neither word frequency nor context plays an absolutely dominant role on vocabulary acquisition, and future research could investigate more specifically the interacting effects between word frequency, context, and other variables (e.g., participants' age, proficiency levels, and motivation), on word learning. Future studies could also examine whether a variety of orders with different contextual types (i.e., nondirective, general, and directive) would affect word learning to different degrees (Zahar et. al., 2001), and how learners pay different aspects of attention to the word, context, and other relevant clues could be examined by the think-aloud protocols in which they have to verbalize their thoughts during the reading process. The words in this study were randomly selected, and future research could pick up and arrange the words in terms of their types and features. Finally, as this is a case study with only one participant, the findings require replication with a larger sample size to draw more positive conclusions.

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# The Impact of Writing Portfolio Assessment on Developing Editing Ability of Iranian EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—Developing autonomy among students has been one of the major concerns in second language instruction. Nowadays portfolio assessment as an alternative form to traditional evaluation has found its place in writing pedagogy. Present investigation was designed to study a group of thirty eight Iranian EFL learners with the aim of investigating the possible effects of using writing portfolio assessment on developing the ability of editing among Iranian EFL learners. The learners were asked to perform some writing tasks. Then they edited their own papers and corrected their writing products using the five categories of content, organization, grammar, spelling, and mechanics. There was a continuous dialogue between the teacher and the learners. The result indicated that the learners could be trained to use editing in their writing. Editing seems to be an effective way for higher proficiency learners to improve the organization of their writing.

**Index Terms**—assessment, portfolio, portfolio assessment, editing, writing ability

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the second or foreign language learning process, assessment plays a very important role. According to Moya and O'Malley (1994) where standardized or traditional tests such as quizzes and term papers are used to serve a purpose in education, they are neither infallible nor sufficient. They believe that any single score, whether it is a course grade or a percentile score from a norm-referenced test almost always fails to accurately report student overall progress. Therefore, in recent years language teachers have started using non-test assessment options such as portfolios which adhere to the criteria for adequate assessment.

Considering the importance of writing, Hamp-Lyons (1994) concluded that in portfolio assessment the focus is on the learners and what they are doing in the classroom. Portfolios are potent devices in teaching and learning writing. In addition, a portfolio approach provides students with opportunities to revise, edit, and ask for help, and they can evaluate what they have learned about learning. The reflection due to the editing process helps the learners promote their learning. When managing their writing portfolio, the students become active in and responsible for their learning and develop a sense of ownership. Therefore, because of the incompatibility of process learning and product assessment and disagreement between the information needed and the information derived from standardized testing alternative forms of assessment such as portfolios are required. They need to go through an editing process that gives them enough time to go over their works with critical eyes. This study was based on the assumption that portfolio assessment may lead to the development of the strategy of editing among EFL learners. An attempt was made to see if there was any change in using the ability of editing due to use of writing portfolio assessment. Therefore, it was assumed that through the strategy of editing the learners can take control of the feedback they receive, and teachers are able to provide effective feedback. The learners need to develop criteria, so that they learn to reflect and edit their own works.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to structuralism model, teachers drilled various grammar forms expecting students to develop the skill needed to communicate via written message; this approach has created in students an unproductive and inappropriate orientation toward composition (Brown, 2001). Later on, there was a change in the approach to writing. Zamel (1982) has claimed that successful writers go through a process of revising and redrafting their thoughts, and as they write they come to a final expression of their ideas. This is what that happens in portfolio assessment as one of the alternative approaches to product oriented assessment. Some educators (e.g. Ferris, 1995) have claimed that in this approach instruction and assessment are involved from the beginning in every stage of the writing process and not the end product.

In portfolio writing, students become aware of and use the strategy of editing when revising their work. Zamel (1982) suggested that this includes not just editing for mechanical errors such as grammar and vocabulary, but also looking a

larger element of text organization and meaning; the process that the learners go through from prewriting to drafting, revising and final writing.

Portfolios have been embraced in a variety of contexts and have become very common in language classes and college composition programs (Yancey 1992; Belanoff and Dickson 1991). A qualitative research carried out by Marefat (2004) in Allameh Tabatabai University indicated a number of recurring themes, patterns of student's reactions. In all, it was suggestive of a general positive toward portfolio use. When students reviewed their works, they were mainly obsessed with grammar and spelling i.e. surface level correction.

Results of a study by Grace-Ann Dolan in the 96-97 school year among sponsored students in Concordia suggested that portfolio could have a positive effect on the process of being a sponsored student and on the sponsored students. Portfolio made students and teachers accountable to support process. Also, portfolios helped students to become actively involved in assessing their needs, progress, achievement, and effort. Portfolio would be an instructional tool to help sponsored students to become independent learners who could judge their own learning.

### III. DEFINITION

Sutton, R (1995) defined a portfolio as a case for keeping files designed to illustrate or exemplify something or someone. Portfolio is developed to contain actual samples or representations of works produced by our pupils.

### IV. HOW PORTFOLIOS ARE JUSTIFIED?

Whereas standardized tests are used as an anchor for school – based assessment (Wiggins 1989, cited in Moya & O'Malley 1994), they are not sufficient tools, because a single score does not tell us accurately about subjects' overall progress. Therefore, in ESL education portfolio is used as an innovative procedure that combines both formal and informal techniques for monitoring student language development; it includes multiple measures and interprets them as an integrated unit.

Moreover, the portfolio procedure can be easily adapted to classroom needs, because portfolio assessment is a classroom – based language procedure, data on students progress are available continually and can be used formatively. Also, because portfolio assessment is not limited to quantifiable, multiple – choice techniques, attention can be directed to assessing a variety of higher level skills such as the ability to handle different processes in writing. A frequent complaint about traditional measures of writing ability is that they undermine regular classroom instruction. These days writing teachers like to teach using a process approach in which students spend time selecting the subjects they will write about, deciding on a viewpoint, finding materials to include in their essays, drafting, and revising before submitting a finished essay. Portfolios reflect the kinds of instruction valued in composition and therefore judgments made based on portfolios are claimed to be inherently more meaningful.

### V. LIMITATIONS OF PORTFOLIOS

There are substantial concerns about the use of portfolio assessment. Since portfolio takes different shapes in different classes, it may be endangered. It causes lack of consistency, reliability, and equity across classes and schools. Portfolio assessment can be protected by building a common understanding of goals and expectations, and collecting several indicators for each goal however, it can be very time consuming for teachers and educators. Furthermore, learners need to understand the evaluation process if portfolios are to mean to them. Mousavi (2002) referred to validity and reliability as the limitations of portfolio assessment. He doubts the extent a portfolio exemplifies students work and instruction.

### VI. METHOD

#### *PARTICIPANTS*

In order to carry out the study, thirty eighty males of 20 to 24 years of age were selected. They were Persian natives and mostly from middle class families. They were studying at the advanced level in NOOR English institute in Tehran. Apart from receiving formal instruction during the course they had little chance of practicing English or visiting English natives outside the classroom. They were randomly divided into two groups of nineteen students, one of which was considered as the experimental group and the other one as the control group. All of the subjects had studied New Interchange series which had no correspondence to what they were learning at school. Most of them had started learning English from childhood; a few of them from adulthood, but all of them, without exception, had studied New Interchange books from Elementary level.

### VII. PROCEDURE

Instruments used in this study involved a Barron's TOEFL test (copyright 2005), a pre-test and a post-test on writing, six writing tasks, a portfolio assessment form, and an interview consisting of nine questions. Both standardized and informal instruments were used to elicit specific kind of information about learners' progress. Techniques of

standardized proficiency tests (TOEFL) as well as non-test techniques such as teacher ratings, checklists, student self-ratings, writing samples, and interviews were considered to get enough information about the learners' progress.

First, to check the homogeneity of the group a TOEFL test was utilized. This test just included grammar and vocabulary points. It consisted of 90 multiple choice items, including 40 questions of written expression and structure and 50 questions of reading comprehension and vocabulary, and the test had a total of 90 points. The participants were asked to answer the questions in 80 minutes. Based on the results of such a test the subjects were classified into three groups: (1) high achievers (2) intermediate achievers (3) low achievers. It should be mentioned that the researcher assigned 70 to high achievers, 60-70 to intermediate achievers, and below 60 to low achievers.

Second, since the portfolio writing itself was considered the treatment, to investigate its effects a writing pre-test and a post-test was conducted. The participants were asked to write on the subject agreed on by all of them at the beginning of the course. This written work was considered as the pretest on writing. Then at the end of the course the best work of participants was taken as the post test on writing. Because there was no explicit treatment in this study, the writing portfolios that the participants performed during the course were considered as one of the instruments. The topics for the writings were mutually selected by both the teacher and students.

Third, the portfolio assessment was conducted for experimental group. This phase included planning the assessment purposes and evaluating them according to the objectives, establishing the measurement criteria, introducing portfolio assessment to the learners, supervising the portfolio assessment process, and finally evaluating the portfolios.

Fourth, during the course subjects were required to write to their teacher. It included a copy of their completed work and the comments they had made. The class was held every week for a complete semester and the participants were required to write essay at home. Because the portfolio assessment process in this study focused on students' reflections on their works, it served as a reflective tool. Therefore, the researcher wanted his subjects to learn from reflecting on the experience of accomplishing a portfolio project. While the learners were doing their assignment, every item to be kept, in whatever form, was provided with comments and the reason for selection. The learners annotated the items they had chosen, and the teacher provided them with effective feedback in best statements on the annotation sheet. The learners corrected their own papers, and expressed their views on the items that they were uncertain about before delivering them to the teacher. The main responsibility of choosing items stood with the learners, and the teacher added to them one more, if necessary, to complement the learners' choices. The most important part of the portfolio assessment process was the students' reflection on their works, choice of significant items, and the specific reasoning that resulted in editing and correcting their papers not the quantity of items. Therefore it happened that a portfolio did not contain a balance of different areas of items i.e. different learners edited some items more than others. The process took the form of a dialog between the teacher and the learners, i.e., the teacher felt the need to respond in a few words to the students' writings. The papers already commented on by the teacher were returned. Next session the subjects made their notes on the processed samples. While evaluating and processing writing the subjects kept all the material including whatever they had used in their portfolios, a reflective section, a writer's autobiography written early in the term, one timed piece written under conditions uniform across the class, evidence of a writing process including peer responses, teacher forms, and multiple drafts demonstrating significant revision and at least one response sheet from a writing teacher. Toward the end of the term, students submitted to their instructors a complete portfolio for formal assessment. Instructors reserved the right to refuse to submit the portfolio to the assessors if the portfolio was incomplete, or if the student has failed to meet other course requirements. During final week students would be given the opportunity to see the outcome of the assessment. Fifth, Portfolios were read and scored by members of the English/writing raters. Each portfolio was read by two different readers. Readers were to work toward consensus. The learners' portfolios were evaluated and graded via a teacher-made evaluation sheet by two raters. The decision was based on holistic perception of the writing according to the five categories (content, organization grammar, spelling, and mechanics), and an analytical evaluation of each of them. The reliability for two raters was 0.94 for the pre-test and 0.91 for the post-test. If consensus could not be reached, a third reader will be used. Finally, subjects were interviewed based on nine questions provided in advance by teachers to record their views on advantages and disadvantages of portfolios.

### VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a teacher teaching English in Iranian schools, the researcher was curious about the prospect of using editing in students' writing and improvement of their writing proficiency. More specifically, the focus was on investigating the use of this technique and its effects in terms of improvement in writing. There were two independent groups in this study including the experimental group and the control group. A pre-test and post-test design was used to answer the research question. To analyze the data, the difference between two groups was derived from the difference between the results of the post-test and the pre-test of each individual subject. There were two groups (Experimental group and Control group) and three subgroups (high achievers, intermediate achievers, low achievers) representing the independent variables of the study (portfolio assessment & sub-groups). The best approach to find out the possible effects of two independent variables on the dependent variables (writing proficiency & editing) was Analysis of Variance (ANOWA).

To investigate the hypothesis among the three subgroups (high achievers, intermediate achievers, low achievers) Chi-Square was used and the outcomes were checked with regard to the learners' ability to edit their papers. The findings

showed that the achieved X was less than the critical level (0.05) therefore editing was different among the three subgroups.

TABLE1.  
THE RESULT OF CHI-SQUARE FOR THREE SUB-GROUPS

$X^2=73.03$	df=4	P=0.001	P<0.05
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In order to come up with the final decision about students' progress with regard to their ability to edit others' papers, randomly one or two pieces of writing of the their peers were given to them to edit. And at last it was decided whether students had gained the ability to edit or not. The results depicted that the experimental group outperformed the control group with regard to their ability to edit their peers' papers. The portfolio enabled the learners to edit the papers of their own peers. However, the high and intermediate achievers performed differently from what the low achievers did. The high and intermediate achievers were more concerned with content and organization, however, the low achievers focused on grammar, spelling, and mechanics while correcting their peers' papers.

According to the subjects, the most important reasons for the effectiveness of this technique was that it facilitated the teacher's understanding of their compositions and enabled the teacher to learn about the problems the learners encountered in writing, so that he could provide the feedback needed. One more reason was that when making comments, the students had to look at their compositions critically and analytically, as a result they were more receptive to the teachers' feedback based on the annotations. However the results of the pos-test showed that only high achievers improved their writing relatively after using this technique.

The students in different sub-groups used this technique with different focuses. This difference can be shown by the different annotations they made. With regard to the percentage of editing on style, the high achievers were the lowest (21%), and the low achievers were the highest (46.2%) with the intermediate achievers in between (32.8%). With regard to the percentage of the remarks on the content in the total number of annotations, on the other hand, the high achievers were the highest (43.5%), followed by the intermediate achievers (34.8%).

Although the high achievers had given close thought to the content and the organization before they started writing, when they were writing they continued paying attention to them. It can be concluded that when writing, the low achievers were engaged more in linguistic operations than the high achievers were. Therefore, with the improvement of their language proficiency they had fewer and fewer language problems, and so they could be engaged more in the content development of their composition.

Another difference between the subjects in different sub groups was in the way they made annotations. The annotations made by low achievers were general, and in fact the learners were trying to pass the responsibility to the teacher, whereas the expressions made by high achievers showed that the subjects had thought about the problem before they made the annotations, and they could express their problems clearly. Compared with the high achievers, low achievers were less willing to think about their problems. When asked why they had made a few comments, most of the low achievers responded that it was useless to do so, since they believed that if they made comments, the teacher would only give suggestions, and then they had to revise their works. Therefore, instead of trying to use this technique in their writing, the low achievers regarded it as only a task, and they wanted to finish their task quickly rather than taking in seriously. Finally, another reason that might account for the lower number of annotations on the content and the organization of composition was that annotations on form were focused on discrete items, while content and organization concerned the macrostructure of the text those on form are related to microstructure of the text .

TABLE2.  
DESCRIPTION OF EACH OF THE FIVE CATEGORIES

Content	familiarity with the subject matter, logic, cohesion
Organization	coherence (sentence structure), appropriate format
Standard English grammar, spelling, mechanics	

TABLE3.  
DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPONENTS OF EACH CATEGORY

Grammar	It tests adjectives and adverbs, conjunctions, and agreement between subject and verb and between pronouns and their antecedents. They look for common errors including compounding nouns, missing subjects or verbs in a sentence, noun-verb agreement errors, split infinitives, plural – singular verb mistakes, tense, and pronoun agreement. The subjects also edit for punctuation: They check commas, colons, semi-colons, and full stops, as well.
sentence structure	It tests relationships between/among clauses, placement of modifiers. The subjects check the clearness and precision at each sentence.
mechanics	Use of apostrophes, hyphens, capitals, abbreviations and numbers
cohesion	The subjects check the link between paragraphs. Do they have atopic for each paragraph? Do they use connectives and references correctly?
format	The subjects check for typesetting: Are all the paragraphs indented by the same amount? Is page numbering sequential? Are headers and footers consistent? Does the layout have “Orphans” or Widows, i.e. Do single words appear alone at the end or start of a page? Is there any number page left? Does the subject's name appear in the correct form?
logic	The subjects check the introduction of their writing. Does the introduction provide a map for the body of writing? Does it have a “thesis”? Does the “thesis (main argument) comes through in the writing? They also check the conclusion, does it summarize main points?

TABLE4.  
COMMENTS MADE BY PARTICIPANTS IN EG

		High achievers	Intermediate achievers	Low achievers	Total
Number of students		10	12	10	32
Annotations on content	Number	100	80	50	230
	Percent in total made by students	43.5%	34.8%	21.7%	100%
Annotations on organization	Number	48	45	25	118
	Percent in total made by students	40.7%	38.1%	21.2%	100%
Annotations on spelling, grammar, mechanics	Number	128	200	282	610
	Percent in total made by students	21.0%	32.8%	46.2%	100%
Total number of annotations		276	325	358	958

The results of all these studies demonstrated the effectiveness of portfolio assessment in instructional settings in that it encourages students to review their own work, gives them the opportunity to focus on their own points of strengths and weaknesses, helps them become active evaluators of their own needs, progress, achievement, and efforts, works as a instructional tool to help the subjects become independent learners, enhances the teacher/student relationships, enables the teachers to provide individualized instruction, gives the learners awareness of their own process of learning, engages them in critical thinking, makes them aware of learning strategies, facilitates students' learning process, and enhances their self-directed learning.

The result of this study is compatible with the result of some empirical studies. They include a learning portfolio study by Valeri et al. (2001), and a portfolio study performed by Mary (1990). The results of them indicated that self-assessment of writing and reading should be nurtured in progress. The learners can be trained to learn how to edit in order to promote learning, evaluate and change curriculum.

#### IX. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF INTERVIEWS

The subjects' responses to the questions put forward by interviewers were tabulated for each of them and the mean score for frequency of use was derived for each item. The questions include:

1. Did portfolio allow you to choose what you liked to write according to your personal interest?
2. Did portfolio help you understand your strengths and weaknesses?
3. Do you feel portfolio can present your learning results?
4. Did it take you a lot time to compile the portfolio?
5. Is compiling a portfolio a simple task?
6. Does portfolio provide a multi-dimensional perspective about learning?
7. Do you like to assess your own progress?
8. Do you like to be evaluated by pencil and paper tests?
9. Is portfolio a good tool to evaluate students' performance?

According to the learners' answers to the questions on the advantages and disadvantages of portfolio project the following results were achieved: most of the learners had positive reactions to the use of the portfolio. Forty-nine percent of the subjects strongly agreed that the portfolio writing allowed them to choose what they liked to write according to their personal interests. Also the portfolio assessment helped them understand their weaknesses and strengths. Seventy percent of the participants strongly agreed that the portfolio helped them realize their strong as well as weak points. Fifty-one percent of the answers indicated that the subjects had positive attitudes to the portfolio as



presenting their learning results. They believed that the portfolio could show their results better than paper and pencil tests.

At the same time there were some disadvantages to the use of portfolio according to the learners' answers to the questions. Most of them believed that compiling a portfolio is time consuming (58%) and sixty percent of subjects strongly agreed that compiling a portfolio was not a simple task.

When interviewed learners were asked to compare portfolios as an assessment means to traditional pen-and-paper tests, above fifty percent of them responded that they would prefer to be evaluated by portfolio, while only twenty percent preferred to be evaluated by paper-and-pencil tests. It may be due to the fact that portfolio offered them chances for self-evaluation because nearly sixty percent of subjects agreed that they liked to assess their own progress. Many agreed that the portfolio provided a multi-dimensional perspective to evaluation. The majority also agreed that multiple assessments should be used.

## X. LIMITATIONS

These are some of the limitations of the study that might have affected the results include:

- One limitation of this study was the small sample size, which does not allow generalizations to other writers in other contexts
- Another limitation was the time period of the study. It was not long enough to show the real difference that self-correction and editing could make on writing.
- The third limitation can be the feedback the teacher provided. The teacher's feedback might not have been effective to some students.
- The fourth limitation of this study was the unfamiliarity of the subjects with portfolio development and portfolio assessment procedure. For some subjects we need more time to introduce portfolio.
- The fifth limitation of this study is the subjects' level of proficiency. The findings of this may only be valid for students at the advanced level.

## XI. CONCLUSION

With regard to the observed data the hypothesis was tested. The obtained results from Chi-Square test indicated that there was a significant difference among three sub-groups in experimental group. In other words portfolio assessment was helpful with learners' use of editing in their works. It is worth mentioning that they used this technique with difference focuses. High achievers were more concerned with macrostructure of language while low achievers focused on microstructure of language or discrete items while editing. On the whole the tendency toward using portfolio assessment outweighed the traditional way of testing. Therefore, portfolio assessment improved subjects' writing proficiency, and enabled them to use editing successfully at the end of the study.

This study was an attempt to investigate the possible contributions of portfolio assessment to improving the strategy of editing in writing proficiency of advanced Iranian EFL learners along with their reactions and perceptions of portfolio and portfolio assessment. This work was carried out in a traditional-minded educational setting in which the dominant form of testing learners' writing ability was composing an essay overnight submitted at the end of the class. With regard to the observed data, the obtained results from Chi-Square test indicated that there was a significant difference among three sub-groups in experimental group. In other words portfolio assessment was helpful with learners' use of editing in their works. The subjects' responses to the questions were tabulated and the mean square for frequency of use was derived for each item. The results suggested that the students had positive attitudes to the use of portfolio. Majority of them uttered their satisfaction in that portfolio assessment was a good tool to allow them reflect and evaluate their own learning. They believe that compiling a portfolio increased the learners' cooperative learning and mental growth in English. Different views were achieved on learners' understanding and perception of portfolio and portfolio assessment. A large proportion of the class thought of reflection as the most important part of portfolio assessment.

There were some advantages to using portfolio assessment. The subjects agreed that that portfolio allowed them to decide on what they liked to write. Portfolio assessment helped the subjects to come up with their strong and weak points, and provided the teacher with insights on adjusting pertinent feedback to the needs of students.

Although using portfolio as a form of alternative assessment to traditional testing was appreciated by majority of subjects, there were some drawbacks reported by them. Majority of learners believed that using portfolio assessment was a frustrating and time consuming task, and portfolio compiling was not a simple task. Due to the burden portfolio compiling put on students, it would not be a convenient way for students out of the classroom. On the whole the tendency toward using portfolio assessment outweighed the traditional way of testing. Therefore, portfolio assessment enabled them to use editing successfully and improved subjects' writing proficiency at the end of the study.

## XII. IMPLICATIONS OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT AND TEACHING WRITING PORTFOLIO IN EFL EDUCATIONAL SETTING

Portfolio is increasingly integrated into EFL settings. We might use portfolio assessment in several ways to judge students' capabilities while they are engaged in learning English as a foreign language:

1. We might wish to show the progress in learning being made over a period of time by an individual student.
2. Samples of work can illuminate special features of learning which we may wish to highlight. They could show a particular strength in the student's work, or a particular difficulty which needs to be overcome. Presenting an example is often quicker and more meaningful than talking or writing about it, and a portfolio can be used as a substitute for or complementary to report about the students' learning.
3. A gathering of recent or current examples of the pupils' work can ensure to show precisely the pupils' current attainment and range of skills.
4. Where teachers are required to make high-stake judgments about individual pupils' standards or levels, which may affect the pupils' overall grade or his access to future opportunities, they may use examples of work to support and underpin an individual judgment.

A portfolio could also be used to illustrate the range and quality of the curriculum through examples of what the pupils have achieved within the activities planned and provided by the school. Individual teachers might use a portfolio produced by the pupils to illuminate the teacher's task design, her professional standards and expectations, and her capacity to motivate and stimulate her pupils. Such an assessment is important to describe the full range of a teacher's abilities over an extended period of time, and to stimulate reflection and improvement of a teacher's performance. Portfolios are used by several groups, because in the list of purposes a particular audience is often implied. When we spell out the possible range of audiences we can see how a set of items might be of interest to a number of different audiences:

1. The audience might be the child himself or herself that is interested in his own progress, strengths and aims for improvement.
2. Parents and care-givers too are important audiences, interested in the progress and development of their own children.
3. Teachers can use standard-based portfolios to share their understanding and expectations.
4. As the students move through the school and to the next teacher, a portfolio of purposefully selected items is available to use, so that teachers reach the right person at the right time.
5. In addition, the related audience can be next school to which the students are moving, providers and school governors that make decision about access to courses and jobs.

It is important to keep in mind that portfolio can be used for both assessment and instruction. The process of assembling a portfolio can help develop student self-reflection, critical thinking, responsibility for learning, and content area skills and knowledge. Portfolio enables teachers and students get a broader, more in-depth look at what students know and can do, and have a supplement or alternative to report standardized tests.

### XIII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Research into this technique is new and still lacking. Studies with large number of subjects at various levels, and within a long time period are necessary to confirm the finding of this study. Future research should include some case studies to follow the writing process of the subjects, so that a clearer and more comprehensive picture can be revealed. Furthermore, some other ways may need to be found for the training of the subjects, especially low achievers, on how to use editing in writing. Finally portfolio assessment and editing, like other innovations, must be undertaken with caution and thoughtfulness for it to fulfill its promise, and relegated to other skills.

#### APPENDIX A. SAMPLE PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT FORM

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Assessment:** Continuous      End of Project

**Rating Scale:** 1.Excellent    2.Very Good    3.Good    4.Fair    5.Poor

Criteria	Rating	Comments
Student selected appropriate material.		
Portfolio showed evidence of student's understanding of course objectives.		
Portfolio showed evidence of student's pride in own work and commitment to writing projects/experiences.		
Portfolio showed evidence that student completed assignments.		
Portfolio showed evidence of student's understanding of the process of developing and organizing portfolio.		

Other comments:

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# A Study of Metacognitive Awareness of Non-English Majors in L2 Listening

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**Abstract**—The study used MALQ developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006), an interview and a listening comprehension test to investigate non-English majors' metacognitive awareness in English listening and the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension performance. The results revealed a lack of metacognitive awareness in the subjects and a significant discrepancy between good listeners and poor listeners. Since metacognitive awareness is proved to influence listening comprehension in a positive way, teachers are suggested to develop students' autonomous learning ability from this perspective and establish learner-centered listening teaching mode.

**Index Terms**—metacognitive awareness, listening comprehension in English, non-English majors

## I. INTRODUCTION

Listening comprehension is a crucial part of language acquisition and instruction. It is influenced by many factors, among which metacognitive strategies are most important. Accordingly, language teachers face the challenging task of helping learners develop metacognitive skills. When learners acquire some metacognitive knowledge, they can manage and evaluate their own language learning better. Learners' understanding of mental and emotional processes in their L2 listening can also help them master the ways of improving their listening skills.

This paper will start from an empirical research to explore metacognitive awareness of non-English majors in English listening and the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension. The article will conclude with the suggestions to develop learners' metacognitive awareness so as to improve their performance in English listening.

## II. BACKGROUND

### A. Metacognition

American psychologist Flavell invented the term 'metacognition' in 1970s. It is thinking about one's cognitive process, which includes two essential aspects—"self-appraisal and self-management of cognition" (Paris & Winograd, 1990, p.17). It refers primarily to "an understanding or perception of ways different factors act and interact to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises" (Goh, 1997, p.361). Flavell identifies three major categories in metacognitive knowledge: personal knowledge; task knowledge and strategic knowledge (Flavell, 1976).

Wenden applies this term into the study of language learning. Metacognitive knowledge refers to "information learners acquire about their learning" (Wenden, 1998, P.518). It has also been classified into three categories. Person knowledge is knowledge learners have acquired about themselves as learners (Wenden 1998). It includes "human factors that facilitate or inhibit learning" (Wenden 1998, P.518). Task knowledge is learners' understanding of the purpose and demands of a task, i.e. how to deal with a particular task. Strategic knowledge refers to learners' specific knowledge about the nature of learning strategies and when and how to use them (Wenden 1998).

Besides metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive strategies have been widely acknowledged as a crucial component in metacognition. Metacognitive strategies refer to "general skills through which learners manage, direct, regulate, guide their learning, i.e. planning, monitoring and evaluating" (Wenden, 1998, P.519). Planning refers to the choices of cognitive strategies and allocation of resources. Monitoring refers to the process of keeping track of how the learning task is going on (Wenden 1998). Evaluation is learners' assessment of their learning efficiency and outcomes.

### B. The Relationship between Metacognitive Awareness and Listening Comprehension

It has been argued that metacognition can have positive influence on second language acquisition (Byrnes, 1996; Costa, 2001; Sternberg, 1998; Wenden, 1998). Metacognitive abilities "are a mental characteristic shared by successful learners" (Vandergrift, 2006, P.435). Metacognition helps learners understand their learning style and capacity, regulate and manage their learning process in an active way, thus finding more effective learning methods. Improvement of metacognition can also help learners become aware of their learning process and demands of learning tasks so that they will know how to choose appropriate learning strategies in different contexts. Consequently, learners can process and restore new information better (Vandergrift, 2006).

Metacognitive awareness in listening refers to the adoption of appropriate strategies and ideal allocation of resources

(Lin, 2002). Metacognition plays an important role in each phase of listening comprehension. Before approaching the listening task, learners make the prediction, select appropriate strategies (e.g. listening for the main idea) needed for completing it, and distribute attention accordingly. While they are doing the listening task, learners keep or change learning strategies by monitoring their learning process. When they find out that these strategies are ineffective and lead to failure, they seek remedies for facilitating comprehension. When they finish the listening process, they evaluate effectiveness of listening strategies and skills in listening comprehension. Therefore, if the metacognitive theories can be applied in second language listening, learners can become more active participants in the learning process. Learning effects and self-regulated learning ability can thus be improved. Their learning interests and motivation can also be generated (Wei, 2008).

### C. Instruments for Measuring Metacognitive Awareness

There have been some empirical studies to assess metacognitive awareness of listening (Goh, 2002; Vandergrift, 2005), but these questionnaires have some shortcomings. Some are too long (e.g., Goh) and some are not comprehensive enough. (e.g., Vandergrift). Most importantly, none of these self-report instruments followed rigorous validation procedures (Vandergrift, 2006).

In order to develop a relatively short instrument that can elicit and identify L2 listeners' metacognitive awareness and use of strategies when listening to oral texts, Vandergrift designed The Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) in 2006. It is based on the Flavell's theory and Wenden's model of metacognition (planning, monitoring, evaluating and problem solving) (1998), which provides theoretical validation for item construction. Its reliability and the factorial validity were examined by SPSS. MALQ has been tested with a large number of respondents in many counties and at various levels of language proficiency. It can be used to examine students' perceptions of themselves as listeners, their understanding of tasks, and their awareness of the strategies they use to facilitate listening comprehension.

In China, there is a lack of studies on the difference in metacognitive awareness between skilled and unskilled listeners (Shi, 2009). This article tries to use Vandergrift's Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) to diagnose the extent to which non-English majors understand and can regulate their listening process, the difference between good listeners and poor listeners in metacognitive awareness, and the relationship between metacognition and English listening abilities. It is expected to improve teaching of English listening by developing students' metacognitive awareness and self-regulatory abilities.

## III. PRESENT RESEARCH

### A. Research Questions

The questions to be answered in this research include: 1) To what extent can non-English major be aware of their listening process and strategies used to achieve listening comprehension? 2) Are there any differences between skilled and unskilled listeners in metacognitive awareness? If there is any, in which ways are they different? 3) Is there a relationship between the listening behavior reported in the MALQ and actual listening performance? 4) Do students who score high on MALQ perform better in listening test than who score low?

### B. Subjects

One hundred and thirty-eight non-English majors in Zhejiang Gongshang University participated in this study. They were sophomores from four classes. Their majors were Japanese, finance and accounting. These students' length of learning English ranged from 11 to 13 years. So many years' English learning enabled them to learn some language learning strategies and have their own understanding of L2 listening. That is to say, they had some metacognitive knowledge.

### C. Materials and Procedure

#### 1. A listening comprehension test

A listening comprehension test was administered before the students completed the questionnaire so that they could answer the questions according to their feelings of taking the test. The test was selected from cet-4 set in December, 2008. The test required students to listen to 8 short conversations, 2 long conversations and 3 short passages and to check comprehension by completing 25 multiple choice questions, with one point each. The test was aimed to measure students' proficiency in L2 listening rather than achievement.

#### 2. The questionnaire

The Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) (see Table 1) developed by Vandergrift in 2006 was used in this study. In order to ensure full understanding, the researcher used its Chinese version translated by Chans Le (2008).

Immediately following the listening comprehension test, the students were asked to respond to the items using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (one point) to "strongly agree" (six points). Statements 3, 8 and 16 were worded negatively so that the respondents would not fall into a pattern of marking only one side of the rating scale. Items 4, 11 and 18 were related to mental translation—strategies language learners should avoid. So for these 6 items,

researchers needed to reverse the scales when scoring. The score these students got was viewed as their metacognitive awareness of the processes and strategies required for successful second language listening comprehension.

Vandergrift demonstrated a five-factor model underlying the MALQ: planning and evaluation, directed attention, person knowledge, translation and problem-solving (Vandergrift, 2006, P.450). Table 1 consists of 21 questions in the questionnaire and the description of each item. (Vandergrift, 2006, P.462).

TABLE 1:  
THE DESCRIPTION OF THE FACTORS

Factors	The description of the factors	Strategy or belief/perception (The statements in the questionnaire)
Planning-evaluation	the strategies listeners use to prepare themselves for listening, and to evaluate the results of their listening efforts	1. Before I start to listen, I have a plan in my head for how I am going to listen.
		10. Before listening, I think of similar texts that I may have listened to.
		14. After listening, I think back to how I listened, and about what I might do differently next time.
		20. As I listen, I periodically ask myself if I am satisfied with my level of comprehension.
		21. I have a goal in mind as I listen.
Directed attention	strategies that listeners use to concentrate and to stay on task.	2. I focus harder on the text when I have trouble understanding.
		6. When my mind wanders, I recover my concentration right away.
		12. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.
		16. When I have difficulty understanding what I hear, I give up and stop listening.
Person knowledge	listeners' perceptions concerning the difficulty presented by L2 listening and their self-efficacy in L2 listening	3. I find that listening in English is more difficult than reading, speaking, or writing in English.
		8. I feel that listening comprehension in English is a challenge for me.
		15. I don't feel nervous when I listen to English.
Mental translation	the online mental translation strategy.	4. I translate in my head as I listen.
		11. I translate key words as I listen.
		18. I translate word by word, as I listen.
Problem-solving	strategies used by listeners to inference (guess at what they do not understand) and to monitor these inferences.	5. I use the words I understand to guess the meaning of the words I don't understand.
		7. As I listen, I compare what I understand with what I know about the topic.
		9. I use my experience and knowledge to help me understand.
		13. As I listen, I quickly adjust my interpretation if I realize that it is not correct.
		17. I use the general idea of the text to help me guess the meaning of the words that I don't understand.
		19. When I guess the meaning of a word, I think back to everything else that I have heard, to see if my guess makes sense.

### 3. The interview

After the students completed the questionnaire, the researcher interviewed nine randomly selected students, which may allow a detailed interpretation of the result, thereby enhancing the reliability of the study.

## IV. RESULTS

The data was analyzed through SPSS11.0. The students' level of metacognitive awareness was determined by the analysis of the results of the questionnaire. Besides, the intercorrelations between metacognitive awareness and actual listening behavior were examined by correlating the MALQ scores with listening comprehension test scores.

Table 2 is the descriptive statistics analysis of whole samples. The table reveals the similarity between the means, medians and the modes. It means the data from MALQ and listening comprehension test present normal distribution, which verifies the validity of data.

TABLE 2:  
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' LEVEL OF METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION ABILITIES.

	number	mean	median	mode	standard deviation	range	maximum	minimum
level of metacognitive awareness	138	3.6529	3.6667	3.81	.57196	3.19	5.14	1.95
listening comprehension abilities	138	11.07	11.00	11	3.627	22	22	0

### A. The Analysis of Metacognitive Awareness

Table 3 illustrates the descriptive statistics analysis of the five factors in the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire.

TABLE 3:  
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ANALYSIS OF THE FIVE FACTORS IN THE METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS LISTENING QUESTIONNAIRE.

	items	mean	standard deviation
The level of metacognitive awareness		3.6529	.57196
Plan-evaluation	1, 10, 14, 20, 21	3.4739	.77782
	1	4.0797	1.37794
	10	2.8696	1.44902
	14	3.7319	1.36985
	20	2.9493	1.33631
	21	3.7391	1.25159
Directed attention	2, 6, 12, 16	4.1304	1.15465
	2	3.5362	1.58533
	6	4.2681	2.97812
	12	4.7464	1.12088
	16	3.9710	1.36666
Person knowledge	3, 8, 15	2.4879	1.09052
	3	2.4565	1.44545
	8	2.0580	1.23080
	15	2.9493	1.46652
Mental translation	4, 11, 18	3.2367	.84019
	4	2.9058	1.21959
	11	2.8188	1.24534
	18	3.9855	1.20816
Problem-solving	5, 7, 9, 13, 17, 19	4.2742	.86680
	5	4.0652	1.29686
	7	4.1522	1.35033
	9	4.5797	1.13865
	13	4.0362	1.25802
	17	4.4855	1.08228
	19	4.3261	1.16621

The researcher divided the subjects into two groups according to their score in the listening comprehension test. Those 73 students who scored higher than 11 represented the high-score group and those 65 students who scored lower than 11 belonged to the low-score group. Table 4 shows the results of t-test used to analyze the difference in the level of metacognitive awareness between the high-score group and the low-score group.

TABLE 4:  
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE LEVEL OF METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS BETWEEN THE HIGH-SCORE GROUP AND THE LOW-SCORE GROUP

	group	number	mean	Standard deviation	The differences between the means	T value	the significance value
The level of metacognitive awareness	high-score group	73	3.7841	.62457	.2786	2.934	.004
	low-score group	65	3.5055	.46874			
Plan-evaluation	high-score group	73	3.6795	.75773	.4364	3.415	.001
	low-score group	65	3.2431	.73950			
Directed attention	high-score group	73	4.3356	1.33932	.4356	2.245	.026
	low-score group	65	3.9000	.85673			
Person knowledge	high-score group	73	2.6575	1.15733	.3601	1.956	.052
	low-score group	65	2.2974	.98447			
Mental translation	high-score group	73	3.3128	.89774	.1439	1.004	.317
	low-score group	65	3.1689	.77027			
Problem-solving	high-score group	73	4.3744	.93243	.2129	1.446	.151
	low-score group	65	4.1615	.77838			

According to the data in table 3 and table 4, the subjects' average score in metacognition is 3.6529 out of 6, which illustrates a low level of metacognitive awareness of the students in listening. The results reveal that these students are not competent in English listening and lack self-regulation strategies in cognitive activities. In approaching the listening tasks, they are just passive recipients in their performance. To a large extent, they rely on teachers and lack confidence in listening comprehension.

When comparing the score between the high-score group and the low-score one, the researcher finds a significant difference in their level of metacognitive awareness. The high-score group is better able to regulate their learning and more active in controlling their listening process. That is to say, they are more autonomous in their approach to listening comprehension tasks.

In these five factors in the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire, the subjects get the highest score in problem-solving (4.2742). These strategies represent “the problem-solving processes, the knowledge retrieval processes, and the accompanying verification (monitoring) processes” (Vandergrift, 2006, P.462). Learners use what they know to help interpret the text, use the clue in the text to guess the meaning of unknown words, and monitor the accuracy of their inferences with the process of interpretation. The subjects score high in this factor because of their training received in their English class. In the interview, the students told the researcher they had done some cet-4 exercises in the class and the teachers explained the strategies needed to do the exercises. Most of these strategies belong to the category of problem-solving. Therefore, many subjects are familiar with these strategies and can apply the knowledge into listening comprehension tasks. It also explains why the high-score group and the low-score group show no significant difference in this category.

The mean of directed attention ranks the second and the high-score group and the low-score group show big difference (0.4356). The difference has reached significant level. The students are clear about the importance of maintaining attention because the incoming information disappears in a flash in listening comprehension. The result of the interview reveals that the students who scored low in the listening test are very anxious because of too many difficulties in completing the task. Thus, they are more likely to lose concentration and give up.

The score the subjects got in the factor of plan-evaluation is not high (3.4739) and there is a significant difference between the high-score group and the low-score group (0.4364). The students who were interviewed told the researcher that their teachers placed less emphasis in the strategies of plan-evaluation. Actually, these strategies are difficult to explain in instruction. Many of the strategies are related to monitoring in the listening process and the skills involved are difficult to manage. Consequently, the students are not good at this aspect. According to many researches, good listeners can regulate their learning process. They have goals in mind before approaching the listening task, making adjustments when problems appear and evaluate the effectiveness of their listening strategies after finishing the task. But poor listeners do not show purposeful nature of the comprehension process. They do not have plans so they cannot adopt effective strategies according to different listening tasks. They seldom check their satisfaction with the ongoing interpretation. They do not reflect on their listening efforts afterwards. (Lin, 2002).

The mean of mental translation is also relatively low (3.2367) and the high-score group and the low-score group show no significant difference. This is a strategy learners should avoid in the listening process. If they always translate the information into their mother tongue, the speed of processing information will be very slow. Consequently, they will miss a lot of information and fail to fully understand the listening material. Apparently, these subjects still rely a lot on their mother-tongue, which should be overcome in their English learning.

The subjects scored lowest in personal knowledge (2.4879), with no significant difference between the high-score group and the low-score one. It is possibly because these subjects are not good at English listening, in which they do not have a lot of practice. Accordingly, they do not have enough confidence in second language listening and avoid the practice. When interviewed, these subjects said they spent more time on vocabulary and reading instead of listening, whether in class or out of class. Thus a vicious circle occurs because lack of successful experience in English leads to low self-efficacy and high level of anxiety in second language listening.

#### B. *The Relationship between Metacognitive Awareness and Listening Performance*

The Pearson correlation coefficient between metacognitive awareness and listening performance is listed in table 5.

TABLE 5:  
THE PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BETWEEN METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS AND LISTENING PERFORMANCE

	Pearson correlation coefficient	Two-tailed significance test
Metacognitive awareness	.280(**)	.001
Plan-evaluation	.331(**)	.000
Directed attention	.177(*)	.037
Person knowledge	.173(*)	.043
Mental translation	.044	.607
Problem-solving	.153	.073

\*\* the significance value: 0.01

\* the significance value: 0.05

According to table 5, there is a pattern of intercorrelations between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension but the correlation is weak (0.280). The result reveals that metacognitive awareness influences listening performance in an indirect way. It only plays a positive role in the organization and planning of listening performance. So it has to work together with other cognitive strategies to improve listening comprehension. Besides, the process of listening comprehension is so complex that it is affected by many other factors, such as age, gender, motivation and learning style. Metacognitive alone cannot determine the result of listening comprehension. In addition, these subjects didn't score high in this listening test because it was too difficult for many of them. Therefore, they are less likely to



benefit from metacognitive awareness.

Among all the metacognitive strategies, the intercorrelation between planning-evaluation strategies and listening comprehension is significantly high (0.3331). It proves that those students who use more planning, monitoring and evaluation strategies are more likely to perform better in second language listening.

*C. T-test of the Differences in Listening Performance Resulted from Metacognitive Awareness*

Table 6 shows t-test of the influence of metacognitive awareness on listening performance. The subjects are divided into two groups according to the mean of the responses on the survey (3.65),

TABLE 6:  
T-TEST OF THE DIFFERENCES IN LISTENING PERFORMANCE RESULTED FROM METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS

	The mean of metacognitive awareness	number	mean	Standard deviation	The difference between the means	T value	the significance value
Listening performance	≥3.65	70	11.90	3.773	1.69	2.811	.006
	<3.65	68	10.21	3.281			

Table 6 reveals that the students with different metacognitive level performed significantly differently in the English listening test. Those with high level of metacognitive awareness scored higher in the test. They can successfully regulate the process of L2 listening comprehension and they are more autonomous in language learning. Therefore, they can finish the listening task more effectively. In contrast, those with low level of metacognitive awareness scored lower in the English test because they lack the ability to regulate their cognitive activities. They cannot consciously monitor or evaluate their process of L2 listening.

*D. Summary*

This research has produced the following results:

1. These non-English majors do not show high level of metacognitive awareness. According to the means they reported in each category of metacognitive strategies from high to low, the order is problem-solving, directed attention, plan-evaluation, mental translation and person knowledge.
2. The high-score group and the low-score group show significant difference in metacognitive awareness. Among those five categories, the difference in planning-evaluation and directed attention is significant.
3. There is a weak correlation between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension. Those who report higher mean of plan-evaluation are more likely to have higher L2 listening ability.
4. There is a significant difference between the students with different metacognitive levels.

V. DISCUSSION

From this survey and test, the researcher draw the conclusion that these non-English majors lack metacognitive awareness in second language listening, especially self-efficacy. Teachers can help them improve their metacognitive aware in the following ways.

Firstly, MALQ can be used to determine the students' current level of metacognitive awareness and help them understand their problems from an objective perspective. It can also be used to make the students become more aware of their listening process and relative cognitive activities.

Secondly, the students' metacognitive knowledge should be enriched. The result of the research reveals that there is only weak correlation between metacognitive strategies and proficiency in L2 listening comprehension. Metacognitive knowledge can be effective only if it is applied into practice. So, in English teaching, teachers should help the students combine metacognitive knowledge with listening practice and introduce listening comprehension strategies according to different tasks. In this way, the students can apply metacognitive strategies into specific contexts and understand the functions of metacognition in the practice.

Thirdly, various ways can be tried to improve learners' monitoring abilities. Teachers can organize the discussion among students on metacognition. Discussion may focus on a certain topic, such as "how to practice second language listening after class", or "which listening tasks are helpful in improving listening abilities". It can also center around a certain listening task. Before doing the task, the students can discuss its specific objective, strategies that can be used, potential problems and ways to solve those problems. After they complete the task, they may discuss effectiveness of the strategies and the factors that contribute to success in finishing the listening task. In this way, the students can understand the functions of metacognition in a comprehensive way and identify the factors that may lead to success and failure in their listening practice. Thus, they can consciously use appropriate strategies in other listening tasks.

Fourthly, given the fact that non-English majors do not have many English classes, teacher should guide the students in spending more time after class in practicing English listening. Large amount of listening practice is a prerequisite for improving listening abilities. And only in listening practice can students fully understand the importance of metacognition. Teachers can ask the students to make appropriate plans in accordance with their own abilities. When choosing listening materials after class, the students should avoid those far beyond their abilities. In experiencing success repeatedly, the students can gradually gain confidence in English listening.

In summary, through training in metacognitive strategies, students can shoulder more responsibilities in the process of learning and learner autonomy can be promoted. When the students can control their learning effectively, they will become more interested in language learning. As a result, they are more willing to invest more time in autonomous learning in English listening after class. To help students become more autonomous and successful learners is the ultimate objective of language teaching.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This research investigated the metacognitive awareness of non-English majors in English listening and the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension. This study is limited both by the small size of the participants and the nature of the listening test. A study of this should be replicated with more different groups of learners. Future studies should also use listening materials which are more authentic and closer to the students' current listening level. Finally, how to give the students training in metacognitive strategies and shorten the distance between metacognitive knowledge and listening practice provides a large research area for further research.

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# Meaning Discrimination as a Function of Equivalent Relation and Part of Speech: The Case of *Hezaareh* English-Persian Dictionary

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**Abstract**—To facilitate the task of meaning discrimination on the part of the users, addressing strategies are assigned to translation equivalents in dictionaries. The rate of addressing strategies assigned to different words in a dictionary should not be either at random or in a consistent way. In this study it is believed that the addressing rate (AR) should be affected by such variables as equivalent relation (ER) and part of speech. This article statistically examines the practice of *Hezaareh* English-Persian dictionary in assigning addressing strategies to different items. The results indicate that there is no systematic relationship between AR and ERs. It is also revealed that items belonging to different parts of speech are not adequately addressed, either. The article proposes that to be communicatively successful the dictionary compilers of *Hezaareh* should allocate more AR to the items in which the ERs of semantic or poly divergence prevail. Besides, the role verbs play in comprehension related purposes and their polysemous nature make them good candidates for receiving higher ARs.

**Index Terms**—bilingual dictionary, meaning discrimination, equivalent relation, part of speech, addressing rate

## I. INTRODUCTION

Although one important task of bilingual lexicographers is to provide users with appropriate translation equivalents, preparing a list of equivalents is not sufficient. To maximize the functionality of a bilingual dictionary and to help users make optimum use of the equivalents offered, it is wise to devise some meaning discriminatory strategies to address the translation equivalents (Gouws and Prinsloo, 2005). According to Piotrowski (1994) any method of distinguishing the senses and strings of equivalents in meaning is known as “meaning discrimination”. The SW is said to be addressed when one or more methods are employed by the lexicographer to discriminate the meanings of the SW (Gouws, 2002). Depending on the number of meanings each SW has in the TL and the amount of addressing each meaning receives, the addressing rate (AR) of each item varies. While the importance of the implementation of methods and strategies as such for addressing the equivalents might not be debatable, a fundamental issue arises concerning the amount of addressing each word requires. The issue gains even more prominence in the light of the limitations on dictionary space.

The amount of addressing strategies is advised to be neither at random nor in a consistent way (Gouws, 2002); instead, it is wise to be regarded as a function of the lexicographic “perspective” and “purpose”. With regard to the perspective of the dictionary, a distinction should be drawn between active and receptive dictionaries. While an active dictionary is intended for encoding purposes and helping such linguistic activities as writing and speaking, a receptive dictionary is intended for decoding, for activities such as listening and reading. As for the purpose of the dictionary, another distinction can be made between general purpose and special purpose dictionaries. As the terms suggest, a general purpose dictionary is designed for the public and covers as wide a range as possible of the general vocabulary items of the SL, while a special purpose bilingual dictionary is designed to meet the special needs of a certain group of users. It provides the users with technical and scientific terms of the SL in a special field of study. Users, according to their needs, choose a dictionary with a specific perspective and purpose and expect the dictionary to be responsive to their needs. As a result, it is the type of dictionary and its intended users which determine which vocabulary items should be prioritized as far as addressing strategies are concerned.

A receptive general purpose bilingual dictionary which is compiled for non-native English speakers should facilitate comprehension related activities of the wide range of the users it aims at. For a dictionary as such to be successful at the important task of meaning discrimination, a number of questions should be answered in advance: What are the users'

lookup needs? How do the addressing strategies of the dictionary help the users with their comprehension? On what basis different ARs should be allocated to different entries? What are the most problem inducing vocabulary items as far as meaning discrimination on the part of the users is concerned?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Al-Kasimi (1983), suggests that bilingual dictionaries should provide meaning discriminations so as to enable a user to select the appropriate equivalent. He further maintains “unless the problem of meaning discrimination is solved systematically, the bilingual dictionary cannot be a dependable guide to the proper equivalents” (p.68). He believes that meaning discrimination depends on whether the dictionary is meant for comprehension or production, and whether it is intended for speakers of a SL or TL. According to him, on occasions when the SL has a concept for which the TL has more than one equivalent and also when the SL item is polysemous and for each sense there is more than one equivalent in the TL and each equivalent is in turn polysemous, meaning discrimination is necessary. Al-Kasimi is of the opinion that proper meaning discrimination can be achieved by using one of the following devices: punctuation, illustrative examples, indicating parts of speech, usage labels and context words or phrases.

Gouws (2002, p.197) stressing the fact that the distribution of data in dictionaries “has to be motivated on functional grounds and not on an attempt to provide an equal data presentation” for all entries, suggests that different types of “equivalent relations” have varying need for entries to support the translation equivalent. He also maintains that the relation of “congruence” holds few problems for the lexicographer, while “divergence” and “surrogate” demand a well-planned system of addressing. He believes that in the case of “lexical divergence”, it is not enough to make the user aware of the fact that the partial TL synonyms can substitute the source language words; the users must be also informed that the target equivalents cannot substitute one another in all occurrences of the SW. With regard to the “semantic divergence”, as he believes, lexicographers should not assume that the users know which translation equivalent to choose in a given situation; instead, they should employ meaning discrimination strategies to ensure an optimal retrieval of information on the part of the users. The same argumentation holds true for the cases of “poly divergence”. The strategies offered by Gouws are the use of illustrative examples along with glosses and labels and the use of synopsis articles “to allow a stronger encyclopedic approach in the treatment of culturally bound lexical items” (p.202).

Mafela (2004) evaluating the treatment of meaning discrimination in Venda bilingual dictionaries as unsatisfactory, asserts that lexicographers should enhance the possibilities for equivalent discrimination. He further suggests, additional information as such, enables dictionary users to interpret the meaning of utterances in context and adds to the communicative success of the bilingual dictionary. Mafela (2005) indicates that in case of entries each having more than one equivalent, the lack of meaning discrimination strategies impedes the user to choose the most appropriate equivalent.

According to Gouws and Prinsloo (2005) the comment on semantics in bilingual dictionaries should make provision for a treatment procedure that has all the polysemous senses of a lexical item in its scope. Gouws and Prinsloo further believe that “polysemy is a language specific feature which implies that for a polysemous word in the SL one will not necessarily find a TL translation equivalent with exactly the same polysemous senses.” (p.151) In such cases, according to them, lexicographers not only have to provide a translation equivalent for each of the polysemous senses of the item, but also have to make sure that a target user of a given dictionary can achieve a successful retrieval of information from the translation equivalent paradigm. This means that for all translation equivalents that are polysemous, each word should be accompanied by extra-linguistic information. This will enable users to discriminate the senses. According to them, “it is of extreme importance that the lexicographic treatment presented in a bilingual dictionary may not leave the translation equivalents isolated from their typical contexts and cotexts.” They add “where these supporting entries are not given as part of lexicographic treatment the users are at a loss in their attempts to retrieve information that can lead to a successful use of the target language form.” (p.153) Other scholars of the field such as Svens n (1993), Bullon (1995), Mavoungou (2001) and Mpofu (2001) have all stressed the importance of the incorporation of sense discriminatory strategies in the comment on semantics of bilingual dictionaries.

In spite of the importance given to the wise application of meaning discriminatory strategies in dictionaries in general, and bilingual ones in particular, and despite the widespread use of English-Persian dictionaries, no study could be found to bring the existing frequently used English-Persian dictionaries under closer examination with this regard. The present study, therefore, tries to assess whether *Hezaareh*, the most frequently used English-Persian dictionary, has a systematic treatment with this regard. The importance of ER, as mentioned above and elaborated more in section 3, is discussed in the literature by Gouws (2002) and Gouws and Prinsloo (2005). This study adds the parameter of part of speech as the second factor which must have a key role in allocating different amounts of addressing to entries and specifically addresses the following questions:

- (1) How does the AR in *Hezaareh* English-Persian dictionary correlate with the parameter of ER?
- (2) How does the AR in *Hezaareh* English-Persian dictionary correlate with the parameter of part of speech?
- (3) What are the implications of the study?

Before elaborating on the method section of the study, it seems necessary to discuss the notion of ER.

### III. EQUIVALENT RELATIONS IN BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

The translation equivalents entered in a bilingual dictionary are regarded as “the most salient data category” (Gouws 2002). A translation equivalent is a TL item, which can be used to substitute the SL item in a specific occurrence, depending on specific contextual and cotextual restrictions. According to Gouws, the relation between SL items and TL items is known as an equivalent relation (ER) which can be of three different types: congruence, divergence and surrogate equivalence. In fact, the distinction between full equivalence, partial equivalence and zero equivalence motivates the existence of the ERs.

#### A. Congruence

An ER of congruence, which is also known as “full equivalence” (Gouws and Prinsloo, 2005, p.154) is characterized by a one-to-one relation on lexical, pragmatic and semantic level. As a result, both SL and TL forms have exactly the same meaning and implication. For a lexicographer, this type of ER holds few problems since “it implies that the translation equivalent can substitute the lemma in all its uses” (Gouws 2002, p.196). However, the existence of congruence is limited to very rare cases. The entry for the lemma *ambulance* chosen from *Hezaareh* can be regarded as an example of congruence:

(1) **ambulance** ... آمبولانس  
(Haghshenas et al. 2003, p.40)

In this example the SW has one meaning in English for which only one translation equivalent is offered in Persian.

#### B. Divergence

Divergence is the most typical ER in bilingual dictionaries. It is characterized by a one to more than one relation between SL and TL forms. To put it in other words, in cases where more than one translation equivalent exists for a given lemma, the equivalent relation is that of divergence. Divergence might happen on lexical grounds, semantic grounds or both.

Lexical divergence prevails where a monosemous lemma has more than one translation equivalent and the translation equivalents are mostly partial synonyms in the TL. Most of the dictionaries use a comma to separate these equivalents. In *Hezaareh* the English lemma *patient* as a noun, which can be regarded as a case of lexical divergence, is provided with two translation equivalents which are separated by a comma:

(2) **patient** ... بیمار، مریض  
(Haghshenas et al. 2003, p.1207)

On the semantic level there is a one to one relation between the SL and the TL. It means that *بیمار/* and *مریض/* are synonymous. But on the lexical level there is a one to more than one relation, because for one SW two equivalents are proposed. As a result, there is a relation of divergence on the lexical level.

According to Gouws (2002, p.198), where lexical divergence prevails the lexicographer has to make sure whether the translation equivalents are full or partial synonyms. If they are full synonyms, which is very seldom the case, the lexicographic treatment can be similar to the case of congruence. But, more often than not the equivalents are synonymous only partially. In such cases, the user should not only be informed about the fact that these partial synonyms can substitute the source language word, but should also be cautioned that the TL equivalents cannot substitute one another in all contexts. Here meaning discrimination comes to the play. As a result, the lexicographer should make use of some sort of contextual clues to indicate the typical environment of the translation equivalents.

The second type of lexicographic divergence is semantic divergence. It happens where the SL lemma is a polysemous lexical item. Since cases of polysemy are language specific, and since the chances are minimal that a single TL item will have the same semantic load as the SL item, a translation equivalent needs to be introduced for each sense of the source language word. Dictionaries use different devices to mark the occurrence of semantic divergence. Some use a numbering system to differentiate between different sets of translation equivalents each representing one sense of the SL lemma in the TL, some others use semicolons as markers to separate translation equivalents representing different polysemous senses of the lemma.

Gouws (2002, p.199) believes that no lexicographer may assume that the users of the dictionary intuitively know which translation equivalent to choose from among a number of them offered in the bilingual dictionary. Consequently, lexicographers are compelled to utilize additional strategies to give rise to an optimal retrieval of information on the part of the user. The following is an example of a polysemous SW, which has two meanings in Persian and for each meaning only one translation equivalent is offered in *Hezaareh* dictionary – a case of semantic divergence:

(3) **news paper** ... 1. روزنامه 2. کاغذ  
روزنامه  
*a daily newspaper* (روزنامه (یومیه)

(Haghshenas et al. 2003, p.1102)

The word *newspaper* as a polysemous word is reported to have three different but related meanings according to LDCE3: 1. a set of large folded sheets of paper containing news, articles, pictures, advertisements etc printed and sold daily or weekly, 2. Sheets of paper from old newspapers, 3. A company that produces a newspaper. As evident, in *Hezaareh* dictionary two meanings are reported for the SW, each containing only one choice of translation equivalent.

Numbers one and two in Persian are the translation equivalents of one and two in English, and no Persian translation equivalent is offered for number three in English. In *Hezaareh* dictionary, one phrase is also given as an example for the first meaning of the SW.

It happens very often that both lexical and semantic divergence prevail in the translation equivalents offered for an SL item. To illuminate the point an example is given from *Hezaareh*:

- (4) **recognize** ...  
 1. شناختن، بجا آوردن، باز شناختن، تشخیص دادن 2. تایید  
 کردن، مورد تایید قرار دادن، تصدیق کردن، اذعان کردن، قبول داشتن  
 3. (رسمی) [دولت، رژیم] به رسمیت شناختن 4. تشخیص دادن، درک کردن،  
 وقوف یافتن بر، متوجه ... بودن، دریافتن 5. قدردانی کردن از، ارج  
 نهادن بر، گرامی داشتن

*I recognize him as a good teacher.* او را معلم خوبی می دانم. قبول دارم او معلم خوبی است.

(Haghshenas et al. 2003, p.1377)

Having a number of different but related meanings in English, *recognize* is regarded as a polysemous word. In Persian it has also five sets of translation equivalents. On the one hand, it has the requirements of being a case of semantic divergence and, on the other hand, each set of equivalents contains more than one translation equivalent. Such co-occurrence of lexical and semantic divergence gives rise to an ER of poly divergence which calls for a well-developed and consistently used system of contextual and cotextual guidance.

### C. Surrogate Equivalence

The existence of lexical gaps is very common in all languages. Where lexicographers are confronted with the lack of a TL lexical item which can be coordinated with a given SL item, a surrogate equivalent is created.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

To address the research questions, the researchers first chose the most frequently used general purpose, English-Persian dictionary as the dictionary for further investigations. Then, 500 lexical items were selected randomly from the First Range vocabulary items. The sampled items included nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. Afterward, AR for each category of ER and part of speech was calculated and considering the two parameters of the study, the effectiveness of such a treatment was discussed. Below is the detailed report of the procedure.

To choose the most frequently used general purpose English-Persian dictionary, the researchers asked 673 people about the English-Persian dictionary they used. As general purpose dictionaries were chosen for investigation, the researchers chose the participants from among those who are certain users of these dictionaries. That way, *Hezaareh* was chosen by 387 participants (i.e. more than 50% of the participants). Thus, it was decided that this dictionary be the object of this study.

Then, the researchers randomly selected 500 lexical items, all from among the first range vocabulary items. The frequency of occurrence of the first range lemmas implies that they are the core vocabulary used by native speakers in their oral and written production, and consequently the items with which non-native speakers who are exposed to that language in one way or another, are more likely to be faced. To ascertain which words are listed as the first range in English, the researchers made use of the advantage offered by LDOCE3 as to marking the 3,000 most frequent words in both spoken and written English. To decide about the number of the words in each group of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, the researchers used proportional random sampling and tried to find the proportion of each part of speech to the total of them in the dictionary under study. Finally, such approximate proportions were applied to the selected sample of 500 lexical items. This resulted in 255 nouns, 128 adjectives, 74 verbs, and finally 43 adverbs (see Appendices 2 to 5). Then, the researchers calculated the AR for each part of speech.

In order to investigate the effect of ER on AR, the ER for each word was determined; 78 words were found to have the ERs of either congruence or lexical divergence and 422 words had the ER of either semantic divergence or poly divergence (see Appendices 2 to 5). The reason why the four categories of ER elaborated above were reduced to two categories is that, as explained above, in the cases of lexical divergence the SW is monosemous and the only difference it has with the cases of congruence is that more than one translation equivalents are offered for the SW, but these equivalents are all synonymous. Taking the limitations imposed on print dictionaries into consideration, it is not logical to expect dictionaries to provide examples or any other kind of addressing strategies for all such synonymous alternatives. As a result, the cases of lexical divergence and congruence were included in one category. As for the second category of this study – semantic or poly divergence – it can be argued that since in the cases of semantic and poly divergence the SWs are polysemous, the need for implementing more addressing strategies and helping the users discriminate the different meanings appropriately, is more pressing.

## V. RESULTS

### A. The Effect of ER on AR

To investigate whether *Hezaareh* treated ERs systematically with regard to the amount of addressing they received, first the AR of each category of ER was calculated.

TABLE 1  
ERS AND THEIR AR

ER	N	AR (Mean)	SD
Congruence and Lexical divergence	78	0.48	0.52
Semantic divergence and Poly divergence	422	0.57	0.34
Total	500	0.55	----

As indicated in Table 1, the first column shows the ERs. In here, the ERs of congruence and lexical divergence which require less AR are included in one category, while semantic divergence and poly divergence are considered as the category requiring higher AR. The second and third columns represent the number of items and the AR of each category of ER, respectively. Finally, the last column shows the standard deviations. It is shown in Table 1 that the total ratio of the addressed meanings to all meanings is 0.55. This implies that almost half of the Persian meanings offered in *Hezaareh* are left unaddressed. However, the cases of semantic and poly divergence receive more addressing (0.57) in comparison with ERs of congruence and lexical divergence (0.48).

To find out whether the difference in the amount of addressing received by different ERs is significant, an independent T-Test was run. The results on the data, however, did not show any statistically significant differences between the two groups ( $t(89.43) = -1.46, p > .05$ ).

*B. The Effect of Part of Speech on AR*

At this stage of analyzing the data, attempts were made to find out if there was any relation between part of speech and AR. The AR for each category was calculated. Table 2 presents the categories of part of speech, the number of words in each category and the AR of each category.

TABLE 2  
CATEGORIES OF PART OF SPEECH AND THEIR AR

Part of speech	N	AR (Mean)	SD
Noun	255	0.57	0.35
Adjective	128	0.76	0.33
Verb	74	0.31	0.24
Adverb	43	0.26	0.39
Total	500	0.55	0.37

According to the table, adjectives received the highest AR (0.76). The second highest AR belongs to nouns (0.57), followed by verbs (0.31) and adverbs (0.26). The one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore if the relationship between the categories of part of speech and their ARs was meaningful. The test indicated that there was a significant difference between the amount of addressing different categories of part of speech received ( $F(3,496) = 38.73, p < .05$ ).

VI. DISCUSSION

The results of analyzing the data showed that there was no meaningful relationship between the type of ER and the amount of addressing each word received. This indicated that with regard to AR, *Hezaareh* does not distinguish between the items in which congruence or lexical divergence prevails, and the items which have the ER of either semantic or poly divergence. The question therefore is whether different ERs require different amounts of addressing. If yes, what is the rationale behind this difference? To address these questions and hence assess the performance of *Hezaareh*, it seems necessary to consider each ER from the perspective of the users.

As for the cases of congruence, as it was defined and exemplified earlier, there is only one translation equivalent for the SL item. Looking the matter from the users' perspective, one can conclude that the potential user will not face any difficulty choosing the appropriate equivalent, since there is only one equivalent available. Therefore, no pressing need is felt on the part of the user for a contextualized word.

The same explanation is partially true about the cases of lexical divergence, as in such cases there is only one sense for which a range of lexical items is offered; that is, there is only one set of translation equivalents in which some synonymous equivalents are offered. Here again, the user is faced with only one sense. The only thing she needs to do is to choose one of the items from among the synonymous equivalents offered. This does not seem to pose a serious problem to the user. Apparently, the users of *Hezaareh* dictionary are native Persian speakers who are masters of their own language. Therefore, when facing an English item which has only one sense, but more than one synonymous Persian translation equivalents, they can easily decide which one to choose. Besides, in many cases it might be possible to use some of the equivalents interchangeably. Therefore, here again the need for addressing is not so urgent.

One might claim that even in cases of congruence and lexical divergence examples and other methods of contextualizing and addressing are needed, because their function is not only to help users discriminate the senses of a word, but also they serve some other functions. For example, they might serve some grammatical functions indicating the morphological and syntactic behavior of the word and serve as models of correct usage (Toope, 1996). They might

also fulfill collocational functions, enabling the user to examine lexical collocations in a larger context (Yong and Peng, 2007). Therefore, if examples are reduced from entries with ERs other than semantic or poly divergence, other functions of examples will be hampered.

In providing a reply to the above argument, it seems necessary to stress the fact that discussing the importance of paying attention to more demanding ERs, does not necessarily mean reducing the amount of addressing strategies employed for other ERs. Especially in the case of *Hezaareh* dictionary, as around half of the senses are left unaddressed, it is not wise to reduce the existing examples or glosses from the entries. The implication the discussion might bear is that allocating meaning discriminatory strategies should be systematic and based on the users' needs analysis. It is obvious that in relation to words with more meanings, the users need more meaning discriminatory strategies. Besides, each dictionary is to serve a predetermined intended purpose. *Hezaareh* as a general purpose English-Persian dictionary is to serve decoding purposes; it is a dictionary for comprehension. Therefore, like any other decoding dictionary, the primary objective of the users who make reference to it is to find the translation equivalents of the SL items. The need for knowing about grammatical and morphological behavior of the word as well as its collocational behavior is felt mostly when the users are occupied with encoding purposes; that is, production related activities. That is why dictionaries are advised to implement exemplification policies in line with the nature of them and the look-up needs of their intended users (Xu, 2008). What adds to the overriding importance of establishing clear, conscious, and deliberate policies of exemplification and addressing is the fact that in print dictionaries such as *Hezaareh*, the problem of space is also a concern. Print dictionaries have limited space in comparison with software dictionaries, so they are advised to make the best use out the space available to them by implementing wise strategies (Yong and Peng, 2007).

Concerning the second research question, the results suggest that in *Hezaareh* there is a meaningful relationship between part of speech and the amount of addressing the word receives. In fact, *Hezaareh* tends to address nouns and adjectives more than verbs and adverbs. In decoding tasks, users often encounter comprehension related difficulties with a TL item. To implement a systematic strategy with regard to the addressing of items belonging to different categories of part of speech in a bilingual receptive dictionary, one should keep an eye on satisfying the decoding needs of the intended users.

It is believed that as the kernel of a sentence, a verb has an important role in comprehension (Xu, 2008). According to Béjoint (1981) the first choice of users for retrieval of information in dictionaries is always the verb. Although many users might not have a good command of function words, adverbs and adjectives, when it comes to decoding a statement in a foreign language they rarely look them up in a dictionary; instead, looking the verb up, they try to grasp the meaning of the whole statement (Xu, 2008). Their search for the meaning of adverbs and adjectives tends to be limited to the cases where such items have a pivotal role in understanding the whole utterance, or where the purpose of looking up is to find the meaning of a specific adverb or adjective. However, if a dictionary is particularly geared to satisfying the encoding needs of the users, the requirements would differ. In such a case, the user is obliged to know about the meaning of the item, as well as its syntactic, morphological, and collocational behavior.

Further, verbs are believed to have more senses than other categories of part of speech (Miller and Fellbaum, 1992; Brown, 1994; Källkvist, 1997; Xu, 2008; Elston-Güttler and Williams, 2008). According to Miller and Fellbaum (1992), in Collins English Dictionary verbs on the whole have an average of 2.11 senses while nouns have 1.74 senses. Along these lines, Brown (1994) confirmed the general tendency of verbs to be polysemous and their senses to be context dependent. Xu's sample also confirmed the same claim in the Big Five (Xu, 2008).

Having this in mind, one can conclude that verbs are the category deserving more attention as far as addressing is concerned. This is however not the case in *Hezaareh* dictionary. Likewise the case of ERs, the discussion in terms of the importance of giving priority to verbs in devising addressing strategies in bilingual dictionaries, by no means intends to underestimate the importance of addressing strategies for other categories of part of speech. The point is that to have a more systematic approach to the issue of meaning discrimination and to avoid the fallacious practice of consistent or random addressing, some items should be prioritized depending on the type, purpose and perspective of the dictionary.

To sum up, what certainly calls the systematicity of *Hezaareh* into question with regard to its addressing policy is that two important, decisive parameters which should influence the amount of addressing the lemmas receive are overlooked: ER and part of speech.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This article examined if in *Hezaareh* English-Persian dictionary the two variables of ER and part of speech play any role in the AR of words. It was found that the type of ER does not influence the AR. *Hezaareh* does not distinguish between the items in which congruence or lexical divergence prevails, and the words having the ER of either semantic or poly divergence. As for the effect of part of speech on the AR, the study revealed that in *Hezaareh* there is a meaningful relation between the variable of part of speech and the amount of addressing the word receives. In fact, *Hezaareh* tends to address nouns and adjectives more than verbs and adverbs.

Assessing the practice of *Hezaareh* in allocating addressing strategies to the words, the study suggests some urgent considerations. In short, words having the ER of either semantic or poly divergence, due to their nature and the users' look-up needs, deserve more AR. Besides, the role verbs play in comprehension related purposes and their polysemous



nature make them good candidates for receiving higher rates of addressing in a bilingual receptive dictionary. As a result, the two factors of ER and part of speech are advised to be taken into consideration and respected while assigning addressing strategies to items.

As a concluding remark, it should be added that dictionary making and compilation is, no doubt, a painstaking activity which requires great amount of expertise, skill, energy, time, and effort, and no dictionary assessment can deny the overall value of the dictionary under study, since each assessment is limited to only one aspect of the dictionary out of the thousands. The purpose of this study was therefore by no means to depreciate the value of the great job done by the lexicographers of *Hezaareh*. *Hezaareh* is the only English-Persian dictionary in which some signs of a systematic project are claimed to be observable (Emami, 2001). This study is conducted simply to give rise to a more objective assessment which according to Qaneefard (2003) is believed to be a major step toward improving the present state of English-Persian bilingual lexicography.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AR: addressing rate
- ER: equivalent relation
- LDOCE3: Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Third Edition
- OALD6: Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, Sixth Edition
- SL: source language
- SW: source word
- TL: target language
- TW: target word

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLED NOUNS AND THEIR ER

Equivalent relation	Sample items	Total
Congruence	afternoon, album, ambulance, ashtray, chemical, cigarette, golf, piano, pie	9
Lexical divergence	ability, agriculture, ally, alternative, anger, chat, classroom, district, dustbin, electricity, evaluation, excuse, fortnight, fragments, hobby, mirror, outcome, patient, pension, raffle, reputation, unemployment, valor, zone	24
Semantic divergence	alcohol, arch, newspaper	3
Poly divergence	accident, account, acid, act, address, adult, advantage, affair, age, agreement, aid, aim, air, alarm, alliance, allowance, amount, angle, anxiety, apology, appeal, appearance, application, approach, area, argument, arm, army, arrival, article, aspect, assault, assembly, asset, assignment, assumption, attitude, audience, baby, background, ball, barrel, beauty, bed, bill, book, boy, bridge, buyer, cabinet, calculation, call, campaign, cancer, candidate, cap, carriage, cartoon, cast, cause, ceiling, certificate, chair, chance, column, command, company, cross, determination, diet, dinner, division, draft, drive, drop, duty, ear, escape, fabric, fence, fire, force, form, foundation, game, gear, girl, goal, governor, grass, guidance, gulf, gun, handle, hearing, hero, holder, implication, infection, influence, intention, interest, interval, investment, island, item, jacket, journey, king, label, ladder, land, landlord, law, layer, leaf, lecture, library, link, log, lottery, lump, magazine, major, manner, margin, mate, measure, metal, migration, model, moment, motion, net, note, notion, nut, objective, odds, offence, opponent, option, order, outfit, pace, pack, panel, parent, passenger, peace, personnel, phenomenon, philosophy, pilot, pipe, plane, player, poetry, pound, presentation, president, prince, progress, proportion, prospect, provision, publicity, pudding, qualification, quantity, queen, range, reaction, reader, recession, recovery, regulation, religion, reservation, respect, resignation, reward, routine, sample, sand, scheme, shaft, show, sight, significance, sister, solution, space, spirit, staff, stone, stuff, subject, table, tail, tap, tea, test, toilet, track, transaction, trustee, union, unity, use, vacancy, version, view, virtue, wall, wave, woman, wood, yard	219

APPENDIX 3: SAMPLED ADJECTIVES AND THEIR ER

Equivalent relation	Sample items	Total
Congruence	alone	1
Lexical divergence	actual, additional, advanced, afraid, amazing, approximate, aware, collective, comprehensive, considerable, damn, detailed, early, equivalent, gray, international, joint, maximum, permanent, pleased, powerful, rural, tall, welcome	24
Semantic divergence	-----	---
Poly divergence	active, adult, aged, aggressive, apparent, automatic, available, awkward, basic, bitter, black, blank, blind, blue, brave, brief, broad, broken, busy, calm, civil, clear, clinical, cold, common, commercial, complete, complex, concerned, concrete, crucial, curious, dark, decent, direct, domestic, dry, dull, dumb, easy, economic, fair, false, fine, firm, formal, fresh, genuine, global, grand, green, handy, healthy, immediate, keen, level, liberal, live, lonely, loose, lower, mad, marked, material, mental, modern, neat, official, oppressive, outstanding, particular, pink, plain, poor, popular, positive, practical, private, pure, quick, radical, raw, recent, red, remote, rough, royal, set, silent, smooth, soft, sophisticated, steep, strange, substantial, thick, tight, total, tremendous, tricky, ultimate, underlying, wide	103

## APPENDIX 4: SAMPLED VERBS AND THEIR ER

Equivalent relation	Sampled items	Total
Congruence	-----	---
Lexical divergence	acquire, apologize, blame, predict, prevent, remark	6
Semantic divergence	-----	---
Poly divergence	accept, act, add, admit, advise, affect, alter, amend, anticipate, appeal, apply, appoint, appreciate, approach, argue, ask, attend, belong, breathe, build, bury, buy, capture, chase, connect, decorate, employ, exclude, free, glance, illustrate, impress, involve, justify, lick, locate, maintain, negotiate, obtain, pause, perceive, persuade, pray, prepare, presume, quote, realize, recall, reckon, recognize, repeat, represent, retain, reveal, satisfy, share, spend, suspect, swallow, sweep, tend, threaten, transfer, treat, undertake, visit, whisper, withdraw	68

## APPENDIX 5: SAMPLED ADVERBS AND THEIR ER

Equivalent relation	Sampled items	Total
Congruence	respectively	1
Lexical divergence	basically, considerably, early, eventually, merely, moreover, of course, presumably, rarely, totally, way, whereby	13
Semantic divergence	-----	---
Poly divergence	actually, almost, altogether, badly, briefly, certainly, commonly, directly, down, fairly, further, generally, honestly, incidentally, indeed, literally, naturally, normally, once, otherwise, particularly, perfectly, properly, reasonably, sharply, shortly, somehow, technically, yet	29

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# Incidental Focus on Form and Uptake in Different Proficiency Levels of Iranian Students

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**Abstract**—This study attempted to add on focus on form discussion by investigating the relationship between complexity of focus on form and uptake in two proficiency levels of Iranian students. Thus, two different level classrooms were observed and 20 hours of communicative interaction were audio-recorded and transcribed. Chi-square analysis suggested a strong relationship between complexity of focus on form and uptake in lower level students but not in higher level class. Complexity of focus on form did not have relationship with successful uptake in any of the classes. The results support the importance of negotiated interaction in L2 development of lower level students.

**Index Terms**—incidental focus on form, complexity, uptake, successful uptake, negotiated interaction

## I. INTRODUCTION

Meaning- and form-focused instructions are two broad significant approaches to language teaching pedagogy. The former approach is based on the assumptions that learners learn a foreign language when their attention is on communicating meaning rather than on language forms. This approach met with great success at that time and attracted attention of many researchers such as Krashen. It proved that second language learners who had studied in these classrooms were generally more successful communicators than their peers who participated in traditional form-focused classrooms. Form-focused instruction (FFI) according to Ellis (2001, p.1) refers to "any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form". He believed that this definition of FFI is an umbrella term which covers other definitions such as *focus on form*, *focus on forms* (Long, 1991 as cited in Ellis, 2001, p. 2), and *analytic teaching* (Stern, 1990 as cited in Ellis, 2001, p.2).

There are various classifications of FFI in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) area. One of them belongs to Ellis (2001, p. 14) who distinguished between three types of FFI (a) focus on forms (b) planned focus on form, and (c) incidental focus on form. Focus on forms is a kind of instruction in which learners are provided with pre-selected linguistic items either explicitly or implicitly. It treats students as language learners rather than language users and language is considered an "object" to be studied.

*Planned focus on form* involves the preselection of several linguistic forms and practicing them intensively. It deals with focused tasks which are specially designed to elicit the use of specific linguistic forms in the context of meaning-centered classrooms. Planned focus on form is similar to focus on forms in that it contains pre-selected linguistic items but their difference lies in their focus. In the former the main focus of instruction remains on conveying meaning while the latter aims to teach specific form of language.

*Incidental focus on form*, on the other hand, involves no preselection of target form and covers unfocused tasks which are designed to elicit general samples of language rather than concentrating on specific language items. It is claimed (Doughty & William as cited in Loewen 2005) that the impact of incidental and planned focus on form on learning might vary. That is, planned focus on form enable learners to pay attention to a specific language form intensively while incidental focus on form provides extensive coverage targeting different linguistic forms. The effectiveness of planned focus on form has been investigated by different researchers (Abdolmanafi, 2010; Jahangard, 2010) but only few studies investigated the beneficial effect of incidental focus on form because it is not possible to carry out a pre-test/post-test method to measure its effectiveness which is due to unpredictable nature of incidental focus on form.

According to Loewen (2007, p. 102) the effectiveness of incidental focus on form can be measured in different ways. One way is to consider uptake. A number of studies (Ohta and Long as cited in Egi, 2010) have argued against the beneficial effect of uptake for SLA on the grounds that uptake is an optional discourse move and cannot be an indication of interlanguage development. Despite such oppositions, the role of uptake in SLA has been supported by different perspectives and theories. For example, interactive perspective which claims that learning a language involves active participation of learners in social interaction. In this regard Long (as cited in Taddarth, 2010) proposed 'interactional hypothesis' based on it interaction and participation in conversation plays an important role in SLA since it "connects input, internal learner capacity and output in productive ways". In addition, negotiation during interaction is

claimed to be effective in directing the learners' attention to the mismatches between their interlanguage and target language forms. In fact, this hypothesis emphasized the important role of corrective feedback which learners receive during interaction and their own modified output in developing second language learning.

Uptake is a concept which has been defined in different ways. Lyster & Ranta (1997, p.49) defined uptake based on speech act theory. According to them uptake is "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspects of the student's initial utterance". This definition shows that they have studied uptake only in relation to reactive focus on form, i.e. after a learner produces an erroneous utterance. But Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001a) claimed that uptake can also occur in pre-emptive focus on form, i.e. after they received information from the teacher or other learners. In the following, different types of uptake are provided.

Example 1: uptake following reactive focus on form

S: Just grown up in Iran. Occupation.... university students. Interests and hobbies... I go...to... English... She... She is go ...

T: She IS go? (Reactive focus on form)

S: She goes (uptake)

The above example (example 1) represents the uptake defined by Lyster & Ranata (1997) because it follows immediately after the provision of feedback by the teacher.

Example 2: uptake following pre-emptive focus on form

S<sub>1</sub>: What's the meaning of politics? (Student-initiated focus on form)

T: who knows politics? Not in Persian please.

S<sub>2</sub>: About ...Uh...some....some...

S<sub>3</sub>: About government.

S<sub>2</sub>: About government of a country. They have some programs to do....for the election.

T: Uh....mhm. Talking about presidents, leader, the problem of government. All of these are politics.

S<sub>1</sub>: aha. (Uptake)

Example 2 represents the uptake defined by Ellis, et al (2001a). As it can be seen, the exchange move preceded by uptake contains an explanation provided by the teacher rather than corrective feedback.

Ellis, et al (2001a, p.295) categorized uptake into different kinds based on type of focus on form. For example, he distinguished three types of uptake in reactive focus on form:

1) *Acknowledge*: when the learner who initially produced erroneous utterance accepts the feedback provided by the teacher or other students by saying *yes*.

2) *Repair*: the learner who produced the erroneous utterance produces the target feature correctly after feedback

3) *Needs repair*: the learner who produced the erroneous utterance uses the target feature incorrectly.

And uptake in pre-emptive focus on form was divided into three types including:

1) *Recognize*: in which students acknowledge the information received by expressing *mm, oh, ahah*.

2) *Apply*: When the student attempts to use the information they received by giving an example or rephrasing.

3) *Needs-application*: when the students fail to demonstrate understanding the information e.g. the students say something that shows lack of understanding or repeat what the teacher says.

Ellis, et al (2001a), then distinguished between *successful* and *unsuccessful* uptake based on the above mentioned classifications. According to him successful uptake is a move in which a student correctly repaired an erroneous utterance or clearly demonstrated understanding of a linguistic item. Unsuccessful uptake refers to the move in which no attempt is made to repair the incorrect form or the student's attempt to repair fails or he fails to clearly demonstrate understanding of the target feature. Based on these definitions successful uptake refers to apply and repair types of uptakes.

One of the rare studies that investigated the effectiveness of incidental focus on form on second language learning was carried out by Loewen (2005). He used an individualized, student specific post-test to measure the effectiveness of incidental focus on form. His results showed that learners were able to recall the targeted linguistic information correctly 60% of the time one day after the focus on form episodes and 50% of the time two weeks after focus on form episodes. The findings of this study also showed that among the various characteristics of incidental focus on form, successful uptake was an important predictor of correct test scores.

Alcon Soler & Garcia Mayo (2008) examined the role of FonF in language learning of 12 Spanish students. Their data included audio-recording of seventeen sessions of teacher-led interaction in English as a compulsory course class, 204 diary entries reporting items noticed items, 204 post-test translations and 204 delayed post-test translations which were created based on what learners claimed to have noticed in their diaries. They found 459 FFEs in their data, i.e. there was one episode in every 0.6 minutes. These findings showed that out of 459 FFEs only 34.2% led to uptake. The frequency of uptake in this study, was higher in student-initiated (82.9%) than teacher-initiated FonF (8.9%). Amount of uptake also differed in reactive FonF depending on the initiator of feedback. These findings revealed that uptake was much higher in reactive student supplier (75.0%) than in reactive teacher supplier (8.9%). The researchers stated that another factor that seemed to have influence on the rate of uptake was complexity of interaction, although it was not considered in their study. Results of Pearson product-moment correlation showed a positive relationship between

noticing and uptake and a degree of relationship between uptake and immediate post-test. In contrast, the same statistical test shows no correlation between noticing and delayed post-test or uptake and delayed production. They concluded that incidental FonF plays a role in noticing and uptake which in turn are associated with short-term learning.

Gholami & Farrohkhi (2008) also studied the effectiveness of incidental focus on form in relation to uptake. They found 641 LREs in twenty hours on interactions, i.e. one episode every 1.9 minutes. The number of LREs in both level 4 and 5 were 334 and 307 respectively which demonstrate a slight difference between the two classes. Regarding the frequency of reactive/pre-emptive FonF the results showed the higher rate of pre-emptive FonF than reactive one and Chi-square analysis shows a significant difference in the frequency distribution of reactive and pre-emptive FonF. These results also revealed a low frequency of uptake in this study. They reported that learners reacted to LREs verbally only in 15.2 % of the cases. And because of this low frequency of uptake, they provided the concept of 'camouflaged' which referred, in their study, to non-verbal behavior of learner in response to LREs. Also, there wasn't significant difference in the amount of uptake in two classes. Regarding type of FonF and uptake the results showed that uptake following reactive episodes was much higher than Pre-emptive episodes. In fact, the findings of this study found no significant relationship between type of focus on form and uptake. The researchers concluded that incidental focus on form is frequently used in Iranian meaning-based EFL classes and their frequency and characteristics vary considerably. They claimed that the variation in the findings of this study in comparison with previous similar studies may be due to the role of instructional context.

Ghaffar Samar & Shayestefar (2009) carried out a quasi-experimental research in which they investigated the occurrence of reactive focus on form and uptake in two communicative classrooms. They also studied the communicative strategies which the students use during interaction to facilitate negotiation. Participants were selected from a public high school in Isfahan, Iran. Totally, 240 minutes of five week lessons were audio recorded. Participants were divided into two Experimental (EXG) and control groups (CG). The result of the study showed a total rate of one FFE every 1.54 minutes. The most frequent type of feedback in this study was metalinguistic (almost 30%) which constituted one-third of the total reactive focus on form. The second frequent type of feedback was recast (28%) followed by clarification request (23.08%), repetitions (7.40%) and elicitation (4.30%). Regarding the effect of reactive focus on form on learners' development of communicative strategies, the results of the study showed that EXG learners focused more on negotiations of both form and meaning. This rate was much lower for CG learners and chi-square analysis revealed a significant difference between CG and EXG in their use of negotiation strategies with higher rate in EXG. The most frequently used type of strategy in EXG and CG was request for clarification but it wasn't as frequent in CG as that of EXG and the difference between them was significant. Findings showed that whereas learners in EXG monitored and self-corrected their erroneous utterance, CG learners did not monitor their output that much. Request for clarification and language switch were used more frequently than other strategies in CG. Looking at the EXG results shows that most of recast moves led to no-uptake (42.5%) and only 38% of the total recast moves led to uptake. Metalinguistic and explicit corrections were the two most successful feedbacks which led to successful uptake (52% and 45% respectively) with metalinguistic feedback more successful at eliciting repair. Clarification request and elicitation were similar at promoting uptake, i.e. they both led to uptake 18% of repairs although elicitation leads to topic continuation 19 % of the time but the rate is 23 % for clarification requests. The researchers claimed that learners in EXG used communication strategies similar to those used by their teacher and it was proved in this study that learners in EXG were significantly different in their employment of negotiation devices when compared with learners in CG. The researchers of this study claimed that the results of this study emphasized the role of incidental focus on form specifically reactive FonF in drawing learners' attention to linguistic elements during meaning-focused interaction; however, these results should be interpreted cautiously.

Reviewing the above mentioned studies alludes that only few studies have tried to examine the relationship between characteristics of incidental focus on form and uptake. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the relationship between complexity of focus on form, uptake and successful uptake in two different proficiency levels of Iranian students.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Design of the Study

A qualitative research design was used for the purpose of this study. Two different level classes from Safir Institute, Sanandaj, Iran were selected and observed over almost three weeks. This Institute is considered a popular private language center all over Iran which has different branches in other cities of Iran. The reason for the selection of this Institute was that methods of language teaching are completely communicative and their primary goal is to teach learners to communicate in foreign language.

### B. Participants

Students of two different level classes from a private language institute were selected as participants of the study. The first class which was pre-intermediate level, consisted of 15 students and their age ranged between 17 to 24 and the second class was an intermediate level consisted of seven students and their age ranged between 16 to 23 years. Except for a few students all learners shared Kurdish as their first language. In order to reduce the effect of different teacher's

method of teaching on the results of the study one non-native female teacher participated in this study. She was 28 years old and had been teaching English at different private Institutes in Sanandaj for 4 years. She was an M.A student of English literature at Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj.

### C. Instruments/Materials

The two classes studied *Interchange book 2 and 3*. They were selected for these levels of proficiency by Safir's authorities. These books covered a variety of activities such as listening, speaking, writing, reading, conversation, discussion, word power, grammar focus and pronunciation practice. In addition, the Safir Institute provided learners with other activities in the classes. For example, watching movies and storytelling. They also studied *Oxford Word Skill* as their supplementary book. Since the aim of this study was to investigate the characteristics of incidental focus on form, the researcher did not select specific tasks or activities for the study. The materials of this study included natural communicative activities which happened in the classes.

### D. Procedure

Totally, 24 hours of interaction were observed and audio-recorded by one MP3 wireless recorder. Twelve hours of interaction for each class was collected during three weeks. To obtain necessary and related data, some focus on forms activities and focus on pre-targeted activities such as grammar focus, pronunciation practice and those part of instruction during which learners watched movie or listened to CDs were excluded from data. Finally, 10 hours of meaning-oriented activities per each class were considered the main data of this research. In order for the data to be as natural as possible the researcher did not explain about the research topic to the teacher or to the students. The main data consisted of 20 hours of audio-recorded interaction from two different proficiency levels of students.

### E. Data Analysis

For the purpose of analysis 20 hours of audio-recorded interaction were listened to carefully twice and all focus on form episodes (FFE) were identified after the second listening. FFE was defined by Ellis et al (2001a) as "the discourse from the point where the attention to linguistic form starts to the point where it ends". Subsequently, all FFEs were coded for the type of focus on form. Although the purpose of this study was to investigate the complexity of FFEs, the researcher of this study categorized all the FFEs as reactive/pre-emptive FFEs in order to be able to identify the episodes and the uptake moves more easily. Reactive focus on form refers to the corrective feedback provided by either the teacher or other learners. In pre-emptive FoF there is a shift from communicative activity to language forms which are perceived to be problematic even though no actual error occurs. Pre-emptive focus on form was also divided into student-initiated and teacher-initiated focus on form. In the next step, data was analyzed in details and were coded in terms of complexity. Based on the Ellis's (2001a) definition complexity is the length of exchanges, i.e. 'complex' focus on form refers to those which involve several exchanges and 'simple' focus on form refers to those involving a single exchange.

Subsequently, the audio-recorded data were analyzed to identify and transcribe uptake moves. The researcher of this study adapted Ellis's definition of uptake according to which it can occur following pre-emptive focus on form in addition to reactive one. Example 1 also shows the uptake move in a complex FFE. Those episodes in which learners knew the answer of questions, as well as those episodes in which learners did not have opportunity to produce uptake were not considered uptake move and were excluded from data analysis. Also, in reactive focus on form those episodes in which the student's errors did not receive feedback and those episodes which contained topic continuation and there was no opportunity for producing uptake were deleted in analysis. And the last step was to code for uptake types which was based on Ellis's classification.

## III. RESULTS

Results of this study are provided in terms of a) Total amount of FFEs including frequency and percentage of FFEs in both classes b) Total amount of FFEs in terms of complexity including frequency and percentage of complex episodes in both classes c) total amount of uptake in relation to complexity of FFEs including frequency and percentage of uptake in both classes and d) total amount of successful uptake in relation to complexity of FFEs involving frequency and percentage of successful uptake in pre-intermediate and intermediate classes.

### A. Total Amount of FFEs

Results of the study showed a total amount of 432 FFEs in the 20 hours of audio-recording data, with slightly more in the pre-intermediate (221, 51.15%) than the intermediate class (211, 48.84%). That is, the overall rate was one FFE, every 2.7 minutes. Table 1 displays amount of FFEs in total and in each class.

TABLE 1:  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF FFEs IN TOTAL AND BOTH CLASSES

Proficiency level	frequency	Percentage
Pre-intermediate	221	51.15%
intermediate	211	48.84%
<b>total</b>	<b>432</b>	

In a similar study, Ellis (2001a) identified a total of 448 FFEs in the 12 hours of communicative classrooms, an overall rate of one FFE every 1.6 minutes. Gholami & Farrokhi (2008) in their study also identified 641 Language Related Episodes (LRE) in the 20 hours of meaning-focused lessons. This means one LRE every 1.9 minutes. The overall rate of one FFE every 2.7 minutes happened in the present study is a much lower rate compared to the above mentioned studies which showed that focus on form did not happened frequently in the observed classes.

#### B. Total Amount of FFEs in Terms of Complexity

The identified FFEs were coded in terms of their complexity. The results of the frequency of complex FFEs in total and in each class are presented in Table 2. Out of 432 FFEs only 146 (33.79%) cases were coded as complex FFEs and most episodes (286, 66.20%) were simple FFEs.

TABLE 2  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF FFEs IN TERMS OF COMPLEXITY

Proficiency level	Frequency & percentage of complex FFEs	Frequency & percentage of simple FFEs	Total amount of FFEs
Pre-intermediate	74 (33.48%)	147 (66.51%)	221 (51.15%)
intermediate	72 (34.12%)	139 (65.87%)	211 (48.84%)
<b>total</b>	<b>146 (33.79%)</b>	<b>286 (66.20%)</b>	<b>432</b>

Table 2 shows that the proportion of complex FFEs in pre-intermediate and intermediate classes were almost similar, with slightly more in intermediate class (33.48% and 34.12% respectively). Also, the frequency of simple FFEs in pre-intermediate (66.51%) and intermediate classes (65.87%) were almost the same. Generally speaking, there was no significant difference between low and high proficiency level students regarding the frequency of complex and simple FFEs.

#### C. Complexity of FFEs and Uptake

Results of the frequency and percentage of uptake in both classes are presented in tables 3 and 4 respectively. Overall, there was a total of 432 FFEs in the 20 hours of communicative interactions in two classes (see Table 1). Uptake was possible in 321 (74.30%) of them.

##### a) Complexity of FFEs and uptake in pre-intermediate class

As table 3 displays, most of FFEs (both simple and complex FFEs) in low level class have led to uptake.

TABLE 3  
COMPLEXITY AND UPTAKE IN PRE-INTERMEDIATE LEVEL CLASS

		uptake	Total
<b>complexity</b>	Complex	Frequency	63
		Percentage	85.1%
		Std.Residual	1.0
	simple	Frequency	103
		Percentage	70.1%
		Std.Residual	-7
<b>Total</b>		Frequency	166
		percentage	75.1%
			221
			51.15%

Table 3 shows the amount of uptake following complex and simple FFEs in pre-intermediate class. As displayed in this table, out of 74 (33.48%) complex FFEs, 63(85.1%) led to uptake in this class. Simple FFEs promoted uptake in 103 (70.1%) of cases. Although most of simple FFEs led to uptake move, this rate is much lower compared to uptake following complex FFEs. That is, complex FFEs were more successful than simple FFEs in promoting uptake in pre-intermediate level class. Table 3 also shows the Std. Residuals value for both complex and simple FFEs. In complex FFEs Std.Residual is positive for uptake (1). That is to say, the frequency of uptake is high in complex FFEs for pre-intermediate level students. The opposite pattern can be seen for the simple FFEs where learners produced less uptake and Std. Residual is negative for uptake move(-.7). This shows that the rate of uptake following simple FFEs are below expectation.

##### b) Complexity of FFEs and uptake in intermediate level class

Table 4 indicates the results of uptake in the intermediate level class. The amount of uptake in both simple and complex FFEs is higher than no uptake move. That is, most of FFEs promoted uptake regardless of their complexity. However, the results show that the rate of uptake following complex FFEs is higher than simple focus on form episodes.



TABLE 4.  
COMPLEXITY OF FFEs AND UPTAKE IN INTERMEDIATE LEVEL CLASS

		uptake		Total
Complexity of FFEs	Complex FFEs	Frequency	57	72
		Percentage	79.2%	79.1%
		Std.Residuals	.6	
	Simple FFEs	Frequency	98	139
		Percentage	70.5%	70.5%
		Std.Residuals	-.4	
total	frequency	155	211	
	percentage	73.5%	48.84%	

Comparing these findings with the amount of uptake in low level class (See Table 3) also shows that uptake following complex episodes occurred more (85.1%) in low level class than high level class (79.2%). The table also shows that Std. Residuals (.6) is positive for complex FFEs and negative for simple episodes (-.4). However, despite the differences observed in the table, the result of chi-square shows that the above mentioned differences are not statistically significant,  $\chi^2 = 1.40$  (1df,  $P = .223 > .05$ ).

D. Complexity of FFEs and Successful Uptake

a) Complexity of FFEs and successful uptake in pre-intermediate level class

Table 5 displays the frequency and percentage of successful uptake in low level class. The total amount of successful uptake in this proficiency level is 100 (60.2%). This shows that most of the uptake moves occurring in this class, regardless of the complexity of FFEs, were successful and only 39.8% of them were considered unsuccessful uptake.

TABLE 5  
AMOUNT OF SUCCESSFUL UPTAKE IN PRE-INTERMEDIATE CLASS

			Type of uptake		Total
			successful	unsuccessful	
complexity	Complex	Frequency	38	25	63
		Percentage	60.3%	39.7%	
		Std.Residuals	.0	.0	
	simple	Frequency	62	41	103
		Percentage	60.2%	39.8%	
		Std.Residuals	.0	.0	
Total	Frequency	100	66	166	
	percentage	60.2%	39.8%		

With regard to the amount of successful uptake in relation to the complexity of FFEs, the results show that most of the complex FFEs (60.3%) led to successful uptake. Also, as displayed in Table 5 most of the uptake moves in simple FFEs (60.2%) were successful and only 39.8% of them were not successful. Therefore, it can be concluded that the percentage of successful uptake in complex and simple FFEs is almost the same (60.3% & 60.2% respectively) in pre-intermediate level students and no difference can be observed between complex and simple episodes regarding successful uptake. Results of Chi-square analysis indicated that there is not any significant relationship between the complexity of FFEs and successful uptake in pre-intermediate students,  $\chi^2 = .000$  (1df,  $P = 1 > .05$ ).

b) Complexity and successful uptake in intermediate level students

Table 6 displays the frequency, percentage and Std.Residual of successful uptake in intermediate level students. As this table shows the percentage of successful uptake following complex FFEs (50.9%) is lower than successful uptake following simple FFEs (58.2%).

TABLE 6:  
AMOUNT OF SUCCESSFUL UPTAKE IN INTERMEDIATE CLASS

			Type of uptake		Total
			successful	unsuccessful	
complexity	complex	Frequency	29	28	57
		Percentage	50.9%	49.1%	
		Std.Residual	-.5	.5	
	simple	Frequency	57	41	98
		Percentage	58.2%	41.8%	
		Std.Residual	.4	-.4	
Total	Frequency	86	69	155	
	percentage	55.5%	44.5%		

As this table shows, the Std.Residual in complex FFEs is negative for successful uptake (-.5) which means that the frequency of successful uptake following complex episodes is very low. On the other hand, the opposite pattern can be

seen for simple FFEs where the Std.Residual is positive for successful uptake (.4) and negative for unsuccessful uptake (-.4). Based on this table the frequency and percentage of successful and unsuccessful uptake following complex FFEs are rather close (50.9% & 49.1% respectively) and there is no difference between them and this resulted in the non-significant chi-square. The results of this test indicate that there is not any significant relationship between the complexity of FFEs and successful uptake in high proficient learners,  $\chi^2 = .50(1df, P = .47 > .05)$ .

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate any possible relationship between complexity of incidental focus on form and uptake in two different proficiency levels of Iranian students. Totally, 432 FFEs were identified in the 20 hours of communicative interaction. The proportion of FFEs in pre-intermediate and intermediate classes was 221 and 211 respectively. This proportion shows a slight difference between the two classes. The overall rate of FFEs was one every 2.7 minutes. In a similar study Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001a) identified 448 FFEs in 12 hours of interaction in an EFL context. There was FFEs at a rate of every 1.6 minutes. Also, Gholami & Farrokhi reported 641 Language Related Episodes (LREs) in the 20 hours of meaning-based classroom interaction, a rate of one LRE every 1.9 minute.

In the present study, the occurrence of incidental focus on form was not as frequent as the above mentioned studies. In addition, it shows an outstanding difference between the occurrence of incidental focus on form in this study and the similar previous studies. One reason for infrequent use of incidental focus on form, perhaps, is the highly communicative nature of these classes where attention to form is not recommended and the main aim of the classes is to develop communicative abilities of learners. In that case, it seems necessary for language school authorities to offer more training courses to their teachers and introduce the instructional value of focus on form discussion.

According to Mackey et al (as cited in Farrokhi, F., & Rahimpour, M., 2011, p. 152) teachers' experience is another important factor which has influence on teachers' use of focus on form in their classrooms. Results of their study indicated that experienced teachers used more incidental focus on form than inexperienced teachers.

The findings of this study revealed that the overall amount of uptake was high in this study. This rate indicates that learners of both classes produced uptake in 74.5% of the cases. The proportion of uptake in pre-intermediate and intermediate level students was 75.1% and 73.5% respectively. This means that there was no difference between the two classes regarding overall number of uptake. This may be due to the fact that the teacher of this study used the same techniques of focus on form in both classes and she did not pay attention to the learners' ability to notice the feedbacks during reactive FFEs or understand the information provided to them during pre-emptive FFEs.

The first research question in this study was to investigate any possible relationship between one feature of incidental focus on form (complexity) and uptake in low level students. Out of 221 FFEs in pre-intermediate class, 33.4% FFEs were coded as complex and 66.5% were considered simple. In this regard, these findings are in line with Ellis's (2001a, p.303) study in which there were 80 complex FFEs out of 429 episodes. With regard to the amount of uptake following complex FFEs, Table 3 shows that, as was expected, complex episodes led to higher amount of uptake than simple episodes in lower proficiency level. Although, the percentage of complex FFEs was lower in pre-intermediate level class, most of them 85.1% were successful in promoting uptake in students of this level of proficiency. The results of chi-square analysis indicated a significant relationship between complexity of focus on form and uptake in lower level students. These findings are completely in line with previous studies such as Ellis (2001a) and Alcon-Soler (2009). Ellis (2001a) in his study found that one of the characteristics of incidental focus on form which affected the production of uptake was the complexity of focus on form. Alcon-Soler (2009) also gained similar results regarding the influence of certain features of incidental focus on form on learners' uptake. She found that the type of feedback and complexity of negotiation were two characteristics of incidental focus on form which were effective at promoting uptake. Results on Pearson product-moment correlation indicated a positive relationship between type of feedback and complexity. The reason for the influence of complex FFEs on learner uptake perhaps is the role of negotiation in L2 development.

The value of negotiation and its effect on the development of interlanguage has been supported by different researchers such as Nassaji (2007). He examined the potential role of negotiation in an ESL classroom. His findings revealed that feedback that involved extended negotiation resulted in more successful repair of the errors by the learners and their peers during interaction than feedback with limited negotiation. In addition, feedback with negotiation resulted in more correction of the errors on the final error correction test by the same student who made the original errors than feedback with no negotiation.

The second research question addressed the extent to which uptake was successful in this proficiency level students. The overall rate of successful uptake, regardless of complexity of FFEs, was high 60.2% in lower level students which shows that most of uptake moves were successful. However, the rate of successful uptake following complex and simple episodes was almost the same (60.3% and 60.2% respectively). The results of chi-square test indicated any significant relationship between complexity of FFEs and successful uptake in this level of proficiency.

Although, the results of this study on the difference between uptake following complex and simple focus on form was in line with previous similar study such as Ellis (2001a) and Loewen (2004) but these findings are in contrast with the above mentioned studies regarding successfulness of uptake moves. Ellis (2001a) found that 89.7% of uptake moves following complex episodes were successful while 69.9% of simple FFEs led to successful uptake. Also Loewen

reported that complex FFEs were twice more likely to contain successful uptake than were simple FFEs. These differences may be justifiable on the grounds of learning context. Ellis and Loewen's studies were carried out in ESL context where learners study English as their second language; therefore, they are more proficient than EFL students. The equal percentage of successful uptake following complex and simple FFEs in low level class shows that although complexity of episode is one of the features of incidental focus on form which leads to high amount of uptake but successfulness of uptake does not depend on this characteristic of focus on form. Detailed analysis of transcribed data revealed that explicitness of feedback or information provided to students seems to be more important in successfulness of uptake in low proficiency level students. This finding is supported by Nassaji (2010) who investigated the role of learners' proficiency level students in the effectiveness of incidental focus on form. His findings revealed that learners benefited differently from focus on form depending on their level of proficiency so that as learners' proficiency level increased the effectiveness of incidental focus on form also increased. The third research question dealt with the relationship between the complexity of FFEs and uptake in students with higher proficiency level. The researcher of the study tried to find out whether the proficiency level of the students had any effect on the relationship between this feature of focus on form and uptake. The findings of this research question showed that as with the first research question, the frequency and percentage of uptake following complex FFEs were higher 57, 79.2% than uptake following simple episodes 98, 70.5%. This shows that in complex episodes, the percentage of uptake increased from 70.5% to 79.2%. However, the results of chi-square analysis revealed that the above mentioned differences are not statistically significant. That is to say, higher proficiency level students of this study benefited almost similarly from simple and complex focus on form episodes.

These findings show that higher proficiency level students did not need longer interaction to notice the feedback or information provided by teacher or other students to produce output. Although, Nassaji (2010) measured the effectiveness of incidental focus on form by individualized post-test and based on the ability of learners to notice the teacher's feedback or information but uptake is also another way of measuring incidental focus on form which is claimed by different researchers (Ellis 2001; Mackey 2006) to be an indicative of noticing. In this regard, the findings of this part of study support Nassaji's (2010) results which revealed that there was strong relationship between proficiency level and effectiveness of focus on form.

Finally, the last research question addressed the rate of successful uptake and its relationship with complexity of FFEs in higher proficiency students. The findings of this question showed that the rate of successful uptake was higher in simple FFEs than in complex episodes. Based on the results of the previous research question which showed no significant relationship between complexity and uptake in intermediate level students, it is not surprising to find any relationship between complexity and successful uptake at this level of proficiency. This shows that long, complex interactions with extra effort to draw the learners' attention to their erroneous utterances were completely unnecessary for higher proficiency level students of this study. It seems that this feature of incidental focus on form is more useful for low level students because they are not capable of noticing their errors and it seems necessary for teachers to draw the attention of their lower proficient students through using more focus on form techniques.

Results of the present study revealed that incidental focus on form does not occur frequently in Iranian context. The reason for this infrequent use of incidental focus on form may be the teachers' unfamiliarity with focus on form discussion. During the short interview conducted by the researcher of this study with the teacher, it was found that focus on form means grammar teaching or feedback to this teacher. Therefore, it seemed that teachers' belief about focus on form plays an important role in using it.

Considering the important role of incidental focus on form and its different characteristics in drawing learners' attention to linguistic forms and its potential for producing output specifically in lower level students, the most important implication of this study is for authorities of private foreign language institutes to offer more training courses to their teachers. It is hoped that EFL teachers' familiarity with the value of incidental focus on form and its different features encourage them to apply it more effectively in their classrooms based on the learners' proficiency level.

#### *Limitation, delimitation and suggestion for further research*

Delimitation of this study relates to the selection of students' proficiency level. Intermediate was the highest level of this institute, so the researcher of the present study selected this level as the higher level group. In addition since elementary level classes had different teachers they were not selected as the other group; therefore pre-intermediate level was selected as the lower level class. Limitation of the study is the small number of students.

Findings of this study supported the results of the previous studies and revealed that complexity of FFEs is an important factor in promoting uptake. However, this result was obtained only for pre-intermediate students but not for intermediate class. That is, there was no difference between complexity of FFEs and uptake in the intermediate level class although the rate of uptake following complex episodes was higher than uptake following simple ones. However, because of the limited number of students specifically in intermediate level class it is suggested that future studies remove this limitation to be able to generalize the results of the study. Based on the "information processing" theory proposed by VanPatten (2002) beginner language learners have limited processing capacity and this can influence their ability to notice their errors or the information provided by others in the classroom. Therefore, it seems necessary to investigate the role of more advanced proficiency level in promoting uptake.

The findings of this study also suggest the investigation of the effectiveness of other characteristics of focus on form in producing uptake in learners with different proficiency levels. More investigation will be necessary to examine the possible role of learners' factors such as age and gender and etc. in producing uptake and successful uptake. And finally, it is important to find any relationship between uptake and L2 learning in future researches.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The present study tried to add to the previous descriptive studies on the role of incidental focus on form in L2 development. These studies measured the effectiveness of incidental focus on form based on the rate of uptake. Some researchers cast doubt on the use of learners' uptake as a yardstick for learning a language on the grounds that uptake is an optional discourse move and cannot be considered an indication of long term learning.

However, some theoretical perspectives such as Swain's Output hypothesis (as cited in Egi, 2010) advocated the beneficial effect of uptake and output on SLA. Most of the previous studies investigated the relationship between reactive/pre-emptive focus on form and only few of them considered the role of characteristics of focus on form in promoting uptake. The results of the frequency and percentage of FFEs showed that incidental focus on form does not happen frequently in Iranian English classrooms.

Other findings of this study are related to the difference between complex and simple FFEs and producing uptake in pre-intermediate level class. The results of this research question are in line with similar studies; that is, the frequency and percentage of uptake following complex FFEs was higher than this rate in simple episodes. Findings of chi-square analysis indicated a significant relationship between this characteristic of incidental focus on form and uptake in lower proficiency level students. Similar results obtained from higher level class revealed that the rate of uptake following complex FFEs was slightly higher than this rate following simple episodes. However, this difference is not statistically significant and null hypothesis is supported for the third research question.

This finding supported the importance of negotiated interaction in L2 development of low proficiency level students. In this regard Long (1996 as cited in Taddarth, 2010) suggested the 'interaction hypothesis' in which he claimed that "negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutors, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention and output in productive ways". Based on the findings of this study one can conclude that negotiated interaction is useful for lower students in terms of producing uptake.

It seemed that lower proficient students benefited more from long, complex interaction than higher proficient class in terms of producing uptake because they are not able enough to notice their erroneous utterances at first turns of interactions. Results related to the rate of successful uptake in pre-intermediate class indicated that the overall rate of successful uptake was higher than unsuccessful uptake moves. However, the rate of successful uptake following complex and simple FFEs was almost the same. It was concluded that there is no significant relationship between complexity of FFEs and successful uptake in lower proficient students. This finding revealed that although complexity of incidental focus on form is effective in promoting uptake in lower level students it did not guarantee the success of uptake. It seemed that success of uptake depends more on the other characteristics of focus on form than its complexity.

Results of successful uptake in intermediate class also revealed that the overall rate of successful uptake was higher than unsuccessful uptake moves, regardless of the complexity of episodes. However, the frequency and percentage of successful uptake indicated that uptake moves were more successful when occurred following simple episodes in this class. Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that long interaction is effective in drawing less proficient students' attention to their errors and in pushing them to produce output.

This conclusion is supported by Schmidt's (1990; 2010) 'noticing hypothesis' which claims that in order for learning to take place, learners should notice to linguistic forms in input. This seems to be more significant for lower proficient learners who are not aware of the gaps between their knowledge and the correct target language forms. Therefore, it is necessary to try to draw their attention to linguistic forms during interaction; and this aim can be achieved by incidental focus on form.

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# Cultural Functions in the Translation of Metaphor

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**Abstract**—Metaphor has been studied for over two thousand years. Modern science has broadened the field of metaphorical study. This thesis attempts to probe into the translation of metaphor from a cultural perspective by analyzing and identifying its cultural connotations so that we could possibly seek for appropriate translation strategies.

**Index Terms**—cultural function, metaphor, translation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Translating is a complex and fascinating task. I. A. Richards (1953) once claimed that translating is probably the most complex type of event in the history of the cosmos. This is because, as a cross-cultural communication event, it involves not only two languages but also two cultures. Although on the surface it seems to be interlingual transformation, it is actually conveyance across cultures. This common understanding has already been reached in the translation circle, for people's attentions have been shifted from emphasis on linguistic transfer towards more emphasis on cultural transfer. Metaphor has been studied for over two thousand years. However, traditionally it was confined to rhetoric and regarded as a kind of linguistic decoration. Modern science has broadened the field of metaphorical study. Lakoff's study from the angle of cognition has opened up a new world for the study of metaphor. Under the influence of culture, the translation of metaphors becomes the most important particular problem (Newmark, 2001).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical study of metaphor, running a long course from ancient Greek age to the present, may be divided into the following three periods on the whole:

- 1) the period of rhetorical study of metaphor, from Aristotle to Richards, or from 300 BC to the 1930s, treating metaphor merely as a rhetorical phenomenon in most cases;
- 2) the period of semantic study of the metaphor, from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the 1970s making semantic study of metaphor from different angles like linguistics, logic and philosophy;
- 3) the period of interdisciplinary study of metaphor, from the 1970s to this day, doing multilevel and multi-dimensional research into metaphor from angles of cognitive psychology, philosophy, pragmatics, semiotics and hermeneutics.

Seen from the above, the theoretical study of metaphor has been constantly developing and deepening, especially in the 20th century.

As early as the fourth century BC, the ancient Greek philosopher Plato was adept at applying metaphor; however he just regarded metaphor as "ostentatious ornament". His pupil Aristotle was first to study metaphor seriously. Aristotle devoted a lot of space to metaphor in his *Poetics and his Rhetoric*. He thought, "The greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor", and "Everyone uses metaphor in conversation". His definition of metaphor was a broad one-giving the thing a name that belongs to something else. As to the nature of metaphor, he pointed out that being good at creating metaphor was being good at making comparison between seemingly unlike things to find out resemblance. His view influenced the following two thousand years and more.

In the 1930s, the coming out of Richards' *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* ended the domination of Aristotle's theory of metaphor. Richards broke through the confinement of traditional rhetoric to lexical level by treating metaphor as a semantic phenomenon and studying it at sentence level, and first advanced the concepts of "tenor" and "vehicle" and the view of interaction. Richards' expositions proclaimed the beginning of semantic study of metaphor.

As Searle said, Aristotle's view of comparison and Richards' view of interaction were the two major schools of metaphor theory before the 1970s.

The French semiotician Paul Ricoeur, in his *The Rule of Metaphor* which was published in 1975, applied semiotic and semantic theory to push forward the study of metaphor from lexical level to sentence level and to discourse level.

The philosopher John R. Searle, in his monography *Expression and Meaning*, studied metaphor from the angle of speech act theory. He thought metaphor was not merely a lexical or syntactic phenomenon, but also a discourse phenomenon, and the metaphorical meaning should be sought in broad linguistic environment.

Experts in pragmatics believed metaphor, seen from its nature, partly belonged to pragmatics.

In the 1980s, systematic functional linguistics joined the study of metaphor. M. A. K. Halliday, in his *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, proposed the new concept of grammatical metaphor, which widened the field of metaphor.

The most outstanding characteristic of the modern study of metaphor is breaking through the restriction of rhetoric

and making interdisciplinary research on metaphor, it is generally acknowledged that metaphor is not merely a rhetorical device, what is more important, it is a universal mode of thought and cognitive means. In 1980, G Lakoff and M. Johnson, in their joint work *Metaphor We Live By*, raised the significance of metaphor to a new height. They advanced a new opinion—metaphorical concept system, according to which metaphorical concepts of human were systematic, thereby people could understand an experience in terms of another. In the late 1980s, E. F. Kittay's *Metaphor: Its Cognitive Force and Linguistic Structure* pointed out that a lot of human action were constructed on the basis of metaphorical concepts, which meant metaphor had cognitive significance—in fact, it was metaphor that provided possibility for cognitive activities to transform into language; and not only in language, but also in dance, painting, music, movie and other artistic forms existed metaphor. Then in the nineties, B. Indurkha published his *Metaphor and Cognition*, with the subtitle *An Interactionist Approach*, in which he supplemented and developed the Interaction Theory.

In recent years, more and more western linguists are fitting metaphor into study of thought and cognition, and numerous monographs on metaphor and thought or on metaphor and cognition have come out one after another. Metaphor now has been the matter of common interest not merely to rhetoricians but also to psychologists, philosophers, semioticians, etc.

The enthusiasm of studying metaphor reached the climax in the late 1970s, particularly in the United States. No wonder M. Johnson and other people called it in jest a metaphormania.

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, this metaphormania spread to Chinese linguistic field, which were lagging far behind the western academic circle in the interdisciplinary study of metaphor. Many Chinese scholars have paid close attention to metaphor and articles on metaphor have appeared in publications in succession.

Shu Dingfang, a young scholar, has distinguished himself by his papers on metaphor, which respectively explore the nature and semantic features of metaphor, analyze the cognitive, psychological and linguistic causes of the product of metaphor, and introduce comprehensively the objective, methods and tasks of modern metaphorical research. Other researchers such as Zhao Yanfang, Hu Zhuanglin and Lin Shuwu, etc, also make their own contribution to modern metaphorical study in China. But there is still a long way for Chinese scholars to catch up with their western companions in the study of metaphor.

### III. PURPOSE AND METHODS

This thesis discusses metaphor, a commonly used rhetorical device in both English and Chinese, and its translation by exploring the definition, classification, intercultural comparison and translation methods.

The study of metaphor has revealed that metaphor is not merely a linguistic phenomenon, but basically a cognitive phenomenon, a thinking mode; its production is thought to be the result of the limitations of human thinking ability at primeval stage and later the result of people's active use for better communicative effect or for the sake of cognition. While language is the carrier of culture, metaphor reflects culture.

According to the purpose of translation, translators may flexibly apply the basic approaches, considering the specific context and paying attention to the pitfalls in translation.

The research methods involved in writing this thesis are mainly: analysis, classification, exemplification, comparison, contrast, etc.

### IV. ON METAPHOR

#### A. Definition of Metaphor

Metaphor was defined earliest by Aristotle as "Metaphor is the application to one thing of a name to belonging to another thing." Metaphor, or the means by which one thing is described in terms of something else, has been described as a central tool of our cognitive apparatus. It is central to our understanding of how language, thought and discourse are structured.

#### B. Classification of Metaphor

Lakoff divided metaphors into three types: orientational metaphors(方位隐喻), ontological metaphors (实体隐喻) and structural metaphor(结构隐喻).

Oriental metaphors were that concrete orientation concepts such as up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow and central-peripheral, were metaphorically based to express abstract concepts as feeling, mood, state of health, information quantity, social status and values.

e.g. Health and life are up. Sickness and death are down.

- (1) He's in top shape. (2) He feels ill.  
(3) 小姑娘的身体一天天好起来。(4) 他终于病倒了。

Oriental concepts are widely applied to objects with orientation; this is the main character of orientational metaphors.

e.g. (1) Do you follow my point. (2) 法律面前人人平等。

Ontological metaphors were that to understand and experience concepts abstract, ambiguous and not easy to explain

through concrete, visible and obvious substance.

e.g. The mind is a machine

- 1) My mind just isn't operating today.
- 2) 开动脑筋，丢掉包袱，轻装上阵。

In container metaphors which were part of ontological metaphors, all things could be considered containers, having edge, inside and outside.

e.g. States are containers

- (1) He is in love.
- (2) 他陷入沉思。

Structural metaphors are cases where one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another.

e.g. Time is money

- (1) I spend much time in reading. 花时间
- (2) You're wasting my precious time. 浪费宝贵的时间

Structural metaphors have a strong cultural and emerge naturally in structures. Not only are they grounded in our physical and cultural experience; they also influence our experience and our actions.

### C. *Functions of Metaphor*

Metaphor plays a great role in the field of rhetoric, language and cognition.

In the field of rhetoric, the apply of metaphor makes the expression more concise, vivid, enlightening, euphemistic and so on.

Linguistic metaphor is the reflection of conceptual metaphor in language. That is to say, we metaphorize one category into another at first, then there is the phenomenon of metaphorizing one word into another in language. For instance, "high" originally represents a spatial concept opposite to "low" or protruding over a level; when it is metaphorized into speed domain, we have the concept "high speed", if it metaphorized into scientific and technological domain, we have the concept "high technology".

When people cognate and describe things formerly unknown, they often depend upon concepts and expressions know to increase their knowledge and learning about things unfamiliar, and metaphor is the core of the process of giving the rein to imagination and association and linking unusually two things that seem to have no relation with each other, from simple to complicate, from abstract to concrete, from familiar to strange and from one thing to another.

## V. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

What is language? What is culture? What is the relationship between culture and language? These fundamental questions are the ones to which a translator must give a priority before undertaking any translation task.

Today, it is generally accepted that language, as "a system of sounds, words, patterns, etc. used by humans to communicate thoughts and feelings" (Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary, 1997:878), or as "a semiotic system of expressing thought", is a crystallization of the total experience of a people's life and work. If language is taken into account in the broad background of human society, it is found that it is a product of culture and also a carrier of culture, for language reflects and records a nation's history, natural geographic conditions, economy, social system, religion, and folk customs and so on. It is no exaggeration to say that languages are integrated with cultures.

Compared with language, culture has a much broader meaning. It reflects the total pattern of beliefs, customs, institutions, objects, and techniques that characterize the life of a human community. And it is an integrated system of learned behavior patterns which are characteristic of the members of a society and which are not the result of biological inheritance. We can understand culture from the following aspects: First, culture is a social inheritance that was created through long-time hard work. Second, culture consists of not only non-material things such as beliefs, value concepts, custom knowledge, as well as material things. Third, culture is the guide of people's action and provides methods for us to solve the problems. Fourth, culture is not innate, it is learned. Lastly, different cultures can be distinguished by their core value concepts.

Language and culture are twin sisters. Language is a part of culture and plays a very important role in it. Some social scientists consider it as the keystone of culture. Without language, they maintain, culture would not be possible. On the other hand, language was 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. (Deng Yanchang, 1991) Language and culture are, of course, inextricably linked, so that learning language means learning culture and vice versa. Every society has its own culture. The Chinese culture, which has been influenced by Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism for nearly three thousand years, is obviously different from the European culture, which consists of Greek myth and Christianity. For example, in Chinese, "孔雀" is a symbol of auspiciousness, while in English "peacock" is a derogatory term which means "proud", "flaunt", "be puffed up" and so on. The phrase "as proud as a peacock" means "像孔雀那样骄傲。" So it is hard to use language correctly without understanding its relevant culture.



## VI. INTERCULTURAL COMPARISON OF METAPHORS

### A. *The Generality of Metaphorical Concepts in Chinese and English*

#### 1. Metaphorical concepts related to human body

Metaphorical concepts related to human body contain metaphors taking parts of human body as vehicles, those taking human body as referring planes those treating human body as containers and those of human feelings expressed by physiological reaction of human body to outside stimuli. In both Chinese and English, there are lots of such expressions as, a leg of table chair's back, which embody metaphorical concepts. The words like "leg" "back" indicate parts of human or animal body, when used to metaphorize other objects, they form vivid expressions easy to understand and accept. These names are established in language and these metaphorical concepts naturally become part of cultural generality. As human have the same senses and interlinked emotional reaction is basically the same among nations.

#### 2. Metaphorical concepts related to nature

All human live on the same earth and the environment is generally alike; therefore, when applying objects in nature to metaphorize abstract concepts or those difficult to describe directly, different nations may adopt the same vehicles.

e.g. In both Chinese and English, flowers are used to indicate beauties: 这闺女真是一朵花。/Oh, my love is a red, red rose.

### B. *The Differences of Metaphorical Concepts*

The Chinese and the British and American peoples, thanks to the influence of various factors such as living regions, climates, ecological environments, history, religion and color of skin, have different cultures, which directly result in the dissimilarities of people's thinking mode and value orientation, and thus become the major cause for the differences of metaphorical concepts.

#### 1. Influence of religion and mythology

In the west, as a result of the wide spread of Christianity, people universally have the sense of salvation and original sin, and they believe God is the only deity; while in china, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism coexist over a long period of time and there are hundreds of divinities, showing the harmonious and all-embracing nature of Chinese culture which influences the production of metaphorical concepts.

归西 V. Jupiter's arrow

#### 2. Influence of aesthetic standards and customs

The Chinese people and the British and American peoples belong to different races and have different cultures, thus the aesthetic standards and customs are dissimilar. The Chinese belong to the yellow race and consider black hair, black eyes and fair complexion to be beautiful; while the most of the British and Americans are white people who consider golden hair and blue eyes to be beautiful.

#### 3. Influence of literature on metaphorical concepts

Classics are an important source of metaphors in various national languages. Metaphors from classics appear repeatedly in language and some gradually merge into people's thought which become concepts and lose the original meanings.

e.g. 刘姥姥进大观园

Romeo and Juliet are the symbol of pure love, and their names may indicate respectively young men and women in love.

#### 4. Influence of region and history

Traditionally, agriculture had been dominating in china since the ancient time, feudalism existed over two thousand years. While in tradition the chief living means of the British was fishing and hunting, England was the first industrialized country, it was powerful at sea and once possessed broad colony. The marked regional and historical differences between the two nations have great influence on the thought, language and national character, which is expressed remarkably in the figures of speech and metaphorical concepts.

## VII. TRANSLATION OF METAPHOR

Scholars agree that metaphor has been sadly neglected in translation theory. This chapter is a brief discussion of metaphor translation in the light of its possible translation procedures and translation methods.

Generally speaking, the criteria of translation are "faithfulness" "smoothness" and "elegance". In order to achieve these three principles, the following methods should be applied to translate metaphors.

### A. *Literal Translation Approach*

Literal translation is generally regarded as the most important translation method in China. Professor Liu Chongde defines literal translation as follows: "In the process of translation, literal translation takes sentences as basic units and at the same time takes the whole passage into consideration; a translator who attaches great importance to literal translation does his or her best to reproduce the ideas and writing style of the original work, retaining as many rhetorical devices and sentence structures as possible."

Literal translation is thought by some scholars to be the most essential and the most commonly used method for

translating metaphors. As long as the original meaning is not impaired, it is essential to give priority to literal translation, for it is able to maintain the basic structure of the original sentence and also to reproduce its artistic conception, image and intended meaning.

For example:

Breakfast without orange juice is a day without sunshine. (橙汁广告)

没有橙汁的早晨是没有阳光的日子。

以眼还眼，以牙还牙

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth

Newmark said: It is necessary to reproduce the same image in the TL provided the image has comparable frequency and currency in the appropriate register. Obviously, this procedure is identical to literal translation.

#### B. Vehicle-converted Translation Approach

Every nation has its own distinctive ways of expression. As a result, metaphors formed in a particular nation are inevitably marked with the national color. To be more specific, distinct national characteristics can usually be detected from vehicles in metaphors. Therefore, when we meet those metaphors that can hardly be translated literally, it is necessary to convert the vehicles, that is, to resort to conversion translation approach to convert the images.

你这是孤注一掷。You are putting all your eggs in one basket.

To me, it's only a piece of cake. 对我而言，这只是小菜一碟。

The conversion translation approach is employed to convert images and vehicles in order to translate the same intended meaning and to render the version faithful and easily understandable. This translation method respects the national individuality, national cultural differences and language individuality, and takes the acceptability of the translated versions into consideration.

#### C. Free Translation Approach

Free translation is supplementary to literal translation. Free translation is employed for the purpose of expressing the original meaning instead of reproducing the original sentence structure and rhetorical device. Only when literal translation is not suitable to use in a certain case, can the translator resort to free translation.

Free translation of metaphors means giving up the original image or vehicle and making effort to find an appropriate way to express the intended meaning of the original metaphor.

e.g. Don't cross the bridge till you get to it. 不要自寻烦恼。不要过早担忧。

#### D. Translation with Addition

While translating metaphors, some times we need to add some words to the translated version in accordance with the context in order to render the intended meaning clear-cut and complete, or to make the version conform to the idiomatic usage of the TL.

A. Translation of metaphor by simile, retaining the image

e.g. Speaking without thinking is shooting without aiming.

说话不经考虑，犹如射箭不用瞄准。

B. Translation of metaphor into simile plus sense. (or occasionally a metaphor plus sense)

e.g. Sorrow for a husband is a pain in the elbow

丈夫的悼亡，就象肘部的一阵剧痛，剧烈却短暂。

#### E. Literal Translation plus Free Translation

Some English metaphors are suitable to be translated both literally and freely.

e.g. Today a man, tomorrow a mouse.

Literal translation: 今天是一个人，明天是一头鼠。

Free translation: 今天得志，明天落魄。

To provide the above metaphor with both literal and free translation helps the learners to grasp the hidden meaning through the literal meaning and then to master the essence.

Among the five methods, literal translation is the most commonly used one; conversion translation is suitable for translating the metaphors that can not be translated literally but the vehicles or images of which can be converted in the TL; free translation is employed only when neither literal translation nor conversion translation is applicable; translation with addition is a supplementary method; whether to provide two versions of both literal and free translation depends on the particular situation.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

As metaphor becomes a frontier subject correlated with various disciplines, people's understanding on metaphor is getting profound. Metaphor is widely used in English and Chinese. By intercultural comparison, we can see there are general characters and differences in Chinese and English metaphors.

This thesis is an initial exploration of the definition, classification, function and translation of metaphors. It aims at helping English learners in china appreciate, apply and translate metaphor better.

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# Feminine Melancholia in Harold Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes*

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**Abstract**—Harold Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes* (1996) addresses different notions such as gender, politics, masculinity and language. Julia Kristeva's theory of melancholia and depression, as one of the most important psychological theories, strives to elaborate the condition of melancholic subject. She remarks that the melancholic subject, unable to share her / his melancholia with others, suffers from an unsignified sense of loss which causes her / his psyche to be wounded. *Ashes to Ashes* explores the melancholic condition of the female protagonist who suffers from an unsignified sense of loss. This study is an attempt to trace the signs of melancholia — regarding Kristeva's theory of melancholia — which reveal through Rebecca's fragmented dialogues, dream-like memories and tense monologues.

**Index Terms**—Harold Pinter, *Ashes to Ashes*, Julia Kristeva, the melancholic subject, loss, language

## I. INTRODUCTION

Widespread interest in Julia Kristeva, a professor of linguistics, stems from her concerns with different disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, feminism and politics. Kristeva is a prolific writer and a complex thinker whose theory of melancholia and depression has won her lasting fame among psychoanalytic theorists. Her psychoanalysis proposes a loss theory of melancholia in the tradition of Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia". The significance of Kristeva's theory lies in making a connection between melancholia and the lost mother (other). She asserts that the early separation of the infant from the mother results in a sadness of depression with a mourning for the lost mother. Moreover, Kristeva adapts Freud's theory of death wish to formulate the notion of a kind of depression that is narcissistic. Thus, melancholia, Kristeva claims, is a form of mourning for the lost mother as well as for the lost self. In Harold Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes*, the female protagonist suffers from an unsignified sense of loss which has caused her psychological collapse. This mental instability is recognizable through her fragmented dialogues, dream-like memories and tense monologues. The very sense of loss from which she suffers has rendered her melancholic ego wounded and has reduced her to a living dead as far as it places her in the state of seemingly enduring hallucination at the end of the play. Therefore, the protagonist is left in her depression without any suggestive resolution which may spread the melancholic condition of the play to the readers.

To project the development of an infant from a non-differentiated to a speaking subject, Kristeva makes a distinction between "the semiotic" and "the symbolic". The semiotic, in Kristeva's words, goes back to "the pre-linguistic states of childhood" in which the child "babbles the sounds s/he hears, or where s/he articulates rhythms, alliterations, or stresses" (Rice and Waugh, 1989, p.129). The child's imitation of the rhythm of her parents' speech distinguishes this stage as a kind of "extra-verbal" in which "bodily energy and affects make their way into language" (McAfee, 2004, p.17). But the semiotic, including both the subject's drives and articulation, is not subject to the rules of syntax. The concept of the semiotic, Kristeva proposes, is "asymbolic" in which "cries, laughter, sound and touch and gesture indicate ... a pre-symbolic dimension" that lacks "the defining structure, coherence and spatial fixity" (Becker-Leckrone, 2005, p.28). Thus, there is no meaning in the linguistic sense in the semiotic. In the semiotic stage the so-called symbiotic interaction between mother and child sets up a psychic space which Kristeva calls "the semiotic chora".

Discrete quantities of energy move through the body of the subject who is not yet constituted as such and, in the course of his development, they are arranged according to the various constraints imposed on this body – always already involved in a semiotic process – by family and social structures. In this way the drives, which are "energy" charges as well as "psychical" marks, articulate what we call a *chora*: a nonexpressive totality formed by the drives and their stases in a motility that is as full of movement as it is regulated. (Kristeva, 1998, p.453)

The concept of chora signifies this semiotic relationship to maternal space. In this psychic space, all the child's needs are satisfied without any delay, there is not yet any differentiation between the child and the mother or surroundings; through this imaginary union, the child identifies herself / himself with her mother as one object.

In the symbolic, where the speaking being acquires language, the separation of the child from her mother takes place. Entering the symbolic is accompanied with a lifelong sense of loss. The child undergoes this sense of loss before the ability to articulate and name it; therefore, later in life, as a result of trauma, she falls down into a deep depression

making her apathetic and reticent. The occurrence of loss in the primary process — chora — brings about narcissistic depression.

The child king becomes irredeemably sad before uttering his first words; this is because he has been irrevocably, desperately separated from the mother, a loss that causes him to try to find her again, along with other objects of love, first in imagination, then in words. (Kristeva, 1989, p.6)

Therefore, from Kristeva's standpoint, the symbolic depends on "language as a sign system complete with its grammar and syntax" (McAfee, 2004, p.17). The symbolic stage for Kristeva means "orderly communication"; the use of normal rules of "syntax and semantics" to carry meaning which results in losing the mother (ibid. P.22). Therefore, the symbolic order is necessary in getting a unified subjectivity; to resist entering the symbolic order results in disjointed subjectivity.

The early ego lacks cohesion, and a tendency towards integration alternates with a tendency towards disintegration, a falling into bits... the anxiety of being destroyed from within remains active. It seems to me in keeping with the lack of cohesiveness that under the pressure of this threat the ego tends to fall into pieces. (Kristeva, 1989, p.19)

In Kristeva's view melancholia results from denial of separation from the mother — a denial of the "matricide" which is our vital necessity to gain individuation: "For man and for woman the loss of the mother is a biological and psychic necessity, the first step on the way to becoming autonomous. Matricide is our vital necessity" (ibid. p.27).

In *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, Kristeva strives to analyze some poets and novelists such as Nerval, Duras and Dostoyevsky in terms of melancholic representation in language. She suggests that the melancholic "sadness would be rather the most archaic expression of an unsymbolizable, unnamable narcissistic wound, so precocious that no outside agent (subject or agent) can be used as referent" (ibid. p.12). Then, the loss would never be an object for the depressed narcissist, but an unnamable *thing*: "The depressed narcissist mourns not an Object but the Thing ... [and] the 'Thing' ... does not lend itself to signification ... [it is] a light without representation: the Thing is an imagined sun, bright and black at the same time" (ibid. p.13).

The child mourns for the lost mother; the depressed feels incomplete and empty since s/he has internalized this sense of loss. As the child has lost her / his mother before acquiring the ability to use language, later in life s / he encounters difficulty in using language. Kristeva believes that the language of melancholia is the dead language: "the depressed speak of nothing, they have nothing to speak of: glued to the Thing, they are without objects. The total and unsignifiable Thing is insignificant — it is a mere Nothing, their Nothing, Death" (ibid. p.51).

Kristeva establishes a mutual relation between artistic creativity and melancholia; in her view melancholia, on the one hand, is a source of literary creation; and on the other hand, works of art are able to provide a sublimatory means in overcoming melancholia.

Literary creation is that adventure of the body and signs that bears witness to the affect — to sadness as imprint of separation and beginning of the symbol's sway; to joy as imprint [*marque*] of the triumph that settles me in the universe of artifice and symbol, which I try to harmonize in the best possible way with my experience of reality. (as cited in Oliver and Keltner, 2009, p.146)

Storytelling is the one means that can be used by the melancholic subject, caught in a death embrace, to master or minimize the pain of loss and abandonment. The artistic creation should produce sublimation; otherwise, like Duras', it spreads its suffering and infects the readers. This lack of catharsis and resolution, Kristeva claims, "produce[s] an eerie depressive silence", then it should be kept away from sensitive readers (ibid. p.151).

## II. DISCUSSION

Harold Pinter (1930-2008), Noble Prize-winning English playwright, screenwriter, director and actor, is the product of a post-war generation whose gift in evoking the dead voice within silence has made him one of the most influential dramatists of "the theater of the absurd". His plays are mostly noted for their use of verbal minimalism, understatement, reticence, elliptical language and even silence to expose the hidden emotions and veiled motivations of characters, which often lie several layers beneath their speech. His style is distinctive in its "mixture of the real and the surreal, its exact portrayal of life on the surface, and its powerful evocation of that life which lies beneath the surface" (Burkman, 1971, pp.3-4). The mysterious atmosphere in Pinter's plays, the unnamed terror which threatens his heroes, dialogues full of banality and existential absurdity without any ultimate resolution almost always keep the audience in a state of puzzlement (ibid. pp.4-6).

Although Harold Pinter's artistic endeavor has been labeled as absurd, mysterious and enigmatic, he mostly deals with mental landscapes to explore man's existential alienation in a world deplete with violence and oppression. His emphasis is not on "existential defiance (demonstrating the human capacity to redefine and renew one's self on one's own terms) but on existential *nausea* (demonstrating the often fatal vulnerability of the individual's own terms under pressure of repression from without and regression from within)" (Rabey, 1940, p.53). Therefore, most of his plays end in the "virtual annihilation of an individual" who wriggles for existence (Cohn, 1962, p.55). Defenseless victims emerge from a vague past to go to their unavoidable destruction. Defeated in search of self-expression, characters mostly enclose themselves in a dark and womb-like world which is the indicator of man's desperate attempt to survive.

[Pinter's world] is a picture of contemporary man beaten down by the social forces around him. It is a picture of man without identity and without individuality, of man crushed into a rigid social mold. It is a horrifying picture of

contemporary life. It is a picture of the powerlessness of modern man, and the plays are frightening. It is a picture of the absurdity of the human condition in our world, and the plays are comic. But beneath the laughter and overpowering the laughter, there is a cry of despair from a well of human hopelessness (Dukor, 1962, p.54)

Dealing with such a grave matter as human suffering has made his drama so obscure and challenging to the extent that "each piece of knowledge is a half-knowledge, [and] each answer a springboard to new questions" (ibid. p.44). The meanings of his plays largely depend on what is not said but is implied from the tense and cryptical dialogues, which make the border line between truth and falsity blurred. In his noble prize lecture, Pinter declares that:

Truth in drama is forever elusive. You never quite find it but the search for it is compulsive. The search is clearly what drives the endeavour. The search is your task. More often than not you stumble upon the truth in the dark, colliding with it or just glimpsing an image or a shape which seems to correspond to the truth, often without realizing that you have done so. But the real truth is that there never is any such thing as one truth to be found in dramatic art (2006, p.811).

Thus, the provoking ambiguity and polysemy of his plays perplex the readers in directing them to every possible meaning and simultaneously to nothing. In fact, the significance of Pinter's plays lies in their capacity "to resist large-scale generalization ... [or] any existing theory about the nature of society, personality, culture, spirituality, anthropology, history or anything else of similar scope" (Quigley, 2009, p.7). As Christopher Innes notes, Pinter's plays are "variations on the subjects of dominance, control, exploitation, subjugation and victimization. They are models of power structures" (as cited in Coppa, 2009, p.43). Martin Esslin asserts that "recurring figures of terrorists, torturers, and executioners" are located at the centre of Pinter's work, making him a playwright who has a particular resonance for the modern age, an era of mass destruction (Lukhurst, 2006, p.359). Therefore, violence is the permanent theme of his plays: "Violence has always been in my plays, from the very beginning [...] We are brought up every day of our lives in this world of violence" (as cited in ibid.).

Pinter is mostly compared with Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco, as the English exponent of what Martin Esslin termed "the theater of the absurd". Harold Bloom calls Pinter the legitimate son of Samuel Beckett: "Aesthetically considered, the shadow of the object that falls upon Pinter's authorial ego is Beckett, who is for Pinter very much the ego ideal" (Bloom, 2005, p.268). But unlike Beckett's works in which man is explored in relation to a world devoid of meaning, Pinter's plays center largely on man "without reference to the spiritual void" (Scott, 1986, p.11). He tries to express man in his fear, joy, humor, stupidity and ambition. In this respect, Pinter is mostly associated with Ionesco where the themes of "menace, fear, the clutter of daily living, the concentration on trivial possessions, the focus on the banality of language" form a common denominator between these two dramatists (ibid.).

Harold Pinter's great achievement is based upon his special use of language. Language is one of the most contested preoccupations of critics regarding Pinter's plays; "I'm Pretty well obsessed with words when they get going", Pinter claims (as cited in Kennedy, 1986, p.61). Known as "verbal marksman", Pinter pitch "telling phrases with deadly accuracy" to produce a language loaded with potential energies (Cohn, 1995, p.58). The words on the page are the artistic means of Harold Pinter to compel the reader to follow them in search of meaning. But words gain an almost "hypnotic hold on ear or mind [of readers], even though they do not inform [and] have no emotional charge..." (Kennedy, 1986, p.62). Many critics have discussed the absurdity and irrationality of Pinter's language; the terms such as "Pinterish" or "Pinteresque", Ronald Hayman states, denote the irrationality of everyday conversation, its "bad syntax, tautologies, pleonasm, repetitions, *non sequiturs* and self-contradictions" (ibid. p.63). J. H. Hollis declares that Pinter "employs language to describe the failure of language; he details in forms abundant the poverty of man's communication; he assembles words to remind us that we live in the space between words" (as cited in Silverstein, 1989, p.1). Such usage of language reveals the essential apartness of man from man. Thus, Pinter mostly utilizes language for purposes other than expression or informativity, and instead of communication, language becomes a means of alienation. This hyperrealistic quality of Pinter's language draws attention to the language itself rather than the message it conveys.

Silence and pause as integral parts in Pinter's plays demonstrate his interest in "the spatial and visual" dimension of the play as much as in the text (Scott, 1986, p.14). The dominance of silence and pause in Pinter's plays are as important as tense dialogue since they are pregnant with strong unstated feelings. Pinter believes that "the more intense the feeling, the less articulate its expression" (as cited in Cohn, 1995, p.63); thus, Pinter's silences are organized, "lengthening from comma and dash, to period, to three dots, to *Pause*, and to relatively rare *Silence* and even rarer *Long silence*" (ibid.). All these three signs — three dots (a pressure point), the pause (a moment of non-verbal tension), the silence (extreme crisis point) — indicate moments of turbulence and crisis (Hall, 2009, p.163). Therefore, the use of silence and pauses gives his dramatic speech an emotional power to the extent that "the unsaid becomes sometimes more terrifying and more eloquent than the said" (ibid.).

However, on the arrival of his first major play *The Birthday Party* (1958), Harold Hobson, the influential critic of the *Sunday Times*, proclaims "that Mr. Pinter, on the evidence of this work, possesses the most original, disturbing, and arresting talent in theatrical London" (as cited in Scott, 1986, p.10).

Pinter's latest play, *Ashes to Ashes* (1996), based on verbal minimalism, tries to rouse the voices of the dead recurrent in the comedies of menace of the 1960s. The play interweaves political and personal concerns to fully explore the suffering of man from terrible self-alienation. The dialogues goes from one image to another without any explicit connection between them which makes the play surreal and thereby more ambiguous. However, as the play progresses

and more images are added, new horizons and perspectives are opened to readers. In their conversations, Devlin and Rebecca allude to unnamed violence which remains a mystery to readers toward the end of the play. Through the recall of Rebecca's memory, the readers perceive that Rebecca has been subjected to an unspecified atrocity. Although the text exhausts the interpretation of Rebecca's story as the Jewish Holocaust story, there is no explicit reference to World War II. On the other hand, the time of the play determined as "Now", i.e. 1996 precludes any possibility of experiencing the Holocaust genocide. Performed in a house in the country, this unknown terror can be taken into the realm of domesticity in which the struggle for domination and individual emotional needs center on male / female relationship. Moreover, Silverstien believes that the focus of the play is on the "mechanisms of domination and marginalization, the social construction of gender and sexuality, and the ideological status of such 'state apparatus' as the family" (as cited in Baldwin, 2009, p.27). Then, Pinter knits tightly political atrocity with domestic brutality in which masculine power is trying to silence the feminine other. This atrocity reduces the female protagonist to a melancholic subject and a lost figure that at the end is left in a constant state of hallucination.

For Pinter, *Ashes to Ashes* brings to mind an image of a drowning woman in the ashes of a past trauma who tries to claw at a helping hand, but no one is there:

*Ashes to Ashes* [...] seems to me to be taking place under water. A drowning woman, her hand reaching up through the waves, dropping down out of sight, reaching for others, but finding nobody there, either above or under the water, finding only shadows, reflections, floating; the woman a lost figure in a drowning landscape, a woman unable to escape the doom that seemed to belong only to others. But as they died, she must die too (2006, p.813).

The one-act play opens with Rebecca and Devlin, described as "*Both in their forties*", talking of mysterious and dream-like experiences (1). The focus of the scenario from the start is on a man's hands trying to suffocate the female protagonist.

REBECCA Well ... for example ... he would stand over me and clench his fist. And then he'd put his other hand on my neck and grip it and bring my head towards him. His fist ... grazed my mouth. And he'd say, 'Kiss my fist' (3).

Rebecca responds to questions of an interlocutor, Devlin, who enacts as a psychotherapist trying to elicit the cause of Rebecca's terrible sadness. This graphic opening image suggests the display of male brutality dominant in the binary of the male/female relation. Rebecca narrates how she kisses the man's fist and then the palm of his opened hand: "Oh yes. I kissed his fist. The knuckles. And then he'd open his hand and give me the palm of his hand ... to kiss ... which I kissed" (3). This power-erotic image conveys, on the one hand, the brutality of the man and on the other, discloses Rebecca's desire for compassion. As she continues:

REBECCA I said, "Put your hand round my throat." I murmured it through his hand, as I was kissing it, but he heard my voice, he heard it through his hand, he felt my voice in his hand, he heard it there.

*Silence*

DEVLIN And did he? Did he put his hand round your throat?

REBECCA Oh yes. He did. He did. And he held it there, very gently, very gently, so gently. He adored me, you see. (3-5)

The readers are baffled by these opposing images; the first image is informed by the savagery of a man who tries to strangle her, but instead of struggling and resistance, Rebecca requests his hand to be put around her throat and finds the same clenched fist "very gentle". This almost opposing force of violence and love tacitly informs the reader of the lack of love and longing for compassion on the part of Rebecca. Of course, throughout the play, Rebecca's ex-lover remains a physical absence; thereby, his very existence outside of Rebecca's mind is often questioned. In fact, the whole play is the conversation between two persons about a third, but an absent figure. Whether it is illusory or real is indeterminate, but what is significant is the effect of this lover-torturer on Rebecca's mind. On the other hand, the interrogatory position of Devlin determined in the stage direction reaffirms the dominance / subservient relationships: "*Devlin standing with drink. Rebecca sitting*"(3). The names are also suggestive; the name of Devlin is anagram of *devil* signifying "fierceness", the man who tries to delve into Rebecca's dark past by rummaging around her psyche, while Rebecca's name is biblical means "healer" (Prentice, 2000, p.371). The names, thus, form a binary opposition in which the empowered and the victimized are identifiable. The more Rebecca explains, the more it becomes ambiguous and critical until the end of the play that Devlin repeats the opening gestures which are shocking to the spectators. Devlin clenches his fist and asks Rebecca to kiss his fist, but she remains still while he is commanding her: "Speak. Say it. Say 'Put your hand round my throat'" (75). This almost the same opening and closing scene act as "metaphorical, offering an image of dramatic power that can be understood as a metonymy of the more general meditation of power in society" (Milne, 2009, p.245). The beginning and end of the play with almost the same image reinforces the presence of violence and masculine power that place Rebecca in a state of "*Long silence*", a symptom of depression, at the end of the play. The phantom figure, physically absent but mentally present, can stand for masculinity that puts Rebecca in a state of an ambivalent feeling. This sadomasochist memory of clenched fist represents the force of masculine power and implicitly acknowledges the repressive ideological form of violence exercised by "a Symbolic Father" to bind the subjects to the Law (Silverstien, 2004, pp.22-23). Therefore, the phantom figure as a Symbolic Father embodies the patriarchal force at work in the society. The incarnation of the phantom figure in Devlin at the end takes the patriarchal repression to the domestic realm by which Pinter makes a parallel between social and domestic domination.

Moreover, the wail of the police siren as the reminder of patriarchal force, breaking the peace and tranquility, makes Rebecca "terribly insecure" (31). This disturbing moment is marked by Devlin's remark that "you'll never be without a police siren" (33). By making such a promise, Devlin guarantees that Rebecca will always be under patriarchal power. The masculinity for which the siren metonymically stands, Silverstein asserts, functions as "Rebecca's *objet petite à*, Lacan's term for the object that promises (but fails to deliver) the plenitude freeing us from lacks" (Silverstein, 2004, pp.22). On the other hand, Rebecca is frightened to lose it, as if her subjectivity is melting away within the siren's fading echo: "I hate it fading away. I hate it echoing away. I hate it leaving me. I hate losing it. I hate somebody else possessing it. I want it to be mine, all the time. It's such a beautiful sound" (31). Since the subjectivity of the speaking being is acquired through breaking into the symbolic order, characterized by the Name of the Father, Rebecca is frightened to lose it even though it makes her feel insecure and disturbed. As Lacan clarifies the symbolic order is identified in "the *name of the father* that we must recognize the support of the symbolic function which, from the dawn of history, has identified his person with the figure of the law" (1998, p.186). Lacan classifies the symbolic order as the first and foremost stage in making subjectivity and selfhood. This stage constitutes one's most important experience of loss which haunts the rest of one's life. Therefore, entering the symbolic order — the world of language — equals entering a world of lack and loss (Tyson, 2006, pp.28-30). The siren sound metonymically stands for the symbolic order that is recognizable with the Name of the Father and in its turn is the epitome of masculinity and dominance and contributes to the production of female melancholia. As Rebecca continues, the police siren as a patriarchal power gains a universal extension.

REBECCA ... It just hit me so hard. You see... as the siren faded away in my ears I knew it was becoming louder and louder for someone else.

DEVLIN You mean that it's always being heard by somebody, somewhere? Is that what you're saying?

REBECCA Yes. Always. Forever. (29-31)

But Devlin's reaction to the police siren is in drastic opposition to Rebecca's. It shows that, in spite of their closeness, they dwell in totally distinct inner worlds. Devlin finds the sound secure and necessary for order. But the subjection of women to the patriarchal symbolic order, Kristeva claims, leaves women in the state of "oceanic void" where they feel pain and empty: "In the midst of its lethal ocean, the melancholy woman is the dead one that has always been abandoned ..." (1989, pp.29-30). This idea is reinforced by Rebecca's statement about the police forces tearing the babies from their mothers' arms: "... [they] tear all the babies from the arms of their screaming mothers" (27).

In response to Devlin's further inquiries about her fascist-like lover, Rebecca tells Devlin that the unknown man works as a "guide" for a "travel agency" (19). She goes on to ask, "Did I ever tell you about that place... about the time he took me to that place?" Unexpectedly, this place turns out to be "a kind of factory" occupied by his "workpeople" who "respected his ... purity, his ... conviction" (23-25). But then she tells Devlin, "He used to go to the local railway station and walk down the platform and tear all the babies from the arms of their screaming mothers" (27). She goes from one image to another in a way that is confusing; the readers cannot make a clear understanding of Rebecca's memory about the man's occupation or his actual existence. After a "Silence", Rebecca changes the subject with: "By the way, I'm terribly upset" (27). This abrupt shift after a silence makes readers aware of Rebecca's disjointed and inarticulate psyche resulting from a repressed sense of deprivation. It demonstrates that the presence of male physical violence has reduced Rebecca to a sufferer and caused her melancholic ego to be wounded. She confesses to Devlin that "I'm terribly upset" without mentioning any absolute cause; as is the case with melancholia, there is no clear cause. Kristeva describes melancholia as "an abyssal suffering that does not succeed in signifying itself and, having lost meaning, loses life" (1989, p.89). Kristeva suggests that the melancholic being is unable to signify the pain of loss because it cannot be adjusted to the signs; it "does not lend itself to signification", since it is unconscious (ibid. p.13).

Since the protagonist is a woman, her experience of language is even more complex. Kristeva believes women experience language "as something secondary, cold, foreign to their lives ... as if language were a foreign body" (Rice and Waugh, 1989, p.131). They attempt to escape the "logical communication" (determined by the Father Figure) to a sort of mystical state, "an archaic experience", in which the delight of the maternal body (semiotic chora) is experienced (ibid.). "The semiotic forms within language is repressed, thrown into confusion, and the fact of not hearing it, of not giving it room, exposes us to depression, to a feeling of strangeness" (ibid.). Rebecca's inability to form a meaningful and coherent communication with Devlin demonstrates another symptom of the melancholic condition. In fact, no real communication takes place as if Rebecca was talking through an alienated language. Rebecca constantly interrupts the consistency of conversation by using phrases such as "oh yes, there is something I've forgotten to tell you," "there is something I'm dying to tell you" or "don't you want to know why? Well, I'm going to tell you anyhow". As Martin Esslin states Pinter's language enacts "the complete contradiction between the words that are spoken and the emotional and psychological action which underlies them ... the language has almost totally lost its rhetorical, its informative elements" (as cited in Silverstein, 1989, p.2). Rebecca's inability to explain her thoughts, feelings and emotions leads to misunderstanding and repetition of the same questions and answers which Ramos calls the "what-do-you-mean syndrome" (1998, p.90).

REBECCA Oh by the way somebody told me the other day that there is a condition known as mental elephantiasis.

DEVLIN What do you mean, 'somebody told you'? What do you mean, 'the other day'? What are you talking about? (49).



While Devlin insists on talking about that man, Rebecca evades and makes strange transitions; she shifts into an unrelated topic such as her statement about her pen rolling off "onto the carpet" (35). In some parts Rebecca just repeats the words of Devlin which leads to no meaning. When Devlin asks her "Do you feel you're being hypnotized?" (7) Rebecca gives irrelevant answers that ultimately end in Devlin's humiliation:

REBECCA I think you are a fuckpig.

DEVLIN Me a fuckpig? Me! You must be joking.

*Rebecca smiles*

REBECCA Me joking? You must be joking (9-11).

Devlin asks Rebecca to define the man but she cannot understand his meaning: "Define him? What do you mean, define him?" which again by shift of subject the question is left unanswered (11). While Devlin desperately tries to communicate to Rebecca, her answers are distant and disconnected. In fact, the pointlessness of Rebecca's statement is the point of the play. Kristeva declares that melancholia is "an abyss of sorrow, a *noncommunicable grief* ... to the extent of having us lose all interest in words, actions and even life itself" (italics added, 1989, p.3). Throughout the play, Rebecca repeats Devlin's words and phrases or talks of irrelevant topics that signify her anguished psyche. Rebecca resists rationalization in her conversation and all these passages expose the fact that language has become an alien skin for Rebecca who illustrates the "dead language" of a melancholic subject (ibid. p.53).

As the conversation progresses the already dead relationship between Devlin and Rebecca is more revealed; Devlin calls Rebecca "Darling" (15) but she protests and rejects being called darling by him:

REBECCA Oh yes, You called me darling. How funny.

DEVLIN Funny? Why?

REBECCA Well, how can you possibly call me darling? I'm not your darling.

DEVLIN Yes you are.

REBECCA Well I don't want to be your darling. *It's the last thing I want to be. I'm nobody's darling* (italics added, 15-17).

In a hostile tone Rebecca requests oblivion and renunciation. She seeks seclusion, as Kristeva states the traumatic events "thrust" the depressed one "into a state of withdrawal" (1989, p.133). By avoiding communication, Rebecca prefers isolation and remoteness; she wants to live in a womb-like environment where nobody can disturb her. Holding a "devitalized existence", the melancholic subject is ready at any moment for "a plunge into death"; "an avenging death or a liberating death..." (ibid. p.4). Rebecca goes a step further and desires for the end which is viewed as one of the most important signs of the melancholic condition.

REBECCA I don't think we can start again. We started... a long time ago. We started. We can't start *again*. We can end again.

DEVLIN But we've never ended.

REBECCA Oh, we have. Again and again and again. And we can end again. And again and again. And again.

DEVLIN Aren't you misusing the word 'end'? End means end. You can't end 'again'. You can only end once.

REBECCA No. You can end once and then you can end again (67).

The melancholic subject recognizes the lost object not as an actual object but as "an internal object" with which the subject identifies (McAfee, 2004, p.60). The desire of death is regarded as a way of killing this internal object, a way to get rid of it. Then Rebecca begins to sing a funeral song to bury their already dead relation; Rebecca "*(singing softly)* 'Ashes to Ashes'—" and Devlin carries on "Dust to dust" (69). The song highlights the funerary association of the title; it is the ashes of a dead relation, a dead memory and a dead desire.

In order to diminish her pain of this dead relation, Rebecca takes refuge to the realm of dream, which according to Kristeva is closer to the chora. Devlin asks Rebecca why she has never told him about her ex-lover and says how he has "the right to be very angry indeed" to which Rebecca is oblivious; then, Devlin strives to draw her attention by repeating the same statement: "Do you realize that? I have the right to be angry indeed. Do you understand that?" (69–71). But after a "*Silence*" (71), instead of responding, Rebecca describes a very strange dream-like event, where she is standing at the top of a building and observes a man and a boy walking down the street, dragging big suitcases; then, she sees a woman with a child in her arms on an icy, star-lit night following them. By describing this lyrical maternal moment, Rebecca gradually brings to her conscious what she has suppressed long ago.

REBECCA ... I saw an old man and a little boy walking down the street. They were both dragging suitcases. The little boy's suitcase was bigger than he was. It was a very bright night. Because of the stars. The old man and the little boy were walking down the street. They were holding each other's free hand. I wondered where they were going. Anyway, i was about to close the curtains but then i suddenly saw a woman following them, carrying a baby in her arms.

*Pause.*

She stood still. She kisses her baby. The baby was a girl.

*Pause.*

She kisses her.

*Pause.*

She listens to the baby's heartbeat. The baby's heart was beating.

*The light in the room has darkened. The lamps are very bright.*

*Rebecca sits very still.*

The baby was breathing.

*Pause. (71-73)*

In her monologue, she shifts suddenly from the third-person "she" to the first-person "I", and Rebecca as a child is held in Rebecca's own arms: "I held her to me, she was breathing. Her heart was breathing" (73). Rebecca totally identifies herself with the image of a mother holding her child and sinks totally into her dream. According to the semiotic chora principles, being apart from the maternal embrace results in an unnamable narcissistic wound which in its turn leads to psychic instability. The risk of losing a woman's very identity is what Kristeva calls "feminine castration"; a woman risks losing herself when losing her mother (Oliver, 1993, p.54). This sense of self-loss is clear through Rebecca's oscillation between being a baby girl and a mother in her frenzied state at the end of the play. The closing scene of *Ashes to Ashes* adopts an echo effect of where "a disembodied voice repeats crucial words from Rebecca's speeches as if it were the ghost of an abandoned child speaking within her unconscious" (Cave, 2009, p.144). The last scene is the summit of the play; no punctuation in the last monologue indicates that time has been stopped and the female protagonist has drowned in her collapsed psyche as if she were never able to survive into reality. The awakened echoes of old trauma, which "are not repressed but constantly evoked", pushes Rebecca to a state of stagnation (Kristeva, 1989, p.46). These lyrical echoes seem as a lullaby to a lost child. In fact, the whole play is the process of anamnesis in which the suppressed trauma gradually emerges into Rebecca's consciousness even though she is in search of comfort to avoid the pain of her past trauma. This last monologue uncovers that Rebecca has probably lost her baby even though the readers are not sure of it.

REBECCA They took us to the trains

ECHO the trains

*He takes his hand from her throat.*

REBECCA They were taking the babies away

ECHO the babies away

*Pause.*

REBECCA I took my baby and wrapped it in my shawl

ECHO my shawl

REBECCA And I made it into a bundle

ECHO a bundle

REBECCA And I held it under my left arm

ECHO my left arm

*Pause.*

REBECCA And I went through with my baby

ECHO my baby

*Pause.*

REBECCA But the baby cried out

ECHO cried out

REBECCA And the man called me back

ECHO called me back

REBECCA And he said what do what do you have there

ECHO have there

REBECCA He stretched out his hand for the bundle

ECHO for the bundle

REBECCA And I gave him the bundle

ECHO the bundle

REBECCA And that's the last time I held the bundle

ECHO the bundle

*Silence.*

REBECCA And we got on the train

ECHO the train

REBECCA And we arrived at this place

ECHO this place

REBECCA And I met a woman I knew

ECHO I knew

REBECCA And she said what happened to your baby

ECHO your baby

REBECCA Where is your baby

ECHO your baby

REBECCA And I said what baby

ECHO what baby

REBECCA I don't have a baby  
 ECHO a baby  
 REBECCA I don't know of any baby  
 ECHO of any baby  
 Pause  
 REBECCA I don't know of any baby  
 Long silence (75-85)

These echoed words become the key words in bringing to light the repressed content which in an expressionistic way accompany the waning light of the setting. The setting leaves the audience in darkness that indicates the impossibility of enlightenment. Pinter writes "*The room darkens during the course of the play. The lamplight intensifies*". He insists on this contradiction: "*By the end of the play ... The lamplight has become very bright but does not illuminate the room*" (1). The ability of darkness to overcome light suggests that "darkness is not just an absence of light but an encroaching, positive force in itself, phenomenologically prior to light" (Grimes, 2004, p.51). The symbolism of light and darkness signifies the symbolic illustration of the victory of evil (darkness) over goodness (light); thereby, tacitly indicating the defeat of any relief from emotional distress.

The repetition of the final line: "I don't know of any baby" demonstrates the disjunction of Rebecca's psyche and her internal anxiety, and after a "*Long silence*" the play ends (83). This statement leaves the readers in a constant state of confusion; nothing is determined and every statement brings new questions; then, readers should decipher meanings because the "depressive speech avoids sentential *signification*; its *meaning* has not completely run dry" (Kristeva, 1989, p.55). Rebecca even stops her repetitive and monotonous speeches and plunges into a long silence; as Kristeva maintains:

They utter sentences that are interrupted, exhausted, come to stand still. Even phrases they cannot formulate. A repetitive rhythm, a monotonous melody emerges and dominates the broken logical sequences, changing them into recurring, obsessive litanies. Finally, when that frugal musicality becomes exhausted in its turn, or simply does not succeed in becoming established on account of the pressure of silence, the melancholy person appears to stop cognizing as well as uttering, sinking into the blankness as asymbolia or the excess on unorderable cognitive chaos. (ibid. p.33)

The "*Long silence*" plays both as signifier and signified. The dominance of silence and many pauses in the play reinforce the depressed ambiance of the play as the melancholic language "is monotonous and weighed down with silences" (ibid. p.55). The start of the play with silence also points out the crisis of representation and signification in the modern era. The melancholic subject cannot make sense because the language is a failed sign system; thus, in this mysterious, sinister and hypnotic journey, Rebecca terribly suffers from a non-determined sense of loss that results in her melancholy psychosis. Moreover, no solution or catharsis is offered at the end of the play; thereby, increasing the possibility of spreading melancholia to readers.

### III. CONCLUSION

As it is mentioned, the image of dramatic power and patriarchal violence in the play reduce Rebecca to a melancholic subject who takes refuge in her dream-like memories to alleviate the pain of her past loss. Kristeva maintains that the lost Thing, resisting language and meaning, is at the center of melancholia and Nervalian metaphor of "black sun", which refers to an intense affect escaping conscious articulation, is the best term in describing the unrepresentable "Thing" (1989, p.13). Rebecca's inability to put her melancholia into a sign system brings readers to the edge of depression, offering only a dismal and bleak psychic landscape, with no catharsis at the end. As Kristeva writes, "there is no purification in store for us at the conclusion of those novels written on the brink of illness, no promise of a beyond ... that might provide a bonus of pleasure in addition to the revealed evil" (ibid. pp.227-28). Therefore, Rebecca's inability to rise above her inner desolation results in her psychological collapse and further more in her "passion for death" which in its turn can transfer melancholia to the readers ( ibid. p.221).

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# The Comparative Effect of Using Competitive and Cooperative Learning on the Oral Proficiency of Iranian Introvert and Extrovert EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—This study investigated the effect of cooperative and competitive learning on the oral proficiency of introvert and extrovert Iranian EFL learners. For this purpose, 120 learners were selected from a total number of 172 studying at a private language school in Tehran through a TSE. They also answered the Eysenck Personality Inventory which in turn categorized them into two subgroups within each learning modality setting consisting of introverts and extroverts. All in all, there were four subgroups: 30 introverts and 30 extroverts undergoing the cooperative learning treatment, and 30 introverts and 30 extroverts experiencing the competitive learning treatment. Another TSE was administered as the posttest and a two-way ANOVA was run on the mean scores of the four groups in the posttest to test the four hypotheses of this study. The results showed that while learners generally benefitted more from the competitive setting compared to the cooperative one, the extrovert group was better off receiving cooperative instruction. Furthermore, introverts outperformed extroverts in the competitive group; yet there was no difference between the two personality subgroups in the cooperative setting. Overall, introverts in both the cooperative and competitive settings benefitted more than extroverts.

**Index Terms**—oral proficiency, extroverts, introverts, cooperative learning, competitive learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

When asked about language and what it is, a non-linguist would most probably provide the very common-place response that language is synonymous with speaking. To many an individual, speaking is the most important language activity which perhaps remains to be the most problematic skill as well. This may be so since this ability which “as such is usually viewed as the most complex and difficult skill to master” (Tarone, 2005, p. 485) is a skill which “cannot be ignored in the EFL classroom since people often judge a person's language knowledge/competence and proficiency level based on how well his/her speaking performance on the target language is” (Chuang, 2009, p. 72). At the same time, it appears that speaking is indeed the most demanding of the four skills both for students to master and, naturally, for teachers to teach (Hedge, 2008; Lennon, 1990; Lazaraton, 1996; Warschauer, 1996).

To this end, Riggenbach (1991) argues that a learner's ability to speak expresses the success of the process of learning and teaching in most classroom contexts. This is perhaps simply because speaking is an integrally indispensable part of everyday life (Griffiths, 2008; Levelt, Roelofs, & Meyer, 2000; Luchini, 2007; Shumin, 1997; Tuan & Neomy, 2007). Moreover, “The observable nature of speaking as a productive skill motivates learners to further indulge in the process of SLA” (Rashtchi & Keyvanfar, 2007, p. 135).

Needless to say, there are varying reasons for EFL learners to wish to master their oral proficiency such as “to keep up rapport in relationships, influence people, and win or lose negotiations” (Hedge, 2008, p. 261) and, indubitably, variation in the different forms and tasks of oral activities in the EFL classroom is required to maximize the learning of this highly complex cognitive skill which involves several different mechanisms (Ellis & Yuan, 2003; Jianing, 2007). Accordingly, various different teaching/learning modalities and also personality variables have been and still are looked into as part of the ongoing quest to enhance EFL learners' speaking in the classroom.

### **Extroverts/Introverts**

In line with the aforementioned quest, there has been a growing awareness and sensitivity in the last few decades towards the importance of teachers' knowing more about the personality styles of learners which can be defined as “the relatively enduring style of thinking, feeling, and acting that characterizes an individual” (Costa, McCrae, & Kay as cited in Navidnia, 2009, pp. 80-81). This awareness is of course partially – if not mainly – due to the impact clinical psychology has borne on school psychology in modern times thus emphasizing the individual personality dimensions of learners (Na, Lin-Yao, & Ji-Wei, 2008) in the continuous endeavor to keep all learners satisfied (Senel, 2006).

A personality dimension that has attracted huge attention in L2 research is extroversion/introversion (Dornyei, 2005). Eysenck, Eysenck, and Barrett (1985) describe the extroverted type as those having characteristics such as sociability,

liveliness, and excitability while the introverted type as those with a tendency towards taciturnity and reclusiveness. Furthermore, Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 195) define an extrovert as one whose “conscious interaction is more often directed towards other people and events than towards the person themselves” while an introvert as one “who tends to avoid social contact with others and is often preoccupied with his/her feelings, thoughts, and experience”.

Extroversion and introversion can also be viewed from a physiological angle. Chamorro-Premuzic (2007) holds that extroversion is “the psychological consequence of physiological differences in the reticulo-cortical system which determines levels of motivation, emotion, and conditioning according to either inhibitions or excitation of the cerebral cortex” (p. 23). He further writes that, “These consistent patterns of arousability would also determine the extent to which an individual is extroverted or introverted and the primary facts of extroversion are warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, and positive emotions” (p. 23).

Introverts do not take action unless they are ready and they tolerantly pay attention to a specific subject for a long stretch of time without getting distracted (John & Srivastava, 1999). Sharp (2003) draws the line between extroversion and introversion by saying that extroverts mostly gather their data out of experience, whereas introverts engender their perspectives from inner, personal factors. That is why introverts endeavor to replace noisy crowds with quiet environments (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2007). Burruss and Lisa Kaenzig (1999) describe extensively the differences between the two categories of personality types by stating that while introverts are usually taciturn, uninterested in participating in social gatherings, more apt for non-group work, and tend to think and concentrate more before talking, extroverts enjoy and need social gatherings, engage in friendships with many people, tend to come up with quick responses, and try to avoid solitude.

It is not clear, however, whether extroversion or introversion “helps or hinders the process of second language acquisition” (Brown, 2000, p. 155) albeit there is a commonly-held belief among language teachers pointing to the issue that extroverts outperform the introverts in L2 learning, especially in terms of being superior in communicative abilities (Spada & Tomita, 2010). As Dornyei (2005) puts it, “Both extroversion and introversion may have positive features, depending on the particular task in question” (p. 27). He points out that, “Extroverts are found to be more fluent in both L1 and L2 and particularly in formal situations or in environments characterized by interpersonal stress” (p. 26) and continues that introverts, however, are more interested in activities such as reading, writing, and drawing than activities which require them to act in an outgoing way.

#### **Competitive Learning**

Apart from the different personality variables that impact L2 learning, one cannot ignore the role of the modality of learning. An established dichotomy in this regard of course is competitive and cooperative learning (Walters, 2000). Competitive learning (win-lose orientation) is used for the purpose of evaluating the position of people in various tasks (Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson, & Nelson, 1981). Deutsch, Coleman, and Marcus (2006) hold that the desired constructive form of competitiveness happens when the winner tries to lend a hand to the loser. Contrarily, in destructive competitiveness, the winner takes it all. They further state that, “Competition induces and is induced by use of the tactics of coercion, threat, or deception” (p. 31)

Furthermore, Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne (2000) hold that competitive learning prioritizes competition among the members of the same group and not necessarily between different groups.

#### **Cooperative Learning**

Contrary to competitive learning, cooperative learning exists when students work together to accomplish shared learning goals (Johnson et al., 2000). While in contrast with the social Darwinist paradigm of competition being at the heart of the survival of the fittest, cooperative learning favors a win-win orientation and gained momentum following the critique of social scientists such as Hartup, Ladd, Lewis, and Rosenblum (all cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009) on competitiveness.

A cooperative classroom, Johnson and Johnson (2008) state, should not be teacher-centered and “Ideally, teachers are trained to take their existing lessons and restructure them to be cooperative as cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning” (p. 26).

Accordingly, Deutsch et al. (2006) name the essential elements in cooperative learning as: positive interdependence, individual accountability and personal responsibility, promotive interaction, appropriate use of social skills, and group processing. The students’ success depends on the achievement of all group members and the social problems involved in the process of learning are tackled (Johnson et al., 2000). In addition, Norman (2005, p. 3) writes that, “Cooperative learning is important for creating inclusive classroom environments that meet the needs of all students because it takes the heterogeneity into account, encouraging peer support and connection”.

Past research has provided sufficient evidence that personality factors are heavily implicated in the learning processes in general and in SLA in particular (Dornyei, 2005). Therefore, the prime motive behind this research was to see whether the oral proficiency of introvert and extrovert EFL learners could be influenced by the use of competitive or cooperative language learning. Accordingly, these two instructions, namely competitive and cooperative and their effects on oral proficiency of introverts and extroverts, are compared to see which one is more effective on EFL learners’ oral proficiency.

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

*H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between the effect of competitive and cooperative learning on introvert EFL learners' oral proficiency.*

*H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference between the effect of competitive and cooperative learning on extrovert EFL learners' oral proficiency.*

*H<sub>03</sub>: Competitive learning does not have a significantly different effect on the oral proficiency of introvert and extrovert EFL learners.*

*H<sub>04</sub>: Cooperative learning does not have a significantly different effect on the oral proficiency of introvert and extrovert EFL learners.*

## II. METHOD

### A. Participants

To fulfill the objectives of this study, 120 female intermediate EFL learners with the age range of 17-30 studying in Tehran's Safir Language School participated in this study. These participants were selected through an oral language test, i.e. the Test of Spoken English (TSE, produced by the Educational Testing Services) from 172 learners in the same language school. The very first session of the class, the students received the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) which identifies the degree of a person's introversion or extroversion.

This research was conducted in two terms. In the first term, nine classes with a total of 60 learners (30 introvert and 30 extrovert learners) were held where all of the learners underwent a cooperative learning procedure while in the next term, another nine classes with 60 students (again comprising 30 introvert and 30 extrovert learners) experienced a competitive learning method.

### B. Instrumentation

To accomplish the objectives of this research, two TSEs and a questionnaire were administered. Furthermore, certain materials were used in the teaching procedure throughout both terms which are described in this section.

#### **Test of Spoken English (TSE)**

As noted earlier, the TSE was used for the homogenization process prior to the treatment and another sample of this test was used as the posttest after the course. The TSE is one of the most widely used batteries of assessment of spoken English worldwide which measures the ability of nonnative speakers of English to communicate effectively. This 20-minute test comprises five separate sections which are: warm-up questions, response to a picture-prompt, telling a story from a picture, description of a graph, and talking through an amended itinerary. The TSE score consists of a single score of communicative language ability reported on a scale from 20 to 60. Assigned score levels are averaged across items and raters, and the scores are reported in increments of five (i.e. 20, 25, 30, ..., and 60).

#### **Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI)**

The EPI (Eysenck et al., 1985) is a questionnaire to assess the personality traits of a person. The instrument initially conceptualized personality as two, biologically-based categories of temperament which include: extroversion/introversion and neuroticism/stability. This validated test consists of 57 Yes/No items. Those who fill out the EPI receive three different kinds of scores: the E score which is related to how much extrovert a person is, the N score measuring the neuroticism, and the Lie score which tries to measure how socially desirable a person has wanted to prove to be. The N score is computed out of 24 since it consists of 24 items, the N score is out of 24, and the Lie score is out of nine. The Yes/No answers should be given based on the usual way of acting or thinking of an individual. The researchers used the Farsi version provided and validated by Seena Institute of Behavioral Sciences Research in Tehran in order for the respondents to answer the questionnaire more accurately. The answer key and the standard rating scales were also provided in the battery enabling the researchers to use them in the study.

#### **Materials**

The following materials were used in the process of the treatment for all the 120 participants in both groups.

The main textbook used in this research was *Interchange 3* by Jack C. Richards. This textbook consists of 16 units which are divided into five levels in the language school. The first intermediate level covers four units of this book and all the other levels following the first intermediate level contain three units each term. The main purpose of this book is to integrate speaking, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, reading, and writing. There is a strong focus on both accuracy and fluency. The underlying philosophy of the course holds that language is best learned when it is used for meaningful communication.

Another series used in this study were the *Oxford Bookworms Storybooks* which are graded at six language stages, from the elementary to the advanced level, using the syllabus devised by Tricia Hedge, the founding editor of the series. Vocabulary, syntax, structure, and information load are carefully controlled in this series. Since stage four of Oxford Bookworms is designed for intermediate purposes (the level of the participants in this study), they were used in this treatment. To teach this vocabulary book, the researchers provided the learners with many pictures taken from the Internet and showed them on screen in the classes. Each intermediate level covers 10 units of this book which are pre-planned to be related to their course book subjects.

### C. Procedure

### ***Cooperative Group***

In order to conduct this study, the researchers first administered the TSE among 92 intermediate EFL learners thus choosing 60 learners for the first phase (the cooperative learning procedure) whose scores on the test fell one standard deviation above and below the mean. All the participants were recorded during the test since two raters whose inter-rater reliability had already been established ( $r = 0.531$ , significant at the 0.01 level 2-tailed) rated these performances.

The next step was to conduct the EPI among the 60 participants thereby dividing them into 30 introverts and 30 extroverts. These 60 learners sat in nine different classes and received the same treatment of cooperative learning during one term which lasted 18 sessions of 90 minutes throughout seven weeks. All nine classes were taught by the same teacher (one of the researchers) using the same method and materials.

The learners were not told about the introversion/extroversion component of the study since the researchers thought it might cause certain complications for learners if they were to know their personality type. To this end, they were just asked to fill out the questionnaire as part of the routine class procedure.

The teacher tried to set up a friendly atmosphere in the classes by making the students introduce themselves to each other the very first session. The students were constantly asked to pay attention to maintaining eye contact while speaking. They were supposed to look at each other instead of the teacher while introducing themselves to one another. It seemed rather hard at first but gradually they got used to it and even started to like it.

Depending on the number of students, they were grouped in clusters of three or four. The grouping was done randomly without paying attention to their introversion or extroversion. Each group member knew that each correct or incorrect answer was of great importance for all the rest of the members of the same group. The students also experienced being in different groups during one term and even one single session in order to learn to work cooperatively with different individuals rather than a specific group. Competitiveness was de-emphasized in each group while group work was encouraged.

Every session, about one page and a half was taught in each class taking an average of four sessions for a unit to be finished. Each unit contained a part called snapshot which introduced a new cultural difference to the students. The participants were asked to answer these questions in cooperation.

Every other session, the students were exposed to a new grammar focus. For this part after the instruction was completed, the students were given some extra exercises. These exercises and those of the book were done and checked in groups and as they had to read their answers, they had to first decide in turn-taking (i.e. who was going to read the answer first). There was no force on them on the teacher's side.

Another point was the use of listening transcription which was given to them to be done inside the classroom. The listening part in the Interchange book was designed in a way that it consisted of several speakers so each group was in charge of one of the speakers. The listening was played for them two times. The first time, they were asked not to write anything; rather, they only listened for the general idea. The blanks contained the points which were the main focus of the unit. The interesting point was that they displayed extreme alacrity in doing this activity. The second time, they were asked to listen to the CD and write what they heard after each pause. Once it was done, they checked their answer in each group and started reading out their responses. The listening part also included a chart which had to be filled in after they had done their transcription. The groups were changed for this activity again to enable the learners to experience working with different learners in their class.

The Oxford Word Skills, as discussed earlier, was the vocabulary book used in these classes. Some of the units were designed in a way that they consisted of two short readings (parts A and B). Each group was responsible for one part of each unit. After they studied those sections, they had to switch their seats and explain each part to the other groups.

The teacher presented the new vocabulary section by jotting down the new words on the board and asking the participants to write a new piece in their groups using the new words accompanied with the grammar focus of the day. If there was enough time, they checked each group's mistakes and would give it to the teacher to double-check their writings.

Every session, the participants were asked to study one chapter of their story book at home and prepare some questions based on that chapter in groups inside the classroom context. These groups were supposed to ask these questions from each other, they were also given sufficient time to decide on the correct answers and then express their ideas. The positive or negative scores went to all the members of each group.

Yet another technique which was used in this group was the use of role play. The participants were helping each other in the process of role play to achieve a shared goal with one another. No one wanted to prove to be the best; rather, they helped each other to have a satisfactory outcome.

Sometimes a penalty was chosen for those groups who failed to accomplish the expected outcome. This was performance of a pantomime by a student who was chosen by the group. This process was so enjoyable for them that they never felt a sense of punishment; indeed, they really liked to keep up with the other students who achieved their goals better.

Immediately after this treatment, the first group of this study which was practicing English in a cooperative way underwent the posttest.

### ***Competitive Group***



The subsequent term, the same participant selection procedure was conducted again with another 80 learners undergoing the TSE, 60 of whom were chosen and subsequently sat for the EPI. There were thus 60 students in nine classes; only this time, the students received a competitive learning modality. Again these students were under study for 18 sessions each lasting 90 minutes. All of these learners were exposed to the same amount of instructions and the same materials again by the same teacher.

The participants were not informed about their psychological traits being studied just as was the case with the previous group. In this condition, the teacher again divided the learners into the groups randomly thus having both introverts and extroverts in each group. These students knew that even if they were in groups, they would be assessed based on their individual efforts and outcomes. To do so, the teacher helped them form various groups differing from one session to the other. Compared to the previous treatment, this setting included less group work.

The teacher's instruction method changed minimally; instead, the way the students practiced every single part changed in comparison with the previous treatment. After the grammar was taught, for instance, the extra exercises and the exercises of the book were done individually. The learners could check their answers with their friends but they could answer only when they were called. The teacher chose the person to answer the questions and not the students themselves.

The questions of the snapshot were answered individually. They did not discuss the issues in specified groups but in an open discussion. One student would start responding to the questions of the snapshot and the other students expressed their own ideas.

This time the Oxford Word Skills was practiced in another way. Half of the class was asked to study part A and the second half was asked to study part B but not in groups. They then sat in pairs and explained the newly-gained information to each other. If the students had to produce a new writing with the new words, they would do it individually and later gave those papers to their teacher to check the writings for them.

They were asked to study one chapter of their story book at home. When it was time for them to make their questions based on each chapter, again the teacher formed their groups but this time whenever they were ready for answering the questions, they did not have time for sharing their ideas; on the other hand, they buzzed to answer the question.

Their questions were made in groups but at the time of answering, they acted individually. They competed against each other on being number one. The one who buzzed sooner would answer sooner and received the positive point only for herself as an individual. They did not have to worry about the wrong answer of one of their group members because the negative point just went to one person. This part was accompanied with a sense of excitement.

In some sessions, the students were asked to summarize the story for themselves and present the summary in the class. They had to be ready because while one of them was summarizing the story, the researchers asked another student to continue the rest of the summary.

The group work was not estimated based on the individual person's answer. During this process, they had to keep their books closed completely and they could not assist each other in the process of answering. The positive and negative points were shown on board to be seen by all the participants. The loser of each group had to play pantomime each session or had to prepare a lecture for the next session of the class.

The same penalty was chosen for the listening transcription part. In this section of the class, there existed no group work. The listening transcription paper was given to all the students to be done individually. All the listening sections were played two times. One time, they only had to listen to the CD without writing anything and another time, they would start writing after every single pause. While they were listening to the CD, they only paid attention to their own listening papers and were asked about it later by their names being called and not voluntarily.

Role play was also used in this group with the teacher's choice of partners. The outcome of that role play was assessed with praising one of the partners as the best one in regards with the amount of attaining the course objectives.

This group also underwent the TSE as the posttest of the study at the end of the 18 sessions of competitive learning.

It is worth noting that the learners in both groups practiced speaking in various forms such as narrating a story, role play, and free discussion. The latter was done in a participatory fashion among both groups inviting the students to also choose the topic that they were supposed to talk about.

Four speaking tests were done in this study and each was rated based on the rating scale provided for the test. The rating for both groups was done by two raters (once the inter-rater reliability had been established).

### III. RESULTS

This section presents the data analysis in a chronological order discussing all the descriptive and inferential statistics conducted. To begin with, the participant selection in both cooperative and competitive groups is described statistically. Then comes the data analysis of the posttest followed by inferential statistics on the hypotheses. Inter-rater reliability is also discussed.

#### **Participant Selection**

##### ***Cooperative Group***

As discussed earlier, 92 students took a TSE at the outset from whom 60 were chosen for the two groups of introverts and extroverts undergoing the cooperative treatment. Next, the EPI was administered through which 30 introverts and 30 extroverts were identified within this sample of 60. To make sure that these 30 introverts and 30 extroverts bore no

significant difference in terms of the dependent variable of this study (i.e. oral proficiency) prior to the treatment, the researchers ran an independent samples *t*-test on the mean scores of the two groups on the TSE.

As displayed in Table 1, the means of the scores of the introverts on the TSE was 42.92 while that of the extroverts was 42.83.

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE TWO SUBGROUPS IN THE COOPERATIVE GROUP PRIOR TO THE STUDY

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness ratio
Introverts	30	40.00	50.00	42.92	2.63296	1.39
Extroverts	30	35.00	50.00	42.83	2.60415	-0.20
Valid N (listwise)	30					

As both groups' distribution of scores resembled normality with their skewness ratios falling within the  $\pm 1.96$  range, running a *t*-test was legitimized. As Table 2 below demonstrates, with the *F* value of 0.016 at the significance level of 0.901 being larger than 0.05, the variances between the two groups were not significantly different. Therefore, the results of the *t*-test with the assumption of homogeneity of the variances are reported here. As the results indicate ( $t = 0.123$ ,  $p = 0.902 > 0.05$ ), there was no significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups' oral proficiency prior to the study.

TABLE 2  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST OF THE INTROVERTS AND EXTROVERTS IN THE COOPERATIVE GROUP PRIOR TO THE TREATMENT

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	<i>F</i>	Sig.	<i>t</i>	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.016	.901	.123	58	.902	.08333	.67612	-1.27	1.437
Equal variances not assumed			.123	57.9	.902	.08333	.67612	-1.27	1.437

To this end, the researchers could rest assured that any probable difference between the two groups at the end of the study could be attributed to the interaction of the relevant independent variable (i.e. cooperative learning) and the moderator variable (being introvert or extrovert). Having finalized the participants selection process for the cooperative group, the first phase of the treatment was conducted.

#### **Competitive Group**

The second phase of the treatment was for the competitive group. The procedure of participant selection in this phase was very much identical to that of the previous phase: A total of 80 students took the same TSE and 60 of them whose scores fell one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected. These 60 participants subsequently sat for the EPI and, again, 30 introverts and 30 extroverts were identified within this sample of 60.

To make sure that these 30 introverts and 30 extroverts bore no significant difference in terms of the dependent variable of this study (i.e. oral proficiency) prior to the competitive exercise, the researchers had to compare the means of the two groups. Table 3 below displays the statistics of the scores of the two groups with the introverts' mean on the TSI prior to the treatment being 44 and that of the extroverts 42.5.

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE TWO SUBGROUPS IN THE COMPETITIVE GROUP PRIOR TO THE STUDY

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness ratio
Introverts	30	40.0	50.0	44.00	3.5598	.34
Extroverts	30	40.0	50.0	42.50	2.8162	2.44
Valid N (listwise)	30					

As the skewness ratio of the extrovert group exceeded the maximum acceptable degree ( $2.44 > 1.96$ ), conducting a parametric test was not legitimized and the researchers had to resort to employing the nonparametric Mann-Whitney test for this procedure. Table 4 shows the results for this statistical procedure ( $U = 277.5$ ,  $N_1 = 30$ ,  $N_2 = 30$ ,  $p = 0.06 > 0.05$ ); the two groups' means were not significantly different so any probable differences at the end of the treatment could be attributed to the interaction of the independent variable (i.e. competitive learning) and the moderator variable (being introvert or extrovert)..

TABLE 4  
MANN-WHITNEY TEST: TEST STATISTICS

	Score
Mann-Whitney U	277.500
Wilcoxon W	742.500
Z	-2.808
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.06

**Posttest**

Once the treatment in each group was over, the TSE posttest was conducted. Table 5 below displays the descriptive statistics for all four subgroups on the TSE posttest in one table for easier reference prior to presenting the posttest analysis.

TABLE 5  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ALL FOUR SUBGROUPS ON THE TSE POSTTEST

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness ratio
Introverts – Cooperative	30	40.0	57.5	47.25	4.5651	.28
Extroverts – Cooperative	30	40.0	55.0	47.25	4.6121	-.27
Introverts – Competitive	30	45.0	60.0	53.00	4.2750	-1.19
Extroverts – Competitive	30	40.0	55.0	45.83	4.1695	.12
Valid N (list wise)	30					

**Testing the Hypotheses**

To verify all four hypotheses of the study together, a two-way ANOVA was required since there is a dual learning modality (cooperative versus competitive) and also a dual personality style (introversion versus extroversion) involved with one dependent variable (i.e. oral proficiency) at stake. The descriptive statistics of all four subgroups showed normality of distribution as is evident from Table 5 above. Furthermore, the Levene’s test of equality of error variances showed that the variances among the four subgroups were not significantly different ( $F_{(3,116)} = 0.326, p = 0.806 > 0.05$ ). Accordingly, running a two-way ANOVA was legitimized. To illustrate the factorial design, the interaction of the two modalities of the independent variable (cooperative versus competitive learning) and moderator variables (extroversion versus introversion) in this study are displayed in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6  
BETWEEN-SUBJECTS FACTOR

		Personality type	
		Introvert (1)	Extrovert (2)
Type of learning	Cooperative (1)	30	30
	Competitive (2)	30	30

Table 7 below shows the results of the tests of between-subjects effects.

TABLE 7  
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	911.250 <sup>a</sup>	3	303.750	15.622	.000
Intercept	280333.333	1	280333.333	14418.031	.000
Learning Type	140.833	1	140.833	7.243	.008
Personality Type	385.208	1	385.208	19.812	.000
Learning Type * Personality Type	385.208	1	385.208	19.812	.000
Error	2255.417	116	19.443		
Total	283500.000	120			
Corrected Total	3166.667	119			

a. R Squared = 0.288 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.269)

As Table 7 indicates, the significance value was less than 0.05 ( $F_{(3,116)} = 15.622, p = 0.000$ ). There was a difference between the impact of the two learning modes on all the participants ( $F_{(1,116)} = 7.243, p = 0.008 < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, there was a significant difference between the introverts and extroverts who participated in this study in general ( $F_{(1,116)} = 19.812, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ).

Finally, as the interaction of the learning type and personality type proved significantly different ( $F_{(1,116)} = 19.812, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), the overall conclusion was that the interaction of the two learning types (cooperative and competitive) with the two personality types (extroverts and introverts) proved significant.

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

The first step was to calculate the descriptive statistics for each of the following groups on the posttest: the 60 introverts in both learning groups, the 60 extroverts in both learning groups, the 60 introverts and extroverts in the cooperative group, and the 60 introverts and extroverts in the competitive group. Table 8 displays the results for the two overall groups of cooperative and competitive learning.

TABLE 8  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR LEARNING TYPE ON THE POSTTEST

Learning Type			Statistic	Std. Error
Posttest	Cooperative	Mean	47.250	.5874
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	46.075
			Upper Bound	48.425
		Std. Deviation	4.5496	
		Minimum	40.0	
		Maximum	57.5	
		Skewness	-.004	.309
	Competitive	Mean	49.417	.7140
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	47.988
			Upper Bound	50.845
		Std. Deviation	5.5305	
		Minimum	40.0	
		Maximum	60.0	
		Skewness	-.073	.309

Table 8 shows that the means for the cooperative group was lower than that of the competitive group (47.25 compared to 49.42). Therefore, the competitive group outperformed the cooperative group significantly. Figure 1 displays the above conclusion.

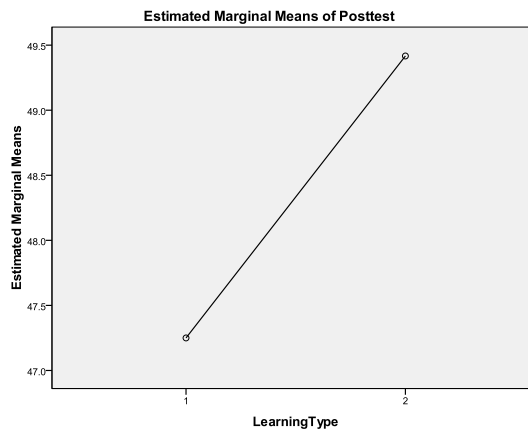


Figure 1 – Descriptive Statistics for Learning Type on the Posttest

Table 9 displays the results for the two overall groups of introverts and extroverts.

TABLE 9  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR PERSONALITY TYPE ON THE POSTTEST

Learning Type			Statistic	Std. Error
Posttest	Introverts	Mean	50.125	.6786
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	48.767
			Upper Bound	51.483
		Std. Deviation	5.2567	
		Minimum	40.0	
		Maximum	60.0	
		Skewness	-.170	.309
	Extroverts	Mean	46.542	.5702
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	45.401
			Upper Bound	47.683
		Std. Deviation	4.4171	
		Minimum	40.0	
		Maximum	55.0	
		Skewness	.001	.309

Table 9 shows that the means for the extroverts was lower than that of the introverts (46.54 compared to 50.13). Therefore, the introverts outperformed the extroverts significantly. Figure 2 displays the above conclusion.

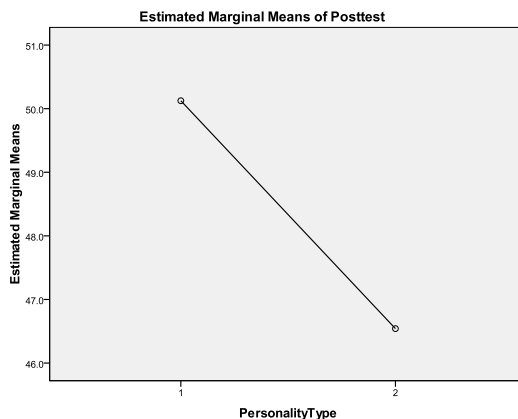


Figure 2 – Descriptive Statistics for Personality Type on the Posttest

Figure 3 below depicts the interaction of the learning modality and the personality type (the dashed line represents the competitive setting while the continuous line the cooperative setting). As is evident, while introverts benefited more from the competitive setting compared to the extroverts, there was no difference between the impact of the cooperative setting on introverts and extroverts.

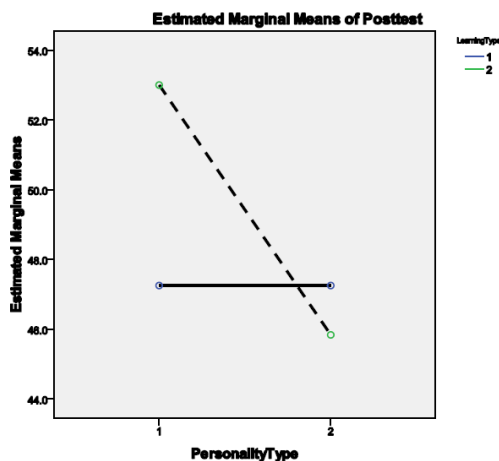


Figure 3 – Interaction of the Learning and Personality Types on the Posttest

Based on the ANOVA table revealing the significant differences, the first hypothesis of the study, that is, *there is no significant difference between the effect of competitive and cooperative learning on introvert EFL learners' oral proficiency* was rejected as the introverts in the competitive group outperformed the introverts in the cooperative group.

The second hypothesis which read *there is no significant difference between the effect of competitive and cooperative learning on extrovert EFL learners' oral proficiency* was rejected since the extroverts in the cooperative group outperformed the extroverts in the competitive group.

As for the third hypothesis, *competitive learning does not have a significantly different effect on the oral proficiency of introvert and extrovert EFL learners*, the introverts outperformed the extroverts in this mode of learning significantly; thus, the third null hypothesis was also rejected.

The fourth and last hypothesis, *cooperative learning does not have a significantly different effect on the oral proficiency of introvert and extroverts EFL learners*, was not rejected, however, as both subgroups undergoing the cooperative treatment gained the same mean score on the posttest.

Finally, the researchers calculated the parameter estimates of eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) to find out how much of the obtained difference could be explained by the two modalities of the independent variable. Table 10 provides that information.

TABLE 10  
ESTIMATES OF EFFECT SIZE FOR THE POSTTEST

Source	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>b</sup>
Corrected Model	.288	46.867	1.000
Intercept	.992	14418.031	1.000
Leaming Type	.059	7.243	.797
Personality Type	.146	19.812	.993
Leaming Type * Personality Type	.146	19.812	.993

a. R Squared = 0.288 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.269)

b. Computed using alpha = 0.05

As demonstrated in Table 10,  $\eta^2$  came out to be 0.06 and 0.15 which indicated that the two settings of learning accounted for 6% of the variability in the posttest scores while the two personality types did so for 15% of the variability. Moreover, to determine the strength of the findings of the research, that is, to evaluate the stability of the research findings across samples, effect size was also estimated. The observed power as shown in Table 10, came out to be 0.80 for the learning modality and 0.99 for the personality type which, being above 0.8, is generally considered a large effect size (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Therefore, the findings of the study could be considered strong enough for the purpose of generalization.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

There were somewhat mixed results in this study. While many studies generally portray the higher effectiveness of cooperative learning (e.g., Deutsch et al., 2006; Johnson et al., 2000; Marashi & Baygzadeh, 2010; Norman, 2005), this study did not prove categorically that cooperative learning is more advantageous. At first sight, one might think that the results delineated a contrary corollary to the above statement and that competitive learning proves more efficient than cooperative learning as those undergoing the competitive treatment performed better than those in the cooperative setting (with mean scores of 49.42 and 47.25, respectively). Yet this result is not the categorical finding of this research as although the students in the competitive group were more successful than those in the cooperative group, the extroverts in the cooperative group achieved more than the extroverts in the competitive group. Hence, while competitive teaching was more beneficial to the learners in all, the extrovert group was better off receiving cooperative instruction. The reason for this is perhaps due to the very nature of extroverts who seem to be more apt at engaging with one another in group activities.

The above conclusion is further substantiated by the other finding of this research: introverts outperformed extroverts in the competitive group meaning that competitive learning does not match the personality of extroverts. Thus, it is clear according to this study that extroverts do not benefit all that much from competitive learning and seem to do better in environments which encourage group activities and synergies.

As for the introverts, a predictable pattern of benefiting from teaching procedures could not be drawn as introverts in both the cooperative and competitive settings benefitted more than extroverts. In other words, introverts were generally better speakers than extroverts. This might be understandable if one puts the somewhat dominant paradigm of extroversion/introversion in context: extroverts outweigh introverts in amount of speech but they do not necessarily gain more than introverts when it comes to oral proficiency as a composite construct with one of its underlying factors being amount of speech. If tested on their own (as was the case in the TSE procedure of this study), they are perhaps not juxtaposed to a threat from others and may speak individually and freely with less intrinsically-propelled intimidation of the others in the immediate environment. Thus, once they feel not jeopardized by others, they function well and perform appropriately and efficiently in terms of oral production.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that although previous studies mainly supported cooperative learning, the competitive learning modality can also be effective especially when dealing with various kinds of personality traits. The studies carried out earlier had mostly tried to show the effect of these goal structures on the overall achievement of learners and they did not pay much attention to learners' personality type.

The extroverts in this study enjoyed being in both groups but since they were more willing to speak, they enjoyed cooperative learning more as it could be expected. The introverts 'being the reserved type' did not produce speech unless they were asked or prompted to.

Generally speaking, a sizeable fraction of people's focus often goes towards those who express themselves easily. This tendency should, nevertheless, be avoided by teachers in classrooms. While recognizing the essential human right of an individual to have a varying degree of appetite for verbal communication and thus refraining in totality from adopting a reprimanding approach towards the more taciturn individuals, teachers can resort to different techniques in encouraging the somewhat introverted learners in a class to talk. These techniques should not be such that they would give the impression that the teacher has identified the introverts in class and is thence giving them a bonus or an advantage; the last thing the teacher wants under these circumstances is any act on his/her behalf which may lead to a stigmatization of these kind of learners. One must not forget that introverts tend to be rather sensitive as well and approaches which might minimally disrespect them would most probably discourage them hugely from further participation in their community (classroom here being an example of such communities).

Another helpful tip in this regard which is of great value is to avoid putting introverts in groups with a large number of extroverts since the latter do not give the former the chance of speaking. Such groupings would perhaps drive the introverts to feel intimidated by the more outgoing peers in the group and, as a result, be discouraged to participate in class activities and ultimately lose their incentive to learn the language. This is where the role of the teacher as the facilitator gains paramount importance: if the teacher spots such a grouping in class, again the last measure s/he wants to take is to take the more quiet learner from that group and place him/her in another group. Such an act may most probably induce the notion in front of everyone that there is something wrong with that individual which would, in turn,

shatter him/her before his/her peers. Instead, the teacher could tactfully make a number of changes in some or even all the groups in the class simultaneously, one of them being taking one introvert from an extrovert-packed group to another. Such changes may seem to be part of the normal procedure of the class and provide the introverts the opportunity to engage in less challenging environments.

Indubitably, it is not only teachers who play the major role in the learning process; syllabus designers and textbook writers have a lot to say in this regard too. Some games can be designed for learners to encourage them to learn through both competition and cooperation. This can only be done if teachers and syllabus designers go hand in hand to facilitate the learning process by paying attention to learners' personality types and interests. Teacher guides should also be designed to ease the use of the books.

On a more general and societal level, the settings of classes in many cultures (Iran included) do not still support the full cooperative type. Students are perhaps not ready enough to embrace fully the culture of cooperativeness without competitiveness. Hence, for cooperative learning to demonstrate its potential, ongoing cultural capacity building is required.

The present study aimed at investigating the difference between cooperative and competitive learning among extroverts and introverts when it comes to oral proficiency. The subsequent recommendations are discussed here hoping that they would draw the attention of researchers in continuity of this study.

1. The same study could also be conducted in co-ed contexts to see whether the sitting together of male and female introverts and extroverts in cooperative and competitive setting would bring about different consequential equations.

2. Another demographic variable which could be adjusted is age. It would be useful to divide the study in various age ranges such as children, teens, or adults. The reaction of introverts and extroverts in various age ranges to the different types of learning contexts would perhaps be variant.

3. The second control variable in this study was language proficiency; another study could be conducted including EFL learners at either elementary or advanced levels.

4. A more detailed approach could also be taken in this regard: rather than oral proficiency in general, willingness to speak (WTC) could be taken as the dependent variable of such a study.

5. This study focused on extroversion/introversion as the personality variable of the study; other such researches could be conducted on various different personality factors and cognitive styles to see which learning modes benefits who most.

6. While this study was designed on the theoretical foundation of the confrontation of cooperative and competitive learning, a study could be conducted where the above confrontation would be substituted by the paradigm of complementarity. Accordingly, cooperative and competitive learning modalities would be merged to see how such a package of instruction would impact extroverts and introverts.

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# Cognitive Context's Role in Discourse Production

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**Abstract**—Relevance Theory's unique view about context is cognitive context, which is dramatically different from the traditional view on context. Cognition varies with each individual so different people will produce different texts even though they are in the same social and cultural context. This paper is dedicated to the studies of cognitive context's role in discourse production.

**Index Terms**—relevance theory, cognitive context, discourse production, mental schema, cultural schema

## I. INTRODUCTION

Relevance Theory is the core theoretic basis of cognitive pragmatics. In the framework of this theory, Sperber & Wilson point out that cognitive context is a set of assumptions stored in human being's brain, communication is an ostensive-inferential process and language users abide by the principle of relevance. To the writer/speaker, communication is an ostensive process, that is, to present his communicative intention as clear as possible. To the hearer/reader, communication is an inferential process. According to the ostensive behaviour of the speaker/writer, the hearer/reader achieves the communicative intention combining the linguistic form with contextual assumptions.

According to Relevance Theory, cognitive context varies according to different individuals, for they have different experiences and live in different environments. All of these aspects will play a very important role in the process of discourse production. As a result, we can use different kinds of texts to express the same idea. In order to communicate with each other successfully, the speaker/writer will produce appropriate text for the communication. The production of discourse consists of two kinds of activities: interior mental activity and exterior communicative activity. Communication, which sometimes involves specific behaviour, is the social activity in connection with special objects. Communication has the following same aspects as the other practical and mental activities. Firstly, they have their own special structure and aim at solving some problems or fulfill some tasks. Secondly, they have the social goal. Thirdly, communication, which is the same as other human activities, needs tools or means to fulfill its intention. This kind of tool or means is acquired by the individuals during the socialized process and is developed or improved in different practices in society. Different from other human activities, communication is aiming at human being, so communication is a cooperative and interactive behaviour from the beginning of its production and is based on social status and the relations among the people who live in the same society.

This interactivity is the important symbol of the communication. It is a special behaviour that is affected by different aspects and relations between the participants. Usually text is considered as the finished product. In fact it is a dynamic and creative activity in which people can finish or fulfill some social goals in certain situation.

Different individuals will learn something about the objective world in the natural and social environment through social division of labour. The world knowledge or encyclopaedic knowledge that is acquired by different people will be different both in depth or range and will reflect their value judgments. The producer of the text should know how much information is involved in a special communicative situation. Only by knowing this can make the receiver achieve his intentions, that is to say, the producer of the discourse should know what kind of discourse is appropriate in a situation and what kind is not.

Different people have different experiences and are affected by different cultures and some factors in the society. According to different experiences, different structured cognitive context factors come into being. All of these factors will influence the individual's production of the discourse.

## II. MENTAL SCHEMA AND SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION IN COGNITIVE CONTEXT AND CHARACTERISTIC STYLES

The definition of style is that it is the "trace of the context in the text." (Van. Dijk) From cognitive point of view, contexts vary according to different individuals for they have different experiences and live in different environments with different cognitive abilities. According to cognitive linguistics, all of these aspects play a role in forming a schema in human being's brain. Yule holds that schema is the structurization of the knowledge structure in mind. (1996) In the process of discourse production, different individuals have different mental schema in their minds and lead to different characteristic styles.

Individuality is very important for the varied and colorful social life. As a result of individuality, communication among human beings has its own distinguishing character and becomes various and complex. Under the general condition, people can use the same language for different kinds of communication. Different social communities and individuals can choose the same language for communication but it is not necessary for them to choose the same language behaviour and means, thus different kinds of discourses come into being. Anderson et al (1977) proves that different experiences, interests, gender etc. form different mental schemas in human being's mind even though they are affected by the same culture and further produce a higher level schema to help people 'see' the information. For example, as two famous writers in 1930s, Luxun's style is dramatically different from Xuzhimo's.

As the ordinary people, they also have their unique way to express the same ideas. For different communicative situations and different addressees, they can choose either direct or indirect ways to express their intentions; different syntax, lexical items and different semantic structures will be selected for expressing the same intention. Choice of style is something that no speaker or writer can avoid. From Sperber & Wilson's point of view, the participants in the communication must obey the principle of relevance. So style arises, we maintain, in the pursuit of relevance. In aiming at relevance, the speaker must make some estimations about the hearer's cognitive abilities and contextual resources, and in particular in what she/he chooses to make explicit and what she chooses to leave implicit. The following examples are a set of discourses that required by the owner of the telephone when they are not in.

(1) a. Hello, you've reached Jim and Sara. We can't pick up the phone right now, because we're doing something we really enjoy. Sara likes doing it up and down, and I like doing it left to right. So leave a message, and when we're done brushing our teeth, we'll get back to you.

b. Hi, I'm not home right now but my answering machine is, so you can talk to it instead. Wait for the beep.

c. Please leave a message. However, you have the right to remain silent. If you give up the right, everything you say will be recorded and will be used by us.

d. Hey, maybe I am too weak to catch the telephone. Please open your mouth to speak something.

e. Hi. I am probably home. I'm just avoiding someone I don't like. Leave me a message, and if I don't call back, it's you.

f. Hi, this is George. I'm sorry I can't answer the phone right now. Leave a message, and then wait by your phone until I call you back.

...

(cited from Chen Rudong, Cognitive Rhetoric)

These examples certainly demonstrate that communication has social and emotional dimensions. In these examples, someone asks the caller to leave a message; someone has some requirements to the caller; someone asks the caller to leave a message meticulously; someone shows the attitude to the caller; someone tells the caller how to leave a message and so on. From the perspective of the style, some speak without reservation; some speak tactfully, some speak humorously; some speak seriously...

Bartlett (1932) claims that the memory of text doesn't base on direct reproduction but construction. The production of discourse is also constructive; the writer/speaker combines the language knowledge and his /her own mental schema to construct new mental representations.

In the common spoken communication, the individual's mentality can be showed as the language character; in the written communication, it can be showed as the individual's style of the discourse. Participants need to constantly monitor the other participants as well as the other elements of the context and adapt their context models accordingly in order to be able to participate appropriately and competently. (van. Dijk.)

For example:

(2) In the spring of 1942, Chinese writer Duanmu Hongliang lived in Guilin. Everyday a lot of the young people who were interested in literature visited him. In order to devote himself to writing, he wrote a poem and put it on the door. It says: "女儿心上想情郎, 日写花笺千万行, 月上枝头方得息, 梦魂却又到西厢。"

(3) At the age of 92, Liang Shuming, a very famous scholar, put a notice on his door in order to avoid the interruption of the visitors. It says:

"漱溟今年九十有二, 精力犹衰, 谈话请以一小时为限, 有未尽之意, 可以改日续谈, 敬此陈情, 唯希鉴谅幸甚。

1986年3月梁漱溟敬白"

(cited from Chen Rudong, Cognitive Rhetoric, 2001)

The two examples are the discourses that the hosts decline to receive the visitors. Both of them perform the act of refusing, but each of them has their own characters. The structures of these two discourses are utterly different. Example (2) was written in the form of a love song. Its rhyme and rhythm is sweet and soft and gives one much food for thought. The girl is in love with her boyfriend so passionately that she goes on writing the letter all day and all night. By the implication of this love song, the visitors will receive the information that the writer is very busy and it is impolite to interrupt him. In example (3), the writer also uses the discourse to tell the visitors not to disturb him. His language, frank and honest, is like the daily conversation. The readers will be moved by the writer's sincere and earnestness. The notice not only includes such information as the age and energy of the writer but also shows the writer's attitude and requests to the visitors. Both of the examples perform an act of refusing but their styles are utterly different. The mental

schemata of the two writers are different and the potential readers they will communicate with are also different. The example (2) was written by a famous writer Duanmu Hongliang in Guilin when he was 30 years old and the example (3) was written by Liang Shuming at the age of 92 in 1986. Owing to their different ages, their attitudes to society and life are different. The potential readers of the example (2) and the example (3) are different too. The former are the young people who like literature and the latter are all kinds of people in society so their mentalities are different. As a result, the style of the discourse is dramatically different though they perform the same refusing act.

### III. CULTURAL SCHEMA IN COGNITIVE CONTEXT AND DISCOURSE PRODUCTION

Saussure (my translation) puts forward that the custom and culture of a nation will be reflected in their language. On the other hand, to some extent, it is language that form the nation. The culture and custom the people live in are branded on one's mind forever. As the mental character and common tendency, the mentality of a nation controls the tendency of a nation's behavior. It includes feeling, value, moral consciousness, religion and so on. People from different cultures form different cultural schemata in their mind. Language is the product of society so every aspects of language are associated with certain social culture and consciousness closely. It influences how to choose and construct the information in a text. That is, culture heavily influences discourse styles in systematic ways and the rules generated by culture determine the underlying structure of conversation. (Steven M. Hoenisch, 1998) For example, English, American, Japanese and Chinese will write a letter in different forms. Chinese and Japanese write the address of the letter from "the big" to "the small", from "the far" to "the near", from "the macro" to "the micro", from "the vague" to "the specific", however, English and American write it in an utterly different order. Just because of different cultures and customs the people live in, their constructions of text vary according to their different cultural schemata in cognitive context.

When people receive a compliment, the westerners will say "Thank you", while the Chinese are likely to say "惭愧, 惭愧 (I'm shamed)" or "您过奖了 (You flattered me)". For example, one day, you wear a beautiful dress. People will say: "How beautiful your dress is!". Hearing this, the Japanese and Chinese will say: "No, I have worn it for several years." Or "那里, 那里". On the contrary, the Americans will say: "Thank you, it is bought by my mother."

In the western society, they do pay no attention to the difference between the old and the young. While Chinese have a restriction on the role of discourse, for example, Chinese say: "您老辛苦了" or "您老当心" to show their respects to the old but the westerners do not. Let's look at the following example:

(4) Cooper: Hey, Wang, I hear you just have a paper published. I'd like to take you and Zhou out tomorrow evening to dinner to celebrate. How about it?

Wang: Oh, no. That's really not necessary. Why don't you come over and have dinner with us?

Cooper: I wouldn't hear of it. On my birthday you made me the best Chinese dinner I've ever had. I'm not much of a cook myself, but it would give me great pleasure to take you both out to eat. You choose any kind of food you'd like.

Cooper and Wang are colleagues. They address each other in a casual way. Cooper addresses "Wang" directly and doesn't add "LAO" before "Wang". If the conversation is between two Chinese, the words that indicate the difference between the old and the young will be added to the surname.

In the communication, Americans always put forward the requirements straightly and then the polite expressions. On the contrary, Japanese put a lot of polite expressions before their requirements. When Americans read the letter from Japanese, they will read from the end to the beginning, so do Japanese read the letter from Americans. Different cultures and customs influence the cognitive context of the people. As the result, they will influence the construction of discourse.

### IV. FRAME AND KNOWLEDGE SCRIPT IN COGNITIVE CONTEXT AND DISCOURSE PRODUCTION

#### A. Omission in Discourse Production

Minsky (1975) puts forward that our knowledge is stored in the memory in the form of data to construct different frames. These frames represent models of situation. The writer/speaker has acquired some conventional knowledge from his/her experiences in society. These conventional knowledge constitutes different "frames" in their mind. The frame will influence the production of discourse. When one of the frames is activated, the addressor will have a lot of assumptions about it, that is, what the people will do and what are included in it. For example, when the classroom is mentioned, the reader/speaker will think about the desk, the chair, the teacher and the student. The "classroom" can stimulate the whole frame that consists of a lot of relevant things. It is not necessary to describe all of the things in a classroom. Indeed, precisely because the reader/hearer are normally able to supplement information in discourse with their own activated, inferred or otherwise construed personal or social knowledge, discourses need not be very explicit. For example:

(5) The sound of reading is from the classroom.

Hearing this, the reader/hearer will have a scene in his mind: the students are sitting on the chair and reading the book. Look at another example:

(6) She went to the hospital by taxi.

In this example, it is not necessary for the writer/speaker to tell the following steps: first, she called a taxi and got into it, then got off from it. The reader/hearer can understand it clearly without the detail description of the whole process. Owing to the “frame”, the addressor can omit some information in the communication and the reader/hearer can complement it unconsciously. Given a speaker who wants to tell a story about a personal event, a journalist having to write about a political event, or a scholar writing a research paper, they are all confronted with mental and practical task what information they have about the events talked about should be expressed, and what should not or need not be expressed in their actual text or talk. It seems obvious that the strategies managing this selection are based on information supplied by the cognitive context of the speaker/ writer.

(7) Woman: Have we spoken to everyone?

Man: I've spoken to his friend and if you have seen all his family, I suppose we can go.

Woman: Yes. I expect they want to be alone now.

In this example, both husband and wife know conventional knowledge about the funeral. There are shared assumptions about the funeral in their cognitive contexts. In the communication, they can omit a lot of information about the shared assumptions in this frame. Let's try to complement all of the omitted information in the conversation.

(8) W: (M1) (We should have spoken to everyone before we leave) Have we spoken to everyone?

M: (M2) (Yes, I think we have.) I've spoken to his friend and if you've seen all his family. (M3)(then we've spoken to all his family and friends.)I suppose we can go.

W: Yes, (M4) (I think so. We should be going at once because) I expect they want to be alone now.

However, the example (8) sounds redundant as the conversation between wife and husband. Owing to some shared frames or knowledge scripts, people can omit some elements in discourse production to communicate effectively.

#### B. *Lexical Choice in the Process of Discourse Production*

From cognitive point of view, the words in a frame must be relevant to one another, otherwise, they will sound unacceptable. For example, if we want to describe a mental state of sadness, the words selected must be relevant to the theme of the discourse because people can't mingle different feeling into one in their cognitive contexts.

According to relevance theory, the writer/speaker will help the addressee acquire the most relevant explanation with least effort. When a word is considered as the theme of the discourse, the other words must be relevant to it. If the other words are irrelevant to it, the discourse will be difficult to be understood no matter how many efforts the addressee takes. The whole discourse will sound ridiculous. While producing the discourse, there are a lot of assumptions in the addressor's mind, for example, the assumptions about “who”, “where”, “what”, “when” and the like in a narration and the word about these assumptions must be relevant to the theme word though they are not determined. By choosing the words correctly can the effective discourse be constructed. For example:

(9) a. It is a good textbook. The content is new.

(9) b. It is a good textbook. The engine is strong.

(9) b sounds ridiculous because engine is irrelevant to the textbook.

#### C. *Spatial Order and Discourse Production*

Living in the society, human being has its special cognition about the space. All of these assumptions about “spatial order” are stored in their brain to form different spatial frames. They will obey the spatial order when they produce the discourse about the space. The spatial order includes “from the high to the low”, “from right to left” or vice versa. Here is an example:

(10) My house consists of two floors: the ground floor and the first floor. On the ground floor there is the dining-room, the lounge or sitting-room, the kitchen and the hall. In the hall we keep a stand for hats, coats and umbrellas. A staircase leads from the hall to the landing on the first floor. On this floor there are four bedrooms, a bathroom and lavatory...

If this kind of discourse is not constructed according to certain spatial order, it will be difficult to be understood.

### V. ADDRESSOR'S ESTIMATION OF THE ADDRESSEE'S COGNITIVE CONTEXT AND DISCOURSE PRODUCTION

According to Sperber and Wilson, communication is a process in which people attempt to receive communicative effects by taking least effort as possible as they can. (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). In order to communicate with each other smoothly, the addressor continues to estimate on the cognitive context of the addressee. By this estimation, he will try his best to construct appropriate discourse for successful communication. He should know who he is, as what he is present, for whom he is speaking, and so on. For example, parents speak differently to children than to adults, women differently to other women than to men.

If he can not have a correct estimation of the addressee's cognitive context, the communication will be a failure or bring about the feeling of humor. That is, the cognitive context defines the way in which language users socially self-define themselves and other participants in the present communicative situation.

Chinese has two styles: classical style of writing and the vernacular of writing. In the past time, only the people who had studied in the old-style private school spoke and wrote in classical style of writing. If people speak to the illiterate in classical style, the communication would not be successful or full of humorousness.

For example:

(11) Once upon a time, there was a son of a rich man who owned a big shop. The son was so stupid that he learnt nothing in the private school. One day, several visitors came to visit his parents. Just at that moment the son was in the shop, so the visitors asked: "Is your 'Lingzun' in?" The son answered, "No". Then the visitors asked again, "Is your 'Lingtang' in?" The son answered, "Lingzun and Lingtang are not available in our shop."

In classical style of Chinese, "Lingzun" and "Lingtang" mean father and mother respectively. The foolish son did not know this. What he knew was that he was in the shop to sell the goods to the customers. When the visitors asked if his "Lingzun" and "Lingtang" were in, he thought that they wanted to buy some goods called "Lingzun" and "Lingtang". The son is foolish enough to be laughed at, however, the visitors in this joke did not receive the information they wanted to get. From this joke, we can see that the wrong estimation of the addressee's cognitive context will lead to the failure of the communication.

There is another example:

(12) One day a work team went to a faraway village to take a census. They asked an old woman: "Do you have spouse?" Hearing this the woman was astonished because she didn't know what the word "spouse" meant. In her cognitive context, there was not the definition of "spouse", so she could not understand the meaning of the question. Of course the investigator also could not receive the information he wanted. Then he continued to ask the woman: "Do you have husband?" The woman answered: "Yes". The communication was fulfilled successfully.

Only by the correct estimation of the addressee's cognitive context can the addressor produce the adequate discourses for successful communications. If the addressor makes sure that the addressee has mastered the key information about the thing, he will omit a lot in the construction of discourses because these information have been known by the addressee. Considering the addressee's cognitive context in different situations, the addressor will adopt effective ways to express his communicative intentions.

For example:

(13) A: What time is it?

B: The milkman has just arrived.

This is a classical example in the discourse analysis. In this example A wants to know what time it is, but B does not answer his question directly. If the communication is successful, it means that both A and B know that the milkman always comes here at a certain time and B knows that A knows it. According to the second principle of relevance: that the presumption of optimal relevance is ostensively communicated. It claims that the act of communication is relevant to the addressee. By answering indirectly, the speaker encourages the hearer to speculate on – perhaps draw conclusions from – a piece of information that she would not have derived from the direct answer. Before producing the discourse, B evaluates that A has "the information" (the milkman always comes here at a certain time) in his cognitive context, that is to say, B knows that A can understand his answer correctly. If B thinks that A does not know this fact, he will answer in another way (It is eight.).

## VI. COGNITIVE CONTEXT AND ARRANGEMENT OF INFORMATION IN DISCOURSE

### A. *Salience in the Cognitive Context and Discourse Production*

When the writer/speaker describes or narrates something, the salient character of the thing is in their cognitive context. Depending on our cognitive ability to direct our attention, different aspects are highlighted, resulting in different linguistic expressions. The user of language tells us what's going on in their minds when they produce the words and sentences. During the process of producing the discourse, which information will be included in a summary, abstract, lead, title or headline, which information will be placed first or last, does not only depend on the conceptual or semantic importance of the propositions, but also on their contextually determined prominence or importance. They will put the most salient aspects in an important position. They write/speak it first and then other things.

The order of prominence of propositions in discourse is also a function of relevance. That is, information that is relatively and contextually important, that is relevant to the speech participants, may generally be expressed first, on top, or in special discourse categories such as titles or summaries, or be repeated several times.

For example:

(14) a: John hit Mary in the face.

(14) b: It was John who hit Mary in the face.

(14) c: It was in the face that John hit Mary.

(14) d: It was Mary that John hit.

(14) a just tells us a fact that John hit Mary. (14)b, (14)c and (14)d stresses the different salient points respectively. Though the basic meaning of these sentences is the same, but the most important information the writer/speaker wants to transform is different. Another example cited from Liao Qiu zhong(1988):

(15) a. 眼镜蛇: 为我国著名的毒蛇之一, 因颈部有一对白边黑心的眼睛状斑纹而得名。遇敌时, 前半身竖起, 颈部膨大, 斑纹醒目。具沟牙; 分布于我国长江以南各省。(《中学生生物实用大全》)

(15) b. Cobra is one of the famous kinds of poisonous snakes in our country. It has its name for the white and black glasses-like stripe in the neck. When it meets enemies, the upper body erects, the neck expands and the stripe becomes striking to the eye. It has groove-like teeth and is distributed over the places on the south of the Yangtse river. (my

translation)

In this example, glasses-like stripe and groove-like teeth can stand for the cobra, so in the description of cobra, people will put the special point in an important position. Compared with the glassed-like stripe, groove-like teeth is less important, so it is put after the former.

#### B. Old Information and New Information

The content of the discourse includes the old and new information. Because of the linear character of the language, the writer/speaker must consider the order of the language structure while transforming information. Within the framework of relevance theory, the order is restricted by cognitive context. The arrangement of language structure must obey the principle: from “the old” to “the new”, from definite things to indefinite things. For example:

(16) The king went to have his breakfast. He took a cup of milk, but it immediately turned to gold. Then he took a piece of bread, and that also turned into gold.

In this example, “the king”, the starting point of the sentence, has been mentioned in the preceding part of the text. It is old information. “went to have his breakfast”, which is not mentioned in the above text, is new information. In the first clause of the second sentence, “he” refers to “the king” that has been talked about before, so it is the old information. In the second clause, the word “it” which means “a cup of milk” in the first clause, is old information. “immediately turned into gold” is the new content that the writer wants to transform to the reader, so it is the new information. From the above analysis, we know that the structure of the discourse obeys the rule of “from old information to new information”.

### VII. THE ADDRESSOR’S INTENTION AND DISCOURSE PRODUCTION

According to relevance theory, the addressor has both informative intention and communicative intention in the communication. For example, A asks: “Can you tell me how I can get to the railway station?” The informative intention is the literal meaning of the sentence. The communicative intention is that he wants help. In different communicative fields, addressors will construct different discourses for different intentions. The communicator’s intention decides her/his discourse strategy. For example, in a personal letter, personal experience and interesting things will be involved. In a business letter, the discourse will be constructed in a different way. Look at the following examples:

- (17) a. I wonder whether you can come?
- (17) b. I wondered whether you could come?
- (17) c. I am wondering whether you can come?
- (17) d. I was wondering whether you could come?

The above sentences are different in the form of “time” and “aspect” and reflect the addressor’s different communicative intentions respectively.

- (18) a. Can you help me?
- (18) b. Could you help me?
- (18) c. Will you help me?

These sentences also reflect the subtle difference of the addressor’s communicative intentions. Different communicative intentions can influence the production of the discourse.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

With the rising of cognitive science, more and more linguists begin to take psychological factors or mental activities into account. As a new branch of linguistics, cognitive pragmatics comes into being accordingly, which gives rise to a dynamic notion of context: cognitive context. In the Relevance Theory put forward by Sperber and Wilson, the co-author claim that cognitive context is a set of assumptions stored in participants’ mind rather than the pre-existed or shared knowledge before the communication or the objective facts before us. It is the cognition that is produced in the dynamic process of communication. The cognitive context lies in the fact that language users can actively manipulate, choose and produce a favourable context for discourse production and interpretation. In addition, according to Relevance Theory, both the manipulation and the choice of the context are based on mutual manifestness. As the production and inference of the information, communication is the process in which both the addressor and the addressee construct and choose the appropriate cognitive context for communicating successfully.

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# The Status of Teacher's Questions and Students' Responses: The Case of an EFL Class

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**Abstract**—Whereas a lot of classroom research conducted in English classes have studied the role of classroom interaction, a considerable number of research has been concerned with the linguistic aspects of classroom interaction, many of which dealt with the type of questions asked in the EFL classes. Previously it was demonstrated that teachers make adjustments in their questioning techniques when communicating with their students. In the same line of inquiry, the present study tried to find out what techniques of questioning teachers use to engage their students in classroom interaction. The present paper, which is based on a case study, investigates classroom interactions in terms of questions being asked by the teacher. To this end, Bloom's (1956) taxonomy was selected as the framework of analysis. A class of six adolescent students, who were both male and female, participated in the study. For the purpose of this study, three 45-minute sessions of classroom interactions between the teacher and the participant were randomly tape recorded. After analyzing the obtained data, it was found that the inference question, among different question types, was the most frequently posed question in the target classroom with 27% of occurrence. Based on the obtained results, it is claimed that the study is a contribution to the characterization of teacher-student interactions. Moreover, some suggestions for further research are presented.

**Index Terms**—teacher questioning, classroom interaction, inference questions

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is a large body of literature available on observational studies completed in both ESL and EFL classes. Whereas a lot of classroom research conducted in English classes have studied the role of classroom interaction, a considerable number of research has been concerned with the linguistic aspects of interaction and second language acquisition (SLA). In this respect, there have been many studies on in-class teacher questions many of which have dealt with the type of question asked in EFL classes. For the purpose of this study, a review of related literature seems noteworthy. To begin with, there is an overview of theories on the role of questions in SLA, as well as studies of questions in EFL classes. It is believed that a review of studies sheds light on the ways in which teacher questions vary depending on the class type, and is a necessary step toward ascertaining possible causes for different questions and response behaviors in EFL classes.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As noted by Gall (1970), questions play a pivotal role in teaching. He calls upon researchers to identify the criteria of effective questions and determine how questions can help students achieve educational objectives. The differences in the way in which teachers use questions have been documented. Barnes (1990) states that teachers use questions to channel students into specific modes of participation. He discusses, for instance, the use of closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions are expected to elicit a closed set of responses (e.g. "Where were you born?"). In contrast, open-ended questions leave open the nature and length of the response (e.g. "What did you do on your trip?"). According to Barnes, the use of these two question types influences students' participation. By being asked closed questions, the student is normally expected to reproduce information or reasoning. On the other hand, open-ended questions help the student to explore the subject matter and encourage him/her to think aloud. Whereas closed questions encourage passive participation, open-ended questions cause students to take a more active role in the classroom.

Chaudron (1988) also describes the role of teachers' questions as an important aid to get students' attention, and enhancing learners' verbal replies and assessing their improvement, but states that questions alone may not always promote a great amount of interaction. He reports on many characteristics of teachers' questions. He maintains, for example, that teachers ask proportionately more display than referential questions. He also reports that EFL teachers have a tendency to repeat or rephrase questions more often than teachers in native speaker classes. Further, he mentions that comprehension question checks, confirmations checks and clarification requests occur more frequently in EFL classes. He suggests "... that the adjustments in teacher speech to nonnative-speaking learners serve the temporary purpose of maintaining communication-clarifying information and eliciting learners' responses..." (p. 55).



Brock (1984, cited in Godfrey, 2001, p. 20) notes that teachers in EFL classes pose far fewer referential questions than native speakers do in informal conversation. Her study looks at the effect of higher frequencies of referential questions in adult classes. She claims that referential questions are on a higher cognitive level than display questions. In her study, two teachers were trained in the use of referential questions, and assigned to teach two classes for adults. These two teachers increased the number of referential questions used significantly as compared to two control group teachers. This resulted in learner responses that were on average twice as long as and more syntactically complex than their responses to display questions. In addition, the students used a far greater number of logical connectors. She suggests that the increased use of referential questions may give students opportunities for practice and output that may contribute to their acquisition process.

White and Lightbown (1984) assert that teachers tend to dominate the class, control the topics and speaking turns of the conversations, and ask most of the questions. In addition, they ask a lot of display questions and help students respond to them. Moreover, students repeat and rephrase questions if they do not get an immediate response to the initial question. They argue that the result of these series of repetitions is an extended sequence of interactions during which the teacher and the student together create the students' answer, rather than students producing the question unaided. White and Lightbown's observations are based to a large extent on high school EFL classes in Canada, a group that is, more or less, similar to the class type that participated in the current study.

All of the above studies suggest that teachers in general modify their questioning behaviors to meet their instructional goals. Based on the results from these studies, there is now evidence that teachers modify their questioning techniques as a result of perceptions of their students' comprehension and general language proficiency. With reference to the aim of the present study regarding questioning techniques, the results of these investigations provide valuable background information.

#### *Typological Frameworks*

Questions can be used for different aims in education. They can be asked for the purpose of directing the students to the target, providing them to think at high level and effectively by directing them to questioning, determining the efficiency of education, increasing students' attendance, improving students' listening skills and increasing tolerance and respect. It can be benefited from questioning for the purpose of providing effective classroom management and decreasing classroom problems.

Bond (2007) presents some suggestions about questioning by paying attention to questioning strategies to decrease classroom management problems. These are:

1. Prepare a number of questions when writing the lesson plan;
2. Form prospects of the learners' probable reactions before commencing questioning;
3. Ask questions from a variety of students;
4. Signal students before questioning;
5. Question at the level of students' proficiency;
6. Ask questions that elicit accurate responses;
7. Offer students adequate wait time after asking a question;
8. Vary and change the way students answer the questions;
9. Ask questions from different learners;
10. Respond to each of the replies and correct the errors;
11. Ask follow-up questions;
12. Encourage and motivate learners to ask questions.

There are different question forms in teaching-learning process. Grouping questions differs according to different authors. In one of the earliest taxonomies, Bloom (1956, cited in Brown, 2007, p. 172) categorizes questions into the following groups:

1. Knowledge: the recalling of formerly-learned material (e.g. What is the special name of this triangle?)
2. Comprehension: the ability to understand the meaning (e.g. Explain how you got that answer.)
3. Application: the ability to use learned material such as rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws and theories in new and concrete situations (e.g. Give me an example of a situation that you may have this experience.)
4. Inference: the ability to form conclusions that are not directly stated in instructional materials. (e.g. How do you feel about it?)
5. Analysis: the ability to breakdown material into its elements so that its organizational structure may be understood. This may involve the classification of parts, exploration of the association between them, and identification of organizational principles (e.g. Why did that work in this case?)
6. Synthesis: the ability to collect different parts and put them together to create a new whole. Synthesis encourages learners to form something new and rely on innovative and creative thinking. (e.g. What would happen if you called him?)
7. Evaluation: the ability to assess the value of materials, the explanation to problems or the details about particular cultures (What do you think?)

Barnes (1976, cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 797), for instance, distinguished four types of questions: (1) factual questions (e.g. What?), (2) reasoning questions (e.g. How?, Why?), (3) open questions, which require no reasoning, (4) social

questions, that are questions that affect learner behavior through controlling or appealing. Barnes also made a distinction between closed questions (i.e. questions that are structured with just one acceptable answer in mind) and open questions (i.e. questions that permit a number of different acceptable answers).

By handling the questions with a cross-disciplinary review, Kearsley (1976, cited in Shomoossi, 1997) conducted questions in verbal discourse and made the following taxonomy of questions' functions:

1. Echoic: those which ask for the repetition or reiteration of a statement or verification whether an utterance has been understood as intended (e.g. Excuse me?! Pardon me?! What?!).
2. Epistemic: those which projects to acquire information:
  - (a) Referential: intended to provide contextual information about situations, occasions, activities, purposes, relations or possessions (Wh-questions, for example).
  - (b) Evaluative: asked to check the addressee's understanding of the answer (sometimes called display, test or known information questions)
3. Expressive: conveying attitudinal information to the addressee (e.g. Are you coming or aren't you?)
4. Social control: used to maintain power by preserving control of the dialog.
5. Attentional: allows the questioner to govern the direction of the dialog (meta-message is "listen to me" or "think about this").
6. Verbosity: asked only for the sake of politeness or to sustain conversation (e.g. cocktail party questions).

Long and Sato (1984, cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 797) modified Kearsley's taxonomy to account for the different types of teachers' questions they observed in ESL classes. The key distinction was between echoic questions, which ask for the reiteration of an utterance or verification that it has been understood as intended, and epistemic questions, which serve the purpose of acquiring information. Long and Sato also termed Kearsley's evaluative epistemic questions as "display questions". By and large, this distinction is similar but not identical to the open/closed distinction of Barnes.

In his research, Bishop (1991) introduces what the questions are used for in classroom discussions and groups question forms as open-ended, information-seeking, diagnostic, challenge/testing, priority and sequence, action, prediction, hypothetical, extension and generalization ones.

Martin (2003) groups the question forms in three as genuine, test and provoking ones, and indicated that 61 % of the teachers ask test questions (How many sides in a triangle? How can we simplify this fraction?), 25 % of them ask genuine questions (How many different triangles did you find? Which measurement did you use?), and 14 % of them ask provoking questions (Why is that? How could you achieve that?).

In general, according to Ellis (2008), "studies of teachers' questions in the L2 classroom have focused on the frequency of the different types of questions, wait-time (the length of the time the teacher is prepared to wait for an answer), the nature of the learners' output when answering questions, the effect of the learners' level of proficiency on questioning, the possibility of training teachers to ask more communicative questions, and the variation evident in teachers' questioning strategies" (p. 798). In much of the research, it has been assumed that L2 learning will be improved provided that the questions lead to active student participation and negotiation of meaning.

### III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As can be seen, numerous studies of teacher questions in English classes have been carried out, mostly of which demonstrate that teachers make adjustments in their questioning techniques when communicating with their students. In these studies, the focus is frequently on the type of questions being asked.

In the same line of inquiry, this study aimed to explore the issue from a particular perspective. More specifically, the present study tried to find out what techniques of questioning teachers use to get their students involved in classroom interactions as well as to help construct their knowledge of language. To this end, Bloom's (1956) taxonomy was selected as the framework of analysis, since it was believed that this taxonomy would better aid to interpret and analyze the types of questions having been asked in the classroom.

For the purpose of this study, it was also believed that case studies due to their better control and manageability would provide the researcher with an appropriate tool to analytically probe into the teacher-question-student-response phenomenon. Therefore, the current paper is a case study which intends to investigate classroom interactions in terms of questions being asked by the teacher.

### IV. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

This study was conducted in a language institute in Tehran. The class comprised of six adolescent students, aged between thirteen and nineteen. The class members were both male and female. Almost all of the class members had started studying English about one year prior to the date of the study, and at the time the study was being conducted they were considered as lower-intermediate EFL learners at the beginning of the sixth semester. The learners are students of high- and junior high school. They were passing a course of English communication based on Top Notch 2, Volume A.

With a first insight into the condition of class members, it was found that the researcher would face a homogenous class. According to a person-to-person dialog between the researcher and each of the participants, all of the subjects seem to have integrative intrinsic motivation to learn English, since they claim they like the language and the culture of people very much. Except one the participants who was already a university student, the rest have this plan to get into university in the near future and two of them were actually preparing themselves to sit the university examinations that year. Class members seemed to be outgoing, easy going and more or less smart. During the study, they creatively and actively participated in class discussions and exercises. In the course of the study, it was found out that two of the class members, both female, seemed to be more talented in learning new things. Among class students, only one male was found to be introvert so that he needed to be *pushed* to engage in class discussions, however, from the viewpoint of the researcher his knowledge of language was regarded as satisfactory and fit to his level.

The major problem with most of the students is their listening, and almost all of them claimed that they were not satisfied with their listening skill. However, they would all respect the class regulations and bring the transcriptions of the listening of their books with themselves every session. Unfortunately, during the study, there was not a chance of tapping into students' knowledge of writing. However, regarding students' reading ability, it can be said that the subjects were keen in comprehending new texts, of different topics, at their level.

Finally, it should be noted that except one of the students who was a bilingual Persian-Turkish learner, the other class members were monolingual and their mother tongue is Persian.

### B. Design

This study favors the *ex post facto* design in that there is no cause-effect relationship. There is also no treatment. The researcher has no control over the selection and the manipulation of the variables in what has already occurred to the subjects of the study. Moreover, the design of the present study can be considered as descriptive, since the researcher presents descriptions concerning naturally occurring phenomena connected with language development and processing, and there is no major statistical operation used in the study.

### C. Procedure

As was mentioned earlier, in the present study the data was collected from a group of adolescent English learners studying in the lower-intermediate level in language institute. The subjects were studying Top Notch, volume 2; and besides the main course book, all of them participated in a 2-hour movie class one session a week. As for the curiosity of the researcher-not for the purpose of the study-every single individual was informally interviewed during the course of study, in order to grasp the idea of how homogenous the class was regarding the students' background, age, major, social interaction, social behavior, degree of extroversion, and other affective variables.

In order to collect data necessary for the interpretation of teacher-questions-student-responses, it was decided that three sessions of classroom interactions between the teacher and the participant be randomly tape recorded. The recording time of each session was 45 minutes. During the recording period, participants were not aware that their interactions with the teacher as well as with each other was being recorded. The researcher who was also the teacher of the class did his best not to alter or modify his instruction for the purpose of the study so that classroom interactions be as natural as possible. Therefore, it was expected that the study would have almost no impact on classroom interaction, one part of which was teacher questioning and students' responses.

In order for the participants to attend with preparation and to answer the questions appropriately, they were provided with sufficient time to think about the questions being asked. After the observation was over, the tape recordings were transcribed for the purpose of subsequent analysis.

### D. Data Analysis and Discussion

In accordance with the pre-determined purpose of the study, the data related to the classroom interaction between the teacher and the students was first gathered by means of tape recording and then transcribed for further analysis. The content of the transcription acquired from the tape-recorded data was analyzed by using a technique called content analysis (Silverman; 1993). The steps of the activity related to this content analysis are as follows:

- In the first step, the recorded data was examined and the questions were transcribed one by one.
- The questions were classified and their frequency was examined in terms of the subject as well as the class of the questions.
- The analysis of the results was presented as of percentage and frequency by tabulating the data in direction of the categories determined.

Next, a table was designed to record the results from the content analysis of the transcribed data. Based on Bloom's taxonomy of teachers' questions, six different categories of teachers' questions were identified and the frequency of occurrence of every question type was entered into the table. Table I gives an overview of the results.

TABLE I  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF THE OCCURRENCE OF QUESTIONS

<i>Question Type</i>	<i>Frequency of Occurrence</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Knowledge	36	11
Comprehension	72	22
Application	52	16
Inference	87	27
Analysis	24	8
Synthesis	8	3
Evaluation	43	13
<i>Overall</i>	<i>322</i>	<i>100</i>

As can be seen from the table, a total number of 322 questions were raised by the teacher in this study. Among questions, inference questions were found to be the most frequently occurring question types posed in the target classroom, by the frequency of 87 questions and total percentage of 27%. Comprehension question types ranked second by the occurrence of 72 in the total number of 322, i.e. 22 per cent of frequency. Application, evaluation, knowledge and analysis questions ranked third, fourth, fifth and sixth respectively. Synthesis questions were found to be the least posed questions in our study of classroom teacher questioning.

Based on the results from the study, one might say that the teacher in this study used inference questions far more than other types of questions. According to Bloom (1956, cited in Brown, 2007), inference questions are the ones that are posed to elicit conclusions about matters which were not directly stated in instructional materials (p. 172). Inference questions essentially strive to illustrate logical and rational proficiencies of learners, that is, their competence. In so doing, they address “such questions as what types of knowledge transformations occur in different learning processes; what is the validity of knowledge obtained through different types of learning, how prior knowledge is used; what knowledge can be derived from the given input and the prior knowledge; how learning goals and their structure influence learning processes; how learning processes can be classified and evaluated from the viewpoint of their logical capabilities, etc” (Michalski, 1993, p. 3).

The rationale behind inference questions stresses the role of learner’s background knowledge, and the significance of learning goals. Question words such as “how” and “why” are commonly used to make inference questions. Examples of inference questions are “What did he mean by saying ...?” and “What conclusions can you draw from ...?”. It can be said that inference questions are a great help in guiding learners toward brainstorming, thinking about subject matters and drawing conclusions.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Questioning is an essential component of teaching. Tsui, Marton, Mok and Ng (2004) assert that questions can draw learners’ attention to the critical aspects of the object of learning, and open up the space for more investigation on the part of learners. As for this study, it was intended to investigate how, in a given setting, teacher questioning is associated with instruction and how it directs later student responses. In so doing, Bloom’s typological framework was developed for the purpose of describing and analyzing classroom discourse, with a focus on question-response interactions. The framework was used to analyze the ways in which the teacher had used questions to structure and lead classroom interactions. It is believed, now, that the representation of teacher questioning in the classroom contributes to an understanding of how questions can inspire students to respond as part of a teaching sequence (Chin, 2006). The analysis of classroom discourse reveals that teacher’s questions are not only evaluative but also supportive in that it seems that questions provoke deeper thinking in the students. Moreover, it engages students in more cognitively active roles. As Chin (2006, p. 1336) puts it, teachers’ questions stimulate students to “formulate hypotheses, predict outcomes, brainstorm ideas, generate explanations, make inferences and conclusions, as well as to self-evaluate and reflect on their own thinking.” It can be hypothesized that by questioning, the teacher provides not only conceptual but also linguistic scaffolding (ibid).

Teachers’ questions that elicit information about students’ understanding can also be considered as an essential tool for formative assessment. Furthermore, as Black and Harrison (2001) point out, since the quality of teachers’ questions can affect the degree to which the questions do or do not extend students’ thinking and prolong their ideas, both the actual content of the questions and the ways of following up on the responses, i.e. feedback, become remarkable. Thus, an implication of the present study would be that teachers ought to think about how questions can be constructed and implemented to develop students’ learning.

This study also contributes to the description and characterization of teacher-student discourse. By the aid of an analysis of the relationship between the aspects of teacher-student interactions, some facilitating strategies related to teacher questioning can be identified. As a case in point, students can be developed mentally through thoughtful teacher-led but not teacher-centered discourse. As leaders of classroom interactions in shaping students’ learning, teachers ought to position themselves as facilitators of talk for thinking. It is worth mentioning that, apparently, students ask fewer questions than teachers in class and that students do not ask other students almost any questions. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers provide students with opportunities to exchange information and experience about making the lesson more active. In so doing, teachers are recommended to increase student-teacher and student-student interaction.

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# The Effect of Using Print Media on Children's L2 Literacy Development: A Longitudinal Study

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**Abstract**—This paper tries to examine the effect of using print media in the classroom on the children's L2 literacy development in an EFL context. Since reading is regarded as a chief goal, in many second/foreign language teaching situations, it receives a special focus. Media as a tool for language learning/teaching, can help both instructed and non-instructed learners to overcome the difficult task of language learning. In order to determine the effects of print media usage on the development of children's foreign language reading abilities, 30 children aged between 7-8 familiar to English alphabet were selected. Based on DIBELS performance, participants were homogenized and assigned as low group. According to National Reading Panel, story books, magazines and newspapers were used to teach five areas of reading proficiency, i.e. phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension. After one year of instruction, based on DIBELS performance, participants were assigned to medium and high groups; implying the effect of direct instruction and print media usage in classrooms for developing foreign language reading abilities.

**Index Terms**—L2 literacy development, reading ability, print media use, childhood education, DIBELS (dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills)

## I. INTRODUCTION

In most of the second or foreign language teaching situations, reading receives a particular attention. Richards and Renandya (2002) remark a number of reasons for this. First, reading is considered as one of the most important goals of foreign language learners; because learners want to be able to read for different reasons such as reading for information and pleasure, reading for study purposes and reading for their career. In other words, the ability to read in a foreign language is all that students want to acquire in most EFL contexts. Second, good reading texts provide opportunities to introduce new topics for discussion as well as to studying language (e.g., vocabulary, grammar, and idioms), they also provide good models for writing. Therefore, extensive exposure to comprehensible texts can enhance the process of language learning. Reading, then, is a skill which is highly valued by EFL learners and teachers (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

In recent years, specially, there has been increased focus on teaching of reading and other literacy skills to children, both in North America and abroad. According to Ediger (cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001), the recognition that reading is the most important skill for L2 learners in academic contexts (Grabe, 1991) can be one reason for this. An increase in the numbers of children learning English as a second/ foreign language can be the second reason. The belief that basic literacy instruction should be a fundamental component of public education can be considered as the third reason. Finally, the growing numbers of countries which are moving toward making English language instruction mandatory from a younger age is the fourth reason. In Korea and Taiwan, for instance, English is now a required subject, beginning in the third grade. According to Celce-Murcia (2001), because of the portability of books and other reading materials, reading is gradually being recognized as a valuable source of language input, particularly for students in learning environments (as in Iran) in which fluent speakers of English are generally not available to provide other kinds of language input.

As mentioned, reading can be considered as one of the most important skills for the EFL learners. Additionally, children's future success in reading can be predicted by the extent of the development of their literacy concept, knowledge and skills in early childhood (Adams, 1990; Donaldson, 1978; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). On one hand, early reading is dependent on understanding of the internal structure of words, and on the other hand, it can be promoted by explicit instruction in phonological awareness. However, early reading instruction, especially explicit instruction in letter-sound correspondence strengthens phonological awareness, and in particular leads to the more phonemic awareness (Snow et al., 1998). As cited in Hinkle (2006), researchers such as Paran (1996), Birch (2002), and Koda (2005) consider the top-down reading skills as additive or compensatory while fluent bottom-up processing is achieved. In other words, at the first stages of learning the bottom-up processing is considered to be more important than top-down processing. Since the existing learning-teaching formula in Iran, especially for children, does not focus on sub-skills and components of reading, the children struggle to read and they have serious problems in

distinguishing English alphabets when reading. Thus, the present research aimed at investigating the effect of using print media as a tool in classroom to develop children's literacy and reading sub-skills. The review of the related literature, therefore, is done in the next section.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

As was mentioned, the purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of using print media on literacy development. Theoretical background, therefore, will be divided into two parts, i.e. the variables of the study: 1) L2 literacy development, and 2) use of media in classroom.

### A. L2 Literacy Development

Alderson (2000) defines reading as "...an enjoyable, intense, private activity, from which much pleasure can be derived, and in which one can become, totally absorbed (p. 28)." However, reading means different things to different people. For some it is understanding written texts, while for others it is a chance to practice speaking skill and to teach pronunciation. In fact, reading has a purpose. It is an activity that we do every day, i.e., it is an essential component of our daily lives, taken for granted and generally assumed that everyone can do.

Since the 1980s, research on reading, both in first and second language contexts has been developed (Grabe as cited in Richards & Renandya, 2002). Although the development in first language contexts has led to improvements in reading instruction, the corresponding research in L2 contexts has not made much headway. In fact, different theories which exist to explain what is involved when we read, and much of what we know about reading and literacy come from research on first language learners (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

A critical element in a child's success in school and life is learning to read early and well (Lane, Pullen, Hudson, & Konold, 2009). The level to which the child progresses in reading can be used to predict the competent function of a child in school and her/his active contribution in our literate society. In fact, reading achievement is closely related to social and economic achievement (Baydar, Brooks-Gunn, & Furstenberg, 1993; Blaunstein & Lyon, 2006). Although throughout the life span reading sub-skills abilities continue to develop, the most important period for literacy development is the early childhood years. Rich literate environments develop children's understanding of the concepts underlying reading (Adams, 1990; Dickinson & Tabors, 2001). Recent research in the realm of reading has shown that children who start off poorly in reading remain poor readers throughout their schooling and beyond (Adams, 1990; Francis, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1996; Juel, 1988; Stanovich, 1986; Torgesen & Burgess, 1998). This phenomenon has been described by Stanovich (1986) as the Matthew Effect—the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. If we want to make a positive change in the lives of children, we must provide appropriate supports during the early childhood years in order to minimize or even prevent the development of reading difficulties.

Eskey (1988) in his overview of reading research, examines "a strongly top-down bias" (p. 95) in L2 reading pedagogy and neglect of learners' weak linguistic processing skills. Eskey's analysis shows that L2 readers are basically distinct from those who read in their L1s and that essential "knowledge of the language of the text" (p. 96) is required before learners can successfully process the L2 reading schema. In other words, he emphasizes the bottom-up skills. The bottom-up processing of reading includes a vast array of distinct cognitive sub-skills, i.e., word recognition, spelling and phonological processing, morpho-syntactic parsing, and lexical recognition and access (Eskey, 2005). The reader should gather visual information from the written text (e.g., letters and words), identify the meanings of words, and then try to process the structure and the meaning of larger syntactic units, such as phrases or sentences. Several studies, like those by Koda (1999), Chikamatsu (1996), and Shimron and Savon (1994), have indicated that visual processing of words and letters in written text represents a cognitively complex task.

National Reading Panel, after exhaustive study summarizing research studies on reading since 1966, published its findings in 2000. Its first report was called Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children. The National Reading Panel summarizes strategies to improve student reading proficiency. The research results were a composite of more than 100,000 studies. National Reading Panel recommends five elements for developing reading ability. Each activity relies on the previous one. Each accomplishment becomes a building block for the next. Following the guidelines of National Reading Panel, the five areas of reading proficiency critical for children to learn to read are 1) phonological awareness, 2) phonics, 3) fluency, 4) vocabulary, and 5) text comprehension. First a child should learn letter names and sounds, then s/he should develop sight words, later s/he will become more fluent and will be able to move more quickly through text, therefore s/he will accomplish more difficult reading tasks such as learning new vocabulary and understanding what is read. So through learning systematically, the child 'learns how to read'. The National Reading Panel, however, suggests that teachers who work with English language learners must be aware that the sounds of English differ from other phonetic languages and that these differences could bring about difficulty for students in learning English word structures. Additionally, vocabulary proficiencies can affect comprehension. However, recent ELL research suggests that regardless of primary language, all children must learn these reading sub-skills and that English-driven reading instruction with these sub-skills is linked to reading success (Baker & Gersten, 1997; Garcia, 2000; Gersten & Geva, 2003). On the same way and according to Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children, in order to begin reading instruction, there should be an emphasis on 1) using reading to obtain meaning from print, 2) the phonological and morphological structure of words, 3) the orthographic system, 4) regular spelling-sound relationships,

and 5) frequent opportunities to read and write (Snow et al., 1998; Foorman & Torgesen, 2001). Children learning to read and write English for the first time, therefore, may need assistance with developing an understanding of notions such as the following (Clay, 1993; Justice & Ezell, 2001):

1. The print tells the story.
2. Pictures go with text.
3. We read from left to right, front to back, top to bottom.
4. Words are written separately from each other and the white spaces between groups of letters represent a break between spoken words or word boundaries.
5. Punctuation marks separate notions or ideas from each other.
6. Quotation marks mean that someone is speaking.
7. Written language has different rules and conventions from oral language.
8. When one page of text is read, the story continues on the following page.

#### B. *Use of Media in Classroom*

The children of the 21st century live in a world rich with technology. They are surrounded by the Internet, Web sites, emails, chat rooms, cellphones, discussion boards, electronic toys and learning games, and so on (Siraj-Blatchford & Whitebread, 2003). So they are called “Digital Children” (Edyburn, 2002). When families use technology, their young children will develop and acquire skills in language as well as literacy through exposure to technology in the home (Jewitt, 2006). Computers by providing multimodal experiences such as images, color, visual layout, sound, and movement, assist children to develop understandings of special kind of communication events within language based social contexts (Jewitt, 2006). Technology and media provide tools that can be used as facilitators to help young children construct their knowledge of the world (Jonassen & Howland, 2003).

Media as a tool for language learning/teaching, can assist both instructed and non-instructed learners to overcome the task of language learning. Just as children learning a first or second language grasp the meaning of words from objects that surround them, non-native speakers (both inside and outside the classroom) make use of the here and now or objects in the immediate environment to process incoming speech (Brinton as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001). It seems that language teachers agree that media can and do improve language teaching, and therefore, we can find a range of media in the daily practice of language teaching – from non-mechanical aids such as household objects, flashcards, and magazine pictures all the way up to sophisticated mechanical aids such as video cameras and computer – assisting teachers in their job, bringing the outside world into the realm of classroom, and making the difficult task of language learning more meaningful and exciting task.

It is germane here to differentiate between ‘large M media’ and ‘small m media’. Media means many different things to different people. ‘The most immediate connotation of the term ‘media’, at least as related to language teaching, is that of the ‘large M media’ – of technological innovations in language teaching, of mechanical paraphernalia, and of glossy, polished audiovisual aids – with all the media anxiety that these can conjure up in teachers. However, there is little evidence that such glossy audiovisual aids are more effective than teacher-made, non-mechanical aids (e.g., paper plate hand puppets, butcher paper verb charts, and the like) or props from daily life (e.g., cereal boxes, campaign buttons, travel pamphlets, bumper stickers) that have been adapted for classroom teaching purposes’ (Brinton as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 460). It would be better to suggest that all these aids, mechanical and non-mechanical, glossy and non-glossy, commercially available and teacher-made, should be part of our definition of language teaching media.

In Brinton’s words (as cited in Celce-Murcia) print media (such media will be described in the Method section) help us to motivate students by bringing a slice of real life into the classroom and by presenting language in its more complete communicative context. Media can also provide a density of information and richness of cultural input not otherwise possible in the classroom, they can help students process information and free the teacher from excessive explanation, and they can provide contextualization and a solid point of departure for classroom activities. The following statements summarize the rationale for using media in the language classroom (Brinton as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001, pp. 461-462):

1. Given the role media play in the world outside the classroom, students expect to find media inside the classroom as well. Media thus serve as an important motivator in the language teaching process.
2. Media materials can lend authenticity to the classroom situation, reinforcing for students the direct relation between the language classroom and the outside world.
3. Since the learning styles of students differ (Oxford, 1990; Reid, 1987; Skehan, 1980; Wenden & Rubin, 1987), media provide us with a way of addressing the needs of both visual and auditory learners.
4. The role that input plays in language learning is virtually uncontested (Krashen, 1987). By bringing media into the classroom, teachers can expose their students to multiple input sources. Thus, while decreasing the risk of the students’ becoming dependent on their teacher’s dialect or idiolect, they can also enrich their language learning experiences.
5. With references to schema theory (Schank & Abelson, 1977), which proposes that we approach new information by scanning our memory banks for related knowledge, media can help students call up existing schemata and therefore maximize their use of prior background knowledge in the language learning process.



6. Finally, research suggests that media provide teachers with a means of presenting material in a time-efficient and compact manner, and of stimulating students' senses, thereby helping them to process information more readily (Mollica, 1997).

### III. PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Since reading achievement in early childhood is highly predictive of later reading success or failure (Juel, 1988; Stanovich, 1986; Torgesen, 2004), the importance of early intervention is quite clear. The fact that early, intensive reading instruction could alleviate early reading failures and narrow the achievement gap warrants further attention. Therefore, to enhance the potential for children in the primary grades to succeed in early reading instruction, the current research examined the use of print media in classroom to develop the children's L2 literacy. The focus of the study was mostly on sub-skills such as phonemic awareness, fluency, and text comprehension. Phonemic awareness is taken to refer to a pre-reading skill; it is the ability to notice, think about and work with the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is, therefore, the ability to manipulate language at the phonemic level, that is, to "reflect on the component sounds of spoken words, rather than on their meanings" (Goswami, 2000, p. 251). Before children learn to read print, they must become aware of how sounds work in words. This includes identifying beginning, medial and ending sounds, hearing rhythm and rhymes, and understanding nuances in spoken words (National Reading Panel, 2000). Although phonemic processing ability appears to remain relatively stable over time (Wagner, Torgesen, Rashotte, Hecht, Barke, & Burgess, 1997), research has shown that phonemic awareness skills, as mentioned, can be taught and that gains in phonemic awareness are associated with corresponding gains in reading achievement (Lie, 1991; Torgesen, Morgan, & Davis, 1992; Vellutino & Scanlon, 1987). Phonemic awareness is operationally defined as the performance of the participants on DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Phoneme Segmentation Test, edited by Good and Kaminski (2007). Fluency is taken to refer to the ability to read text accurately and quickly. This occurs when readers read silently and recognize words automatically. Fluent readers read effortlessly; fluency is the bridge to reading comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000). Fluency is operationally defined as the performance of the participants on DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Oral Reading Fluency Test, edited by Good and Kaminski (2007). Text comprehension is taken to refer to understanding what is read. To truly comprehend text, reading must be purposeful and active (National Reading Panel, 2000). Text comprehension is operationally defined as the performance of the participants on retell part of DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Oral Reading Fluency Test, edited by Good and Kaminski (2007).

According to what was discussed above regarding the problem and purpose of the study, the present research addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of print media use on developing children's phonemic awareness?
2. What is the effect of print media use on development of children's fluency?
3. What is the effect of print media use on developing children's text comprehension?

### IV. METHOD

#### A. Research Design

Since we had a control group and an experimental group, the design of the study was experimental. Using tables of random numbers, participants were selected randomly and each group was given a pre-test and a posttest. For each group a phoneme segmentation test was given as a pre-test, and a phoneme segmentation test and an oral reading fluency test were used as posttests.

#### B. Participants

The participants of this study were 40 female children within the age range of 7-8 familiar to English alphabets. The participants had studied English at one school in Esfahan, Iran. They were selected randomly from two classes of the mentioned school. From the 40 students 30 students qualified for inclusion. These students met the criteria of a) having parental permission, and b) likely to remain at the school during the course of the study. Using tables of random numbers, these 30 children were divided into two equal groups, i.e. experimental and control groups.

#### C. Materials

The materials used were as follows:

##### 1. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Phoneme Segmentation Test

This test consists of 20 progress monitoring sub-tests. Each sub-test consists of 24 words, presented in increasing order of difficulty. The first progress monitoring sub-test was used as a pre-test and in order to homogenize the participants. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of this test in the current study was .84. The other 19 progress monitoring sub-tests were used during the course of study.

##### 2. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Oral Reading Fluency Test

This is a graded reading test which has 6 stages from the first grade to the sixth grade and each stage consists of 20 sub-tests. At the end of each sub-test, the students should retell the studied passages in their own words in order to test

the students' comprehension of the text. The first, second, and third stages were used in this study. However, because of the long sub-tests, sub-tests numbers 1, 5, 10, 15, and 20 of each stage had been used. The Cronbach alpha coefficient (reliability) of these tests in the current study were .83, .85, .85, .86, and .86 respectively.

### 3. Sails Book Series

This book series consist of 35 graded books from early 1 to early 4. Each book includes 3 titles: a) thinking critically, b) exploring language, and c) processing information. Under the title thinking critically there are some sample questions such as "When would you use a map?" and "Look at pages 12 and 13. How do you think Molly and Henri feel about Miss Grimble?" which should be used as pre-reading questions and activities. Under the title exploring language there are the following sub-titles with some guidelines for the teacher to help the students to explore their language: a) terminology: speaking about the title, cover, author, etc., b) vocabulary: introducing interest words, high-frequency words, positional words, etc., c) print conventions: introducing punctuation such as full stop, commas, etc., d) phonological patterns: working on the most repeated phonemes in each story, and e) visual information: using pictures in each story to gain information. And finally, under processing information title, there are some guidelines and questions such as "Retell the story." and "Get the children to draw and label a map showing how to go from one place to another." for processing information including oral, written and visual language. The last two titles, i.e. exploring language and processing information should be used as post-reading activities.

### 4. Teenager Magazine

This magazine is designed for teenagers; however, at the end of it there is part named "Ladder" designed for the kids. This part includes a) kids' story, b) kids' crossword, c) kids' poem, d) kids' fun and e) knowledge.

### 5. Newspaper

The instructor used different books, magazines and websites in order to produce newspapers for kids. The mentioned newspapers were colorful and attractive for children. They include a) charts, graphs, and diagrams, b) maps, c) tables, d) pictures, and e) cartoons and comic strips. Later the participants were asked to make their own newspapers for the class and share the information with each other.

### D. Procedure

The first progress monitoring sub-test of the DIBELS phoneme segmentation test was used as a pre-test for both groups and in order to investigate the level of the children. All the participants were at the same level and were assigned as low level. Although they were familiar to the English alphabets, they were not able to diagnose the alphabets in the list of words and they could not pronounce them correctly. In fact, their phonemic awareness was considered as very low.

The control group participated in 30 minutes classes once a week. Although they were familiar to English alphabets, based on the school's rule *Let's Go Starter* was used to teach English. The control group received traditional instructions, i.e. each session they were taught 3-4 vocabularies start with one of the English alphabet without focusing on phonemes. First the alphabet was introduced and after some repetitions the vocabularies were introduced. There was no use of rhyming or comparing the phonemes.

On the other hand, the experimental group participated in whole-class activities for 45 minutes, three times per week. *Sails* book series were used to teach phonemes, phonics and vocabulary through stories and direct instruction to the experimental group. During teaching the mentioned parts, the other 19 progress monitoring sub-tests of the DIBELS phoneme segmentation test were used to investigate the progress of the participants. However, when the students were familiar with some of the vocabularies, the kids' cross words and kids' fun of the *Teenager magazine* were used.

After 3 months of instruction, the children were able to read the stories of the *Sails* book series and had developed their phonemic awareness and vocabularies. At this time stories and poems of the *Ladder* part of the *Teenager magazine* were used in order to familiar the participant with more complicated stories and vocabularies. At the end of each story in the magazine, there is a quiz used in order to check the participants' text comprehension.

After 3 months of using magazine, the children became conversant with the mentioned stories and were able to read them; thus, the instructor used the teacher-made newspapers. Gradually the children learned to read tables, graphs, maps, etc. At this time which was the middle of the year of instruction, the first grade of the DIBELS oral reading fluency test was used and as was expected all the students were able to read and pass this level, i.e. first grade.

After one month of working on teacher-made newspapers, the instructor wanted the participants to make their own newspapers and share them with their friends. At this time, however, the students were able to produce cartons and comic strips and to read them. The instructor and students worked on students-made newspapers for 2 months.

At the end of the educational year which lasted nine months, the second grade of DIBELS oral reading fluency test was used, surprisingly all the students had passed it and were assigned as high group. To investigate the exact level of the participants' reading ability, the thirds grade of the aforementioned test was used. Based on the children's performance on this last test, they were assigned as high and medium groups. To ensure that the results were due to the instruction not growing of the children, the other 15 children of the control group who had not received the direct instructions mentioned before, but had studied English as a foreign language were tested by the first sub-test of the DIBELS phoneme segmentation test and the first grade of the DIBELS oral reading fluency test. They were not able to read the reading fluency test and their performance on phonemic segmentation test was very low.

V. RESULTS

The first sub-test of DIBELS phoneme segmentation test, as mentioned before, was used as pre-test. The mean score of the subjects' performance on this test is 2.26 which is very low and implies the low phonemic awareness of the participants. During teaching phonemes and phonetics, the other 19 sub-tests of DIBELS phoneme segmentation test were used to assess phonemic awareness and progress of the experimental group. The mean scores of sub-tests numbers 5, 10, 15, and 20 are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1.  
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S PHONEMIC AWARENESS RESULTS

DIBELS PST	Test 1	Test 5	Test 10	Test 15	Test 20
Mean Score	2.26	36.53	46.93	56.93	67.77

PST = Phoneme Segmentation Test

Table 2 shows the mean score of subjects' performance on sub-tests numbers 5, 10, 15, and 20 of each grade of DIBELS oral reading fluency test. Based on DIBELS' instruction and guidance, the subjects had passed grades 1 and 2 and they would be assigned as high level. The results of the third grade, however, are a little different. Based on DIBELS' instruction, the subjects were assigned to high level with mean score 239 and to medium level with mean score 223.

TABLE 2.  
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S ORAL READING FLUENCY RESULTS

DIBELS ORFT	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	
			High	Medium
Mean Score	204.8	233.33	239	223

ORFT = Oral Reading Fluency Test

Table 3 shows the results of the retell part of DIBELS oral reading fluency tests grades 1, 2, and 3. The maximum mean score for each of the aforementioned tests is 94. It can be understood that the students' comprehension is high and they would be assigned as high level. However, subjects' performance on the third grade of aforementioned test was different. The students are assigned as high level with mean score 86.75 and as medium level with mean score 84.42. Since the students were not able to read at the beginning of the study, their comprehension could not have been measured. The decrease in the subjects' text comprehension could be explained with the difficulty of the tests for the students. However, it should be reminded that at the end of the study and at the time of this test the participants were within the age range of 8-9 and as a result reading and comprehending the third level with mean score 85.66 could be considered a great progress for the subjects.

TABLE 3.  
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S RETELL RESULTS

DIBELS Retell	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	
			High	Medium
Mean Score	89.6	87.73	86.75	84.42

As was mentioned, the first sub-test of DIBELS phoneme segmentation test and the first grade of DIBELS oral reading fluency test were used to measure phonemic awareness and reading ability of the other 15 students, i.e. control group at the end of study. Table 4 shows the results of these two tests. Based on their performance on DIBELS phoneme segmentation test, they are assigned as low level. The mean score of the oral reading fluency test is 37.77 showing that they could not pass this level of reading. As they were not able to read the reading sub-tests, they could not retell the passages showing their lack of comprehension.

TABLE 4.  
CONTROL GROUP'S PHONEMIC AWARENESS AND ORAL READING FLUENCY RESULTS

DIBELS TEST	PST/Sub-test 1	ORFT/Grade 1
Mean Scores	10.45	37.77

PST = Phoneme Segmentation Test, ORFT = Oral Reading Fluency Test

In order to compare the phonemic awareness scores of two groups, an independent samples t-test was conducted. The results showed that the scores obtained on DIBELS phoneme segmentation test are significantly different across the two groups ( $t(30) = 99.95, p < .05$ ) (see Table 5). The magnitude of the differences in the mean was very large (eta squared = .99).

TABLE 5.  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST BETWEEN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS REGARDING PHONEMIC AWARENESS

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PST20	Equal V assumed	5.148	.031	99.95	28	.000	57.267	.573	56.09	58.44
	Equal V not Assumed			99.95	22.59	.000	57.267	.573	56.08	58.45

PST = Phoneme Segmentation Test, V = Variance

Another independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the fluency scores of two groups. The results showed that the obtained scores on DIBELS oral reading fluency test are significantly different across the two groups ( $t(30) = 87.73, p < .05$ ) (see Table 6). The magnitude of the differences in the means was very large ( $\eta^2 = .99$ ).

TABLE 6.  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST BETWEEN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS REGARDING READING FLUENCY

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
ORFT,G3	Equal V assumed	175.9	.000	87.73	28	.000	193.8	2.209	189.2	198.3
	Equal V not Assumed			87.73	14.58	.000	193.8	2.209	189.0	198.5

ORFT = Oral Reading Fluency Test, G = Grade, V = Variance

## VI. DISCUSSION

In EFL contexts, reading and the ability to read and comprehend foreign texts is one of the most important goals of the learners. Since development of literacy skills in early childhood are predictors of children's success in reading (Adams, 1990; Donaldson, 1978; Snow et al., 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998), as well as the fact that bottom-up processing is more important than top-down processing at the first stages of learning (Paran, 1996; Birch, 2002; Koda, 2005, as cited in Hinkle, 2006), and because the teaching-learning formula in Iran does not focus on bottom-up processing; this study aimed at investigating the effect of print media use and direct instruction on literacy development in children.

The analysis of the data revealed that subjects in experimental group outperformed those in control group in phonemic awareness, reading fluency, and text comprehension. In other words, treatment, i.e. print media use and direct instruction affect reading sub-skills positively. Subjects who received instruction that focuses on phonemic awareness made greater gains in spelling, i.e. phoneme segmentation and phonemic awareness, reading and text comprehension than those subjects who had not received such instruction. As a result, phonemic awareness instruction improves children's ability to read words and help them learn to read. Since phonemic awareness instruction has influence on word reading, it aids reading comprehension and therefore it improves children's reading comprehension. When children improve their rapid and accurate word reading skill, they could shift their focus from the letters of the words to the meaning of what they read.

Students differ in their phonemic awareness, i.e. some need more instruction than others. In addition, students have different learning styles (communicative, authority oriented, concrete, and analytical). Using media in classroom, therefore, would provide opportunities for the students to use information and instruction based on their styles and their need (Brinton as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001).

These findings contribute to bottom-up processing theory and its importance as a stepping stone to better reading ability (Paran, 1996; Birch, 2002; Koda, 2005, as cited in Hinkle, 2006), and permit a clearer understanding of previous findings about the fact that reading ability can be affected by many factors such as pre-reading skills, i.e. phonemic awareness (National Reading Panel, 2000), and the knowledge of the language of the text (Eskey, 2005).

Although the subjects were familiar with English alphabet at the outset of the study, they were not able to segment and read simple words in the first sub-test of DIBELS phoneme segmentation test. However, through print media usage, i.e. story books, magazines, and newspapers to teach areas of reading proficiency, the students became able not only to segment and read the words, but also to read and comprehend the text they read. Considering the other side of the coin, the subjects in control group were not able to read and segment the simple words at the end of the study. Their reading

fluency was very low and since they did not have essential knowledge of the language of the text, they were not able to process L2 reading schemata and texts (Eskey, 2005). Through bringing the outside world into the classroom (print media usage), the subjects in experimental group developed their pre-reading skill, they read effortlessly and they learned how to read. As a result, the Matthew effect (Stanovich, 1986) can be seen here.

## VII. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the current study investigated the effect of print media use on children L2 literacy development. The results revealed that use of print media in classroom to teach pre-reading skills and reading skills has a positive effect on reading ability development. In other words, as the learners' knowledge of the language of the text grows, the reading fluency and text comprehension will increase. The development of emergent literacy skills happens in preschool years, hence shows the importance of instruction in these years. Phonological awareness and letter knowledge are the best predictors of later achievement in reading (Adams, 1990; Snow et al., 1998). Oral language is highly correlated with emergent literacy knowledge as well (Justice and Pullen, 2003). In short, successful reading ability relies on mastering a certain level of phonological awareness. Moreover, phonological awareness instruction is helpful for most children, but the degree of explicitness should be changed according to the learner's skills and styles. Teachers can benefit from print media use in classrooms, therefore, to meet the different needs of their students.

The results show that the students' skills grew in letter naming, phoneme segmentation, reading fluency, and text comprehension. Therefore, the results imply the effect of direct instruction and print media usage on the developing of foreign language reading abilities. Understanding the structure of the text will lead students to read with more understanding. Newspaper, magazine, and story books text structure is predictable and exposes students to multiple input sources. They are concise and well written and can become a model for learners' writing. Print media activities provide situations for learners to practice skills they have learned in years and to work together to develop their social skills as they learn to accept and appreciate differences in others. The print media provides situations for students to see the linkage between writing and reading. As a result, print media can be considered as a bridge between school writing and real world writing. And therefore, the results could encourage the teachers to use print media in their classrooms in order to develop students' reading ability.

There are some limitations to the present study. First is that the sample of the present study was limited to EFL learners with Persian as their L1. This limits the scope for generalization of the research findings. Second, the number of the participants was very limited and sex was controlled. Larger samples with mixed genders, hence more representative of the larger population, may yield more conclusive results.

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# Foreignization of *Tao Te Ching* Translation in the Western World

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**Abstract**—As one of the philosophical gem of China, *Tao Te Ching* is the most-translated Chinese classic. A translator has to face the dilemma of domestication and foreignization when dealing with the oriental language style. Retaining the culture and strangeness of the target language, the foreignized translation reflects the respect for the source language and culture, which has become the trend for translation. The quantitative analysis on the basis of 55 authoritative translation versions of *Tao Te Ching* indicates the foreignization in phonetics, image and structure, which is the promotion of many new expressions and multicultural merge.

**Index Terms**—foreignization, phonetics, image, structure, alterity

## I. INTRODUCTION

As the first philosophical classic in China with its laconic language and profound insight, *Tao Te Ching* has attracted numerous scholars and philosophers to translate the book. With the profound Taoism and many Chinese culture-specific items, it has been translated into many languages and aroused the attention and interest all over the world. It is an issue worth studying concerning whether the translator should adopt domestication or foreignization to stress similarities or dissimilarities in terms of the cultural connotation.

## II. FOREIGNIZATION

The concept of foreignization and domestication originate from *On the Different Methods of Translation*, a speech by Friedrich Schleiermacher, the German theologian and philosopher who suggests two roads of translation: “Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader toward him. Or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author toward him.” (André Lefevere, 1992) And he personally prefers the first approach through which the translator will retain the strangeness and transplant the foreign flora so that “the readers can enjoy the same pleasure he himself has, with the traces of hardship it carries and the feeling of strangeness that remains mixed into it” (p.147).

A century later, Antoine Berman (1992), the French translator and theorist discusses the foreignization from the theoretical level and terms the “fidelity” as the ethics of translation. He argues that the very essence of translation is not only the conveyance or restatement of the information, but also “a dialogue, a crossbreeding, a decentering” (p.4). He criticizes the so-called “naturalization” and states that the translation should accept and respect the foreignness to avoid repressing the individuality in literature as translation is a place for cultural alterity.

In 1995, Lawrence Venuti presents the concept of “domestication and foreignization” in *The Translator's Invisibility* for the first time on the basis of the dualism of Schleiermacher, the autonomy of translation of Ezra Pound and the abusive fidelity of P. Lewis. Domestication and foreignization are two translation strategies, regarding the degree to which translators make a text conform to the target culture. Domestication is the strategy of making text closely conform to the culture of the language being translated to, which may involve the loss of information from the source text. Foreignization is the strategy of retaining information from the source text, and involves deliberately breaking the conventions of the target language to preserve its meaning.

Venuti(1995) cites Norman Shapiro's metaphor of “a pane of glass” to describe the translation with little imperfections like scratches and bubbles. He disagrees with the translation without any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities and calls the “invisibility of the translator” a weird self-annihilation. The illusion of transparency covers up “the crucial intervention” of the original text. Venuti proposes the resistant strategy to preserve the difference and the otherness and challenge the aesthetic culture of the target language (p.306). In 1998, he goes further and claims the translation catering to the target language blindly as a scandal and explains his preference of minoritizing translation in which he suggests the translator manifest the foreignness of the foreign text to avoid the inequality in translation (Venuti,1998).

The kernel idea of foreignization is to manifest the linguist and cultural dissimilarities in the source language and

resist the ethnocentric value for the promotion of the crossbreeding and assimilation of the two cultures. It can cultivate the heterogeneous discourse, open up the standard dialect and literary canons to form sociolect, creative style and cultural renovation. In the cross-cultural communication, translators of the classics have to face the dilemma of domestication or foreignization. The choice of either approach is a reflection of the translator's attitude towards the individuality of the source culture. The respect, emphasis and preservation of the differences are the highlight of Venuti's ideas. As a result, the foreignness and alterity in classic translation are also a reflection of the respect for the source culture and the classics.

### III. TRANSLATION OF *TAO TE CHING* IN THE WEST

*Tao Te Ching* has 81 chapters in two parts, the *Tao Ching* (chaps. 1–37) and the *Te Ching* (chaps. 38–81) with brief and ambiguous wording which encourages various interpretations. As a gem of oriental wisdom, *Tao Te Ching* has great influence in the world. According to the statistics of Knut Walf from University of Nijmegen in 1989, *Tao Te Ching* has 252 versions in 17 European languages from 1816 to 1988, which is the most translated Chinese classics and lists only next to the Bible among all the translated world literature. Holmes Welch (1965), the professor from Harvard University says that the book is a famous puzzle which everyone would like to feel he had solved.

*Tao Te Ching* has been translated into many Western languages, mostly to English, German, and French. Among all these translated versions, the English ones top the list. Since John Chalmers, the English missionary translated the book into English in 1868, many scholars have tried to translate and interpret the book. In history, there appeared three stages of translating *Tao Te Ching*. The first one started from 1868 to 1905 when most of the translators were English Congregationalists including the most noted one, James Legge whose version is most faithful and rigorous. The second tide is from 1934 to 1963 when many sinologists such as Arthur Waley and Witter Bynner translated the book. In 1973, the unearthing of two original silk texts of the *Tao Te Ching* in Ma-Wang-Tui tomb aroused the third tide of translation when many Chinese and foreign scholars cooperated to translate the book. In this period, the versions of D. C. Lau, Victor H. Mair and Robert G Henricks are the most influential. Since 1990s, the enthusiasm for the translation of *Tao Te Ching* has showed no signs of decreasing and an average of 4.6 English versions of *Tao Te Ching* has been published each year. The versions by Thomas Cleary (1991), Michael LaFargue (1992) and A. S. Kline (2003) are comparatively renowned. Till now there are over 180 English versions of the classic and it can be expected that the figure will still climb in the future.

Many Chinese and western scholars have studied the English versions of *Tao Te Ching*. Wang Rongpei (1992) elaborates "Tao", the abstract keyword with profound meanings. Erin M. Cline (2004) discusses two interpretations of De in Daodejing. Feng Xiaoli (2009) analyzes the version of D. C. Lau. Yoav Ariel and Gil Rez (2010) explains the adoption of anaphor or cataphor of qi (其) in the first chapter of the book. However, the study on the foreignization of the book has been rare. The paper has an analysis and comparison of the domestication of foreignization of *Tao Te Ching* on the basis of 55 authoritative English versions by the noted translators such as James Legge, Arthur Waley, Lionel Giles, A leister Crowley, Gia-Fu Feng & Jane English, Robert G Henricks, and Stephen Mitchell etc.

### III. FOREIGNIZATION OF *TAO TE CHING*

As the earliest book of Taoism, *Tao Te Ching* is fundamental to the philosophical Taoism and enjoys authoritative status in Chinese culture. It has strong influence over other schools such as Legalism and has been the inspiration for many Chinese artists, painters, and poets. The total domestication of the translation may result in misinterpretation and misreading as the "foreignness" in the source text may be weakened or even removed and canon requires classic elaboration of book. The foreignized translation tends to incorporate foreign elements in the target language to retain the source language and culture. The foreignness is reflected in many levels such as phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, style, value, power-discourse, and ideology. The closer the translation is to the original text, the more foreigner it shows. This paper discusses the foreignization in phonetic level, cultural image and discourse structure in the translation of *Tao Te Ching*.

#### A. Phonetic Foreignization

Among all the nine schools (Confucianism, Mohism, Taoism, Legalism, Logicians, Eclectics, Agriculturists, Yin-Yang School and Diplomats) founded by Pre-Qin scholars, only Confucianism, Mohism, Taoism and Yin-Yang School adopt phonetic translation because of the lack of equivalents in English. Tao appeared in *I Ching* and *Zuo Zhuan* with the meaning of road or principle. Lao Tzu proposed Tao as the origin of the world for the first time as the essence of Taoism and the kernel concept of his philosophy. In the very beginning of the book, Lao Tzu says, "The Tao that can be told is not the invariant Tao/the names that can be named are not the invariant Names." (tr. Michael LaFargue, 1992) The metaphysical concept of Tao is the origin of the Universe and all existence, an abstract absolute and the unlimited being. Invisible as it is, it is omnipresent in the universe with the nature of nihility and inactivity.

As a kernel category with various levels and structures in Chinese philosophy, Tao (Zhang Liwen, 1989) can be summarized with eight connotations: 1) Way or rules; 2) origin of the universe; 3) one; 4) nihility; 5) Taichi; 6) mind; 7) chi; 8) humane. In other words, Tao can be elaborated as the origin of nature, rules, movement process, and the way of



politics and ruling the country. It appears 74 times in 37 chapters of the book with various meanings. According to the 55 authoritative English versions of *Tao Te Ching*, we can find that the main translation of the word as follows:

TABLE 1.  
THE TRANSLATION OF TAO AND THE PERCENTAGE IN TAO TE CHING

Translation of Tao	Tao	Dao	Way	existence, nature, origin, guide, principle
Number	30	5	15	5
Percentage (%)	54.5	9.1	27.3	9.1

As listed in Table 1, about 54.5% of the translators such as James Legge, Stephen Mitchell, and John C. H. Wu adopt foreignization in phonetics, i. e. Tao to express the abstract word. In 1796, Tao is collected by the Oxford Dictionary with three connotations. Tao and its derivatives such as Taoism and Taoist have been collected and well-established in many authoritative dictionaries such as Webster, Longman and Cambridge. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, many translators such as Nina Correa use pinyin of Dao originated in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century but Dao has not been collected by other dictionaries except Cambridge. Some translators such as Arthur Waley, D. C. Lau, and Robert G Henricks translate the word as “the way” while some use existence, nature and spirit etc.

Tao--the nameless and ineffable word of oriental mysticism is used frequently in the book. Neither the word of “way, path, or road” nor the expressions of “existence or spirit” can fully describe the nature of Tao. The foreignization in phonetics can inspire the interest and curiosity of the audience by conveying the word in phonetics, semantics and culture. Moreover, many translators adopt phonetic foreignization in the translation of the words with cultural connotations such as Te, Chi, Tien, and wu-wei which expand the English vocabulary and convey the key words of oriental culture directly.

B. Foreignization in Images

Word, image and the meaning constitute the major elements of literature. As the raw material of thought and the vehicle of meaning, image includes all the subjects in nature except human beings. It is used to express the abstract concept and philosophical ideas with the combination of the subjectivity and objectivity and the author’s emotion and the scenery. Based on the emotion, image has been considered as an important aesthetic category in the Chinese culture. The adoption of image can be dated back to *I Ching*, “Image can be used by the sage to express what can not be fully stated.” In Han dynasty, Liu Xie proposes that images of all subjects should be mixed with the author’s spiritual activities in his book *Dragon-Carving and the Literary Mind*. The images originate from the subjects of the world but are not limited to the subjects. Instead, they carry what the author wants to express by vivid illustrations.

In the western world, image originates from “imago” in Latin which is an important way to elaborate and analyze the poems and poetic dramas. Sir Philip Sydney says that “imaging is itself the very height and life of poetry.” Arthur Waley holds that imagery is the soul of poetry. In the end of the seventeenth century, the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes emphasizes that the origin of all thought is sensation, which consists of mental images produced by the pressure of motion of external objects. Thus Hobbes anticipated that these sense images are extended by the power of memory and imagination. Later, John Dryden, the English literary critic applies image into poem criticism for the first time. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, T. E. Hume, the English critic and poet and Ezra Pound, the American poet launched the imagist movement in which clear, specific and concrete images are called for and image has been enhanced to an unprecedented height. In a word, image is the perceptual form of subject on the basis of the objective world and the sensation of the author.

*Tao Te Ching* is a classical poem of philosophy with rhymed three-word or four-word sentences and occasional loose sentences. Lao Tzu elaborates his abstract ideas with the application of 23 original and apt images such as water, valley streams, bellows, straw dogs, jade and stone etc, which make the profound philosophy plain and vivid. The major images and the foreignization are as shown in following table:

TABLE 2.  
FOREIGNIZATION OF IMAGES AND THE PROPORTION IN TAO TE CHING

Image	water	bellows	straw dogs	gold & jade	baby	feast	uncarved wood	small fish
Number	55	48	42	40	54	43	49	51
Proportion (%)	100	87	76	72	98	78	78	92

In dealing with the common and similar images, most Chinese and western translators adopt the original images of the author. For example, in the eighth chapter, the author takes the water as a metaphor to express his yielding, void and tranquil outlook of the world and his “female” value: 上善若水，水善利万物而不争。(Pinyin: Shangshan ruo shui, shui shan li wanwu er buzheng.) The omnipresent water contributes to all living things in the world. It is appropriate and natural to describe the highest goodness with the nutritious water which never makes a display of itself because the readers can understand easily and clearly what the supreme goodness is by the image popular home and abroad. In the 55 authoritative English versions such as James Legge and Victor H. Mair, all the translators adopt the original image by Lao Tzu unanimously and translate the sentence as: The highest excellence is like that of water. (tr. James Legge) or The highest good is like water. (tr. Victor H. Mair)

Accepted by both eastern and western cultures, the image of water transcends the limitation of time and space with its characteristics of all-inclusiveness, moisture, softness, flexibility and invincibility which reflect the nature that “the way of heaven is conditioned by those of Tao and the ways of Tao by Self-so.” (tr. Arthur Waley)

Moreover, in dealing with the unique image loaded with Chinese culture, most translators adopt the original images as well. Take a sentence in the fifth chapter: 天地不仁，以万物为刍狗(Pinyin: Tiandi buren, yi wanwu wei chugou) as an example. In ancient China, chugou (straw dog) is the sacrifice which the author uses to describe the worthless and useless things or opinions. In the 55 English versions, some translators use the ambiguous “sacrificial images”, or domesticate it as guinea pigs, grasses of field, or used talismans which are more easily for the western readers to understand, or even cancel the images. However, most versions adopt straw dogs directly or amplify the cultural connotation as sacrifice of straw dogs (Witter Bynner, 1944), offering straw dogs (Tolbert McCarroll, 1982) and ritual straw dogs (Tormond Byrn, 1997), which fully express the loaded cultural connotation.

In the 60<sup>th</sup> chapter, “治大国若烹小鲜(Pinyin: Zhi daguo ruo peng xiaoxian)” is also an ingenious image by Lao Tzu. Apart from D. Allchin who translates it into “like crystal handle with care”, all the other scholars translate it into “Ruling/Governing a big country is like cook/fry/boil small fish”. Besides, many translators adopt the creative and imaginative metaphors and images in Chinese culture such as “a house full of gold and jade”, “He who lives in Mergence with Great Te is pure like a newborn baby”. The witty images combine the abstract ideas and concrete objects, the author’s spirit and emotion, the reasoning and the imagination skillfully. Natural and fluent as the domesticated versions are, the linguistic and cultural features behind the source language vanish in the seemingly transparent translation while the foreignized text reflects the original and unique expressions which impress the target language readers with unusual inspiration.

### C. Foreignization in Structure

Besides the profound ideas and the succinct languages, the structure of the text is also distinctive with the rhetorical device of anadiplosis which indicates the continuous or progressive relations with the repetition of the last word of the previous line. In Systemic-functional Grammar, the thematic progression is termed Linear Progression in which something introduced as new information in the Rheme of the first clause is taken up to be the Theme of the second.

Although thematic progressions are still controversial in the field, they are generally classified into five basic types of constant theme, constant rheme, linear progression, derived theme and split rheme. The quantitative analysis based on *Tao Te Ching* show that Linear Progression amounts to 40% among all the five thematic progressions, which is a striking feature in the structure of the book.

Language aims at conveying information and each information unit is a structure composed of two parts: the Given and the New. In most cases, the theme is the Given and rheme the New. The sentence structure highlights the progressive relationship with given information carrying the new information which is transferred into theme for the given in the next sentence. The spiral structures form a complete and cohesive information chain and strong rhythm to convey the continuous and progressive relationships.

The structure is plentiful in the book such as in 25, 37, 42, 59, and 61 chapters and all together there are 23 anadiplosis structures in *Tao Te Ching* which are very impressive to the audience such as “The Tao formulated the One. /The One exhaled the Two./ The Two were parents of the Three./ The Three were parents of all things” (42 Chapter) etc.

Many translators follow the oriental winding structure in Chinese to retain the classical Chinese thinking mode. For example, Victor H. Mair translates the four anadiplosis in the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter as follows:

人法地，	Man patterns himself on <b>earth</b> ,
地法天，	<b>Earth</b> patterns itself on <b>heaven</b> ,
天法道，	<b>Heaven</b> patterns itself on the <b>Way</b> ,
道法自然。	<b>The way</b> patters itself on nature.

His version retains the original Chinese structure, which reflect the rhythm and structure of the classical Chinese. The foreignized translation is similar to the original text in form, which retains the Chinese linguistic structure and original style to the maximum vividly. The audience of target language has an understanding of the special expression of Chinese.

What’s more, hypotaxis and parataxis are two ways to connect sentences in all languages. It is agreed that English is more hypotactic while Chinese more paratactic. Nida remarks in his *Translating Meaning* (1983) that the most important difference in linguistics between English and Chinese is the contrast of hypotaxis and parataxis. In Chinese, language cohesion does not lie in form but in covert cohesion and the logical meaning of the words or phrases. *Tao Te Ching* is written in classical Chinese which is more concise with few grammatical particles and conjunctives. The passage in the first chapter is very brief with no verbs: 无名，天地之始。有名，万物之母。故常无欲，以观其妙。常有欲，以观其徼。 As a hypotactic language, English often resorts to overt cohesion, frequently using various cohesive ties such as coordinators, subordinators, relative pronouns and adverbs, prepositions etc. however, Ellen Marie Chen, the American Chinese translator imitates the original Chinese structure in the following way:

Nameless (wu-ming), the origin of heaven and earth; /Named (you-ming), the mother (mu) of ten thousand things. Therefore, always (ch’ang) without desire (wu-y ü), /In order to observe(kuan) the hidden mystery (miao); /always (ch’ang) with desire(you- y ü), /In order to observe the manifestations (chiao). (tr. Chen,1989:3)

Similarly, 9.1% translators such as Herrymon Maurer (1985), Stephen Addiss (1993), Stanley Lombardo(1993), Tim Chilcott (2005) and Aalar Fex (2006) preserve the Chinese structure without using verbs in English as well. The compact language embodies the poetic structure, which produces the novelty and strangeness resulting from the mixture, compromise and blending of different cultures. It is also worth noting that foreignized translation is the purposeful recreation of the original characteristics and the intention of the author on the premise of a new readability and smoothness instead of the pidgin or the grotesque and confusing translation.

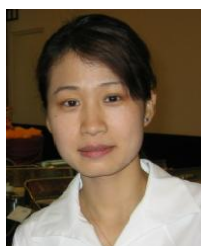
#### IV. CONCLUSION

*Tao Te Ching* attracts numerous scholars to introduce the profound insights with its unique cultural and linguistic features. The translation versions are varied in content as some translators distort the meaning for the sake of form or rhymes, or amplify the subtitles in the chapters on the basis of their understanding, or change the original images to cater for the value and culture of the target language, which lead to the misunderstanding of the book in the western world.

From the dynamic equivalence by Eugene Nida (1964), the skopos theory by Hans J. Vermeer (1987), and the manipulation of culture by Andre Lefevere (1990) to the foreignization by Lawrence Venuti (1995), it is the reversion from the TL-oriented translation to the SL-oriented translation. In the conflict and collision between the two cultures, the foreignized translation reflects mutual infiltration and exchange of different languages and cultures on the basis of the equality of different cultures. It is of great help to deal with the difference in the source language and target language, to cultivate the source culture in the totally different soil of target language.

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# The Effect of Dynamic Assessment on EFL Learners' Intrinsic Motivation

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**Abstract**—This study was intended to explore the effect of an interactionist model of dynamic assessment (DA) on Iranian EFL adult learners' intrinsic motivation. One hundred participants were selected based on the convenience sampling procedure. The participants were assigned to the experimental ( $n=50$ ) and control ( $n=50$ ) groups. An interactionist model of DA in reading comprehension was implemented in the experimental group seven times during the term. Data were collected through the Academic Motivation scale and were analyzed by an independent-samples *t*-test. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups in terms of their amount of intrinsic motivation. It is concluded that incorporation of DA as a supplement procedure to classroom activities has a positive effect on EFL learners' intrinsic motivation.

**Index Terms**—dynamic assessment, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, reading comprehension

## I. INTRODUCTION

All effective language learning environments have an unquestionable dependence on the existence of intrinsic motivation in language learners. The concept of 'integrativeness'—a willingness to learn a language in order to "come closer to the other language community" (Gardner, 2001) has been one of the main issues to be considered in language learning by the researchers and educators. Learning a foreign language has a different process as compared with the learning processes necessary for other skills. As Kramsch (2001) argues, "learning another language is not like learning math or other subjects...it is likely to involve not only the linguistic and cognitive capacities of the learner, but the social, historical, emotional, cultural, moral sense of self as a subject". Therefore, learning another language seems to be a multi-dimensional ability which goes beyond linguistic and cognitive capacity of the learner and demands caring the affective filter sides as well as socio-cultural aspects of learning too.

Since having intrinsic motivation is among the main aspects of learning a foreign or second language, a lot of researchers are interested to investigate the effect of integrative motivation in foreign language learners and to explore the extent to which learners' achievement and success are affected by it.

Dornyei and Otto's model of L2 motivation, which is called the process-oriented model, is focusing on the dynamic capacity of the intrinsic motivation and on its capability to be affected by different factors including environment and time; the model also suggests that motivation may not be stable during the learning process in the long run (Dornyei and Otto, 1998). Accordingly, the concept of static trait is no longer validated. Also it has been apparent in many studies that intrinsically motivated learners are superior to the extrinsically motivated individuals. Maslow (1970) stated that intrinsic motivation is long-termed and more superior to extrinsic motivation. Also he proposed that extrinsic motivation is not as long lasting as intrinsic motivation is. In the language learning process teachers' task is not only to generate motivation in learners but also to help them with its maintenance. As it seems, in the Iranian EFL context, there is little concern toward the learners' intrinsic motivation. And learners participate in language classes mainly because they need it for job opportunities or academic purposes. Therefore, the majority of learners find it difficult to continue their language study. Most practitioners think intrinsic motivation is something related to the individual characteristics, and they can do nothing about it. However, it has been stated in several studies that intrinsic motivation is a dynamic process which is influenced by different factors like enjoyment (Malone 1981; Malone and Lepper 1987; Lepper 1998; Lepper and Cordova 1992; Cordova and Lepper 1996; Inyengar and Lepper 1999, 2000), deeper understanding and the ability to make connections. The assumption made in this study is that if teachers lead their class energetically, and the information and feedback which is provided by the teacher is appropriate and useful, then the students are more likely to take an active part in their own learning. In Dornyei's (2001) research, the techniques which help the teachers toward development and maintenance of intrinsic motivation in language learners have been offered. Dornyei (2001) also states that one way to interfere in the learners' motivation is simply to improve the teaching quality provided to learners.

In contrast to the general perspectives about motivation, it has been stated by various researchers that motivation of the students is subject to change by various factors. According to Dornyei (2001), both external and internal factors which learners are confronted with during the process of language learning could be a source in labeling the motivation an evolving construct. In their 1985 work, regarding intrinsic motivation Deci and Ryan contend that "intrinsic

motivation will be operative when action is experienced as autonomous” (p. 29). Also, it is offered that students intrinsic motivation would be enhanced when the class activities are enjoying (Malone 1981; Malone and Lepper 1987; Lepper 1998; Lepper and Cordova 1992; Cordova and Lepper 1996; Inyengar and Lepper 1999, 2000). There have been plenty of empirical studies that evidence the changeability of intrinsic motivation. For example, studies showed that when the learners are interacting meaningfully their intrinsic motivation is positively influenced and consequently their problem solving ability is enhanced (Ragan, 1998). Deci et al. (1999) revealed that intrinsic motivation in learners is decreased when they are given tangible feedbacks such as money and would be enhanced when the rewards are given in verbal format.

Therefore teachers need to be aware that if they cannot do much to improve their students' instrumental motivation there are certainly many strategies and techniques they can employ to increase their students' intrinsic motivation. Although these studies provide some evidence of modifiability nature of the intrinsic motivation, to the best of our knowledge, there have been no comparable studies examining the potential effects of testing instruments such as dynamic assessment that could be testing and teaching at the same time, on students' intrinsic motivation. The specific purpose of the present study was to explore the possible causal relationship that may exist between implementing the dynamic assessment model in EFL classes and students' intrinsic motivation enhancement. Consequently, the following research question was formulated: Will individuals receiving dynamic assessment procedure gain different levels of intrinsic motivation compared with individuals who do not receive this model of integrative assessment?

Based on the above question, the following research hypothesis was conceived:

*H1: After the dynamic assessment model is implemented, there is a significant increase in students' intrinsic motivation as compared with those who do not receive the dynamic assessment.*

## II. METHOD

### A. Participants

The participants in this study were 100 EFL learners in Jihad Daneshgahi Institute in Kermanshah, Iran. The participants, who were within the age range of 18-24, consisted of 60 females and 40 males. At the time of this study, they had been learning English for 2 years as a foreign language in this particular institute. They were mainly university students and were studying English for the purpose of finding a better job or achieving higher degrees in their related fields. Also, they were studying *Top Notch* series (Saslow and Ascher, 2007) for improving their language proficiency. The classes met three times a week for 25 sessions.

The participants were selected based on the convenience sampling procedure. Having the cooperation of the manager in Jihad Daneshgahi Institute in Kermanshah the researchers' selected four classes, each of which included 25 students. The selected classes' were randomly assigned to two experimental and two control classes, therefore using 50 students as an experimental group and 50 students as a control group. The dynamic assessment procedure was implemented in the experimental classes; but the control classes were taught the same set of concepts using the traditional method of reading assessment. Attempts were also made to equalize the conditions in the groups, such as time and length of the instruction.

### B. Materials and Instruments

For the purposes of data collection, the researchers used the following materials: the pre-intermediate *Selective Reading* textbook (Michael Kinsley, 1999...) and *Preliminary English Test (PET)* reading comprehension on line prepared tests by Cambridge as a source for the test preparation during the DA implementation.

An intrinsic motivation questionnaire was adapted from “The Academic Motivation Scale” (AMS) by Vallerand et al. (1992, 1993). The questionnaire is based on the self-determination theory. It has 28 items and seven subparts: a) one subscale for amotivation b) three for extrinsic motivation and c) three for intrinsic motivation. Our adapted questionnaire includes three sections related to intrinsic motivation. It has three sub parts which measures: (a) Intrinsic Motivation Knowledge, (b) Intrinsic Motivation Accomplishment and (c) Intrinsic Motivation Stimulation.

### C. Design

As Dornyei (2007) maintain, “in most educational settings random assignment of students by the researcher is rarely possible”. Therefore, employing a quasi-experimental design, we drew on the *Sandwich model* originally introduced by Sternberg and Grigorenko (as cited in Poehner, 2008) through which the DA treatment was implemented. In this approach to DA, a mediation phase is sandwiched between a pre-test and a post test that are administered in a non-dynamic manner. Then, the post-test is compared to that of the pre-test to determine how much learning has developed. The mediation phase in this research involved mediator-learner interaction, entailed hints, prompts, questions, suggestions, and explanations determined by the mediator's assumptions about learner needs and when learners request for mediation. After the post-test, learners in both groups were asked to answer the Academic Motivation questionnaire. A detailed description is presented in the next part.

### D. Procedure

The instructor of the classes (who is the second author of this article) taught the four selected classes. Two of them were randomly assigned as the experimental groups and the other two classes as the control groups. As we intended to deliver reading lessons through a DA Sandwich model, attempts were made to ensure the homogeneity of the students' ability in EFL reading through the administration of the Nelson reading test.

TABLE 1:  
PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Groups	N	M	Percent	F	Percent
Control group	50	20	20%	30	30%
Experimental group	50	20	20%	30	30%

N: Number; M: Male; F: Female

It was intended to allocate 30 minutes of experimental classes' time to reading using a DA Sandwich model as follows:

**Stage one:** the students were given a test and asked to answer the questions. The questions involved both multiple choices and open ended types. Then the instructor took the papers home, and scored them. She even provided individual comments and explanation to the errors in a marginal format and gave the papers back to the students.

**Stage two:** the instructor in a discussion format tried to uncover the problematic areas found in the students' test. The instructor, who has got a mediator role offered feedback, gave explanations, asked them to explain why they chose the wrong answer, and provided them with different techniques mostly with thinking aloud. The mediator did her best not to reveal the answer and let the students themselves find the correct answer.

**Stage three:** in this stage another reading comprehension test was administered. The mediator used the same procedure of scoring as the first one and gave the marked papers back to the students. But there was no discussion on it.

These three stages were repeated seven times during the term in the experimental groups. In the control group, students were only required to take the reading comprehension test and no elements (e.g. offering feedback, giving explanations) of the DA procedure were observed.

Two sessions to the end of the term, we conducted the survey on intrinsic motivation. The students in all four classes were asked to answer the questionnaire. Data were collected in June 2011. To reduce the context effect on testing, we selected a large hall, so that all the students could be accommodated. All the questionnaires were administered in the same day from 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. The students were told that the questionnaires aimed to measure their intention for learning English and it has nothing to do with their course mark. They were assured that, no one except the researchers would have access to their responses and their names would not be used in reporting the results. The students were asked to read each part carefully and provide correct answer in the answer sheet. It was a two-part questionnaire. The first part was dedicated to demographic information. The students were asked to answer the questions about their age, gender, language background, etc. And the second part measured their intrinsic motivation. The results are presented in more details in the next section.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS

This study was designed to investigate the possible effect of dynamic assessment on students' intrinsic motivation. Thus, the following research question was proposed:

Will individuals receiving dynamic assessment procedure gain different levels of intrinsic motivation compared to individuals who do not receive this model of integrative assessment?

Based on this question the following research hypothesis was formulated:

*H1: After the dynamic assessment model is implemented, there is a significant increase in students' intrinsic motivation as compared with those who do not receive the dynamic assessment.*

In order to compare the students' intrinsic motivation, data were hand scored and entered into a statistical software package (SPSS. 16) for the quantitative analysis. Table 2 shows the result of descriptive statistics. The mean scores of the groups show that the experimental group has more intrinsic motivation to continue learning the language than the control group.

TABLE 2:  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	50	4.08	2.07	.29
Experimental	50	5.38	2.30	.32

To ensure that the obtained difference is statistically significant, an independent-samples *t*-test was used. Table 3 shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental group ( $M=5.38, SD=2.30$ ) and the control group ( $M=4.08, SD=2.07$ ),  $t(97)=2.942, p=.00$ . Results suggest that the dynamic assessment procedure could be a significant predictor of intrinsic motivation. Learners in the experimental group reported to be more intrinsically motivated to learn English as a foreign language as compared with the control group.

TABLE 3:  
INFERENTIAL STATISTICS (RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST)

Leamer's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
.38	.53	2.94	97	.00	1.29	.44	.42	2.17

IV. DISCUSSION

Actually we can draw a conclusion that the results from the present study provided sufficient evidence for the hypothesis of the study. The result of the independent sample t- test shows that intrinsic motivation in the experimental group is higher than the control group. Therefore we can assume that we are safe in rejecting the null hypothesis through the results. The findings seem to add to the evidence contributed by many studies (Malone 1981; Malone and Lepper 1987; Lepper 1998; Lepper and Cordova 1992; Cordova and Lepper 1996; Inyengar and Lepper 1999, 2000) on the dynamic characteristic of intrinsic motivation that can be changed and that it is not a fixed variable. The results of the present article add validity to the argument provided by Ryan and Deci (2000) which states that intrinsic motivation will be facilitated by the task which is in the proper level of difficulty, the feedback which is promoting and the absence of forceful assessment. The finding also gives support for the arguments of Benson (2000), Brown (1994), Dickinson (1995), Holec (1981) and Littlewoods (1999), who have stated that intrinsic motivation will be fostered if we give the second language learners an amount of freedom to the extent that they feel responsible for their own course of learning.

According to the independent samples t- test, the students who underwent a Dynamic Assessment procedure were intrinsically motivated more than the students which didn't undergo the same procedure. These results seem to support the conclusion from several studies in both second and foreign language learning context (Malone 1981; Malone and Lepper 1987; Lepper 1998; Lepper and Cordova 1992; Cordova and Lepper 1996; Inyengar and Lepper 1999, 2000) proposing that students' intrinsic motivation could be enhanced. As Dornyei 2001b states, motivation is a continuously evolving construct, which is a subject to various internal and external influences confronted by the learner. Now we can answer the research question: there is a significant difference in students' intrinsic motivation while a dynamic assessment procedure is implemented and that there is a positive relationship between having a DA procedure and intrinsically motivated learners. These findings are also in accordance with previous researches revealing that when the amount of self-confidence in learners increase as a result of experience and when second language learners gain more control in their own process of learning there are more intrinsic reasons to study and continue their leanings. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) can give us an explanation:

“Intrinsic motivation stems from the organism's need to be competent and self-determining. Perception of competence and perception of control are apparently distinct yet not easily separated. If a learner perceives himself as being highly competent in a learning situation, then the opportunities to take control of that situation will be meaningful to him. On the other hand, in order to experience a feeling of competence, it is necessary to feel responsible for the actions and outcomes that demonstrate competence (Ryan and Deci, 2000).”

One possible explanation for such difference would be the quality of teaching. Dornyei (2001) also point to this issue that ‘the best motivational intervention is simply to improve the quality of our teaching’ (p. 26). DA can be, therefore, seen as an assessment and at the same time a teaching procedure which increases the quality of teaching and learning.

The findings of the present study can be also explained this way greater motivation will be resulted if the learning process is successful enough to the learners especially to the learners who feel responsible for their leanings' achievements. Motivation is seen as a result of taking responsibility for learning outcomes. It has been reported by Kaufman and Kozulin (1998) when a DA was implemented in Israel it resulted in high level of achievement.

Gardner's (1985) in his model states that, ‘attitudes toward the learning situation’ is a vital component of motivation existence. So any experienced teacher is aware of the fact that student anxiety created by a tense classroom environment is a powerful factor in undermining L2 process of learning. Therefore implementing a dynamic procedure could break so many affective filters due to the rapport which is made between teacher and the students. And this could be another explanation of high amount of intrinsic motivation among the individuals in the experimental group.

In conclusion, the principle findings from this investigation may include:

1. The positive effect of dynamic assessment procedure on students' intrinsic motivation
2. Intrinsic Motivation is not affixed construct; therefore tutors may be able to influence students' intrinsic motivations.

V. CONCLUSION

This study aimed at determining whether there is a significant difference in students' intrinsic motivation while a dynamic assessment procedure is implemented. Analysis of the obtained data showed EG superiority over CG on the amount of intrinsic motivation. Overall, findings provided the answer to the main research question: There is a significant difference in students' intrinsic motivation while a dynamic assessment procedure is implemented. In the last chapter, all the findings were discussed and interpreted in relation to the literature presented earlier. This chapter explains the implications of these findings, suggestion for further research, and the concluding remarks.

#### A. Implications

The researcher so far tried to interpret the findings related to the hypothesis proposed earlier. Some conclusion and interpretations were drawn from the explanations. The findings may have some implications if the interpretations are correct. However, it should be noted that these implications need to be examined in real situations.

Gardner in his theory of Multiple Intelligences has emphasized the role of dynamic assessment since assessment process is no longer separated from the learning process, the examination room is no longer separated from the classroom, and the examination time is no longer separated from the learning time. Therefore it's no longer separated from dynamic atmosphere of the classroom. According to these facts and that the motivation is not a fixed construct and dynamic assessment is a step toward improving the quality of the teaching, teachers should try to implement DA in their classes as a way toward raising the students' intrinsic motivation. The rapport which is created during this procedure between the instructor and the students is one of the factors that the learners need to be intrinsically motivated to learn the language. Rogers, 1983 states that a good rapport between the teacher and the students is a fundamental need in any modern, student-centered approach to education. In order to improve students' language learning, EFL teachers need to understand how important the role of motivation esp. intrinsic motivation in the process of learning is. In fact teachers should become more aware of their students intrinsic motivation in order to orient teaching methods more appropriately. And DA could be an effective assessment method and at the same time a teaching method in which it will lead to greater amount of intrinsic motivation among the learners. Besides it will reduce the anxiety which is sometimes created in EFL language classes. In Gardner's (1985) model, 'attitudes toward the learning situation' is a key determinant of the motivation complex, and any practicing teacher is aware of the fact that student anxiety created by a tense classroom climate is one of the most potential factors that undermine L2 motivation (e.g. MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991; Young, 1991). Therefore through the rapport which is created among the learners and the teacher this negative affective filter can be controlled to some extent.

To this end, by having a dynamic assessment procedure in language classes, teachers can help the students to identify their problems and be aware of it to work more on that point or it can simply be solved by a hint which is given to them by the teacher. The findings also imply that, language curricula, materials and instructional approaches should incorporate dynamic assessment beside the usual static assessment as a way toward increasing students' intrinsic motivation to learn the language. In addition, the use of DA can enable the students to take responsibilities for their own learning by enhancing learner autonomy, independence and self direction. These factors are important because learners need to keep on learning when they are no longer in a formal classroom setting (Oxford, 1987).

#### B. Suggestions for Further Research

Interpretations and findings of this study lead to several recommendations for further research. First, it is recommended that a replication of this study be done wherein:

- a) The subjects of this study are compared with other populations such as those not majoring in English.
- b) The Academic Motivation Scale is compared with other types of scales
- c) The amount of intrinsic motivation is measured through other language skills such as speaking, listening or writing when a DA procedure is implemented.

Second a more detailed look at variables influencing the intrinsic motivation is needed. Affective factors such as self-esteem, self confidence, and self determination might relate to the amount of intrinsic motivation. To consider as many variables as possible will enable language teachers and researchers to draw a more accurate, and global picture of what is happening to an individual when he or she is learning a language.

Third, longitudinal research which identifies the other learning factors which are affected by having a dynamic procedure in EFL classes is needed.

Fourth, qualitative research studies will provide a throughout look at language learning behavior.

In conclusion, the findings provided support for the idea that students' intrinsic motivation is enhanced when a dynamic procedure is implemented in their class. More research is needed in this area to establish how effective intrinsic motivation may be facilitated by both language teachers and language students.

#### C. Conclusion and Final Remarks

According to the previous review, dynamic assessment procedure has a role in affecting students' intrinsic motivation. This study aimed to determine the possible relationship between the students' intrinsic motivation and using a dynamic assessment procedure in EFL classes. To identify the possible change in students' intrinsic motivation the researcher used the scale of L2 intrinsic motivation which was adapted from "The Academic Motivation Scale" by Vallerand et al. (1992, 1993).



Independent samples t-test was used to evaluate the differences in intrinsic motivation between the experimental group, whom a dynamic assessment procedure was implemented during their course, and the control group. And the students in the experimental group reported having higher intrinsic motivation the result was consistent with the finding that ‘the best motivational intervention is simply to improve the quality of our teaching’ Dörnyei (2001) and These findings are consistent with earlier studies by Covington (1992), Gottfried (1985, 1990) and Noels et al. (2000, 2001), indicating that learners who had more confidence in their ability and/or experienced more control in their learning showed greater interest in learning for intrinsic reasons. Accordingly, it is recommended that dynamic assessment procedure should not be neglected in the foreign or second language learning curriculum.

This study also provides the instructors with opinions about the role of their teaching quality in EFL classes that can have on students’ intrinsic motivation. The one that sometimes it is wrongly perceived as something fixed that nobody can’t do anything about it except the learners themselves. consequently, for further research , qualitative research including the other strategies in teaching that a teacher can use in his class to improve the students intrinsic motivation are suggested as a good methodology in spite of being time consuming and difficult to analyze. They allow the objective observation of both ongoing behavior and the mental pictures of the participants.

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# Bakhtin's Carnival and Strindberg's *Miss Julie*

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**Abstract**—The subversion of the three feudal, patriarchal, and religious hierarchies turns Strindberg's perennial play, *Miss Julie* (1888) into an exemplar of Bakhtinian carnival. The present study, thus, offers firstly a survey of each hierarchy as concerning its 'king' and 'clown,' secondly of Strindberg's ambivalent stance to these pecking orders, and thirdly of their being violated and the outcome these changes bring about. Highlighting the theory of the carnivalesque which is in direct association with the spirit of Midsummer Eve in overall background of the play, Strindberg's endeavor to create a private utopia of his social, economical, and moral ideals will be explored. As a consequence, such issues as the bodily lower stratum, the simultaneous praise and degradation of each character and also the centrality of down/up motif are dealt with in detail.

**Index Terms**—Bakhtin, carnival, bodily lower stratum, hierarchies, *Miss Julie*

## I. INTRODUCTION

August Strindberg's *Miss Julie* (1888), as a species of the "literature of problems" can be dubbed an example of Bakhtinian Carnival, in which three forms of hierarchies are overturned (Larsson, 1909, p.313). As Bakhtin benefits from the folk culture of medieval festivals to criticize the "strict hegemony of the Soviet Union," Strindberg's setting of pagan Midsummer eve helps him liberate his characters from Victorian & feudal hierarchies they were subjected to (Grindon, 1996, p.148).

The assumption to deem *Miss Julie*, Strindberg's dream of a utopia would not seem unrealistic. What he aims at is not achieving a democracy, though. His utopia is Hobbesian i.e., not devoid of hierarchies and power relations, but confirming a naturalistic supremacy of 'the stronger,' namely, men over women. A Marxist utopia — a classless community — is not what he desires; he craves for the reversal of the old hierarchies, replacement of the ruling class by the oppressed, and establishment of the 'new order' as opposed to the 'old' one.

## II. MAIN DISCUSSION

The present study seeks to discuss Strindberg's *Miss Julie*, with regard to the issue of carnival theorized by Mikhail Bakhtin in his *Rabelais and His World* and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, though he did not initiate this theory (Wiles, 1998, p.61). It would be vital, as a result, to commence with the definition of the notion of carnival. Bakhtin asserts.

as opposed to the official feast, one might say that carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal. It was hostile to all that was immortalized and completed. (1998, p.686)

What Bakhtin valorizes is the carnivalesque spirit, which endorses the reversal of the rank, class, hierarchies and norms, at least temporarily, however "the key to this abolition of boundaries of class and ideology is that joy, festivity, laughter and desire are understood as the revolutionary impetus that brings such a world about" (Grindon, 1996, p.149).

Whilst there are controversies over the carnival's revolutionary spirit, the totally accepted belief among the literary critics and sociologists is that "it posits popular culture as a site of resistance and struggle" (Humphrey, 2000, p.149). Nevertheless, a brief discussion of these controversies would assist with exploring the broad aspects of the carnival theory.

From Plato and his conservative commentary on carnival, which associates it with communal order (wiles, 1998, p.61) to the adherents of the 'safety valve' theory (Grindon, 1996, p.151), all thinkers have countered the notion of carnival as progressive and revolutionary. While Bakhtin and Situationists emphasized that "[c]arnival folk-laughter is egalitarian in its suspension of such binary divisions as official/unofficial, high/low, dialogic/monologic" (Knowles, 1998, p.6), many have argued that "carnival does not have such revolutionary potential, but is in fact a sort of social 'safety valve' that allows the official world to operate unhindered the rest of the time, and is in this sense complicit with that which it superficially opposes" (Grindon, 1996, p.151). As a matter of fact, the safety valve model comes back to Aristotelian and Hippocratic theory of the four humors, according to which "[c]elebration evacuates melancholy and thus restores the body to equilibrium" (Wiles, 1998, p.63). Carnival in this sense is applied as the reaffirmation of the status quo that "reinforces the bonds of authority by allowing for their temporary suspension" (Dentith, 1995, p.71).

Limited potential of carnival, also, is another hypothesis some critics call attention to. Eagleton maintains that the carnivalesque is “a licensed affair in every sense, a permissible rupture of hegemony, a contained popular blow-off as disturbing and relatively ineffectual as a revolutionary work of art” (Eagleton, 1981, p.146). Although he affirms carnival’s potential for temporary disruption of the ruling class hegemony, Eagleton renounces its efficacy to revolutionize the dominant ideology, simply because it is “permissible” and “licensed” by the same ruling class, and is, consequently, only “disturbing” in a *controlled* way.

Hakim Bey, among proponents of ‘interventionist’ carnival, examines the similarities that the carnivalesque shares with the postmodern: “[b]oth appeal to play, dialogism, collage and an opposition to modernism’s fixed hierarchies and elitism” (Grindon, 1996, p.156). It is carnival’s playful spirit which challenges the monologic, authoritative, and absolute assumptions of the rulers, reducing them to the level of mockery; the dialogue among the various social and economical strata of society, possible only at the time of carnival, provides an outlet for suppressed desires. In short, such “comedy of misrule” forms a pastiche, where the upper class achieves the lower class’s vitality and energy, the latter, the opportunity of self-expression and power (Magistrale, 2005, p.168). “The dialogic consist[s] of a truth on the boundaries between people in dialogue,” Cahill observes in his doctoral dissertation, *A Bakhtinian Analysis of Four Comic American Novels* (2005, p.46). Each dialogue occurs between at least two entities – ‘self’ and ‘other’, generally – and carnival becomes “a means for displaying otherness” (Holquist, 1990, p.89): it defamiliarizes familiar relations and “draws attention to their variety, as well as highlighting the fact that social roles determined by class relations are *made* not given, culturally produced rather than naturally mandated” (Ibid.).

In his investigation of Rabelais’ work, Bakhtin alludes to the anarchic, body-based and grotesque elements of popular culture as opposed to the serious, non-festive official culture and introduces the notion of ‘grotesque realism,’ where “the material bodily principle, that is, images of the human body with its food, drink, defecation, and sexual life, plays a predominant role” (Bakhtin, 1998, p.687). Yet these images are not proposed satirically, to picture private negative aspects of the individual’s body, but as a celebration of universal, social bodily life of all people (Ibid. p.688). “In grotesque realism, an object is sent to the lower strata of life, to the bowels and to the womb, to be reborn,” as Cahill puts it (2005, p.71). In fact, the negative and destructive aspects of the body have, also, a regenerating and constructive role; degradation accompanies with exaltation and body with spirit. Carnival is concerned with “the lower stratum of the body, the life of the belly and the reproductive organs,” manifested as the “acts of defecation and copulation, conception, pregnancy, and birth” (Knowles, 1998, p.5). It forms a space where the reversals of high and low, king and beggar, as well as upper body (e.g. head) and lower body (e.g. genitals) are realized and the opposites of life and death, fact and fantasy, heaven and hell, mingled (Selden *et al.*, 1985, p.41).

Carnival’s promise of renewal and rebirth is generated from agrarian feasts upon which it is based. Put plainly, it creates a zone of “joyful relativity” which challenges what has been taken for granted as perennial and resolute (Bakhtin, 1984, p.107).

It is intended, here, to expose the complementary details about the idea of carnival with reference to Strindberg’s play. Whether he has been familiar with Bakhtin’s theory of carnival or not, *Miss Julie* (1888) seems to abound with related characteristics.

*Miss Julie* is set in a Swedish manor house on Midsummer Eve in the eighties (Stockenström, 2004, p.39). Midsummer’s Eve is a Scandinavian celebration with feasting and Maypole dancing (Turner, 2005, p.168). This pagan festival and the opportunity it offers for dancing, singing, drinking, and revelry link it directly to Bakhtin’s notion of carnival (Ibid. p.iv). Consequently, the festive atmosphere of the play liberates the characters, even if temporarily, from the Victorian moral values, feudal hierarchies, and patriarchal restrictions.

The significance of mummery, dance and song in Bakhtin’s carnival can also be perceived by the sections named as “Pantomime” and “Ballet” in Strindberg’s play (Strindberg, 1964, pp.39- 51). In fact, what emboldens Jean, the valet and Julie, the Count’s daughter, to overlook their social, economical, and moral stance and intermingle with each other in the act of merry making is the hypnotizing impact of music and dance; at the beginning of the play, where the audience/reader first learns about Miss Julie “leading the dance with the gamekeeper,” the carnivalization of the standards has already taken place (Ibid. p.35). Besides, Jean’s special expertise in dancing (along with the condescending, yet refined manners and his knowledge of French language) endears him to Julie. Furthermore, it is by the peasants’ song that the idea of running away, which will be discussed in detail subsequently, pops into Jean’s head.

Of the consequential elements of carnival is eccentricity, which brings the suppressed desires to the surface of consciousness (Sidorkin, 2005, p.302); frequent references to Julie’s hysteria and Jean’s oddity stress the point:

Jean. You know, you’re strange.

Miss Julie. Perhaps. But so are you. Everything is strange. Life, people, everything, is a scum which drifts, drifts on and on across the water until it sinks, sinks. (Strindberg, 1964, p.44)

Hence, Julie’s sensual insanity violates the decorous and decent norms of official order and arouses taboos and repressed energies, which are capable of disturbing the established hegemonies.

Also central to the carnivalesque is the function of mask and disguise, associated with “notions of transition, transformation, mocking, and the violation of natural boundaries” (Martin, 1971, p.92). After the Renaissance, however, when the mask – losing its regenerating nature – becomes a deceiving vacuum, the masker turns into a trickster. The trickster’s “capricious acts of sly deception” disclose him as a cunning, lascivious, and conceited jester, who is “at the

mercy of his passions and appetites,” and can pose a major threat to the established order (Davidson, 2008, p.145). Jean’s crafty theatricality, cultural aptitude, and ruthless ambition transform him into the classical Machiavellian anti-hero, for whom “conventions” are arbitrary settlements with which one can choose not to “bother” from time to time (Strindberg, 1964, p.51). As a practical joker, he seduces Julie (by fabricating a story about his forbidden love of her and suicidal thoughts) and tricks her into going to his room, bringing forth the real carnival.

In order to clarify this last point, it is worth mentioning here that singing on Midsummer night is an old custom; and the fact that Jean regards the peasant’s song as “a filthy song. About you and me” (Strindberg, 1964, p.51), seems more like an act of deception than what Strindberg holds as “the chance that drove these two people together into a private room” (Strindberg, 1964, p.22). Firstly, the song, though filthy to the high-born and supposedly innocent Miss Julie, makes no particular reference to any specific person; secondly, in order to escape the disrepute (if any), Jean could have gone to his room alone (if at all); and thirdly, shooting, “if any one tries to break in” would not be a sane solution. In any case, even if one does view the event as a mere coincidence, Jean’s Machiavellian advances, discussed later on, cannot be denied as responsible for the tragedy that befalls Julie.

*Miss Julie* becomes a topsy-turvy world of inverted hierarchies and constitutes the site in which “[t]he effect of cartwheel circularity denies the polarities of the high and the low” (Good, 2000, p.101). To take the hierarchies of the play into account, one should categorize them as feudal, patriarchal, and ecclesiastical.

Strindberg, the child of a working-class mother and a more privileged father, lived and wrote with a class-conscious mentality (Als, 2005, p.92). His concomitant abhorrence to and desire for the upper classes, reflected in Jean’s ambivalent aspirations, present these people as the species with an “innate or acquired sense of honor” inherited from “barbarism” (Strindberg, 1964, p.25). His unachieved ambitions for power and progress created in him “a mind raging at life,” which sought revenge on the upper classes (Ibid. p.129). It is not surprising, then, when the Lord Chamberlain first banned *Miss Julie* in 1925 as ‘sordid and disgusting’, “he was not referring to the extramarital sex, nor yet to Julie’s suicide, but simply to the way in which it would forever threaten the master-servant relationship and make it harder to hire good valets” (as cited in Morley, 2000, p.49).

The play’s boundaries between the gentry and working class are to be inferred from the divisions of the house spaces. The servants’ quarters are completely segregated from the rest of the house: the kitchen is “connected to the servants’ sleeping quarters but with no access to the rooms above where the count and his daughter, Lady Julie, live in the stately manor house” (Stockenström, 2004, p.39).

From the very beginning, the description of Jean’s and Christine’s clothes in sharp contrast to Miss Julie’s and the absent Count’s, as well as the account of their conflicting activities, underlines the dialectic of class conflict: “Jean enters, dressed in livery and carrying a pair of big riding boots, with spurs” (Strindberg, 1964, p.35). The comparison made between Jean’s livery, as the symbol of his servitude and the recurrent images of the Count’s boots and gloves is highlighted, once more, by Christine’s “light cotton dress, with apron” (Ibid.) which is opposed to Miss Julie’s scented handkerchief.

The opposition between the two poles of leisure and labor, besides, is brought into light by Jean’s taking “his lordship to the station” and Christine’s “standing at the stove, frying in a pan” (Ibid. p.35), while there are broad hints at Julie’s (dancing, drinking, etc.) and the Count’s (riding, drinking coffee, etc.) leisure pursuits.

The Count’s speaking tube and bell for calling and commanding his servants act as the transcendental signifiers for his domestic sovereignty (Blackwell, 1999, p.314).

Owing to Strindberg’s scheme of social emendation, the first hierarchy is violated when the Count — whose ringing bell suffices to reduce Jean to a “frightened horse” — due to her daughter’s transgressions of the normalities, is carnivalized and as a consequence, Jean “kicks the boots” (Strindberg, 1964, p.53). In addition, the master (mistress)/slave binarism dominant in Julie and John’s relationship is overturned by Julie’s misbehavior; Jean’s subsequent abusive language and gestures, discussed later, subscribes to this inversion. Julie’s transformation from the house’s mistress (head) to the house’s servant’s mistress (coquette) follows the same Bakhtinian downward movement, central to grotesque realism.

The second hierarchy treated in the play is what patriarchy presents as men’s superiority over women. Strindberg’s sense of social inferiority towards his wife, a baroness, and the influence of Nietzsche’s theory of the Superman who offer[ed] some consolation against the impending domination of the world by women” were at fault for his misogynistic work (Meyer, 1964, pp.9-11). Blackwell, among many, proclaimed that Strindberg and a multitude of male authors responded with “varying degrees of horror, outrage, and counterattack” to the rise of the ‘New Woman’ in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (1999, p.311).

Julie’s unconventional mother, “brought up with ideas about equality, [and] freedom for women” was an easy target for Strindberg’s vengeance. Her aversion to marriage and having a child, her carnivalesque reversal of women’s and men’s roles on the state and her setting fire to the house could not be disregarded as venial sins by patriarchy, specifically, when Julie’s father had been denied access to his wife’s money which was legally “[h]is lordship’s too, then” (Strindberg, 1964, p.60).

The Count, one of the two patriarchs of the play is “consistently equated with proper rule” (Blackwell, 1999, p.320), the Law of the Father in Lacan’s terms. In point of fact, he enjoys a two-fold authority, being both master and father to

Julie. Equally, Jean's treatment of Christine at the beginning of the play adheres to the same master-servant relationship between the Count and his household:

Jean. ... You might have warmed the plate, though.

Christine. You're fussier than his lordship himself, once you start. (She pulls his hair affectionately.)

Jean. (angrily). Don't pull my hair. You know how sensitive I am. (Strindberg, 1964, p.36).

As the dramatist's mouthpiece, Jean's underscoring of the gender differences emanates from his deep yearning to establish himself in social hierarchization. His self-fashioning materializes only through a process of differentiation and displacing the "desire onto a control of the other" (Walton, 1995, p.7):

Jean. But *I* wouldn't do it [commit suicide], mind. There's a difference between us.

Miss Julie. Because you're a man and I am a woman? What difference does that make?

Jean. The difference – between a man and a woman. (Strindberg, 1964, p.75).

In Bakhtin's theory, however, women prompt "the undoing of pretentiousness, of all that is finished, completed and exhausted. [A woman] is the inexhaustible vessel of conception, which dooms all that is old and terminated" (as cited in Cahill, 2005, p.72).

Although a potential patriarch, Jean cannot be a proper king in patriarchal system, since his slave-mentality subjects him to the will of the greater power, the Count. Moreover, he cannot break free from his sense of inferiority to Julie's higher birth to the end. Ergo, he, together with Julie, plays the role of a clown to this system. Julie's stealing his father's money for Jean, which has been paralleled to her mother's entrusting hers to her lover, uncrowns the Count's authority. Their defiance, even though bitterly punished, pokes fun at patriarchal pretensions and brings about the carnivalesque laughter: "we became the laughing-stock of the district" (Strindberg, 1964, p.59).

The reversal of the monologizing patriarchal order by Julie resembles that of the feudal structure by Jean; as the carnival clowns, they have "the right to confuse, to tease, to hyperbolize" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.163). What distinguishes her from Jean, however, is the fact that despite him who cannot be the proper king of an official, non-carnival system (neither feudal nor patriarchal), Julie is that of one i.e. of feudal system. As a member of high society, like her father, she is crowned (consider Jean's mock ceremony, kneeling and kissing her foot) and decrowned during the carnival. But, her fall is not momentarily.

Contrary to Jean's carnivalization, Julie's is doomed to failure thanks to the dramatist's radical misogyny. And despite the fact that the issues of pre/extra-marital affair and misalliance have not been uncommon in Julie's family, regarding her ancestor's – a miller who "let the king sleep with his wife" (Strindberg, 1964, p.63) – and her parents' affairs, she is condemned to death.

Anyhow, of great value is the fact that the result of mismatches and misrule in the play contradicts Bakhtin's impression about carnival's inherently comic outcome; carnival can be "a site of violence against the weak and marginalized" (Crawford, 2002, p.47). In other words, the acts of mock crowning and uncrowning exert context-bound effects which can be either comic or tragic. As a matter of fact, the play's "current of anarchic violence," which is "the festival's bitter side" prepares the ground for Julie's suicide (Bernstein, 1992, pp.5-6).

Carnival's abusive language – language of the marketplace, which is swarmed with all kinds of profanities, oaths, and curses – retains its positive, regenerating pole: "The passing from excessive praise to excessive invective is characteristic, and the change from the one to the other is perfectly legitimate. Praise and abuse are, so to speak, the two sides of the same coin" (Bakhtin, 1998, p.690). Accordingly, Jean's praise is "ironic and ambivalent," that is to say, this grotesque language "abuses while praising and praises while abusing" (Ibid.); his degradation accompanies admiration, from beginning to end:

To my mind, she is not what one would call a lady. Just now, when she was dancing in the barn, she grabbed the gamekeeper from Anna and made him dance with her. We'd never do that – but that's how it is when the gentry try to act common – they become really common. But she's a magnificent creature! What a figure! Ah! What shoulders! and – etcetera! (Strindberg, 1964, p.37)

Even after Julie's fall, when Jean's language grows coarse and offensive, the same pattern is followed:

Servant's whore, lackey's bitch, shut your mouth and get out of here. You dare to stand there and call me foul? Not one of my class ever behaved the way you've done tonight. Do you think any kitchen-maid would accost a man like you did? Have you ever seen any girl of my class offer her body like that? I've only seen it among animals and prostitutes ... Miss Julie, you're a fine woman, much too good for someone like me ... you're beautiful, you're refined. Educated, loveable when you want to be, and once you have awoken a man's passion, it could never die. (Ibid. pp.57-58)

Additionally, the recurrent down/up motif in the play conveys the logic of simultaneous humiliation/commendation, degradation/regeneration, and death/rebirth:

Miss Julie. I have a dream which recurs from time to time, and I'm reminded of it now. I've climbed to the top of a pillar and am sitting there, and I can see no way to descend. When I look down, I become dizzy, but I must come down ... I long to fall but I don't fall. And yet I know I shall find no peace till I come down, no rest till I come down, down to the ground. And if I could get down, I should want to burrow my way deep into the earth....

Jean. No. I dream that I'm lying under a high tree in a dark wood. I want to climb, up, up to the top .... (Ibid. pp.44-45)

Interestingly, Jean's and Julie's fanciful ascend and descend in their dreams result in a real upside-down pecking order and therefore, exposing the "half-real and half-play" nature of Bakhtin's carnival (Sidorkin, 2005, p.30). Bakhtin's commentary on the grotesque realism is directly relevant to the play's images of the material bodily principle or the bodily lower stratum: "The essential principle of grotesque realism is degradation, that is, the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract; it is a transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity" (1998, p.688).

Indeed, various forms of downward movement or prone position in the play exhibit the physicality and materiality of the grotesque body and accentuate the degradation and regeneration polarity: "the grotesque or material body and its everyday functions (eating, drinking, scratching, excreting, copulating, etc.) were used against decorous behavior and norms of decorum and spirituality" (Peters, 1913, p.24). Frequent references to the characters' eating, drinking, lying, sleeping, excreting, and love-making debunk the sacred, elevated, and official discourse of the aristocracy and guarantee the depletion of suffering and fear (Bakhtin, 1998, p.690). On this account, the beautified portrait of the lavatory – "a Turkish pavilion in the shadow of jasmine trees and overgrown with honeysuckle," decorated with "the pictures of kings and emperors" – underscores the co-existence of the two poles of praise and abuse, epitomizes the glamorized appearance of a rotting aristocracy, and ultimately, signifies the need for change (Strindberg, 1964, p.47).

As the critics postulate, Bakhtin's carnival celebrates "the transition from a stern authoritarian period (the Medieval) to a period in which the individual was liberated from medieval superstition and fear (the Renaissance)" (Davidson, 2008, p.141). Likewise, *Miss Julie* explores a "historical process of change" from the old agrarian system of values to an industrialized culture (Stockenstrom, 2004, p.44).

Julie's fall and death, in consequence, undermine the audience's/reader's fear of death and destruction, as well as, the superstitious sanctity of "Bakhtinian paradigm of them-and-us, officialdom and the folk" (Knowles, 1998, p.67); the solace that ensues is a "relief such as one feels when one sees an incurable invalid at last allowed to die," Strindberg observes in his preface to the play (1964, p.21).

For Bakhtin, the notion of carnival and the up/down movement in the hierarchies are associated with the observer's place, which determines the domination of one of the two poles of degradation/admiration: "everything is perceived from a unique position in existence. Its corollary is that the meaning of whatever is observed is shaped by the place from which it is perceived" (Holquist, 1990, p.21). Thus, Jean perceives Julie as an inaccessible dream, when escaping from the lavatory and soiled with his master's waste, he hides "under a pile of weeds – under" (Strindberg, 1964, p.48). Julie's high stance in the social stratum, on the other hand, grants her a more advantageous perspective of the world. That is why Jean inquires: "Do you know how the world looks from down there? No, you don't. Like hawks and eagles, whose backs one seldom sees, because most of the time they hover above you" (Ibid. p.47).

To return to the categories of hierarchies, one would regard the third hierarchy in *Miss Julie* as religious. Strindberg enunciated, "[t]he theater, and indeed art in general, has long seemed to me a *Biblia pauperum*, a Bible in pictures for the benefit of the illiterate; with the dramatist as a lay preacher hawking contemporary ideas in a popular form" (Ibid. p.19). Strindberg's handling of drama as an image of Bible in motion, denotes the substantial impact of religion on his life and career. *Miss Julie* exemplifies such didacticism; it must be read/watched and reflected upon.

The officialdom of the religious hierarchy is reinforced by the play's Biblical allusions. In this respect, Midsummer Eve is a Christianized festival with pagan roots which are conquered in Sunday sermons of St. John the Baptist's Day (Turner, 2005, p.168). Moreover, Christine's faith in the Savior's blessing and God's special grace that make it "easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven" transforms her into the moral center and, therefore, the carnival king (queen) of the play (Strindberg, 1964, p.74). But soon this queen is also decrowned, when the reader is informed that "[s]he goes to church in order to be able to shift the guilt of her domestic pilfering on to Jesus, and get herself recharged with innocence" (Ibid. p.27). Accordingly, the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the play is reversed after Julie's fall, since she is no longer from "the first" but already "among the last of all" (Ibid. p.77).

Eventually, the reestablishment of order, after this night of chaos takes place with the Count's return. As Frye illustrates, the expulsion of the carnival king concludes the festival and a far better community emerges from the chaos of the former one. In *Miss Julie*, as well, the death of the tragic scapegoat pays the price for this "social and political protest" (Kristeva, 1982, p.65). Strindberg's utopia, then, is a world in which a servant "survives the battle unharmed, and will quite possibly end as an hotelier" (Strindberg, 1964, p.26).

### III. CONCLUSION

To conclude the discussion, one would infer that even though Strindberg adopts a narrow definition of social justice, his strategy to achieve it corresponds to Bakhtin's theory of carnival. This immoral disorder Strindberg benefits from to appraise the possibility of change seems as repulsive and dishonorable as it has been to the audience; he takes no pains to justify the maliciousness of the disturbances triggered by the unprivileged side of the social hierarchy. To Strindberg, upper classes deserve being fooled and exploited. But unlike Bakhtin, whose carnival promises "an alternative social space of freedom, abundance, and equality, expressing a utopian promise of plenitude and redemption" (Bell and Gardiner, 1996, p.767), what Strindberg anticipates as utopia in his play, however, is not a "republic" with flattened social hierarchies, where the public are endowed with equality, uniformity and democracy (Strindberg, 1964, p.53). In



lieu, he exploits naturalism, which guarantees the irresistible and inevitable decadence of the aristocracy as a means of justification for his political theory. Otherwise, his lower class characters are either too subservient or too revengeful to the ideology and in both cases too corrupted to hold the entitlement and capability for hierarchical inversions.

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# Analysis on Three Versions of *If by Life You Were Deceived* from Perspective of Stylistics

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**Abstract**—A. C. Pushkin's poem *ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ* was translated into many languages for the time being, and is famous all over the world. In this article, three versions (Russian, English and Chinese) of the poem are analyzed from the perspective of stylistics, including the lexical categories, the rhythm, the rhyme, and the sentence pattern. The purpose is to help understand the language differences of this poem in Russian, English and Chinese more clearly, and to compare the two translation versions with the original, and it is an attempt to apply stylistics into the research of literature and translation as well.

**Index Terms**—analysis, three versions of *ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ*, stylistics, translation

## I. INTRODUCTION

The poem *ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ* by A. C. Pushkin is worldly famous for the time being, and was translated into many languages. There are for instance the English version *If by Life You were Deceived* and the Chinese version *假如生活欺骗了你*. They are respectively:

### **Russian version:**

ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

Если жизнь тебя обманет,  
Не печалься, не сердись!  
В день уныния, смирись:  
День веселья, верь, настанет.  
Сердце в будущем живёт;  
Настоящее уныло:  
Всё мгновенно, всё пройдёт;  
Что пройдёт, то будет мило.

### **English version**

If by life you were deceived  
If by life you were deceived,  
Don't be dismal, don't be wild!  
In the day of grief, be mild!  
Merry days will come, believe.  
Heart is living in to-morrow;  
Present is dejected here;  
In a moment, passes sorrow;  
That which passes will be dear. (Translated by M. Kneller)<sup>1</sup>

### **Chinese version:**

《假如生活欺骗了你》  
假如生活欺骗了你，  
不要忧郁，也不要愤慨！  
不顺心时暂且克制自己，  
相信吧，快乐之日就会到来。  
我们的心儿憧憬着未来，  
现今总是令人悲哀：  
一切都是暂时的，转瞬即逝，  
而那逝去的将变得可爱。 (Translated by ZHA Liang-zheng)<sup>2</sup>

A. C. Pushkin, one of the representatives of Russian Romanticism and the founder of Russian realism in literature, originally composed the poem *ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ* in simple words, which made it easy to be read, understood, and memorized. The 8-line short poem reveals the poet's optimistic attitude toward setbacks or misfortunes

Note<sup>1</sup>: <http://www.reeds.com.cn/forum.php?mod=viewthread&tid=472>, June, 2012

Note<sup>2</sup>: <http://bbs.24en.com/thread-165079-1-1.html>, June, 2012

in life. Don't be dismal, don't be wild. Be mild and believe that merry days will come tomorrow. These imperative expressions are presented in plain simple words. It gives readers the intrapersonal power to be optimistic to life and reveals the poet's despire to misfortunes, the ambition to pursue the happiness of life, the determination, and the spirit of persistence. Thus, readers who are reading the poem aloud or silently will immediately get tremendous indwelling power and reactivate themselves with vitality when they are in trouble or when they have some kind of misfortunes. Probably, that is why the poem is world-widely spreading.

Pushkin's short poem is dominantly composed of imperative expressions. Generally speaking, it is against the rule in literature writing. However, the simple style gives readers simplicity and frankness, which shortens the distance between readers and the poet and makes the poem just like a private conversation between close friends. Thus, the persuasive tone of this poem plays a good role of the interpersonal function. Therefore, the poem's popularization is achieved and deserved.

To better understand the substance of the poem and the poet's language choice as well as its English and Chinese translations, it is essential to have an analysis on the poem from more different and specific aspects. Therefore, a stylistic description on the three versions (Russian, English and Chinese) of the poem ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ is undertaken in this article.

Every analysis of style is an attempt to find the artistic principles underlying a poet's choice of language (Leech & Short, 2003). Any text of any writer, therefore, has its unique individual writing qualities, which can be discovered by stylistic analysis, and then it is possible to reveal the stylistic characters of the poem to help better understand the poem and its English and Chinese translations. Style can be the characteristics of the distinctive personal use of language in context, can be the selection of features partly determined by the demands of genre, form, theme, etc., can be the choice between alternative expressions, and can be the linguistic variety restricted by context.

As to the notion of style, translation theorists consider it consists of the (literary) translator's choice of the type of material to translate where applicable, and his/her consistent use of specific strategies, including the use of the prefaces or afterwords, the footnotes, and the glossing in the body of the text, etc. Therefore a translators' style covers certain patterns or preferences for using specific "lexical items, syntactic patterns, cohesive devices or style of punctuation where other options may be equally available in the language" (Baker, 2000, p. 248). No matter what kind of definitions, text genre, choice of colloquial language or written language, differences of thinking and expressions, syntactical differences, tone and rhetorical differences, which are specific to an individual translator, all can be ingredients of the style of a translator. Based on this, the following analysis is made to give a relatively thorough depiction of the styles in the three versions of the poem ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ by A. C. Pushkin.

## II. LEXICAL CATEGORIES OF THREE VERSIONS

The first here is a comparison of lexical categories of the three versions (Fig.1). Generally, simple words or easy expressions are used in the three versions of the poem. From the Russian version, the poem was composed to a 15-year-old girl, so the simple and easy words are selected by the poet. Therefore, the simplicity of words and expressions is used to strengthen the subject and the poet's purpose. The following figures will give us a rough knowledge about the lexical categories in the three versions.

	Russian version	English version	Chinese version
total words (no punctuation)	31	44	77
number of nouns	7	8	11
number of verb phase	16	11	11
number of empty words	9	9	--
metre	Stressed and unstressed syllabi alternate.		
rhyme	[a] [b] [b] [a] [a] [c] [a]	[a] [a] [a] [b] [c] [b] [c]	[a] [b] [a] [b] [b] [b] [a] [b]
main sentence pattern	hypothetical condition clause, imperative, subject-predicate sentence		

(Figure 1) General Comparison

Russian version	English version	Chinese version
Если	If	假如
жизнь	(by) life	生活
обманет	were deceived	欺骗
Тебя (object)	you (subject)	你 (object)
Не печалься	Don't be dismal	不要忧郁
не сердись	don't be wild	不要愤慨
В день уныния	In the day of grief	不顺心时
смирись	be mild	克制
День веселья	Merry days	快乐之日
верь	believe	相信吧
настанет	will come	就会到来
Сердце	Heart	心
в будущем	in tomorrow	未来
живёт	is living	憧憬着
Настоящее	Present	现今
уныло	is dejected	令人悲哀
Всё		一切
мгновенно	In a moment	都是暂时的
всё		(一切)
пройдёт	passes	转瞬即逝
Что пройдёт	That which passes	而那逝去的
то		
будет мило	will be dear	将变得可爱

(Figure2) Comparison of detailed expressions

#### A. Nouns

##### 1. Nouns in Russian version of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

In the poem, there are only seven nouns: жизни, день, уныния, веселья, будущий, сердце, настоящий, and all these nouns are very easy to be understood even for a 15-year-old girl. Therefore, these words are used to show the general subject, the simplicity of life, and the attitude towards the affliction. Жизни (life) and Сердце (heart) are the most important parts in human's body, and what the human must experience is the sad days or happy days (день уныния или веселья). In the poem, all the sadness and happiness are included, so the poet wrote the poem aiming to reveal the truth of life.

##### 2. Nouns in English version of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

In the English version *If by life you were deceived*, there are the same number of nouns as the original: life, day, grief, heart, tomorrow, present, moment, sorrow. All of the six nouns are also very simple, which are widely used in colloquial English, therefore, these words are also suitable to reveal the truth of life, and that is, life is filled with happy days and sad days. At the same time, these nouns are tangible to a 15-year girl. But one sentence is quite different from the original one: "In a moment, passes sorrow", while the original is "Всё мгновенно, всё пройдёт" which means "All is temporary and all will be gone soon".

##### 3. Nouns in Chinese version of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

In the Chinese version 《假如生活欺骗了你》, there are only four nouns: 生活 (life), 日 (day), 心 (heart), 现今 (nowadays), 未来 (future), 转瞬 (moment). Some nouns in the Russian version and English version do not occur in Chinese version, for instance, уныния или веселья (sadness and happiness) are replaced by verbs "忧郁和愤慨" (means melancholy and indignant), while the most important words like life, day, future and heart are translated with their corresponding equivalents.

From this aspect, the nouns used in these three poems serve well to express the subject of the poem, to reveal the truth of human life, and also to show the simplicity of the moral with these simple colloquial words. At this level, the three versions are equivalent to each other.

#### B. Verbs

##### 1. Verbs in Russian version of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

From the original poem, it is easy to find that обманет, печалься, сердись, смирись, верь, настанет, живёт, уныло, мгновенно, пройдёт, пройдёт, будет мило are verbs, among which there are four authoritative verbs (печалься, сердись, смирись, верь), and three impersonal verbs (уныло, мгновенно, будет мило). Linguists think that authoritative verbs have a suggestive function to the listeners in daily communication, therefore, Pushkin also expected the 15-year girl to bravely face the difficulties and misfortunes of life. The impersonal verbs in this poem can give the readers an impression that something for the young is so unchangeable that people have to face and accept their life. In fact, with these verbs the structure of the poem is constructed. In the 30-word poem, 12 are verbs, almost half of the text. On the other hand, these verbs are also simple, either to read or to write.

## 2. Verbs in English version of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

In the 44-word English version, the poem is composed of verbs or verb phrases. Similarly, there are four authoritative verbs or verb phrases: don't be dismal, don't be wild, be mild and believe, which is equivalent to the original version. Equal to its Russian version, most of the subjects are not personal, which shows that the fortune is not controlled by people.

## 3. Verbs in Chinese version of СЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

In Chinese, most of sentences are generally constructed by nouns and verbs or verb phrases, so do the Chinese version of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ. But in the Chinese version, there are 11 verb phrases, which are equal to its English version, while in Russian version there are 16 verb phrases.

From the Russian version, it can be concluded that the verbs used in the poem are chosen carefully by the writer, which are also to show subject of that life is unchangeable and sometimes people are powerless to the fortune or misfortune. And in English and Chinese versions, the features are also realized accordingly.

## 4. Empty words in three versions of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

In general, the empty words used in these poems are very easy to understand, even to the 15-year girl, and their numbers are small. In the poem, the first empty word ЕСЛИ (if) plays an important role to attract the reader's eyes, to show the possibility of being cheated. Of course, in Russian, some empty words are necessary to connect the sentence, so does in English, but the empty words also play a role to show the rhythm of the poem and the rise and fall of accent.

By the way, the differences in Russian, English and Chinese are represented by these words or phrases. Firstly, the word “Тебя” is used in the Russian poem as an object, which is similar in Chinese translation, while in English the sentence is translated as a passive voice and the word “you” which is equal to “Тебя” in meaning is used as the subject, as in English passive voice is more often used and it also realized the idea that you are doomed to be deceived sometimes, no matter how you are careful. Secondly, in Russian “обманет” is present voice and active voice, while its English version is past voice and passive voice, and its Chinese version is past voice with the word “了”, as in English subjunctive mood is used when it is hypothetical, while in Russian and Chinese, subjunctive mood is often expressed by some others' additional words instead of form change of verbs. Thirdly, “В день уныния” is translated as “不顺心时”, while it originally means “在不顺心时”, as the latter is equal to the former in Chinese and “Сердце” is translated as “心儿”, as in Chinese “儿” can be used after nouns to produce a “Rhotic accent” without changing its meaning. Fourthly, “то” in the original is used as a modal particle, but its English translation omitted it and its Chinese translation is the adversative conjunction “而” which means “while” in the context. Therefore, in translation, the empty words are more freely changed in different languages.

### III. RHYTHM AND METRE

Rhythm is the pattern or flow of sound created by the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables in accentual verse or of long and short syllables in quantitative verse<sup>3</sup>. Metre refers to the regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. (SHAО-Jingdi & BAI-Jingpeng, 2003) Rhythm and metre are very important to the poems and widely used in poems, which make the poem full of musical sense.

Если жизнь тебя обманет,

/ U / U / U / U

Не печалься, не сердись!

/ U / U / U / U

В день уныния, смирись:

/ U / U / U

День веселья, верь, настанет.

/ U / U / U / U

Сердце в будущем живёт;

/ U / U / U

Настоящее уныло:

/ U / U / U / U

Всё мгновенно, всё пройдёт;

/ U / U / U /

Что пройдёт, то будет мило.

/ U / U / U / U

(a stressed syllable is marked with “/”, and an unstressed syllable is marked with “U”)

If by life you were deceived,

/ / U / / / U

Don't be dismal, don't be wild!

U / U / U / U

Note<sup>3</sup>: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/rhythm>, June, 2012

In the day of grief, be mild!  
 / / U / U / U  
 Merry days will come, believe.  
 U / U / U / U  
 Heart is living in to morrow;  
 U / U / / U /  
 Present is dejected here;  
 U / / / U /  
 In a moment, passes sorrow;  
 / U / U / U /  
 That which passes will be dear.  
 U / U / / U  
 假如生活欺骗了你,  
 U / U / U / U  
 不要忧郁, 也不要愤慨!  
 / U / U // U U U  
 不顺心时暂且克制自己,  
 / U // U / U / U /  
 相信吧, 快乐之日就会到来。  
 / U / U / / U U / U /  
 我们的心儿憧憬着未来,  
 U // U / U / / U /  
 现今总是令人悲哀:  
 U / U / / U /  
 一切都是暂时的, 转瞬即逝,  
 / U / U U / / / U  
 而那逝去的将变得可爱。  
 / U U / / U // U

Accordingly, the original, the English version and Chinese version all have the same kind of rhythm and metre.

#### IV. RHYME

Rhyme is the repetition of the stressed vowel and all succeeding sounds. (SHAO-Jingdi & BAI-Jingpeng, 2003) Rhyme is very important to poems, and widely used in poems, in which end rhyme is the commonest and most consciously sought-after sound repetition in poetry. In the three versions of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ, the end rhyme is used with different patterns.

##### A. Rhyme of Russian Version

In Russian version of the poem, the end rhyme is obvious: the first, fourth, fifth and seventh sentences end with т, roughly equal to English symbol t, while the second and third end with исъ, sixth and the last end with ло. In Line 2 and 3, the former parts end with “я” (/ja/) while the latter parts end with “сь” (/si/), and in reading it, the tone rises at the beginning and falls in the end. In the last two lines, the tone rises, falls, falls and rises. According to the phonetics, the symbol т is a stop, which gives the readers a feeling of shortness.

ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ

Если жизнь тебя обманет,	[a]
Не печалься, не сердись!	[b]
В день уныния, смиришь:	[b]
День веселья, верь, настанет.	[a]
Сердце в будущем живёт;	[a]
Настоящее уныло:	[c]
Всё мгновенно, всё пройдёт;	[a]
Что пройдёт, то будет мило.	[c]

##### B. Rhyme of English Version

Though the rhyme in English version of the poem is not the same as that in Russian version, the end rhyme d is also a stop, and the rhyme of its English version is also carefully used:

If by life you were deceived	
If by life you were deceived,	[a]
Don't be dismal, don't be wild!	[a]
In the day of grief, be mild	[a]

Merry days will come, believe.

Heart is living in to-morrow; [b]

Present is dejected here; [c]

In a moment, passes sorrow; [b]

That which passes will be dear [c]

In the English version, it can be found that the rhyme pattern is [a] [a] [a], [b] [c] [b] [c], which is popular in English poems.

### C. Rhyme of Chinese Version

In the translation of poems, it is difficult to translate according to their rhyme, especially at the level of phonetics, therefore, the stop t is replaced by a vowel i, but the Chinese version of the poem is not only translated according to rhyme, but also translated with two end rhymes.

《假如生活欺骗了你》

假如生活欺骗了你, (ni) [a]

不要忧郁, 也不要愤慨! (kai) [b]

不顺心时暂且克制自己, (ji) [a]

相信吧, 快乐之日就会到来。 (lai) [b]

我们的心儿憧憬着未来, (lai) [b]

现今总是令人悲哀: (ai) [b]

一切都是暂时的, 转瞬即逝, (si) [a]

而那逝去的将变得可爱。 (ai) [b]

From the comparison of the English and Chinese versions with the original Russian version, it is easy to find that the rhyme is similarly used and the two translations have expressed the features of the original rhyme.

## V. SENTENCE PATTERN

Sentence pattern plays an important role in the literary text, and different patterns may express the writers' different subjects and aims. So the sentence pattern is also worthy of discussion.

From the original Russian poem, it can be found that there are hypothetical condition clause (the first line), imperative (the second, the third, second part of the fourth line), subject-predicate sentence (part of the fourth, the fifth, the seventh, and part of the last line), non subject sentence (the sixth line, part of the seventh and eighth). Hypothetical condition clause introduces the topic and attracts the reader's eyes, and it also to make readers stay calm to the situation which may not be true in real life, and the imperative sentence pattern has a feeling of suggestion, advice or wish, while non-subject sentence can give readers a feeling that all the misfortune can be solved by fortune itself.

The English and Chinese versions are also mainly made up of hypothetical condition clause, imperative, subject-predicate sentence, which play the same functions of expressing the subject and aim of the poet. Thus the two translation versions are transferred beautifully.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Through the stylistic analysis of A. C. Pushkin's poem ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ and its English and Chinese versions from the aspects of lexical categories, rhythm, rhyme and sentence pattern, it is then concluded that the three versions are approximately equal in noun number, verb number, rhythm, rhyme and sentence pattern, and are similar in style.

Then, from the perspective of stylistics it is safe to say that the two translated versions of ЕСЛИ ЖИЗНЬ ТЕБЯ ОБМАНЕТ are to some degree equivalent to the original poem and both of the translations of English and Chinese have been done very well because all of the three texts bear nearly the same linguistic features as each other. To make it further, both of the translations play the same interpersonal role in readers as the Russian one of A. C. Pushkin. However, equivalence in translation is a complicated term which needs more research. For example, culture differences may cause opposite effects and brings about problems, which determines the translation strategies. So, this article is just an explicit demonstration for that stylistics can be effectively applied into the discovery of the linguistic features of a text. To be further, stylistics can be an effective approach to literature criticism and translation studies as well.

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# Students' Use of Translation as a Learning Strategy in EFL Classroom

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**Abstract**—Translation has long played a controversial role in English teaching and learning. It has been largely ignored as a valid activity for language practice and improvement. On account of this matter, although, most language educators are completely against the use of translation in language classrooms, nowadays, this perspective is changing and more and more professionals have believed the facilitating role of the first language in ELT. On the basis of this matter, this issue has been discussed in applications of language pedagogical methodologies. The main purpose of the present study was to investigate Iranian English learners' use of translation as a learning strategy to learn English. It is also to find out the strategies involving translation the students use in the process of learning. In order to do all this, the study employed quantitative and supplemental qualitative methods. For the quantitative part, 170 Iranian EFL learners were asked to answer the Inventory for Translation as a Learning Strategy (ITLS) questionnaire. For the qualitative survey, 120 students were selected to respond the learners' interview guide. Then, the data analysis and statistical calculations revealed that language learners used a wide variety of learning strategies concerning translation to comprehend and remember as well as produce English whether or not they are discouraged to do so by their teachers.

**Index Terms**—foreign language learning, learning English, learning strategies, translation

## I. INTRODUCTION

After the application of translation in Grammar Translation Method (GTM), it has been banned from the language classroom for quite a while in methods, mostly including the early versions of the communicative approaches to ELT, in L2 language pedagogy. In addition, 'the only time that L1 is mentioned is when advice is given on how to minimize its use' (Cook, 2001). Although the role of mother tongue in foreign language teaching has been neglected by most of language teachers, many of language learners use their mother tongue in learning a new language (Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco, 1978; Politzer 1983; Chamot, O'Malley, Küpper, and Impink-Hernandez, 1987). Therefore, during 1970s and 1980s, the use of learners' first language was rejected in communicative methods (Kavaliauskienė & Kaminskienė, 2007). Because of such a reason, the association of translation with the language learning became less and less for centuries. Moreover, L1 using was gradually omitted in foreign and second language learning classes. However, recently the attitude toward the use of translation in language learning has been shifted positively. Further, teachers and in a broad way students have considered translation a supportive strategy and got benefits from it. Corder (1981) also emphasizes that students' mother tongue is a useful resource for the learners to compensate their deficiencies in second language learning. Regarding the issue, Weschler (1997) concludes, combining the good points of both "grammar-translation" and "communicative" approaches can lead to a strong method which can largely be meaning-based rather than the form-based.

It does not matter how students are qualified in reading or listening, most of language learners keep the mental translating a language into another. Based upon this issues EFL educators gave attention to the importance of L1 in language learning process (Kavaliauskienė & Kaminskienė, 2007). According to Harmer (2001), the use of both students' mother tongue and code-switching between two languages are naturally helping things in learning a new language. Students' use of native language may be differentiated based upon their attitudes and skills. He also express that "No one is in any doubt that students will use their L1 in class, whatever teachers say or do". As a result, rejecting translation in language classes seems to create a stressful situation to great many students, if considered tactfully, there are many ways and benefits of using translation in both EFL teaching and EFL learning. On the basis of this matter, this issue has been discussed in applications of language pedagogical methodologies. So the present study aimed to analyze the strategies through them translation could be considered as a helping factor for the learners to arrive at their learning objectives in EFL classes.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the growing importance of learner-centered language teaching, what helps the learner in his or her own way has been an asset. On the basis of this fact, researchers have attempted to lighten the load of language learning, and have investigated what is helpful for learners to arrive at their objective in the most economical way. Among them the use of translation and also its place has been a debatable topic.

In the past, by the use of GTM, studying a language for a long time could not guarantee the language learners' fluency. On account of such a reason, although, most language educators are completely against the use of translation in language classrooms, nowadays, this perspective is changing and more and more professionals have believed the facilitating role of the students' native tongue in language classrooms (Liao, 2006; Cook, 2010). On the basis of learners' beliefs toward EFL learning, it has been considered; learners' attitudes would probably influence their style in using diverse methods while learning in some researches. For instance, Horwitz' (1988) survey indicated that language learners' beliefs would limit their use of strategy while learning a foreign language.

In Iran, the mother tongue, Farsi, is the formal language of education. All students do their primary education in their mother tongue. If these students could be given an early exposure to the English language it would make a big difference to them. Therefore, ignoring the use of learners' first language in language classes could naturally lead to the students' de-motivation. The purpose of the present study is to deal with translation as a fruitful material in language classes and get rid of its name from what considered badly in GTM. Therefor challenging problem is to consider that whether translation use in EFL learning and EFL teaching is as facilitating or debilitating matter.

### III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Where, the role of learners' mother tongue in learning process is not precisely stated and mostly its nature is misunderstood, the present study intended to investigate and determine the function of translation from students' perceptions in Iranian EFL classes.

Regarding above-mentioned matter, it was an attempt to find answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent do Iranian English learners make use of their mother tongue as a learning strategy?
2. What strategies involving translation do Iranian learners' use in the process of English learning?

### IV. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

One hundred and seventy both male and female students taking English courses in language schools with the age range of 15-30 participated in this study. At the first part of the study, all of the survey participants took part in quantitative survey. Then, for the qualitative measure, these English learners took part in Quick Placement Test, a standard and valid test. This was done to choose participants for the second part of the study. To fulfill the study forty students of each English proficiency levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) were chosen to participate, and the remains were eliminated from the study. These survey language learners were in about 15 different groups at language institutes.

#### B. Instruments

Data collection of the present study was through the following instruments.

##### 1. Quick Placement Test

To differentiate participants' English proficiency, and divide them into three levels of English language skills for the study, the researcher administered Quick Placement Test. It is a reliable and valid test, a 60-item multiple choice test, evaluating the language learners' level of L2 proficiency. It includes five meaning-based items, 25 items in the form of cloze passages, 20 items to assess learners' knowledge of structure, and finally 10 items evaluate to the students' vocabulary knowledge.

##### 2. Learning Strategy Questionnaire

To identify the learning strategies regarding translation, learning strategy questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire was firstly designed by Liao (2006).

The questionnaire is of a Likert-scale design. There were 5 scales for each item from "completely disagree", which represents the lowest rank of participants' using translation as a learning strategy to "completely agree", which indicates the most use of this strategy. The questionnaire was firstly translated into the survey participants' native language to assist them better understand intentions of items.

##### 3. Interview Guide for students

The gathering interview data were to add extra information to complete the quantitative part. The interview was used to receive more to the point data concerning English learners' use of translation strategies. An interview is mostly "an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 1998). Moreover, the main goal of an interview is to "find out what is in or on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1990). Through the help of an interview the researcher probes the students' minds and also their viewpoints regarding English learning in order to improve a better understanding toward the function of learners' native tongue in language learning process.

Following interview guide approach, the interview questions in this study, used for the students, focused on (1) learners' reflections and evaluations of their use of mother tongue as a strategy in language learning process. Interview guide for the students was designed basically based upon what Liao (2006) worked on. The questions were somehow modified regarding the new students' culture and fulfilled in Persian language, the students' native language; to assist better understanding of all language learners (especially beginners who are mostly of low English proficiency).

V. RESULTS

A. Descriptive Statistics of the Learning Strategies

Addressing the first research question, the language learners were asked to rate the Learning Strategy items on the five point Likert scale from completely disagree to completely agree. First of all, the percentage of each scale (on ITLS items) was measured and then displayed in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1.  
THE PERCENTAGE OF LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE ON ITLS ITEMS

	Number	Percent	Total percent of disagree
completely disagree	447	9.72	26.47
Disagree	770	16.75	
no idea	865	18.82	Total percent of agree
Agree	1363	29.65	54.69
completely agree	1151	25.04	
Total	4596	100.0	

The result show that the highest level of percentage was given to agree, and completely agree was rated as the second one in both tables. The participants' responses (about 54 percent) were to indicate most of the participants accepted the mother tongue as a helping strategy in their new language (English) learning.

Moreover, to complete the result, the researcher also computed means of learning strategy items to help find how the language learners expressed their use of translation as a strategy in language learning process. The scores of items indicated that

Most of the items were of the highest means. The learners reported that they made use of their first language to benefit of mentally translation in reading English texts. They emphasized that translation is helpful mostly in outlining their ideas and also their writings, understanding the meanings of utterances in a piece of listening, and learning English idioms and expression. Further, most of the students verified, bilingual dictionaries could help them learn English both in and out of the class. Additionally, the gathered data showed that a lot of Iranian English learners discussed the differences and similarities between Persian and English through their own mother tongue.

B. Students' Use of Learning Strategies by Means of Translation

In this study, Learners used translation as an affective strategy. In their eyes, with the help of translation, learners could be encouraged more to learn English language and understand it better. The following remarks described this issue.

The use of translation can increase our sense of security to learn what we do not know, and also help us to feel comfortable beside our teachers in the EFL classes.

In my English language classes, when the teacher explained all materials in English, it caused a threatening environment. As a result, my classmates and I could not ask our questions, and just looking each other.

I feel satisfied and secure when my teacher speaks Persian occasionally. It helps me conceive I know what I need about the lesson. If not so, I doubt what I have perceived is correct or not. Challenging this matter, it takes me so long and seems more difficult to learn what I really need.

In the study, almost all of the learners agreed using their mother tongue as compensation in Iranian EFL classes. The following statements highlight the mentioned strategy.

While writing a composition, after gathering some information in Persian I translate it to English. During the writing, when I cannot find the English equivalence of the words, I have to look up the words in Persian – English dictionary.

Since most students do not familiarize with English language in EFL classes, when the teacher speaks just English they do not understand what he/she means. In these situations the learners get used to loathing the English language. As a result what is a help is nothing except learners' mother tongue.

While reading a text, I underline the difficult words. After that, I refer to English \_ Persian dictionary.

Retrieval strategy (using the keyword mnemonic in order to retrieve the meaning of a given vocabulary word) and memory strategy are two other strategies noted in the following words.

Learning and memorizing some new English words requires a lot of practice and effort. Besides, just for a few days I can remember them. In order to solve this problem I try to connect the word to some event in Persian. This event can be

matched to the pronunciation of the word, and requires me a little effort to memorize. So, as I hear or see the word the way it pronounced helps me remind its meaning after a few seconds.

When I memorize the Persian meaning of English new words or new idioms, if I forget the words, their Persian meanings are good help to remind those words.

Some other responses indicate that language learners mostly use their first language as a social strategy to learn and produce English. The following statements confirm the idea.

Owing to lack of knowledge of words, sometimes in order to comprehend some part of a text, I have to ask my classmates to translate it to Persian, but I try to do when teacher is not around.

Oftentimes my classmates and I have to translate what the teacher is talking about together in the class and out of the class to support our understanding of the lesson.

In free discussion moments, sometimes it is necessary to elaborate on the issue in Persian. Then ideas concerning the topic would be discussed in English to the whole class.

## VI. DISCUSSION

The result of the study and also from most previous studies was the fact that translation plays a positive role in EFL classes. Moreover, students use it as a helping strategy in order to learn and improve their new language learning. These findings were somehow consistent with Chamot et al. (1987) finding that the translation strategy was considered a base for language learners' comprehension and production of the target language. Further, Liao (2006) reported that students mostly used their mother tongue to expand their English knowledge of vocabulary, structures, expressions, and to improve 3 language skills of reading, writing, and speaking. Moreover it can help the learners to check their comprehension of different tasks, especially reading and listening ones. The results contradict what Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) came up with in their study. They stated that most of university students in Japan, about 77%, preferred directly use of English in their composition writing. They also mentioned that these students intended to think directly in the second language. In this regard, based upon the study done in Taiwan, Huang and Tzeng (2000) noted that Taiwanese high proficient English learners mostly use the target language in their language learning process. In other word, only 11% of them use their first language as a helping strategy in reading skill improvement.

Supplemental qualitative survey with one hundred and twenty language learners revealed that using L1 in language learning process not only decreases learners' anxious but also enhances their English learning encouragement.

Another reason of using translation in their EFL classrooms related to the providing of an affective situation positively.

The result is consistent with Husain's (1996) finding in which it was clarified that students' mother tongue in language learning process could intensify the learners' confidence and also give them the positive feeling of relaxation. It was said that the learners' stress could be decreased by making use of translation. Further, Wenden's (1986) found that the adult English learners felt afraid or nervous when they spoke just English. Moreover, based upon what the students mentioned, translation sometimes compensate for their lack of knowledge. This finding supports Kern's (1994) result that foreign language students make a large amount of translation from second language into first language mentally while reading a text. Additionally, similar to findings of the present study, Danchev (1983) expressed that translation can facilitate not only a swift solving of structurally complication in the second language but also a quick and effective comprehension.

From the students' ideas, other strategies highlighting the positive role of translation in ELT were guessed. Students get benefit from retrieval strategy and memory strategy in vocabulary acquisition. The result is consistent with Prince (1996) finding. In comparing using translation with context learning, he found that in expanding the knowledge of L2 lexicon, the role of first language is more significant than the function of vocabulary learning contextually.

From the students' perspectives and also from the previous studies, social strategy which is the interaction among students in language pedagogy shows that in language pedagogy, making use of learners' mother tongue plays an integral role in both language perception and its production. In the eye of Donato and McCormick (1994), strategies used in language pedagogy are mainly emerged from socially participation of language learners in the language classes. Consequently, it can be claimed that learners' use of translation refers to social strategy a process in direct contact with the activities fulfilled in language classes.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

The finding of this study involved that translation is a supporting factor in language pedagogy in order to learn and improve learners' new language learning. In other words, students employed some different translation strategies to assist them improve their knowledge of English regarding different skills and solve language problems. For instance, I can say that some learners need the security of their mother tongue to lower their English learning anxiety moreover, in order to be motivated. Besides, students used translation to memorize and retrieve English, to make up for their deficiencies in English language, to self-assess and comprehend their target language tasks, and have an interaction with other people in learning English.

In conclusion, with regard to translation use in language learning process some strategies were clarified among the survey language learners. These strategies are sometimes performed to remove the learners' class anxieties and worries and make them feel more self-confident and relaxed. Furthermore, they are used to compensate the learners' English lack of knowledge, memorize and retrieve some complicated words and structures, and also fulfill the difficult activities and tasks socially both in and out of the class. According to results of the study, it is concluded that Iranian students' make use of translation as a strategy to help them learn English in language learning process. Regarding the correlation between learners' attitudes toward translation and their strategy use, the obtained highest results appeared that they are not only positively correlated but also greatly related to each other. To sum up, language learners mostly believed in using translation, and also used it as a helping strategy in language pedagogy. Besides, they endorsed translation not to train professionals, but to help learners develop their knowledge of English. In other words, it is a means to an end, not an end to be achieved.

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# Postmodernist Features in Graham Swift's *Last Orders*

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**Abstract**—The present essay explores the postmodernist features in Graham Swift's *Last Orders* (1996). The novel is in deep intertextual debt to William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* (1930) because of superficial similarities in plot, multiple narrators, and various chapters, as well as thematic elements which led to winning 1996 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for fiction and the Booker Prize. Although both modern and postmodern tendencies can be found in Swift's novel, this study endeavors to analyze overt postmodernist features in this work as a postmodernist model in literature. The selected literary work is analyzed in accordance with the peculiar notions and theories that are more visible in Swift's dramatic achievements including Jean-Francois Lyotard's theory of the end of grand narratives and Jacques Derrida's deconstruction. As an instance of a postmodernist work of art, Swift's *Last Orders* seems to include ambiguity, complexity, difference, pluralism, uncertainty, and decentralization that are varieties of language games. These features pertain to character, resistance to interpretation, delogocentrism, and minimalism.

**Index Terms**—Graham Swift, *Last Orders*, postmodernism, intertextuality, difference

## I. INTRODUCTION

*Last Orders* written by Graham Colin Swift FRSL (1996), and noteworthy for similarities in plot to William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* (1930), is the winner of the 1996 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for fiction and the Booker Prize in 1996. Many critics have argued in favour of the dominance of modernist features in the novel however, the application of Lyotard's theory of the end of grand narratives and Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, prove the novel to be postmodernist.

*Last Orders* is constructed on a one-day journey of four male characters with the aim of scattering their deceased friend's ashes in Margate Pier. However, they philosophize, ponder, and agonize over grand issues like meaning of life and death during the course of the novel. Parker (2003) states that "Jack's death symbolizes the demise of the model of masculinity he represents and prompts his friends to reflect on their lives and reappraise their identities during the journey to Margate" (p. 91). The story is retold by multiple narrators: the whole novel is narrated in first person by seven different people that are in seventy five sections without numbers but entitled according to the name of narrators or places. The majority of the novel is narrated by four men—Vic, Vince, Lenny, and Ray—who are accompanying Jack's ashes. A few sections of the novel are narrated by three other characters who are the dead Jack Dodds himself, Amy (Jack's wife), and Mandy (Vince's wife) though their narration is not as dominant as the other four characters'. June's voice, Amy's and Jack's retarded daughter, is conspicuously absent in the novel. On the whole, these seventy five narrative sections, in first person, merge the descriptions of the past and disclose the secrets and mysterious events through interior monologues and result in investigation and complication of the meaning of these incidents. Swift puts it with a postmodernist sensibility that the novel is "about death in order to be about life" (as cited in Parker, 2003, p. 89). Parker presumes that "if *Last Orders* is about life" it is particularly about "the difficulties of how to live as a man and express maleness when traditional models of manly being have lost their validity, that is in a world in which last orders have metaphorically been called for masculinity" (Parker, 2003, p. 89). In addition, Wheeler (1999) rightly puts forward the idea that "Swift's fiction explores the loss of traditional forms of knowledge in a secular postmodern world and is concerned with the new ways of being in the face of uncertainty" (pp. 64-65). Part of the uncertainty of the world of *Last Orders* comes from intertextuality.

## II. INTERTEXTUALITY

Intertextuality is a general and neutral term that is used in place of the traditional 'reference' or 'allusion.' It is pertinent to the idea that the existing relationship between earlier and contemporary texts constitutes their meaning (Gale, 2000). The relationships of texts to other texts have been the preoccupation of literary theorists from classical antiquity until now; "Aristotle speculated on the potential shape of tragedies based on the Iliad and the Odyssey as against other relations of the fall of Troy and its consequence" (Bauman, 2004, p. 1). The term 'intertextuality' was used for the first time by Julia Kristeva in the 1960s. Intertextuality has taken on a significant role within cultural and literary

studies. This term is drawn upon in Structuralist, Post-Structuralist, Semiotic, Deconstructive, Post-Colonial, Marxist, Feminist and Psychoanalytic theories (Allen, 2000). Intertextuality is roughly defined by Allen as “all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts” (Allen, 2000, p. 101). Intertextuality for Genette is “a relationship of co-presence between two texts or among several texts” and as “the actual presence of one text within another” (Allen, 2000, p.101). The theory of intertextuality implies that “any one text is necessarily read in relationship to others” and readers draw upon a range of textual knowledge. These relationships are not in the form of specific allusions from one text to another and readers have no need to be familiar with specific or the same texts to get intertextuality (Friske, 1987, p. 108). As Montgomery (2007) states, the relationships between texts are vivid through intertextuality, and indeed no text is unique.

Given the above mentioned definitions for intertextuality, there is an agreement about *Last Orders*' intertextuality among different critics. For example, Malcolm (2003) puts forward the idea that “Swift’s scholarship has frequently shown that his novels constantly refer to the tradition of the canonical British nineteenth century novel. His novels, it is argued, echo and engage with those of Dickens, Throllope, George Eliot, and Hardy (p. 11). Malcolm also finds traces of Dickens and Hardy’s fiction regarding the celebration of “working-class milieu.” Furthermore, He finds “part of George Eliot’s subject matter in *Adam Bede* [1859] and *Mill on the Floss* [1860]” since both Hardy and Eliot are “precursors of the detailed evocation of rural and small town settings” (p.12).

Cooper (2002) draws attention to the influence of Hardy on Swift in terms of “its combination of the specific and the universal as well as in many aspects of techniques” (P.14). She believes that “like Hardy’s, Swift’s fictions tend to be character-driven and philosophical, deeply concerned with both human psychology and the nature of our physical and spiritual lives” (p. 15).

Regarding the issue of intertextuality in *Last Orders*, Shaffer (2006) in *Reading the Novel in English 1950-2006*, states that “particularly strong echoes of two other modern novels resound in *Last Orders*: William Faulkner’s (1930) *As I Lay Dying* and Virginia Woolf’s (1925) *Mrs. Dalloway*” (p.199). He continues that,

as to the connection with Faulkner’s novel, Swift himself attests to “a little homage at work”: “I admire Faulkner very much, and there are obvious similarities” between the two novels. Yet while “I have my jar of ashes, Faulkner has his rotting corpse, and the setting is clearly very different.” That said, for Swift the “funeral” emphasis, the story of “laying the dead to rest” and of “how the dead apply pressure on the living,” is not so much a Faulknerian as a perennial, “primitive”, “archetypal” concern. The fact that both novels feature a dead character whose remains are being transported and who narrates a small section of the text (Addie Bundren/Jack Dodds) has led one interviewer, John Frow, to accuse Swift of plagiarism (pp.199-200).

For Lea (2005) there is another source being drawn upon by Swift in *Last Orders*. He points to the climactic valediction on Margate Pier and draws attention to the following lines from T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* as being recalled by *Last Orders*: “on Margate Sands/ I can connect/ Nothing with nothing” and concludes that “the consonance between a poem and a novel that mourn the loss of western society’s faith in the didactic institutionalization of belief is uncanny” (p.162).

According to what was mentioned earlier, especially significant is the effect of Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying* on Swift’s *Last Orders* which is referred to by different critics. These similarities found between the two include going on a funeral journey, having multiple narrators whose names constitute the titles of chapters, having dead bodies to be transported according to their will, and having the dead to narrate a chapter of the novel. Still another conspicuous similarity between these two novels that implies the intertextuality is a very short chapter narrated by Vince and only two words “Old buggers” (LO 80). This is very similar to a chapter in *As I Lay Dying* in which the reader encounters a chapter of one sentence “my mother is a fish” (1930, p. 84). Still another short chapter in the novel is the one narrated by Lenny which is only a few sentences:

Canterbury Cathedral. I ask you. I should have kept my big trap shut.  
Still, dose of holiness’ll do us good, I suppose, the way things were going.  
So glory be. Lift up your heats for Lenny (p. 127).

Tebbetts (2010) positively comments on the existing intertextuality between these two literary works. According to him “Swift chose to use *As I Lay Dying* as a model for the plot and narrative point of view of his 1996 novel *Last Orders*, he [Swift] suggested that in doing so he might have intended to engage the earlier novel in what Richard Gray has called the “open dialogue” among writers in the “vast sprawl” of the “literary tradition” (ix)” (p.1). He continues that in such an “open dialogue” Swift is in conversation with Faulkner and the aim is to grasp the other novel and then to respond to it (Tebbetts, 2010, p.1). Thus “looking past the imitations and toward the conversation lets the reader see just how fully *Last Orders* makes a productive response to *As I Lay Dying*” (Tebbetts, 2010, p.1).

It is also pointed out that “Swift’s fascination with the family, and the disrupted family in particular, has its antecedents in Dicken’s *Bleak House* and Eliot’s *The Mill on the Floss*” (Malcolm, 2003, p.12). In terms of “the dark secrets hidden within these families (insanity, illegitimacy, misplaced parents) [it] echo [es] Dickens and Wikie Collins” (Malcolm, 2003, p.12). David Malcolm positively concludes this intertextuality and presents that, “one can see Swift’s novels are deeply and consistently intertextual, both on a local and a more general level....However, in overall terms, intertextuality serves to universalize and to dignify particular characters and their fates” (Malcom, 2003). This is also in line with the advantage of intertextuality for Hatim and Mason (1990) as a “signifying system which operates by



connotation” and broadens the domains of textual meaning. Thus intertextuality is not a foible but a forte for *Last Orders* adding to the already-existing layers of meaning.

### III. CHARACTER

In Swift’s *Last Orders*, there is a departure from conventional norms of character, dialogue, and narrative. In addition, the elements of pastiche, irony, parody, self-reflexivity, and absence of a frame of reference can be traced in his work. A postmodern atmosphere is enacted in Swift’s *Last Orders* by these elements. As the novel unfolds, the situation of characters becomes more complex and ambiguous. This illustrates a degree of “semantic indeterminacy that is the frequent hallmark of postmodernist aesthetic production” (Murphy, 2003, p.187). The characters in the novel know the reason of their one-day journey for which they have come together, but they search for their past and explore their identities in a postmodern mood during the course of this “circadian” or “one-day novel” (Shaffer, 2006, p.196). For characters in the novel, as Shaffer believes, “the limited present of the novel serves as an opportunity for character to recount and explore from their past lives. These memories and musings in turn illuminate and embellish the present of the narrative, which becomes considerably more resonant and complex in the process” (pp. 195-196). Shaffer also presumes that Swift draws upon “memory and the imaginative recreation of the past” in his novel to “reveal the extent to which national history and personal history are [...] knowable, ultimately and most fully, in subjective terms” (Shaffer, 2006, p. 197). Thus characters retell the past to make sense of their present situation. Hartung-Bruckner (2006) observes that, “the recurring concern with a reconstruction of family history highlights the longing for continuity and communication between the generations and sexes, both of which relationships are presented as contested, problematical, or even impossible” (p. 3).

Furthermore, the male characters in the novel ponder, philosophize, and agonize over grand issues such as the meaning of life as well as death which is dexterously represented through the characters’ speeches or monologues; the male characters speculate on the time of their death and where and how they want to be buried which signals the moving impact of Jack’s death and his ashes on characters and how they deeply delve into death. For example, Ray by telling that “the last of us to go” means to pass away like Jack Dodds; implies how deeply he is obsessed with death: “I’d [Ray] say Vic’s looking the best of us all, by a long chalk. I’d say if you took Lenny, Vic and me, any one’d give Vic a five year advantage. It’s a fair bet he’ll be *the last of us to go* [my emphasis]. Excluding Vince, that is, and he aint no spring chicken” (*LO*, p. 51).

The novel is made pluralistic through complexity, undecidability, and openness of the text in exploring new traces of ideas which result in representing its postmodernity and liberating it from dominant logocentric thought. The demonstration of the postmodern condition of characters is further hinted by unstability of the main characters’ identity as well as the novel’s language.

### IV. RESISTING INTERPRETATION: AMBIGUITY, COMPLEXITY, DIFFERENCE

Under the guise of what follows as Ambiguity, Complexity, and Difference, resistance in the novel is not only possible but also actualized.

#### A. Ambiguity

Lyotard (1984) has asserted that:

The postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher, the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by pre-established rules and cannot be judged according to a determining judgment, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. Those rules and categories are what the work of art is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what will have been done (p. 81).

The verbalized chaotic nature of modern life in texts written by a postmodern writer or works produced by a postmodern artist “is not governed by pre-established rules” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 81). In *Last Orders*, attention is drawn toward the ambiguity of the ambiguous and ill-defined physical world which is inhabited by characters from the very beginning: “it aint like your regular sort of day” (*LO* 2). Ray, the title character, begins the novel with the simple activity of ordering Bernie “to pull” him “a pint and puts it in” (*LO* 2) and after four pages of ambiguous dialogues and keeping the reader in the ambiguous world created by them, the reader gets to grasp the information about their purpose of gathering in the pub. Consider the following dramatic monologue:

He [Vic] twists the box round so we [Ray and Lenny] can see there’s a white card sellotaped to one side. There’s a date and a number and a name: JACK ARTHUR DODDS. (*LO* 4)

Here the purpose of their gathering is somehow revealed and it is to scatter Jack Dodds’ ashes according to his wish before his death. Cooper (2002) states, “in Swift’s novels, a simple plot usually provides the opportunity for a profound study of character, and a complex journey into the human psyche. As a writer deeply interested in the mind and its relationship to the heart, Swift uses plot as a point of departure for exploring the personalities and relationships of his vivid individuals” (p. 22). Ontological explorations are possible in an ambiguous world where boundaries are removed. This makes the imagination flowing and at work for making meaning.

#### B. Complexity

Multiple meanings could be extracted from every sentence of the novel and its title which makes sense depending on the angle from which the case is considered. According to the above-mentioned idea, the title of the work refers to various meanings. Malcolm (2003) nicely comments on the possible meanings of the title, *Last Orders*:

Graham Swift's sixth novel is prefaced by two epigraphs that neatly sum up the concerns, the milieu, and the powerful paradoxes of the text. The first comes from Sir Thomas Browne's grandiloquent meditation on funerals, *Urn Burial* (1658). The quotation reads: "But man is a Noble Animal, splendid in ashes and pompous in the grave." The second epigraph quotes the author (John A. Glover-Kind) of a popular music hall song first published in 1907: "I do like to be beside the seaside." Browne's sentence is impressive, archaic, and sonorous, touching on last things; Glover-Kind's song captures a fun-seeking, saucy, seedy, lower-class world of Edwardian and 1930s seaside resorts. *Last Orders* embraces both intellectual and social worlds. It is a complex meditation on grand, universal matters; it is set in a lower class world of nonstandard dialect, mundane work in shops and offices, and trips to the seaside. The title of the novel itself embodies this paradox. "Last orders" are the final drinks one can obtain in a British pub before it closes. "Last orders" also suggest last things, death, mortality, and the inevitable passage of time (p. 158).

According to Parker (2003), *Last Orders* refers to "male order and the end of masculinity" and, situates Swift's character within a patriarchal social order. On the most immediate level, it refers to the last orders of Jack Dodds [...] but it simultaneously introduces the theme of male authority and evokes a number of male-dominated institutions that signal Swift's interest in masculinity: the pub, the church, and the armed forces. The masculine names of the pubs where the men drink denote that they are predominately male spaces: the Green Man, Thomas a Becket, Lord Nelson (Swift, 1996: 17), the Prince of Windsor (p 18), and the Bull. (p. 90).

It is also said that, "the title relates to the men's service in the armed forces, a traditionally all-male and still male-dominated organization based on orders. All of the central protagonists have served in the armed forces, and Lenny's comment indicates the degree to which they are shaped by their military experience that puts a finish on man. This complexity is further strengthened through the use of narrational techniques and multiple tellers as Malcom (2003) puts it: "the novel's narrational technique and narrative organization contribute toward the reader's sense of character complexity" (pp. 170-171). Furthermore, the title is also part of a sentence in which Ray and Jack are talking about Coach and Horses and Ray says, "it was coming up to last orders" (*LO* 6) hence a part of the sentence becomes the title and adds to the complexity.

Wheeler (1999) argues that "Swift's fiction explores the loss of traditional forms of knowledge in a secular postmodern world and is concerned with new ways of being in the face of uncertainty" (pp. 64-65). In contrast to Wheeler who argues that the novel's obsession is the invocation of order, Parker (2003) refers to the limits of masculinity and represents patriarchy as a lost order. Regarding the same idea, Shaffer (2006) calls attention to the point that "both Swift's title and the location of the final scene subtly evoke T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, which mourns what is portrayed as last orders for European civilization [...] and expresses profound anxiety about the disruption of traditional class and gender boundaries" (p.199).

### C. *Différance*

Around 1967 in Paris, a novel intellectual movement took the place of Structuralism which emerged in the work of some French thinkers like Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva, Gilles Deleuze, Luce Irigaray, Helen Cixous, Jean-Francois Lyotard, and Jean Baudrillard. This new movement was usually referred to as Post-structuralism and the reason lying at the heart of this title was the radical departure of the basic assumptions of Structuralism. Deconstruction is the name of a method of critique that was developed by Jacques Derrida, "whose writing is central to the emergence of Post-structuralism" (Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p. 257). Thus "deconstruction" is another term that widely is associated with Post-structuralism. In addition, it also takes into account the idea of defining Derrida's work by the word "deconstruction." Martin McQuillan (as cited in Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, 24) observes that "deconstruction is not a school or an "ism." There is no such thing as "deconstructionism;" this is a word used by idiots."

As Derrida has remarked there is no "univocal definition" or "adequate description" for this eccentric phenomena called "deconstruction," and the reason for "this absence of univocal definition is not 'obscurantist' " but rather it is related to a new enlightenment (Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p. 24). According to what Royle (2003) states, Derrida's texts have been more effective than other contemporary writers, and they "describe and transform the ways in which we think about the world, about life, death, culture, philosophy, literature, politics, and so on" (p. 21). He presumes that Derrida has written again and again and always differently to produce "a force of dislocation that spreads itself throughout the entire system" and about deconstruction as "de-sedimentation," about "a force of irruption that "[disorganizes] the entire inherited order" (p. 25). He dubs deconstruction as an earthquake. Royle (2003) also believes that deconstruction is about "shaking up, dislocating and transforming the verbal, conceptual, psychological, textual, aesthetic, historical, ethical, social, political and religious landscape. Its concern is to disturb, to de-sediment, to deconstruct" (p. 25). Stocker (2006) says in the account of deconstruction by Derrida that "the ideas of duality and equivocation are constant" (p.168). Royle also goes further by drawing on the idea that deconstruction is a "strange strategy without finality" which "encourages a critical questioning of any and all kinds of religious or political discourse that make dogmatic assumptions about the nature of presence and what might be meant by 'the end' "(p. 35).

The concept of "Différance" introduced by Derrida lies at the heart of deconstruction—he also introduces the ideas of multiplicity, heterogeneity, and plurality of meaning. Derrida declares in the 1968 essay that *différance* is "neither a

word nor a concept.” He continues that difference “is not a name;” [...] “is” what makes presence possible while at the same time making it differ from itself” (Royle, 2003, p.71). Saussure’s concept of the diacritical nature of the linguistic signs was the focus of Derrida. According to this concept the differences of a sign from others constitute its identity. Therefore, Derrida concluded that “there had to be a more primordial process of differentiation at work that affected everything having to do with language, thought, and reality” (Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p. 258). He called this primordial process “differance” which means “a simultaneous process of deferment in time and difference in space” (Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p. 258). He continues that “one present moment assumes past present moments as well as future present moments; to be “present,” a present moment presupposes its difference from other presents.” Similarly, “the presence of an object of conscious perception or of a thought in the mind is shaped by its difference from other objects or thoughts.” Thus Derrida by “*differance*” means “simultaneous movement of temporal deferment and spatial difference both ongoing processes that constitute being” (Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p. 258). The denotation of the verb “to differ” [*differer*] seems to differ from itself. It indicates, on the one hand, difference “as distinction, inequality, or discernability;” on the other hand, it “expresses the interposition of delay, the interval of a *spacing* and *temporalizing* that puts off until “later” what is presently denied, the possible that is presently impossible” (p. 279).

According to McHale (1987), “the dominant mode of modernist fiction is epistemological” (p. 9) and therefore, the modernist fiction concentrates on repetition and uniformity and “rewards interpretation” which is in sharp contrast to difference; difference is in agreement with ontological poetics of postmodernism that “frustrates interpretation” (Nicol, 2009, p. 60). In other words, “in postmodernist texts [...] epistemology is backgrounded, at the price of foregrounding ontology” (McHale, 1987, p. 11). Graham Swift does not provide the reader with a definite, logocentric text thus it does not lead to a decidable meaning. The reader is actively involved in the text since difference is applied in the novel by Swift that aims at challenging the reader’s perception and understanding of the novel. In supporting the same idea, when Swift is interrogated the question, “what does water mean to you?” by Lewis Burke for the *Journal Winter*, his reply is evocative: “I have kind of resisted the connection” which is in line with the idea of frustrating interpretation. Therefore, by drawing on the previous discussion on the possible meanings that can be implied by the title, it could be concluded that there is a lack of determinate meaning that is in agreement with post-structuralism deconstruction and creates ontological instability, a dominant feature found in postmodernist texts.

#### V. TOWARD DELOGOCENTRISM

Derrida did research on the relationship between language and reality in his texts, *Writing and Differance* and *Of Grammatology*. As it can be understood from his texts, he denies the stability of signification system and the presupposed stability between them and questions the validity of “Logocentrism.” According to him (1978), for finding meaning, there is no pre-existent truth, “transcendental signifier” or “logos” to appeal to. As Ulmann (1999) puts it, his “deconstruction affirms the importance of ambivalence, of the relation between terms rather than the choice of one term over another” (p. 23).

The proposed delogocentrism by Derrida rejects the feasibility of discerning transparency in language and proves that “the central signified, the originality, or transcendental signified is revealed to be never absolutely present outside a system of differences, and this absence of an ultimate signified extends the domain and play of signification to infinity” (as cited in Lodge & Wood, 2000, p. 246). Swift, in order to free himself from the boundaries of language and text, draws on this potentiality. He is like most postmodern writers and unlike metaphysical thinkers and philosophers who try not to encounter multiplicity of meaning or ambiguity of a written text. In *Last Orders*, as the title speaks for itself, the credibility of “the metaphysics of presence” is lost, since from the onset talking of last things is mentioned. *Last Orders* refers to the last will of the deceased Jack Dodds who is to be absent during the course of the novel, but he is present which simultaneously aims at prompting his friends and readers to reconsider their lives. Thus the reader should understand this absence and presence; the ambivalence of presence/absence contributes to Derridean idea remarking that in postmodern thought and literature there could not exist sacred-text and author-God. Thus the access to the signified is made infeasible and the truth remains far-fetched.

It can be inferred that through the application of above mentioned techniques Graham Swift succeeded in demonstrating the “inadequacy of meaningful narrative” which is the product of “deligitimation” according to Lyotard (1984): it is the process in which grand narratives lose their power to legitimize discourses.

#### VI. MINIMALISM

The origin of minimalism, as a peculiar movement in arts, lies in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century modernist experiments with form. Since contemporary writers use such strategies in the late-modernist form, it can be regarded as both a bridge and continuation of these strategies to postmodern art assiduities. Mason (2007) presumes that

minimalist texts are often constituted by fragments that have little narrative continuity even if they develop a consistency of thematic tropes....The exhaustion of language and narrative is often an important feature of minimalism ... where enervation, repetition, and disconnection (textual, cultural, and cognitive) are significant tropes. Minimalism is particularly concerned with the reduction of the self and consciousness... in this case the production of a

text is an attempt that fails because of the necessity of using language which is the case of fragmentation in the first place (p. 210).

Although Swift may not be regarded as a genuine devoted minimalist such as Samuel Beckett, the footprints of providence with words and an epitomizing on surface description can be pinpointed in his text. Like most minimalist writers, he allows context to dictate meaning. This technique results in keeping the reader on his toes to create the novel's story based on oblique hints and clues rather than reacting to directions from the author. Thus the readers are expected to take an active role in making sense of the text as Malcolm (2003) states that "the Swiftian narrators' speech is distinguished by incomplete utterances (frequently as aposiopesis - the intentional failure to complete a sentence). Many narrators allow their utterances trail off into dashes and ellipsis points" (p. 15). Their utterances end either in incomplete sentences or starts with ellipsis in which using of dots [...] is outstanding. For example, in a chapter told by Ray there is an incomplete sentence as follows: "it's just the gypsy in my..." (LO 112); or in another chapter narrated by Vic the sentence starts by some dots: "... we therefore commit their bodies to the deep" (LO 84). This feature hints the idea that there are some realms that the narrator does not want to share with the reader or s/he is unable to convey it to the interlocutor. In addition, there are sometimes pages where characters swap phrases that are just a few words long:

Jack says, "You've only got an hour of it left."

Mandy says, "Better make the most of it."

Lenny says, "Promises."

Vince says, "Never know your luck" (LO 7).

Silence is another significant feature of minimalism as well as postmodernism. Mason states that silence is the only response being drawn upon when there is an inability in expressing the self or reality as meaningful entities. Thus the preoccupations of minimalism are negativity, absences, and the unspoken, which result in creating a significant generative principle in text, particularly in a sort of paradox that minimalism both carves for and is afraid of which is silence (Mason, 2007, pp. 210-211). According to Malcolm (2003):

the Swiftian's narrators' speech is distinguished by incomplete utterances [...] [and the reader gets] a strong sense that some characters are unwilling to say certain words, or to look at certain issues directly. This is coupled with one's sense that there are deep silences in some narrators' lives, areas of their experience that will avoid at all costs (p. 15).

These silences support the fact that the characters lack the ability to express the reality in their minds or their identities.

## VII. CONCLUSION

*Last Orders* enjoys some superficial similarities in plot to William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* (1930). It endorses both modernist and postmodernist features but the postmodernist features are more significant and apparent. After applying Jean Francois Lyotard's theory of the end of grand narratives and Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, it is fair to dub *Last Orders* a postmodern work.

A real portrait of postmodern condition is depicted by Graham Swift in *Last orders*. The novel is a complex one and enjoys semantic indeterminacy which according to Murphy (1992) is "the frequent hallmark of postmodernist aesthetic production" (p. 187). The dominance of ontological poetics is conspicuous in the novel and according to McHale this is in sharp contrast to modernism in which epistemology is more apparent. The characters search their identities and recreate and retell the past to make sense of their present situation. The ambiguity is presented from the outset and thus it gives a postmodern atmosphere to the setting of the novel and situation of characters. Therefore, *Last Orders* frustrates any specific interpretations due to the novel's resistance against being interpreted.

Another obsession of Swift's novel is Lyotard's idea regarding the end of grand narratives. Complexity, ambiguity, and difference demonstrate the "inadequacy of meaningful narrative" which is the product of "deligitimation;" according to Lyotard "deligitimation" is the process in which grand narratives lose their power to legitimize discourse (Lyotard, 1984).

The novel does not provide a definite meaning which results in ambiguity and hence lack of closure. Therefore, the reader has to make sense and take on the responsibility of getting meaning according to the viewpoint s/he considers the text.

The last but not the least, minimalism is a recurrent postmodern feature apparent in the works of this era. Short sentences and unspoken realities are the outcome of minimalism in this novel. Silence is another feature related to minimalism in which characters remain silent or their speeches end in dashes or dots resulting in the perception of the point that some private domains of characters are not allowed to be trodden by the interlocutor.

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# Online Learning Community with Open Dialogue Interaction: Strategies and Application

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**Abstract**—Online learning community has become the prevalent unit to achieve the goal of emotional support and academic improvement. In terms of social communication, online community can not only support interpersonal communication, but also promote the creation of positive learning environment and community culture. The article mainly adopts the method of theoretical analysis and practical reflection, introducing some concrete strategies for establishing and operating online learning communities with open dialogue according to the author's real practice on three learning platforms. The article follows the principle of real learning starting from dialogue teaching. As a result, the design and guidance strategy, the organization and feedback strategy are proposed to create the framework of online dialogue teaching, to inspire the participation of every community member, and to enhance the quality of multi-sided dialogue interaction. These strategies applied into online teaching activities have actually achieved something and online dialogue teaching is going on enthusiastically and skilfully. All these above teaching practices turn out that dialogue teaching can be regarded as the principal online teaching method, and it is of great value to explore this pioneering method unceasingly.

**Index Terms**—group collaborative learning, online community, dialogue teaching, strategy

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Group Collaborative Learning is a unit of students who maximize their learning products under some encouragement mechanism with the common learning goals, which includes all the relative activities in the process of collaborative learning. (Huang, 2001) At present, with the rising-up of network technology and the innovation of teaching concept, Web-based Collaborative Learning has increasingly attracted universal attention, and more and more teachers have attempted to put it into their teaching practice. Under this new situation, the combination of network technology with the Group Collaborative Learning will turn into the main trend; the building of multimedia learning platform with the characters of active interaction, open dialogue, and common sharing will dominate online learning space. VPIE (Virtual Policing in English) Network Training Platform, Cross-cultural communication and English professional and practical training platform, Growing-up English QQ Group, as three online learning communities for English learning and cultural nurturing in Liaoning Police Academy, have been established, undergoing smooth operation and obtaining fruitful results. These online learning communities revolutionized the traditional teacher-centred pattern, introducing collaborative and interactive online teaching and learning model. This innovative strategy mainly follows the principles of cooperation, equality, and encouragement, which strongly advocates open dialogue interaction among community members regardless of their status or attainment. In the process of online learning, however, we met with a series of problems, such as how to nurture the students' cultural values under network environment, how to fulfil equal and open dialogue among all the group members, and how to set adjustable and appropriate strategies to ensure the quality and continuity of online dialogue teaching. The article aims to explore the answers and solutions for these problems in order to construct effective and rewarding online learning communities benefiting every community member emotionally and academically.

## II. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING OF ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITY WITH OPEN DIALOGUE

### A. *The Teaching Concept Innovation: From Knowledge Transmission to Knowledge Construction*

The information society prompts transformation of living environment and life styles; the speed of knowledge renewal is increasing so fast that the knowledge structure system has to be modified accordingly; the information technology, especially the rapid covering of information network, are changing the ways of cultural transmission. All these external alterations constitute the impetus to transform the traditional teaching concept and thus implement the principles of Constructivism. The newly-emerged learning theory of Constructivism is mainly reflected in learning goals to realize the transformation from teacher's knowledge transmission to students' active construction. From the perspective of Constructivism, the purpose of learning is to construct the individual meanings rather than the repetition of others' meanings in order to find the correct answers through individual exploration and effort. Meanwhile, this theory underlines the learner's function as the learning subject. This conceptual change enables the students to enhance their learning motivation and momentum, gradually developing their subjective awareness in learning.

### *B. Online Community: Definition and Function*

Online Community refers to a new living space in which a group of people with similar interests and demands take advantage of the peculiarity of network to accomplish mutual communication and interaction, thereby forming the close and identified relationship. (Gan, 2005) Apart from some common features of ordinary community, for instance, a certain number of people, communication space, similar interests and ideals, Online Community owns its kernel elements including similarity, interaction, trust, and culture. It is a learning and communication space filled with cultural and reliant atmosphere; the community members can seek the sense of belonging and obtain the emotional support and academic improvement through online interactive activities.

In this special Community, every member equally takes part in different activities and shares abundant resources; everyone can express his unique opinions and discuss with other divergence. This mechanism of free expression and equal discussion will promote mutual understanding and common improvement, building up friendship simultaneously. Online Community helps the learners construct their individual identities, overcoming anxiety and isolation resulted from online learning process. This interpersonal communication and emotional interaction can make one's learning experience accepted, encouraged, and supported by other community members. Therefore, the sense of belonging, identification, and the community cohesion are greatly reinforced, which, in turn, propels all the community members to play active role in its routine interactions. In terms of social communication, Online Community can not only support interpersonal communication, but also facilitate the creation of positive learning environment and diverse community culture. After all, online social interaction in the learning community is the vital means to fulfil emotional communication and form the sense of social belonging and identification. (Ma, 2009)

### *C. The Network Cultural Educaiton: An Indispensable Part of Education*

According to Stoddard, culture is composed of three parts: artifacts, mentifacts and sociofacts. (Stoddard, 1986) Artifacts refer to the physical matters, such as tools, houses, and production. Mentifacts refer to the ideological mark of culture, such as belief, world views, values. Sociofacts refer to various structures to maintain interpersonal relations, such as political, legal, educational, and religious organizations or institutions. Culture can penetrate into every segment of social network, and Internet culture is one of its parts. Internet culture is the product of the Internet, and the extension of the previous culture. It normally refers to the culture of virtual community formed through media of information and communication technology (ICT). In the virtual community, people apply special software, or utilize the mass network platform to communicate with each other limitlessly on the information highway. The fast development of ICT is changing the people's language styles, cognition, aesthetics, values, cultural identification, and identity distinction. The main feature of Internet culture is globalization. (Palaiologou, 2007) From the perspective of social biology, culture is similar to language, for both of them have the creatural attributes. (Laponce, 1993)

### *D. Teaching and Learning with Dialogue: Significance and Values*

Whether the online dialogue among the community members is conducted effectively is the prominent symbol of beginning the genuine online learning. Why is it so important for online learning? According to the modern concept and longstanding practice, education is not monologue, but dialogue; education isn't the teacher's monodrama, but a living drama played by all the participants in the classroom; the real education is the dialogue education. Dialogue, as a normal living phenomenon, and its functions and effects in interpersonal communication, information transmission, ideas exchange, contradiction and conflict resolution, and harmony of cooperation, are raising the public concern and attention. It has been regarded as a new philosophy of life, the life criteria, and the value pursuit. The QQ group software and campus network platform on the basis of the information and network technology create unprecedented platforms, conditions and convenience to accomplish dialogue instruction. However, the main participant of educational activities must establish the educational concept to trust, respect, and control dialogue. In a broad sense, the dialogue teaching under the network environment by means of multidimensional interactions reflects four characteristics including the adjustment to the relative separation of time and space between teacher and student, the best use of distance online means, the emphasis on teacher-to-student dialogue interaction, and the student's self-study guided by the teacher. The students learning online can not only acquire the rich knowledge, the updated information and the learning skills to broaden their horizon and catch up with the pace of development, but also reflect on, appreciate and criticize the new inputs to improve their creative and critical thinking.

## III. STRATEGIES AND APPLICATION IN ONLINE DIALOGUE TEACHING

### *A. The Design and Guidance Strategy: The First Step to Build Dialogue Platform and Plan Dialogue Activities*

The design strategies of main learning points: (1) The author designed three preparatory courses to introduce dialogue teaching. Before having online dialogue teaching, the instructor should have the first course titled dialogue navigation class introducing the nature, the goals, the framework of this course, as well as the dialogue arrangement. The second one is "three-point" tutorial class requiring the teacher to determine the key points, the difficult points and hot points of the course as the main body of dialogue tutorial. The third one is homework instruction and hints review focusing on homework requirement, direction, and analysis. As to each type of course, its concrete course is composed

of learning hints, “three-point” core, extending materials, deep thinking and online points for discussion. (2) Three types of dialogue teaching activities with multiple involvements are arranged by the author. To explain and discuss the key points, to question and discriminate the difficult points, and to rethink and explore the hot points constitute the basic framework of dialogue interactions. Figure 1 clearly presents us the design of three preparatory courses for beginning dialogue teaching and three learning activities in it. These three types of teaching activity through online dialogue class are collectively conducted by teacher, students and texts. These all-round dialogues occur effectively in the following forms of interaction according to the concept of student-centered education: student-to-teacher, student-to-student, student-to-text, and student-to-himself.

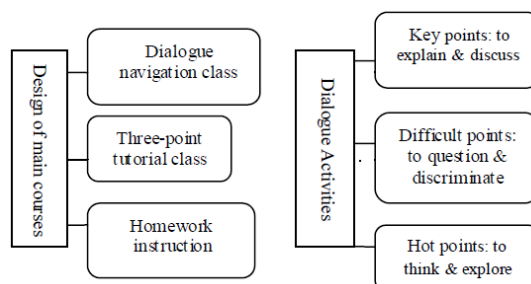


Figure 1: The design of three main courses and three learning activities in dialogue teaching.

The guiding strategies to take part in dialogue teaching: (1) To build the cultural awareness of dialogue teaching. The teacher should firstly develop a cultural habit of dialogue teaching in which the teacher functions as the interactive guide and plays the pivotal role of guide. As a result, the teacher has to be proactive to comprehend, to feel and to implement the cultural concept of dialogue teaching, leading the students to take part in, experience and practice the dialogue teaching process. (2) To carry out dialogue teaching in a lively style. The teacher should adopt various methods to guide the students to develop the tendency to dialogue teaching. To have the wonderful first class to stress the significance of dialogue interaction, to put forward the problem, to relate the story, to state the case, and to release the news, all these appealing lead-in can be put to use to start the dialogue teaching. It is just because these creative activities are relevant to deep thinking and unique dialogue design that the students are filled with curiosity and interests to enter into dialogue with other participant in this learning community. According to a previous research results in Maine, among seven teaching methods to learn the new materials, the methods of Discussing Group, Practical Exercise, and Teaching Others or Apply Now can help students improve the rate of learned material retention from 50 percent, 70 percent to 90 percent. However, other traditional methods, such as Expository method, Reading method, Audio-visual method, Demonstration method, can only make students keep the rate of retention no higher than 30 percent. (Han, 2012) Table 1 shows the detailed retention rate for these methods in a comparative way. Through comparative study and clear data, we'll be confirmed that discussion, timely practical use of the knowledge after learning, mutual teaching are advantageous means to understand and memorize the learned materials, especially the foreign language. In view of this research results, the author mainly adopts dialogue teaching method in her English class to make her students memorize the vocabulary and sentence structures as many as possible after teaching. And most of dialogue teaching occurs online through three learning platforms.

TABLE 1:  
THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RETENTION RATE FOR SEVEN TEACHING METHODS

Teaching Methods	Rate of Learned Material Retention
Expository method	5 percent
Reading method	10 percent
Audio-visual method	20 percent
Demonstration method	30 percent
Discussing Group method	50 percent
Practical Exercise method	70 percent
Teaching Others or Apply Now method	90 percent

Obviously, if the teacher mainly uses the following teaching techniques in his class: question lead-in, cooperative discussion, dialogue interaction, and mental practice, he will correspond to the principles of those three teaching methods with higher retention rates, and thus the students' dominant role in learning can be confirmed; their learning initiative can be brought into full play.

#### B. The Organization and Feedback Strategies: The Concrete Steps to Achieve Dialogue Teaching

Organization strategy: The teacher can adopt the following strategies to practice and control online dialogue teaching. (1) To regard the students as the principal element in dialogue teaching, and to improve teaching by learning from students and prompting teacher-to-student dialogue interaction. At present, it is the information and network era, and diverse cultures interact with each other. Online learning community advocates the concept of Person who knows the first serves as the teacher; The teacher isn't the authority; The teacher learn together with students and grow up together;



Dialogue teaching benefits teachers as well as students. In Growing-up English Group, there are 7 learning assistants, and one of them is a student whose net name is Criterion. He is a music and movie fun, so he uploads abundant entertaining resources as shown in Fig. 2 and the detailed introduction of *Life of Pi*. The combination with the student in dialogue teaching is the strong proof of respecting the student and learning from them and growing up with them together.



Figure 2: The Angel's material uploaded by learning assistant Criterion in Growing-up QQ Group.

Criterion assistant(2606717112) 20:06:57

Ang Lee's "*Life of Pi*" is a miraculous achievement of storytelling and a landmark of visual mastery. Inspired by a worldwide bestseller that many readers must have assumed was unfilmable, it is a triumph over its difficulties. It is also a moving spiritual achievement, a movie whose title could have been shortened to "life."

The story involves the 227 days that its teenage hero spends drifting across the Pacific in a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger. They find themselves in the same boat after an amusing and colorful prologue, which in itself could have been enlarged into an exciting family film.

The story begins in a small family zoo in Pondichery, India, where the boy christened Piscine is raised. Piscine translates from French to English as "swimming pool," but in an India where many more speak English than French, his playmates of course nickname him "pee." Determined to put an end to this, he adopts the name "Pi," demonstrating an uncanny ability to write down that mathematical constant that begins with 3.14 and never ends. If Pi is a limitless number, that is the perfect name for a boy who seems to accept no limitations.

Criterion assistant(2606717112) 20:07:57

The heart of the film focuses on the sea journey, during which the human demonstrates that he can think with great ingenuity and the tiger shows that it can learn. I won't spoil for you how those things happen.

The possibilities are surprising.

Criterion assistant(2606717112) 20:08:58

The writer W.G. Sebald once wrote, "Men and animals regard each other across a gulf of mutual incomprehension."

This is the case here, but during the course of 227 days, they come to a form of recognition. The tiger, in particular, becomes aware that he sees the boy not merely as victim or prey, or even as master, but as another being.

The movie quietly combines various religious traditions to enfold its story in the wonder of life. How remarkable that these two mammals, and the fish beneath them and birds above them, are all here. And when they come to a floating island populated by countless meerkats, what an incredible sequence Lee creates there.

(2) To adopt such approaches as problem discussion, story explanation, case analysis, current affair debate to carry on dialogue interaction. Online learning community is an open and democratic space in which every participant expresses his particular opinions, shares his individual learning experiences, and explores the genuine knowledge. All of these approaches are conducive to the improvement of online dialogue teaching quality, especially to the development of students' creative and divergent thinking capability. (3) To broaden learning space and optimize online learning platform; to extend online discussion and promote dialogue interaction. The author and her colleague have built three platforms to fulfill online dialogue teaching interaction in Liaoning Police Academy, they are VPIE (Virtual Policing in English) Network Training Platform (The VPIE network platform fully applies the modern combined technology of computer & network in order to achieve the VPIE goal of multifunctional interaction, timely updates, and international police integration and cooperation), Cross-cultural communication and English professional and practical training platform, and Growing-up English QQ Group (WEI, 2012a). Fig. 3, Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 present the readers with two homepages of online learning platforms and the dialogue record in English QQ Group. The teaching assistants on these three platforms made specialized multimedia courseware of the Elite Policing English, The Multicultural Education and Cross-cultural Communication, College English Tutorial Course. Many linguistic problems, cultural issues, and current affairs are discussed and learned together by teachers and students. These platforms have played positive roles in carrying on higher-leveled teacher-to-student and student-to-student dialogues. Most of the participants take active part in learning interactions after face-to-face classroom teaching, fulfilling online learning tasks for one and half an hours every day on average. (4) To encourage and require the students to have dialogue with the texts (the learning courseware, the extended learning resources, and so on); to guide them to have self-reflection and introspection after a short period of dialogue teaching. The network era tends to be mistakenly considered that the computer can

substitute for the human's brain, and the mass information can replace human's meticulous analysis. Given this phenomenon, the teachers are undoubtedly responsible for transforming this misconception, helping students to establish correct and rational network values, and to comprehend the logical relationship between network (or computer) and learning. In the process of dialogue teaching, the teachers should make great endeavors to steer students to reflect on their learning behaviors, to make inquiries into their souls, and to examine their life styles continuously and repeatedly. As a consequence, the students are capable of combining five capabilities (learning, questioning, thinking, arguing, and acting) together, realizing the mutual promotion of overt and covert dialogue. For this reason, we can realize the ultimate goal of our education.



Figure 3: The homepage of VPIE (Virtual Policing in English) Network Training Platform. (WEI, 2012b)



Figure 4: The homepage of Cross-cultural communication and English professional and practical training platform. (WEI, 2012c)

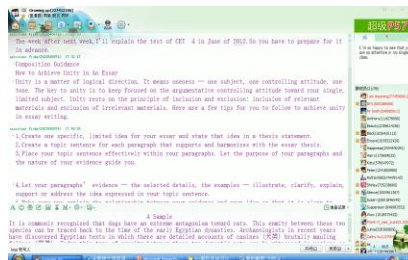


Figure 5: The dialogue teaching in Growing-up English QQ Group between teacher and students.

**Feedback strategy:** The cooperative dialogue teaching with a wide range of teachers and students participating into activities is not a temporary teaching aimed at solving one problem, but a whole process throughout online teaching and learning. The comprehensive design of dialogue teaching, its organization and practice, the students' initiative and leaning activity, all of these details will exert decisive influence on an integrated dialogue teaching process. In the concrete course of dialogue teaching, feedback plays such irreplaceable functions as control, encouragement, reflection, improvement, and innovation. (1) To incorporate the students' dialogue activities into formative evaluation system. The activities frequency and record qualities in each online interaction constitute important components of students' formative performance. The teacher determines dialogue tasks and their proportion in the formative score, which urges students to participate in dialogue proactively. Only by means of taking active part in dialogue, engaging in learning activities, and studying English in order to apply it in real situation can the students realize the goal of real learning. This timely feedback evaluation system (including the record of logging times, discussing times, posts numbers, dialogue quality and originality, assessment frequency and content, and so on) can enhance the influence of dialogue teaching, inspire many-sided interactions, and improve dialogue levels and qualities ultimately. (2) To offer feedback to the students in dialogue teaching interaction as quickly as possible. The dialogue teaching follows the principle of openness, freedom, tolerance, and error-free, and the learning assistants encourage and reply to the students who take part in dialogue interaction on a regular basis. For those posts with innovative ideas and original spirits, it's necessary for the teacher to give prompt and positive evaluation and encouragement, for these reactions are driving forces and facilitators to make the students maintain continuous zest for supporting dialogue teaching interaction. (3) To frequently examine and control dialogue teaching process. The teacher should investigate and improve dialogue teaching quality via reviewing and surveying the performance of three-point tutorial, the design of case study, and the arrangement of discussing problems. Once the teacher found any problems in existence, he would make suitable adjustment to

accommodate different dialogue teaching types. (4) To guide the students to reflect and improve their learning process consciously. Online open education is a kind of self-study by teacher's teaching and guiding in part, and students' self-directed learning primarily. Therefore, it must include students' self-feedback control with teacher's guidance in this special learning process, which covers reviewing, inspecting, and reflecting the frequently-used learning approach or regular learning activity. Meanwhile, the students have to learn "To question", that is, to question teacher, students, learning resources, practice, and, of course, themselves. Only harboring the concept of "To question" and "To ask questions whenever and wherever possible" can the students master the basic skill of dialogue teaching, and hence commence their journey of learning in the real sense.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Online learning community, as a newly-booming community, has prompted wide attention from teachers and learners. The teachers aim to establish a learning space without time and space limitation to realize seamless and ubiquitous teaching and learning interaction; the learners aim to broaden their horizon of knowledge and master adequate information and professional skills through online equal dialogue teaching and self-exploration activity. Interaction and dialogue are two core factors in online learning community. These two factors can also be exchanged, or combined together. In fact, the concept and goal of Teaching Others or Apply Now teaching method correspond to those of Dialogue teaching, which hold that the real learning starts from dialogue teaching. As a new tendency of teaching and learning, the strategies and application of online dialogue teaching is in need of in-depth discussion. Once community members establish the cultural view of dialogue teaching, participating into online teaching interactions actively and effectively, online learning community has played its due role. The design and guidance strategy, the organization and feedback strategy proposed by the author can provide online teachers and learners some suggestions on how to maintain the vitality of online dialogue teaching, how to develop the campus and network culture, and how to realize the goal of real learning.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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# Investigating the Role of Teachers' Self-monitoring in the Learners' Willingness to Communicate: A Case of Iranian EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—Self-monitoring as a means of observation gives teachers proper respect and appropriate understanding of what they do when teaching. There is also a shift from an outsider to an insider as far as observation is concerned. It definitely gives teachers a great insight into their teaching and at the same time proves effective in improving their teaching. The purpose of this paper is two-fold. It first investigated the barriers that Iranian high school students face while speaking. This investigation was made by interviewing both students (language institutes and schools) and teachers. Teachers' comments on the students' answers and teachers' separate answers on the causes of speaking problems were elicited. It then made a comparison between the willingness to communicate (WTC) of high school and language institute students after the reflection (self-monitoring) of the teacher. To achieve this purpose 32 high school and 32 language institute students spent 10 sessions with a teacher who had previously reflected upon the speaking barriers collected from participants comments through oral interviews. The results of the study, using an independent *t*-test, clearly showed that language institute students were much more willing to communicate. Several reasons were also found to be highly important regarding students, teachers, and course materials. Both high-stake and low-stake holders can avail from the results of the study.

**Index Terms**—self-monitoring, willingness to communicate, Iranian EFL learners, high school students

## I. INTRODUCTION

The world of ELT is quite amazing. It undergoes many changes and experiences with new methods and approaches coming into existence every day. Knowledge is not bound to sets of fixed ideas and principles born out of our old generation's mentality. Moreover, a sort of relativism is dominant. Things seem to be context dependent and are subject to change due to place and time. This is where the challenge lies. ELT is in the realm of humanities, further complicating things. In humanities we deal with something which we call the human mind; a highly complicated issue to discuss. There are different sides to this: linguistic, psychological, social, etc. Having all this in mind, in fact, makes us much more concerned with consciousness about the issue of context. We have to accept the changes around us and behave accordingly. Whether we like it or not, the context of language teaching has changed and it will definitely experience more changes in the near future as well. In fact, the concept of language teaching and consequently *language teacher* as the one who makes it happen is much different today from that of twenty or thirty years ago. Widdowson (1990) mentions that not long ago, teachers tend to be referred to as if they were factory workers to be provided with minimal practical skills and were required to pick up on the job whatever expertise is necessary to keep the pedagogic production line going. In this case, the result is that teachers' morale declines with their status. Many leave a profession officially treated with such disdain. Furthermore, expedient stop-gap attempts to provide for the lack of qualified teachers only make matters worse. Widdowson (1990) adds that twenty-five percent of teaching in British secondary schools is being carried out by teachers with an inadequate knowledge of the subject. Those in authority seem not to be particularly troubled by this situation. So long as there are people available to stand in front of classes it does not seem to matter much about their competence as teachers.

There are a couple of points to ponder here. In the light of such attitudes, nothing positive can be done. It is important to assert that teaching needs commitment to standards of professionalism. These standards depend on our open-mindedness and tolerance of new approaches and ideas. In other words, in the limits of principled pragmatism (the dominant approach of the 1990's), we should experience new paths and views, one of which is the new picture of a language teacher as researcher. In this approach, teachers are given important roles. They are not merely consumers of

the truth produced by out-of-the-classroom researchers. They are teaching practitioners who feel that their own experience as pedagogic providers is given sufficient recognition.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Self-monitoring*

Many people are interested in knowing whether teaching has been fruitful or not. Among those administrators, course supervisors, and students taking the course can be named. However, the teacher himself is the first who wants to know what type of teacher he is, what he is doing and how well he is teaching. So, having the ideas from principled pragmatism on his mind, he should do his best to become a critical teacher who can properly take the steps of self monitoring himself. Today, self-monitoring as a recently used term in ELT is given special attention. The term comes from the new trends in ELT where teachers have central roles as researchers. According to Richards, Plat and Plat (1992, p.327), self-monitoring or self-observation is 'observing and recording information about one's own behavior for the purpose of achieving a better understanding of a control over one's behavior and its impact on students' growth. In fact, teachers, almost always overwhelmed with a sense of responsibility gain specific rights through this approach. They, themselves, achieve the role of an observer or supervisor and show the confidence in themselves by using more responsible attitude towards the system they are working for. The confidence in teachers is formed when recruiting and training them. Moreover, this approach in English language classes i.e. the experience of *self monitoring* help teachers feel at ease to become more autonomous in their teaching activities.

According to Richards & Nunan (1990), improvement of teaching maybe achieved through reflection. Asking 'what' questions gives us a certain power over our teaching and the degree of autonomy and responsibility we have in our work as teachers is determined by the level of control that we can exercise over our actions. If teachers want to gain such control, they should be good self-monitors. Nunan & Lamb (1996, p.121) introduce three parts as central in any reflective teaching: planning, implementation, and evaluation. It is right in the third part where "ability to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching takes a key function. Richards (1990, p.119) summarizes the good reasons for the use of self-monitoring as the following:

- Teachers need feedback to improve their performance and self-monitoring is a good way to gain such feedback.
- It creates a good means of critical reflection on teacher's own teaching.
- It can help narrow the gap between teachers' imagined view of their own teaching
- It changes the responsibility of checking one's improvement in teaching from an outsider, such as supervisor, to the teachers themselves.

Emphasizing the role of observation techniques, Millrood (1998) believes that there is a need for handy and time-saving observation techniques which can be used to reflect on the lesson that is being observed. He continues stating that observation activities may have different features: focusing on developing linguistic competence, pragmatic abilities, thought processes, background knowledge, etc. Richards & Nunan (1990, p. 207) reinforces the need to consider a number of principles and self-monitoring.

1. The issue upon which the teacher reflects must occur in the social context where teaching occurs.
2. The teacher must be interested in the problem to be solved.
3. The issue must be 'owned' by the teacher-that is, derived from his or her practice.
4. Reflection on the issue involves problem solving from the teaching situation in which the teacher is located.
5. Ownership of the identified issue and its solution is vested in the teacher.
6. Systematic procedures are necessary.
7. Information (observations) about the issue must be derived from the teacher's experience of teaching.
8. The teacher's ideas need to be tested through the practice of teaching.
9. Ideas about teaching, once tested through practice, must lead to some course of action.
10. Hence, reflexive action may be transformed into new understandings and refined practice in teaching.

Richards (1990) introduces three major approaches to self-monitoring in teaching: personal reflection, self-reporting, and recording lessons.

#### 1. Personal reflection:

It is the simplest approach through the use of a diary or journal in which the teacher prepares an open extensive report of what happened in teaching. Among many others, one advantage of using diaries is that it allows teachers to explore information that might not be accessible in other ways. It serves to initiate insights into the teaching experience.

#### 2. Self-reporting:

This efficient approach involves completing an inventory or checklist in which the teacher indicates which teaching practices were used within a lesson. Teachers can check up to what extent their assumptions about their own teaching are reflected in their actual teaching practices. A teacher, for instance, can use self-reporting to find out about the kinds of teaching activities he has used regularly, the extent to which primary learning goals for a lesson are being met, and the kinds of activities that work well or do not work at all.

#### 3. Recording lessons:

Audio or video recording of lessons provide a very reliable moment-to-moment record of what actually happened in the class, though it is not possible for every teacher to use.

Many aspects can be examined when teachers self-monitor through diaries, self-reports, or recordings of lessons. The following are some issues:

1. Classroom management and discipline
2. Teacher-student interaction
3. Grouping
4. Structuring
5. Tasks
6. Classroom interactions
7. Opportunities for speaking
8. Quality of input
9. Communicativeness
10. Questions
11. Feedback
12. Use of time
13. Use of teaching aids
14. Teaching pace
15. Establishing rapport

#### *B. Importance of Communication and Speaking Ability*

Emphasis on communication and concern for fluency and accuracy has been a matter of great concern for teachers/learners in the field of English language teaching. In line with this trend, some theories such as Monitor Theory of SLA by Krashen (1982) puts emphasis on the output which is performance. Doughty and Williams (1998) back up focus on fluency and communication rather than focus on form and accuracy. According to Chastain (1988), speaking plays several roles in language learning and in language classes. Being aware of these roles will enable teachers to attend to them all and to see speaking as one important element in developing each language skill and conveying culture knowledge. Fluency and accuracy are both important but at times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use (Brown, 2000). This seems to be one of the major concerns of Communicative Language Teaching where students have to use the language productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Fluency is the ability of the speaker of a foreign language to communicate with the language in a way that makes him understood by his interlocutors whether they are native-speakers or not (Harmer, 2001). On the importance of speaking, Nunan (2001) believes that if listening is the Cinderella skill in second language learning, then speaking is the overbearing elder sister. More important than that, Rivers (1981) warns teachers to be aware of inhibiting factors which may impede students' speaking and expression of ideas.

#### *C. Willingness to Communicate*

The term "willingness to communicate" (WTC) was first introduced by McCrosky and Richmond in 1987 in the context of first language acquisition. Nonetheless, it is now being widely used in the context of second and foreign language learning.

Since the late 90s attempts have been made to conceptualize willingness to communicate to explain an individual's degree of readiness to participate in discourse in an L2 (MacIntyre, Clement, Dörnyei & Noels, 1998). MacIntyre et al. (1998) recognizes the difference between L1 and L2 WTC and mentions it's probably being due to the uncertainty inherent in L2 use that interacts in a more complex manner with the variables influencing L1 WTC, i.e. individual differences. WTC was originally introduced with reference to L1 communication, and it was considered to be a fixed personality trait that is stable across situations, but when WTC was extended to L2 communication situations, it was proposed that it is not necessary to limit WTC to a trait-like variable, since the use of an L2 introduces the potential for significant situational differences based on wide variations in competence and inter-group relations (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998).

Yashima, Nishide and Shimizu (2004) hold that WTC is a conceptual model in which L2 proficiency is not considered as a goal to be achieved through L2 learning, but rather is considered as a means to gain 'interpersonal/intercultural' goals. According to Leger and Storch (2009), early models of WTC included two main variables: perceived communication, and communicative anxiety. Based on this model it is predicted that high levels of perceived competence together with low levels of anxiety results in higher WTC and a higher probability of communicative interactions in L2. MacIntyre et al. (1998) conceptualized WTC in an L2 in a theoretical model in which social and individual context, affective cognitive context, motivational propensities, situated antecedents, and behavioral intention are interrelated in influencing WTC in an L2 and in L2 use. Some researchers have argued that a fundamental goal of second language education should be the creation of WTC in the language learning process. It is also suggested that higher WTC among learners leads to increased opportunity for practice in an L2 and authentic L2 usage (MacIntyre et al., 2003). As Chapelle (2001) states in the communicative classroom, conscientious language teachers want motivated students who demonstrate a willingness to communicate in the L2. A lack of willingness

inhibits effective interaction and language production. Recent technological advances have changed the classroom so that interaction has come to mean not only spoken interaction but electronic interaction as well.

As was mentioned earlier, learners' willingness to communicate in an L2 has been a matter of great concern for some researchers within the scope of second language investigation. Here, some of the important studies conducted so far are pointed out. MacIntyre et al. (1999) investigated the effect of anxiety variable and found that this factor influenced L2 communication and confirmed the findings of the previous studies related to the effect of anxiety variable. MacIntyre et al. (2001) found that among their early adolescent learners (Grades 7-9), the strongest correlate of L2 WTC in all three grade levels was perceived confidence in the L2. Clément and Kruidendier (1985) examined factors related to self-concept including perceived confidence and found that this variable is correlated with WTC. Other researchers like Gardner, Tremblay and Masgoret (1997) further conducted researches on the potential role of self-perceptions in an L2 learner's desire to communicate and came to the same results as found in the previous studies. Daly and Stafford (1984) found that communication apprehension is significantly related to a person's willingness to communicate. Communication apprehension is "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1984). Their research findings indicated that people who experience high levels of fear or anxiety regarding communication often avoid and withdraw from communication.

#### *D. Statement of the Problem*

Although there has been many studies related to the effect of self-monitoring on the improvement of different language skills, there seems to be scarce studies (if any) on the effect of teacher's self-monitoring on the learner's willingness to communicate in Iranian EFL context at high school level. Therefore, this study is aimed at finding an answer to the following research question:

#### *E. Research Question and Null Hypothesis*

For the research question of "Is there any relationship between teacher's self-monitoring and student's willingness to communicate?" a null hypothesis is made:

There is no relationship between teacher's self-monitoring and student's willingness to communicate.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### *A. Participants*

Participants of this study are 32 Iranian upper-intermediate EFL students, males and females from Simin Language Institute. They have just started studying the New Interchange, book 3. They are of two separate classes but the teacher is the same. The next group was 32 high school students, grade 3 to pre-university, all under the supervision of one English language teacher.

#### *B. Instruments*

In this study, the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) questionnaire developed by MacIntyre et al. (2001) was used in order to collect the necessary data. This questionnaire is designed in two parts of 27 items which tests communication inside the classroom and outside the classroom context. It is a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire (See Appendix A) consisting of four skill areas of speaking (8 items), reading (6 items), writing (8 items) and listening comprehension (5 items). Concerning the reliability of the questionnaire, previous internal (alpha) reliability estimates have been reported (McCroskey & McCroskey, 1988; McCroskey, 1992) at .91 and .95 respectively.

#### *C. Procedure*

Since this study was a qual/quant research, for the first step, students of both language institutes and schools were interviewed in order to find out the possible barriers they face in trying to communicate or making themselves understood. Teachers were also interviewed in order to figure out their answers and comments on the students' responses regarding the causes of their speaking problems. The teacher (the one used for the reflection) had to consider these items and reflect upon them or change his way of teaching in order to meet the needs of his students for language institute participants only and worked on the high school students conventionally (without any change in spite of the problems these participants showed regarding their speaking). As a matter of fact, language institute participants were regarded as experimental group while high school students were regarded as control group. The focus of this study was on the possible change in willingness to communicate between these two groups when the teacher reflects upon the problems and changes his way of teaching or not. For instance, all the students complained about not being provided with enough time to express themselves or simply talk. But the teacher tried to give more time during the class for the experimental group participants. He also tried to motivate the participants to take part in discussions with providing more free chat opportunities, asking them to talk about their personal life, etc. The teacher also tried not to threaten students with marks focusing on grammar and vocabulary section and let them be freer on the speaking sections and so on. Since the answers and comments varied a lot, only those common responses and comments are shown here. Tables 1 and 2 show the answers.



TABLE 1.  
TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' ANSWERS ON THE CAUSES OF SPEAKING PROBLEMS OF THE STUDENTS IN GENERAL

Item	Teachers' and students' answers on the causes of speaking problems of the students in general
1	S: One student said he had no motivation to talk in English. T: most of the students are not motivated to talk.
2	S: Another student said he did not feel the need to talk in English. T: Students are not required or obliged to talk, so they are carefree.
3	S: One other student said he studied English in order to pass the university entrance not for anything else. T: Yes, that's true. Nearly all the students are exam-centered. Rarely do they prepare themselves for listening or speaking.
4	S: One student said our teacher could not speak well (he meant fluently and accurately), let alone the students. T: teachers do not usually have problems in speaking, they are fluent and accurate normally, but there are some who are off-track.
5	S: Another student said he was not given any opportunity to talk (in fact no one had this chance to express himself in the class). T: we are overwhelmed with different materials to cover. The syllabus is not time-appropriate. We have a lot to do, so much less time remains for the speaking session.
6	S: yet another student said his teacher had just drill and practice in the class, and unlike institutional classes they rarely had time to make a free discussion class. T: drill and practice is something necessary for the class. In fact practice makes perfect. Students are not at the level of free discussion, they are so weak.
7	S: teachers teach differently when they are in language institutes than when they are at schools. There's no concentration on speaking at schools. T: the syllabi, books cause and managers expect us to teach differently. Besides, we are better paid here than schools, so we are much more motivated.

TABLE 2.  
TEACHERS' SEPARATE ANSWERS ON CAUSES OF THE SPEAKING PROBLEMS OF THE STUDENTS

Item	Teachers' separate answers on the causes of students' problem in speaking
1	Students are not motivated to speak.
2	Students are afraid of speaking.
3	They don't practice enough.
4	They just want to memorize words and learn grammar in order to be able to pass university entrance.
5	They spend very little time on listening, that's why they are not good at speaking.
6	If they want to learn to express themselves in English, they should register in institutional classes.
7	They just have English course one session a week, so their amount of exposure to English language is barely enough.

After 10 sessions, a willingness to communicate (WTC) questionnaire based on MacIntyre et al. (2001) was given to 32 upper-intermediate EFL students from Simin Language Institute and 32 high school and pre-university students in order to determine the level of their WTC and possible difference between the two groups after the reflection for the experimental group. The focus of this research was both on the possible difference between two groups of students and common barriers to their speaking ability.

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Investigating some speaking difficulties of Iranian high school students, the researcher faced some answers highly worthy of mention. The classes observed were of different levels, from grade 3 in high school and pre-university. The data for the ten high school classes observed appears below. This chapter is devoted to the description of the statistical analyses which were performed to answer the question formulated for the purpose of this research. All the data were processed using version 18.0 SPSS software.

When the teacher reflected upon the comments of the students, he tried to concentrate more both on students' answers and the items available in the WTC questionnaire (8 from in class, and 8 from out of the class willingness to communicate). After 10 sessions of working with both groups, the WTC questionnaire, scaled 1 to 5, was given to the students in order to evaluate the possible difference. The results are as follows:

Table 1 shows the number of each group (32), mean of school students (38.75) and mean of the language institute students (56).

TABLE 4.1:  
GROUPS STATISTICS

	school	Institute
N Valid	32	32
Missing	32	32
Mean	38.7500	56.0000
Std. Error of Mean	1.33577	1.73554
Median	39.0000	56.0000
Mode	36.00 <sup>a</sup>	43.00 <sup>a</sup>
Std. Deviation	7.55624	9.81769
Variance	57.097	96.387
Range	27.00	30.00
Minimum	24.00	42.00
Maximum	51.00	72.00
Sum	1240.00	1792.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown



TABLE 4.2:  
FREQUENCY TABLE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

		SCHOOL			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	24.00	1	1.6	3.1	3.1
	25.00	1	1.6	3.1	6.3
	26.00	1	1.6	3.1	9.4
	27.00	1	1.6	3.1	12.5
	30.00	1	1.6	3.1	15.6
	32.00	2	3.1	6.3	21.9
	33.00	1	1.6	3.1	25.0
	35.00	1	1.6	3.1	28.1
	36.00	3	4.7	9.4	37.5
	37.00	1	1.6	3.1	40.6
	38.00	2	3.1	6.3	46.9
	39.00	3	4.7	9.4	56.3
	40.00	1	1.6	3.1	59.4
	41.00	1	1.6	3.1	62.5
	42.00	2	3.1	6.3	68.8
	43.00	1	1.6	3.1	71.9
	45.00	2	3.1	6.3	78.1
	46.00	1	1.6	3.1	81.3
	47.00	1	1.6	3.1	84.4
	48.00	2	3.1	6.3	90.6
49.00	1	1.6	3.1	93.8	
51.00	2	3.1	6.3	100.0	
	Total	32	50.0	100.0	
Missing	System	32	50.0		
Total		64	100.0		

TABLE 4.3:  
FREQUENCY TABLE FOR INSTITUTE STUDENTS

		INSTITUTE			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	42.00	2	3.1	6.3	6.3
	43.00	3	4.7	9.4	15.6
	44.00	2	3.1	6.3	21.9
	46.00	1	1.6	3.1	25.0
	47.00	1	1.6	3.1	28.1
	49.00	2	3.1	6.3	34.4
	50.00	1	1.6	3.1	37.5
	54.00	2	3.1	6.3	43.8
	56.00	3	4.7	9.4	53.1
	57.00	1	1.6	3.1	56.3
	58.00	1	1.6	3.1	59.4
	61.00	1	1.6	3.1	62.5
	62.00	1	1.6	3.1	65.6
	63.00	2	3.1	6.3	71.9
	65.00	3	4.7	9.4	81.3
	66.00	1	1.6	3.1	84.4
	67.00	1	1.6	3.1	87.5
	69.00	2	3.1	6.3	93.8
	72.00	2	3.1	6.3	100.0
		Total	32	50.0	100.0
Missing	System	32	50.0		
Total		64	100.0		

The above table shows frequency of the numbers for institute students.

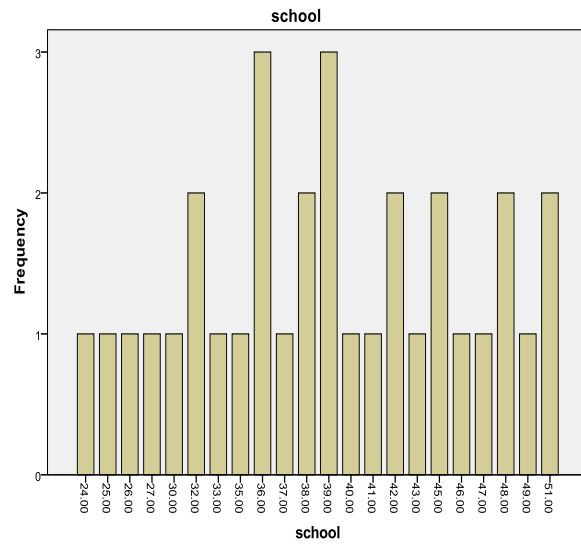


Figure 4.1: Bar chart for school students

The above chart shows bar chart for school students who attempted the 16-item WTC questionnaire.

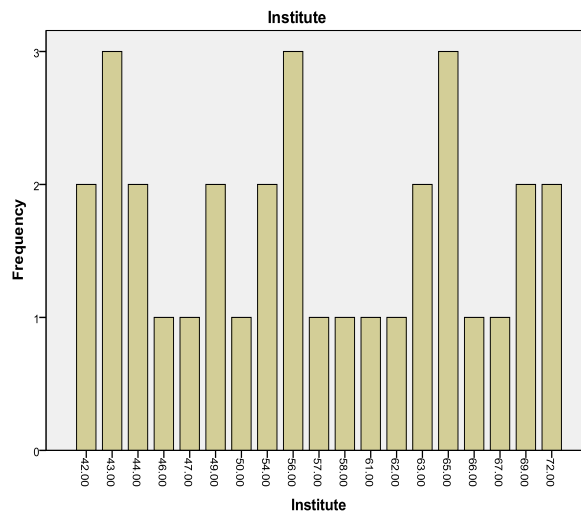


Figure 4.2: Bar chart for institute students

The above chart shows bar chart for institute students who attempted the 16-item WTC questionnaire.

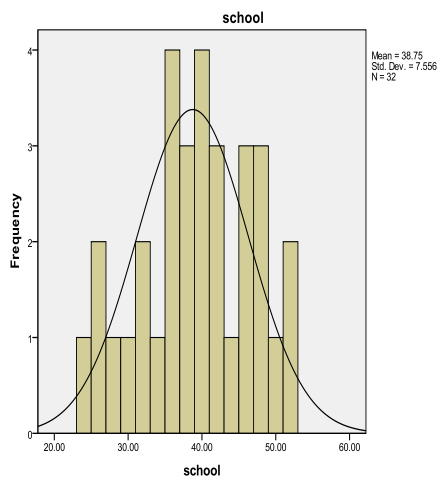


Figure 4.3: Histogram with minimal curve for school students

The above figure shows the histogram with minimal curve for school students who attempted the 16-item WTC questionnaire.

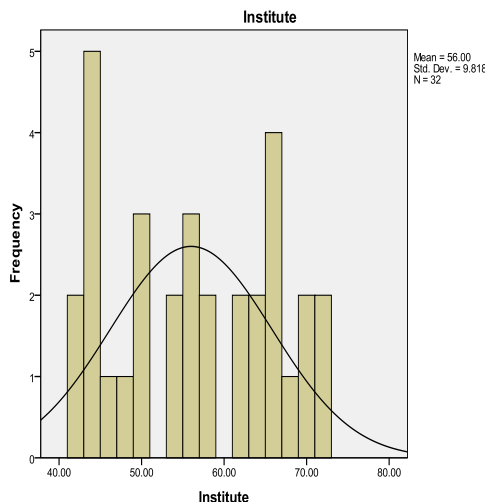


Figure 4.4: Histogram with minimal curve for institute students

The above figure shows the histogram with minimal curve for institute students who attempted the 16-item WTC questionnaire.

TABLE 4.5:  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE TWO GROUPS

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS									
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
school	32	27.00	24.00	51.00	1240.00	38.7500	1.33577	7.55624	57.097
Institute	32	30.00	42.00	72.00	1792.00	56.0000	1.73554	9.81769	96.387
Valid N (list wise)	32								

TABLE 4.6:  
GROUP STATISTICS AND INDEPENDENT T TEST FOR BOTH GROUPS

GROUP STATISTICS					
School/Institute		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
WTC dimension1	sch	32	38.7500	7.55624	1.33577
	Ins	32	56.0000	9.81769	1.73554

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
WTC	Equal variances assumed	4.074	.048	-7.876	62	.000	-17.25000	2.19006	-21.62787	-12.87213
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.876	58.187	.000	-17.25000	2.19006	-21.63359	-12.86641

An independent t test was conducted in order to decide whether this mean difference (17.25) is meaningful for the t value of 7.87 or not. As you notice: F= 4.074 and P< 0.05. So in this way the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that the research hypothesis is accepted, meaning there in fact is a difference between willingness to communicate of Iranian high school and language institute students.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Self-monitoring as a means of observation gives teachers proper respect and appropriate understanding of what they do when teaching. There is also a shift from an outsider to an insider as far as observation is concerned. It definitely gives teachers a great insight into their teaching and at the same time proves effective in improving their teaching. Many people are interested in knowing whether teaching has been fruitful or not. Among those administrators, course supervisors, and students taking the course can be named. However, the teacher himself is the first who wants to know

what type of teacher he is, what he is doing and how well he is teaching. So, having the ideas from principled pragmatism on his mind, he should do his best to become a critical teacher who can properly self-monitor. Today, self-monitoring as a recently used term in ELT is given special attention. The term comes from the new trends in ELT where teachers have central roles as researchers. According to Richards, et al. (1992, p.327), self-monitoring or self-observation is 'observing and recording information about one's own behavior for the purpose of achieving a better understanding of a control over one's behavior'. In fact, teachers, almost always obsessed with a sense of responsibility gain specific rights through this approach. They, themselves, achieve the role of an observer or supervisor but show the confidence in the teachers and, by giving them such respect, make them even more responsible towards the system they are working for.

Out of the four language skills, speaking plays a quite crucial role in communication, i.e. oral communication. Iranian high school students have been learning English for about 5 years, yet they have problem in speaking or making themselves understood while talking in a foreign language. One of the major problems regarding the investigation of the speaking difficulty is that there might not exist a fixed source or a defined rule based on which speaking could be measured. However, in this research students' motivation to speak was measured by Willingness to Communicate questionnaire (WTC). The findings of this research showed that there actually was a difference between the willingness to communicate of the language institute participants (experimental group) and high school participants (control group). It was quite interesting that what students of school said to a great extent the problems of the language institute students too. But that latter group could find a way to compensate for the weaknesses, i.e. by finding more time in a more relaxed atmosphere and more practice. The t-test result showed the difference between the mean scores of the two groups, resulting in the better performance of the language institute participants, suggesting when teachers self-monitor themselves, consider and reflect upon their teaching ways and problems of their students, they become better educators resulting in the better performance of the students (in this particular aspect willingness to communicate).

Interpretations of the findings of this research also led to several suggestions for further research.

1. It is recommended that this study be replicated with a larger sample or number of participants from the same background.
2. The present study may be replicated having native speakers as the participants.
3. It is recommended that a research be carried out to investigate whether teacher's self-monitoring has any role on the students' motivation or not.
4. It would be interesting to compare the results across levels of proficiency.

#### APPENDIX A: MACINTYRE ET AL. (2001) WTC QUESTIONNAIRE

##### WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

**Directions:** This questionnaire is composed of statements concerning your feelings about communication with other people, in English. Please indicate in the space provided the frequency of time you choose to speak English in each classroom situation.

If you are almost never willing to speak English, write 1. If you are willing sometimes, write 2 or 3. If you are willing most of the time, write 4 or 5.

- 1 = Almost never willing
- 2 = Sometimes willing
- 3 = Willing half of the time
- 4 = Usually willing
- 5 = Almost always willing

##### Speaking in class, in English

- .....1. Speaking in a group about your summer vacation.
- .....2. Speaking to your teacher about your homework assignment.
- .....3. A stranger enters the room you are in, how willing would you be to have a conversation if he talked to you first?
- .....4. You are confused about a task you must complete, how willing are you to ask for instructions/clarification?
- .....5. Talking to a friend while waiting in line.
- .....6. How willing would you be to be an actor in a play?
- .....7. Describe the rules of your favorite game.
- .....8. Play a game in English, for example Monopoly.

##### Reading in class (to yourself, not out loud)

- .....1. Read a novel.
- .....2. Read an article in a paper.
- .....3. Read letters from a pen pal written in native English.
- .....4. Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions.
- .....5. Read an advertisement in the paper to find a good bicycle you can buy.

.....6. Read reviews for popular movies.

### **Writing in class, in English**

- .....1. Write an advertisement to sell an old bike.
- .....2. Write down the instructions for your favorite hobby.
- .....3. Write a report on your favorite animal and its habits.
- .....4. Write a story.
- .....5. Write a letter to a friend.
- .....6. Write a newspaper article.
- .....7. Write the answers to a “fun” quiz from a magazine.
- .....8. Write down a list of things you must do tomorrow.

### **Comprehension in class**

- .....1. Listen to instructions and complete a task.
- .....2. Bake a cake if instructions were not in Persian.
- .....3. Fill out an application form.
- .....4. Take directions from an English speaker.
- .....5. Understand an English movie.

## **WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM**

**Directions:** Sometimes people differ a lot in their speaking, reading, and so forth in class and outside class. Now we would like you to consider your use of English outside the classroom. Again, please tell us the frequency that you use English in the following situations.

Remember, you are telling us about your experiences *outside* of the classroom this time. There are no right or wrong answers.

- 1 = Almost never willing
- 2 = Sometimes willing
- 3 = Willing half of the time
- 4 = Usually willing
- 5 = Almost always willing

### **Speaking outside class, in English**

- .....1. Speaking in a group about your summer vacation.
- .....2. Speaking to your teacher about your homework assignment.
- .....3. A stranger enters the room you are in, how willing would you be to have a conversation if he talked to you first?
- .....4. You are confused about a task you must complete, how willing are you to ask for instructions/ clarification?
- .....5. Talking to a friend while waiting in line.
- .....6. How willing would you be to be an actor in a play?
- .....7. Describe the rules of your favorite game.
- .....8. Play a game in English, for example Monopoly.

### **Reading outside class, in English**

- .....1. Read a novel.
- .....2. Read an article in a paper.
- .....3. Read letters from a pen pal written in native English.
- .....4. Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions.
- .....5. Read an advertisement in the paper to find a good bicycle you can buy.
- .....6. Read reviews for popular movies.

### **Writing outside class, in English**

- .....1. Write an advertisement to sell an old bike.
- .....2. Write down the instructions for your favorite hobby.
- .....3. Write a report on your favorite animal and its habits.
- .....4. Write a story.
- .....5. Write a letter to a friend.
- .....6. Write a newspaper article.
- .....7. Write the answers to a “fun” quiz from a magazine.
- .....8. Write down a list of things you must do tomorrow.

### **Comprehension outside class**

- .....1. Listen to instructions and complete a task.
- .....2. Bake a cake if instructions were not in Persian.
- .....3. Fill out an application form.
- .....4. Take directions from an English speaker.

.....5. Understand an English movie.

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# A Survey on Vocabulary Learning Strategies: A Case of Iranian EFL University Students

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**Abstract**—This study aims at investigating what strategies are more or less common for learning vocabulary among EFL university students at Hakim Sabzevari University in Iran. A questionnaire adapted from the taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) developed by Schmitt (1997) was administered to 74 EFL students (18 males and 56 females). Moreover, semi-structured interviews were also carried out with ten students who completed the written questionnaire to obtain more information about their beliefs and attitudes dealing with vocabulary learning strategies. The results revealed the following order of strategy use by the students from the most frequent to the least frequent one: determination (DET), cognitive (COG), memory (MEM), metacognitive (MET), and social strategies (SOC). In particular, findings indicated that guessing from context and dictionary use strategies were the most popular strategies, while asking the teacher or peers for meaning were rarely used.

**Index Terms**—VLS, determination, cognitive, metacognitive, memory, social strategies

## I. INTRODUCTION

Many research studies (Cohen, 2007; Oxford, 2002; Prichard, 2008) have pointed out that language learning strategies play a very vital role in foreign language learning. Oxford (1994) refers to learning strategies as specific actions, behaviors or techniques students use to improve their progress in comprehending and producing L2. He notes that these strategies can make learning easier, faster, more fun, independent, and efficient.

Cohen (2007) speaks of language learning strategies as some techniques including three factors: action, goal, and situation. Consequently, the word strategy indicates some degree of awareness on the part of the learner. If foreign language learners are equipped with strategies such as vocabulary learning strategies, they can be much more successful language learners because vocabulary learning strategies make students autonomous and enable them to take responsibility of their own learning (Oxford, 1990). As Benson (2001) puts it explicit teaching of strategies can help EFL/ESL learners to become more independent learners. Since the late 1970s, there have been many researchers focusing their attention on vocabulary learning strategies as a vital issue among different strategies of language learning. Obviously, learning and using these strategies will lead to vocabulary development of learners. Additionally, considering vocabulary instruction as a broad area, the teachers become aware of their methodology by obtaining an overall pattern of learners' vocabulary learning strategies.

This research study makes attempt to address the following research questions:

1. What are the most common vocabulary learning strategies used by Iranian college EFL learners?
2. What are the least common vocabulary learning strategies used by Iranian college EFL learners?

## II. BACKGROUND

Learning vocabulary is considered as an indispensable part of language learning and production as limited knowledge of vocabulary results in learner difficulties in production as well as comprehension of language. Concerning the complexity of this issue, vocabulary learning strategies, as a part of language learning strategies, seem to be very crucial in language learning and consequently being aware of these strategies is important for both teachers and students. Fan (2003) argues that all vocabulary learning strategies consist of five steps: (1) to encounter the word (2) to get a visual or auditory image of the word. (3) to learn the meaning of the word (4) to make a strong memory link between the forms and the meanings of the words and (5) to use the word.

A number of researchers (Gu & Johnson, 1996; O'Malley & Chamot 1990; Oxford, 1990; Schmitt, 2000) have proposed various classifications of vocabulary learning strategies. However, for the purpose of this study, the taxonomy developed by Schmitt (1997) has been used. He proposes two aspects of vocabulary learning strategies: discovery strategies and consolidation strategies. Discovery strategies refer to strategies used to uncover the meaning of the words presented to the learner for the first time while consolidation strategies are applied to help the learner internalize the meaning when he/she encounters the word afterwards.



These strategies are subdivided into five categories as determination strategies (DET) referring to individual learning strategies which help learners to discover the meaning of words by themselves without getting any help from their teachers or peers. Social strategies (SOC) which engage learners in interaction with others, memory strategies (MEM) which involve learners in learning the newly-learned word by relating their current or background knowledge with the new word. Cognitive strategies (COG) in which learners are not involved in mental processing rather they are engaged in more mechanical processing, and metacognitive (MET) strategies which are strategies concerning processes such as decision-making, monitoring and evaluating learner's progress.

Previous research on vocabulary learning strategies has yielded insightful results. A study conducted by Ahmad (1989) showed that successful undergraduate Sudanese students used dictionary use and note taking strategies as two popular learning strategies. The findings of another similar study conducted by Gu and Johnson (1996) on 850 Chinese college students revealed that there was a significant relationship between vocabulary learning strategies, language proficiency, and vocabulary breadth. Interestingly, there was a positive correlation between learners' scores and these strategies: dictionary use, guessing from context, and note-taking. However, they found that visually repeated words had a negative correlation with the size of vocabulary and general proficiency.

Still, in another survey carried out in Japan by Schmitt (1997) among 600 high school, college and adult learners, the researcher found that the most frequently used strategies were dictionary use, oral and written repetition, word spelling, and contextual guessing, whereas semantic map, the key word method, and first language cognates were used less frequently. There was also some evidence that more proficient learners were inclined to use more complex and meaning-centered strategies than less proficient learners.

In another research project, the effects of explicit teaching of keyword strategy among 40 students were investigated by Lawson and Hogben (1998). The results manifested that most of the learners are familiar with different strategies of vocabulary learning. Moreover, they found that repetition was the most commonly used strategy.

Having classified the vocabulary learning strategies in a systematic way, Kudo (1999) claimed that many strategies were seldom used. He concluded that the most and the least common vocabulary learning strategies in L2 were rote-learning and key-word technique, respectively. Fan (2003) also studied 1067 college students in Hong Kong and recognized that they did not make use of key word technique and management strategy while they utilized dictionary and contextual guessing strategies.

In a rather recent study, Marin-Marín (2005) examined the utilization of vocabulary learning strategies by 150 EFL students at the University of Quintana. It was found that guessing meaning from context, using dictionary to check the meaning and repeating silently were the most commonly used strategies and keeping notes on electric devices, using electric dictionaries, and recording words on audiotapes were the least commonly used strategies. Additionally, Marin-Marín (2005) explored that contextual guessing, dictionary use and silent repetition were utilized frequently by EFL learners at Quintana University. In contrast, electronic note keeping, using electronic dictionary and using vocabulary tape-recording were rarely used.

In a more recent experiment, Arjomand and Sharififar (2011) made effort to explore the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and gender among Iranian EFL learners. They concluded that cognitive strategy was the most commonly used strategy, while social strategy was the least frequently used one. Furthermore, with respect to gender, they claimed that cognitive/ metacognitive and social strategies were respectively the most and the least commonly used ones. Considering the contradictory results of the vocabulary strategy studies, particularly at tertiary level, the results of this study may have a significant contribution to our understanding of these strategies and the way they are applied by Iranian EFL university students.

### III. METHOD

#### A. Participants

A total of 74 Iranian students from Hakim Sabzevari University participated in the study, eighteen postgraduate students majoring in TEFL (teaching English as foreign language), and fifty six undergraduate students majoring in English literature. Twenty one were males and fifty three were females. The age of the students ranged from 19 to 34. The demographic information of participants is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Variables	Category	number
Gender	male	21
	Female	53
	Total	74
Course	Undergraduate	56
	Post graduate	18
	Total	74

#### B. Instrument

To identify the vocabulary learning strategies the participants employed, the current study made use of the questionnaire adapted from Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies (see Appendix). All 40 items in the questionnaire were reorganized and classified under 5 different groups of strategies as eleven statements on memory strategies (items 1-11), nine statements on determination strategies (item 12-20), six statements on social strategies (items 21-26), nine statements on cognitive strategies (items 27-35), and five statements on metacognitive strategies (items 36-40) (see Table 2). The frequency of use were measured by 5-point likert-scale from 1(never) to 5(always). Statistical analysis was carried out using The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 17.0). Furthermore, a number of semi-structured interviews were conducted to validate the outcomes and also to get familiar to students' attitudes towards vocabulary learning strategies.

TABLE 2  
DESCRIPTIONS OF THE CATEGORIES OF VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES

Strategy Category	Strategy Item
Memory Strategies (MEM)	1-11
Determination Strategies (DET)	12-20
Social Strategies (SOC)	21-26
Cognitive Strategies (COG)	27-35
Metacognitive Strategies (MET)	36-40

### C. Procedure

The questionnaire had a time limit of 20 minutes. It was administered on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Before filling out the questionnaire, students were told that their participation was voluntary. They were also asked to answer as honestly as possible. Since all the participants majored in English, the questionnaire was not translated into the learners' mother tongue (i.e., Farsi). The survey was kept anonymous to counteract the tendency of the participants to answer in a way they think the researchers would like. The participants were asked to indicate if they used the particular strategy. Moreover, ten students were selected for interviews as representatives from the same 74 students used for the questionnaire. All interviews were conducted in Farsi, the first language of the interviewees, to assure their comprehension of the questions.

## IV. RESULTS

Having analyzed the interview and questionnaire data, the researchers tried to report the findings based on the research questions. To describe the most and least frequently used vocabulary learning strategies, descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations of the five categories and their subdivisions are employed. The results of descriptive analysis are presented in Table 3. As the table indicates, determination strategies ( $M=31.76$ ;  $SD=5.42$ ) are reported as the most frequently-used of the five vocabulary learning strategies, followed by cognitive strategies ( $M=26.95$ ;  $SD=4.16$ ), memory strategies ( $M=25.5$ ;  $SD=4.28$ ), metacognitive strategies ( $M=13.92$ ;  $SD=3.51$ ), and social strategies ( $M=10.66$ ;  $SD=3.73$ ).

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR EACH VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGY N=74

Strategy	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Rank
Determination	9	45	31.76	5.42	1
Cognitive	9	44	26.95	4.16	2
Memory	11	49	25.5	4.28	3
Metacognitive	5	22	13.92	3.51	4
Social	6	21	10.66	3.73	5

When it comes to the most and the least frequently used vocabulary learning strategies with respect to individual items, Table 4 shows that the most frequently used strategies spread across the two categories of vocabulary learning strategies, namely determination strategies (DET) and cognitive strategies (COG). The highest mean ( $M=4.21$ ) was achieved by strategy item 14 "I guess from textual context". Strategy Item 16 "I consult a monolingual dictionary" reaches the second highest mean of 3.98 followed by verbal repeating (Item 29;  $M=3.91$ ), analyzing the parts of speech (Item 20;  $M=3.84$ ), studying the word sound (Item 7;  $M=3.80$ ), and keeping a vocabulary notebook (Item 34;  $M=3.78$ ).

TABLE 4  
TOP 6 OF THE MOST FREQUENTLY USED VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES

Rank	Description	Item	Category	Mean	SD
1	I guess from textual context	14	DET	4.21	1.00
2	I consult a monolingual dictionary	16	DET	3.98	.93
3	I repeat the word verbally	29	COG	3.91	.98
4	I analyze the parts of speech	20	DET	3.84	.97
5	I study the sound of the word	7	MEM	3.80	1.03
6	I keep a vocabulary notebook	34	COG	3.78	.93

The results shown in Table 5 reveal that skipping or passing the new word (Item 39; M=1.56), asking the teacher for making a sentence (Item 3; M= 1.72), using flash cards (Item 35; M= 1.80), asking the teacher for L1 translation (Item 21; M=1.83), putting English labels for physical objects (Item 33; M= 1.98), and remembering the initial letter (Item 11, M= 1.99) were determined as the least frequently used strategies.

TABLE 5  
TOP 6 OF THE LEAST FREQUENTLY USED VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES

Rank	Description	Item	Category	Mean	SD
1	I skip or pass the new word	39	MET	1.56	.80
2	I ask the teacher for making a sentence	3	SOC	1.72	1.02
3	I use flash cards	35	MET	1.80	.83
4	I ask the teacher for L1 translation	21	SOC	1.83	.99
5	I put English labels for physical objects	33	COG	1.98	1.00
6	I remember word's initial letter	11	MEM	1.99	.93

In order to validate the results and elicit specific information of students' attitudes about vocabulary learning strategies, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 10 students. They were asked to answer the open-ended questions. The results of which are stated below. The question directed to seek "What are the most and the least frequently used strategies of vocabulary learning among Hakim Sabzevari EFL students and why?" Nine out of ten interviewees (N=9; 90%) stated that they use monolingual dictionary to discover the meaning of a new word. They claimed that using monolingual dictionary helps them to learn even more words because every item in the dictionary is explained or illustrated. 80% (N=8) of total ten interviewees pointed out that another most preferred vocabulary learning strategy was guessing from context. They added that this is due to the medium role of foreign language in reading comprehension of their textbooks. They noted that words need to be repeated in order to be studied, and different texts provide a context that helps them figure out the meaning of words they do not know. Consequently, this contextualized learning deepens their understanding of words and they learn which words go together as well. The third most commonly used strategy reported by 60% (N=6) respondents was "I make a list of new words and memorize them". They pointed to the benefits of word lists as they are made by learners themselves based on their needs and their interests. Less than half of students (N=4; 40%) stated that they connect the new word to its synonyms and antonyms to expand the size of their vocabulary. The social strategy "I ask my teacher for L1 translation" was reported to use rarely (N=2; 20%) by the respondents. Similarly, "I ask my classmates for meaning" had the minimum percentage (N=1; 10%) compared to other strategies since they thought learning vocabulary individually can be more helpful than in the group. The responses to the open-ended interview are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6  
THE MOST AND THE LEAST-REPORTED VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES N=10

Strategy description	Rank	Category	Percentage
I use a monolingual dictionary	1	DET	90%
I guess the meaning from context	2	DET	80%
I make a list of words and memorize them	4	COG	60%
I connect the words to the synonyms/antonyms	3	MEM	40%
I ask my teacher for L1 strategy	5	SOC	20%
I ask my classmates for meaning	6	SOC	10%

### V. DISCUSSION

The major findings of the present study is that among the five vocabulary learning strategies based on Schmitt's taxonomy, Determination Strategies were reported as the most frequently-used strategies, followed by Cognitive Strategies as the second most frequently-used strategies, Memory Strategies as the third most frequently-used strategies, Metacognitive Strategies as the fourth most frequently-used strategies, and Social Strategies were the least frequently-used strategies. Thus, "asking teacher's L1 translation" and "asking the classmates for meaning" were ranked at the bottom of Table 6. This result seemed to be consistent with the results from Arjomand and Sharififar's (2011) study with Iranian EFL freshman students who used social strategies least frequently.

The most plausible explanation for this issue is that the nature of vocabulary learning is considered as an individual or asocial process. Therefore, students resist asking others' assistance for the meaning of new words. This finding also aligns with the findings of a study done by Kafipour (2006) who emphasized that learning in an EFL environment was a major reason why social strategies were not widely used, that is, in an EFL environment there is no need to negotiate the meaning of the word in communication situations. He further explained that what seems to be essential is the active engagement of participants in different learning contexts, such as classroom activities. Another weakness is due to educational system in Iran which is known as teacher-oriented. Teachers are in front of the classroom and provide all knowledge students need. Teachers provided the information through lecturing and the students should just listen and take note. Such teaching procedure did not have any place for group work or discussion in classroom.

Findings of the present study also revealed that guessing from context ( $M=4.21$ ) and dictionary strategies ( $M=3.98$ ), as the most preferred ones, were employed by 80% and 90% of the respondents, respectively and were considered as two top strategies (see Table 4 and Table 6). This finding of the current study echoes the results of Marin-Marín (2005) that some proficient learners used more guessing from context and dictionary strategies than any other type. Similarly, this result is in agreement with the other studies on guessing the meanings from the context raised by Gu and Johnson (1996), and Schmitt (1997). Data analysis also revealed that memory strategies are the third frequently used strategies. This finding was unlike the findings of Kafipour's (2010) study who found memory strategies as the most frequently used strategies by Iranian EFL undergraduate students. The reason is likely due to the postgraduate students as more successful learners who tend to employ a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies rather than just memorization and rote learning. This view is in line with Schmitt's (1997) claim that there is some evidence that more advanced learners tended to use more complex and meaning-focused strategies than less advanced learners.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the most and least frequently used strategies of vocabulary learning strategies by collage EFL students at Hakim Sabzevari University. The major finding of this research was that determination strategies such as guessing from context and consulting a dictionary were the most popular strategies, whereas social strategies were the least popular. The findings of this study also revealed that the majority of students did not use certain vocabulary learning strategies such as semantic maps and discovering meaning through group work activity. Actually, it seems that not many students are familiar with these strategies. Therefore, the present study suggests that it is vitally important for students to be trained on vocabulary learning strategies. Similarly, Nation (2001) maintains that there is enough evidence that explicit instruction of strategies can improve learners' strategic knowledge. Furthermore, strategy training leads to learner autonomy. It helps them to become aware of their own preferences and habits and feel responsible for own learning.

Even though the findings of this study can enlighten language teachers and offer them a deeper understanding as to how to design more effective vocabulary learning tasks to better fit Iranian collage EFL learners at different levels, it does not seem to be conclusive and carrying out more elaborate studies with much larger population seems to be necessary.

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# A Literature Review on Content ESL Instruction

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**Abstract**—Content instruction is a method to integrate language instruction with subject (Crandall, 1987). It has been used in various language learning contexts for the last twenty-five years and its popularity and wider applicability have increased dramatically in the past ten years. They show that content instruction is taken effective in a wide range context in bilingual education. This literature review focuses on some of the ways in which English language instruction is integrated with science.

**Index Terms**—content instruction, ESL, bilingual education

## I. INTRODUCTION

Content instruction is a method to integrate language instruction with subject (Crandall, 1987). It has been used in a variety of language learning contexts for the last twenty-five years. Its popularity and wider applicability have increased dramatically in the past ten years. A lot of evidence shows that content instruction is taken effective in a wide range context in bilingual education, such as Canada French/English immersion program, U.S.A. Hispanic/English immersion program, New Zealand Mori/ English immersion program and University of Ottawa sheltered program (Grabe & Stoller, 1997). It also has been a part of elementary and secondary school English-as-Second-Language (ESL) programs. ESL is a system of instruction that enables students whose native language is not English to acquire academic proficiency in English (Ovando & Collier, 1998). This literature review focuses on some of the ways in which English language instruction is integrated with science, so it is called content ESL instruction. This review begins with the conception of content ESL instruction. Then it explains why ESL and science learning need to use content instruction. The following part describes the significant of integrating English and science through this kind of instruction. After discussing how to use it in classroom through instruction models and strategies, this literature review briefly gives some suggestions for implementing content instruction in bilingual education in China.

### **What is Content English-as-Second-Language (ESL) instruction?**

Content ESL instruction is based on two important linguistic concepts. The first one is Krashen's (1982) concept that language acquisition occurs when students, in an interesting, low-anxiety context, are provided with comprehensible input, which is slightly above the students' level of understanding. The second one is Crandall's (1987) concept that second-language proficiency entails control not only of social but also of academic language. Content ESL is a method that integrates English-as-a-second-language instruction with subject matter instruction (Tarey, 1998). The technique focuses not only on learning a second language, but also using that language as a medium to learn mathematics, science, social studies, or other academic subjects.

### **Why implement Content Instruction?**

According to the theories, content ESL instruction can help students' both language and science learning. In the United States, Krashen's theory (1981, 1982) of second language acquisition has influenced the development of integrated instruction at all levels. Krashen suggests that the focus of the second language classroom should be on something meaningful, such as academic content. He believes that modification of the target language facilitates language acquisition and makes academic content accessible to second language learners. Similar with his theory, Ovando believes that "the process of instructional for content ESL like a continuum (1998, p.185)." At one end of it, using a math or science topic is as a means for developing second-language skills. At the other end, to develop math or science concepts through using techniques of second-language acquisition is to maximize student's understanding of the content. A mastery of science content in the bilingual classroom requires an interplay between language and concept formation (Mason & Barba, 1992). The following will describe the significance of ESL and science learning through content instruction.

#### *Language acquisition in science classroom*

On one hand, using content instruction in science classroom can promote LEP students' all aspects of language at school: vocabulary development, listening, speaking, reading, and writing development together.

- Vocabulary development

Science content material copes with the acquisition and usage of new vocabulary. Specialized vocabulary is closely related to the specific content of science. Saville (1984) found that knowledge of vocabulary was the most important aspect of second language competence for learning academic content through that language. Carrasquillo and Todríguez (2002) claims that knowing vocabulary is not just identifying the scientific jargon, it includes the ability to use the vocabulary of science to make informed decisions about science issues which would affect society as well as students personally.

In the content ESL, Crandall (1992) stated that much vocabulary development occurs naturally through the context of science activities, especially when the subjects are taught actively using models, experiments, role playing and so on. A meaningful classroom context can enhance the students' acquisition of the terms, which should convey how the thinking processes in science occur (Crandall, 1987, p188).

- Listening, speaking, reading, and writing develop together

Language is an integration of the four processes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which are inseparable (Bernhardt & Kamil, 1998; Cecik & Lauritzen, 1994; Dickinsin, 1987). These four linguistic processes although independent, they are inter-related and work in conjunction with the cognitive process of learning. English as second language students are immersed in an English print environment and "it is only natural that in their creative construction of oral and written language, they will attend to this language data, to this input (the print environment), and will use it to meet some of their needs to communicate in their second language" (Hudelson & Sema, 1994, p.285).

- Affective variables

Research synthesized by Brown (1994); Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982); Genesee (1987); and Schumann (1980) suggests that affective factors play a powerful role in the acquisition of a second language. Kessler and Quinn (1987) point out that science can provide an idea environment to stimulate students' affective variables: interesting, motivation, self-confident and low-anxiety. They believe that in science classroom, language involves around relating observations or communicating other aspects of the investigation. In these activities students pay more attention to the meaning rather than the grammar or form in the communication. Using different strategies to cope with the question, discussion or group experiments, students would not become overanxious or feel threatened. In this actively science setting, learners can have high interest and motivation, intrinsic to scientific inquiry as well as language acquisition.

#### *Scientific knowledge expansion through language learning*

On the other hand, scientific knowledge can be expanded through language acquisition.

- Conception development

Science learning involves the use of literacy processes, which are the root system for growth in scientific knowledge. Ovando (1998) claimed that scientists and science learners must be literate in the basic literacy process in order to be able to communicate effectively their ideas or discoveries. The science classroom, as Fathman, Quinn and Kessler (1992); Sutman, Allen and Shoemaker (1986) suggest, provides an excellent atmosphere for developing the kinds of social and scientific behaviors LEP students needed in order to find solutions to local and global problems. Content area instruction is based on the notion of "comprehensible input," in which the teacher uses only the vocabulary and structures that can be understood by students (Ramirez, 1986). When teacher uses visual reviews, such as lists, charts, paraphrasing and the salient points where appropriate, students' science conceptions can be developed.

- Cognitive benefits

Kessler and Quinn (1982, 1985) found that bilinguals performed significantly better than monolinguals in formulating solutions to science problems. Their study showed students using ESL were superior in convergent thinking, as seen in the linguistic process of metaphor formation. In addition, Quinn and Kessler (1986) state that conflicting with cognitive structures and cultural experiences in science classroom, bilingual children build new cognitive systems at higher levels. Results from the Multicultural Improvement of Cognitive Abilities (MICA) project also show that participants made improvements not only in cognitive and academic achievements but also in language proficiency (Kessler & Quinn, 1987).

#### **Issues in content instruction:**

A major source of support for content area instruction comes from second language acquisition research, particularly the work of Krashen, Swain, and Cummins. Krashen's (1982, 1985) comprehensible language input provides an important rationale for the development second language. He argues that Canadian immersion programs, U.S. bilingual immersion programs, and the University of Ottawa sheltered programs for second learners all provide a degree and L2 (second language) content learning. Particularly, students in Canadian immersion programs have equivalent L1 (native language) language learning, and near-native L2 learning.

However, Swain (1985) points out the limitation of instruction, which only promote comprehensible input. Students in Canada immersion program are successful in subject matter and comprehension skill (listening and reading), but are not as successful in speaking and writing. She proposed that it should focus on relevant and contextually appropriate language forms to support content-learning activities in the classroom.

Another issue is about Cummins's (1979, 1981) notion of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Cummins has hypothesized two different kinds of language proficiency: basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). Cummins suggests that BICS are relatively easy to acquire, taking only 1 to 2 years, but that CALP is much more difficult, taking from 5 to 7 years (Cummins, 1981; Collier, 1987). Postponing content instruction while students develop more advanced academic language is impractical and ignores students' complex educational needs. Students need to be learn content information while they are acquiring CALP. Moreover, the need for more demanding language abilities suggests that a content instruction would be the most effective way for students to develop CALP.

However, Crandall (1992) claimed that it needs further research to evaluate the effectiveness of content-based instruction, specifying optimal conditions for various grammatic effects. Additionally, using of various instructional

strategies, texts, and assessment measures needs to be considered. Content-based teachers would know how to shelter their instruction, and language teachers need to learn how to integrate academic language and content better in their classroom.

Finally, the role of L1 is an important issue. Ovando (1998) believes that using of L1 and L2 can assist students understand the subject matter content deeply. However, finding the appropriate balance in instruction between the first and second language still is a big challenge.

## II. IMPLEMENT CONTENT INSTRUCTION IN SCIENCE CLASSROOM

Over the last twenty years, researchers and practitioners have described ways to integrate language and content (Cantoni-Harvey 1987; Crandall 1987; Gibbons 1998), explored techniques and methodologies (Burkart and Sheppard 1998; Case 2000), and examined the learning processes that science requires (Chamot, 1995). To promote both language and science learning effectively, there are variety of models and learning strategies in content second language instructions.

### *Program models*

Crandall (1994) reviewed eight content-area learning models, which are also suitable in science classroom. They are:

- Content-based language instruction,
- sheltered subject,
- matter teaching,
- theme-based,
- sheltered instruction,
- language across the curriculum,
- adjunct model,
- cognitive academic language learning approach (CALLA).

Among these approach, content-based language instruction and theme-based instruction, especially emphasis on learning content through language (Oxford, 2001). Both of these benefit from a diverse range of materials, textbooks, and technologies for the ESL or English Proficiency Limited (EFL) classroom. Theme-based, adjunct, and sheltered are three general models widespread today and they can be found in many innovative ESL and LEP textbooks (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). In the adjunct model, language and content courses are taught separately but are carefully coordinated. In the sheltered model, the subject matter is taught in simplified English tailored to students' English proficiency level.

### *Learning strategies:*

There are a variety of strategies and techniques used in content-centered second language learning. Fathma, Quinn, and Kessler (1992) integrate second-language acquisition with science content and identify the following strategies for use in classes:

- Promoting collaboration between teachers and among students.
- Modifying language.
- Increasing the relevancy of science lessons to students' everyday lives.
- Adapting science materials.
- Using language teaching techniques in presenting science concept. (p.4)

Chamot and O'Malley (1994) believe that learning strategies need to provide extra support for the negotiation of content area instruction in the second language. By developing the habit of using learning strategies, the students have transferable skills that will stay with them as they progress to higher levels of academic instruction in math and science. According to the language input rational of Krashen's, using strategies such as discovering learning, cooperative learning, can promote language input comprehensible to facilitate ESL students' understanding of second language (Krashen and Biber & Biber, 1988; Short, 1991). Simultaneously, they can extend vocabulary development, integration of reading and writing, and conception development.

### • **Cooperative language learning**

Kessler (1992) pointed out cooperative learning in the science classroom fosters a rich communicative environment for the hand-in-hand development of science and language). Cooperative learning is an excellent means of involving students with limited English proficiency (Cochran, 1989). Fillmore (1983) found that a relatively open class structure works only if students interact with each other. Language is acquired naturally as students listen to others and express themselves while working in a group. In groups, LEP/ELL students can learn how to work with others to achieve a common goal: to plan, discuss, compromise, question, and organize information. Science presents extensive opportunities for students' interaction. Laboratory work is a type of open classroom that provides enough structure and management to make conditions for second language development. It also provides language learners helpful variations for getting input. Peer cooperative work can potentially affect the amount of learning. When classrooms are organized so that ESL students have access to interactive settings, students can acquire both science and English simultaneously (De Avila, 1983).

However, Cohen and Anthony (1982) points out the negative influence in cooperative learning. Students, who are not full proficient in English, are perceived lower status. De Avia and Duncan (1984) agree with them. To reduce this



negative influence, De Avia and Duncan claimed that teacher should take account of status effects and they has got effective results in modifying status effects program-- Finding Out/ Descubrimien. This bilingual science program makes use of learning content in which children take turns at various assigned roles. This multiple-ability approach to peer interaction reduces negative status effects, allowing all students to experience the significant learning gains from group interactions.

- **Inquiry-based learning**

Steen (1991) believed that science should be taught as science is practiced by investigating and evaluating data. The purpose of using inquiry/discovery strategies in the science classroom is for students to find out science information through their own efforts. Through scientific inquiry, students develop learning processes inherent in thinking: observing, classifying, comparing, communicating, measuring, inferring, and predicting to develop the concept of science (Carrasqu éz, 2002). The hands-on experiments or discussion provide a rich environment for simultaneous cognitive and linguistic development (Crandall, 1987).

However, Carrasqu éz (2002) also mentioned that ESL students need guidance at the beginning to formulate complete thoughts in English and to express their questions and answers. Teachers should provide a variety of resources to support students' discovery activities. Another claim is that time must be built into practitioners' schedules if they are to engage in reflection, meet with colleagues, study the literature and research of the field, analyze data, and document classroom activity (Oxford, 1989).

### III. SOME STUDIES IN CHINA

With the economic development and political policy reform in China, all kinds of English proficient people are needed urgently. In order to foster more and more bilingual learners, especially English as second language, China has implemented bilingual education programs after joining to the World Trade Organization (Huang Xiaoyan, 2002).

Content area instruction was taken into effect in some universities, such as Tsinghua University, Peking University and so on. Major courses such as information technology, biotechnology, new material technology, finance and law have been given in both Chinese and English. Five to ten percent of the total course has been taught in English. Except universities, a number of primary and secondary schools and even some kindergartens in Shanghai and Beijing have been taught in English. Content instruction not only improves the students' linguistic ability, but also improves their subject knowledge.

However, in China, there is no national curriculum, achievement standards and instruction material in bilingual education. Additionally, there are short of teachers who teach two different languages in subjects such as science, math, and social studies. All in all implementing a foreign language program requires careful planning, and teachers and administrators must consider the specific learning needs of students at different level (Short & Karen, 1991). Foreign language study can be an enriching experience. It is important to provide students with programs that are challenging, enjoyable, and suited to their specific educational needs.

### IV. CONCLUSION

This article firstly introduced the conception of content ESL instruction. Then it explained the reasons why ESL and science learning need to use content instruction. In the following part, the article described the significance of integrating English and science through this kind of instruction. After discussing how to use it in classroom through instruction models and strategies, this literature review briefly gave some suggestions for implementing content instruction in bilingual education in China. Relating to economic and education environment in China, some suggestions are given to promote ESL instruction.

Science learning thrives in vigorous communities that help students make connections with issues of importance to them. Integrating the teaching of science with language learning through collaborative interaction can result in the active negotiation of science knowledge. In the inquiry-based process, students develop English vocabulary, integration of development of writing, reading, listening, and as well as science conception and cognitive benefits. However, there may be some limitations found in the above literature review which are waiting for some further research to consider and solve: The first one is that the detailed procedure of instruction needs to be discussed further. The second one is how to improve and evaluate LEP students' achievement in both language learning and scientific subject learning, and the third one is how to balance L1 and L2 in content instruction classroom.

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# Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

## Aims and Scope

Journal of Language Teaching and Research (JLTR) is a scholarly peer-reviewed international scientific journal published bimonthly, focusing on theories, methods, and materials in language teaching, study and research. It provides a high profile, leading edge forum for academics, professionals, consultants, educators, practitioners and students in the field to contribute and disseminate innovative new work on language teaching and research.

JLTR invites original, previously unpublished, research and survey articles, plus research-in-progress reports and short research notes, on both practical and theoretical aspects of language teaching, learning, and research. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Language teaching methodologies
- Pedagogical techniques
- Teaching and curricular practices
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- Programme, syllabus, and materials design
- Second and foreign language teaching and learning
- Classroom-centered research
- Literacy
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- Teacher education and professional development
- Teacher training
- Cross-cultural studies
- Child, second, and foreign language acquisition
- Bilingual and multilingual education
- Translation
- Teaching of specific skills
- Language teaching for specific purposes
- New technologies in language teaching
- Testing and evaluation
- Language representation
- Language planning
- Literature, language, and linguistics
- Applied linguistics
- Phonetics, phonology, and morphology
- Syntax and semantics
- Sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics
- Discourse analysis
- Stylistics
- Language and culture, cognition, and pragmatics
- Language teaching and psychology, anthropology, sociology
- Theories and practice in related fields

## Special Issue Guidelines

Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 10 to 15 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

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  - Submission of extended version
  - Notification of acceptance
  - Final submission due
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