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Exploring Spanish Register among Graduate Students: A Pilot Study of Spanish at a University in Southern California

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Abstract—This article expands the study of registers in conversational and written language with empirical data collected from different situations throughout the daily activities of two bilingual populations at a university in Southern California. It explores the importance of register distinction in the classroom. This is done by studying the use of formal and informal register at the university between two bilingual populations throughout the tasks they perform on a daily basis. Language samples used in a normal day were collected and transcribed for analysis. A qualitative analysis was performed using characteristics previously studied by Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci in 1998: lexical choice, integration versus fragmentation and detachment versus involvement. Results indicated similarities in the use of Spanish register used among the two populations studied. A presence of informal register was found in formal contexts by both bilingual populations. Implications for curriculum and course development including register topics are discussed.

Index Terms—heritage language learner, Spanish, discourse analysis, academic register, bilingual populations, informal register, Spanish register analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Understanding the construction of academic language is crucial for those engaged in the communicative practices of a discourse community at the university. A discourse community is defined by Dell Hymes (1974) as, “a community sharing knowledge of rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech.” He continues to mention, “Such sharing comprises knowledge of at least one form of speech and knowledge of its patterns or use” (Hymes, 1974, p. 51). When students arrive in a class, they are expected to understand the rules for the conduct and interpretation of successful communication in the university discourse community. Within this community there are many situations associated with speech and written texts.

The situations that a student must navigate through using appropriate levels of formality include; class discussions, question and answer periods after presentations, office hours with professors etc. In the analysis of language, the term ‘register’ is used to define contextualized language varieties. As described in the dictionary of sociolinguistics (2004) “register is used to refer to variation per the context in which language is used” (Swann et al., 2004, 261). For example, most people speak differently in formal contexts, an academic lecture or a job interview, as opposed to informal contexts, bantering with friends and family. The task of navigating through varying contexts might seem simple for many, but if the language spoken is not your first language, or if you have uncertainties regarding language, the task becomes more complex. Such could be the case for students upon entering the university.

The language used and taught at the university level should reflect an awareness of different registers used among different populations so that students can perform successful communication in multiple contexts where distinct language registers are used. As stated by Biber, (2006) “Most universities do very little to prepare students to acquire this wide range of ‘registers’. In fact, most universities do not even introduce students to the linguistic demands of academic prose” (Biber, 2006, p. 1).

Until recently little attention was placed on academic repertoire used at the university. Presently at the university level there are few courses found that teach or mention specific registers of language. ESL/EFL (English as a second language / English as a foreign language) programs have been innovative in matching language instruction to the actual language tasks required in university courses (Biber, 2006, p. 9). The content of some, but not all of these courses mention higher and lower registers used in appropriate contexts. Spanish departments also have recently offered content specific classes such as, ‘Commercial Spanish’ to be used in the context of the business world. When looking at the course descriptions, they are content based, discussing the appropriate business terms but often failing to mention the notion of registers used in contextualized language varieties. From discussing these courses in both English and Spanish we can see that there is still progress to be made in course content to mention registers of language at the university level. The appropriate levels of formality and ways of speaking should also be addressed.

The purpose of this pilot study is to explore Spanish used in different contexts at the university. In so doing, this study sets out to expose educators and students to the Spanish that is used and taught at the university level. By investigating Spanish used in the university setting by bilinguals, progress will be made regarding what constitutes an

academic register. With a more accurate definition of the discourse used in the 'academic register' a course of action for further language development can be created to better aid students and those involved in the bilingual academic community.

This article presents a pilot study using a sociolinguistic lens to explore 'register' comparing two bilingual populations that differ in language acquisition background. The following research questions will guide this study focusing on the students' use of academic register through a variety of situations occurring in the university setting.

1. What registers do graduate students use while completing their daily tasks as graduate teaching associates at a university in Southern California?
2. How do registers differ among students classified as circumstantial and elective bilinguals?
3. How does the register produced in Spanish and used among graduate students at a university in Southern California reflect the characteristics of 'academic Spanish' or 'conversational Spanish' as defined by previous studies? (Achugar 2003; Biber 2006).

Language samples were collected from two bilingual populations of students enrolled in a Spanish master's program for this analysis. Throughout the context of a normal day, graduate students navigate through situations and conversations with fellow graduate students, professors and full time faculty, undergraduate students and administrative staff. I chose to study language produced between graduate students, with undergraduate students and language used with professors and full time faculty. For each participant, a sample of language was collected from five contexts: oral presentations, teaching events, an interview, a casual conversation and a writing sample.

The data was then transcribed and analyzed using the framework from Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) that focuses on the following categories: (1) lexical choice, (2) integration versus fragmentation and (3) detachment versus involvement. The presence of disfluencies is considered and the characteristics of disfluencies are labeled as, (4) 'real time processing' units. (Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998)

II. PREVIOUS STUDIES AND LITERATURE

Bilingualism is often talked about as if it were an attribute of a person and statements are made such as, "he/she is bilingual." When a person grows up in a household or country where a different language is used they are in fact bilingual, per the fact that they have knowledge of two languages. As life circumstances change, the ability to communicate in the second language changes either to be enhanced or diminished. Today defining bilingualism is more complicated than ever before due to many factors; globalization, the ease of traveling and in the US, the influx of people from different countries. In fact, defining bilingualism is not agreed upon among researchers. One thing current research does agree upon as stated by Valdés & Figueroa (1994) is the importance of viewing bilingualism as, "a continuum and bilingual individuals as falling along this continuum at different points relative to each other depending on the varying strengths and cognitive characteristics of their two languages" (Valdés & Figueroa, 1994, p. 8).

This view of bilingualism takes into consideration constantly changing life situations that affect language among bilinguals. As language is constantly changing, the bilingualism of an individual can be placed on a continuum that is modified as the person's environment changes. Due to this nature of language, tasks for bilinguals are always changing, calling for skills to manage technical, academic, and abstract language in differing situations. In this context of change, bilingualism cannot be thought of as something that is attained. Bilingualism must be a process that continuously evolves both for a society and for the individual. The ability to communicate successfully in two languages is one that many people struggle to attain. The mere fact that a child is raised in contact with two languages does not guarantee that they will communicate successfully in both languages. In its broadest terms, we will define bilingualism as previously defined by Valdés & Figueroa (1994), "a human condition in which an individual possesses more than one language competence" (Valdés & Figueroa, 1994, p. 8).

Circumstantial bilingual is a term used by Valdés & Figueroa (1994) defining individuals who because of their life circumstances, find that they must learn another language to survive. They are generally members of a group of individuals who must become bilingual to participate in the society that surrounds them (Valdés & Figueroa, 1994, p. 7). The circumstantial bilingual has also been labeled a 'heritage speaker' or 'Chicano bilingual student' in previous studies (Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci 1998; Valdés 2001; Valdés 2005). Elective bilinguals are those who chose to study a foreign language and become bilingual. The elective bilingual has also been termed 'non-native language learner' or 'L2 language learner' (L2 representing the second language of acquisition). For this study, we will adhere to Valdés' (1998) classification of circumstantial and elective bilinguals when referring to bilinguals participating in this research project (Valdés, 1998).

When looking at the acquisition background of each bilingual type, there is a distinction in this process. Elective bilinguals have acquired the foreign language primarily in the classroom setting, which allows for a strong academic vocabulary and formal register yet poses a potential challenge when called upon to converse using more informal registers.

Circumstantial bilinguals use a heritage language in the home setting with family and community members. Yet growing up in the U.S., the language of primary education being English, these bilinguals have not received a formal education in this language. This may pose a greater challenge for the circumstantial bilingual regarding formal academic register use, not receiving as much schooling in Spanish as their counterparts.

The importance of formal schooling for the circumstantial bilingual is echoed in a series of interviews collected by Valdés et al (2003). In her studies, one of the most serious challenges for Latinos was identified as acquiring correct, standard, or academic Spanish because of the profound differences between home and school Spanish (Valdés, 2003, p.19). Because of the different literacy backgrounds each bilingual has a limited repertoire in either colloquial or academic registers of Spanish.

The population of the heritage speaker or circumstantial bilingual has grown significantly over the past decades and scholars are always attempting to further their understanding of this complex situation. The importance of this growing population has been recognized in many articles (García 2005; Valdés 2005). The US Census Bureau (2015) reported that in roughly 15.2% of residents above five years of age speak Spanish at home. “The number of migrants coming to the United States each year, legally and illegally, grew very rapidly starting in the mid-1990s, hit a peak at the end of the decade, and then declined substantially after 2001. There were 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. in 2014, a total unchanged from 2009 and accounting for 3.5% of the nation’s population. The number of unauthorized immigrants peaked in 2007 at 12.2 million, when this group was 4% of the U.S. population (Passel and Suro, 2009).” Even if demographic and socio-economic trends eliminate Spanish used in the home after a few generations, still it is quite possible that Hispanic immigrants will continue in the years to come (Colombi and Roca, 2003, p. 54).

Both bilingual types could expand their language repertoire if they were to have knowledge of formality levels to navigate through a wide array of registers in Spanish. For example, for a student to participate in the classroom and to communicate effectively with those who reside in their community and speak the language, they must understand both the academic register and the more colloquial registers of Spanish. The possibilities for both bilingual types could grow if they acquired a full range of registers in Spanish.

Many different levels of language repertoires are held by each bilingual speaker coming from distinct backgrounds. However, everyone is expected to produce language used in an array of registers at the university level. An awareness of register use among both types of Spanish bilinguals is necessary if the academic register in the university setting is continually demanded.

From the perspective of educators, if a population of Spanish speakers that can navigate effectively in a variety of registers is desired, further attention must be given to language analysis focusing on register. Additional research must be added in the field of applied linguistics in Spanish to expand upon previous research with the purpose of better equipping bilingual speakers to use all registers of language.

In languages other than English, there are few studies that have been carried out with an emphasis on register, and few focus specifically on the characteristics of academic discourse in bilingual contexts in the U.S. Schleppegrell and Colombi presented research on clause combining strategies and nominalizations in written language. Here it was found that bilingual students used the same strategies when writing in English and in Spanish (Colombi and Schleppegrell, 1997). There was a minor difference found when using discursive registers in the grammatical and lexical elements of writings between languages. English and Spanish are two languages that require knowledge of distinct grammatical and lexical rules to properly communicate in each. This research supports the need for further instruction of academic registers to develop a more comprehensive linguistic repertoire for the Spanish bilingual (Colombi & Schleppegrell, 1997, p. 501).

Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci focused on identifying characteristics of language that constitute the academic register in spoken Spanish (1998). This study analyzed the language used by Chicano bilinguals and Mexican students in a university setting. Language was analyzed focusing on features to determine if the individuals used the appropriate academic register in Spanish. They found that although bilingual students’ lexical production appeared to be “less rich” than that of their monolingual counterparts, both sets of students appeared to use an “approximative” academic register that was still clearly in a state of development. These results from Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) suggest that “students will profit from direct attention to the notion of register as well as to classroom activities that expose them to high-level registers that they would be expected to produce in an authentic academic context” (Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998, p. 496). Both studies (Schleppegrell and Colombi 1997; Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci 1998) involved data collected from students taking undergraduate university language courses. Achugar (2003) agrees with the findings that, “These projects advocate for the explicit instruction of academic registers to develop Spanish bilingual’s linguistic repertoire” (Achugar, 2003, p. 217)

Achugar (2003) has expanded upon previous research from Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) to identify linguistic features of oral texts produced among graduate university students that create membership within a discourse community. She focused on specific linguistic and discursive characteristics among university students while presenting in a formal bilingual context. A goal in her study was to identify the discursive characteristics that enable speakers to portray themselves as members of the academic community of their discipline (Achugar 2003).

The current study attempts to shed light on the language produced among bilingual students of different language acquisition backgrounds focusing on the same characteristics of language studied by Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci (1998).

III. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANTS

Two circumstantial bilinguals and two elective bilinguals participated in this pilot study. The language acquisition process for each participant was studied and reported in the pilot study performed.

The four participants for the research study were chosen based upon the following list of criteria: (a) type of bilingualism (b) enrollment in a master's program (c) employment as graduate teaching associates and (d) willingness to participate. To obtain the linguistic history of each participant, a brief interview was conducted.

Table 2 summarizes the topics for the data collected. In the context of informal conversation, daily activities are defined to include topics such as: teaching undergraduate classes, graduate classes being taken, weekend events and health. In an informal interview questions one through five focus on the history of the language repertoire for each participant while question six gathers ideas on how to better prepare students in the university to use a full range of registers.

TABLE 2.
PARTICIPANTS AND CONTEXTS

Participants Contexts	Tony	Ricardo	Mauricio	José
Formal Presentation	Thesis Presentation of research work	Introducing why we Listen with examples	N/A	Testing Language using Listening Tactics
Informal Conversation	Future doctoral studies	Daily activities	Daily Activities	Daily Activities
Teaching Spanish	Spanish 103	Spanish 102	Spanish 101	Spanish 101
Written work	From Spanish 601 Seminary in Hispanic Literary Theory	From Spanish 581 Spanish & American Dialectology	From Spanish 501 Twentieth Century Spanish Novels Women	From Spanish 611 Spanish English Contrast Analysis

The students involved in this study are classified as circumstantial and elective bilinguals (Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci 1998; Valdés 2001; Valdés 2005). Those considered circumstantial bilinguals grew up in a household where Spanish was the primary language yet the principal language of education was English. Elective bilinguals (Valdés & Figueroa, 1994) having grown up in a household where the primary language was English, learned Spanish principally in the educational setting.

A study attempting to classify people does not have clearly drawn lines due to life circumstances. Each participant has a unique experience growing up with both Spanish and English present during childhood and into adulthood. For this study the speakers classified as circumstantial bilinguals were educated in Spanish until reaching middle school. Thus, the education received from kindergarten until sixth grade was in Spanish. This amount of instruction in Spanish is more than the average circumstantial bilingual receives. Those typically known as 'circumstantial bilinguals' receive all primary education in English, while in the home, a minority language is used. When asked to classify themselves as either a native or heritage speaker, both opted to choose the term native to identify themselves. The level of bilingualism that one has is not easily defined or measured due to the constant changing demands of life which is reflected in language.

Consequently, the bilingual speakers involved in this study are native Spanish speakers who became circumstantial bilinguals when they moved to the U.S. To analyze language from students with this level of bilingualism is ideal for the current study. This is because they have received more primary education in Spanish which gives them a more complete ability to communicate in the academic register. This will allow for more language samples with a broader range of examples of the academic register in Spanish. As we learn more about different bilinguals' language use, we can more clearly define registers for Spanish speakers. This definition will provide an awareness of what constitutes a full range of the academic register in Spanish and will serve as a tool to enhance language for bilinguals.

All the oral language production from the participants was recorded and transcribed by the investigator and analyzed for content only. Pauses were not counted and the transcription conventions used apply to content analysis. Four different situations taking place in the university setting and hypothesized to contain a variety of registers were studied. The data analyzed was chosen to focus on characteristics of the language that is produced at the university with the intention of exploring and analyzing 'academic' register.

The language samples collected for this study are analyzed based on the framework of Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) that focuses on the following categories: (1) lexical choice, (2) integration versus fragmentation and (3) detachment versus involvement. The presence of disfluencies was also considered in this study. For this study the characteristics of disfluencies will be explored and labeled as, (4) 'real time processing' units.

These categories were chosen because they will allow us to distinguish characteristics of academic language used in Spanish. Each grouping previously listed above is broken down into sub-categories to be further studied.

Lexical Choice

Lexical Choice is examined more thoroughly in terms of (a) academic vocabulary, (b) the use of transitional phrases, (c) the use of colloquial or casual forms, (d) the use of stigmatized forms, (e) lexical searches and (f) vocabulary range. Academic vocabulary is characterized using words or expressions relevant to the specific area of knowledge or specialization found in the academic setting. An example of a successful academic phrase would be, *evaluar si los estudiantes captaron el vocabulary* [to evaluate if the students gained an understanding of the vocabulary]. In this example José is presenting and uses the verb *captar* [to grasp] rather than the informal *entender* [to understand]. An

example found to represent an unsuccessful use of academic vocabulary is, *nos permite no enseñar los (sic) instrucciones directamente* [it permits us not to teach the instructions directly]. In this example, the speaker is presenting on a formal topic and places the word *no* incorrectly. Transitional phrases are used when transitioning from one idea to the next, some informal examples found are *entonces* [also] and *también* [also]. Casual or colloquial forms are mentioned to contrast the use of academic vocabulary. In the different contexts studied, there were many examples of colloquial language in the data, *no más que* [nothing more than], *orale güey* [hey bro], *vale pues* [alright then]. Stigmatized forms such as reverting from the norm of *el problema* to the stigmatized form of *la problema* were found in the data. In English, there is no differentiation when using the article “the” before a noun. However, nouns in Spanish are either masculine or feminine and the article placed before the noun must agree with the gender of the noun. Both types of bilingual students produced examples of stigmatized borrowings such as using the word *checar* from the English “to check” and *el tópico* from the English word “the topic.” In many cases students performed lexical searches while they paused for periods of time to search for the appropriate word. Many of these pauses were completed with the correct lexical choice *creo yo es en mi...en una um...una (sic) problema de considerer no? de catalogar*, [I believe it is in my...in a em...a problem of considering you know? of cataloging] while others ended in new word creations such, *as cómo se dice...emercido* [how do you say emersed]. In the first example a lexical search was indicated by the speaker pausing and beginning to use a feminine article pausing again then completing the sentence with the appropriate feminine article. In the second example of a lexical search the speaker asked how to say a word, searched for the word as he paused then completed the sentence using an invented word *emercido*.

When speaking in the academic register a wider range of words is used. This range of words can be seen clearly when looking at verb usage. In Spanish, there are many commonly used verbs in informal language. These verbs can be labeled “high-frequency verbs,” some examples are *ser* and *estar* [to be and to be], *tener* [to have] *decir* [to tell] *poder* [to be able to] *querer* [to want]. To determine the vocabulary, range the total number of verbs used are compared to the number of high-frequency verbs. This range will make clear to us if there is variation in the verbs used among bilingual speakers or if only high frequency verbs are used.

Integration versus fragmentation

Academic language is characterized as having the integration of several idea units into a set of clearly linked segments. Another important feature of integration is that multiple idea units are coherent. Casual conversation on the other hand frequently contains single clause constructions that portray a fragmented structure. A term used by Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) to investigate integration was “grammatically complex segments.” This term is defined as a segment consisting of one or more independent clauses and a varying number of dependent clauses. Dependent clauses are not coherent alone; they require another language construction to bring meaning to the statement. Independent clauses have coherence without another statement. For this study, we will not adhere to the term, “grammatically complex segments” but rather we will use the term “complex phrases” to indicate the integration of several idea units. As defined in the dictionary of linguists, complex clauses contain a main clause with a subordinate clause.

Integration versus Fragmentation will be studied focusing on the following features: (1) single-clause segments and (2) complex segments. Single clause segments are independent statements commonly found in casual conversations and create a fragmented quality. An example found in the data from an elective bilingual in the conversation is bolded in the following example.

10	Ricardo	<i>¿Entonces los los alumnos nuevos aquí todavía</i> Then the the new students here still <i>tienen que escoger?...</i> have to chose?...
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The example above is an independent construction that contains a single idea unit.

Packaging large quantities of information concisely indicates integration. An example of a complex segment found in the presentation given by a circumstantial bilingual is in the following example.

58	La industria genera una cantidad enorme de dinero ya, no sólo en The industry generates an enormous quantity of Money already, not only in
	producción de videos um sino también de producción de internet y video production um but also in internet production and
	<i>esto es sólo hablando en contexto de los Estados Unidos. Hay varios</i> this is only speaking in the context of the United States . There are various

In line 58 the main clause begins in bolded text. The subordinate clause follows the transition *ya* [already], followed by an independent clause, followed by three clearly linked dependent clauses. Articles that indicate a new clause in Spanish used in this example are *no sólo* [not only] *sino también* [but also] *esto es sólo* [this is only]. These articles and phrases indicate a continuous flow of ideas and are often present in complex segments.

Detachment versus Involvement

Detachment versus involvement is examined in relation to the relative involvement of speakers with the audience. The idea of detachment is when the speaker creates distance between the information relayed. This created distance also allows for information to be used when speaking to a larger crowd rather than personalized information that would be

more relevant in a conversation. To convey detachment, some features to be analyzed are the use of *se* passives and agentless passives. In Spanish, the use of *se* in front of conjugated verbs indicates a more general use of the verb and is relevant when speaking to an audience. For example, the common phrase *se habla español* is translated to mean [Spanish is spoken here], not that a specific person speaks Spanish. Agentless passives follow the same meaning of *se* passives in conveying an idea to a general audience but rather than using *se* specifically, no agent is defined. Some examples are “the people” “the students” “the information.” When referring to academic register, the use of *se* passives and agentless passives both indicate detachment.

Features of involvement generally found in casual language include a higher presence of the following: first and second person verbs and pronouns, strategies used to monitor information flow and the use of “fuzzy expressions.” In the study by Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) oral strategies were also analyzed. This feature of language was found in the argumentative texts produced by bilingual speakers. In this study, there were no occurrences of oral strategies due to the nature of the data collected, thus the category was omitted. In casual conversation, the speaker is usually greatly involved in the topic discussed, consequently the presence of first person references and verbs reflect the speaker’s direct involvement. Another feature of the informal register is seeking feedback before continuing the discussion. This is done to assure the speaker that the listener is paying attention. Consequently, information is monitored to determine whether the speakers’ message is being conveyed using phrases such as, *¿vale?* [Right?], or *¿no?* [“you know?”]. In formal academic registers, speakers assume the audience is listening and often continue the lecture by building on previous remarks using phrases such as, “as Thomas stated” or “as mentioned by”. When the speaker has already conveyed the necessary information, repetition of the complete idea is not necessary. In informal registers examples of phrases used are: *todo lo demas* and *y todo eso* [all the rest] and [and all this]. These have been referred to as “fuzzy” expressions by Chafe (1984) and indicate greater involvement with both the other speakers and the topic.

Real time processing units

In the analysis of oral language production, it is important to be aware of the distinctions between oral corpus and a written corpus. Many researchers have studied oral language based on conceptual frameworks used for the analysis of written data. For many areas of analysis this framework does not seem to be a problem, but when looking at the terms disfluencies in written work the definition will vary because of the nature of written versus spoken discourse. Spoken language happens in real time and the participants in the conversation have no time to edit, which is possible in written language. Thus there are many characteristics of language that do not have distinguishing features of written language and have previously been labeled as disfluencies. This study will examine these features of language that happen as real time processing units. Some characteristics to be mentioned are: (1) pauses both filled and un-filled (2) repetitions (3) self-corrections (4) abandoned constructions (5) lexical searches and uses as defined by Silva-Corvalán (1994) that are not part of any Spanish language variety.

Pauses are indicated in the data transcribed by the insertion of three periods in a row (...). For the purposes of this study the length of pauses were not considered. The pauses were either filled or un-filled. A common word used to fill pauses in the academic setting is *entonces* [then]. Also, the expression, um or *pues* [then] were frequently used. Repetitions were commonly made while the speaker was gathering ideas or for emphasis while teaching. Self-corrections occurred when the speaker became aware that they were using an article or a word incorrectly. Some common corrections were made regarding gender and number agreement between articles, adjectives and nouns. In Spanish nouns are either feminine or masculine. Before each noun the article or adjective used must agree with the noun. For example, if the noun used is *fuego* [fire] which is a masculine noun, the article placed before it must also be masculine.

In the last category of real time processing units, lexical searches and words not part of any Spanish language variety contains varieties that are used by bilinguals when rules of language are oversimplified and generalized. An example would be the creation of the word *hacido* [regularized past participle of the verb “to do or to make”] as opposed to *hecho* [standard form of the past participle]. Here the student is applying the standard rule to a verb that is irregular and does not follow the general rules. Another real-time processing phenomenon, abandoned constructions, was found in the context of the interview as the student explained the answer. Leaps were made from one train of thought to the next. These abandoned constructions indicate a real-time processing unit that is unique to spoken discourse.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The analysis presented in this chapter focuses on the language produced by graduate students in contexts they encountered daily. The specific language characteristics analyzed help us explore the vocabulary and expressions of the Spanish academic register used by each participant. The following criteria (Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci 1998) guide this analysis: (1) lexical choice, (2) integration versus fragmentation (i.e., presentation of large amounts of information in a single idea unit), (3) detachment versus involvement, and (4) the presence of real time processing units. Each criterion mentioned is further analyzed and supported by data in the following paragraphs.

These features will be analyzed using data collected from the following contexts: (1) a teaching event (2) a formal presentation (3) an informal interview (4) an informal conversation and (5) a writing sample. Concluding each section of criteria analysis mentioned, a Table charting a random sample of data is presented. This Table uses the abbreviations CB for circumstantial bilingual and EB for elective bilingual. The data used in the Table was selected randomly using

twenty lines or turns of language produced from each participant. To collect the data for the table, a random section from each context was chosen from all participants to maintain a sample that represents the whole. During the introduction and concluding section of a teaching event or presentation the speaker uses language to warm up to the audience or to wrap up the lesson presented. Thus, the middle section of language production from each context was chosen to avoid the introduction and conclusion.

Question 1

1. What registers do graduate students use while completing their daily tasks as graduate teaching associates at a university in Southern California?

The language used by graduate students contained many characteristics of the informal academic register in Spanish as they completed their daily tasks. Throughout the different contexts analyzed, language varied having a formal academic register and an informal register filled with colloquialisms. Language used in contexts where formal registers would be expected such as in written work and in formal presentations contained a high presence of informal language features alongside formal characteristics. The distinction of register was weak in each context where Spanish was analyzed. There were minimal consistent occurrences of formal academic vocabulary used by the participants. The formal presentations also demonstrated a weak presence of academic register. This was due to the few complex segments that were used by both bilingual populations. To explain ideas, extensive complex segments are more appropriate to strengthen an argument or presentation of ideas.

The use of informal language characteristics in formal academic settings both in writing samples and presentations raises a few concerns. While searching for an explanation of language production, we will consider the previously researched heterogeneity of the bilingual populations studied. A few reasons could be (1) perhaps the participants do not possess knowledge of the academic register in their language repertoire, or (2) it could be that they are not aware of language characteristics that constitute a formal academic register or lastly (3) they deem it unnecessary to use a formal academic register at the university level.

In research previously mentioned Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) also concluded that academic language produced among the bilingual populations could benefit from more attention to the specific notion of register. The results and discussion from this study found that there were more complications with the language from circumstantial bilinguals, classified as heritage speakers, due to their complex acquisition process and life circumstances. Comparing our analysis to that of the previous, among circumstantial bilinguals our results coincide. Conclusions for elective bilinguals cannot be compared due to different population of native speakers used in the previous study.

Question 2

2. How do registers differ among students classified as circumstantial and elective bilinguals?

The differences found in the language produced by elective and circumstantial bilinguals were: (1) a greater use of colloquialisms by circumstantial bilinguals (2) fewer transitional statements made by circumstantial bilinguals (3) more features of detachment were found in the language produced by circumstantial bilinguals in oral language while elective bilinguals produced more features of detachment in written work (4). Overall there was a higher presence of features representing formal language from elective bilinguals found present in both the formal and informal contexts.

When comparing writing samples there were distinctions made: (1) there were numerous examples of stigmatized forms and borrowings from elective bilinguals (2) elective bilinguals used more academic vocabulary (3) also circumstantial bilinguals used fewer academic transitional phrases and a greater amount of informal transitions.

Some similarities found in the language produced by both types of bilinguals were a high usage of single clause segments and a rare occurrence of complex segments. In the contexts of language studied there was more distinction of register demonstrated by the elective bilinguals when compared to their counterpart. Circumstantial bilinguals produced similar language through the contexts studied while elective bilinguals used different registers as they went about their daily tasks. Elective bilinguals appeared to use both formal and informal styles of language demonstrating a more complete language repertoire. This finding supports the education of both bilingual types regarding language formalities.

The combining of academic vocabulary alongside informal language seems to be a common occurrence for the circumstantial bilingual throughout all the contexts addressed. Elective bilinguals portrayed qualities of academic vocabulary in the following contexts: presentations, written work and teaching events. Along with their counterpart, elective bilinguals frequently inserted characteristics of informal language use. Both elective and circumstantial bilinguals used informal conversational Spanish in the contexts of: conversation, the interview and presentations. In the context of conversation an informal register of language was reflected using involvement as well as through lexical choices made.

Although the differences mentioned seem minute, considering that merely four participants supply the data for this study, the complexity of language, life and people can be seen through the depth of analysis for each participant and their language. Once again the idea of heterogeneity among bilinguals must be considered in this study as was also mentioned in previous research. Valdés also recognized the complexity in the field of bilingualism in the U.S. among other researchers and advocates for continuous research in this area. This study also supports further research among bilinguals.

Question 3

3. How does the register produced in Spanish and used among graduate students at a university in Southern California reflect the characteristics of 'academic Spanish' or 'conversational Spanish' as defined by previous studies? (Achugar 2003; Biber 2006).

In the language analyzed, characteristics of academic Spanish were reflected by both bilinguals. Circumstantial bilinguals used academic vocabulary prevalently in the contexts of written work and presentations. Academic language was demonstrated using detachment, lexical choices and complex segments used. In these contexts, the students also included characteristics of informal language using colloquialisms, features of involvement and single clause segments.

Circumstantial bilinguals commonly used *se* passives to create detachment more frequently than their counterpart. This was the greatest indicator of formal register used by circumstantial bilinguals. Elective bilinguals did not implement this construction as often in formal settings. A possible reason for this could be due to lacking of a similar verb construction in English. While speaking in a foreign language it could be that elective bilinguals' thoughts were in English, with no equivalent in English, this could explain the lack of *se* passives.

In the data, a lack of transitional phrases demonstrated less formal academic language. Both populations presented very few transitional phrases in the contexts studied. Rather, ideas were connected with pauses both filled and unfilled. Some possible reasons for this could be (1) that the student is processing thoughts and not sure of the next statement they are going to make (2) students may not possess transitional phrases in their repertoire (3) or it could be that they do not feel that using transitional phrases was necessary to convey their ideas.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) conducted research among circumstantial bilinguals and native Spanish speakers. The data collected was from planned events, the participants were aware that language register was being studied. This study differs from that study; the participants were elective and circumstantial Spanish bilinguals. Another key difference regarding the participants in this study was that they were not aware that language register was being studied. The data was collected randomly from TA's throughout contexts encountered daily. In Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) the results reflected awareness of register. According to Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci, (1998), the participants "were aware of register differences in the sense that they attempted to produce suitable academic speech for the activity involved". Thus, there were more occurrences of successful as well as unsuccessful academic language produced when compared to the current research (Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci 1998, p. 82).

When comparing the results in the data of, the most obvious distinction was in academic vocabulary used unsuccessfully. In this study, participants rarely used academic vocabulary unsuccessfully while in Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci attempts to use academic vocabulary were often made with varying degrees of success. This disparity in the results could also be because the participants in Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci were aware of the topic being studied and thus attempted more often to demonstrate knowledge of academic vocabulary and phrases. Participants in the current study were unaware that register use was the topic of analysis. It can be suggested that students may not have felt a need to use academic language exclusively even in formal university contexts. For the different situations analyzed, participants freely used formal and informal language to express their thoughts and ideas. Due to the random collection of data and since participants were not challenged and assessed in their production of formal academic language, it is not possible to conclude that students did not have the repertoire to use formal registers. What can be noted is that there was a low level of expectancy and demand among the bilingual populations to use formal academic language in many circumstances at the university studied.

Previous research from Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) has suggested that students would profit from direct attention to the notion of register as well as to classroom activities that expose them to high-level registers. The findings in this study support this idea as well. Language produced in the academic environment observed was found to contain a formal register appropriate in university situations in certain instances (Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998, p. 496).

Creating a level of awareness regarding features of language that constitute formal and informal registers could assist in developing a new approach to course curriculum for bilingual students at the university. Both bilingual types would aid from courses focused on levels of formality used in appropriate contexts. The informed instructor could adapt lessons that strengthen both the elective and the circumstantial bilingual utilizing strengths from both acquisition backgrounds.

As stated by Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci (1998), "students will profit from distinct attention to the notion of register as well as to classroom activities that expose them to the high-level registers that they would be expected to produce in an authentic academic context" (Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998, p. 496). A curriculum focusing on appropriate formality levels of Spanish would expand the repertoire for both bilingual types. The apparent limitations circumstantial and elective bilinguals demonstrated could have been due to a limited exposure to academic Spanish.

Currently there are many programs that have implemented courses specific for bilingual speakers. A model university program places emphasis on the language used in classes specifically created for heritage speakers who desire to use Spanish in academic contexts in the future. Such courses are essential due to the language backgrounds of many bilingual speakers living in the United States. This study specifically addresses the university where the data collection takes place and argues the need for courses and programs applicable to the needs of the bilingual types

analyzed in this study. Both bilingual types demonstrated areas to be improved regarding the production of formal academic Spanish.

Educating future and current teachers on the topic of appropriate register for specific contexts could contribute to expanding students understanding of components that constitute a broader language repertoire. This study has highlighted a few cases of bilingual students who have demonstrated a vague knowledge of register distinction. Awareness of register could become strikingly clear in the future with the help of educators addressing suitable contexts for formal and informal language as well as components of Spanish that constitute each register.

Suggestions for teachers are to implement courses focusing on the use of academic register appropriate at the university and to provide opportunities for students to practice this register. For this to occur, first students should be educated on the structure of register formalities in the classroom setting. Once made aware of Spanish characteristics appropriate in a formal context, they should also be given opportunities to practice oral and written formal academic register in class. Lastly feedback should be given from professors as students use academic register in their writings and class discussions.

Considering the two bilingual populations in this study, and observing the distinct acquisition backgrounds from everyone, educators also must take into consideration differing repertoires held by everyone. Creating classes specific for bilingual types has already been implemented in many universities and through out all levels of education. For teachers, awareness of the distinct acquisition backgrounds of bilingual populations present in class is becoming more crucial at the university as demands to produce successful academic language grow.

Understanding a foreign language presents difficulties for all language learners. When teachers become aware of learners needs and understand the heterogeneity of bilingual populations present at the university, steps to meet these needs should be taken. Identifying components of language appropriate in various formal contexts could aide students as they pursue a degree in Spanish. Developing classes that present fundamentals of language structure including register distinction can strengthen students' repertoire.

Once teachers are educated in the fundamentals of language, they could benefit their students by teaching distinct formalities through video instruction. This could be done by watching academic presentations from peers and other researchers in their field of study. To continue the lesson, teachers could instruct students to work in groups to analyze components of language, focusing on different language characteristics. Teachers could then lead a class discussion on language components that create formal dialogue.

Students must first become aware of their language repertoire and then seek out opportunities to broaden their exposure to different registers. Implications for students are first in education. Secondly contact with professionals and educators exercising formal academic language could motivate students to pursue further development of registers. Once educated and motivated, students must then be presented with opportunities to maintain and challenge their own language skills.

A limitation of the current study is the number of participants involved which affects the validity of the conclusions being drawn. Consequently, it is important to mention that the conclusions drawn from this pilot study may merely set directions for further research regarding formal registers in Spanish. Due to this being a pilot study with only four participants, the conclusions are purely suggestions and observations from the specific university and population studied.

A suggestion for future studies would be to encourage situations that challenge participants to use formal academic register during data collection. An idea would be to conduct structured interviews containing questions in a more academic register. If participants are challenged to use formal language, data containing successful and unsuccessful attempts of academic vocabulary would be provided. Including this aspect of language in future studies would widen the scope of analysis to better understand each participant's level of bilingualism.

Further research needs to be done on the language used by professors of Spanish in academic institutions at the graduate level to gain a better understanding first how professors use academic language in class, secondly how they instruct their students to use academic language and lastly how expectations around register are constructed. Focusing on student to teacher interactions would allow for a broader angle of analysis. An analysis of formal academic language used by professors from different countries and used to teach different areas of language, literature and translation would also allow for further exploration of formal academic language. Different contexts to be analyzed could include conversations during office hours, lectures given, formal presentations at conferences, written work and conversations among professors. Using the same framework implemented for this study, comparisons could be made between bilingual students and professors.

As stated earlier, the notion of register regards situationally defined varieties of language. Researchers need to agree on defining register, then perhaps educators could develop more of an understanding regarding academic register. Though work continues to be done in educating bilingual populations on the importance of language formalities, with the general acceptance of informal language and colloquialisms in formal institutions, developing complete Spanish repertoires are hindered. In the future, more research will be done to shed light on the importance of teaching and maintaining a Spanish academic register. It is my hope that once more studies are made in this field, students will be able to benefit from being taught by educators that understand Spanish academic registers, who know how to teach them, and who can transmit the importance of broadening their Spanish repertoire.

This article has analyzed language produced from students through out varying contexts of daily situations at the university. It has considered previous studies focusing on register and bilingualism. The characteristics of language researched by Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) were used as a guide for the analysis. This chapter concludes and discusses results found through this case study. Implications for course and curriculum development were mentioned along with suggestions for future research. This study contributes to the fields of bilingualism and register studies with the hope of encouraging others to implement future research on the topics presented. Additionally, this research hopes to encourage Spanish speakers on all levels to broaden their language repertoire to include formal and informal registers. Furthermore, this study advocates the need for more opportunities where bilinguals could exercise and broaden their Spanish academic language.

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A Look into a Professional Learning Community

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Abstract—Professional learning communities are not commonplace in Iran and this is evidenced by the scant literature in this regard. The present study is an attempt to fill the gap in the literature. This study was conducted in the hope of evaluating a professional learning community within an English language institute in Iran to detect the threats to its survival from the viewpoints of some of the teachers and members of the board of studies. The analysis of the data uncovered three major strengths the current PLC enjoys. These plus points are the dynamic work context, management policy, and a nexus of focus communities. There is, however, a consensus among participants that in recent years many teachers have detached themselves from different communities within the institute. The analysis of the data revealed sense of belonging, teacher's view of the profession, infrastructure and flawed dialogue as the major threats.

Index Terms—professional learning community (PLC), professional development, teacher education

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a widely held belief that the quality of learners' education depends mostly on the quality of teachers (Wood, 2007; Hord, 2009). If teachers are professional, they know how to craft quality education. Teacher quality is given high priority in new approaches to education owing to the fact that student learning and teacher quality are inextricably linked (Shirazi, Bagheri, Sadighi&Yarmohammadi, 2013). To professionalize their teachers, schools and educational institutions invest large sums of money in providing lots of training, workshops, seminars and courses. However, this top-down approach is flawed since "they have little actual effect on classroom teaching as not much change happens, and if it does, it does not last long" (Farrell, 2015, p7). Transforming teachers into thinkers and inquirers who play an active part in knowledge construction can guarantee quality education. However, this does not take place unless the right supportive atmosphere exists. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (as cited in Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008) note that "helping teachers rethink practice necessitates professional development that involves teachers in the dual capacities of both teaching and learning and creates new visions of what, when, and how teachers should learn" (p. 80).

Peter Senge's 1990 opinion of turning corporations into learning organizations has had a huge impact on the path many organizations in the world have taken. Senge holds that corporations won't survive unless they are turned into learning organizations which can recognize threats to their survival and seek opportunities for ongoing development. His view has also revolutionized many schools today as transforming a school into a learning community is currently in vogue. However, it takes a huge paradigmatic shift from viewing schools as a bureaucracy to a community (Roberts & Pruitt, 2008). The vision of employees involved in collaborative learning who are skilled at creating knowledge can well depict a *professional learning community (PLC)*. In such a community, team work, collaborative learning, sustained reflection, and sharing professional practices are the foundations (Roberts & Pruitt, 2008).

I believe that if we teachers do not find the right supportive atmosphere, our teaching concerns and questions usually get lost in the everyday ebb and flow of life. We do the same practices again and again until they look like common sense. In order not to get into the trap of routines, we need to build a quality professional learning community and if we have one we need to evaluate it, see its threats, look into its weaknesses and strengths, and make an endeavour to turn it into an opportunity for both teachers and students' growth. Professional learning communities need maintenance and care, and if their voices are not heard and the threats to their survival and development are not taken seriously, they might soon become extinct.

My own experience of professional development began in a small learning community my colleagues and I had built within a large institution of nearly 120 teachers. Our community was founded on teacher dialog and collective critical reflection. The supportive and non-threatening environment provided me and my colleagues with the chance to share all the questions that occupied our minds and the teaching practices that we were hesitant about. Having the privilege of unbiased colleagues and rich dialog increased my awareness, boosted my confidence, and helped me design more effective teaching practices. Our community was a spontaneous one which in time strengthened and developed. However, in recent years this community is suffering, as evidenced by member attrition and cancellation of a number of learning groups. This study aims to look into the climate of this professional learning community in Iran by investigating the viewpoints of the teachers and members of the board of study about their PLC and looking into the challenges this community is dealing with.

II. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

This study was carried out in the summer of 2016 in Iran where English is taught as a foreign language by mostly Iranian bilingual teachers. In recent years, there has been a dramatic rise in the number English language institutes all across the country due to the inadequacy of English programs in schools. A bachelor's degree in teaching English or a relevant field with a very good level of English language proficiency is the minimum requirement for recruitment in these institutes. There are usually initial training programs tailored according to the priorities and objectives of the school. They might then be followed by in-service development programs depending on both the vision and budget of the institute.

In the female branch of the institute where this study was carried out, there are around 80 female bilingual teachers teaching kids, young adults, and adults in 5 different branches. The pre-service training program consists of 40 hours of both theoretical and practical language teaching issues where teachers get familiar with the fundamentals of English language teaching in general and the current teaching methodology of the institute in particular. Teachers are then provided with the booklets of methodology specific to the institute, textbooks and the syllabus specifying the number of lessons they are required to cover before the midterm and final exams. Next, based on the level they are assigned, teachers are grouped into teams with coaches to guide them. The coaches devise different activities for them to perform ranging from weekly meetings to self, peer, and group observations. Apart from that, some teachers, particularly the newly-recruited ones, voluntarily team up, write lesson plans together and request to have peer observations. They turn team work into a habit and pursue their self-development through small communities they willingly join. There are also teams planned by the authorities for more experienced and senior teachers. Even though some teachers express genuine interest in partaking in these communities, there are other teachers who see it as an additional burden, are usually dragged in to attend and would prefer to teach behind closed doors.

This institute is a private institute supervised by the Iranian Ministry of Education and run by a board of managers who are the owners of the institute and should approve all the educational decisions made by the board of studies. Teacher recruitment, teacher initial training and professional development, material selection, and level assignment to the teachers are among the major responsibilities of the board of studies.

III. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This interpretive study seeks to develop a more transparent image of a professional learning community in a language institute in Iran. This section reviews the relevant literature related to the nature, building blocks, and benefits of a PLC. This section concludes with a brief look inside research on teacher development in Iran.

A. *What Is a PLC?*

Looking through a sociocultural lens, learning is a social act and individuals are active participants constructing their own learning community (Mitchel, Miles & Marsden, 2013). To put it another way, the environment is responsible for nurturing and scaffolding learning. Contrary to the followers of cognitive theorists who place the focus on individual cognition and hold that learning is a mediated process between the stimulus and the response, the sociocultural theorists' main concern is the individual's surroundings. To them, learning is the by-product of collaboration between individuals.

PLC also considers learning a social rather than an individual act. As the term Professional learning community suggests learning is not an individual affair to take place in a vacuum but happens in a community of professionals. This community; however, is more than a simple gathering of individuals. It is goal oriented, meaningful and calls upon teachers' professional spirit and commitment to not only their own learning but also to that of their students' (Hord, 2009).

The idea of professional learning community originated from the notion of learning organizations (Senge, 1990). The differences, however, in the ends and means between a learning organization and a school have made educators consider schools a learning community rather than a learning organization. In a learning organization, the ends are organizational growth and productivity through learning. In other words, learning is a tool. In contrast, the end in a learning community is people growth which takes place through ongoing discourse and communication in the community (Mitchel & Stackney, 2001). Stoll and Louis (2007) posit that a universal definition of *professional learning community* does not exist but one can certainly be found when groups of teachers discuss and critically reflect on their teaching practices in an ongoing and collaborative way with the intention of promoting growth. Despite the fact that there is no definite definition for a learning community, Mitchel and Stackney (2001) point out that all learning communities have shared vision, communication, risk taking, trust, and mutual respect in common.

Buysse, Sparkman and Wesley (2003) state that a learning community is grounded on two major assumptions. First, knowledge in a community is constructed through critical reflection of the teachers on their day-to-day experiences. Second, teachers' knowledge enhancement improves students' learning. Stoll and Louis (2007) adds that a PLC does not centre around individual teacher's learning but strives to hone collective knowledge within a cohesive group that not only impacts upon the professional lives of school teachers and leaders but also permeates the lives of students. In Pirtle and Tobia's (2014) words PLC is a "powerful infrastructure" where teachers learn how to act more effectively to enhance learning in their students.

Apart from the positive impact of PLCs on students' achievement, Dufour and Dufour (2010) consider PLCs as a *sine qua non* for the 21st century success and add that educators within a school need to collaboratively clarify the skills required for success in this new century and the best practices they can employ to help individual students acquire these skills. In addition, to deal with the constantly-changing world occurred by globalization, learning requires a collective effort and should be done collaboratively rather than be left to individuals (Stoll et. al., 2006). Little (2001) claims that instructional improvement and school reform are the fruits of a PLC. Fullan also supports this claim by mentioning that reform in educational institutions can take place through developing PLCs (as cited in Dufour&Dufour, 2010).

B. *The Building Blocks of a PLC*

• **Shared mission and values**

A clear sense of mission and shared values are indispensable to a PLC. A shared mission and vision take place when walls of isolation are broken down and people work on goal-oriented teams and strive to “establish specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, time-bound (SMART)” goals pertaining to student learning and try hard to achieve them (Dufour&Dufour, 2010). To DuFour (2003) the mission “is not simply to ensure that students are taught but to ensure that they learn. This simple shift—from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning—has profound implications” (para 5). Dufour and Dufour (2010) posit that having a PLC requires working in collaboration rather than in isolation and collective inquiry about students' learning issues within their context which can eventually contribute to shared knowledge and, to Stoll and Louis (2007), a “common understanding of concepts and practices” (P. 3).

• **Ongoing constructive dialogue**

The quality of learning among teachers lies in the climate of the learning community. In other words, the social aspect of the community plays a determining role. Stoll and Louis (2007) maintain that collaboration contributes to desirable process. Teachers need genuine dialog to open up, exchange ideas, learn collectively, maintain relationships and construct a community. However, due to the complexity of the mentioned layers, developing a professional learning community is by no means easy. In a learning community, the social aspect of learning determines the cognitive climate which means that learning is a direct result of negotiation among the individuals in a learning community. Issacs (1999) states that maintaining a dialog requires the skills of listening, respecting, suspecting, and voicing. These skills set the groundwork for disclosure and criticality that characterize a learning community. Easton (2015) recognizes *dialog* as a key skill and mentions that “without the skill of dialog, professional learning communities may become dysfunctional” (para. 20). He also adds that “it must be learned, consciously practiced and purposefully employed when it is important to surface everyone's ideas” (para. 23).

• **Collective reflection**

In an exhaustive study on factors determining student learning, Hattie (2008 as cited in Dufour&Dufour, 2010) considers collective reflection to be a leading factor. He adds that reflection in isolation can barely promote growth. Moreover, when collective reflection is accompanied by expertise and evidence of effective student result in their context, reflection has been proven to be more effective and teachers are better prepared to cope with the challenges within their context (Dufour&Dufour, 2010). Learning within a PLC requires deconstruction of knowledge via reflection followed by reconstruction and co-construction of knowledge via collaboration with peers (Mitchel &Sackney, 2001).

• **Atmosphere of trust**

Tschannen-Moran (2014, p. 17) defines trust as “one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent.” She also adds that it is the duty of the school leaders to build a trusting and non-judgmental atmosphere in which the teachers willingly want to be involved in the kind of conversations that make them deeply reflect on their teaching practices and eventually help PLCs to thrive. Hord (2009) calls trust an imperative to a PLC and holds that for a PLC to be constructive, learning needs to take place in a social setting of collegiality and authenticity.

• **Supportive leadership**

There is no doubt that supportive leadership can provide the scaffold for developing and maintaining a PLC. Supportive leadership not only contributes to the sustenance of a PLC but also provides the safety a PLC should be built on. Hord (2009) mentions the two factors of time and place and adds that it is the school leader's responsibility to adjust the school schedule in a way that teachers can easily access time for their PLC and should ensure a place that can accommodate the whole community.

C. *PLC Effects*

Mclaughlin and Talbert (2006) state that “deprivatized” teaching provides the foundation for teachers to develop not only common understanding but also shared language about their practices. In addition, shared vision and collective learning leads to collective responsibility for their students and together the whole experience generates collective growth. They go on to note that administrators can also benefit from the PLC as they can reinforce norms and standards of their expected teaching practices. In *A review of research on the impact of professional learning communities on teaching and student learning*, Vescio, Ross and Adams (2008) posit that evidence from extensive research suggests a positive correlation between PLCs, improved teaching practice, and student achievement. Furthermore, the intense

focus on student learning, teachers' perpetual learning, teacher collaboration and teacher improved authority can help promote the school culture.

D. Teacher Development in Iran

On the way towards professionalizing teachers, schools and institutes in Iran provide in-service programs to both update and enhance their teachers' expertise (Razi&Kargar, 2014). However, these in-service programs usually conclude with certificates that can merely help teachers collect credits for their appraisal and promotion purposes (Razi&Kargar, 2014). According to Shirazi et al (2013), teacher education in Iran is barely satisfactory. The traditional one-size-fits-all is still the most dominant approach to teacher education. Shirazi et al describe the dominant teacher training as episodic and fragmented with its focus mainly on generic issues. The results of a study conducted by Birjandi and DerakhshanHesari (2010) revealed that the inadequacy of training programs in Iran cannot cater to the teachers' needs and are far from satisfactory. Professional learning communities are not commonplace in Iran and this is evidenced by the scant literature in this regard. The present study is an attempt to fill the gap in the literature of PLCs in Iran. In addition, it can mark the beginning of research on PLCs in Iranian educational contexts.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Research Questions

In order to gain a more transparent image of the PLC the following are the questions this study intends to address:

1. What are the strengths of their PLC from the viewpoints of teachers and members of the board of study?
2. What are the threats to the PLC from the viewpoints of teachers and members of the board of study?

B. Research Framework

This research project is informed by the interpretive paradigm as it strives to merely describe the status quo of a PLC from the perspectives of the main beneficiaries i.e. teachers and members of the board of study. To improve the professional learning community in the institute under the study, I believe, a clear picture of the reality of the PLC should be obtained. This image can shed some light on how distant the current PLC is from the objectives and how large the gap is. To this end, I have looked into the strengths and weaknesses of a PLC adopting an interpretive framework.

Interpretivism which arose out of the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and Wilhelm Dilthey's and other German philosophers' hermeneutics refers to many variations of approach to social research such as "relativism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, idealism, symbolic interactionism, and constructionism" (Grix, 2004). To interpretivists, reality is subjective and socially constructed and the world is interpreted from the perspective of its "social actors" (Pring, 2000, p. 98). According to Cohen et al (2011), social reality in the interpretive paradigm is understood and explained through the lenses of the participants. By the same token the proponents of this paradigm hold that "research can never be objectively observed from the outside rather it must be observed from inside through the direct experience of the people" (Mack, 2010, p. 8). Thus, the researcher within interpretivism is not detached from the research as interpretivists hold a subjective predisposition towards the discovery of reality. Interpretivists appreciate and respect the differences among people's interpretations and make an endeavour to discover the subjective interpretation of social reality in an inductive manner. However, one of the major limitations of this framework is that research findings within this paradigm are not generalizable but can be transferable if they fit into similar contexts.

C. Data Collection Method

I was going to use both questionnaires and interviews to collect data. However, due to the contextual constraints and problems concerning finding the right number of participants, I opted for interviews. The kind of interview I selected was group interviews rather than one-to-one interviews as the diversity of perceptions in a group interview and its dynamic nature can develop discussions which can, in turn, assist the researcher in obtaining deeper data and eventually making a better assessment of the interviewees' beliefs. Compared to one-to-one interviews, the data obtained from group interviews are deeper and richer (Thomas, as cited in Rabiee, 2004). Cohen et al (2011) also mentions that group interviews naturally create a wide range of responses compared to individual interviews. Krueger (2014) posits that a group exhibits a synergy which cannot be found in one-to-one interviews. He adds that group interviews are used when the range of opinions and beliefs about a particular issue are sought. In addition, the nature of the group interview can both cross-check and complement the opinions providing a more reliable and thorough picture (Arksey& Knight, as cited in Cohen et al, 2011). For the above-mentioned reasons, I selected *group interviews* in order to gain a more transparent image of the situation from the view points of the participants.

D. Participants

The number of people who were invited to partake in this study totalled 8. The participants were put into two groups in accordance with their positions in the institute. Group A was comprised of 5 female teachers in the 29-36 age range and teaching experience of 8.5 years on average. Teachers in group B, on the other hand, are members of the board of studies and make pivotal decisions regarding teacher professional development and initial teacher training. The teachers

in this group were one male and two female teachers with the age range of 37-58 and had been in their positions for around 12 years. The participants of the study were selected purposefully rather than randomly because their experience of working as both teacher and professional development planner assisted me in gaining a better picture of the professional community in the institute from two different perspectives.

E. Procedures

The interview questions (Appendix A) were designed in relevance to the objective of the study and were prepared ahead of time. The structure of the interview, however, allowed me to ask spontaneous questions to better delve into the matter at hand. To ensure that the questions were the *right* questions and could serve the purpose, I conducted a pilot interview using the draft questionnaire with one of my former colleagues who was aware of the objective of the study a few days prior to the interviews. The pilot interview helped me delete some ambiguous questions and gave me a chance to ensure that my questions were not prejudicial, double-barrelled, or leading. During the pilot, I also checked the chronological order of my questions to ensure their smooth transition. After the pilot interview, I came up with a shorter list which I was more confident both about the quality of the questions and their order.

The participants' asymmetry of power was the major factor to categorize them into two groups as some were teachers and some were members of the board of study. Due to their grouping and homogeneity of their background, the discussion was developed with ease. In addition, the rapport among the group members let them feel safe to open up and express their true opinions freely. Disagreement was witnessed a few times which was a good sign that the participants were not hesitant to express their true opinions. A few cases of misunderstandings were cleared by the members through additional questions they posed and explanations they provided. The above mentioned items all added to the accuracy and reliability of the data.

Each interview started with a short briefing in which I clarified the main objective of the interview and put the interviewees at ease by mentioning the ethics I am bound to follow. I defined the concept of *professional learning community* briefly and a few questions were asked regarding the concept prior to the interview. I kept all my questions short and to the point and for the sake of reliability the same questions were asked a second time using different wording. Furthermore, the meanings of the interviewees' statements were clarified by providing interpretations of their answers verbally. Efforts were made to ensure everyone responded to the questions and each participant was given enough time to speak. Their responses were natural as it was a discussion and there was no turn taking as I believe it can damage the nature of a discussion. The teacher interview (group A) took 1 hour and 12 minutes and the interview of the members of the board of study (group B) lasted 48 minutes. The interview questions were written in English, but since I speak the participants' mother tongue, all the interviews were conducted in Persian in order to help the participants to articulate what they intended to express with ease. All interviews were conducted in quiet places. The interviews were recorded, transcribed in Persian and color-coded in order to derive the emerging themes and analyse the data. (A sample has been provided in Appendix B.)

F. Data Analysis

Before transcribing the interviews, I listened to all interviews to find connections between the different sections and also their ties with the literature. After that I transcribed all the recorded interviews in Persian and read them all thoroughly. The interview data revealed the major categories themselves. The data was coded based on the emerging themes and sub themes. To conduct data analysis, I followed Wolcott's (1994) suggestions of data descriptions, data analysis, and data interpretation. I did my best to be faithful to the teachers' viewpoints and avoid biased interpretation of the data. Data analysis suggested a number of themes which have been categorized into the strengths and weaknesses of the community.

G. Ethical Considerations

In keeping with the University of Exeter ethics guidelines, all the necessary ethical procedures were followed. The participants were informed fully of the purpose of the research and a written information sheet explaining the details, the purpose of the research and information regarding their anonymity, confidentiality and the fact that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw any time during the research accompanied the consent form. In addition, the institute's permission was required for all the interviews after the details and the purpose of the study were explained to the managing director of the institute.

H. Limitation of the Study

There is an extensive research base on the benefits of a professional learning community. Nevertheless, little has been said about the challenges, threats and the solutions. This study can contribute to the knowledge and better understanding of a PLC especially in Iran where there is almost no literature on professional learning communities. It can also provide a lesson for other professional learning communities with similar structures. This study is limited owing to the fact that it is a small scale qualitative study with a limited number of participants. Therefore, the results are not generalizable and representative of a particular population. They can, however, be transferrable to similar contexts.

V. FINDINGS

This section aims to clarify the results of the data analysis which has been categorized based on the research questions into the two main themes of strengths of the PLC and the threats to the PLC. Some extracts from the interviews reflecting each theme have been selected. What follows is an explanation of each theme. For ease of matching the extracts with the two groups, the pseudonyms of the participants from each group are as follows:

Group A: Nina, Elly, Rim, Mariam, and Sara

Group B: Fanya, Sally, and Eric

A. Strengths

Dynamic work context, management policy, and a nexus of focus communities are among the themes arising out of the interviews concerning the positive attributes of the community.

• Dynamic work context

All the interviewed participants are of the opinion that their community is a dynamic one encouraging everyone to be up-to-date. Nina says, "This institute naturally pushes you forward to learn". She compares this institute with her previous work places and believes that the current institute has altered her outlook on teaching. She adds, "When I entered this institute, I felt that the teachers here were a lot more professional than me. This made me want to learn more. I bought some books on methodology and even decided to do my MA in teaching". Elly believes that the diversity of the teachers in terms of age, experience, academic knowledge, and personalities has added to the dynamic nature of this community. Rima is of the opinion that to survive in a dynamic environment, one has no way but to stay dynamic as an individual". Fanya shares her personal experience and explains, "When I entered this institute, I didn't have formal education in teaching. Taking part in different communities within the institute inspired me to gain expert knowledge and the confidence that have enabled me now to discuss issues in the field with the ones with formal education". She also adds, "I do consider this place a learning community".

• Management Policy

"We have always been asked to discover new talents", says one of the participants from group B. She adds that the general policy in the institute is to look out for the teachers with talents and provide opportunities to nurture them. She concludes that the community today is grounded on the philosophy of talent discovery". In this regard, Rima says, "contrary to other institutes, we were seen here. We've been told what we are good at and we have made it bolder in our teaching". Eric, calls this community a strong learning one despite all its challenges and mentions and believes that this community is one-of-a-kind in Iran. With regard to the expectations existing in the institute, Rima states that if the people in charge were not demanding, the teachers might not feel the need to work hard and put in the necessary effort. Elly holds that the high expectations of the institute can motivate the teachers to work harder in order to shine. Eric confirms this point by saying that even the most indifferent teachers have also grown due to the general expectations in the institute. Their growth is not substantial but adequate to put them on the right track. Fanya also adds, "Our weakest teachers have even had some development, and this does not take place everywhere".

• A nexus of focus communities

Due to the large number of teachers, smaller communities each with a particular focus geared toward the same vision have been created for teachers to join. It is expected that joining these communities can help teachers meet their professional needs of different kinds. Teachers across all levels are always encouraged to get involved in these learning groups; however, joining some such as the learning communities for the new teachers is mandatory. Rima calls communities for the novice teachers the best and biggest change which has ever taken place at the institute. She believes that this community has broken the ice and replaced resistance with flexibility. Mariam, one of the participants from group A, emphasizes how helpful observing classes of the senior members of the community as one of the follow-up tasks assigned in her group has been. She, then, shares a personal experience of her first term working at the institute and mentions, "while observing a model class, I told myself ...aha... this is the standard they expect from me". Sara, another participant from group A, explains, "Peer observation within the communities has brought about keen competition pushing you to do something for your own professional growth". Elly says that she envies the new teachers and believes that the kind of service they receive cannot be found anywhere else in town. In this regard, Dufour and Dufour (2010) mention that a successful learning community is a facilitator in the hiring process as it provides a smooth transition for the newly-hired teachers and never lets the traditional swim-or-sink approach happen again.

It is evident that collective learning takes place more easily in smaller communities than in larger ones. Fanya also talks about the professional dialogue in these groups and mentions how much these dialogues have promoted professional growth and learning. There is a consensus among the participants that the existence of several communities within one large community has also added to the *dynamic* nature of the PLC. They add that collective learning and professional dialog have contributed to both the bond among teachers and their professional development.

B. Threats

There is a consensus among participants that in recent years many teachers have detached themselves from different communities within the institute and there has been a sharp decrease in the number of teachers who willingly want to join. Sally from group B mentions that there isn't enough motivation for all to take part in learning communities and those who have stayed are intrinsically motivated. She further continues, "We haven't been able to convince everyone to join". Another participant from group B believes that the institute once created a great PLC; however, their recent

policies have damaged this community. When asked why they think the learning communities are suffering from teacher attrition the following themes emerged:

- **Teacher's sense of belonging**

One of the participants from group B is of the opinion that the institute has not been able to create a sense of belonging in the teachers. She further explains that if the management does not have a long-term policy, long-term planning for teachers never happens and as a result, sense of belonging is never built in teachers. Another teacher from the aforementioned group explains that adequate acknowledgement does not exist and this, undoubtedly, ruins one's sense of belonging. One's job will not be considered his/her top priority any longer. Despite the fact that there isn't much systematic research on teachers' sense of belonging, there should be a positive correlation among teachers' sense of belonging, motivation, and job satisfaction (Skaalvik&Skaalvik, 2011).

- **Teacher's view of the profession**

"Some of the teachers working here, especially female teachers do not see teaching as their career. As their pastime, they take a few classes", says Fanya. The participants from group B explain that male teachers who are mostly the major breadwinners of their families view teaching as a source of income. Instead of spending time in learning communities, they can take a couple more classes and make more money. Rima mentions limitations of different kinds such as time, personality, and teaching limitations and explains that these limitations have prevented some teachers to get their promotions. She adds that this has created a sort of enmity between those who have managed to get promotions and those, especially the veterans, who have failed. She believes the veterans do not hold a professional view and blame others for their faults.

- **Infrastructure**

Two of the teachers from group A express their concerns about teacher morale and the "so what?" question that occupies their minds. Participants from group A point out that teachers in this institute are recently under a lot of pressure to reach the standard. Their putting a lot of effort may in the long run backfire and makes them reach the "so what?" threshold. Sally confirms this point by saying, "There's no gain". Other participants from group B explain that there are no perks and continue that their professional growth can hardly be turned into a pay raise. Eric quotes from the teachers working in the institute, "they want me as long as I can work like a tractor. As soon as I lose steam, they say goodbye".

In a study on factors contributing to Iranian EFL teachers' emotional exhaustion, Mahmoudi-Shahreabaki (2015) identifies income as one of the major stressors for teachers making them consider quitting. He explains that teachers explicitly state that their efforts for professional development do not influence their income. He also called the income factor as the number one reason for teachers' frustration, lack of interest or in a word "compassion fatigue" (Chang , as cited in Mahmoudi-Shahreabaki , 2015).

Teachers in group B hold that the degradation of their learning community is due to lack of transparency and job security. They hold that teachers' being given two-month contracts have greatly disillusioned the teachers about their profession. Consequently, teachers cannot visualize a future in the institute as they believe they are more assumed as short-term teachers and that is the reason teachers are not invested in. Fanya complains about the dearth of transparency in the institute's promotion and pay raise policies. "Teachers should be clear on what they gain besides professional growth", mentions Fanya. Sally confirms this point by mentioning that the institute needs to have a much stronger organizational plan. She adds that at the moment it is more like a "come what may" policy". Most of the participants believe that frustration has led to a sort of non-cooperation and disobedience mostly witnessed among the senior teachers.

Cynicism among veterans might prompt resistance to PLCs as they might refuse to take part in the meetings of PLC. Evans (2001) states that "teacher-centered" leaders build the right work context for their teachers as they show as much care and interest in the individual teacher's well-being and welfare as child-centered teachers towards their students. She continues that in teacher-centered leadership approaches, the work context is grounded in tolerance, cooperation, compromise and consideration for others. In such an approach, leaders are also expected to explicitly clarify their ways of operating or in Evan's words "lay their cards on the table and allow teachers to see a hand they could expect to be dealt if they accepted a specific post" (p.304). In other words, she emphasizes the importance of transparency and explains that in such a work-context, teachers' morale is higher and teachers exhibit a more positive job-related attitude.

- **Flawed dialogue**

Sara mentions fear and explains that fear of judgement and losing face deters community members from opening up, sharing their stories and asking their questions with ease. She believes that the atmosphere is not always teacher-friendly. Sally confirms this point by saying, "interaction among members has faded away. Managers should know that dialogue is the basis of each community". It's very unlikely that teachers partake in peer observation, feedback, and discussion if they do not feel safe (Stoll, et al, 2006).

Through reflection, teachers assess their practices to ensure they are in line with their beliefs and values. According to Grey (2011), engaging in professional dialogue helps create a professional learning environment in which teachers reflect on authentic situations and can be exposed to new ideas and perspectives. Sharing personal stories and thoughts can nevertheless promote anxiety (Fook&Askelund, as cited in Grey, 2011). Grey further mentions that a trusting context can guarantee teachers' feeling of safety in sharing their personal stories and exchanging constructive feedback.

In addition, deep reflection which is considered to be “the cornerstone of a true PLC” does not take place unless the atmosphere is supportive and nonjudgmental (Pirtle&Tobia, 2014, P. 4).

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There is no denying the fact that professional learning community is embedded in today’s world of education (Stoll & Louis, 2007) as Schomker (as cited in Dufour&Dufour, 2010) states we are approaching a milestone in the history of education as in the future “the absence of a strong PLC in a school is an embarrassment” (p. 431). Building a PLC requires alterations to the way schools operate and how professionals try to promote success for every single student (Talbert, 2010). PLC construction, however, is a formidable challenge which is worth the effort.

This study was conducted in the hope of evaluating a professional learning community within an English language institute to detect the threats to its survival from the viewpoints of some of the teachers and the members of the board of studies. I am of the opinion that assessment in schools should not be mainly directed to student evaluation. It is time to assess PLCs as well. After establishing one, a learning community needs maintenance. Otherwise, it might simply wither. In addition to challenges, the strengths of a PLC need to be recognized and fostered to help the ones in charge to better cope with its threats.

All participants from both groups confirmed that their community is a PLC after features of a professional learning community were briefly discussed. The analysis of the data uncovered three major strengths the current PLC enjoys. The dynamic work context, management policy, and a nexus of focus communities are the plus points. The word *dynamic* was the most recurrent word which the members used with pride to describe their community. They all held that this major characteristic is a driving force in bringing about change in several aspects of their career structure including their professional outlooks and plans. The dynamic nature of this context cannot have been created by accident. Conscious and deliberate attempts keep it vigorous. Moreover, talent discovery helps to promote its dynamic nature. The philosophy of nurturing professionals from within the institute suggests that teachers are viewed more as its capital. When teachers feel that they are seen and are not left in the margin, they want to stay, develop, and be involved in the current professional evolution. The existence of a nexus of focus communities is another advantage mentioned by the participants. One single learning community cannot take place within a large institute with a large number of teachers. Instead, it has been broken down into smaller communities. Having smaller communities, which share the same vision and mission, can create a better cohesion among the members and give these communities better chances of survival. The diversity among the teachers in terms of experience and knowledge can help teachers to be involved in vertical dialogues which they find rich and thought-provoking. The dialogues especially the ones in the communities of novice teachers are based on their authentic practices as they are engaged in peer and group observation in which one teacher or groups of teachers observe either a veteran teacher or one of the fellow members of the group. In the former observation, standards can be both set and seen and the latter can create competition among teachers.

Participants from both groups, however, held that except for the community of the newly-hired teachers which is mandatory, their PLC has recently deteriorated. They consider teacher attrition as the main contributing factor. When asked why they think their communities are suffering from attrition, the analysis of the data revealed sense of belonging, teacher’s view of the profession, infrastructure and flawed dialogue as the major reasons. Sense of belonging has been shattered as teachers cannot see themselves in the institute long-term policies. Obviously, this feeling leads to more detachment as teachers begin to think of plan B and other alternatives outside the institute. Although some teachers in group A were satisfied with the institute’s recognition of their talents, the participants in Group B complained about a dearth of recognition. It seems as if talent discovery can serve as recognition temporarily and the ones in charge should also consider other ways of appreciation. Some of the teachers are said to be indifferent towards the institute as they do not consider teaching as their career. They just teach to fill their free time. Others see teaching as merely a source of income and never want to sell their hours for nothing when they can make money. Teachers’ explicit defiance has its roots in their feelings towards the institute as they see no transparency, job security and monetary value in their participation. These have caused the *so what* question. In addition, the two-and-a-half-month contract can provoke cynicism as I believe the length of the contract itself is contrary to the view of professionalism. Anxiety resulting from an unsafe dialogue can terminate a community as the major tool that can unite the members and help the community to mature is interaction. If members do not feel safe, they either resort to avoidance when they are present or prefer to not attend.

There is no doubt that PLC should be added to the recipe of teacher development. This study, however suggests that establishing a PLC does not suffice and its sustenance requires regular maintenance due to its vulnerability. Its challenges and threats to its survival should be identified regularly and action should be taken to restrict its threats and keep it fresh and vigorous. Teachers are the major building blocks of a community and motivation and a sense of purpose is its cohesive force. Taking care of a PLC means taking care of the teachers and providing the infrastructure that gives teachers adequate motivation to join and a reason to stay. Stoll and Louis (2007) maintain that a professional learning community can survive providing that the needs of the humans are taken into consideration. They also add that due attention should be paid to not only the culture of PLC but also the priorities of the people of the community. Setbacks, conflicts, and challenges are inevitable, but what matters is taking the challenges seriously and making an effort to resolve them. In fact, Dufour and Dufour (2010) believe that educators’ responses to the setbacks and mistakes

can contribute to either success or failure of a PLC. This study once again emphasizes strong ties between the PLC and leadership support. The ones in charge should provide the condition in a way that joining a PLC makes sense.

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

1. Is your community a professional learning community? Why?
2. What are the plus points of your learning community?
3. What are the challenges and the threats to your community?
4. What causes these challenges and threats?
5. How do you see the dialogue in your community?
6. How has this community affected your professional life?

APPENDIX B

فانیا: باید sense of belonging بوجود بیاد یعنی در اثر professional development شما sense of belonging بهم میزنید. چون من اینجا professional development داشتم در من sense of belonging بوجود اومده. مثل چیزی که خودتون پرورش دادین، علاقه ندارین ر هاش کنید. ولی بنظر من موسسه نتونسته sense of belonging در افراد ایجاد کنه (جدیدا) که فکر کنند متعلق به اینجا هستند. یعنی تعصب اینجا رو داشته باشن. چون هدف موسسه longterm نیست و هیچگونه longterm plan برای معلمهاش نداره. نتونسته اونقدر موفق بشه که بتونه این حس رو در همه ایجاد کنه که همه بخوان درش رشد کنند.

سالی: مرکزی که درش community ایجاد میشه یاد بتونه افراد رو دور هم نگه داره. این وجود نداشته، موسسه احساس میکنم که آگه بخواد نیاز به افراد رو express کنه این براتش افته. در حالیکه موسسه باید جوری plan کنه که اطلاع بده من به شما پنج سال نیاز دارم.

فانیا: acknowledgement اینجا خیلی کم وجود داره یعنی همیشه punishment هست و praise به موقع وجود نداره.

سالی: حتی کلامی هم این praise وجود نداره. خوب مسلماً sense of belonging رو از بین میبره و کار اینجا رو شما میگذارین توی حاشیه.

اریک: حتی کسانی که انگیزه درونی دارن وارد این گروهها که میشن، کل هم میکنند و یا دلسوزی دارن آروم آروم توی این راه خسته میشن، فرسایشی میشه، میبینند اون چیزی که میخواستن نیستی مدیریت هم شور تو رو نمیزنه. برخورد کادر و سایر افراد آدم رو دلسود میکنه. آگه ادامه بدی با اون کیفیت انجام نمیدی. Professional development درسته که انگیزه میخواد ولی بیرونش باید خیلی چیزها فراهم باشه.

فانیا: اول باید هدف مشخص باشه باید goal focused باشه بعدش هم توسط موسسه support بشه. درسته که افراد بطور فردی ممکنه بدنیال professional development باشن ولی این تو محدوده کوچکی هست. آگه همه بخوان involve باشن باید institutional support باشه.

اریک: چیزی که ما اینجا نداریم مزایاست. موسسه من رو support نمیکنه کمک مالی، روحی، مشاوره، وام... من فقط اینجا هستم که کار کنم تا زمانیکه رmq دارم و بعد که رmq تمام شد مثل تر اکتوری که دیگه کل نمیکنه خداحافظ.

Fanya: Sense of belonging should be created and this sense can be built through professional development. The sense of belonging created in me was due to the fact that I had professional development here. It's like something you have nurtured. You don't like to leave it. I believe the institute has [recently] not been able to create and develop this sense and make the teachers believe that they belong to the institute and make them have strong feelings about it. It's because of the fact that the goal of the institute is not long-term and it does not have any long-term plans for the teachers. It hasn't managed to create this sense in the teachers to make them want to stay and develop here.

Sally: when a community is created, the institute should be able to retain the people. This has not been here. I think, the people in charge never express their needs to the individuals. They think it is below them. The institute should have a sort of planning that expresses its need. For example they should say we need you for five years.

Fanya: There is little acknowledgement here. There is always punishment but there is no timely praise.

Sally: Even verbal praise does not exist, so obviously sense of belonging does not develop and your work here is not your top priority any longer.

Eric: Even those with intrinsic motivation, gradually get demotivated and feel burnout for they see that it is not what they want. Even the directors are not as concerned as you are about the institute. The attitude of the staff disappoints you. If you continue working, it won't be with the same quality. It's true that professional development requires intrinsic motivation, but lots of things should be provided outside.

Fanya: The goal should be identified. It should be goal-focused. It also needs to be supported by the institute. It's true that individuals might want to follow professional development on their own, but it is limited. If you want to involve everyone, there needs to be institutional support.

Eric: What we don't have here is perks. The institute does not support us..financially, spiritually, no consultations for teachers, no loans. I'm just here to work as long as I can, and the time I run out of steam...just like a tractor...they will say goodbye.

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How Explicit Listening Strategy Instruction Affects Listening Comprehension of Different Learners

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Abstract—Listening has been a growing interest of EFL/ESL researchers and teachers in the last 50 years because the majority of learners view listening as one of the most problematic skills. Recently, there have been discussions on teaching listening with the emphasis on strategy instruction for better achievement in listening comprehension. Hence, the researcher designed this quantitative study to help learners overcome their problem. The aim of this experimental research is to investigate whether explicit instruction of listening strategies s listening skill of different learner types. The study was conducted in an English language academy in Iran with 135 high-Intermediate EFL participants for 10 sessions. A pre-/post-test design was selected for data collection. The results revealed that all learners showed a higher mean score in the post-test than the pre-test but with a slight difference in improvement of listening comprehension of different learner types.

Index Terms—listening strategy instruction, listening comprehension, learner types

I. INTRODUCTION

As listening has been an important part of language programmes (Brown, 2006; Clement, 2007; Richards and Burns, 2012), some second language (L2) listening scholars argued that it should be taught in a more theoretically-informed manner in the classroom (Brown, 2006; Vandergrift, 2007). A conscious plan is needed in listening comprehension to deal with problems (like incomplete understanding) that a listener might encounter with while listening (Richards and Schmidt, 2007). The listeners are of different types and the teacher should take their types of learning into consideration. It makes learning easier when the learning material suits the student's learning style (Ehrman and Leaver, 2003). Learning styles refer to any individual characteristics of a learner which are their natural and preferred habits of learning (Reid, 1995). These different styles of learning result in different learner types. The interwoven of psychological, socio-cultural and educational backgrounds comprise learner types (Willing, 1993).

Although there is a profound research on listening strategy training, there is a dearth of research on its influence on the listening comprehension of different types of learners. Thus, this paper will explain whether explicit instruction of listening strategies has any statistically significant impact on the listening comprehension of different learner types.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Richards and Schmidt (2007) defined listening comprehension as the process of understanding speech in a first or second language. The study of listening comprehension processes in L2 learning focuses on the role of individual linguistic units, the listener's characteristics, context or the situation, background knowledge and the topic. It therefore includes both 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' processing (Vandergrift, 2007). Although the importance of teaching listening comprehension was underemphasized in traditional language teaching approaches, more recent approaches emphasize the role of listening in language competence development (Field, 1998; Liu, 2009; Richards and Burn, 2012; Zhang, 2012; Graham and Santos, 2015; Jacobsen, 2015). The researchers also believe that teaching listening in the initial stages of second or foreign language learning should gain more attention. Oxford (2011) defines language learning strategies as the techniques that are utilized by learners to improve the use of target language information. L2 listening research in recent years has focused on understanding listening strategies and how second language learners manipulate them to cope with their difficulties while listening. Listening strategy has become an integral part of L2 listening research (Graham, *et al.*, 2008). Research in L2 listening has been increasingly directed to recognize facilitative strategies and clarify listener's mental processes (Cross, 2012). The interest in listening comprehension strategies has evolved in a number of research studies (Graham and Macaro, 2008; Siegel, 2012; Jacobsen, 2015). Listening strategies according to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), is classified by how the listener processes the input. Vandergrift (2007) categorized listening strategies into three macro groups: cognitive, meta-cognitive, and social/affective strategies. Cognitive strategies are used by language learners to process, store, and recall new information (Goh, 2000). Two broad types of cognitive strategies have been the subject of L2 listening research: bottom-up and top-down. Bottom-up strategies are text based. They involve word-for-word translation, adjusting the rate of speech, repeating the oral text, and focusing on prosodic features of the text. While top-down strategies are

listener based. They include predicting, inferencing, elaborating, and visualization (Mendelsohn, 2001; Vandergrift, 2007). Meta-cognitive strategies are management techniques by which learners control their learning through planning, directed attention, selective attention, monitoring, and evaluating (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 2007). Modifying was also added to metacognitive subcategories by Rubin (2011). As Oxford (2011) puts, the conscious use of meta-cognitive strategies helps learners get back their attention when it is lost. However, learners do not use meta-cognitive strategies very frequently despite the importance of self-monitoring and self-evaluation. Social/affective strategies have been classified into two categories: cooperation and confidence building. The former is used for explanation and clarification and the latter one for encouraging oneself to be able to think positively and to be relaxed (Vandergrift, 2007; Liu, 2010). In a number of research studies, it has been demonstrated that skilled learners use more strategies than their less-skilled counterparts. In addition, there were differences in the types of strategies skilled and less-skilled learners applied (Guan, 2014). Empirical studies have found that an important distinction between skilled and less skilled L2 listeners lies in their use of meta-cognitive strategies (e.g., O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Goh, 2000; Vandergrift, 2004). Vandergrift (2007) discovered that skilled listeners utilized twice as many meta-cognitive strategies as their less-skilled counterparts. According to research studies by Berman (2003), O'Malley et al. (1990) and Young (1997), listening strategies include three different steps: pre-listening, while listening (identifying main ideas, note taking, processing details, determining the relationships of ideas, guessing vocabulary from context, identifying pronoun referents), and post-listening strategies. Based on a research by O'Malley et al. (1990) and Young (1997), six listening strategies are inferencing, elaboration, self-monitoring, summarization, self-evaluation, and toleration of ambiguity.

On the other hand, there are various learner types with different preferences and teachers should be aware of these differences while teaching each language skill since the students learn more effectively if the teaching method is in consistent with their type of learning (Flowerdew and Miller, 2010). The main focus of research studies was learning styles and preferences in the mid-1920s (e.g. Willing, 1993; Reid, 1995). These different performances of learners on learning activities while they were taught via the same instructor and the same teaching methodology became an important issue and concern for the researchers (Reid, 1999). Therefore, a great body of research has been conducted in the area of learning styles since then. For example, Chen (2009) conducted a research study to investigate the relationship between perceptual learning style preferences, grade level, and language learning strategies among Taiwanese high school students and concluded that teachers should be aware of the differences in their students and present the information in a way that appeals to every individual. In another study, Chen and Hung (2012) investigated the impact of personality type on learning style and language learning strategies. There were 364 Taiwanese senior high school students as the participants of the study. Based on their conclusion, there is a significant relationship between personality type, learning style, and language learning strategies.

Mehrpour and Motlagh (2015) investigated how motivation and attitude affect English language learning, learning style, and gender. 154 Iranian EFL learners participated in the study. The result of their research study indicated that the majority of learners were either auditory or visual and there was not a significant correlation between learners' language proficiency and learning style. There are some other researchers who have investigated the effect teaching writing skill on the writing skill of different learner styles (e.g. Young, 2010; Sahragard and Mallahi, 2014) and concluded that there is a strong correlation between teachers' teaching methodology and achievement of different learners with various style of learning preferences.

All of the aforementioned researchers have measured the participants' learning style preferences through use of either Willing (1993) or Reid (1999) model. Willing (1993) proposed a model for different types of learners, categorizing them into four main groups, namely concrete, analytical, authority-oriented, and communicative learners. Reid (1999) has classified learner types in three main different groups: cognitive, personality, and sensory learning styles in which there are some sub-categories. In this research study, sensory learning style is taken into account which is divided into four groups named as visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and tactile learner types.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays, listening has gained widespread attention of EFL learners worldwide. Thus, learners are in need of some strategies to help them overcome their listening obstacles. In such a case, teachers are the only ones who can guide their students by teaching them listening strategies. From the literature, it is obvious that there has been lots of studies on learning styles, teaching methodologies, and listening strategy instruction separately (e.g. Graham and Macaro, 2008; Graham and Santos, 2015; Jacobsen, 2015; Zhang, 2015; Zarrabi, 2016), but to the best of author's knowledge there is no research on the effect of explicit instruction of listening strategies on the listening comprehension skill of different learner types. Therefore, the current study is designed to shed more light on the issue of "Do all learner styles benefit from listening strategy instruction?" and fill the gap in this area.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The current study sought to examine how explicit teaching of listening strategies influences the listening comprehension of different learner types. The literature review showed that while many studies have investigated the

listening strategies and how skilled and less skilled learners apply them, little or no research has examined the impact of listening strategy instruction on the listening comprehension of different learner types. Regarding the mentioned purpose, one basic research question was raised:

Q1: Does explicit instruction of listening strategies have any statistically significant impact on the listening comprehension skill of different Iranian intermediate learner types?

Participants

150 high-intermediate Iranian EFL students in 14 (10-12 students per class) classes of a private English language institute were chosen as the participants of the study. Different listening strategies were taught to the subjects through various listening tasks other than the ones in their regular curriculum (English Result Intermediate). The subjects were all female language learners aged from 15 to 40 and with Persian as their L1. After homogenization of the participants through FCE proficiency test, twenty subjects were disqualified and brought the total number of the subjects down to 135.

Instrumentation

Two sets of materials were applied in the current research study: firstly for the purpose of instruction (instructional materials) and, secondly, for measuring participants' abilities (tests).

- Instructional materials

Listening strategy instructions were designed and presented in ten sessions (each session = 90min) within course requirements.

- Coursebook

The subjects in this study were all taught the same through "English Result Series" intermediate level by Mark Hancock & Annie McDonald (2009) as their course book. Furthermore, the sources from which the listening tasks for intermediate EFL learners were selected and applied in listening strategies instructions, were "Q Skills for Success 4 (Listening and Speaking)" by Freire and Jones (2011), "Open Forum 2 (Academic listening and speaking)" by Blackwell and Naber (2006), and "Tactics for listening (Advanced)" by Richards (2011).

- Listening strategies

Iranian EFL/ESL students are studying English for different purposes; some love learning it, some want to be prepared to take standardized English tests or to study at a university abroad, and some for migration. Regarding the above mentioned fact, listening is one of the vital skills which should be taught and is not something that is gained naturally (Nunan, 2002). Some researchers have categorized listening strategies into different groups. For example, Berman (2003) has listed listening strategy in three main steps which are: (a) pre-listening strategies, (b) while listening strategies, and (c) post-listening strategies. In addition, other researchers' listening strategies categorization such as O'Malley et al. (1989) and Young (1997) were implemented and instructed to the participants in this study.

- Tests

In this study, four sets of test were applied: FCE test, listening comprehension pre-test, Reid's learner type questionnaire, and listening comprehension post-test. The pre-tests and post-tests had four parts: two parts to test listening for details and two parts to test listening for the main ideas. Each of these tests is discussed in more details below.

- FCE test

First Certificate of English (FCE) language proficiency test is employed in this study for homogenizing the participants. FCE consists of four sections to evaluate the students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English language. The FCE proficiency test in this study had four main parts including three-part reading with 30 items, two-part writing, four-part use of English with 42 items, and the last part dealt with listening with 30 items. The recommended time for the test was 225 minutes. Firstly, the test was piloted with a group of 26 participants similar to the target sample (as the control group) prior to its main administration.

- Listening Comprehension Pre-test

A listening comprehension pre-test was taken from the participants to measure their listening comprehension in the first session. The listening pre-test was derived from the Cambridge website. It was checked regarding IF and ID. The test consisted four parts including: eight short pieces of monologue or conversation with 3-option multiple-choice items focusing on detail, gist, opinion, purpose, topic, and relationship; one monologue or conversation with 10 sentence completion items focusing on understanding of specific information given in the piece; five short monologues with five matching items with the same focus as part 1; and one interview or discussion with seven 3-option multiple-choice items focusing on understanding of detail, gist, opinion, and attitude.

- Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (Reid, 1995)

Reid questionnaire (1998) consists of 30 items which identifies learners' preferred medium of learning among four different learning styles including visual, auditory, tactile/haptic, and kinaesthetic. In this questionnaire, every item is followed by five options including; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Undecided, D = Disagree, and SD = Strongly Disagree. The participants were asked to fill out this questionnaire.

- Listening Comprehension Post-test

A listening comprehension post-test with the same qualifications as the listening comprehension pre-test was given to the participants to examine the effect of the researcher's methodology on them.

Procedure

The main purpose of the current study was to investigate the impact of listening strategy instruction on the listening comprehension of different learner types. Firstly, all the available one hundred and fifty participants participated in the first phase of the study, which was homogenization of the participants. Prior to the study, the subjects were informed about the main goal of the study.

For the purpose of having homogenized participants, they were initially tested using the FCE test. Those participants who scored above the mean were chosen as the main participants of the study. Accordingly, the number of participants decreased to 135. Then, to gain information about the participants' learner types, they were asked to fill Reid's perceptual learning styles questionnaire.

The participants received 10 sessions of listening strategies instruction. Brief explanation of strategies which were developed by different researchers such as Young (1997), O'Malley et al. (1989), Celece-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), and Berman (2003) were written on paper. These printouts were given to the students on the first session but each strategy was taught and emphasized in each separate session. In each session, the researcher went through the course book just as usual and then she asked the participants to use the presented listening strategies in listening parts. By doing so, the researcher got feedback from the participants and made sure whether they understood these listening strategies and their objectives. The other nine sessions had just the same procedure as the first, and one of the listening strategies was highlighted in every single session. At the end, the obtained data was analysed to test the proposed research question of the study.

Design

This study had a pre-test/post-test design, and the participants were chosen through non-random selection. As one of the prerequisites of a true experimental design which is random assignment of participants is not met, this study has a quasi-experimental design. This study had one dependent variable which was listening comprehension ability. The independent variable was the instruction: explicit teaching of listening strategies and learner type was considered as the moderator variable. Furthermore, control variables of the study were language proficiency level and gender because the participants were all female and at the intermediate level. The participants were first homogenized through using FCE exam. Then, they had a listening comprehension pre-test and in the succeeding sessions, they went through the instruction sessions and after that, a listening comprehension post-test was administered in the last session.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This study was designed to examine how explicit teaching of listening strategies influences listening comprehension of Iranian intermediate learner types. First, it initiates with the results of testing assumptions, then, the statistical procedures used for the measurement of the aforementioned variables will be elaborated. Finally, the data will be analysed in order to answer the research question.

The Result of Testing Assumptions

There are four assumptions which need to be considered before running parametric tests (Field 2013): the participants should perform independently, homogeneous variances of the groups should be met, normal distribution of data is important, and an interval scale should be used for measuring the data. All four above mentioned assumptions are met in this study. As displayed in Table 1 the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their respective standard errors are within the ranges of +/- 1.6 (Field 2013).

TABLE 1.
NORMALITY OF THE TESTS

Learner Code		N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
			Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio
Auditory	FCE	24	-0.518	0.472	-1.097	-0.621	0.918	-0.676
	Pretest	24	0.167	0.472	0.354	-1.097	0.918	-1.195
	Posttest	24	-0.317	0.472	-0.672	-1.174	0.918	-1.279
Kinaesthetic	FCE	53	-0.420	0.327	-1.284	-0.561	0.644	-0.871
	Pretest	53	0.432	0.327	1.321	0.152	0.644	0.236
	Posttest	53	-0.078	0.327	-0.239	-0.501	0.644	-0.778
Tactile	FCE	15	-0.590	0.580	-1.017	-0.257	1.121	-0.229
	Pretest	15	-0.875	0.580	-1.509	-0.298	1.121	-0.266
	Posttest	15	-0.832	0.580	-1.434	-0.540	1.121	-0.482
Visual	FCE	43	-0.148	0.361	-0.410	-0.710	0.709	-1.001
	Pretest	43	0.556	0.361	1.540	-0.077	0.709	-0.109
	Posttest	43	0.214	0.361	0.593	-0.485	0.709	-0.684

The Results of Piloting the FCE Proficiency Test

A one-way ANOVA was run to prove that the participants are homogeneous regarding their level of general language proficiency prior to the main study. Based on the results in Table 2, the Levene's F-value of 1.32 is not significant ($P = 0.270 > 0.05$).

TABLE 2.
LEVENE'S TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES; PROFICIENCY TEST

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.324	3	131	0.270

The results in Table 3 shows ($F(3, 131) = 0.648, P = 0.585 > 0.05; \omega^2 = 0.008$) which is a weak effect size. Therefore, it is concluded that there are no significant differences between the mean scores of the four learner types on the proficiency test. Thus, it can be claimed that they are all in the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study.

TABLE 3.
TWO-WAY ANOVA PROFICIENCY BY LEARNER TYPES

Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	132.506	44.169	0.648	0.585
Within Groups	8926.798	68.143		
Total	9059.304	134		

As it is displayed in Table 4, the mean scores of the auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile/haptic and visual groups on the proficiency test are 82.38, 81.75, 82.13 and 79.91 respectively (Figure 1).

TABLE 4.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS PROFICIENCY BY LEARNER TYPE

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Auditory	24	82.38	9.160	1.870	78.51	86.24	62	95
Kinaesthetic	53	81.75	8.642	1.187	79.37	84.14	60	94
Tactile	15	82.13	7.800	2.014	77.81	86.45	66	93
Visual	43	79.91	7.338	1.119	77.65	82.17	65	93
Total	135	81.32	8.222	0.708	79.92	82.72	60	95

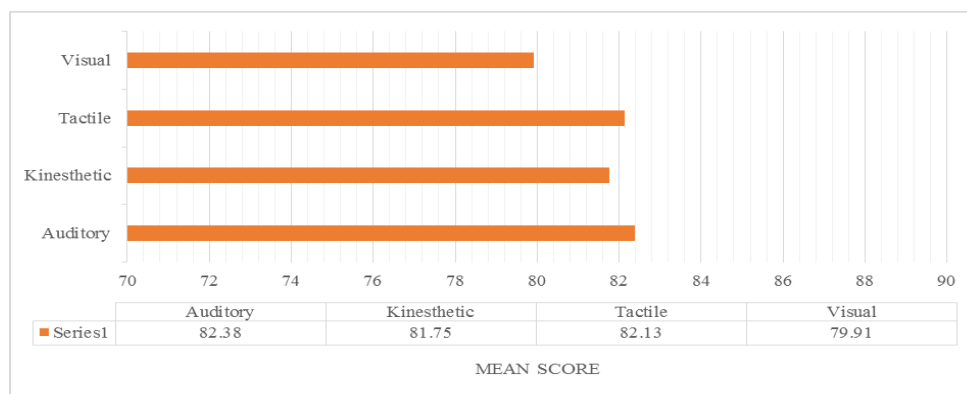


Figure 1. FCE Proficiency Test by Learner Types

The Results of Piloting the Listening Comprehension Pre-Test

A one-way ANOVA was run to investigate the listening comprehension skill of different learner types (auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile/haptic, and visual) by taking a pre-test of listening comprehension before the intervention. Table 5 demonstrates that the Levene's F-value of 0.771 is not significant ($P = 0.512 > 0.05$).

TABLE 5.
LEVENE'S TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES; LISTENING COMPREHENSION PRE-TEST

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
0.771	3	131	0.512

A two-way ANOVA was run to compare different learner types in the listening comprehension pre-test. As it is shown in Table 6 ($F(3, 131) = 0.104, P = 0.958 > 0.05; \omega^2 = 0.02$), there is a weak effect size. Thus, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the four learner types on the listening comprehension pre-test. Thus, it is claimed that the participants' level of listening comprehension ability were the same before the intervention.

TABLE 6.
TWO-WAY ANOVA PRE-TEST OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION BY LEARNER TYPES

Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.444	0.481	0.104	0.958
Within Groups	606.289	4.628		
Total	607.733	134		

According to the information in Table 7, the mean scores of the auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile/haptic, and visual groups on the listening comprehension pre-test are 11.71, 11.55, 11.87, and 11.58 respectively (Figure 2).

TABLE 7.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS PRE-TEST OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION BY LEARNER TYPE

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Auditory	24	11.71	1.899	0.388	10.91	12.51	9	15
Kinaesthetic	53	11.55	2.366	0.325	10.89	12.20	6	18
Tactile	15	11.87	1.846	0.477	10.84	12.89	8	14
Visual	43	11.58	2.096	0.320	10.94	12.23	8	17
Total	135	11.62	2.130	0.183	11.26	11.98	6	18

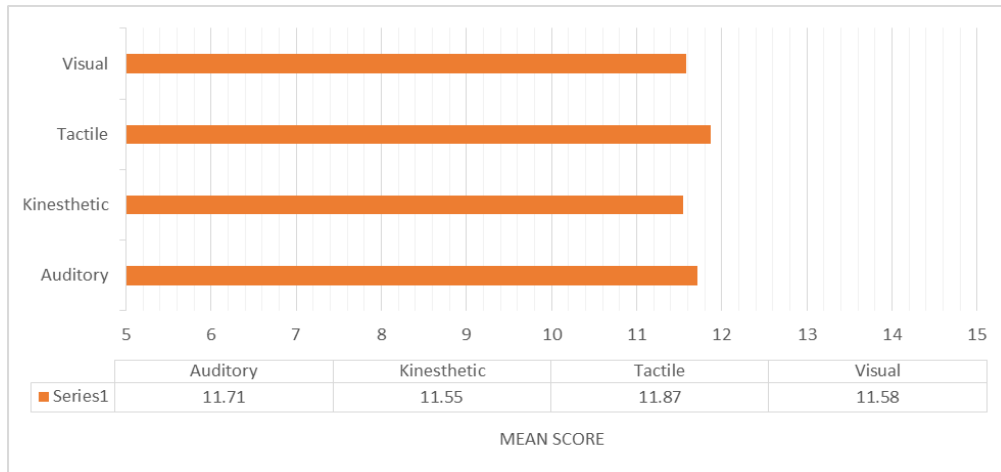


Figure 2. Pre-test of Listening Comprehension by Learner Types

In order to investigate whether explicit instruction of listening strategies has statistically significant effect on the listening comprehension of different Iranian intermediate learner types or not, the researcher needed to run a paired-samples t-test to compare the students’ mean scores on the pre-test and post-test of listening comprehension. The results of the paired-samples t-test ($t(134) = 61.42, P = 0.000 < 0.05, R = 0.98$) represents a large effect size and indicates that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the students on the pre-test and post-test of listening comprehension (Table 8).

TABLE 8.
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Paired Differences		Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean	Std. Deviation					
12.281	2.323	0.200	Lower 11.886 Upper 12.677	61.420	134	0.000

The students after receiving explicit instruction of listening strategies showed a higher mean score on the post-test ($M = 23.90$) than the pre-test ($M = 11.62$) (Table 9, Figure 3).

TABLE 9.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS PRE-/POST-TEST OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	23.90	135	2.687	0.231
Pre-test	11.62	135	2.130	0.183

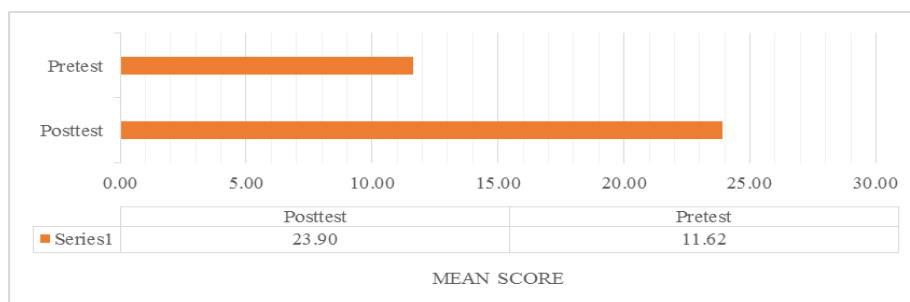


Figure 3. Pre-test and Post-test of Listening Comprehension

VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of explicit listening strategies instruction on the listening comprehension of different learner types. Based on the results and data collected, it is concluded that explicit instruction of listening strategies has statistically significant impact on the listening comprehension improvement of all EFL learner types. The outcome of this study also supports the findings of previous research (e.g. Graham and Macaro, 2008; Liu, 2009; Zhang, 2012; Guan, 2014; Graham and Santos, 2015; Jacobsen, 2015).

Therefore, this research has made significant contributions to the area of improving Learners' listening skill. For example, the EFL/ESL teachers are enlightened to consider how much different preferred ways of learning exist. As a result, a wide range of English teaching methods is required to make classes beneficial to all learner types. In addition, the results of this paper gave the teachers a wider vision about students' problematic skills which might be due to lack of their knowledge about strategies. Overall, the researcher also concluded that by raising strategy awareness of students for each skill, the teachers will make passive learners, active and independent learners.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study provide implications for teacher education, teachers, and curriculum designers, as well as test designers. The study seems to endorse the notion of providing teachers with the necessary information about the effectiveness of listening strategies, the important role of learner styles in teaching methodology. The EFL/ESL teachers and syllabus designers are aware that there are different listening strategies as a basis in courses to design listening tasks with variety of questions. In addition, they should provide students with some tips about listening strategies in each unit. Furthermore, curriculum designers and teachers should consider the social, cultural aspects of language use, and their preferred ways of learning, knowledge, experiences, and individual learning differences that students bring to classes.

Suggestions for Further Research

As the participants of this study were female, the study can be replicated with male participants. It would be interesting to probe the effect of explicit instruction of listening on listening comprehension of language learners in other levels since the participants of the current study were all high intermediate EFL learners. Moreover, similar studies can be carried out to investigate the comparative effect of different listening strategies to find out which strategy is the most effective one. Furthermore, the focus of other studies can be shifted towards investigating the effect of explicit teaching of writing, reading, or speaking strategies on skills other than listening comprehension.

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Antecedent Retrieval with Repeated Name Anaphors in Japanese: Topic and Subject

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Abstract—The present study tested whether repeated-name anaphors in Japanese elicit different effects in retrieving antecedents, depending on the anaphors being either a topic anaphor appended with the topic marker *wa* or a non-topic anaphor with the nominative marker *ga*. Early studies have shown that pronoun anaphors facilitate faster retrieval of their antecedents relative to repeated name anaphors, when the anaphors are grammatical subjects that refer to salient antecedents. In Japanese, however, grammatical subjects can be further classified into topic-subjects marked by *wa* and non-topic subjects marked by *ga*. Therefore, different antecedent-retrieval patterns may be possible between topic-*wa* and topic-*ga* even when they both were repeated-name anaphors. In addition, the present study investigated this issue with native English speakers who were learners of Japanese. Because their first language, English, does not overtly mark an entity as topic or non-topic, it was predicted that they might be relatively insensitive to anaphors' topic-hood and may not show different effects between topic-*wa* and non-topic-*ga*. A self-paced reading experiment showed that native Japanese speakers retrieved antecedents faster for repeated-name topic-*wa* anaphors than for non-topic-*ga*. On the other hand, native English speakers showed only marginally faster retrieval of antecedents for topic anaphors compared with to non-topic anaphors.

Index Terms—antecedent, anaphor, topic, Japanese

I. INTRODUCTION

In resolving referential relationship between anaphors and antecedents, an anaphor functions as a cue to retrieve the antecedent. The reference resolution has been examined by several studies in the field of psycholinguistics. Gernsbacher's (1989) experiment is one of the studies that examined the different forms of anaphors, which are unequally efficient for retrieving antecedents. Her word-by-word timed-reading experiment showed that repeated name anaphors elicited faster antecedent-retrieval than pronouns, in sentences such as the ones below.

- (1) a. Bill_i handed John some tickets to a concert but he_i took the tickets back immediately.
- b. Bill_i handed John some tickets to a concert but Bill_i took the tickets back immediately.

(Gernsbacher, 1989, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4467536/>)

Gernsbacher utilized probe recognition task, using antecedents as probe words, i.e., *Bill* in (1). The participants were presented with the probe words and asked to rapidly verify whether the probe words appeared in the sentences that they were reading. The results showed that, when the probe words were shown to the participants after they read anaphors, they responded faster when the anaphors were repeated names than when they were pronouns. Gernsbacher explained that the information that repeated name anaphors contain fully matches with that of antecedents, and thus repeated name anaphors facilitate faster reference resolution than pronoun anaphors.

However, Gordon, Grosz and Gilliom (1993) pointed out a methodological problem in Gernsbacher's experiment. In her experiment, because probe words (i.e., antecedents) were the same as the repeated name anaphors, what was retrieved from the probe words were possibly the anaphors, not the antecedents. Thus, Gernsbacher's results might have not reflected the speed of antecedent-retrieval. Gordon et al.'s self-paced sentence-by-sentence reading experiment elicited opposite results, which showed a faster reference resolution with pronoun anaphors than with repeated name anaphors when their antecedents were salient entities, e.g., grammatical subjects or first-mentioned entities in the sentences. This relative advantage of pronoun anaphors was observed in sentences such as the followings.

- (2) a. Bruno_i chased Tommy all the way home from school one day. He_i watched Tommy hide behind a big tree and start to cry.
- b. Bruno_i chased Tommy all the way home from school one day. Bruno_i watched Tommy hide behind a big tree and start to cry.

(Gordon et al., 1993, p. 318, with modification)

Sentences with a pronoun anaphor like the one in (2a) were processed faster than those with a repeated name anaphor like (2b).¹ The relative faster processing time of sentences with pronoun anaphors indicates the faster retrieval of antecedents. According to Gordon and Hendrick (1998), the different processing time occurs because, unlike pronouns,

¹ The difference of the processing times is not merely a reflection of the difference in phonological or orthographic lengths between pronouns and repeated names. If the outcomes were a reflection of the length-difference, then the processing-time difference should be uniform regardless of the salience of antecedent. Actually, when antecedents are not salient, there is no difference in their processing times.

readers of a repeated name anaphor do not initially interpret it as an anaphor. They first build an independent representation of the repeated name, and only then they realize that it refers to an antecedent, resulting in its slower retrieval. This advantage of pronoun anaphors over repeated name anaphors for antecedent-retrieval when antecedents are salient seems to be held as a general consensus among linguists (Arnold, 1998).

It is important to note that Gordon, Grosz and Gilliom's (1993) study observed the slower processing of repeated name anaphors only when the anaphors were grammatical subjects (e.g., 'Bruno chased Tommy all the way home from school one day. *Bruno* watched Tommy hide behind a big tree and start to cry.'). In Japanese, however, grammatical subjects can be further classified into topic-subjects appended with the topic marker *wa* (e.g., *Bruno-wa ookina ki-no ushiro-ni kakureru Tommy-o mita*. 'Bruno watched Tommy hide behind a big tree.'). and mere grammatical subjects appended with the nominative marker *ga* (e.g., *Bruno-ga ookina ki-no ushiro-ni kakureru Tommy-o mita*. 'Bruno watched Tommy hide behind a big tree.'). The present study reports on an experiment that examined whether either subject anaphors or topic-subject anaphors would show a comparative advantage for antecedent-retrieval when both anaphors are repeated names. Furthermore, while the experiment examined this issue with native Japanese-speaking participants, the same experiment was also conducted with native English speakers who were learners of Japanese as a second language. It tested whether native English speakers would react similarly to native Japanese speakers, while their first language, English, does not overtly differentiate topic-subjects and non-topic subjects.

II. ANAPHORS, TOPIC-WA AND SUBJECT-GA

In general, a topic noun phrase (NP) refers to an entity that the speaker and listener have already acknowledged (Chafe, 1987; Kuno, 1973). Prince (1978) argues that a speaker marks an entity as a topic when the listener already knows the entity. In response, the entity marked as a topic leads the listener to search for its referent in the preceding context, the ongoing situation, or the listener's long-term memory (Haviland & Clark, 1974). In short, a topic is essentially anaphoric, as Halliday (1967) argues: a topic is concerned with the relation of what is currently being said to what was said earlier in the discourse.

In Japanese, the topic marker *wa* is a morphological device that presents an overt NP as a topic. Because a topic-NP-*wa* is most frequently a grammatical subject (i.e., topic-subject) (Martin, 1975; Nishimura, 1989), it has been widely argued how different it is from a mere subject-NP with *ga*-marking (Kasuga, 1918; Matsushita, 1928, among others). Kuno (1973) maintains that, because topic-*wa* refers to already-known information, it can be anaphoric while subject-*ga* cannot, unless it exhaustively lists its antecedent. Noda (1996) argues that subject-*ga* could be anaphoric only when the overall sentence describes an unpredicted event or when the sentence with it begins a discontinuous context, at a change of scenes, etc. In other words, a subject-*ga* should not be an anaphor except in the above cases, and thus, readers of a repeated name marked by *ga* would not expect that it anaphorically refers to an antecedent. On the other hand, readers of a repeated name with *wa* would immediately understand that it refers to an antecedent, and they would quickly retrieve it.

Unlike Japanese, English does not utilize a morphological marking system. Thus, a topic-NP in English cannot be immediately understood as a topic, i.e., readers of a topic-NP without a topic marker would not immediately realize that the NP refers to an entity that was already presented in its preceding context. Recall that earlier studies, e.g., Gordon, Grosz and Gilliom (1993), found that pronouns are preferred to repeated names for retrieving antecedents because repeated names are not immediately interpreted as anaphors while pronouns are immediately interpreted as anaphors. Based on the above discussion that a topic is essentially an anaphor and that the morpheme *wa* marks a topic in Japanese, repeated-name-*wa* in Japanese seems close to English pronouns, while repeated names in English are likely equivalent to repeated-name-*ga* in Japanese.² If this argument is true, native Japanese speakers would retrieve antecedents faster when the antecedents are referred to by topic-subject anaphors with *wa* rather than by non-topic subject anaphor with *ga*. On the other hand, it is also possible that native English speakers who are learners of Japanese may not show this antecedent-retrieval difference if they interpret both repeated-name-*ga* and repeated-name-*wa* merely as repeated name anaphors as in English, which does not utilize morphological markings such as *wa* or *ga*.

In order to test the above possibilities, a self-paced reading experiment was conducted with repeated-name-*ga* anaphors and repeated-name-*wa* anaphors, participated in by both native Japanese speakers and native English speakers learning Japanese. While Gordon, Grosz and Gilliom's (1993) experiment in English showed the relative disadvantage of repeated name anaphors, the present study further examines the advantage/disadvantage of repeated-name topic-*wa* and repeated-name non-topic-*ga*. As previously mentioned, it was predicted that repeated-name topic-subject-*wa* anaphors would elicit faster antecedent-retrieval than with the repeated-name non-topic subject-*ga*. However, native English speakers might not, or more weakly, show this advantage with topic-*wa* anaphors because their first language does not morphologically differentiate topics and non-topics.

III. EXPERIMENT

² Japanese null pronouns should be the most equivalent to English overt pronouns (Kameyama, 1985), and Japanese overt pronouns do not have their counterpart in English (Hashimoto, 1948; Kuroda, 1965; Shibatani, 1990).

A. Participants

24 native Japanese speakers and 11 native English speakers recruited at the University of South Carolina participated in the experiment. The native Japanese speakers were all from an ESL (English as the second language) school that belongs to the university. The native English speakers were all undergraduate students, who have taken four semesters of Japanese at the university.

B. Items

A self-paced sentence-by-sentence reading experiment was conducted, following Gordon, Grosz and Gilliom (1993). In the experiment, participants read two-sentence discourses, which consisted of the first sentence including an antecedent and the second sentence including an anaphor. The antecedents were all salient, namely, sentence-initial grammatical subjects. The anaphors were all repeated names, which were either topic-subject-*wa* or non-topic subject-*ga*. Participants answered a yes-no comprehension question after they read the discourses. Example item is shown below. Native Japanese speakers saw only the Japanese texts (underlined parts) in the actual experiment.

(3)

First sentence:	<u>太郎が</u>	<u>図書館に</u>	<u>行った。</u>	
	Taro-ga	toshokan-ni	itta.	
	Taro-NOM	library-DIR	went	
	'Taro went to a library.'			
Second sentence:	<u>太郎は/が</u>	<u>英語を</u>	<u>勉強した。</u>	
	Taro-wa/ga	eego-o	benkyooshita.	
	Taro-TOP/NOM	English-ACC	studied	
	'Taro studied English.'			
Question (問題):	<u>太郎は</u>	<u>図書館に</u>	<u>行きました</u>	<u>か。</u>
	Taro-wa	toshokan-ni	ikimashita	ka.
	Taro-TOP	library-DIR	went	Q
	'Did Taro go to a library?'			

For native English-speaking participants, in order to ensure that they understand each Japanese word, English translations were presented after each content word, but not for functional words (i.e., markers). Also, comprehension questions were presented only in English. An example is shown below. The underlined parts show what the native English speakers saw in the actual experiment.

(4)

First sentence:	<u>太郎(Taro)が</u>	<u>図書館(library)に</u>	<u>行った(went)。</u>	
	Taro(Taro)-ga	toshokan(library)-ni	itta(went).	
	Taro-NOM	library-DIR	went	
	'Taro went to a library.'			
Second sentence:	<u>太郎(Taro)は/が</u>	<u>英語(English)を</u>	<u>勉強した(studied)。</u>	
	Taro(Taro)-wa/ga	eego(English)-o	benkyooshita(studied).	
	Taro-TOP/NOM	English-ACC	studied	
	'Taro studied English.'			
Question:	<u>'Did Taro go to a library?'</u>			

30 different experimental items such as the one above were prepared: half of them included repeated-name topic-subject-*wa* anaphors in the second sentences, and the other half included repeated-name non-topic subject-*ga*. The 30 experimental items were mixed with 40 distractor items. Thus there were 70 items given to the participants in total. The items were presented in random order.

Unlike Gordon et al.'s study, reading times of the second sentences would not be a valid variable to assess the speed of resolving referential relationship (i.e., antecedent-retrieval) because the items in the present experiment for native English speakers were mixtures of Japanese texts and English translations of content words. Instead, accuracy rates of the comprehension questions and the response times for the comprehension questions were used as dependent variables in this study. The comprehension questions for the present study asked about the first sentence with antecedents, as shown in (3) and (4). They were similar to Gernsbacher's (1989) comprehension questions in her experiment, which asked about the first clause containing antecedents. For example, for her item shown in (1b) 'Bill_i handed John some tickets to a concert but Bill_i took the tickets back immediately', the comprehension question was 'Who handed someone some tickets?'. According to Gernsbacher, this type of question asking about the clauses with antecedents ensured that participants correctly identified the antecedents of repeated name anaphors. The author of the present study considers that the response times for the questions would reflect how fast participants retrieved antecedents. In addition, the accuracy rates for this kind of comprehension questions would reflect how successfully participants retrieved

antecedents. Thus, the accuracy rates and question-response times were used as the dependent variables to be analyzed in this study.³ Also, when analyzing the question-response times, the data from those with wrong answers were removed prior to the analysis, as incorrect answers may indicate that the participants did not accurately identify antecedents. Only the data of question-response times that reflected how long it took the participants to retrieve accurate antecedents was analyzed.

C. Procedure

The discourse items in the experiment were presented using E-Prime. Participants read the two-sentence discourses sentence-by-sentence, in a self-paced reading fashion, following Gordon, Grosz and Gilliom (1993). The experiment was carried out with each participant viewing the sentences on a computer. The participants first received the welcome message and instruction on the computer screen and proceeded to the practice block by hitting the space key. The practice block provided four practice questions to familiarize the participants with the task. After the participants finished the practice questions, they received the end-of-practice message, and they proceeded to the actual experiment by hitting the space key. In the practice block and actual experiment, the first sentence of each experimental discourse appeared after the fixation mark, “+”. After participants read each discourse, a yes-no comprehension question was given, which could be answered by hitting the keys, “1 (yes)” or “2 (no)”. After the comprehension question, the fixation “+” appeared, which was followed by the first sentence of the next discourse. The experimental and distractor items were given in random order. One session lasted approximately 20 minutes.

IV. RESULTS

A. Native Japanese Speakers

Native Japanese speakers’ results of accuracy rates and response times for comprehension questions are summarized in the table below.

TABLE I.
ACCURACY AND RESPONSE TIMES FOR COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (NATIVE JAPANESE SPEAKERS)

Conditions	Accuracy % (SD) (SE)	Response time <i>ms</i> (SD) (SE)
Topic-subject- <i>wa</i>	90.00 (.30) (.016)	3756.28 (1731.38) (96.19)
Non-topic subject- <i>ga</i>	90.56 (.29) (.015)	4090.89 (2510.65) (139.05)

One-way ANOVA tests were performed for the accuracy rates and response times for the comprehension questions, comparing those between two conditions: repeated-name topic-subject-*wa* anaphors and repeated-name non-topic subject-*ga* anaphors. Participants’ accuracy rates did not show a significant difference between the conditions [$F(1, 718) = .063, p = .802$]. However, the question-response time data showed a significant difference between the conditions (at a significant level of $p < .05$ or lower). Analyzing the data after removing the responses with wrong answers, affecting 9.72% of the entire data, the result showed that comprehension questions for topic-*wa* items were responded to faster than those for non-topic-*ga* items [$F(1, 648) = 3.908, p = .048$]. This result indicates that participants retrieved the antecedents of repeated-name topic-subject-*wa* anaphors faster than those of repeated-name non-topic-*ga*. As predicted, participants were likely to have immediately interpreted the repeated-name-*wa* as an anaphor and quickly realized its antecedent, resulting in faster response times to comprehension questions that asked about antecedents. In contrast, repeated-name-*ga* was not initially realized as an anaphor, resulting in relative slower retrieval of antecedents, which was reflected in slower question-response times.⁴

B. Native English Speakers

The results of native English speakers’ comprehension accuracies and question-response times are summarized in the table below.

TABLE II.
ACCURACY AND RESPONSE TIMES FOR COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS)

Conditions	Accuracy % (SD) (SE)	Response time <i>ms</i> (SD) (SE)
Topic-subject- <i>wa</i>	89.70 (.30) (.024)	2842.34 (1300.14) (106.87)
Non-topic subject- <i>ga</i>	93.94 (.24) (.019)	3225.81 (2086.28) (167.57)

One-way ANOVA compared the accuracy rates and question-response times between the conditions. Similar to native Japanese speakers, the results of the accuracy rates did not show a significant difference between repeated-name-*wa* anaphors and repeated-name-*ga* anaphors [$F(1, 328), p = .161$]. On the other hand, the result of question-response times, excluding the data with wrong answers (affecting 8.18% of the data), showed a marginally significant difference

³ Gernsbacher’s experiment would have possibly shown faster question-response times for pronoun anaphors than for repeated name anaphors, which indicates the advantage of pronouns over repeated names, unlike her results from probe recognition task.

⁴ Although reading times for the second sentences with anaphors were not a reliable variable for native English speakers’ results, the author analyzed the reading-time data from native Japanese speakers, excluding the data with wrong answers for comprehension questions. The result showed no significant difference [$F(1, 648) = .004, p = .952$].

between the topic anaphors with *wa* and non-topic anaphors with *ga* [$F(1, 301), p = .057$]. This result is compatible with the prediction: native English speakers' speed of antecedent-retrieval did not significantly differ between the conditions with repeated-name topic anaphors and repeated-name non-topic anaphors, possibly due to the influence of their first language, which does not overtly differentiate between the two anaphors. However, their result was close to that for native Japanese speakers. The participating English speakers' sensitivity to *wa* and *ga* was only slightly weaker than native Japanese speakers.

V. DISCUSSION

The result of native Japanese speakers showed a significant difference in antecedent retrieval between two types of repeated-name anaphors. When asked about antecedents, they responded faster when the repeated-name anaphors were topic-*wa* than when they were non-topic-*ga*. The result may indicate that the topic marker *wa* signaled that the repeated name was a topic that referred to an antecedent. Thus, the participants immediately retrieved the antecedents after they saw the anaphor, and both the anaphor and antecedent were activated as the same entity in their working memory while they were reading the discourse. Accordingly, the participants quickly responded to comprehension questions when the questions asked about the antecedents. In contrast, the participants might have not initially realized the anaphor-antecedent relationship when the anaphors were non-topic-*ga*. Possibly, they shifted their attention away from antecedents when they read non-topic anaphors with *ga*, building the representations of the anaphors independently from their antecedents. They might have been reminded of the antecedents only when they read comprehension questions that asked about the antecedents, exhibiting relatively slower response times to the questions. In sum, the test results from native Japanese speakers indicate that, unlike in English, there is a difference in retrieving antecedents of repeated name anaphors in Japanese, depending on whether the anaphors are repeated-name topics or repeated-name non-topics.

The results for native English speakers indicate that they may have been not sensitive to the markers, *wa* and *ga*, enough to elicit a significant difference in using them as cues to retrieve antecedents. They might have often interpreted both repeated-name topic-subject-*wa* and repeated-name non-topic-subject-*ga* as mere repeated name subjects. However, the fact that they showed the same trend as native Japanese speakers, i.e., marginally faster question-response times for topic anaphors than non-topic anaphors, may indicate that they are in an ongoing process of linguistically acquiring the difference between *wa* and *ga*. As mentioned, the participants were Japanese learners who have completed four semesters of Japanese language classes in a university. This implies further predictions: more advanced-level Japanese learners (e.g., after completing six semesters of Japanese classes) might show a significant difference between repeated-name-*wa* and with repeated-name-*ga*, while more elementary-level Japanese learners (e.g., after completing two semesters of Japanese) might show no significant difference, even a marginal one. If a future experiment elicits the results predicted above, it would indicate that native English speakers learning Japanese gradually acquire the anaphoric function of the topic marker *wa* and the sensitivity to the morphological markings in Japanese.

VI. LIMITATION

A limitation of this study is that the experimental items were different between conditions. The same items with only a difference between *wa* and *ga* would have more accurately assessed the possible different reference resolutions with topic anaphors and non-topic anaphors. A future experiment with a modification for this limitation should be conducted, and as also mentioned above, an experiment with different levels of Japanese learners would explore learners' acquisition of Japanese more comprehensively.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study exhibited that two types of repeated-name anaphors in Japanese showed different effects in antecedent-retrieval. Topic anaphors with *wa* facilitated a faster resolution of antecedents than non-topic anaphors with *ga* because of the function of the topic marker *wa* that overtly informed readers that the repeated names are anaphors and thus there should be the antecedents. Based on the results of this study, the author suggests that more experiments with languages that utilize morphological markings should be conducted. Exploration of the processing of anaphors appended with markers would allow us to more comprehensively understand reference resolution across different languages.

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Bilingual Panama: EFL Teacher Perceptions, Study Abroad in an Immersion Environment

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Abstract—In 2014, the newly inaugurated Government of Panama launched the *Panamá Bilingüe* initiative, considering that sustainable development demanded taking emergency measures to improve the teaching of English in public schools. The program is designed to impact at least 250,000 students in a five-year period, gradually training approximately ten thousand pre-service and experienced English teachers. Using a narrative inquiry method, twelve teachers who sojourned for eight weeks in the United States, England, and Scotland under the program were interviewed after their return, to study their perceptions of the benefits and challenges of cultural and linguistic immersion on EFL teacher development, and how it specifically affected their teaching skills. The teachers appreciated practicing English in an immersion environment, learned new teaching techniques, and reflected on their prior knowledge and practices. Nevertheless, they felt that the ESL approach prevalent at the host universities responds to needs that differ from those they deal with in Panama, where the low proficiency of primary school teachers and inadequate school facilities are major obstacles to teaching and learning English.

Index Terms—bilingualism, EFL pedagogy, EFL teacher training and development, English proficiency of EFL teachers, language policy, narrative inquiry

I. INTRODUCTION

The *EF English Proficiency Index* (EF Education First, 2014) ranked Panama, in 2013, in position 56 of a total of 60 countries evaluated to determine the average level of English skills among adults. Panamanian Government authorities were alarmed. Incredibly, Panama, with a service-driven economy powered by world trade, had ranked below Ecuador, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

Having a population of only four million, Panama has one of the most prosperous economies in Latin America. However, the distribution of wealth in the country is also one of the most unequal in the region (United Nations, Panama, 2016). Students who can attend the relatively expensive private schools have been fortunate to acquire at least an intermediate, “working knowledge” of English, while large segments of the population are deprived of the advantages of mastering the world’s *lingua franca*.

The Panamá Bilingüe initiative, personally set in motion by the President of Panama, intends to “provide training in bilingual education to about 2,000 teachers every year, at the same time preparing 20,000 high school students and 30,000 elementary school students [annually, over a period of five years], with the objective of enabling more Panamanians to have access to the best jobs” (Government of Panama, Ministry of Education, 2014). The project has three components, which are being implemented in a growing number of schools. An After-School program, for high school students, and a Kids program, for elementary school students, offer youngsters additional hours of exposure to the English language. Under Teacher Training, novice and in-service English teachers are being placed in colleges and universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Barbados to strengthen their knowledge of English and their teaching skills in an English-speaking immersion environment, aiming “to improve the teaching of oral and written English”, according to Executive Decree 148 of April 1, 2016 (Government of Panama, Ministry of the Presidency, 2016). Article 5, point 2(a) of the decree establishes that

Once the teachers return to the country, having satisfactorily completed the international phase of their training, they will be coached for a year, during which they must participate in a two hundred [200]-hour program leading to an international certification exam, according to the specific area in which they work. This must be a CELTA (Certificate of English Language Teaching) . . . or equivalent, TKT (Teaching Knowledge Test) or equivalent.

The Gabriel Lewis Galindo Foundation and several external Second Language Acquisition consultants have been playing a major role in carrying out the Panamá Bilingüe program. The U.S. Department of State has lent its support in different ways: A U.S. Government-funded Teacher Match program would send a number of U.S. English teachers to Panama to be matched with Panamanian public middle or high school English teachers, to assist in classroom instruction and curriculum development (U.S. Embassy, Panama, 2014). “Teacher training focused on TESOL best practices, including the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model” is being facilitated, and an English Language Fellow will “review Panamá Bilingüe strategy and give feedback accordingly, as well as observe classes and provide peer counseling and peer mentoring to Panamá Bilingüe teachers” (U.S. Department of State, 2015-2016). The Department of State Regional English Language Officer set up his office in Panama, a presence described by the U.S.

Embassy as a resource in support of the Panamá Bilingüe program (U.S. Embassy, Panama, 2015). The collaboration of the Fulbright Scholar Program (Fulbright Scholar Program, Panama, n.d., ca. 2015) was also offered.

Panamá Bilingüe is being implemented in a country that is proud of having ended the existence of the Canal Zone, a U.S. colony in its midst, when the Torrijos-Carter Treaties were signed in 1977. Panamanians thereby gained control of the Panama Canal, today a vital source of revenue. In the past, many people in Panama deliberately chose not to learn English, as a way to protect national identity from cultural assimilation, rejecting ideological submission. Psychological resistance to acquiring the language still lingers, stoked by the horrors of the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama. Teachers who traveled abroad under Panamá Bilingüe spontaneously displayed Panamanian flags, folkloric outfits, traditional jewelry and other symbols of identity and loyalty to their homeland at the airports and on college and university campuses.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the field of second language acquisition, the term “immersion” originated in Canada in the 1960’s, when English-speaking students learned in an experimental program where French was used as the medium of instruction. However, the term has been used to describe a variety of language learning experiences. Johnson & Swain (1997) identified eight core features of immersion and offered a good look at specific language-learning projects carried out in different countries with diverse approaches, all of them labeled “immersion”. Swain & Lapkin (2005) reviewed the mentioned core features, realizing that changes in the sociopolitical realities of Canada (among them, the increase in ethnic diversity), and new research, required updating the pedagogy (p. 170).

Harvey, Roskvist, Corder, & Stacey (2011) describe “different arrangements [that] enable language teachers to spend varying amounts of time in a country where their teaching language is used as a first language. Sojourns range from two weeks to one year” (p. 5). It is in this sense that the concept “immersion” is used in this paper.

Lee (2009, p. 1095) is optimistic about short study-abroad immersion programs for English teachers, pointing out that “the literature suggests that overseas teaching experiences for student teachers’ [*sic*] result in personal growth, a broadened world view and increased professional competence (e.g. Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Stochowski & Chleb, 1998; Tang & Choi, 2004; Ward & Ward, 2003; Willard-Holt, 2001)”.

However, Roskvist, Harvey, Corder, & Stacey (2014, p. 324) wrote that “There is very limited research focusing on in-service language teachers undertaking immersion or SA [study abroad] programmes (Harbon 2007; Wernicke 2010; Gleeson & Tait 2012)”. Wang (2014, p. 71) echoed these words, noting that, whereas the bulk of research on the study abroad of English involves undergraduate students, few studies have been conducted on experienced teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

The pertinence of studying language teachers’ perceptions of the training and development they are required to undergo, or personally decide to take, is clearly demonstrated by Freeman (1989), in an enlightening article on how classroom practice and student learning outcomes depend on decisions made by the teachers based on their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness. According to S. Borg (2015a), whose main area of research in TESOL has been teacher cognition, his work now concentrating on professional development for English language teachers,

The major justification for studying L2 teachers’ beliefs is that they provide insight into the psychological context for teaching and teacher learning which can inform the design of initiatives which encourage teachers to learn, change or behave in particular ways. (p. 500)

Johnson and Golombek (2011) point to the fruitfulness of narrative inquiry, maintaining that “the transformative power of narrative lies in its ability to ignite cognitive processes that can foster teacher professional development” (p. 504). These authors claim that productive changes have been seen to occur in classroom practice as a result of the teachers’ *externalization*, *verbalization*, and *systematic examination* [emphasis added] of their experiences, and that “narrative as a vehicle for teacher inquiry has become the primary means by which researchers have come to understand and document teachers’ professional development” (p. 488).

III. METHODS

A. Research Design

The research design for this project, based on narrative inquiry, using a qualitative, inductive approach, was guided by Phakiti & Paltridge (2015), Barkhuizen (2015), Borg (2015, a & b) and Holliday (2015).

B. Participants

Oral accounts were obtained in face-to-face interviews with twelve experienced Panamanian EFL teachers working in the public school system who had been sent to the United States, England and Scotland. Six had gone to the U.S. and six to the U.K. Teachers placed in Canada were not interviewed because a list of the teachers and their destinations was not made available. Eleven of the teachers work in high schools, four of them in a teacher training institute. Five of the participants also teach in public universities, one in a private university, and one both in a private and a public university. Only one of the teachers works in a primary school. Two of the teachers hold an MA-TESOL degree; two obtained an MA in Linguistics; one has an MA in Applied Linguistics; one has an MA in English. In other words, half

of the teachers interviewed had what appeared to be a strong knowledge base in English and English teaching. By contrast, the elementary school teacher, whose workplace was a rural school, was struggling to finish a BA in English and had a very low proficiency.

It can be argued that this small group of teachers is not a truly representative sample, since most had at least an intermediate command of English and had already received higher education in English teaching methodologies. However, this background made them, potentially, a more reflective group, able to engage in a refined metacognitive processing of their study-abroad experience. They will probably be called upon to become teacher trainers in the PB program, according to the plan outlined in Executive Decree 148 of April 1, 2016.

C. Procedure

Ten of the teachers were interviewed in their workplace. Each one was interviewed separately. They were asked to bring with them photos, handouts, other documents and feedback furnished to them during their experience, as well as personal diaries and other records, for the purpose of helping to transport them back to the environment of their study-abroad sojourn. All of them chose to be interviewed in English.

A letter was sent to the principals/headmasters of the two institutions where most of the teachers work, asking for permission to carry out the interviews, as required by their school policies. An informed consent form was signed by each teacher and the researcher before starting the interview, setting forth in writing that the identities of the participants would be kept anonymous.

Before and after each interview, journal entries were made to record conditions of the interaction and other observations. The interview questions, inspired by Borg (2015b, p. 544), were written in advance, and the participants were not exposed to them before the interview, to avoid the preparation of “the right answers”. The questions served as a starting point and were returned to after listening to what the teachers had to say. The interviews were audio recorded. The researcher took verbatim and other notes while they were carried out. Each interview was transcribed.

D. Analysis

The thematic analysis of the data followed the four steps outlined by Holliday (2015, pp. 53-54): (1) coding, i.e., converting the data to key words and phrases; (2) determining themes; (3) classifying the themes into headings and subheadings to build an argument, and (4) going back to the data, collecting extracts to support the argument, reassessing the codes and themes, drafting and redrafting results.

During the whole research process, Phakiti & Paltridge’s (2015) view that “qualitative researchers allow themselves to be involved in formulating meanings and interpretations of what they have observed” (p.13) was reassuring. The co-construction of meaning, learning and knowledge by the researcher and each participant, considered inevitable by Barkhuizen (2015, p. 174), occurred when questions were made to elicit ideas that the participants might find it difficult to articulate (Borg, 2015a, pp. 492-493). However, the report of findings and conclusions is carefully mindful of Holliday’s (2015) warning that the researcher should heed “the moral imperative embedded in how we should deal with data – taking disciplined care to refrain from *imposing meaning* [emphasis added], not only on data, but also on the people who it represents” (p. 60).

IV. RESULTS

The universities and colleges that hosted the interviewed teachers in 2015 and 2016 had the liberty of proposing the organization and the specific contents of the eight-week study abroad period. However, they had in common an objectives- and task-based, student-centered Communicative Language Teaching approach, endeavoring to achieve the two main objectives with which they were entrusted: (1) improving the teachers’ knowledge of and proficiency in English and (2) equipping them with effective English teaching techniques. In addition to reviewing English language skills, discussing language teaching methods, practice activities and reflections in class, visits were organized to schools, where the teachers watched real-life language classes. In some cases, they even had the opportunity to make a presentation to the students. The teachers were also taken on tours to places of cultural interest.

There were different accommodation arrangements. Some of the teachers stayed with families, enjoying additional opportunities to practice the language, while others shared rooms in college dormitories. One shared an apartment, and another stayed at a youth center.

The perceptions of the teachers have been grouped below under the headings “Benefits” and “Challenges”. Representative extracts from the interviews illustrate the respondents’ thoughts. Pseudonyms are used in lieu of the participants’ real names.

A. Benefits

1. “You are forced to use the language”.

Alberto: You are surrounded by, you know, the English speakers and, obviously, you have to put in practice all your knowledge and all the words, the phrases, the sentences, the pronunciation, and everything that you have learned during the years...

2. Enhancement of teaching skills by learning methods and strategies. All the teachers reported having learned useful techniques, sometimes revisiting specific skills and strategies they had been exposed to before their immersion experience, among them:

Relying less on memorization; instead, “looking for those things that our teenagers are interested in”, such as listening to music, watching a video, and carrying out more computer-assisted activities, when possible.

Motivating students by asking them what they would like to learn, and rewarding them when they do a good job.

Thinking of the students’ needs. In the case of technical and trade schools, providing students with English for Specific Purposes, in addition to basic knowledge of the language for communication purposes.

“Not giving so many written tests”; *greater emphasis on listening and speaking*. Instead of the usual concentration on grammar rules and grammatical structures, have more conversation, more oral exercises; for example, silent listening, followed by oral production.

Simpler lesson planning, concentrating on fewer topics and objectives in a class.

Improving pronunciation by learning to listen and to observe carefully, breaking down words into sounds, paying attention to mouth and lip movements and the position of the tongue, then practicing with phrases and sentences, noticing where the stress should go; use of phonetic charts.

Different forms of student interaction: mingling, pair and group work, in some cases including physical rotation and changes of location in class, to complete reading, writing, and oral tasks; for example, “work stations”, and jigsaw creation of tests and exercises.

Classroom management.

Increasing the use of visuals; for example, to introduce lessons.

Teaching reading strategies, such as getting meaning from context, without stopping so often to consult with a dictionary.

Using rubrics for a more objective evaluation of learning, thereby motivating students to do their best by knowing what they are expected to achieve and how they will be assessed.

3. English language proficiency improvement.

Yvonne: In each group, we had high level students and low level students, so the proficiency level were [*sic*] not the same ... But we noticed improvement during the training ... We helped them to survive ... They improved very much.

4. Reflection on prior teaching practices; reinforcement of prior knowledge. The methods and skills discussed and demonstrated during their study abroad were already known to some of the teachers; however, they valued reviewing them. We must remember that most of the teachers interviewed were qualified professionals.

Carmen: It was like reinforcement, most of all, [of] what I learned at the university...

Giselle: It helped me to think a lot, because I try to compare the way we teach here in Panama and what they were teaching there, and also to see what we can improve in order to take advantage of what we were doing there ... But most of the time, their way of teaching was similar to our way of teaching. It wasn’t so different. The only thing is that they have more technology.

Yolanda: The classes [were] very similar as we do here in Panama, but with the elements needed for the performance of that: the infrastructure, the materials and the organization. When I witnessed the classes, I said: “I would do it in a different way”, [or] “I would do it the same way”. So I said: “Wow! The only thing I need in Panama is they have a permanent classroom.”

Kiara: I have been teaching for eight years ... With Panama Bilingüe, I had the opportunity to update my knowledge; also, [to] reflect about why I do this way, or maybe there’s a different way to do this.

5. Awareness of the need to improve English teaching capability.

Yolanda: We noticed that –wow!– we Panamanians have a lot of gaps, and we have a lot of things to learn.... We have to demand more from ourselves ... One person told me: “Yolanda, I have to be honest to myself, haven’t done too much for myself. I have a diploma, I’m working in MEDUCA [Ministry of Education], it’s a permanent job, but I haven’t done [enough] because I am feeling frustrated, I cannot understand the teachers, they’re speaking too fast.”

6. Motivation to improve professionally.

Ariel: Now I feel more motivated, and now I can tell my students the importance of learning English ... not only for traveling, but for many other things, like reading a good book, or watching any documentary in English ..., and I try to transmit my motivation to my students.

Dana: I like to improve myself. And this opportunity, [with] Panama Bilingüe, has been a very good one. Being there, with the immersion. Not just me ... It has been a very, very good experience.

7. The opportunity to visit and experience an English-speaking country. The teachers had fun visiting places of cultural and historical interest, and these experiences put them in contact with authentic uses of English and promoted intercultural communication.

Alberto: I’m very happy with the initiative of Panama Bilingüe. It’s a very interesting, very useful strategy by MEDUCA and the Lewis Galindo Foundation also ... I have heard of some teachers who have not had that experience, to be in a country where English is spoken.

Jason: [Pointing to a picture:] This is Rosslyn Chapel, I think ... We had the tours, not to visit schools, but just for fun Being in another country ... was a very enriching experience, because not only did I learn from teachers, but I learned new things from real people. I went to the places to meet the people, and talk to the people, and listen to them ...

Kiara: We had the opportunity to interact with the students at the university, and also we visited London and the Buckingham Palace. We saw that, in order to introduce us to the culture We had the opportunity to visit Oxford, too.

Yvonne: When I visit[ed] the museums, when I went to the different places, and I read the different scriptures [*sic*; labels, written explanations] they have on the monuments, ... the most amazing story was when they taught about the American Indians and how they were forced to do things to change their ideology, their ideas, their culture, and how the American government ... forced them to go to the war, ... when Vietnam. And also the Civil War ... We went to the American Indian Museum. It's just like Victoriano Lorenzo here ...

8. Awareness of different varieties of English.

Lorenzo: I would say "Let me help you with the garbage." They would say "That's American. You have to say "rubbish".

9. Professional and personal, intercultural relationships.

Bruno: Just sharing with other people, with other cultures, it's already an advantage.

Dana: This was professor [name withheld] ... He came to Panama We invited [him], and he came to Panama to talk to the Minister of Education.

Yvonne: I'm in contact with her [the professor] ... she's really fantastic. And she said: "Hey, if you come to [a particular State in the U.S.], you have to visit me!"

The teachers did not agree unanimously on the benefits of their study-abroad experience. For example, while Kiara welcomed participating in student-centered activities (as a teacher student), Lorenzo had a completely different view, preferring the teacher-centered approach. He also suggested that the teacher training goals of the Panamá Bilingüe Program can be met in Panama, without having to travel abroad:

Lorenzo: The only thing that I didn't like is that we had to give classes for members of the group from Panama Because I think that, if we go there, it's to learn [from] the professor from England. Because to go there, taking nine, ten hours [flight duration], it's better to stay in Panama and to be with people here, and we are going to learn from each other. We don't have to travel to England.

B. Challenges

1. **Limited English proficiency, especially of elementary school teachers.** The teachers agreed that eight weeks in an English-speaking country may help in different ways to improve linguistic skills and the ability to manage some aspects of language learning in class, but they believed that a much longer period of study is needed for most of the Panamanian EFL elementary school teachers to acquire the knowledge of English and the proficiency level indispensable to teach English well. One of the teachers passionately expressed the view that the best way to promote the learning of English in Panama is to begin teaching content areas such as Mathematics, Science and Social Studies in English at an early age, with the caveat that the Social Studies classes should be based on books written by Panamanian authors.

Ariel: We needed more ..., not methodology, I think, but more English ... There should be more coordination between MEDUCA and ... the universities in those countries where they're sending teachers.

Carmen: From the 24 [Panamanian EFL teachers participating in her group], three or four ... were teenagers, and the rest were [practicing] teachers. I think that ... their level of teaching was ... elemental As soon as they [the host universities] realized that most of us were elementary school teachers, they lowered the level.

Yolanda: And they speak very fast ... Some classmates of mine, they feel [felt] frustrated ... [Some colleagues would say] "I don't understand when they are speaking in English." Why don't we go to the elementary schools [in Panama], in which the teachers must be well, well trained? You have to really make sure that the teacher commands the language. If she doesn't, the students, who are very [much] like a sponge, they are very receptive, they won't learn well...

2. Following speech in different varieties of English.

Jason: They spoke English, but the Scottish dialect. And sometimes you had to ask them again, because it was, sometimes, difficult. They have different vowel patterns, and different words, also ...

3. Age.

Alberto: We were too many people. We were with two old teachers, almost sixty-nine years old. It was very embarrassing for us, because ... You know, some things, like walking fast, taking a metro, taking a taxi, taking the airplane. The problem was that we were the first group, so there was [*sic*] no rules.

4. Very hard work!

Yvonne: They were very demanding. The only thing people were complaining about was too much hard work. Because, during the storm, we ... were isolated ... During those days, we had a lot of homework, because we couldn't go to the university, so they said homework, homework, homework.

5. The teaching was aimed at acquisition of English in an ESL setting, but in Panama we are in an EFL setting.

Jason: I think that was one of my main complaints. ... Many things that I was learning there wouldn't apply to teaching in Panama. The main reason for that is that in Panama we teach what we call EFL, and the setting is completely different from what they teach there, and everything that we learned there was aimed at ESL.

Lorenzo: I went to [an] elementary school twice and to a high school one time ... The majority [of the students] were from Pakistan.

6. The need to make adaptations for application in Panama.

Lorenzo: There are lesson plans for one thing, but it doesn't work for us here in Panama.

Yolanda: How we can do it in Panama? Because we have many different things against, that we have to try make adaptations, we cannot follow exactly as we learned it there.

7. Classroom arrangement.

Carmen: Their classrooms are completely different to us [from ours]: ... Good for teaching! ... Even the position of the chairs, in front of the teacher, some of them around the teacher ... And sometimes we can't do that in here, because we do not have time enough if you start arranging everything ...

Yolanda: The government has invested a lot of money in this program ... I suggest that every single teacher of English must have a permanent classroom... I have six groups in this school. I have to go with my material ... group by group [to different classrooms]. I have to take it all the time ... That's not good!

8. Number of groups assigned to each teacher, and number of students in each classroom.

Yolanda: Teachers [in the place she visited in the United States] have maybe like two groups, whereas, in Panama, teachers have like six groups ... In most of the schools [in Panama], classes have 44 students, 39 ... They couldn't imagine how a teacher, how a government or society can cope with stress, ... and also how the society says "People are not speaking English!" How [can they]?

9. Resources.

Ariel: Yes, ... the cultural shock, technology. Rooms [in the immersion experience] were more equipped for teaching; you have a projector already there ..., and good Internet connections. Everything was there. Libraries. So I was comparing [with] the place where I studied here, in Panama City, or my school. We don't have a dictionary to look at. Teachers [there] have tools, all the tools they need. And the school, for example, that we visited ... everything was there, just ready to be used. I think that that is what we are lacking here OK, you can receive methodology and good information. But I think also with tools ... We need more language labs, and headphones, because, for example, in my case, I like phonetics, for my students to learn English sounds. It's impossible here ... We have the facilities; they should be equipped with technology in order to reach our students' expectations. And that is quality. Also, books for the students, because we don't have any textbooks. They can't take home, for example, ... a workbook.

The infrastructure, technology and materials available at the countries they visited impressed the teachers, producing a strong demonstration effect. A remarkable example of the very different conditions in which they have to work is the language lab of a high school where four of the teachers were interviewed. The laptops used by the students were kept in a cabinet under lock and key, to be taken out at the beginning of the day and stored away after the final class. That particular room did not have access to the Internet.

It should be noted that one of the universities that hosted Panamanian EFL teachers advised making the best of the resources available, however limited, indicating that good English teaching can be achieved in the absence of state-of-the-art technology.

In a rural high school where four of the interviews were conducted, the students worked in class and did their homework using photocopies provided by the teacher from his personal budget. Markers, paper, and other supplies were also purchased by the teacher from his own pocket.

V. DISCUSSION

The teachers' oral accounts, and existing research, suggest that the Panamá Bilingüe program cannot be expected to automatically lead to better teaching and improve student learning outcomes on the national level as soon as the teachers return to their posts after the study abroad period or shortly thereafter. Explaining the difference between training and development, Freeman (1989) soberly cautions against the "misconception ... that transmission of knowledge will lead to effective practice" (p. 29). He clarifies that changes in performance are measurable after *teacher training*, which involves "the mastery of discrete skills and knowledge" that can be taught to the teacher directly, whereas *teacher development* is a different strategy, triggering internal processes that produce an increased awareness by the teacher of her/his own classroom practice, i.e., what she/he is doing and why, which is what really makes a difference in teaching outcomes. Therefore, changes may not be immediately observable and cannot be expected to occur within a designated period of time (pp. 39-43).

The above is especially significant in relation to the number of primary school teachers in Panama having a very low level of proficiency in English. Richards, Conway, Roskvist, & Harvey (2013) point out that "rather than learning the language for a minimum length of time, teachers need to be learning the language until they have a high level of proficiency. As this level may not be reached by teachers during the [immersion] course, facility needs to be available for them to continue to study the TL [target language] post-course" (p. 244), because "commitment to building teachers'

language proficiency is a long-term investment, as it is well known that learning language is a developmental process (Crabbe, 2005) and becoming proficient in another language takes time” (p. 245).

Different factors need to be considered to decide the course of action to take and estimate the time required to improve English language teaching and learning in “Periphery” countries such as Panama. As emphasized by B. Kumaravadivelu (2001), developing a meaningful language pedagogy demands recognizing particularity. Local conditions should determine, for example, whether English is to be taught mainly for everyday communicative purposes or for academic purposes, such as preparing for higher education in an English-speaking country. There can be a lack of motivation in particular groups of students to make the effort required to learn the language; few opportunities exist to interact in English, inside and outside the classroom; and teachers often have to perform their work in challenging circumstances, with large numbers of students in class and limited resources. A particular reality that must be taken into account is hinted at by Yvonne: The mother tongue (L1) that many students from the indigenous communities of Panama bring to class, along with their own cultural perspectives, is not Spanish, so English would be their L3, and sometimes their L4.

In line with Jason and Lorenzo’s comments, Liu (1999) was highly critical of teacher training and development programs in English-speaking countries. As reviewed by Bame (2001),

Dilin Liu argues that NNS [non-native speaker] teacher trainees’ needs are not being met in the North American, British, and Australian (NABA) teacher training contexts. He argues that L2 acquisition theories and TESOL methodologies are based on data from immigrants and L2 students in NABA countries. He further states that these are not suitable to most of the NNS teacher trainees’ situations. (R-9)

From a different position, the benefits of linguistic and cultural immersion in an English-speaking environment are upheld by G. Braine (2005, p. 15), citing Reeves & Medgyes’ (1994) suggestion that “frequent exposure to authentic native language environments and proficiency-oriented in-service training activities” may help “non-native” speaker teachers deal with their language difficulties.

Braine adds extremely important advice: “Further, in order to enhance the self-perception of these teachers, they should be made aware of their advantageous condition as language teachers” (p. 15). The nature of the mentioned advantageous condition was set forth convincingly by Edge (1988) and Medgyes (1999), the latter establishing the often-cited position that

NNS teachers can:

- provide a good learner model for imitation,
- teach language learning strategies more effectively,
- supply learners with more information about the English language,
- anticipate and prevent language difficulties better,
- be more empathetic to the needs and problems of learners, and
- make use of the learners’ mother tongue (p. 178)

Yes, use of the mother tongue, so controversial in the context of EFL teaching in Panama, where using “English only” has been established as one of the highest services a teacher can provide to her/his students! “Research suggests that allowing a judicious use of the L1 on the part of learners may be warranted”, indicated Swain & Lapkin (2005, pp. 169 & 179-180), mentioning studies by Villamil & de Guerrero (1996), Behan & Turnbull (1997), and Antón & DiCamilla (1998).

The advantages of sharing the culture and language of the students, so valuable for our EFL teachers’ awareness of their own potential, at the same time brings up the recurrent discussion regarding the use of the native speaker/non-native speaker (NS/NNS) labels and mindsets in teacher development and training activities. The significance and implications of the strengths listed by Medgyes are extraordinary for teachers whose level of language proficiency, strong “foreign” accent, and different cultural approaches to teaching English may seem to make them unfit to effectively perform their job; however, the words are headed by the non-native speaker label which Medgyes considered reasonable to keep but is so questionable (as in Paikeday, 1985; Edge, 1988; Phillipson, 1992; Davies, 2003). Readers wishing to view work reflecting the uncompromising rejection of the native/non-native distinction are hereby referred to Swan, Aboshiha & Holliday (2015); Holliday (2014), Shin (2007), and McKay (2003).

Regarding knowledge of the language, the need to include a “language development provision in teacher training curricula” (Murdoch, 1994) has been recognized and confirmed by research –and common sense– over time, as substantiated by Cullen (1994) and Frazier & Phillabaum (2012, p. 173), the latter pointing to the work of Barratt (2010), Kamhi-Stein (1999), Lee (2004), Liu (1999), and Nemtchinova, Mahboob, Eslami & Seran (2010). J. C. Richards (2011) has summed up the discussion on “the language proficiency factor” as follows:

Most of the world’s English teachers are not native speakers of English and it is not necessary to have a native-like command of a language in order to teach it well (Canagarajah, 1999). The issue is, how much of a language does one need to know to be able to teach it effectively and how does proficiency in a language interact with other aspects of teaching (Bailey, 2006; Kamhi-Stein, 2009)? To answer these questions it is necessary to consider the language-specific competencies a language teacher needs in order to teach effectively. **These include the ability to provide good language models, to maintain use of the target language in the classroom, to give correct feedback on learner language, and to provide input at an appropriate level of difficulty** [emphasis added]. Learning how to carry out

these aspects of a lesson fluently in English is an important dimension of teacher-learning for those whose mother tongue is not English. There appears to be a threshold language proficiency level a teacher needs to have reached in the target language in order to be able to teach effectively. (p. 3)

According to H. Richards, Conway, Roskvist, & Harvey (2013, p. 237), citing Farrell & J. C. Richards (2007), the “language-specific competencies” highlighted above, plus three more, namely, “**exploitation of target language resources**”, “**provision of accurate explanations**”, and “**ability to improvise**” [emphasis added], also drawn from Farrell & Richards (2007), are recognized by Borg (2001), Chaudron (1998), Edge & Garton (2009), Ellis (2005), Kim & Elder (2008), Krashen (1982), McNamara (1991), Naserdeen (2001), Schulz (1999), Scrivener (2005), and Tsui (2003) as essential for effective teaching.

Wondering about the “accent reduction” exercises some of the Panamanian EFL teachers were subjected to during their immersion experience, it is important to underscore that the elusive “native-like” pronunciation is not really needed to be a good EFL teacher; however, obviously, “a minimal proficiency level of pronunciation is required for a future teacher [and student] to be intelligible” (Frazier & Phillabaum, 2012, p. 172). Intelligibility is the golden rule.

Wright (2009) conducted a study on the development of EFL proficiency of 32 adult, instructed Chinese speakers of English after a ten-month period of immersion in postgraduate studies in UK universities. Her findings suggested that “Immersion helps learners process what linguistic knowledge they already have with greater efficiency, rather than lead to acquisition of new linguistic knowledge” (p. 10). She further indicated that

Some researchers suggest that immersion may not even be necessary to achieve very advanced or native-like levels of proficiency (White & Juffs 1998). The majority of studies find wide individual variation and fossilisation at advanced levels, even in cases of long-term residence in the L2 environment (see, e.g. Han 2004, Birdsong 2005, Wright 2006, Lardiere 2007). (p.2)

VI. CONCLUSIONS

All the interviewed teachers deeply appreciated the opportunity they had to stay eight weeks in an English-speaking country under the Panamá Bilingüe program. They believe that they derived specific benefits, in terms of having to use English to communicate, listening to the use of the language by speakers for whom it is their mother tongue; increased awareness of the existence of different varieties of English; enhancement of teaching skills by being exposed to different methods and techniques, practicing some of them in class during their sojourn; language proficiency improvement; metacognitive reflection on their prior knowledge of the language and on their pedagogical practices, becoming aware of strengths and weaknesses; the cultural knowledge, language learning, and joy derived from visiting a different country and places of historical interest in those countries; intercultural contact and new professional relationships; and motivation to keep working toward better student learning outcomes.

The teachers emphasized two disturbing realities that need to be addressed in order to achieve the desired impact and sustainability of efforts to improve English teaching in Panama:

1. The very low English proficiency of many, if not most, primary school EFL teachers in the country. The interviewed teachers thought that an eight-week immersion program would not significantly improve the linguistic skills of most of their primary school EFL colleagues.

2. The inadequate physical conditions in which English teachers perform their work. Thousands of students are expected to learn English in crowded rooms with no air conditioning, in the humid, and often hot, tropical environment. Many peasant children still assemble under thatched or tin-roofed, multigrade classrooms after walking long distances under sun and rain, often crossing dangerous bridges or wading through streams.

A third concern mentioned by some of the teachers was that many aspects of the programs offered by the host universities were designed to meet the needs of teacher learners and students in ESL teaching contexts, far removed from the context of EFL teaching in the public school system of Panama.

In a country where quality education and English language learning have traditionally been accessible only to a minority, Panamá Bilingüe is a laudable initiative, a strong statement for reform and the democratization of English language teaching in the country. The implementation of this program can lead to confirming or discovering what is needed to teach and learn English successfully in Panama, using “an appropriate pedagogy” (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; “an appropriate methodology”, said Holliday, 1994), serving local and national needs.

Panama is a small country in close contact with the rest of the world due to its strategic geographical position. The knowledge and use of English with intercultural communicative competence (Sun, 2014) can empower its citizens to develop their personal potential above and beyond current educational inequalities and limitations.

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A Comparison between Holistic and Analytic Assessment of Speaking

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Abstract—As speaking is an intricate productive skill, its evaluation raises many interesting issues. In this study, the main purpose is to find the most suitable procedure that is useful to assess speaking, by making a comparison between the holistic and the analytic scales. Thus, twenty oral performances were recorded and given to five raters who assessed them holistically and analytically, according to four distinct tasks at the Higher Institute of Languages in Gabès. The raters' gradings were compared according to four basic parameters, namely the mean, the range, inter-rater and intra-rater reliability. Despite the fact that both methods yielded low reliability rates, it was clear that there were many differences between the two scales, since they reflected a discrepancy at the level of the four parameters as well as at the level of tasks. Apart from the differences, it was noted that the holistic scale is more useful, reliable and consistent as far as speaking assessment is concerned.

Index Terms—holistic assessment, analytic assessment, speaking

I. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a skill that reveals a lot about the person's thoughts, personality and origin. Some researchers claim that speaking has its own rules which differ from one person to another and from one culture to another. In addition to that, a fluent speaker makes his audience attracted to his speech, because this shows the extent to which such a speaker masters the language.

For these reasons, many researchers highlight the importance of speaking as part and parcel of the speaker's personality. Hence, if an interlocutor makes many pauses while speaking, the listeners think of his/her lack of confidence or of his/her inability to express himself/herself in a second or foreign language. Consequently, the listeners may judge a speaker according to the way s/he speaks.

In this research, I am interested in speaking in an academic context, particularly "testing speaking". In fact, many issues come out from the association of "testing" with "speaking". Many researchers dealt with testing speaking as a challenging task which faces the testers, for many reasons. Firstly, the momentary nature of speaking urges the testers to listen carefully to the testees' speeches, which is not always guaranteed since there are some internal (tester's fatigue, testee's low voice etc...) and external (noise, the lack of means of recording etc...) factors that impede the assessment process. Secondly, speaking is an intricate skill. Hence, even the definition of this productive skill differs from one researcher to another. In this regard, some researchers consider a good speaker as the one who is able to appropriately convey a given message at a specific context, whereas other researchers take into consideration the different parts of the speech and insist on the necessity to focus not only on the message itself but also on its accuracy. (Hughes (1989), Alderson et al (1995)).

In other words, there are two distinct approaches to the study of speaking. On the one hand, the first view consists of considering speaking as a "whole", so that the tester focuses on the message itself regardless of its parts. On the other hand, the second view reflects that any speech is partitive and can be divided into its subcomponents (like pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, content etc...). In fact, the idea of this research is based on these two conceptions.

II. HYPOTHESIS

This study focuses on a comparison between holistic and analytic scales, in order to determine the most suitable way to assess speaking. This comparison is based on some parameters that enable us to measure the degree of difference between the two methods. Thus, it is hypothesized that the holistic and analytic methods of assessment are different in terms of mean, range, inter-rater and intra-rater reliability and that the variability of speaking tasks deepens this difference, as a starting point to tackle further issues related to assessing speaking.

III. ANTECEDENT RESEARCH

If we look at "speaking" from a psycholinguistic angle, we can imagine a scale with two extremes, ranging from "babbling" to "speaking". For instance, some psycholinguists are interested in studying the evolution of a person's oral output since his/her birth. In this context, Caldwell (2009) suggests that the child's speaking progression lies in "producing sounds that will eventually be shaped into words and used in communication." (p.1).

The writer further maintains that even deaf children babble, which makes this primary form of output universal. In fact, the passage from “babbling” to “talking” has a natural aspect: All normal children acquire words and sentences progressively as they grow up. This naturalness, however, does not nullify the complexity of oral acquisition, since many factors play a great role in shaping one’s oral performance. Accordingly, we cannot ignore the role of the environment in enhancing or impeding the child’s speaking progression.

Speaking is also an issue that attracts many discourse analysts, like Fasold (1990) who reports that: “The viewpoint succinctly stated by the famous American linguist Leonard Bloomfield (1933:21) went unchallenged: ‘Writing is not language, but merely a way of recording language by means of visible marks’” (p. 276). Hence, speaking as a skill came before the process of writing.

In addition to that, many researchers deal with speaking in second or foreign language. One of these researchers is Richards (2008) who states that “Research has also thrown considerable light on the complexity of spoken interaction in either first or second language” (p.1). Thus, we can deal with speaking as a complex pattern that necessitates a deep analysis depending on its context. In this regard, Luoma (2004) distinguishes between a planned speech and an unplanned one. A planned speech is the one which is prepared in advance, like a lecture, whereas an unplanned speech is spontaneous like in a conversation. It has to be noted that the planned speech is frequently found in a classroom context, where the teacher can, for example, prepare a lecture, and a student can also prepare an oral presentation.

Assessing speaking is an intricate task. In this context, Luoma (2004) maintains that there is a “cycle of assessing speaking”. She claims that there is a big deal of “interaction” in this type of assessment. Firstly, she specifies the different participants in the stage of testing an oral performance, namely “the examinees, interlocutors, raters and score users”. (p. 4).

Before dealing with the “holistic approach”, it is necessary to know what the word “holism” means. Hornby (2000) defines “holism” as: “Considering a whole thing or being to be more than a collection of parts”. (p. 620). Thus, the term “holism” refers to the whole of anything.

Holistic assessment aims at looking at the overall performance under testing. In this type of assessment, the skill that is tested is considered as a unified whole, where there is no possibility of assessing each part independently of the other. In this regard, Xi et al (2006) maintain that: “In holistic scoring, raters consider the combined impact of delivery, language use, and topic development, and make a judgment about a person’s performance on a particular task. During this process, raters attempt to weigh the impact of different dimensions on the overall effectiveness of communication to come up with a holistic score”. (p 32).

According to this view, in a holistic assessment of speaking, the testers look at the overall oral performance of the testee. The different components, namely fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation etc..., are assessed under speaking as a whole.

The analytic method of assessment is viewed differently by many researchers. In a definition of analytic assessment, Xi and Mollaun (2006) argue that: “An alternative scoring approach, analytic scoring, can be used to assess examinees’ performance on each of the three dimensions. In other words, separate delivery, language use, and topic development scores can be reported”. (p.1). We can guess from this definition that analytic assessment is based on separating the components of the skill under testing. Hence, assessing speaking necessitates providing a score for each subcomponent of speaking, like pronunciation, vocabulary, the message content etc... (Hughes (1989), Alderson et al. (1995), Mertler (2001)).

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

To begin with, I chose that this study be a cross-sectional one, because it aims at looking closely to groups of students and teachers at the same time. Since this research belongs to language testing as a discipline, we cannot imagine a test without taking into account different students and teachers, because a test and its scoring are not actually targeting one student or one teacher.

Despite the fact that this project is mainly based on the qualitative method, the quantitative aspect is crucial since it serves as the first step towards making a comparison between the holistic and the analytic methods of testing. In addition to that, after giving the recording of the students’ oral performances to the raters, it is crucial to draw some tables and diagrams reflecting the statistics that are necessary to make the comparison.

As for the main skeleton of the methodology, it consists of selecting two groups from first and second years English students at the Higher Institute of Languages in Gabés, Tunisia, and five teachers of oral expression from different universities. All the teachers studied Linguistics as a branch, so they are acquainted with language testing as a discipline in general, and testing speaking, in particular. In a further step, I recorded the students’ oral performances according to different speaking tasks, and these performances were then downloaded in a computer by means of a mobile phone. I gave the recorded performances to the five teachers, and then they assessed them holistically and analytically.

After collecting the data, I made a comparison between the holistic and the analytic methods of assessment, according to different criteria that are basically related to language testing namely, inter-rater and intra-rater reliability. In this regard, I used Nakamura’s (2004) comparison between holistic and analytic assessment of writing, by applying his framework to assessing speaking.

A. Audio Recording

Audio recording helps the testers in assessing oral performances, since they can have some reference against which they can check the words, the chunks or even the sentences that are not previously heard. In addition to that, Alderson et al (1995) stress the fact that audio recording offers “authentic language data in tests” (p.224). Accordingly, it positively contributes to any research which is about speaking, because this skill requires authenticity.

Thus, I tried to record some of the students’ oral performances, in order to show how the same performance is judged holistically and analytically by some teachers of oral expression. Hence, I used my mobile phone and my computer in order to record and to download the voices. Contacting some teachers and students during and after oral expression sessions was the first step towards recording the speeches of twenty students.

B. The Tasks

In order to ensure the consistency of scoring the oral skill, I gave different tasks to different students. These tasks were actually the ones that some teachers of oral expression gave to their students. As a matter of fact, I tried to attend some oral expression sessions, so that the students were able to think about the major parts of these tasks and then were asked to speak accordingly. All of these performances were later recorded. In this context, the students were assessed on four different tasks namely, oral presentation, interview, storytelling and picture description.

Oral presentation concerned some of the first year students who were asked to deal with this topic “Why have you chosen English as a branch of study?” It has to be noted that the students were given two minutes in order to think about the topic, and then I recorded their speeches. Moreover, I asked them not to take notes before speaking, in order to preserve one essential feature of any speech, namely authenticity.

I have to mention that some of the students were not able to speak at all, so they kept silent, while there were other students who spoke enthusiastically about this topic.

After attending an oral expression session of the first year, I recorded five oral performances in an interview with a teacher. During the session, the teacher asked a question: “What do you think about Valentine’s Day?”, and she chose one student to ask him/her more questions, and so on. Then, the teacher enabled me to record some interviews.

I noticed that the students were so enthusiastic while speaking in an interview. They were even dealing with the different reasons explaining their attitudes towards Valentine’s Day. In fact, I guessed that the teacher wanted to make the students able to speak in a specific context, so that she was able to make them talk about current events.

In storytelling task, the teacher gave a group of second year students a string of words, namely “proper, afraid, foot, seventy-five, quickly”, and she asked them to imagine a story using these words. After four minutes of reflection on the task, I recorded some of the students’ performances. Each student spoke about his/her own story, despite the fact that there was the same set of words.

In picture description task, I showed some of the second year students a picture, which consists of an anti-war slogan. In this picture there is a child who is expressively pointing to the viewers, with the slogan “Our world needs you to end war!” Some students tried to depict this picture showing their opinions about the child, the colours and the slogan.

C. The Questionnaire

It is essential to deal with the quantitative aspect which enabled me to grasp teachers’ conception of the holistic and the analytic scales. In this regard, the questionnaire, which targeted the five teachers of oral expression, can be used as a first step to compare the holistic and the analytic scales. This questionnaire includes nine questions that aim at finding the way the teachers do assess their students’ oral performance and understanding their conception of the holistic and the analytic scales.

D. The Comparative Design

The use of the audio recording and the questionnaires aims at making a comparison between the holistic and the analytic methods of assessment. Generally speaking, it is the teachers’ scoring of the students’ oral performances which serves as the first step towards making the comparison. Hence it is necessary to depict how this procedure takes place.

E. Scoring Procedure

After recording the twenty oral performances, I gave each tester a C.D that includes all the recorded speeches in order to assess them holistically and analytically. In fact, the students were classified into four groups (five students in a group). Each group was assessed by five testers according to one of the already specified tasks (interview, oral presentation, storytelling and picture description). Thus, I can reflect on the differences between the holistic and analytic scales by taking into account the variability of tasks to grasp whether the variability of the tasks shows any differences between the two methods of assessment or not.

1. Holistic versus Analytic Scoring

1.1 The Holistic Scoring

The teachers assessed the students’ performances holistically. In fact, the table includes the number of the students, the different tasks according to which the students were tested, and the holistic scale that I took from Hughes’ example of holistic scoring (1989). I chose this table, firstly, because it is clear in its classification of the levels ranging from “excellent” (18-20) to very poor (0-4), and secondly because it follows the same scoring procedures of scoring that are

used in our Tunisian academic context, since all of the marks are between 0 and 20. Hence, the teachers would listen to the recorded performances and then give the marks according to six main criteria namely, excellent, very good, good, pass, weak or very poor.

1.2. The Analytic Scoring

The teachers scored the different performances while focusing on different aspects of speaking namely accuracy, fluency, pronunciation and content. The table of scoring does also include all the tasks and the students' numbers.

I took the example of scoring from the "Grading Scale of Oral Expression Interviews" which is followed in testing oral expression in the Higher Institute of Languages in Gabés. I selected this table because it efficiently reflects the ways by which the teachers of oral expression assess their students.

Hence, each level is given a (0.....5) scale which includes different criteria namely, awful (0), poor (1), o.k. (2), good (3), very good (4), and native like (5). In addition to that, each rubric of this analytic scale encapsulates the different parts of speaking. In fact, the grading scale illustrates the subcomponents of accuracy, fluency, pronunciation and content.

Firstly, accuracy is based on the extent to which a student's performance is grammatically consistent, which stands for the adequate use of subjects, verbs, tenses, prepositions etc... Secondly, fluency includes the use of lexis, idioms, synonyms, antonyms etc... This part of the analytic scale mainly requires the adequate use of vocabulary which enables the student to produce a coherent speech. Thirdly, the rubric of pronunciation is specified by the administrators of "the Grading Scale OE Interviews" as including: "past ed- endings, rhythm (not Fr. Syllable timed), correct stress on syllables and words, correct vowel pronunciation". Hence, it encompasses the bases of English pronunciation that should not be affected by Arabic or French pronunciation. Fourthly, the rubric of content is the one that is meant to assess the degree of coherence that the student's speech should adhere to. In fact, a coherent speech is based on some organised ideas that are related to a specific topic and on the extent to which a student is able to argue for or against an issue. Accordingly, the choice of this analytic scale comes as a result of its exhaustiveness, as it includes the basic subcomponents of speaking.

1.3 Reliability Measurement

a) Inter-rater Reliability

In this part, I made a comparison between the five raters' scoring, in order to determine the extent of agreement between them. As Cherry (2009) points out: "Another means of testing inter-rater reliability is to have raters determine which category each observation falls into and then calculate the percentage of agreement between the raters. So, if the raters agree 8 out of 10 times, the test has an 80% inter-rater reliability rate". I applied this method of comparison to calculating inter-reliability rates, because it was clear and concise. Furthermore, it was useful in reflecting on the similarities and differences between the five testers.

It has to be noted that the degree of agreement in the holistic scoring depends on the degree of agreement at the level of the six criteria that I already selected (Excellent, very good, good, pass, weak, very poor), so that, when two testers, for instance, give 12 and 14 to the same performance, I can state that both agree on the same criterion, since 12 and 14 come under the rubric of "good".

b) Intra-rater Reliability

In order to calculate intra-rater reliability rate, I used the same procedures that I selected for calculating inter-rater reliability, but with considerable modifications. In this regard, I directly compared the holistic and analytic scores given by the same rater, so that I was able to show the degree of agreement between the two sets of scores. Accordingly, I calculated the rate of similarity and difference of the two methods of scoring. Then, I made the comparison between them after analyzing the raters' outcomes.

F. The Questionnaire

Three testers out of five use the analytic scale to assess their students' oral performances, which reflects that most of the testers think that the analytic scale is more reliable than the holistic scale. Hence, four testers agree on the reliability of the analytic method of assessment.

Moreover, one tester uses both holistic and analytic scales when testing speaking, which shows his own conception of the two methods as distinct but complementary. In addition, the five testers agree on the subjectivity of the holistic assessment. This agreement confirms some of the researchers' depiction of the holistic scale as "impressionistic" (Cited in Mayo (1996).

Indeed, four testers believe that the analytic assessment has a positive backwash effect on teaching, which reflects that there is a tendency to assess the students' oral performances by evaluating each sub-component of speaking (pronunciation, vocabulary, message content, etc...) apart from the other components.

V. ANALYSIS

After giving the 20 recorded oral performances to be evaluated by five testers holistically and analytically, I got different scores that were so useful in drawing a statistical framework. In this context, we can calculate **the Mean** in order to have a glance at the average given by each method of assessment.

A. The Mean of the Raw Scores

As table 1 shows, in the holistic assessment of the 20 oral performances, the testers' outcomes provide us with five means ranging from 8.5 (tester 1) to 10.3 (tester 4), i.e., the difference between the two means is of **1.8**. It is this difference which is important because we can deduce that despite the fact that the testers assessed their students using the same criteria, there is a difference at the average level between one tester and another tester.

TABLE 1:
RAW SCORES MEAN.

Testers	Holistic Scores Mean	Analytic Scores Mean
1	8.5	8.1
2	9.175	9
3	9.55	8
4	10.3	11.8
5	9.95	8.05
Total mean	9.495	8.99

As for the analytic scoring, the difference between the top mean (11.8, tester 4) and the down mean (8, tester 3) is of **3.8**, which reflects a considerable divergence between the two outcomes. Apart from that, the total means that are related to holistic and analytic scores are **9.495** and **8.99** respectively.

B. The Range of the Raw Scores

Concerning the holistic method of assessing speaking, the table of range (see Table 2) shows a difference between the testers' scores as far as the range is concerned. Indeed, the five ranges that are obtained are restricted between 12 and 8. Accordingly, the difference between the top range and the bottom range is **4**. This difference is significant in that it reflects the degree of agreement between the testers as they are assessing the same oral performances.

TABLE 2:
RAW SCORES RANGE.

Testers	Holistic Scores Range	Analytic Scores Range
1	11	9
2	10.5	10.5
3	8	9
4	8	7
5	12	9
Total range	9.9	8.9

Apart from that, the scores that are derived from the analytic scale yield a set of ranges that vary between 10.5 and 7. Hence, we obtain **3.5** as a range difference between the highest and the lowest scores. Moreover, the overall range that is specific to holistic scores is **9.9**, whereas the one that is related to analytic scores is **8.99**.

C. Reliability Criterion

In this section, we will take into consideration inter-rater reliability rate and intra-rater reliability rate, so that we can perceive the extent to which the two methods of assessment differ in terms of reliability as a criterion of making comparisons. As we have mentioned in the research design part, we will calculate the rate of agreement that is suitable for each type of reliability.

1. Inter-rater Reliability

The calculation of inter-rater reliability rate is based on the degree of compromise between the scorers as they give marks. Accordingly, the analysis of the agreement rate brings many useful results. All these results are shown in tables 3 and 4 (Appendices 1 and 2).

Table 3 illustrates the main results that were deduced after the calculation of the total agreement rate and inter-rater reliability rates according to the different tasks. The students were classified into groups according to task types.

2. Inter-rater Reliability as Deduced from the Holistic Scale

The calculation of the overall agreement rate in the holistic scale is of **62.22%**. In brief, we deduce that there is an acceptable extent of agreement between the raters, since it is over 50%, but we cannot ignore the 37.78% rate of disagreement, because the testers actually assessed the same set of oral performances.

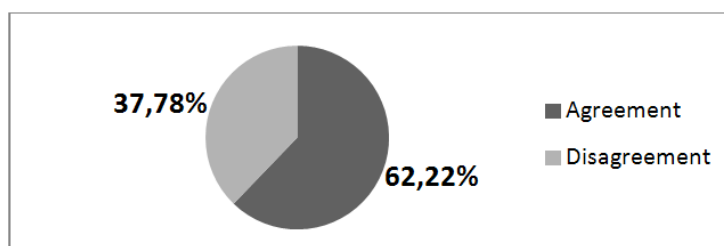


Figure 1: Inter-Rater Agreement in the Holistic Scale.

3. Inter-rater Reliability Rate According to Tasks

As far as interviews are concerned, we find that the total rate of agreement is 60%. In fact, we can consider this rate as low, since Stemler (2004) argues that: “A typical guideline found in the literature for evaluating the quality of inter-rater reliability based upon consensus estimates is that they should be 70% or greater”(p.3).

Apart from that, the assessment of the oral presentation reveals another set of reliability rates. It can be seen that the overwhelming percentage that characterizes the oral presentation rubric is 80%. Indeed, the calculation of the overall agreement rate reflects that there is a consensus over 73.33% of the scores. As for the picture description, the most noticeable rate of agreement is 80%. The five rates yield an overall rate of 62.85%. We have to mention that there is no full agreement between the five testers, as far as picture description is concerned.

Additionally, the reliability rates that are specific to storytelling task vary, with an overwhelming proportion of 60% that is specific to four performances. Hence, the overall agreement rate is 55%, which is lower than the overall rates that are specific to the other tasks.

4. Inter-rater Reliability According to the Analytic Scale

The overall accuracy agreement percentage is 48%, which is below the average of 50%. Accordingly, we can say that when the testers focused on the speech accuracy, they did not assess it in the same way, despite the fact that this criterion is actually based on clear rules (grammar and vocabulary rules).

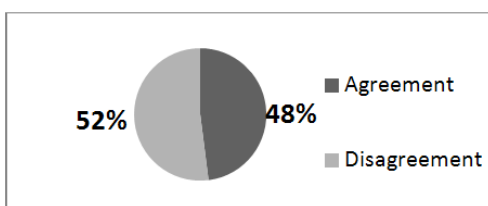


Figure 2: Inter-Rater Reliability According to Accuracy Criterion.

5. Inter-rater Reliability Rate According to Tasks

A look at table 5 reveals a difference of rates according to the four tasks. If we focus on the first task (the interview), we can remark that the majority of the raters agreed on 60% of the scores. Hence, the overall agreement rate is 56.66%, which is lower than Stemler’s (2004) acceptable consensus estimates, which should reach at least 70%.

Furthermore, all of the rates that were given to the students who were assessed according to the oral presentation task are either 40% or 60%, yielding an overall percentage which is 46.66%.

TABLE 5:
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY AGREEMENT ACCORDING TO ANALYTIC ASSESSMENT: THE RUBRIC OF “ACCURACY”.

Tasks	Interview	Oral presentation	Picture Description	Storytelling
Agreement rate	%56.66	46.66%	52%	45.75%
Total Agreement of Accuracy Scores 48%				

Next, the following task (picture description) reflects another set of agreement rates. It has to be noted that there is no agreement over the thirteenth student’s speech accuracy, whereas the raters’ feedback regarding the fifteenth performance reflects a higher agreement reaching 80%. After dealing with these two examples, it should be mentioned that there is a low reliability, since there is a huge difference between the two rates (0% and 80%). Accordingly, the overall agreement rate according to this task is 52%.

6. Inter-rater Reliability According to the Fluency Rubric

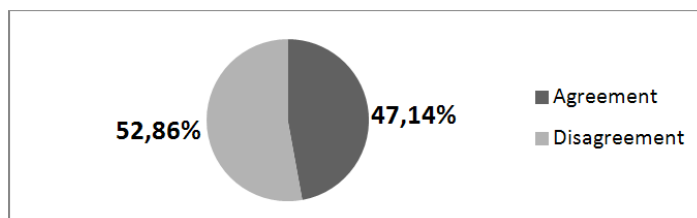


Figure 3: Inter-Rater Reliability According to Fluency Criterion.

In brief, the overall agreement over fluency scores is of 47.14%. This rate is low and demonstrates a lack of agreement between the raters as far as this skill is concerned. Hence, we can deduce that this low reliability can be traced back to the nature of fluency as a skill which is qualified differently by distinct raters.

TABLE 6:
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY AGREEMENT ACCORDING TO ANALYTIC ASSESSMENT: THE RUBRIC OF “FLUENCY”.

Tasks	Interview	Oral presentation	Picture Description	Story telling
Agreement rate	51.42%	42.85%	50%	45%
Total agreement of Fluency Scores 47.14%				

The assessment of the first group of students according to the interview task resulted in different scores that affected their reliability. In this regard, if we look at table 6, I deduce that there are many examples showing that the same student was given extremely distinct scores. For instance, the marks that were specific to student 5 were as follows: 2, 1.5, 1, 3, 1. This difference is further reflected by the total agreement rate which is 51.42%. If we compare this rate to the one that is specific to the following task (oral presentation), we find that the second rate is even lower, reaching 42.85%.

Besides, all of the reliability rates that come under the rubric of the third task (picture description) are between 40% and 60%, resulting in 50% as a general agreement rate. In addition, the fourth task (storytelling) reflects a lower overall agreement (45%). If we look at the details, we find that the marks that are specific to student 16 are as follows: 2, 1.5, 3, 3, 1. Otherwise, there is a disagreement between the testers, especially between testers 3 and 4, on the one hand and tester 5, on the other hand.

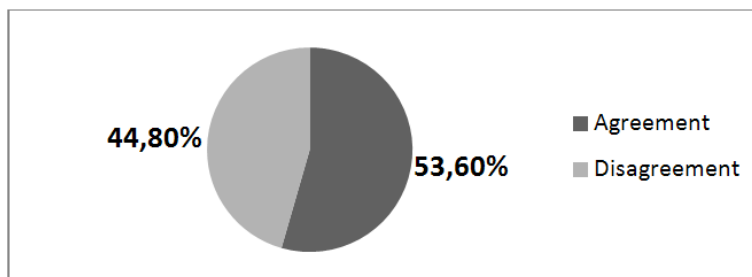


Figure 4: Inter-Rater Reliability According to Pronunciation Criterion.

After dealing with the percentage that is specific to each performance, we obtain 53.6% as a total agreement over pronunciation scores.

TABLE 7:
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY ACCORDING TO THE PRONUNCIATION RUBRIC

Tasks	Interview	Oral presentation	Picture Description	Story telling
Agreement rate	50%	54.28%	60%	50%
Total Agreement of Pronunciation Scores 53.6%				

If we concentrate on table 7, we can deduce that the testers agree on the same scores with varied rates. Apart from that, most of the rates that reflect raters' agreement range between 40% and 60%. However, we neither have any total disagreement (0%) related to the scores of any student, nor total agreement (100%).

Table 8 and figure 5 show that the total rate agreement of content scores is 51.66%. This percentage is acceptable as it is over 50%. If we look at the details that are given by the table, we can perceive that the agreement rates are mainly between 40% and 100%.

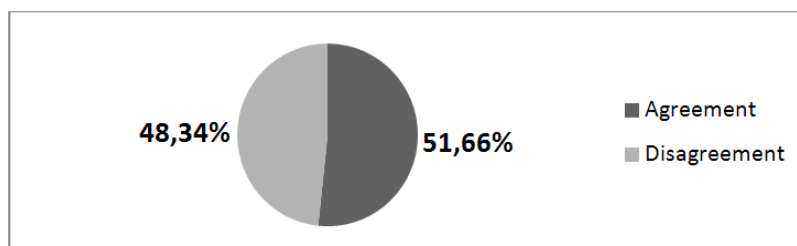


Figure 5: Inter-Rater Reliability According to Content Criterion.

Concerning the content rubric, the rates according to tasks range between 44% and 56.66%. The lowest rate (44%) is specific to the first task, where the raters agreed on 40% of the scores four times, which is considered as a low rate.

In the second task, the raters agreed one time on 80% of the scores. In the third task, the agreement rates are between 40% and 80%, resulting in 56% as an overall rate. In the fourth task, most of the rates are around 40%, yielding 50% as an overall rate.

TABLE 8:
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY ACCORDING TO CONTENT

Tasks	Interview	Oral presentation	Picture Description	Story telling
Agreement rate	44%	56.66%	56%	50%
Total Agreement of Content Scores 51.66%				

7. The Overall Agreement Rate of the Analytic Scale

As we have seen, the analytic scale encapsulates many criteria that can be analyzed in order to deduce the amount of reliability for each component. In this part, we will shed light on the total marks that emerged from this scale.

Accordingly, Table 6 (see Appendix 2) reflects the degree of reliability over the scores that are given to the twenty students.

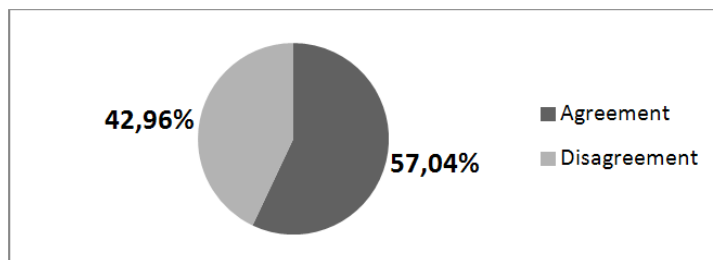


Figure 6: Analytic Scale Inter-Rater Reliability.

A scrutiny of table 6 reveals different rates that are specific to agreement according to tasks. In fact, the scores that are reported in the analytic scale are the composite scores of accuracy, fluency, pronunciation and content.

Both oral presentation and storytelling tasks engender the highest rate of agreement (60%). The task that reflects the least agreement rate (53.33%) is the interview. Moreover, the raters agreed on 55% of the scores that are under the rubric of picture description. In this regard, we have to mention that a full agreement (100%) occurs twice, since the testers gave almost similar scores to students 1 and 16. In addition to that, the testers agreed on 80% of the scores just five times, which shows the low total rate that characterizes the analytic scale, namely 57.037%. Thus, there is a variation according to tasks, but this variation does not hide the fact that the analytic scale does not guarantee an acceptable reliability rate (70%).

8. Intra-rater Reliability

If we focus on the first tester’s outcomes (see table 9), we deduce that despite the fact that he gave the marks to the same performances, there was a considerable difference between the scores that were given according to the holistic scale and the ones that were given according to the analytic scale.

Apart from that, the total rate of agreement that is deduced from tester 2’s outcomes is of **95%**. This rate is higher than tester 1’s agreement rate. As a matter of fact, it seems that tester 2 does almost agree on the same set of scores holistically and analytically, which I consider as an exception because there is no other high rate of agreement.

After analyzing tester 3’s holistic and analytic scores, we obtain **45%**, as a rate of agreement between the two scales. This rate is considered low, since it is below 70%.

TABLE 9:
INTRA-RATER RELIABILITY AGREEMENT.

Testers	Tester 1		Tester2		Tester3		Tester4		Tester5	
	H.S	A.S	H.S	A.S	H.S	A.S	H.S	A.S	H.S	A.S
Agr.	50%		95%		45%		65%		60%	

If we look at tester 4’s feedback, we notice that the intra-rater agreement rate reaches 65%, which is above the average. However, we cannot ignore the 35% of disagreement which reflects a difference of rating.

9. Intra-rater Reliability Rate According to Tasks

A look at tables 10 shows that there is a difference between the rates according to tasks. In view of this, tester’s 1 outcomes reflect distinct percentages. Hence, we find that tester 1 agreed on 40% of the scores that are both specific to interviews and storytelling tasks. It has to be noted, however, that the agreement rate reaches 60% as far as the oral presentation and picture description are concerned.

TABLE 10:
INTRA-RATER RELIABILITY RATE ACCORDING TO TASKS:

	Tester 1	Tester2	Tester 3	Tester 4	Tester 5	Total Agr.
Interview	40%	100%	20%	60%	60%	56%
Oral presentation	60%	80%	40%	60%	80%	64%
Picture description	60%	100%	80%	60%	40%	68%
Storytelling	40%	100%	20%	60%	60%	56%

Broadly speaking, the results imply a difference of intra-rater reliability rates according to tasks. As a matter of fact, the general agreement rate that is deduced from the scores of the first task (interviews) and the fourth task (storytelling) is 56%. The highest rate is related to the third task (picture description) which is 68%, almost reaching the acceptable rate of agreement (70%). Moreover, the rate of agreement that is specific to the second task (oral presentation) is 64%. In fact, we can say that intra-rater agreement rate depends on the task type and varies as the tasks vary.

VI. DISCUSSION

A. The Mean

The mean in the holistic method reflects that the holistic scale is more flexible than the analytic one. This view is further explained by Kozłowska et al (2005) who suggest that the holistic testing is based on a “criterion of intelligibility”, whereas the analytic testing is based on error finding”, since the testers focus on each part of the skill.

This goes in line with Smaoui (2009), who found that some aspects of holistic testing cannot be found in the analytic one. In fact, these results do not support some of the raters’ viewpoints. The testers claim that the holistic scale is sometimes “unfair”, since it is usually maintained by some researchers that the analytic scale is more objective than the holistic scale. Accordingly, the scorer can refer to the holistic scale and use it in assessing the performance together with the analytic scale. Thus, it seems that the analytic and the holistic scales can be used in a check and balance way.

B. The Range

We deduce that the calculation of ranges difference reflects a higher agreement between the raters in the analytic assessment than in the holistic one, but, we have to say that it is rather a slight difference because it is of **0.5** (the difference between 4 and 3.5). Moreover, the total range of the holistic scores is 9.9, whereas the total range of analytic scores is 8.9, which results in a difference of 1.

In fact, the holistic scale gives a deeper discrepancy between the students’ levels. Accordingly, the holistic scale yields greater difference between the top and the bottom scores. In short, the holistic and the analytic methods of assessment are different in terms of range.

C. Holistic versus Analytic Scales

A look at the results that were deduced from the different scorers’ rates according to the holistic scale shows that the overall agreement rate is 62.22%. In fact, this percentage reflects a low reliability since it is below the acceptable average of agreement (70%). It has to be noted that many researchers claim that any subjective assessment leads to low reliability (Hughes (1989)). Hence, it is clear that a holistic scale does not guarantee high reliability. Moreover, even at the level of tasks, we notice a considerable variation. For instance, the assessment of oral presentations yields an acceptable agreement rate (73.33%). This result can be explained by the fact that the raters of any oral presentation focus on a student who is speaking without any visual or written support. Thus, we can say that there are no clear cut parts in an oral presentation and we can notice the holistic aspect of this task. This stresses the fact that oral presentations are authentic tasks, when the students do not prepare them in advance.

In addition to that, the assessment of the other three tasks yields low reliability rates. It has to be noted that the more the students focus on parts of their speeches, the less reliability rate we get. In other words, we notice that when the students spoke freely in an oral presentation task, and without any interruption, the raters gave almost the same scores. This perception can be traced back to the fact that the testers did only focus on a specific speech which has a holistic aspect. If we compare oral presentation to the other tasks, we notice that the interviews, the picture description and storytelling tasks have a partitive aspect. Firstly, the picture description task necessitates that the students look at the different parts of the picture in order to depict it. Secondly, in the interview task, each student talked with an interlocutor (tester). Thus, the task can be divided into many pairs of speech. Thirdly, in the storytelling task, the students are required to focus on different words from which they can imagine a story. Hence, we deduce that there is a link between the partitive aspect of each task and the degree of reliability of the holistic scale.

After analyzing the data, we obtained different results specific to the analytic scale. As a matter of fact, we calculated reliability rates according to two distinct ways, firstly by determining the reliability rate of each criterion, and secondly, by finding the reliability rate by means of the total scores. Thus, we can say that the analytic scale is flexible since it enables us to interpret the data in two different procedures.

The study of the agreement rate of both methods results in many significant observations. Firstly, I infer that the study of analytic scale reliability requires more details than the holistic scale, because the analytic analysis of speaking is actually a scrutiny of all the components that make up this skill. Hence, I presume that the analytic scale offers a deeper observation related to calculating the degree of inter-rater reliability of accuracy, fluency pronunciation and content, which is not possible while analyzing the holistic scale data.

Secondly, I notice that inter-rater reliability in the analytic scale can be calculated in two different ways, either by dealing with the components of speaking or with the total (composite) scores that were given according to the scale, whereas, in the holistic scale, it is necessary to use the same set of scores in order to measure reliability. As a matter of fact, the analytic method seems to be more flexible than the holistic one, because it does not necessitate a single interpretation.

Thirdly, as far as inter-rater percentage is concerned, I find that its rate is higher in the holistic method (62.22%) than in the analytic one (57.037%). This perception reflects that the testers do agree more when using the rubrics that express their attitudes (excellent, good etc..) over the oral performance than when using the detailed analytic scale, as if there is a consensus between the teachers over the good and the weak speeches. Another interpretation of these results can be traced back to the nature of speaking itself, because when the listener in his/her daily life focuses on the oral performance, s/he cares more about the overall outcome than about its details. This observation does not support testers’ conception that the holistic scale is less reliable than the analytic one, because their holistic assessment of the twenty oral performances revealed higher agreement than their analytic assessment.

Fourthly, at the level of tasks, I notice a greater variation of the reliability rate in the holistic scale than in the analytic one. Hence, I can state that the analytic scale is more suitable when dealing with different tasks, since it is useful when the students sit for oral exams that are based on different tasks. Thus, the variability of tasks deepened the differences between holistic and analytic approaches to assessment.

Fifthly, I confirm that the interpretation of the analytic results yields a deeper scrutiny of the different parts of speech, as well as of the way the testers focus on each part. It is clear that there is an unconscious weighting that characterizes each rater, and it is this concept which lessens scorers' reliability rates that are related to the analytic scale.

Eventually, all of these results reflect that the holistic and the analytic scoring of speaking are different in terms of inter-rater-reliability rate, which confirms our hypothesis that is based on the difference between the two methods of scoring.

It has to be noted that there is a common point between the two scales, which lies in yielding low reliability rates. We cannot ignore that the results reflect low agreement between the raters, because in both scales we did not attain the percentage of 70% of agreement except when we dealt with the holistic assessment of the oral presentation task (73.33% of agreement).

Thus, it is not frequent to obtain a high agreement between the raters as far as speaking is concerned. This fact can be explained by the concept of the unconscious weighting which we have dealt with in the previous parts of the research. Hence, the raters are different in their conception of what a good speech consists of.

VII. CONCLUSION

After dealing with the differences between the two methods, I notice that there are many differences between speaking assessment (as I dealt with it in this research) and writing assessment (as I read about it in the literature). Most of the researchers claim that the objective assessment (the analytic one) is more reliable when assessing writing. After dealing with speaking assessment in this research, I concluded that the holistic scale is more reliable than the analytic one.

Thus, we can see that there is a difference between holistic and analytic assessment of writing, on the one hand, and holistic and analytic assessment of speaking, on the other hand.

I think that making a comparison between these two productive skills in terms of holistic and analytic assessment is an interesting area of investigation, by which we can have a broader view of the use of these scales and provide a deeper analysis by setting a comparative design not only to show the differences between holistic and analytic scales, but also to highlight the discrepancies between speaking and writing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe my deepest gratitude to my teacher Dr. Chokri Smaoui who inspired me to conduct this research.

APPENDIX I

TABLE 5:
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY AGREEMENT ACCORDING TO HOLISTIC ASSESSMENT.

Students	Tasks	Tester 1	Tester 2	Tester 3	Tester 4	Tester 5	Total Agr.	Agr. According to tasks.
1	Interview	10	11	10	10	12	80%	60%
2	Interview	06	08.5	05	09	09	40% / 60%	
3	Interview	04	08	06	06	06	60%	
4	Interview	03	07	05	10	07	60%	
5	Interview	04	08	07	05	05	60%	
6	Oral presentation	13	13	13	13	15	100%	73.33%
7	Oral presentation	05	07	05	10	10	40% / 60%	
8	Oral presentation	08	07	10	10	11	80%	
9	Oral presentation	04	04	05	08	03	80%	
10	Oral presentation	06	08	09	10	08	80%	
11	Picture description	08	11	12	12	14	40% / 60%	62.85%
12	Picture description	10	10	09	11	05	80%	
13	Picture description	11	10	10	11	13	80%	
14	Picture description	14	10	10	13	12	40% / 60%	
15	Picture description	12	14.5	12	09	15	80%	
16	Storytelling	11	08	13	12	10	40% / 60%	55%
17	Storytelling	10	12	12	12	12	80%	
18	Storytelling	12	08.5	12	12	11	40% / 60%	
19	Storytelling	10	09	13	12	14	40% / 60%	
20	Storytelling	09	09	12	10	07	60%	
Total Agreement of Holistic Scores							62.22%	

APPENDIX 2

TABLE 6:
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY AGREEMENT ACCORDING TO ANALYTIC ASSESSMENT.

Students	Tasks	Tester 1	Tester 2	Tester 3	Tester 4	Tester 5	Agreement	Agr. According to tasks
1	Interview	11	10.5	09	11	09	100%	53.33%
2	Interview	07	08.5	04	11	05	40% / 40%	
3	Interview	05	08	04	13	05	40%	
4	Interview	07	07	04	09	05	60%	
5	Interview	07	08	04	12	07	40%	
6	Oral presentation	13	12.5	13	16	11	80%	60%
7	Oral presentation	04	07	04	10	08	40% / 40%	
8	Oral presentation	08	05	09	09	09	80%	
9	Oral presentation	05	04	04	09	03	60%	
10	Oral presentation	05	07	07	13	08	60%	
11	Picture description	07	11	09	13	12	40% / 40%	55%
12	Picture description	07	10	08	11	06	60% / 40%	
13	Picture description	10	10	08	12	09	80%	
14	Picture description	13	10	08	13	11	60% / 40%	
15	Picture description	13	14.5	13	13	11	80%	
16	Storytelling	10	08	09	11	08	100%	60%
17	Storytelling	08	12	12	13	09	60% / 40%	
18	Storytelling	08	8.5	11	12	08	80%	
19	Storytelling	07	09	10	12	10	60%	
20	Storytelling	07	09.5	10	13	07	40% / 40%	
Total Agreement of Analytic Scores							57.037%	

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English Prepositions of Time Translated into Albanian

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Abstract—The study of language as a form of communication includes the structure and rules under which words interrelate. Scholars are facing the need for research on difficult issues and comparisons at the global and local level. The theme of this research is prepositions of time. Its aim is to deepen the knowledge of distinct prepositions and their use. Several comparative studies of this nature exist regarding the English and Albanian languages; it is tried to update the studies to facilitate students' acquisition of English as a foreign language and the work of translators between English and Albanian. On the basis of this research, the question rises as: How English prepositions of time for and after are translated into Albanian? In order to clarify the research, it was studied the use of prepositions, particularly prepositional phrases with emphasis on prepositions of time (for and after), and compared them with prepositions in the Albanian language from selected novels in English and Albanian. The research is based on a corpus of four novels, two by English authors and two by an Albanian writer. This research looked into analytical and comparative nature with the aim of enhancing and improving the current state of learning and it resulted that our assumption was right as these prepositions were translated as it was expected in the dictionary.

Index Terms—preposition, time, for, after, analysis, language

I. INTRODUCTION

Languages as a mean of communication are used in order people could be understood with each other and express their ideas, opinions, meanings, feelings etc. During history some languages survived the time and made themselves as superior or more used ones.

Mastering the use of prepositions in English, in both speaking and writing, is one of the most difficult tasks that students face. Prepositions pose problems not only to lower-level learners but also to the more advanced ones. Beginners who start learning English face the same problem, needing to search the best way to use English prepositions, which are sometimes not easy due to their multiple meanings. Learners may encounter several challenges in using them properly, but the main problems are as follows:

- a) Which preposition should be used if required? And
- b) What prepositions are “a must”?

This paper specifies the use and translation of certain prepositions in English such as preposition *for* and *after*, as from the analysis, preposition *for* appeared to be the third most used preposition after the preposition *in* and *at*.

This research, besides prepositions, also included prepositional phrases, considered among the main elements of noun phrases in English grammar. In Albanian grammar prepositions are often expressed through the noun cases.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study will be based on a corpus of four novels, two by English authors and two by an Albanian writer. The first two novels translated from English into Albanian include:

"White Fang" by Jack London, translated by Mikaela Minga as "Dhëmbi i Bardhë" (hereinafter as W. F. and Dh. B.); and "Dubliners" by James Joyce, translated into Albanian by Ildir Azizi as "Dublinasit" (hereinafter used as D. and Dubl.).

The two Albanian novels are by the well-known Albanian writer Ismail Kadare: "Darka e gabuar" translated by John Hodgson as "The fall of the stone city" (hereinafter used as D.G. and FSC); and "Kronikë në gur" translated into English by Arshi Pipa as "Chronicle in Stone" (hereinafter used as K.G. and C.S).

The decision to base the study on the above-mentioned novels derived from the fact that both Jack London and James Joyce stand in high regard in both languages, and as such have been translated into the targeted language.

The same stands for the Albanian corpus, as Ismail Kadare is one of the most translated Albanian writers, especially into French and English. Moreover, the two novels were translated directly from Albanian into English. There were other novels translated into English, but they were first translated from Albanian into French and then from French into English.

In the above-stated novels, prepositions of time are treated according to their grammatical function, namely to semantic nuances brought from one language to another, from English into Albanian and vice versa. As semantics is the study of meaning communicated through language, we will be looking into the meaning of prepositions in sentences.

Also this research looked into the possibility of other variables of translation or non-translation within different situations in both languages, respectively in the four novels as well as a research was conducted with students of secondary school to see how they translate and how close to the dictionary are the translations. As we expected, the students identified and knew how to translate the test given to them.

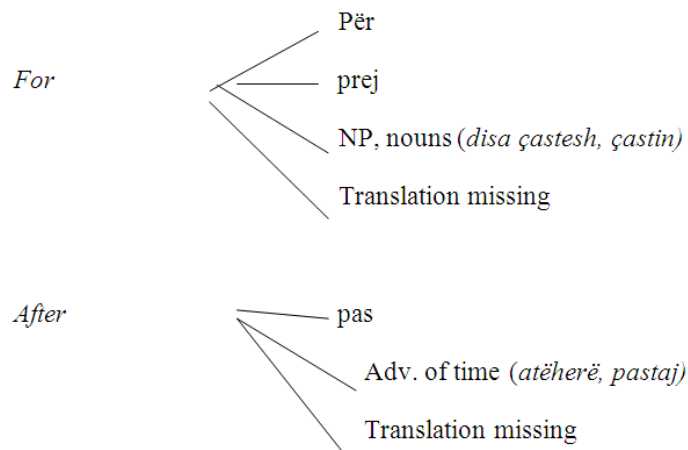
With the development of linguistics, prepositions have been targeted by many linguists of the modern world. A deep insight was made into the structure, which in some respects clarified features that were not present before. All this came as a result of the prevailing opinion on prepositions, being of a very questionable nature and bearing a dichotomy as both lexical and functional.

According to Littlefield (2003) “statistically, in a corpus of one million English words, one in ten words is a preposition. Yet, despite their frequent occurrence, there is no generally accepted account of this category and its characteristics. At best, prepositions represent a problematic, contradictory category for theories of syntax.” (pp.1-10)

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Most simple prepositions in English are translated into Albanian with prepositions or with a single word, for example the prepositions *in*, *on*, *at*, *for*, *after*, etc. That word can be the preposition *në* (*in*, *at*, *on*), *for* (*për*) indicating *time after* (*pas*) adverbs of time (*atëherë*, *pastaj*), or by a noun phrase (*for-disa çastesh*, *çastin*).

Translated with prepositions:



According to the analyzed novels, preposition *for* is the third most used preposition denoting time, after prepositions *in* and *at*, as it was found to be used in *White Fang* 476 times in total and 65 denoting time; in *Dubliners* 508 times and 71 denoting time.

English For-Albanian Për

1. *Bill stopped for a moment, in order that his words might gain greater significance...* (W. F. p. 6); (Billi heshti për një çast, si për t`u dhënë rëndësi më të madhe fjalëve që do të shqiptonte... (Dh. B. p. 8)).

2. *...where it had remained for weeks, a rankling flame ...* (W. F. p. 42) (...më thellë se të tjerët dhe për javë të tëra i ishte dashur... (Dh. B. p. 47)).

3. *I sat staring at the clock for some time, and when its tickling...* (D. p. 25); (Pashë orën e murit për pak çaste dhe kur tik-taket e saj filluan... (Dubl., p. 50)).

4. *There was a pause for a few seconds; and a great deal of scuffling...*(D. p. 107); Heshtja kaloi për disa çaste, pastaj vrundull këmbëzvarrjesh...(Dubl., p. 135)

As seen from the above examples, preposition *for* was mainly translated with preposition *për* in Albanian denoting a fixed time (*for a moment, for a quarter of an hour, for five or ten muntas*) but mostly showing duration of time (*for a week, for a little time, for some time*). Prepositional phrases with *for* may be simple containing P + N (*for weeks*) or they may be complex P + NP where the NP is preceded by modifiers (*for some time, for a few seconds*).

In Albanian they appear translated with P + NP preceded by modifiers (adverb, indefinite pronoun) as well (*për pak çaste, për disa çaste*). Therefore, the same structure is in both languages (P + NP).

English For - Albanian NP and Nouns

1. *For a week she never left the cave, except for water, and then her movements were slow and painful.* (W. F. p. 65); (Pastaj qëndroi një javë në shpellë; dilte vetëm sa për të pirë ujë, duke lëvizur ngadalë... (Dh. B. p. 70)).

2. *The moment Mit-Sah gave his order for the start, that moment the whole ...* (W. F. p. 111); (Kur Mit-sahu jepte sinjalin e nisjes, ai lëshohej përpara.... (Dh. B. p. 115)).

3. *For days his manifestations of desire to lay hands on him had been...* (W. F. p.123); (Kohët e fundit ai kishte qëndruar më shumë jashtë. (Dh. B. p. 127)).

4. *...too many battles to be in doubt for a moment what to do.* (W. F. p. 35) (...shumë luftimeve dhe e dinte saktësisht castin kur duhej tësulmonte.(Dh. B. p. 38)).

As in the above examples, PP's with HP *for* appear translated with NP into Albanian, and those NP's may have a modifier (*një, disa*) or may be just nouns (*e nisjes, kohët e fundit*). Nouns may have a front article *e* which makes the noun in genitive (*e nisjes*) and (*kohët*) a feminine noun, plural in accusative, whereas the noun *çastin* is masculine, singular in accusative.

English For-Albanian Prej

1. *..., he had been employed for thirteen years in a great Catholic wine-merchant's office...* (D. p. 60) (... ai punonte prej trembëdhjetë vjetësh në një zyrë të madhe tregtarësh katolikë të verës, ... (Dubl., p. 89)).

2. *He had been for many years cashier of a private bank.* (D. p. 104); (Prej shumë vitesh punonte si arkëtar i një banke private. (Dubl., p. 139)).

3. *They had been married for twenty two years and had lived happily...* (D. p. 111); (Kishin qenë të martuar prej njëzet e dy vjetësh dhe martesë e tyre (Dubl., p. 146)).

The examples above, when English preposition *for* is translated with the Albanian preposition *prej*, were found only in *Dubliners* (8 times). The PP in Albanian is composed of P + NP where a noun is preceded by a numeral (*trembëdhjetë, njëzet e dy*) and an adverb as modifier (*shumë*) and the nouns (*vitesh, vjetësh*) are in ablative case.

English For -Translation Missing

1. *The circle of eyes to shift restlessly for a moment and even to withdraw a bit...* (W. F. p. 7); (Edhe në rrethet e syve të përfaktë u pa hutim. (Dh. B. p. 10)).

2. *For the time, fear had been routed by growth, while growth* (W. F. p. 54); (Frikën e kishte mposhtur kureshtja. (Dh. B. p. 59)).

3. *...to break out of the eariness of school-life for one day at least.* (D. p. 13) (...vendosa ta thyeja përditshmërinë e shkollës, të paktën një here. (Dubl., p. 36)).

4. *when she had been laid up for a day....* (D. p. 32) (...kur ajo rastisi të zinte shtratin, ai i pati lexuar.... (Dubl., p.58)).

In *White Fang* more translations were found missing than in *Dubliners* (20-11). The underlined PP's were not translated or replaced by other words or phrases, although we think that they could have been translated with the preposition *për* (*for a moment - për njëçast; for one day - për një ditë*), *adverb* (*tani*), *expression* (*for the time - tani për tani*) or *noun* (*for a day - ditën*). Therefore, these cases show absence of translation and consequently the reader cannot have a clear picture of the time in the sentences. Let us see all these statistics in a tabular manner as follows:

TABLE 1.
WHITE FANG.

Translation used for analysis		Times	%
English PP with the head <i>for</i> used - in total		476	100%
<i>for</i> denoting time		66	100%
PP with the head <i>for</i> –translated into Albanian	- with prepositions of accusative-për	18	27. 27%
	-other prepositions: në, pas, me, rreth	7	10.60%
	-with adverbs of time: (pak - 2; gjatë - 6; tani - 1)	9	13.63%
	-verb phrases - 4	4	6.06%
	-cases when translation missing	20	30. 30%
	- nouns	3	4. 54%
	- noun phrases	5	7.57%

TABLE 2.
DUBLINERS

Translation used for analysis		Times	%
English PP with the head <i>for</i> used - in total		508	100%
<i>for</i> denoting time		71	100%
PP with the head <i>for</i> –translated into Albanian	- with prepositions of accusative - për	34	47. 88%
	-other prepositions: në, nga, rreth	4	5.63%
	-with adverbs of time	3	4.22%
	-preposition: prej	8	11. 26%
	- cases when translation missing	11	15. 49%
	- conjunction (edhe)	3	4. 22%
		- noun phrases and nouns	8

As seen from the tables, preposition *për* carries the burden of English translation *for* into Albanian. As for preposition *për* in Albanian, in both novels it appeared to be used in *The Fall of the Stone City* 382 times, and only 46 times denoting time, from 46 times only *për - for* (15); translation missing (13); *prej - for* (6); NP - *for* (një copëherë, një grime kohë, ca caste - 13); nouns - *for* (koha, ditë e netë - 2); VP - *for* (kaq shumë, kaq javë, kaq muaj), etc.

In *Chronicle in Stone* preposition *për* is used 426 times, 42 - denoting time; and other expressions translated into English preposition *for* such as: *për - for* (31); *për - translation missing* (9); *prej - for* (9); NP - *for* (një orë, orë të tëra,

ca ditë - 27); VP - **for** (6); adverbs - **for** (pak, gjatë - 6), etc. All in all, approximately the same picture is gained as with preposition **for** in English.

Analysis of Preposition *After*

As stated above, preposition *after*, in regard to time relation, was used very often in the analysed novels in English; it was found in *White Fang* 104 times, 53 denoting time, and in *Dubliners*, out of 115, 88 denoting time.

English *After* -Albanian *Pas*

Preposition *after* is mostly translated with preposition *pas* into Albanian, showing a time after something, and in *Dubliners* out of 115 times it was found to be translated 51 times with *pas* into Albanian, whereas in *White Fang* out of 104 times, only 24 were translated with *pas*. This difference probably depends on the novel's content and the translator; *Dubliners* had a more correct translation than *White Fang*, whose translator several times produced sentences without translating them. Let us see some sentences in both novels:

1. *After a time* the she-wolf began to grow restless. (W. F. p. 35); (Pas disa sekondash ujkonja filloi të shfaqte një lloj shqetësimi. (Dh. B. p. 40)).

2. *After a long while* his monologue paused. (D. p. 18); (Pas një fare kohe monologu i tij rreshti. (Dubl., p. 42)).

3. *had gone away quietly in couples after a few minutes*... (D. p. 212) (...pas disa minutash u larguan qetë – qetë dy e nga dy. (Dubl., p. 233)).

As seen from the examples above, the preposition *after* is translated with preposition *pas* showing “a time after something”. We found that preposition *after* was followed by a simple noun or NP (*after dinner*, *after eight o'clock*, *after that evening*) or by a more complex NP (*after their first sleep*). In Albanian as well, as stated in the previous paragraph on Albanian prepositions, PP's with the preposition *pas* are followed by a simple or complex NP and may have a modifier before a noun (*pas darkës*, *pas një fare kohe*, *pas disa sekondash*, etc.).

As observed during the analysis of the novels, both prepositions have a free placement in the sentence; they can be found in initial, middle or final positions within the sentence.

As happens with the preposition *pas* being found in the construction N + P + N (*kohë pas kohe* - now and then, *herë pas here* - from time to time, *orë pas ore* - hour by hour), we found the same construction with the preposition *after* as well: N+P+N (*night after night*-netëve me rradhë, *morning after morning*-çdo mëngjez, *day after day*-përnatë). Here the constructions are the same; translation differs as *pas* is translated more often with expressions and *after* appears translated with NP's preceded or not preceded by a modifier.

English *After* -Translation Missing

1. *But after that* he was afraid no more of the looming bulks of the tepees. (W. F. p. 74) (...Sidoqoftë nuk kishte më frikë prej tyre ... (Dh. B. p. 80)).

2. *And after such classification* he avoided the things that hurt..... (W. F. p. 52); (Ai thjeshtë i ndante gjërat në dy kategori: ato që të shkaktonin dhimbje... (Dh. B. p. 57)).

3. ...said Gallahar, *emerging after some time* from the clouds of smoke... (D. p. 73); (Tha Gallaheri duke dale prej reve të tymit ku ishte zhdukur. (Dubl., p. 104)).

4. *The people are in bed and after their first sleep* now... (D. p. 26); (Njerëzia kanë rënë për të fjetur tani, madje duhet ta kenë bërë gjumin e parë... (Dubl., p. 51)).

5. *The next morning after breakfast* I went down to look at the little house... (D. p. 3) (Të nesërmen në mëngjez vajta ta shihja në shtëpinë e vogël... (Dubl. p. 26)).

As seen from the examples above, PP with its head *after* may be simple (*after that*) or more complex (*after their first sleep*); nevertheless, the underlined PP's were not translated and they were not even replaced. Another fact to be mentioned, in comparison to other prepositions, is that there weren't many cases of non-translation especially in *Dubliners*, where the translator adapted somehow the translation as in the last two examples [although in the translation into Albanian it is not sure whether they ate breakfast or not, as it refers only to a part of the day (*the next morning after breakfast* - Të nesërmen në mëngjez)].

In *White Fang* there were 12 cases when PP was not translated or replaced. There were also cases when the whole sentence was missing in translation (*And after two or three painful adventures with the mothers of part grown puppies*...p.78). These are considered loss of translation.

Other translations found were: with *adverbs of time* such as: *atëherë* and *pastaj* (especially the PP *after that* - *pastaj*); *pak, gjatë* (*and sleeping through after that evening* - e të përgjumura gjatë gjithë mbrëmjes (D. p. 32:50)); with VP (*it was after eight o'clock* - kish kaluar teta...(D. p. 34; 51)); with NP, especially when there were expressions in English (*night after night* - netëve me rradhë; *morning after morning* - çdo mëngjez).

Apart from other discussed prepositions so far, the preposition *after* was found preceded by its complement and it appeared translated into Albanian with preposition *më*, followed by an adverb as complement of it (*më pas*), for example:

1. *Two nights after*, his friends came to see him. (D. p. 155); (Dy netë më pas erdhën miqtë për vizitë. (Dubl., p. 198)).

2. ...out going a few days after. (D. p. 56) (... , ca ditë më pas. (Dubl., p. 85)).

During the analysis of the Albanian novels, approximately the same picture emerged from translation in English, so in *Darka e Gabuar*(The Fall of the Stone City) preposition *pas* - *after* (27), NP - *after* (2), më pas - *after* (1), nga *-after* (2), and in *Kronikë në Gur* (Chronicle in Stone) *pas* - *after* (15), Adv of time - *after* (2), NP - *after* (2).

Let us see statistics about the preposition *after* and its translation into Albanian.

TABLE 3.
WHITE FANG.

Translation used for analysis		Times	%
English PP with the head <i>after</i> used - in total		104-56	100%
<i>after</i> denoting time		56	100%
PP with the head <i>after</i> –translated into Albanian	- with preposition of ablative - pas	24	42.85%
	- other prepositions: për, më, prej	6	10.71%
	- që	2	3.57%
	- verb phrase	1	1.78%
	- cases when translation missing	12	21.42%
	- adverbs of time (pastaj, atëherë)	5	8.92%
	- expressions	2	3.57%
- conjunction (pasi)	4	7.14%	

TABLE 4.
DUBLINERS

Translation used for analysis		times	%
English PP with the head <i>after</i> used - in total		105-88	100%
<i>after</i> denoting time		88	100%
PP with the head <i>after</i> –translated into Albanian	- with preposition of ablative - pas	51	57.95%
	- other prepositions: më,	3	3.40%
	- verb phrase	3	3.40%
	- noun phrase	3	3.40%
	- cases when translation missing	16	18.18%
	- adverbs of time (pastaj, gjatë, pak)	6	6.81%
	- conjunction (pasi)	6	6.81%

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the Introduction part of our research it is stated that a test is conducted on prepositions of time Since this research is based on the comparison between two languages, English and Albanian, we expected that translation (without dictionaries) would be satisfactory, believing that students would identify and translate them properly. This assumption was based on research done in the secondary school by a particular test which included prepositions of time (*in, on, at, for, from, after, before*). The test contained 14 sentences, each preposition appearing in two sentences for translation.

The reason why it was chosen the high school is that such schools are supposed to be the best in Kosova, and one of them is the High School “Zenel Hajdini” in Gjilan, profile “Natural Sciences”, as they have the best students. As the Municipal Directorate for Education in Gjilan stated, the students of this profile showed great success in English in the last year graduation test (68%). The test was appropriate only for the Intermediate level, which fits the students’ experience of study; they started learning English as a second language at the age of 10 and so most of them were 17 at the time the test was given. Students translated without a dictionary; based on the above criteria, we believed and expected them to translate correctly.

The analysis of the test is shown on tables with the total number of respective prepositions, which were used 400 times each (*in, on, at, for, from, after, before*). All the prepositions were used twice, showing time relations in the sentences given in the test. Since the test was done with 200 students, there were a total of 400 prepositions per each preposition. The following tables illustrate in detail the translation of the above-mentioned prepositions and in this research prepositions *for* and *after*.

Table 5. Preposition **FOR**

FOR	400	%
for-për	395	98.75%
for-tr.miss	5	1.25%

Table 6. Preposition **AFTER**

AFTER	400	%
after - pas	392	98%
after -tr.miss	4	1%
after - para	2	0.5%
after - nga	1	0.25%
after - rreth	1	0.25%

According to the analyzed novels, the preposition *for* is the third most used preposition denoting time, after the prepositions *in* and *at*. Preposition **FOR** was the easiest preposition for the students to translate; they consistently translated it with the Albanian preposition *për* (98.75%). If we go back and see the Albanian preposition *për* translated into English, there is about the same situation: *për - for* in C. S. (73.80%) and less in FSC (31.25%) as it depends on the content of the story and the translator.

The preposition **AFTER** showed no problem to students as it was found to be translated into the Albanian preposition *pas* (98%). Out of that percentage, it was translated only 5 times with *mbas*, which is an old form of the preposition *pas*.

In conclusion to this research, it is observed that students translated correctly all the above-mentioned prepositions. Therefore, according to their translations without dictionaries, it is believed that students better recognize prepositions of time than of place, and that they make more mistakes in translating prepositions of place than those of time. Prepositions of place may pose problems; they have idiomatic meanings while prepositions of time seem quite clear.

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The Attitude of Economic Students and Lecturers toward Economic English Material Based on Shariah Economy System

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Abstract—This research aimed to investigate Economic students and lecturers' attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system. The material was the new material design that combined economic English in general and shariah economy concept in a teaching and learning material. This research is survey research. It was held at Economy Faculty of Dayanu Ikhsanuddin University Baubau Indonesia in 2015/2016 academic year. This research was limited to analyze both Economic students and lecturers' attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system. The Participants of the study were 100 Economic students and 20 Economic lecturers. The instruments used were questionnaire and interview. All participants were invited to respond to questionnaires. And they then participated in follow-up interviews. The results of the study showed that the main score of students' attitude was 42.24 and lecturers' attitude was 41.50. From the main above indicated that both Economic students and lecturers had positive attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system.

Index Terms—economic English, attitude, shariah economy system

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English for tertiary education students in Indonesia, especially for non-English majoring students, still faces many problems. The students learning achievements or their English language skills are still relatively low. Many research results argue that Indonesian students have low English proficiency (Hamra, 1996 and Kwelju, 2003). The success of learning English is actually still far the success of the research related to the teaching and learning English. This is because there are still many obstacles in implementing the result of the studies such as cultural factors, paradigm, and the way of lecturers and students in teaching and learning.

The English course in Economy Faculty of dayanu Ikhsanuddin University falls under the category of English for Specific Purpose (ESP). But in implementation there are some problems happened such as: (1) The learning material used by lecturer is General English (GE) that taken not based on the process of students needs analysis; (2) Economic English is taught in Indonesian, (3) Students have very limited time to practice and increase their language skills in the classroom. This condition makes students be difficult to muster the language: (3) The learning model used is a conventional model where learning English is only focused on the lecturers, the lecturers who explain the material and students more listen. Whereas, the use of unsuitable learning model in teaching and learning process can be lead to boredom, lack of understanding, and monotonous teaching and learning so, students are less motivated to learn.

In overcoming the problems, then the application of Economic English material based on Shariah economy system is important because of several reasons including (1) In learning, economic English material based on shariah economy system implements the Students Centered Learning (SCL) and the learning approach used is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The use of SCL and CLT approach are able to increase students' independence learning, the ability to work in teams, and learn to reflected the existing circumstances. (2) The learning material is developed based on the specific needs analysis, (3) The material contains the English as modern knowledge and shariah economy as religious knowledge. Johari and Mustaffha (2014) combination of modern sciences and religious sciences are needed in an academic curriculum. In other words, he also confirms that students who learn integrated knowledge they will be good not only in *knowledge* but also in *skills* and *spiritual*.

Based on all explanations above and to make sure that Economic English material based on shariah economy system is necessary to be used in teaching Economic English. Therefore, the researcher needs to be known "The attitude of economic Lecturers and Students toward economic English material based on Shariah economy system". Whatever

Garner (1985) explained that the success of learning the second and foreign language would mostly likely seen to depend on attitude of learners.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *English for Specific Purposes*

Economic English material based on shariah economy system is a part English for Specific Purposes (ESP), it is in the branch of “English for Business and Economic (EBE)”.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) defines that ESP is the model of language learning that all materials and situations are designed based on the learners’ target of learning. Gatehouse (2001) argues that in ESP, the language contexts are determined based on the results of specific need analysis in target workplace.

Carter (1983) divides ESP into three types: (1) English as restricted language; (2) English for Academic and Occupation Purposes; and (3) English with specific topics. Further, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) broke English for Academic and Occupation purposes into three parts: (1) English for Science and technology (EST); (2) English for Business and Economic (EBE); and (3) English for Social Studies (ESS).

Stevens (1988) identifies ESP into absolute and variable characteristics: *Absolute Characteristics*, English teaching is designed for: (1) Finding specific needs of the learners; (2) The content, for example ‘*themes*’ and ‘*topics*’ must be related to the particular disciplines, occupations and activities; (3) The language center can be in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc. Variable characteristics, ESP may be, but is not necessary: (1) The language skills are learned to be restricted for example ‘*reading skill*’ only; (2) Pre-ordinal methodology is not used in teaching

From the explanation, the writer explains that English for Specific Purpose is designed to meet specific needs of the learner. The objective of ESP is to make the learners understand the language needed in the certain domain, occupation or vocation.

B. *Economic English Material Based on Shariah Economy System*

Economic English material based on Shariah economy system is designed especially for economic students in the university. The material is designed through the process of specific needs analysis, so that, the material is expected to be suitable for the students’ needs and levels.

In the aspects of language skills, economic English based on shariah economy system is to apply integrated skills namely: (1) Listening, students should be able to understand and identify the arguments and the points of someone talks; (2) Speaking, students should be able to participate effectively in speech such as speaking individually, being a presenter at the seminar, and including how to develop an argument in the discussions; (3) Reading, students can understand various of texts that are from textbooks, articles, newspaper, and the internet; (4) Writing, students can produce understandable and well strured writing, and also the students should have ability to paraphrase and use phrases appropriately.

In the aspect of learning approach, it is used communicative language teaching (CLT). Harmer (2001) explains that the main principle of CLT is to train the students to use language forms appropriately in the variety of contexts for the variety of purposes. While Richards and Rogers (2007) explain that the goal of language teaching which the materials taught include four language skills into communicative exercises. The underlying theory of language in CLT logically views language as communication. The goal of teaching is to develop communicative competence. Further, Richards and Rogers (2007) describes the principles of communicative language teaching: (1) Learners learn a language through communicative process; (2) The goal of classroom activities is authentic and meaningful communication; (3) Important dimension of communication is fluency; (4) The integration of different skills is needed in communication; (5) Teaching and learning process is a process of creative activities that involves trial and error.

In teaching Economic English based on Shariah economy system is used the Learner-centered classroom. Husain (2011) explains that learner-centered classroom usually involved a number of features, which fit the principles of Communicative Language teaching. The dimensions of function, structure, topic demonstrated in many current communicative materials are essentially learner-centered. Grunet (1997) described learner-centered with particular emphasis on enhancing students learning by a learner-centered to college education ask you to consider how each and every aspect of your course can most effective to support students learning. Weatherholz (2003) argues that in the learner-centered classroom students learn to access their own work and anticipate in the assessment of their counterparts work, which leads them to become self-directed learners and long-life learning.

In the aspect of content, economic English based on shariah economy system uses vocabulary, sentence, theme, title that are used in teaching and learning related to shariah economy practice. In this case, the students are given the complete explanation so that they can analyze various economic problems. Through this study, students are expected to be able to participate in a variety of functions in businesses and public sectors. Students are prepared to be a financial analyst, economic consultant, human resource managers, policy advisers, researchers, etc.

C. *Concept of Attitude*

Attitude has a close relationship with motivation. They are interconnected each other. There are many definitions of the term. Ellof & Ebersohn (2004) Attitude is belief and opinion that can influence individuals to behave in certain

ways. Brown (2001) states that attitude is indicated by the large proportion of emotional involvement such as feeling, self, a relationship in community (p. 61). Garner (1985) explains that attitude is the evaluative reaction to the certain object which is inferred based on the individual's belief or opinion about it (p. 91). Attitude is acquired through experience and has a direct influence on behavior. Strong or positive attitude can predict behavior more effectively than weak or negative ones, the attitude formed by personal experience is often stronger in nature. Self-awareness increases the consistency between our attitude and overt behavior. Students attitude is commonly believed to hold a central role in language learning. According to Morgan (2011) states that attitude is a tendency to respond positively (favorable) or negatively (unfavorable) to certain objects, persons, or situations. Attitude refers to the process of action, the readiness to respond to certain things or people whether like or dislike.

Gardner (1985) argues that attitude is attitude directly related to motivation which is in turning to the second language learning. In the other words, attitude must be seen as motivational supports and not as factors, which have a direct relation to the second language learning. Someone who has the positive attitude towards something or someone will show her/his positive behavior directly. Moreover, if someone has negative attitude towards something or someone also directly show her/his negative behavior. On the other hand, in the other word, attitude relates to the individual's internal state in learning to a certain group social identity.

The definition above relates to the internal condition of individuals, in this case, the mental aspects stimulate the response of the individual choice and keep it consistent. Human conditions are consistently changed as well as their perceptions. The attitude of individual may become permanent according to the influence upon the individual response to the certain object or thing. There are many factors affecting students' attitudes. However, the researcher focuses only on the student' attitudes toward teaching and learning, they are: interest, motivation, lecturers, and learning materials.

III. METHOD

A total of 100 Economic students and 20 Economic lecturers participated in this research. All of the Economic students had joined Economic English in their class. After participating in filling the attitude questionnaires, the same participants were invited to take part in follow-up interviews. This research is survey research. Both questionnaires and interviews were used to gain an in-depth insight into the attitude of Economic students and lecturers toward economic English material based on shariah economy system. (Mackey and Gass, 2005) explains that triangulation or the combination between instruments can ensure the validity of research result. The interview here was provided as supplementary and confirmatory data gotten for attitude questionnaires. In analyzing the data collected include the frequency and descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the results of the questionnaires. SPSS 17 version was employed for data analysis. And the data gotten from the interview were read line by line and translated into English. Afterward, the emerging themes were identified and reported.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Findings

1. Students and Lecturers' attitude toward Economic English Material based on Shariah Economy System

The analysis of students and lecturers' answers to each item of attitude questionnaires can be seen in the following table:

TABLE 1.
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS' AND LECTURERS' ANSWER TO THE ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRES

The Items of Questionnaires	Participants (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Undecided (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)	Average Score	SD
Economic English material based on shariah economy system can be used for teaching economic English.	Students	0	0	0	75	25	4.26	0.44
	Lecturers	0	0	10	60	30	4.25	0.64
Economic English material based on shariah economy system can replace teaching material before.	Students	0	3	17	50	30	4.08	0.77
	Lecturers	0	5	25	55	15	3.70	0.80
Economic English material based on shariah economy system is useful for Economic Students.	Students	0	0	5	46	49	4.43	0.61
	Lecturers	0	0	5	30	65	4.60	0.60
Students can be motivated to study economic English material based on shariah economy system.	Students	0	0	16	60	24	4.08	0.63
	Lecturers	0	0	15	65	20	4.10	0.64
Students can improve their English skills by studying Economic English material based on shariah economy system.	Students	0	0	7	54	39	4.31	0.61
	Lecturers	0	0	15	45	40	4.25	0.71
Studying economic English material based on shariah economy system can improve Economic competence.	Students	0	0	10	58	32	4.29	0.66
	Lecturers	0	0	5	55	40	4.35	0.59
Students will be more active in English class if it is taught using Economic English material based on shariah economy system.	Students	0	0	16	64	20	4.04	0.60
	Lecturers	0	0	30	45	25	3.95	0.76
Students can be interested to study economic English material based on shariah economy system	Students	0	0	7	64	29	4.23	0.57
	Lecturers	0	0	15	70	15	4.05	0.60
I want to (I hope my students can) Study Economic English material based on shariah economy system	Students	0	0	5	40	55	4.50	0.59
	Lecturers	0	0	10	60	30	4.20	0.62
Economic English material based on shariah economy system can help in looking for jobs.	Students	0	0	18	62	20	4.02	0.62
	Lecturers	0	0	20	45	35	4.05	0.83

The table 1 above shows that distribution of students and lecturers who answer the questions of attitude questionnaires indicates that most of students and lecturers choose agree and strongly agree but less of them choose undecided and disagree. Further, from all the questions only question number 2 (Economic English material based on Shariah economy system can replace teaching material before) that there are some students and lecturers answer 'disagree' because they regard that the material before still also feasible to be used in teaching economic English.

Further, below will be also explained about the frequency and percentage of students and lecturers' attitude toward the economic English material based on shariah economy system.

TABLE 2.
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AND LECTURERS' ATTITUDE

Range of score	Classification	Students		Lecturers	
		F	%	F	%
43-50	High Positive	48	48	6	30
35-42	Positive	52	52	13	65
26-34	Neutral	0	0	1	5
18-25	Negative	0	0	0	0
10-17	High Negative	0	0	0	0
Total		100	100	20	100

Table 2 illustrates that most of the students and lecturers' attitude were in the positive and high positive. The aggregate percentage of students' attitude, categorized as high positive attitude was 48 percent (48 students), positive attitude was 52 percent (52 students) and none of the students in neutral, negative, and high negative attitude. While for the lecturers, categorized as high positive was 30 percent (6 lecturers), positive attitude was 65 percent (13 lecturers), neutral was 5 percent (1 lecturer), and none of lecturers in negative and high negative attitude. Based on the explanation, the students and the lecturers' attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system can be also seen in the following figure.

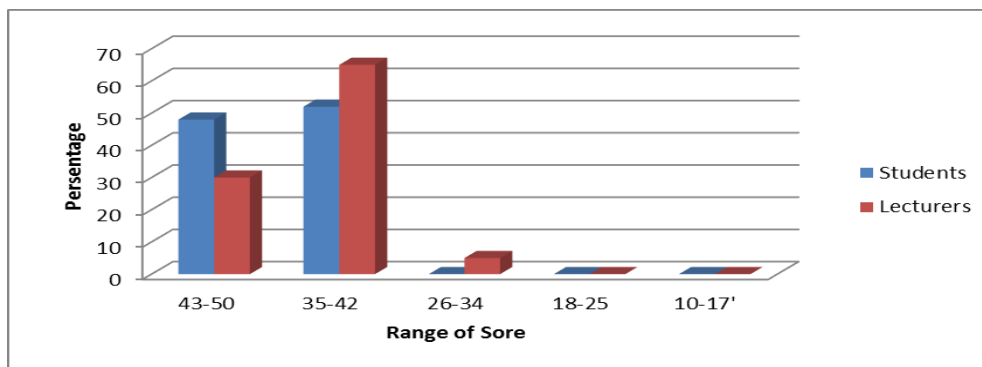


Figure 1. Frequency and percentage of students and lecturers' attitude

Further, the data of descriptive statistic of students and lecturers' attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system can be also seen in the following table:

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTIC OF STUDENTS AND LECTURERS' ATTITUDE

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students	100	37	48	42.24	2.10
Lecturers	20	34	46	41.50	2.80

Table 3 illustrates that the mean score of students attitude was 42.24 with the higher score was 48, the lowest score was 37, and the standard deviation was 2.10. From the explanation above especially the main score of the students' attitude that was existed in the range of score 35-42, it means that the students had the positive attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system. While the mean score of lecturers' attitude was 41.50 with the higher score was 46, the lowest score was 34, and the standards deviation was 2.80. It could be explained that the mean score of the lecturers' attitude also existed range of score 35-42, it means that the lecturers also had positive attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system.

B. Discussions

Students and Lecturers of Economy Faculty at Dayanu Ikhsanuddin University have positive attitude toward Economic English based on shariah economy system. It is very important for the success of teaching and learning economic English. Gardner (1985) stated that success of learning second or foreign language would mostly likely be seen to depend on the attitude of learners. Most of the students and lecturers *agreed* to use economic English material based on shariah economy system in teaching economic English in Economy Faculty of Dayanu Ikhsanuddin University because of some reasons: (1) To know shariah economic vocabularies and terminologies in English, (2) Directly know both economic English in general, and shariah economy (3) To prove economic outlook, (4) To take a stance toward the trend of Shariah Economy in the world, and (5) To help in improving economic English competence to face ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the trend of shariah Economy in the world now.

Most students and lecturers believed that economic English material based on shariah economy system could be useful for students to improve both their English language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and English language components such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. In the other hand, the students also could know the economic knowledge in content especially Shariah Economic. In this case the students could be trained to be able: (1) To take notes for the extended lecturers, including how to understand the arguments and identify the speaker's point of view; (2) How to take part effectively in seminar, including how to develop arguments and give respond for questions and comments. (3) How to understand a wide range of texts, from academic textbooks, articles, newspaper, internet, including how identify the complex sentences and writer's message in the texts; (4) How to develop students' knowledge and use of key vocabulary, both in the field of Economy shariah and of academic study in general.

The students expressed their enthusiasm in joining economic English class that was taught by using economic English material based on shariah economy system. Because they regarded that the material can help them to be able to compete with domestic and international work seeker. Because one of the weaknesses of job seekers from Indonesia was low in English proficiency. Dirgayasa (2014) explained that Indonesian graduates are commonly not able to compete to get job with graduates from other countries because they are justified to have better English competencies than Indonesian (p. 112).

V. CONCLUSION

This study found that Lecturers and students in Economy Faculty of Dayanu Ikhsanuddin University have positive attitude toward economic English material based on shariah economy system. The means scores of the students' attitude is 42.24 and lectures' attitude is 41.50, indicate their positive attitude towards the Economic English Material based on the Syariah Economy System. There are several reasons for both the students and lectures for expressing their positive

attitude toward the material they are: (1) By studying to material the students can know shariah economic vocabularies and terminologies in English, (2) Directly know both economic English in general, and shariah economy concept in specific (3) To prove economic outlook, (4) To take a stance toward the trend of Shariah Economy in the world, and (5) To help in improving economic English competence in order to find the job and to face ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

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The Impact of Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model on Student Teachers' Teaching Skills and Self-efficacy

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Abstract—The main purpose of this study was to determine the impact of sheltered instruction observation protocol on student teachers' teaching skills and self-efficacy. Questions formulated to achieve the purpose of the study focused on. (1) Determining the teaching skills necessary for the EFL student teachers. (2) Finding out differences in both EFL student teachers' teaching performance observation checklist experimental and control group. (3) Finding out differences in both EFL student teachers' self-efficacy scale of experimental and control group. Twenty two EFL student teachers constituted the sample for this study and two instruments- designed by the researchers- were used for data collection. Results indicated that students of experimental group outperformed their counterparts of control group in EFL teaching performance. The effect of sheltered instruction observation protocol model on student teachers teaching skills and self-efficacy was profound and significant. Sheltered instruction observation protocol model was very motivating for student teachers and gave them opportunities to make decisions and be creative.

Index Terms—sheltered instruction, teaching skills, self-efficacy

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the base of educational reform as well as they are the key to better quality education (Suwandee, 1995). According to Tucker, Strong and Gareis (2002), the teachers are the main key for learners' achievement. However, there is no agreement concerning the factors that make teaching qualified, proficient and effective. Consequently, the leading aim of research in field of the language teaching address the features of effective teaching in addition to the methods of incorporating these features into teachers training programs (Birjandi and Bagherkazemi, 2010). According to Evans (2008), specialized development of teachers is a necessity to serve the society and to achieve the required development according to the needs of society. On the other hand, the visions and opinions of teachers towards teaching professional development are not investigated (Swann et al., 2010). Gordon (2008) believed that the process of evaluating teachers training programs is a part of developing these programs. According to Brophy (2004) assured that constructing inspiring and encouraging learning atmosphere contribute to better quality teaching inside schoolrooms (as cited in Adel, Zareian, & Mardekhoda, 2015).

Teachers' performances affect the development of methodology and teaching instructions particularly EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers who have to meet the standards of English as an international language (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Teaching facilitates learning. It is the process through which a learner gets to interact with a teacher in order to gain new skills, knowledge, attitudes and opinions. As there is a general agreement that the quality of teacher and especially the foreign language teacher is one of the most important factors in the educational process that affects students' achievement, the education reform and development movement has shifted its attention to the teacher (Al-Mutawa, 2004 and Coulter, 2007). Gohar (2014) illustrated that teachers have to serve some functions inside the classroom as: organizing material, setting goals, creating encouraging atmosphere, teaching new learners in the workgroup, relating tasks to students' own experiences, motivating students and evaluating their performance. Hassan (2014) assured that an effective teacher should have clear and specific structure of instruction and evaluation, knowledge of subject matter, a scheme that permits students to state their needs, provide a safe classroom environment and give appropriate feedback to students regarding the success of their performance. English language learners (ELLs) at all levels accomplish the required tasks when provided with clear and direct instruction from their teachers. One strategy a teacher can apply for direct instructions inside classroom is to have visible language and content objectives for each lesson. Content objectives are what the students expect to know whereas language objectives are how students show they know the content (Echevarria et al., 2011).

Sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP) is an approach that enables to English language learners to comprehend academic subject while gaining English language proficiency. Sheltered instruction (SI) offers a structure for making academic material understandable and increasing the academic English language skills of learners through

teaching. SI model integrates traits of operational teaching for learners (e.g., cooperative learning, reading strategies, differentiated instruction and the incorporation of the four language skills). Moreover, it contains traits specially planned to support the academic achievement of students (e.g., the insertion of language goals in the course, the progress and application of prior knowledge, and using teaching techniques to develop intellectual capacity) (Echevarria and Short, 2004). Friend et al. (2009) assured that language skills are developed through collaboration and interaction, which can be willingly made in all subject areas. Teachers train students to build meaning from texts and to comprehend content material by clear and direct instruction.

The basic steps to support English language students' academic and English language acquisition are placed in sheltered instruction procedures. For ELLs, SI is a procedure of language training that emphasizes content material teaching and language learning. SI is mainly useful to teachers who deal with different background and proficiency level students (Echevarria et al., 2011; Friend et al., 2009 and O'Neal et al., 2009). Sheltered instruction is recommended for any program where students are learning content through a nonnative language (Batt, 2010).

A. *The Context of the Problem*

In spite of the efforts of Egyptian faculties of education in providing student-teachers with the required teaching skills besides the efforts of Ministry of Education in organizing training programs for teachers, implementing new teaching techniques is a prerequisite as a result of rapid changes nowadays. Moreover, a number of supervisors noted that teachers do not apply or even follow up the current teaching strategies which in turn affect their performance negatively inside schoolrooms.

The challenges of the teaching profession are on the rise. The range and type of information that students need to know far exceed that of previous decades. In addition, the academic expectation for all students are increasing enormously. Thus, caring and competent teachers who master the teaching skills are vital to the success of the educational process. A number of studies (e.g., Koura (2002), Al-Sheikh (2004), Gohar (2014) and Hassan (2014)) assure the impact of classroom teaching performance on the achievement of their students. They reached the same conclusion that among the multiple factors that affect students' achievement is teacher effectiveness. Thus, the challenge remains to improve and promote the effectiveness of teachers in an effort to increase students' academic achievement.

B. *Statement of the Problem*

The problem of this study is that in spite of the stressed importance of teaching skills, student teachers lack many of the EFL teaching skills which may have a negative impact on their teaching performance that in turn affects their teaching self-efficacy.

C. *Questions*

The problem of this study can be addressed in the following questions:

1. What are the teaching skills necessary for EFL student teachers?
2. What is the effect of using SIOP model on developing EFL student teachers' teaching skills?
3. What is the effect of using SIOP model in developing EFL student teachers' self-efficacy?

D. *Significance*

The study gains its significance from the following:

1. Helping student teachers to monitor and evaluate their own teaching.
2. Providing EFL teachers with a model that may develop students' achievement.
3. Helping English curricula developers to pay attention to sheltered instruction.

E. *Hypotheses*

1. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group and the control group on the teaching skills post-observation favouring the experimental one.
2. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group on the teaching skills pre- and post-observation favouring the post-observation scores.
3. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of experimental group and the control group on the post administration of self-efficacy scale favouring the experimental one.
4. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group on the pre and post administration of self-efficacy scale favouring the post scale scores.

F. *Delimitations*

The study is delimited to:

1. A sample of EFL student teachers' at faculty of education, Mansoura University.
2. A sample of lessons from Hello! English for preparatory schools, year two.

G. *Definitions of Terms*

Crawford, Schmeister and Biggs (2008) define SIOP model as a scheme of teaching English language that

depends on using supporting materials, visual aids, grouping and meaningful tasks that aim at developing the language and teaching the content material to enhance learners listening, reading, speaking and writing skills.

SIOP model is operationally defined as an approach that offers a system for lesson planning and delivery that incorporates best practices for teaching English and improving student achievement.

Caprara et al., (2003) define teacher self-efficacy as a concept that affects learners' performance and leads to increased job satisfaction, commitment to teaching, greater levels of planning and organization and working longer with students who are struggling.

Teaching self-efficacy is operationally defined as one's beliefs in his/her abilities to accomplish teaching confidently and influence outcomes in the classroom and it is measured by the score that the student teachers gets on the post administration of teaching self-efficacy scale.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Strategies for Improving Teaching Skills

Research proved that SI and proficient development of teaching skills should be the main concern in facing the difficulties of working with ELL learners. SIOP is an instructional model that aids ELL students to acquire the academic material by integrating procedures and approaches that support the English language acquisition as well. Hansen-Thomas (2008) pinpointed the aim of SI, which is to offer effective and stimulating material that English native speakers trained on. SI mainly concentrates on: supportive learning, academic vocabulary, students' background in lessons, and hands-on activities. Curtin (2005) observes how students perceive SI. The results indicates that students were satisfied as they confirmed that teachers supported them with clear and direct step by step instruction based on SIOP model. Baik and Greig (2009) indicated the privileges of using SIOP model with students who are at-risk in an undergraduate program. Using the model, the researchers provided students with activities and tasks that enabled them to develop their English language. Baik and Greig's study proposed that SI programs help students increase their language skills. There was a positive relation between attendance and academic results, and the researchers assured the significance of early classification of low level learners (as cited in Todd, Stinson, & Sivakumaran, 2011). The SIOP considered as a training model and evaluating tool for teachers. A number of researches (e.g., Gibbons, 2003 and Giouroukakis et al., 2011) noted that the increase use of SI came as a result of using assessment rubrics and observation checklist that are included in the model.

B. Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model (SIOP)

SIOP was established to support lecturers with beneficial model of teaching. SI is a representation of effective teacher performance that takes into consideration the students' academic level differences (Crawford, Schmeister, and Biggs, 2008). It is through a cyclic procedure where teachers examine, use and remodel, SIOP model was designed and enhanced. SIOP model originally was an observation tool that measure teachers' performance according to the features of sheltered instruction (Echevarria and Short, 2004). Fig.1 below shows the improvement of the model.

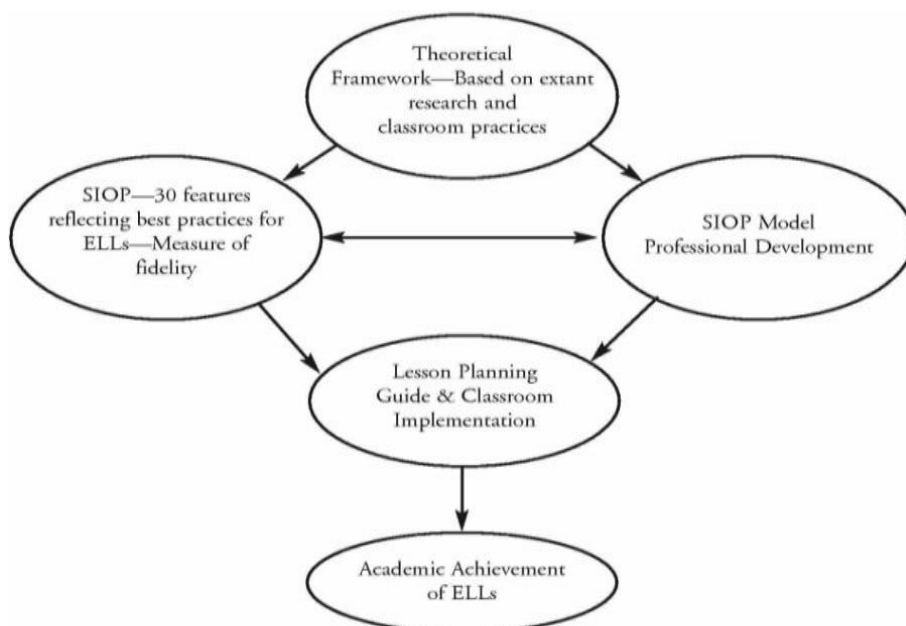


Figure 1. SIOP Model for English-Language Learners (Echevarria, 2006, p.200).

The model is a structure that guarantees that operational techniques are implemented and evaluated. SIOP model

facilitates reflection and self-evaluation about teaching (Echevarria, 2007 and 2008). It includes the following eight components as explained by Echevarria, Vogt and Short (2008):

1. Lesson Preparation: Well-organized instructions should contain content besides language objectives. Supplementary materials for instance visual aid, diagrams, images and demonstrations should be used. These objectives include the four language modalities: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
2. Building Background: Research proved the relation between vocabulary learning and achievement. Consequently, vocabulary teaching should be linked to learners' background.
3. Comprehensible Input: The language of instruction used by teachers should be suitable to learners' proficiency level.
4. Strategies: Learning schemes that aim at developing learners' intellectual capacity should contain meta-cognitive, intellectual, and social approaches.
5. Interaction: Learning process in which learners participate is more effective and positively beneficial.
6. Practice and Application: Involving learners in tasks and practical activities enable them to connect theoretical knowledge with the actual and practical use of this knowledge.
7. Lesson Delivery: To ensure the comprehension of the subject content, language objective should be suitable to learners' skills.
8. Review and Assessment: Effective evaluation is the base of deciding whether to continue or to give additional training.

C. SIOP Model and Effective Instruction

Teacher effectiveness relies on sufficient and successful training and professional development in teacher preparation programs (de Jong, 2005; Friend et al., 2009). A number of these programs depend on including language education to syllabus (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Yet, most teachers do not get the proper training that is required to work successfully with ELLs. Through interviews with teachers concerning professional development, Crawford et al. (2008) confirmed that they expressed their need to develop their performance. Likewise, in their study, Friend et al. (2009) stated that teachers had the desire to learn and apply effective approaches. Moreover, they were against teaching EFL students by teachers who are not EFL trained. Similarly, Giouroukakis et al. (2011) through a study with a big number of ELL people assured that teachers expressed their need to receive training to prepare them for teaching ELL students. Effective training for ELLs necessitates professional training for teachers (Nan and Zia, 2010).

Sheltered instruction (SI) includes educational approaches of just good teaching (JGT) and instructional procedures needed for ELLs (Wright, 2010). Hansen-Thomas (2008) advocates that the components of SI are used by teachers in undeliberate manner as they are the same component of JGT. Guarino et al. (2001) tested the dependability of SIOP rubric as a method of evaluating teachers who work with ELLs. A number of studies (e.g., Al-Ansari, 2000; Minaya-Rowe, 2003; Faltis, 2010) confirm the reliability of using some of SIOP components that are involved in SI strategy. Several studies (e.g., O'Neal et al., 2009; Batt, 2010 and Echevarria et al., 2011) confirmed that SIOP model combine the application of the eight component of the model in addition to SI. In a comparison made between a group of teachers who trained on using SIOP with another group that did not receive the same training, Echevarria et al. (2011) clarified that teachers who applied SIOP inside classrooms managed to be effective teachers. Moreover, Batt (2010), Crawford et al. (2008) and O'Neal et al. (2009) assured that teachers who received training on SIOP model were more responsible, dependable and mindful with their learners' requirements. Furthermore, Whittier and Robinson (2007) proved that SIOP model was effective in teaching new vocabulary.

D. SIOP Model and Teaching Self-efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy is the base for effective teaching inside schoolrooms. Teachers who have self-efficacy are trustworthy and able to support students to develop their skills (Pendergast, Garvis and Keogh, 2011). The improvement of teachers' self-efficacy is crucial for making active, devoted and enthusiastic teachers (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teacher self-efficacy is stimulated by four sources: mastery experiences; verbal persuasion; vicarious experiences; and emotional arousal. Teaching progression is affected by the four sources. Mastery experiences affect teaching efficacy remarkably as teachers depend on previous teaching experiences which in turn benefit them in the teaching process (Bandura, 1997; Mulholland and Wallace, 2001). Pendergast, Garvis and Keogh (2011) examined teacher education programs and recommended raising teacher self-efficacy through teacher training programs.

Teachers and teacher mentors know the consequence of the association between raising self-efficacy and teaching proficiency (Gorski, Davis, & Reiter, 2012) and Hemmings, 2015). Using several quantitative rubrics of self-efficacy, Woolfolk Hoy and Burke Spero (2005) determined that there were improvements in preservice teachers' sense of efficacy from the start to the end of teacher training program. However, not all studies report an improvement in self-efficacy due to the effect of teacher training programs. Teacher training program did not add to the improvement of preservice teachers' self-efficacy as assured by Gencer and Cakircglu (2007). Another study by Yilmaz and Cavas (2008) done on 185 preservice teacher who received training on self-efficacy. The researchers used pre-posttest and proved that teacher's self-efficacy did not positively affect due to the training.

A number of studies (e.g., Gibons, 2003; Crawford et al., 2008; Friend et al., 2009 and Batt, 2010) have shown that

SIOP provide teachers with self-efficacy and provide them with the ability to deal with challenges. It was proven that self-efficacy features positively affected the teaching process. It was confirmed that SIOP model helped lecturers to be active trainers who observe their success through their students' performance and enhance their educational schemes in order to cope with student requirements. Furthermore, the SIOP model provides teachers with academic strategies and evaluation tools that encourage learners to be self-directed and autonomous students (Echevarria, 2008). Additionally, SIOP supports teachers with evaluation measurements that help teachers in the improvement of their performance besides their own professional growth and development (Echevarria, Vogt and Short 2008).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

A feasible sample of student teachers' from Faculty of Education of Mansoura University was selected and then assigned to a control and an experimental group (11 student teachers' each group). Students' age ranged from nineteen to twenty years. They had been learning English for fourteen years, six at the primary stage, three at the preparatory stage, three at the secondary stage, and two at Faculty of Education. The researchers selected Mansoura University to perform their experiment for some reasons: The instructors of the experimental group were the researchers themselves. The researchers were offered some facilities and support by the university administration.

B. Design

Adopting the quasi-experimental design, the control and experimental group were pre-tested on their teaching performance and self-efficacy. Then the experimental group received training through SIOP model. On the other hand, the control group received the regular course of the teaching skills. Both groups received the pre-post application of the teaching performance observation checklist and self-efficacy scale to measure improvement in student teachers' teaching skills and self-efficacy.

C. Instruments

To achieve the purposes of the study, the researchers prepared two instruments: Teaching performance observation checklist, see Appendix (A) and teaching self-efficacy scale, see Appendix (B). Validity and reliability of the two instruments were established through jury validation and the calculation of internal consistency for the teaching self-efficacy (alpha coefficient = 0.712).

*Appendices are available upon request (prof.qural@yahoo.com and faten_zahran_7@yahoo.com)

D. The Treatment

Program for Developing EFL Student Teachers' Teaching Skills and Self-Efficacy: Based on reviewing related literature and the observation checklist, training program was designed in order to improve student teachers' teaching skills and self-efficacy (Appendix (C)). The program aims at developing the following skills:

- 1- Developing teaching performance including the eight domains; lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice and application, lesson delivery and review and assessment.
- 2- Training EFL student teachers on using SIOP model.
- 3- Developing student teachers' teaching self-efficacy.

E. Materials

The selected unites from student book of second year of preparatory stage.

F. Aids

PowerPoint, Worksheet, Mind maps and Grouping.

G. Duration and Content

The program consisted of two sections that were distributed over twelve sessions. First section was an introduction of SIOP model and practical administration for four lessons (reading, writing, listening and speaking) from student book of second year of preparatory stage using SIOP model. Second section was observation of student teachers inside actual classroom at Shagaret El-Dor prep school. Each session was 90 minutes. The program lasted for one semester. Teaching to the experimental group took place over a period of 12 weeks (February, March and April) during the academic year 2015/2016 from 25/2/2015 till 21/4/2016.

H. Description

Due to the flexibility and mutual interaction characterizing its components, the program was designed based on SIOP model for the student teachers' group. On the other hand, the control group received regular training. During the second, third, and fourth week of the experiment, the experimental group was introduced to SIOP model. On the fifth, sixth and seventh session student teachers were given practical administration for four lessons (reading, writing, listening and speaking) from student book of second year of preparatory stage using SIOP model.

On the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth session, the experimental group was observed in actual classroom

with prep stage students from Shagaret El-Dor prep school. As for the control group, the same lessons had been taught to prep stage students. Each session was 90 minutes. Teaching to the control groups took place over the same period of 12 weeks from 20 /2 / 2015 till 25 /4 /2016. Student teachers' did not receive training on SIOP model.

I. Evaluation

In addition to valuing the student teachers' teaching performance, the researchers also focused on evaluating their self-efficacy. In evaluating student teachers' teaching skills, the researchers looked at their ability of mastering the eight components of SIOP model.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To examine the first hypothesis, Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks test was used to compare the mean scores of the control and experimental group as shown in table 1.

TABLE 1.
WILCOXON-SIGNED RANKS RESULTS OF POST-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP.

Component	Groups	Ranks	N	Mean of Ranks	Total of Ranks	Z Value	Significance Level
Lesson Preparation	Experimental	Negative	1	3.63	30	0.102	Not sig
		Positive	10				
		Ties	-				
	Control	Negative	2	3.50	27		
		Positive	9				
		Ties	-				
Building Background	Experimental	Negative	1	3.51	33	2.376	0.05
		Positive	10				
		Ties	-				
	Control	Negative	9	1.10	1		
		Positive	1				
		Ties	1				
Comprehensible Input	Experimental	Negative	1	3.19	27	0.132	Not sig
		Positive	9				
		Ties	1				
	Control	Negative	1	3.37	33		
		Positive	10				
		Ties	-				
Strategies	Experimental	Negative	3	3.40	24	2.811	0.05
		Positive	7				
		Ties	1				
	Control	Negative	8	1.12	2		
		Positive	2				
		Ties	1				
Interaction	Experimental	Negative	1	3.58	30	0.193	Not sig
		Positive	10				
		Ties	-				
	Control	Negative	-	3.20	33		
		Positive	11				
		Ties	-				
Practice and Application	Experimental	Negative	-	3.57	33	2.763	0.05
		Positive	11				
		Ties	-				
	Control	Negative	7	1.69	3		
		Positive	3				
		Ties	1				
Lesson Delivery	Experimental	Negative	1	3.53	27	2.432	0.05
		Positive	9				
		Ties	1				
	Control	Negative	7	2.11	4		
		Positive	2				
		Ties	2				
Review and Assessment	Experimental	Negative	-	3.76	27	2.301	0.05
		Positive	9				
		Ties	2				
	Control	Negative	6	2.28	6		
		Positive	3				
		Ties	2				
Total	Experimental	Negative	2	4.51	32	3.015	0.05
		Positive	8				
		Ties	1				
	Control	Negative	6	2.45	6		
		Positive	3				
		Ties	2				

Table 1 indicates that the experimental group outperformed the control group in all components with the exception of lesson preparation, comprehensible input and interaction where the difference was not significant. These results are expected since there is a fixed format for lesson preparation provided by the Egyptian ministry of education. For comprehensible input, this is typical of student teachers whether in experimental or control groups since novice teachers usually speak slowly, repeat more frequently and use active learning skills. As for interaction, active learning, verbal interaction, questioning and cooperative learning are all strategies that both groups study and practice in their methodology. The estimated Z value for the components; building background, strategies, practice and application, lesson delivery and review and assessment (2.376, 2.811, 2.763, 2.432 and 2.301). These results are in line with those of (Crawford et al., 2008; de Jong, 2005; Friend et al., 2009) in that SIOP model led to improvement in teaching performance. The positive change in experimental group teaching performance could be attributed to using SIOP model that incorporates features of effective teaching.

To test the second hypothesis, Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks test was used to compare the mean scores of the experimental group pre-post observation as shown in table 2.

TABLE 2.
WILCOXON-SIGNED RANKS RESULTS OF PRE- AND POST-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Component	Groups	Ranks	N	Mean of Ranks	Total of Ranks	Z Value	Significance Level
Lesson Preparation	Post-observation	Negative	1	3.63	30	0.099	Not sig
		Positive	10				
		Ties	-				
Building Background	Pre-observation	Negative	2	3.53	24	2.371	0.05
		Positive	8				
		Ties	1				
Comprehensible Input	Post-observation	Negative	1	3.19	27	0.130	Not sig
		Positive	9				
		Ties	1				
Strategies	Pre-observation	Negative	3	3.37	24	2.501	0.05
		Positive	8				
		Ties	-				
Interaction	Post-observation	Negative	3	3.40	24	2.617	0.05
		Positive	7				
		Ties	1				
Practice and Application	Pre-observation	Negative	7	1.12	2	2.371	0.05
		Positive	2				
		Ties	2				
Lesson Delivery	Post-observation	Negative	1	3.58	30	2.617	0.05
		Positive	10				
		Ties	-				
Review and Assessment	Pre-observation	Negative	7	3.20	6	2.721	0.05
		Positive	3				
		Ties	1				
Total	Post-observation	Negative	-	3.57	33	2.721	0.05
		Positive	11				
		Ties	-				
Total	Pre-observation	Negative	8	1.69	2	2.500	0.05
		Positive	2				
		Ties	1				
Total	Post-observation	Negative	1	3.53	27	2.500	0.05
		Positive	9				
		Ties	1				
Total	Pre-observation	Negative	7	2.11	6	2.301	0.05
		Positive	3				
		Ties	1				
Total	Post-observation	Negative	-	3.76	27	2.301	0.05
		Positive	9				
		Ties	2				
Total	Pre-observation	Negative	8	2.28	6	3.004	0.05
		Positive	3				
		Ties	-				
Total	Post-observation	Negative	2	4.51	32	3.004	0.05
		Positive	8				
		Ties	1				
Total	Pre-observation	Negative	6	2.39	4	3.004	0.05
		Positive	2				
		Ties	3				

Table 2 indicates that the estimated Z values for the components; lesson preparation, and comprehensible input (0.099 and 0.130) are not statistically insignificant while Z values for the components; building background, strategies, interaction, practice and application, lesson delivery and review and assessment (2.371, 2.501, 2.617, 2.721, 2.500 and 2.301) are statistically insignificant at (0.05) which implies that there is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group on the teaching skills pre- and post-observation favouring the post-observation scores.

To test the third hypothesis, Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks test was used to compare the mean scores of the control and the experimental group on self-efficacy post scale as shown in table 3.

TABLE 3.

WILCOXON-SIGNED RANKS RESULTS OF SELF-EFFICACY POST SCALE OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP

Self-efficacy Scale	Scale	Ranks	N	Mean of Ranks	Total of Ranks	Z Value	Significance Level
Total of Scale Items	Experimental	Negative	2	4.73	32	3.107	0.05
		Positive	8				
		Ties	1				
	Control	Negative	7	2.13	8		
		Positive	4				
		Ties	-				

Table 3 indicates that the estimated Z value (3.107) is statistically insignificant at (0.05) level. This reveals that the use of SIOP helped increase the teaching efficacy for the experimental group. The preceding results agree with those of (Crawford, 2008; de Jong, 2005; Friend et al., 2009; Batt, 2010 and Echevarria, Short and Vogt, 2010) that SIOP support teachers with high personal efficacy as individuals that are not afraid of a challenge. They found that SIOP helped teachers to be effective successful teachers who observe and develop their academic strategies and schemes in accordance with learner requirements.

To examine the fourth hypothesis, Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks test was used to compare the mean scores of the experimental group pre-post self-efficacy scale as shown in table 4.

TABLE 4.

WILCOXON-SIGNED RANKS RESULTS OF SELF-EFFICACY PRE- AND POST-SCALE OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Self-efficacy Scale	Scale	Ranks	N	Mean of Ranks	Total of Ranks	Z Value	Significance Level
Total of Scale Items	Post-scale	Negative	2	4.73	23	3.109	0.05
		Positive	8				
		Ties	1				
	Pre-scale	Negative	7	2.58	6		
		Positive	3				
		Ties	1				

Table 4 indicates that the estimated Z value (3.109) is statistically insignificant at (0.05) level. This implies that the teaching self-efficacy for the experimental group was enhanced due to the use of SIOP practices.

V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The main concern of the study was to investigate the impact of SIOP model on student teachers' teaching skills and self-efficacy. The results of the study show significant differences between the experimental group and the control group that received the regular instruction. These differences came in favour of the experimental group. The control group lacked the important factors that relate to teachers' effectiveness, namely giving feedback, providing instruction, praising students, linking instruction to students' background and using activities for students to apply content and language knowledge in their learning. This result is in line with studies such as (Koura, 2002; Al-Sheikh, 2004; Gohar, 2014). Comparing the student teachers performance of the experimental group at the beginning of the program until its end reveals that there has been a gradual development in their teaching skills and self-efficacy. Their teaching at the beginning of the program focused on mere teaching grammar and new vocabulary to their prep stage students. Most of them even used fragmented techniques. The SIOP training program acted as a guiding framework for student teachers. The sheltered instruction model is remarkable by using of additional resources that enrich the educational material with diagrams, pictures, videos and computer-based material. Improving students understanding of their educational text is the main target of using additional resources. These resources helped student teachers to enrich and develop their teaching skills and self-efficacy.

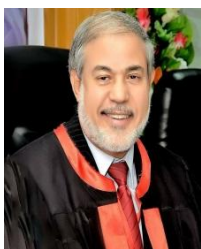
Before applying the SIOP training program, student teachers viewed teaching skills as dealing with grammar and new vocabulary and viewed assessment as asking questions to solicit students' knowledge. By the end of administering the proposed program, student teachers changed their views of teaching skills seeing it as systematic process that follows a set of logical and rational procedures. The effect of SIOP model on student teachers teaching skills and self-efficacy was profound and significant. SIOP model was very motivating for student teachers and gave them opportunities to make decisions and be creative. O'Neal et al. (2009), Batt, (2010) and Echevarria et al. (2011) supported this result as they indicated that in operational SI class; students communicate and cooperate with each other and with their lecturer. Moreover, students showed a high level of collaboration that resulted in higher level of thinking. Students also learned how to negotiate, convince, discuss and explain their point of view. Students could practice and use the language and academic content through effective discussion and purposeful tasks. The previous results led to the conclusion that using SIOP model was effective in improving student teachers' teaching skills and self-efficacy.

In the light of the results of this study, teacher education programs should incorporate SIOP model into their language arts curriculum. In this way, teachers can become more knowledgeable, experienced, and qualified at teaching. Future research is needed to investigate the impact of SIOP instruction on students' achievement.

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Arab Learners of English and the Use of Discourse Markers in Writing

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Abstract—This study aims at investigating the development level of Arab EFL learners in the use of discourse markers (DMs) in writing through the analysis of their errors. For this purpose, two types of questions regarding the use of DMs (additive, causative, adversative, and temporal) were distributed to 40 undergraduates (20 males & 20 females), first, second, third, and fourth year English-major, in the academic year 2015, at the Hashemite University in Jordan. The study concludes that students' level in using DMs becoming better and better as their academic level evolves.

Index Terms—discourse markers, EFL learners, academic level, writing process

I. INTRODUCTION

Discourse, whether spoken or written, is a way of communication and interaction between people in which they use language as a means to give and take information, and to express their ideas and feelings toward others. As Dijk (1985) states "discourse usually refers to a form of language use, public speeches or more generally to spoken language or ways of speaking", he also adds that analysts of discourse agree that it means language in use (pp. 1-2). The purpose of discourse or communication between people is to convey the right meaning or the required message. In order to fulfill this aim discourse has different markers, linking words, or cohesive devices; like, *because*, *but*, *so*, *and*, *however*, etc. that people should use. As Holmqvist and Holsanova (1997) say "discourse consists of small units and includes small words (discourse markers) that reflect the planning and production process of the speaker" (p. 224). These markers have several terms that used interchangeably to refer to the same idea, as Fraser (1999) states "these lexical expressions have been studied under various labels, including discourse markers, discourse connectors, discourse operator, pragmatic connectives, sentence connectives, and cue phrases"(p.931).

(Note: the terms, discourse markers, linking words and cohesive devices will be used interchangeably in this paper).

According to Saez (2003) there are two types of information that DMs convey; "attitudinal comments of the speaker or information about the connections between utterances" (p. 348). Therefore, discourse markers either function as indicators to know what the next utterance is, or as linking words which connect words, sentences, and phrases together. The first role is more connected with the spoken discourse, whereas the second one is more associated with the written one, which is our concern in this paper. The use of DMs in the writing process is more important than using them in oral conversation; in that in spoken discourse a hearer can know the right meaning by other way rather than the use of signals; such as, gestures, facial expression, and body language. But, in written discourse a reader has nothing but the text, thus the writer should include markers and cohesive devices that enable the reader to move smoothly from one idea to another and to understand what in the text is going on. So, linking words help to connect ideas together so one can understand the general idea and pay more attention to a certain notion, and off course they help to produce more cohesive texts.

Discourse markers are basically linking words that stick words and sentences together. These cohesive devices are various and different, and they can occur at any place in oral or written discourse; at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end. Fraser (1999) suggests that discourse markers refer to three syntactic categories; conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases. Also, Asassfeh, Alshboul, and Alshaboul (2013) suggest that there are four distinct categories of logical connectors (LCs): additive, causative, adversative, and temporal connectors. Additive markers like *and*, *furthermore*, *moreover*, *besides*, *in addition...* etc, are used to add and explain ideas. Causative markers; such as *because*, *so*, *therefore*, *as a result*, *thus...* etc, connect ideas by signaling the next sentence as a consequent, result, or reason for the previous one. Adversative markers like *but*, *yet*, *instead*, *on the other hand*, *although...*etc. show contrasts between two sentences; the sentence precedes the marker and the sentence that follows. The last class is temporal or sequential markers which mark a chronological order of ideas; such as, *first*, *firstly*, *second*, *next*, *finally...* etc. This study is concerned with the use of these four classes.

Almost all countries of the world use English as a second language because it is an intermediate one which people speak to understand each other's language. In most Arab countries, all students learn English at public schools for about seven years and at private schools nearly for twelve years, but unfortunately their level in English as a foreign is not good especially in the writing skill. As noticed by many researchers, one important feature that learners fail to use properly in their writings is DMs. The aim of this paper is to examine the development level of Arab EFL learners

regarding the use of cohesive devices in the writing process, with respect to the use of four categories: additives, causatives, adversatives, and temporal markers.

A. Problem Statement

Almost all learners of a second language make errors in different parts of the writing process; syntax, linking words, punctuation, vocabulary, spelling, and many others. But, errors that are related to the use of discourse markers are the most important ones; because the quality of writing is majored by their usage. According to Daif-Allah & Albeshir (2013), the "awareness of the use and practicality of DMs can immensely contribute to the overall quality of the discourse created by English language learners" (p. 218). Thus, the more is the use of appropriate cohesive devices, the more is the production of cohesive texts. As it is mentioned before, meaning cannot be understood without using or applying connectivity tools rightly. For example, the following sentences have different meanings:

A. - John cannot go out on Mondays, Tuesdays, *and* Wednesday.

- John cannot go out on Mondays, Tuesdays, *or* Wednesdays.

B. - I like my aunt *because* I don't see her frequently.

- I like my aunt, *but* I don't see her frequently.

The linking words (and, or, because, but) change the whole interpretation in both examples; in the first example 'and' indicates that John cannot go out in all these three days, while 'or' marks that there is a possibility to go out in at least one of these days. Similarly, in the second example, the use of causative and contrastive markers (*because* & *but*) affects the meaning; because they function differently in connecting words together. Therefore, applying the wrong discourse marker in the wrong place is a serious problem that may result in creating different interpretation. Various meanings lead to misunderstanding of a piece of information, which in turn affects the quality of the text that indicates weakness in the writing skill.

B. Objectives of the Study

This study concentrates on answering the following questions:

1. What is the most frequent error/s in terms of the use of four classes of DMs; additive, causative, adversative, and sequential markers that Arab EFL learners make?

2. Which kind of questions do students find more difficult to answer; filling in the blanks, or choosing the right position for DMs?

3. Is there a remarkable development regards students' use of linking words through their four years of study?

C. Rationale of the Study

Writing skill is the most complex part of language; both to teach and to learn. It is very important for learners to learn how to write effectively because as Haselow (2011) says "writing is seen basically as a process of four main stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing" (p. 3603-3623). Applying DMs is one of the major sections that must be included in writing. Many researchers conducted studies about the use of DMs by Arab EFL learners, but a few studies were carried out in Jordan to investigate the developmental level of proficiency. So, this study is important because:

- Few studies were conducted in this field in Jordan.

- It opens the way for learners to focus more on the learning process with respect to the use of DMs.

- It opens the way for teachers to change teaching techniques and improving them.

D. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is derived from its purposes; that focus on revealing the most common kinds of DMs Arab learner of English (English-majors students of the Hashemite University in specific) find difficulties in applying them correctly; and therefore using them wrongly. Finding errors students make opens the way to discover solutions. So, the main significance of this study is to understand the basic problems that students face in applying DMs in order to tackle them in appropriate ways. Like, to change and develop teaching techniques according to learners' level of proficiency, aware students of the bad consequences of using cohesive devices wrongly especially in their writings. The most important point is to encourage them by various ways to put much effort in the learning process; by understanding how to use different DMs in different situations and positions according to their functions rather than just memorizing them.

E. Hypotheses/Predicted Results

There are three main hypotheses for this study:

1. It was predicted that the most frequent error English-major students commit in the use of DMs is related to the adversative class (instead and although), followed by causative (because, so, in order to), additive (and, or, for example), and sequential (first, second, third) categories. This prediction is derived from the researcher's knowledge that students do not use adversative markers frequently, so they possibly do not know their functions or usages.

2. It was predicted that students are more likely to face difficulties in answering the second question than the first one. In the first question, linking words and positions are given to students, whereas in the second they are just given the categories of DMs in which they have to guess their places.

3. It was hypothesized that the number of errors made by third and fourth-year students is much less than that committed by first and second-year students.

After first and second years of study, students somehow become more recognizable of the structure of words and sentences in the writing process; because most of them take writing courses (writing 1 and advanced writing) in their first and second years. Thus, they are expected to link ideas and sentences, and write more cohesive paragraphs in their third and fourth years.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Facing problems, in general, and committing errors in learning a second language are serious phenomena that many researchers and linguists have written about. Al Quran (2010) states that "The belief that making errors is an inevitable component of learning in both first and second language learning is what underlies the continued interest in error analysis" (p. 2). The most important but difficult part for learners in learning a second language is writing; as Al-Buainain (2006) claims that "writing is especially difficult for non-native speakers because learners are expected to create written products that demonstrate their ability to organize the content" (p. 18). So, the writing process is a hard skill because it is all about delivering the right or the meant meaning; by organizing ideas, connecting words and sentences in the suitable form, using the right grammar, choosing the right vocabulary, using the appropriate punctuation ...etc. one can infer the meaning of any given text. Discourse markers (cohesive devices) play a significant part in the composition of writing; that is when linking or connecting the backward sentence with the forward one by using the right linking word, one can figure out the relation between the two sentences and the meaning they express.

Making errors in the use of discourse markers is one of the major issues that Arab learners of English encounter especially in the writing process; therefore, many researchers conducted studies about the different use of cohesive devices and the common mistakes that Arab EFL learners make when using them. For example, Martines (2002) carried out a study at the University of Oviedo in order to examine the use of discourse markers by Spanish EFL learners. Seven essays were written by seven English-major students about a linguistic topic; the analysis of their conclusion part showed that participants used markers appropriately, but some of them overused some kinds and underused others. Also, Sadighi and Heydari (2012) conducted a study to investigate the most frequent cohesive errors made by Iranian undergraduate students, according to the level of proficiency, who learn English at Shiraz Azad University. 67 male and female were asked to write a narrative composition, they found out that the most frequent error was the use of references, followed by lexical and conjunctive devices. In other context, Modhish (2012) analyzed 50 essays written by Yemeni EFL students of level three who are enrolled in the four-year undergraduate program at TU, Yemen; and that to find out the frequency usage of discourse markers. He discovered that students used elaborative, inferential, contrastive, causative, and topic relating markers respectively. In another study, Asassfeh, Alshboul, and Alshaboul (2013) analyzed the written errors in the use of additive, causative, sequential, and adversative DMs committed by 146 Jordanian English-major undergraduates. The results show that the most frequent errors students made were related to additive, causative, adversative, and sequential respectively.

We can see from the review of literature that many researchers conducted studies to find out the frequent errors made by Arab EFL learners regards the use of different types of DMs. But, few researchers emphasized on the students' level of proficiency in using them. The purpose of this paper is to examine the most common kinds of cohesive devices made by Arab students at the Hashemite University in Jordan which in turn reveal their development level.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

This paper is based on data collected randomly from the answers of 40 students (20 males & 20 females), first, second, third, and fourth-year English majors. 10 students were selected from each year (5 males and 5 females), in the academic year 2015 at the Hashemite University in Jordan.

B. Data Description

The purpose of this paper is to examine the development level of Arab students, who study and learn English, concerning the use of DMs in the writing process, and to find out the most frequent errors that they make in using linking words. In order to fulfill these aims; two forms of question were distributed randomly to 40 students (20 males and 20 females). The first exercise is to fill in the blank with the appropriate discourse markers in a given paragraph, and the second one is to find the right positions for a given group of linking words in a non-cohesive paragraph. The two paragraphs are selected from a writing book (Savage & Mayer, 2005) and edited by the researcher to serve the need of DMs. The category of linking words is given in both questions (see questions no 1&2 in appendixes).

C. Data Analysis

This study is an empirical one which contains data collected from the answers of Arab EFL learners. Students were asked to answer two questions regards the use of linking words, they were given no more than 15 minute to answer. Data were analyzed to extract the most common kind of cohesive devices that students use mistakenly; mistakes or

errors are related to: additive (and, for example, or), causative (because, so, in order to), adversative (instead, although), and sequential (first, second, third). The correction of the papers was done by the researcher; it was limited to identify the most frequent DMs that students use wrongly in order to detect whether students' level of proficiency would really develop and change from the first year to the fourth or would not. The purpose of this research is to find helpful ways and solutions for avoiding such errors; to produce more cohesive texts and achieve better communication between the writer and the reader by understanding the right meaning.

D. Discussion and Results

The major concern of this study is to reveal the most common kinds of DMs among additive (and, or, for example), causative (because, so, in order to), adversative (instead, although), and sequential (first, second, third) ones which students find difficulties in using them properly. The analysis of the 40 papers indicated that the total number of errors that were committed by students concerning the use of the four categories of DMs is 187. Three results were found in this paper in which they answer the three previous research questions. The following tables illustrate the results.

TABLE 1

Type of DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
Additive	42	23%
Causative	92	49%
Adversative	38	20%
Sequential	15	8%
Total	187	100%

TABLE (1), A

Additive DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
And	2	5%
For example	12	28%
Or	28	67%
Total	42	100%

TABLE (1), B

Causative DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
Because	48	52%
So	13	14%
In order to	31	34%
Total	92	100%

TABLE (1), C

Adversative DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
Instead	25	66%
Although	13	34%
Total	38	100%

TABLE (1), D

Sequential DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
First	2	14%
Second	5	33%
Third	8	53%
Total	15	100%

Table 1 shows the first result in terms of types of cohesive devices. Unpredictably, the findings show that the most common kind of cohesive devices students make errors in, in both exercises, is *causative* (49%), followed by *additive* (22%), *adversative* (20%), and the least difficult is *sequential* (8%). Tables (1) A, B, C, & D show in details the most common mistake of each type of DMs that students make. In the use of additive DMs, most students didn't know what the right position is for 'or' (66%), (See table 1). In the second type which is causative, 'because' (52%) was more problematic for students than 'so' & 'in order to' to apply. Concerning errors that related to adversative markers, students made mistakes in the use of 'instead' (65%) more than 'although'. While in the sequential markers, the highest number of mistakes was in the use of 'third' (53%) among 'first' & 'second'.

As hypothesized, the second outcome in table 2 points out that students face more difficulties in answering the second question (to choose the right position for DMs) than the first one (to fill out empty slots). The results indicate that 69, 51% (almost 70%) of errors is related to the second question, whereas just 30% is related to those concerning the first question (see table 2). A reasonable explanation for such result is that either students do not fully know the different functions of linking words, so they cannot choose the suitable or the right place to put them in. Or they did not understand some words and sentences, or the whole idea of the given paragraph, which resulted in facing difficulties in knowing which sentences express cause/effect, addition, or contrastive relation with others.

As expected, the last result that answers the third research question indicates that students' level of proficiency regards using DMs in writing did develop and change through their four years of study. Table 2 demonstrates the result.

TABLE 2

Year of study	Frequency of Errors	Percentage of Errors
First	57	30%
Second	54	29%
Third	50	27%
Fourth	26	14%
Total	187	100%

Table 2 manifests the development level of English-major students regards the use of DMs according to their years of study; first, second, third, and fourth years. It fortunately shows that students' level of learning DMs does positively develop when moving from one stage to another. As it is mentioned before, the majority of students tend to register in writing courses in their first and second year. Thus, their writings are expected to be better in the third and fourth year. The findings indicate that there is a noticeable difference in students' answers in both questions; to choose the suitable position and to fill in the blank. In that, the number of errors declined gradually from the first year to the fourth. The percentages of mistakes that were committed by first, second, third, and fourth year students are, 30%, 29%, 27%, and 14% respectively.

IV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, making errors in learning a second language is something unavoidable, as AbiSamra (2003) claims that "errors are 'indispensible', since the making of errors can be regarded as a device the learner uses in order to learn" (p. 6). Discourse markers, cohesive devices, or linking words are considered as a necessary part in writing; so as to help connecting ideas and produce a well written text in terms of meaning and cohesion. This study examined the errors Arab learners of English commit concerning the use of linking words. The results show that the percentages of committing mistakes in applying the four kinds of cohesive devices; causative, additive, adversative, and sequential are: 49%, 22%, 20%, & 8% respectively.

Although most students and learners of English have learned what DMs are and what functions they serve, they still find difficulties in applying them correctly. In that, in nearly all cases, they seem to be unsure of which, how, when, and where to use them. Actually, most students face this problem which deprives them from producing a well formed paragraph. And that because most of the time, students are asked to answer multiple choice and true/false kinds of question. These types are not helpful because they show nothing about students' writing skill. Asking them to write a paragraph or an essay on a certain topic is much better because in this way one can clearly tell what their writing level is. That's because writing skill is "a clear proof of whether learners learnt English well or not" (Khan & Akter, 2011, p. 11). Also, teaching techniques affect the learning process both negatively and positively depending on the method used. Some studies were conducted to find helpful methods for teaching Arab learners of English. For instance, Ansari (2012) conducted a study on the problems of teaching English and their remedies in Saudi Arabia, he stated that choosing suitable methods of teaching depends on the need of students; if they are beginners, intermediate, or advanced. Also he concluded that reading process is the first and the most important process which enables learners to write and speak. So, I recommend conducting more studies that aim to analyze all kinds of DMs that learners use inappropriately. Also, other studies my carry out on finding and discovering new helpful techniques in learning how to write with the flavor of cohesive devices.

APPENDIXES

TABLE 1

Type of DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
Additive	42	23%
Causative	92	49%
Adversative	38	20%
Sequential	15	8%
Total	187	100%

TABLE (1), A

Additive DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
And	2	5%
For example	12	28%
Or	28	67%
Total	42	100%

TABLE (1), B

Causative DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
Because	48	52%
So	13	14%
In order to	31	34%
Total	92	100%

TABLE (1), C

Adversative DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
Instead	25	66%
Although	13	34%
Total	38	100%

TABLE (1), D

Sequential DMs	Frequency of errors	Percentage of Errors
First	2	14%
Second	5	33%
Third	8	53%
Total	15	100%

TABLE 2

Year of study	Frequency of Errors	Percentage of Errors
First	57	30%
Second	54	29%
Third	50	27%
Fourth	26	14%
Total	187	100%

Question no 1

1. Fill in the blank with the appropriate following linking words.

(although, and, because, for example, so)

You may use them more than once

Sometimes I wish I were not the middle child in my family-----my brother and sisters have an easier life than mine. ----- my older brother is very responsible; he is like a third parent who we have to respect ----- obey, ----- he can do whatever he wants. ----- my sisters are very noisy, they get a lot of attention from my parents -- ----- they are twins.

Question no 2

2. Choose the suitable position for the following linking words.

(Because, in order to, instead, third, first, or, second)

You may use them more than once

For people who would like to act in the theater, there are several important rules to remember. make sure that you face your audience while acting because if you turn away from the audience they can't see your facial expressions. make sure that you speak loudly enough have the audience's interest. memorize your lines by rehearsing them often on the train, in the mirror, while you are walking to class. The last and the most important rule is to remain calm on stage if you forget your lines; don't panic and stop speaking the audience will notice that. make up something to say until you remember your next line.

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Strategy Use Awareness in Academic Listening Practices Relative to L2 Motivation among Chinese Tertiary Students

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Abstract—Academic listening has been widely studied from the perspective of note-taking, attention to discourse markers, and schematic knowledge. Learner variables, such as motivation, degree of anxiety, and learner beliefs, have all received increasingly attention from researchers, but have not yet been sufficiently explored in second language (L2) listening. This paper investigates the correlations between second language learning motivation and learners' strategy use awareness in academic listening practices. Quantitative data was obtained using questionnaires issued to 79 second year English-major students after a TOEFL lecture listening practice. The results suggest that teacher classroom instruction and feedback, task significance, and learners' commitment encourage the listeners to apply more listening strategies. Pedagogical implications drawn from the results are discussed, concluding that L2 listening teachers should develop motivation-based strategy instruction with emphasis on creating a learner-centred constructivist learning environment. In addition, a skill-oriented approach is proposed in order to improve course design in L2 listening instruction. This would train students to consciously use strategies to improve their listening comprehension in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. Suggestions are provided at the end for future research.

Index Terms—L2 motivation, academic listening practices, listening strategies, motivation-based instruction

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic listening, also referred to as listening to lectures or academic discussion, is of great importance to advanced second language learners. According to Flowerdew (1994), special demands are placed upon listeners if they strive to succeed in academic listening, such as understanding relevant background knowledge, distinguishing important and unimportant information, and taking notes. Because of this, academic listening has long been considered as a difficult task for proficient language learners. However, few ESL (English as Second Language) or EFL students have received substantial instruction in listening to lectures either in listening or academic courses. This is particularly true in Chinese EFL instruction. Consequently, Chinese undergraduates who pursue further studies in major English-language speaking countries experience extreme difficulties in understanding academic lectures delivered by the native speakers (Ou, 1991). Huang (2005, 2006) conducted a series of systematic studies to examine Chinese overseas students' performances in this respect. According to her study, about 88% of the 78 Chinese students surveyed could understand 80% or more of the lectures given in their majors and a total of 92.3% of the participants reported having difficulties in understanding academic lectures and in taking notes.

As for research, even though Lynch (2010) argued that academic listening was an under-explored area of inquiry, research concerning L2 academic listening has been extensively carried out, however only narrowly in the aspects of rate and pace of lectures, micro- and macro discourse markers, lecture simplification and elaboration adjustments, (Flowerdew, 1994; Rost, 2002) and the effectiveness of note-taking and summarizing (Rost, 1990). Strategy use and instructions in academic listening still requires further investigation.

In the 1980s, relevant research suggested significant relationships between L2 motivation and choice of learning strategies (e.g., MacIntyre and Noel, 1996; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989). A large-scale investigation led by Oxford and Nyikos (1989) was conducted among 1,200 foreign language students studying at a US university. According to their report, among all the variables affecting choices of learning strategies (personalities, learning styles, attitudes, etc), "motivation is the single most powerful influence on the choice of language learning strategies" (p.294). MacIntyre and Noels (1996) carried out their research focusing on the correlations between strategy use (metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategies) and Gardner's social-psychological motivation theory. The results showed that highly motivated students were willing to invest effort and tended to use strategies more frequently. A few studies have subsequently been conducted in a Chinese EFL context. Xu (2011) investigated L2 motivation and learning strategies among 284 Chinese non-English major undergraduates. The results indicated that overall learning strategies and motivation were closely related to motivation, and strong correlations were particularly found between motivational strength (effort-making

intention) and personal goals. Another study led by Yu (2012) was conducted among 164 students at a local Chinese university. Revised motivation questionnaires and learning strategy questionnaires adapted from Oxford (1990), O'Malley and Chamot (1999) were used. The findings suggested that both integrative and instrumental motivation led to the use of a variety of learning strategies. However, the author did not specify the components pertaining to "learning situation motivation", which could result in the correlations between learning situation motivation and use of strategies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Review of Research on Motivation Theory*

Over the past five decades, L2 motivation research within second language acquisition has undergone four main periods of development: social-psychological (1959-1990), cognitive-situated (during the 1990s), process-oriented (turn of the century), and social-dynamic (current) (Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2010). Through observing the language learning situation in Canada, an individual's attitude towards the L2 and the L2 community is viewed as an important factor in L2 learning behaviour (Gardner, 1972). Affective factors, for the first time, became the focal point in language learning research. In addition, interpretation of motivation from the social-psychological viewpoint led to the emergence of the concept of integrative motivation.

Many motivation studies have been carried out to explore the casual relationships between successful L2 learning and motivation. Seminal as Gardner's model was, it was criticized because it was "particularly sensitive to the social dimension of L2 motivation" (Dörnyei, 1994), and thus inapplicable to the foreign language classroom setting. A gradual trend towards a more situated analyses of L2 motivation appeared thereafter, in which mainstream cognitive theories were fully considered. Factors that were central to cognitive theory, e.g., self-efficacy, attribution, and intrinsic motivation were all incorporated into various theoretical frameworks. Later on, researchers found the necessity of describing the temporal organization of motivation or the motivational process itself. The perspective from trait motivation (a learner's general motivational orientation) to state motivation (a learner's situation-specific motivation) then fully developed during the process-oriented period. In this period, motivation was viewed as a process, consisting of pre-actional, actional and post-actional phases, in which various internal and contextual motivational influences were considered (Dörnyei, 2003). This process model was by far "the most elaborate attempt to delineate the temporal structure of L2 motivation" (Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2012). However, there are insufficiencies in the theoretically appealing process-oriented L2 motivation model. For instance, Dörnyei (2003) claimed that the model was difficult to test empirically in a classroom setting because of its ill-defined motivational phase.

What is missing from this area of research is a clear picture of defining motivation constructs in relation to classroom teaching and learning. Consequently, there is a dearth of pedagogical implications concerning how to motivate students in particular classroom learning activities. Dörnyei's (1994) three-level L2 motivation is comprehensive in categorizing motivation at the L2 learner level, language level, and learning situation level; particularly in subcategorizing motivation at the learning situation level into motivational components at teacher-specific, group-specific, and course-specific levels. However, few studies have been devoted to using this all-encompassed model in examining students' motivation in a classroom setting. Therefore, further research needs to be conducted to construct an L2 motivation model that will not only be beneficial to a L2 classroom, but also can be tested empirically, so as to offer further insights into how best to motivate learners in classroom learning activities.

B. *Review of Research on Listening Strategies*

L2 listening strategies remain a crucial thread in listening comprehension research and it becomes a gradually elaborated conceptual framework (see O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 2003). On the one hand, effectiveness of strategy instruction, in terms of what kind of strategies to teach and how to teach them (Rubin, 1994), was gradually recognized in improving listening proficiency (e.g. McGruddy, 1995); with the exception of Graham, Santos, and Vanderplank (2010) exploring the changes of strategy use in the absence of explicit strategy instruction.

On the other hand, a few studies were devoted to exploring learner variables in strategy use (Bacon, 1992; McGruddy, 1995). Without examining the learner variables clearly, researchers and teachers will not be able to "understand the nature of lecture comprehension" and "produce definitive findings" (Rost, 2002). Progress has been made since Rubin's (1994) earlier review summarizing learner variables, encompassing language proficiency, affect, memory, age, gender, background knowledge, processing skills, as well as learning disabilities in L1. Goh (1998) used retrospective verbal reports among 16 ESL learners with different language levels to investigate frequency and range of strategy and tactics used. The results showed that the proficient language learners used more strategies and tactics than the non-proficient ones. All of them tended to use more cognitive strategies, but proficient groups were also good at using them. Motivation seems to be another variable that is currently unexplored. Relationships between strategy use and motivation in academic listening are also not adequately investigated. Considered as a salient area of research in listening comprehension (Rost, 2002), Richards (1983) proposed a set of skills required for lecture listening. In his comprehensive list, a number of particular skills associated with lecture listening were identified, among which some fundamental skills were: (a) the ability to identify the purpose and scope of a lecture; (b) the ability to identify relationships among units within a discourse (e.g., major ideas, generalizations, hypotheses, supporting ideas, examples); (c) the ability to identify the role of discourse markers in signalling the structure of a lecture (e.g., conjunctions, adverbs,

gambits, routines); (d) the ability to recognize key lexical items related to a subject/topic; (e) the ability to deduce meanings of words from the context; (f) the ability to identify the topic of a lecture and follow the topic development; and (g) the ability to infer relationships (e.g., cause, effect, conclusion). In this study, the categories of academic listening strategies were constructed based on the micro-skills identified in Richards's work as well as O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) theoretical model of learning strategies, i.e., metacognitive strategy, cognitive strategy, and social-affective strategy (details of their model can be found in Section 3.2.3).

C. *Review of Research on the Relationships between Learners' Motivation and Listening Comprehension Strategies*

Vandergrift's (2005) study in investigating motivation and strategy use in L2 listening was representative in this area of inquiry. He pinpointed the relationships between motivation and metacognitive strategies in L2 listening comprehension among 57 French learners. They came from Canadian junior high schools using French as their second language. Vandergrift used Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory-based questionnaire to examine students' three motivation orientations: amotivation, intrinsic, and extrinsic. Moreover, a Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) based upon L2 listening theory validated by Vandergrift was used. The material they listened to was a number of authentic conversations with 28 multiple-choice comprehension questions needed to be completed within regular classroom time. The data showed that intrinsically-motivated students preferred to use metacognitive strategies frequently such as maintaining concentration, knowing where to focus attention, evaluation of comprehension. When learners were extrinsic-oriented, the strategies used were the same, but relationships were less significant. Lastly, most of the metacognitive strategies correlated negatively with a motivation. The study suggested that students who were strongly motivated, regardless of extrinsic or intrinsic motivation, used listening strategies that were more "metacognitive in nature" (Vandergrift, 2005, p.196).

Recently, a study led by Onoda (2012) examined how self-regulation strategies, peer learning strategies, and effort regulation strategies were associated with two motivational variables: goal-orientation and self-efficacy. Onoda's listening comprehension practices included 39 items covering several long passages in different topics (e.g., school events, sightseeing). The results of this study suggested that goal orientation and self-efficacy affected effort regulation strategies as well as the self-regulation and peer learning strategies.

D. *Gaps in the Existing Literature*

The overview of research reveals that several gaps which can be identified. Firstly, it has been found that insufficient attention has been paid to explore classroom-based language learning motivation on the basis of Dornyei's 1994 study. In addition, with regard to the research on motivation and L2 listening practices, these are mainly devoted to exploring the relationships between metacognitive strategies and L2 motivation. Research should go in-depth into a wide range of listening strategies, not only limited to metacognitive strategies. Therefore, the present study seeks to explore language listeners' strategy use awareness relative to L2 motivation with the aim of providing language teachers with important insights into how L2 motivation can be integrated into strategy training in academic listening practices.

III. METHOD

A. *Participants*

This study consisted of a questionnaire survey, aimed at investigating students' language learning motivation in classroom and the use of L2 listening strategy. The survey was conducted with 79 second-year English major students enrolled in a L2 listening course at the School of Education at a university in Shanghai. At the very beginning the session, the research made clear that participation had nothing to do with their final scores on the course, but based solely on their willingness to be involved in the research.

The majority of the respondents were female students. Approximately 50 students began to learn English over 10 years, while the other students' learning experience varied from between 5 to 10 years. Students' listening proficiency levels remained upper-intermediate based upon their reports of previous final listening examinations. Almost half of the students achieved over 80% in the exam, 16 students achieved at least 70%, and 10 students achieved 90%. According to the course instructor, the listening test mainly tested the students' comprehension ability through various types of material; for instance, news, long conversations, long passage listening, lecture listening, and sentence or spot dictation. The question format included multiple-choice, blank-filling, and true or false question. Additionally, from their previous learning experience, students were trained to listen to lectures mainly in the form of relevant TOEFL listening practices at the beginning of their second year listening courses.

B. *Instrumentation*

The students were asked to complete the questionnaire (written in Chinese) after they had finished a lecture listening practice. A four-point Likert scale was adopted for the study. On a scale ranging from 1 to 4 (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) participants rated the extent to which the statements in the questionnaire can indicate their preference. The higher on the scale indicated the strongest agreement with the statement, while the lower on the scale indicated the least agreement.

In order for their presence to not adversely affect the responses of the students the researcher adopted a non-intrusive

manner while conducting the survey by remaining silent in the classroom during listening practice. The following are the instruments used in the data elicitation.

1. Listening Practice Test

The materials used in this study consisted of 20 items in total, covering 8 motivational and 12 academic listening strategy items. The test was selected from a TOEFL lecturer listening practice with a particular focus on the topic of public health. Multiple choice and filling in the blanks were the main question format. The purpose was to examine the students' execution of the strategies such as predicting the topic, planning strategies in advance, and using selective attention while answering the questions.

2. L2 motivation Elicitation Questionnaire

There were 8 items in motivation questionnaire (see Table 1). The theoretical framework underpinning the L2 motivation questionnaire was derived from Dornyei's (1994) three-level L2 language learning motivation, with particular reference to learner and learning situation level, as the L2 motivation discussed here is learning-context specific. Unfortunately, the investigation of language level (i.e., integrative and instrumental motivation) is beyond the scope of this study. The selection and adaptation of the 8 items for the present study were generally in line with motivation at learner and learning situation level. They also fell neatly into the following four major areas: (a) learning task novelty (M6), which concerns how a learner evaluates the learning stimuli (i.e., learning task) he/she receives which then leads to an emotional, and consequently a behavioural response; (b) coping potential (M7, M8), consists of self-efficacy and attribution, the former is defined as a personal judgment of one's own ability in a specific action, whilst the latter refers to a past failure or success that is ascribed to one's ability (task difficulty may affect one's performance in certain learning performance); (c) task significance (M9), which refers to motivation derived from a learner's own perception towards the various external influences that are personal and relevant and considered desirable to them; and (d) learning situation (M10, M11) constitutes a teacher's way of presenting and implementing a task, giving feedback, and creating a learning environment.

TABLE 1
ITEMS IN THE L2 MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Items	Classroom-based motivation constructs
M6	The topic in this practice is novel to me and I enjoy practicing it.
M7	I did not perform well in the previous lecture comprehension practice, so I feel I will not perform well this time.
M8	I did not know how to cope with this practice because of fast speaking rate, substantial information, and so on.
M9	I tried to invest this practice with personal significance.
M10	The learning environment in the L2 listening course is not desirable and interactive.
M11	I was motivated when I found the teacher gave detailed instructions and explanations in the pre-listening stage (e.g. new word, listening strategy instruction, necessary background information, etc).
M12	The teacher's feedback and comments made me confident in lecture comprehension.
M13	I made effort to use skills and tactics in this practice in order to improve my comprehension.

M6=task novelty; M7=attribution; M8=low self-efficacy;
M9=task significance; M10=learning environment; M11=teacher instruction;
M12=teacher feedback; M13=commitment to task

3. Academic Listening Strategies Elicitation

The listening strategies questionnaire (see Tables 2 and 3) was developed by adapting O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) categorization of listening strategies, and also by incorporating Richards's (1983) comprehensive summary of academic listening skills mentioned in the review of literature.

Metacognitive strategies include four subsets: planning, selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Cognitive strategies consist of elaboration, note-taking, summarization, and inference. Affective strategies are made up of self-encouragement and interaction after class. Detailed descriptions of the listening strategies and items in the questionnaires are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

TABLE 2
TAXONOMY OF ACADEMIC LISTENING STRATEGIES

Listening Strategies	Descriptions
Metacognitive Strategies	Planning: Predicting topic and would-be used strategies. Selective attention: Identifying discourse markers and key lexical terms related to topic. Self-monitoring: Monitoring comprehension during the process of listening. Self-evaluation: Judging one's overall strategy use after listening.
Cognitive Strategies	Elaboration: Making use of schematic knowledge to assist comprehension. Note-taking: Retaining information through note-taking in a organized and hierarchical way. Summarization: Making a mental or written summary about information heard so far. Inference: Deducing meanings of unfamiliar words (e.g., technical terms) from context; infer relationships between information.
Affective Strategies	Self-encouragement: Encouraging oneself to cope with expected/unexpected difficulties. After-class interaction: Interacting with teachers or peers to address queries.

TABLE 3
ITEMS IN ACADEMIC LISTENING STRATEGIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Items	Academic listening strategies
ME1	I remind myself of paying attention to discourse markers (<i>but, next, firstly</i> etc.), and important concepts.
ME2	I planned a series of lecture-related strategies (e.g. note-taking, selective attention) before I listened.
ME3	As I listen, I am ready to monitor my comprehension.
ME4	After listening, I think back to the details of how I listened and the execution of the strategy used.
C1	My note-taking follows a clear structure (e.g., <i>main idea-supporting details-conclusion</i> structure).
C2	I often predict what the teacher is going to say based on the information I have heard so far.
C3	I rely upon background knowledge to assist my comprehension of the text.
C4	I often make a mental summary by incorporating different parts that I have heard.
C5	I can deduce meanings of unfamiliar words in this practice; so I will never get stuck at certain parts of it.
C6	I understand text on a word-by-word basis.
A1	I encourage myself to cope with difficulties encountered in lecture listening (unfamiliar technical terms).
S1	I interact with the teachers and peer students in order to clearly address my queries.

ME=metacognitive strategies; C=cognitive strategies; A= affective strategies; S=social strategies

IV. ANALYSIS

Reliability of the Questionnaire

Of the returned questionnaires, 4 questionnaires were discarded as invalid, as they were not filled in all the items completely.

The questionnaire scale ratings of the participants were entered into SPSS 17.0 for reliability analysis. Fortunately, overall reliability was demonstrated by Cronbach's alpha and the figure remained acceptable at .726 level. The reliability of the sub-sections in the questionnaire could be further improved upon, as the exactness and appropriateness of translation from English to Chinese might have caused a loss of the original meaning.

V. RESULTS

Correlation Analysis of Classroom-based Motivation in L2 Academic Listening and Listening Strategies

As shown in Table 4, most of the strategies correlate positively with task novelty (M6), among which the correlations between strategies and "attention" ($r=.386$, $p<.01$) and "self-encouragement" ($r=.296$, $p<.01$) in the classroom-based motivation constructs turned out to be significant. The results mean that the more novel a listening task, the more attention and self-encouragement the learner will have to complete it.

TABLE 4
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN L2 MOTIVATION AND ACADEMIC LISTENING STRATEGIES

Item φ	M6 φ	M7 φ	M8 φ	M9 φ	M10 φ	M11 φ	M12 φ	M13 φ
ME1 φ	.386** φ	-.047 φ	-.002 φ	.160 φ	.067 φ	.121 φ	.266* φ	.277* φ
ME2 φ	.119 φ	-.070 φ	-.213 φ	.179 φ	-.095 φ	.088 φ	.168 φ	.390** φ
ME3 φ	.217 φ	.007 φ	.129 φ	.210 φ	.073 φ	-.028 φ	.067 φ	.145 φ
ME4 φ	.087 φ	-.052 φ	.125 φ	.373** φ	.011 φ	.279* φ	.408** φ	.356** φ
C1 φ	.004 φ	.134 φ	.074 φ	.045 φ	.194 φ	.146 φ	.215 φ	.395** φ
C2 φ	.189 φ	-.202 φ	-.130 φ	-.021 φ	-.234* φ	.185 φ	.163 φ	.172 φ
C3 φ	.078 φ	.009 φ	.194 φ	.190 φ	.124 φ	.376** φ	.361** φ	-.082 φ
C4 φ	.135 φ	-.102 φ	-.134 φ	.055 φ	.053 φ	.163 φ	.165 φ	.206 φ
C5 φ	-.013 φ	-.209 φ	-.183 φ	.298** φ	-.086 φ	.280* φ	.359** φ	.233* φ
C6 φ	.012 φ	-.075 φ	.167 φ	.135 φ	.097 φ	-.013 φ	.098 φ	-.126 φ
A1 φ	.296** φ	-.201 φ	.112 φ	.218 φ	-.265* φ	.273* φ	.221 φ	.352** φ
S1 φ	.092 φ	.027 φ	.062 φ	.359** φ	-.112 φ	.286* φ	.437** φ	.224* φ

** $p<.01$ (two-tailed); * $p<.05$ (two-tailed) φ

M6=task novelty; M7=attribution; M8=low self-efficacy; M9=task significance;

M10=learning environment; M11= teacher instruction; M12=teacher feedback;

M13= commitment to task; ME=metacognitive strategies; C=cognitive strategies; A=affective strategies; S=social strategies

Moreover, it is clear that there are no correlations between attribution, self-efficacy and metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, or social/affective strategies. For instance, attribution (M7) correlates negatively with the majority of the strategies, such as attention ($r=-.047$, $n=79$), pre-planning ($r=-.070$, $n=79$), recall ($r=-.052$, $n=79$), inference ($r=-.202$, $n=79$), summary ($r=-.102$, $n=79$), guessing ($r=-.209$, $n=79$), word-by-word comprehension ($r=-.075$), and self-encouragement ($r=-.201$, $n=79$). In addition, as the item low self-efficacy is negatively worded, weak correlations can be seen with monitoring ($r=.129$, $n=79$), recall ($r=.125$, $n=79$), note-taking ($r=.074$, $n=79$), reliance on background knowledge ($r=.194$, $n=79$), word-by-word translation ($r=.167$, $n=79$), and self-encouragement ($r=.112$, $n=79$), and interaction ($r=.062$, $n=79$)

As indicated in Table 4, task significance (M9) is closely related to the listening strategies of recall ($r=.373$, $p<0.01$), guessing ($r=.298$, $p<0.01$), and after-class interaction ($r=.359$, $p<0.01$). Other components such as goal-commitment are also found to strongly correlate with pre-planning ($r=.390$, $p<0.01$), recall ($r=.356$, $p<0.01$), note-taking ($r=.395$, $p<0.01$), and self-encouragement ($r=.352$, $p<0.01$).

As for the classroom learning environment (M10), it should be noted that this item is negatively narrated and weak correlations between the learning environment and inference ($r=-.234$, $p<0.05$), as well as self-encouragement ($r=-.265$, $p<0.05$) were displayed. In contrast, both teacher instruction and teacher feedback correlated strongly with background knowledge ($r=.376$, $r=.361$, $p<0.01$). This means that the more a teacher presents background knowledge and provides feedback after students have applied it during a practice, the more students will be likely to use background knowledge again later. In addition, there was a significant correlation between teacher feedback and the strategies of recall ($r=.408$), guessing ($r=.359$), and after-class interactions ($r=.437$) at the 0.01 level. At the 0.05 level, teacher instruction demonstrates a relatively higher degree of correlations with recall ($r=.279$), guessing ($r=.280$), self-encouragement ($r=.273$), and interaction after class ($r=.286$). The more teachers' instructional actions motivate listeners, the greater the tendency that students will put the strategies of recall, self-encouragement, and after-class interactions into use.

VI. DISCUSSION

A. Discussion of Research Findings

Evidently, learners' motivation is related to the role of teachers in terms of teacher instruction (M11). Teacher feedback (M12) significantly correlates with social strategies in addition to other strategies such as recall, reliance on background knowledge, and guessing as shown in Table 4. Such results were supported by the facts that giving regulatory feedback in strategy instruction, helping students to regulate their activities, and giving direct teaching to focus the learners' attention on the strategy being taught (William M. & Burden R., 2001) are all beneficial to improve students' strategy use. Also, as indicated in Table 4, commitment to task (M13) correlates significantly with such metacognitive strategies as attention, pre-planning, and recall. The result was consistent with the findings that students will be more actively involved in planning, organizing, and evaluating their own learning if they are equipped with a strong desire to achieve their goals (Okada et al., 1996).

Moreover, there are no apparent correlations between attribution (M7) and academic listening strategies. The result may be attributed to the fact that few students used previously unsuccessful study experiences to account for their current academic listening performance, even when their instructors did not comment positively on their performances in the lecture listening practice. Since listening is a one-off practice, the materials are entirely different each time. As a result, students do not care as much about their learning (listening) experience during this process.

Low self-efficacy (M8) is found to be inversely related to academic listening strategies. The result suggests that students tended to maximize their control over the demanding listening practice, in that they were driven by the intense pressure from mid-term and final listening tests. An additional reason is that the listening material was played several times. Even if the questions were beyond their listening ability during the first play through, they would gradually find ways to cope with the practice after listening for the second or third time. However, the results do not show any relationship can be predicted between low self-efficacy and the use of strategies. A study conducted by Yeldham (2009) among Taiwanese EFL learners supported the finding that strategy instruction would improve learners' self-efficacy in listening comprehension. Graham (2011) in her recent study also concluded that self-efficacy in listening can be enhanced through explicit strategy training.

Finally, no theoretical or empirical underpinnings led to the prediction of a close relationship between task significance and listening strategies, such as guessing ($r=.298$, $p\leq.01$, $n=79$) and after-class interactions ($r=.359$, $p\leq.01$, $n=79$). The correlation was incidentally found to be statistically significant, and in this sense, obtaining such relationships in this study is significant for further exploration. This is because researchers did not previously know whether correlations between task significance and guessing, and after-class interaction existed.

B. Pedagogical Implications

The findings based upon the empirical study indeed shed light on a novel approach for strategy training in L2 listening. First, success of strategy instruction, as claimed by Dornyei (2010), is dependent on regulatory feedback. Second, learners are motivated or demotivated by how a teacher presents an activity, and how a teacher works and interacts with learners during completion of an activity (William and Burden, 2000). From a social constructivist perspective, an individual's motivation is related to social and contextual influences, such as "significant other people" and the "individual's interaction with these people" (William and Burden, 2001, p.121). Consequently, creating an engaging and stress-free learning environment, where rich feedback is available and instruction is engaging and stress-free, is of vital importance to improve classroom practice.

Additionally, more than giving feedback and creating a supportive learning environment, an individual's perception towards the significance of learning activities could arouse motivation. Learners have the tendency to analyse a specific learning task in order to see whether it is related to them personally, or to use Gardner and Lambert's (1972) term "intergratively" or "instrumentally". As such, different perceptions then decide different strategy use. Accordingly, what a language teacher could develop is a "learner-strategy approach" (Flowerdew and Miller, 2005, p.16). This approach

encourages decision-making based upon the students' awareness of particular learning task, rather than being entirely dependent upon language teachers during the process of motivation formation and strategy choice. In listening comprehension instructions, teachers should help students identify which types of strategies are effective considering their motivations. For instance, learners who are strongly motivated to study abroad may be encouraged to summarize and reflect upon the use of strategies after practice and then the teacher should remind students to transfer strategy knowledge in the future. For example, taking language test such as TOEFL or IELTS, or attending lectures in native English speaking countries. In contrast, when competing with expert listeners in stressful standardised tests or practices, strategies that rely on background knowledge, would be more effective to lesser motivated students that demonstrate poor decoding skills, but who still try to achieve an equal understanding the whole lecture.

Based on the quantitative findings, a skill-developing listening course design is proposed (see Figure 1). In this model of course design, the teacher could prepare listening materials that are stimulating and personally significant to the listeners, enabling students to be highly motivated be involved in the listening process. The notion is consistent with the strong correlation between listening task novelty and attention, as well as with metacognitive strategies suggested in the Table 4 (sees M6 and ME1 in Table 4). According to Dekeyser (2007), besides stimulating content, a good practice involving real operating conditions as soon as possible can make knowledge related to learning skills smoothly proceduralized. This requires, the materials chosen to be practiced, if they need to be carefully revised as well, and should include the required tactics that are in accordance with mastery of the target skills. For instance, students are expected to be trained to identify and make use of the discourse markers (e.g., the most important, first, second) in well-adapted academic listening material involving many exercises.

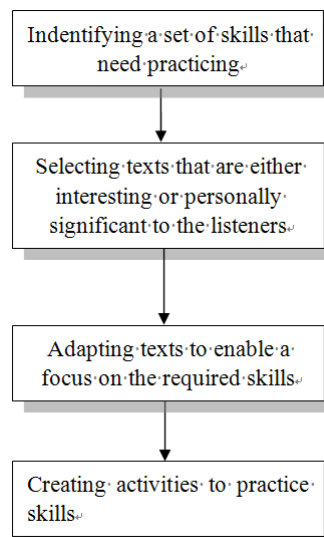


Figure 1: Procedure of a skill-developing, listening course design. Adapted from "A learning-centred approach," by T. Hutchinson and A. Waters, 1987, *English for Specific Purpose*, p.91.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Unfortunately, some limitations exist in this research. Firstly, a TOEFL test of a science topic was used to find out the students' academic listening proficiency. The students may be motivated differently and use different strategies in response to listening materials of different academic disciplines. Furthermore, due to the constraints of time, the study was not longitudinal in nature and did not keep track of the students' performances in the academic listening practice over a period of time. Follow-up investigations are necessary in order to see if the length of time, and the frequency of being exposed to the same type of practice, may change either the students' listening strategy use or their motivation orientation.

The study explored the Chinese listeners' choice of academic listening strategies in relation to L2 motivation. The results suggest that the teacher's instruction and feedback, task significance, and learners' commitment significantly affected the listener's choice of academic listening strategies. Some unexpected results require further investigation, such as the correlations between motivation constructs such as task significance, and listening strategies such as guessing and interactions after class, were identified in learners' performances in academic listening practice in a Chinese language learning environment.

More importantly, the results shed some light upon the innovative pedagogical approach that can be applicable to EFL contexts with regard to L2 listening learning and instruction. Above all, an engaging and supportive learning environment should be created, that is, effective instructions are presented followed closely by the timely feedback on the students' performances, and encouragement to listeners with varied language proficiency to use listening strategies of personal significance and interest. Finally, a skill-developing course design is proposed to promote listeners' strategy

use awareness by integrating their motivation orientations.

Notes

1 Goh's research defined "strategy" and "tactic" as two distinct concepts. The former being in a general sense, while the latter was specific action. This research will use the same distinction.

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A Qualitative Meta-synthesis of Research on Dynamic Assessment of Second/Foreign Language Learning: Implications for Language Teachers

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Abstract—Striving to integrate teaching and assessment, Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a pivotal classroom teacher assessment practice at teachers' disposal. Although a multitude of research has delved into different aspects of DA of second/foreign language learning, whether their findings find their way into educational practice is a cause for concern. Adopting a meta-synthesis methodology, this study served a two-fold purpose: (a) to distill the pedagogical conclusions on the effectiveness of DA, and (b) to develop a more informed understanding of a set of guidelines for the implementation of DA so that the practical implications of research findings for teacher educators and teachers be better grasped.

Index Terms—qualitative research, second language instruction, second language learning, sociocultural patterns, alternative assessment, dynamic assessment

I. INTRODUCTION

Quantitative research methods and those employing experimental conditions or large data sets can, doubtless, lead to invaluable findings important to policymakers in the realm of education. Having said that, qualitative research synthesis and systematic reviews of primary research on education in general and meta-synthesis in particular might better unveil the practical implications of empirical research findings for teachers and provide them with instructional guidelines that would enhance teaching practices and/or learning outcomes. As far as second language acquisition (henceforth SLA) is concerned, meta-syntheses “may provide a different set of instructional strategy recommendations for English language teachers working in a wide variety of settings” (Tellez & Waxman, 2006, p. 250), which could, at least partly, justify why “qualitative studies in second language teaching are increasing in both number and quality” (ibid, p. 246) and the number of researchers and organizations, such as Campbell Collaboration, trying to synthesize primary research findings is escalating.

Although the effectiveness of mediation in promoting learner development and the benefits of DA implementation in classroom assessment are bandied about in the related literature, (see the research reports marked with an asterisk in the reference list), research-based qualitative accounts that provide teacher educators and language teachers with practical guidelines on the effective implementation of DA are quite scanty. To fill this void, this meta-synthesis sought to amass information about the conclusions that have been pointed to in research studies on the effectiveness and applicability of second language (L2) DA and to identify a set of clear guidelines on the implementation of DA in classroom context.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Dynamic assessment “challenges conventional views on teaching and assessment by arguing that these should not be seen as separate activities but should instead be fully integrated” (Poehner, 2008, p. 5). “Within this framework, efforts to understand, or assess, learner abilities necessarily involve promoting their development through instructional intervention. Put another way, the object of assessment is fully understood by actively seeking to change it” (Poehner, 2011a, p. 100). As far as classroom assessment is concerned, DA helps teachers track the ongoing process of learning and make conscious decisions, informed by the results of previous assessment, as to how subsequent instruction should be organized. A sizeable portion of primary research into English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as a Second Language (ESL), and SLA has looked at different aspects of DA and its effectiveness to unite instruction and assessment in the social environment of language classroom (see the studies marked with an asterisk in the reference list). For instance, previous studies scrutinized the applicability of DA to the development of learners' (a) word recognition and reading comprehension (Carney & Cioffi, 1990; Dorfler, Golke, & Artelt, 2009), (b) writing skills (Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Shrestha & Coffin, 2012), (c) listening comprehension (Ableeva & Lantolf, 2011), and (d) speaking skills (Hill & Sabet, 2009); however, more needs to be done by way of research to render empirical findings applicable to classroom assessment.

As far as the purpose of the study is concerned, as noted in Rezaee and Ghanbarpour (2016), classroom assessment, also referred to as ‘ZPD-based assessment’ and ‘classroom teacher assessment’ (see Rea-Dickins, 2004; van Compernelle & Kinginger, 2013), is regarded as an alternative to standardized testing (Hill & Sabet, 2009, p. 537) in in classroom context. Although DA, as a form of classroom assessment, is found to be feasible and effective “not only in the field of cognitive performance but also in such curricular domains as EFL learning” (Kozulin & Grab, 2002, p. 122), whether or not enough heed is paid to the findings of ongoing research on DA in the field of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) can be the subject of some lively debate. To exemplify, preservice and in-service teacher-training course (TTC) organizers may make no mention of the progress made in the field in the course curricula; research findings might have no manifestation in such courses, accordingly, and they may simply remain as unwarranted, ancillary suggestions and theories on paper. Teacher trainees and language teachers, hence, would be liable to make no use of the developments in the field to advance on their way to professional excellence. Also, depriving learners of the benefits of recent research findings, such inadvertent negligence has some repercussions for students as well.

Lack of familiarity and knowledge with/about principles of DA among teacher trainers/educators, language teachers, and those who are involved in teachers’ professional development is, doubtless, a barrier to DA finding its way into educational practice. It is high time we pondered over a simple question: when the cornerstone of micro validity (see Poehner, 2011b) and the overall success of DA lie with the teacher’s/mediator’s ability in providing learners with negotiated mediation attuned to their emerging needs, how can teachers who are deprived of a basic understanding of DA remain proactive in conducting classroom assessment?

Mediating sources, both external (e.g., policy makers) and internal (e.g., teachers and teacher educators) (see Tierney, 2006), can make way for practicable change in the prevailing position of assessment in general and DA in particular by taking on an intermediary role to bridge the gap between language research and language pedagogy (see Ellis, 2010, 2013; Gass, 1995; Ishihara, 2010; Nuland, 2011; Nunan, 1991). Given that DA is no more a newfangled framework in the realm of education, the present study is an attempt to provide a set of guidelines to help teacher trainers and teachers get a better understanding of DA principles, its practicality and benefits, so that, hopefully, in the future, DA becomes a household approach in many educational settings.

In an attempt to settle the aforementioned issues, the present study will look at conclusions and suggested guidelines in studies where DA was used to promote language development, inform intervention, or break new ground for conceiving of classroom assessment. It is an attempt to (a) sensitize classroom practitioners to the importance of being familiar with the dynamic traits of learner development, (b) avail language teachers of guidelines on providing learners with meditational means of development by attending to empirical research findings, and (c) give them some hints, extracted from relevant primary research, to help them engage in organizing complimentary classroom-based L2 DA practices that can foster learner development. Striving to take a step to permit classroom DA to achieves its pedagogical potential and provide a set of guidelines for teacher trainers and language teachers on implementing DA in classroom, the present study addresses two main research questions: 1) What pedagogical and theoretical conclusions have been discussed in the existing primary research on the usefulness of DA? 2) What common guidelines can be derived from studies on DA to assist language teachers to implement DA practices?

III. METHOD

A. Design

To provide language teachers and teacher educators with empirical evidence, findings, assertions, and guidelines put forward in primary research regarding the usefulness and practicality of DA for language teaching/learning, the present meta-synthesis was carried out. Meta-synthesis was employed because, as stated earlier, it aims at (a) identifying ubiquitous phenomena and common themes observed or emerged in and from a selection of primary studies, (b) presenting key implications realized from research findings, and (c) identifying, comparing, combining, summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting the data and supported findings from across studies in terms of their quality and utility (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010; Thorne et al., 2004, Zhao, 1991) and was found to be suitable for fulfilling the dual purpose of the present work. Sandelowski, Docherty, and Emden (1997) delineated three general strategies for synthesizing qualitative studies: (a) integrating the findings of one prominent researchers’ work over time, (b) integrating the results of research across both researchers and time, and (c) transforming qualitative data into counts and analyzing them quantitatively. It is worth noting that the present meta-synthesis adopted the second aforementioned strategy.

To interpret the data and distill evidence, the criteria Norris and Ortega (2007) established for meta-synthesis was used, according to which any systematic research review should possess three characteristics. First, the criteria for selection, inclusion, and exclusion of the studies should be explicitly denoted and rationalized. Second, instead of summarizing individual research reports and paying attention to what researchers claim their findings mean, which is quite commonplace in traditional reviews, critical and intense scrutiny is to be given to the evidence displayed in each study, and “numerical, visual, and textual displays of aggregated and reanalyzed primary data across studies” (Norris & Ortega, 2007, p. 808) should be presented. Third, to integrate individual research evidence into a whole which is greater than the sum of the parts, a coding book, determining what to look for in the studies, should be used. Such coding

categories are usually clarified in tables or appendices. With regard to the third criterion, the coding of the present meta-synthesis was done inductively and the axioms and posteriori themes emerged in the process of reviewing the data.

B. Data Collection

1. Search Terms and Procedures

The articles included in this meta-synthesis were gathered in July 2014. Given that study sampling is typically purposive and selective in qualitative meta-synthesis (Norris & Ortega, 2007; Suri & Clarke, 2009), the initial literature was purposefully searched for by retrieving related articles from databases such as Academic Search Complete, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), JSTOR, Modern Language Association (MLA), ProQuest, PsycINFO, Springer, Social Science Citation Index, and Web of Science.

The search terms ‘dynamic assessment (DA)’, ‘sociocultural theory (SCT)’, ‘activity theory’, ‘zone of proximal development (ZPD)’, ‘ZPD-based assessment’, ‘mediated learning experience (MLE)’, ‘scaffolding’, ‘classroom assessment’, ‘classroom teacher assessment’, ‘Vygotsky’, as well as their wild cards were employed to locate and retrieve potential research reports for this meta-synthesis. Author searches were also conducted with the names of eminent researchers who were publishing in the field of DA (e.g., Lantolf, Poehner, van Compernelle, etc.). Also, *Journal of Cognitive Education and Psychology*, which accords special attention to DA, was searched. The initial search yielded a total 82 research studies published from 1987 to 2014.

2. Quality Considerations: Inclusion Criteria

An important issue in the selection of data to be used for meta-synthesis is that the criteria for both the inclusion and exclusion of primary research studies should be clearly expounded on (Welch, 2008). To enhance the quality of the studies used in this meta-synthesis, the number of collected potential articles was lowered by applying a predetermined criterion: the inclusion of published peer-reviewed quantitative, qualitative, theoretical, and case studies. Hence, dissertations, book reviews, and conference presentations were all left out.

Having in mind the focus of the research questions and contemplating the need to merge comparable results and data types, the researcher eliminated those peer-reviewed studies that despite concentrating on DA, did not match the purpose of this meta-synthesis, that is, examining the empirical findings and practical implications of DA for language teachers and teacher educators as well as applications of DA procedures to L2 classroom assessment and pedagogy. Also, those studies that looked at Computerized Dynamic Assessment (C-DA) (e.g., Poehner & Lantolf, 2013) were excluded.

Finally, to improve the trustworthiness of the study, the collected data set was narrowed down once more by deciding on a time frame for inclusion, and only those studies which were published between 1990 and 2014, a time period when DA found its way into the practice of educational mainstream and original research attended to its principles in pedagogy, were included in the final data set.

3. The Final Data Set

The selected articles were then reviewed by the researcher and a Ph.D. candidate of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) whose doctoral dissertation was on DA to make sure that the selected studies would closely align with the rationale and purpose of this investigation. After evaluating all of the retrieved literature on the basis of the aforementioned data selection procedure, 41 peer-reviewed studies were retained as the body of research for the present meta-synthesis. These studies are identified with asterisk in the reference list.

C. Data Analysis

Analysis for this meta-synthesis followed the six-phased interpretive approach as delineated by Suri and Clarke (2009), according to which after the first three phases, that is, drawing from relevant philosophical and theoretical discussions, identifying an appropriate purpose, and searching for pertinent evidence, in phase four, the collected evidence must be distilled and interpreted. This phase is described in the subsequent section below (i.e., the results). Next, in the fifth phase, connected understandings must be developed by identifying the common patterns, features, and guidelines across the studies, which is presented in the ‘results’ section of the present work. The last phase is “communication with the audience” (Suri & Clarke, 2009, p. 414), which is presented under the title of ‘discussion and conclusions’. Since in the conclusion section, meta-synthesis is expected to communicate with the target audience (see Noblit & Hare, 1988) and given that simply summarizing findings of individual studies is to be avoided, the excerpts presenting mediated interactions in primary research were pondered over so as to pull out relevant information on the potential of DA for L2 classroom context prior to devising the main themes and guidelines.

D. Coding the Data

Each paper came under careful scrutiny by two readers (i.e., the researcher and a Ph.D. candidate of TEFL working on DA) separately and independently; detailed notes were taken on the key themes, phrases, concepts, metaphors, and substantive categories of study features, and an initial template was made. In fact, Noblit and Hare (1988) used the term *metaphor* to refer to themes, perspectives, organizers, and/or concepts revealed by qualitative studies. Put another way, “a metaphor works to portray or explain difference when differences are represented as familiar entities within an equally familiar metaphorical explanation” (Thorne et al., 2004, p. 1355). The two readers, then, discussed the

identified methodological features of the data to find the discrepancies and conclude an agreement in terms of the distilled evidence of the potential of DA for L2 learning contexts and guidelines for its implementation.

After making the necessary amendments to the initial template, certain features of the data (i.e., the selected primary research), including approaches taken to DA, methodological features, sample and participant features, sampling technique, type and duration of instructional mediation/interventions, Learning contexts (i.e., second/foreign language learning), dependent and independent variables, available findings for qualitative meta-synthesis, and techniques for measuring outcomes, were coded prior to deciding what relevant conclusions/guidelines to include and how to do so. The simple agreement ratio (see Orwin, 1994) between the two coders was 0.88 for the final coding and classification.

IV. RESULTS

A. Emergent Themes: Practical Implementation of L2 DA

This section looks into a number of emergent themes focusing on the major conclusions and findings drawn from primary research on DA that can have implications for L2 teaching.

1. General Benefits of DA

The implementation of DA principles in daily interactions that teachers/mediators have with learners not only illuminates their level of development in terms of ZPD and focuses on the process of learners' performance rather than its product, but also affects their subsequent performance by developing their language abilities and helping them gain increasing control over certain features of language, become more independent, and perform autonomously (Lantolf & Poehner, 2010). Vygotsky (1978) defined individuals' ZPD as the difference between their unassisted and assisted performance, and maintained that individuals' future unassisted performance would desirably reach the level of their current assisted performance. Put another way, in Vygotsky's (1978) terms, as cited in Poehner (2012), learner development starts on the *intermental plane* constructed through mediation and leads to the emergence of learners' ability to perform *intramentally*, using the internalized forms of symbolic mediation to self-regulate. DA, hence, is interested in both the process and product of learning. Not only does DA assess abilities achieved in the past, but also it intervenes in learning and develops emergent abilities. Despite showing similar abilities in non-dynamic assessment, learners might have dissimilar ZPD's, that is, different evolving language abilities and distinctive potentials to develop.

In addition, informed by Shrestha and Coffin's (2012) study, as far as learners' perception of DA is concerned, regarding it as 'more relaxed', 'encouraging', and 'supportive', they are very positive about it. A student has maintained that DA is "a great way of learning because the guidance questions helped me to think about what I did and how I could improve" (Shrestha & Coffin, 2012, p. 67). It is also acknowledged that DA can simultaneously make learning an enjoyable experience and enhance learners' language development (ibid, p. 59).

2. Interaction and Mediation in DA

Interaction and mediation are of pivotal importance in determining the accuracy of classroom assessment. In fact, DA has the potential to enhance and extend traditional models of assessment (Shrestha & Coffin, 2012, p. 59). For instance, van Compernelle and Zhang (2014) argued that assistance provided during elicited imitation test of L2 English morphology uncovers and enhances the continued growth of emerging L2 abilities. As far as the approach taken to DA is concerned, interactionist approaches, that are dialogic and open-ended, compared to interventionist ones, in which scripted intervention is offered, are found to be more useful in classroom setting (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004, p. 68). As discourse unfolds throughout mediation, the mediator is able to gain a better understanding of learners' capabilities. With regard to achievement tests, it should be noted that task difficulty and personal circumstances could affect learners' performance and enlarge error score accordingly. Hence, fulfilling diagnostic purposes, interaction and mediation have benefits for the pursuit of accurate assessment and designing individualized plans of development informed by learners' needs (Anton, 2009). Moreover, assessment without mediation overlooks the importance of future by merely evaluating performance at the end or the beginning of a curriculum (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004; Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). Meditational moves, targeted at learners' ZPD and made by the tutor, help diagnose the problem areas faced by learners and present an opportunity for learners to improve their skills and develop their conceptual knowledge.

Assistance offered by mediators must not be haphazard, but rather tailored, dynamic, and ongoing guidance finely tuned to learners' emerging needs and responsiveness to previous mediation as they move through their ZPDs is to be provided. Results of Nassaji and Swain's (2000) study on the effect of random versus negotiated help on the learning of English articles revealed that assistance provided within a learner's ZPD is more effective than help provided randomly. It is worth noting that learners value formative feedback and mediation as long as they are relevant and usable (Shrestha & Coffin, 2012, p. 59).

B. Guidelines on the Implementation of L2 DA

Informed by an interpretation of DA primary research findings, this section provides a set of guidelines on the implementation of DA in classroom context and putative typologies of mediational strategies that can be adopted and/or adapted by teacher trainers and teachers in the pedagogical practice of their profession with regard to the nuances of the instructional context as well as the very language skill/component they deal with. A point which has to be carefully considered is that what is briefly presented in this section typifies axiom procedures, clines of mediational moves, and veritable cornerstones of DA which, doubtless, allow for variation in implementation beyond the skills they have been

initially used for. They can serve as a blueprint for taking initial measures to commence the implementation of DA until teachers get principles of DA right and master them. Teachers' judicious choice and use of the guidelines is, indeed, a substantive matter with regard to fine-tuning and translating the presented principles into practice with the intent of producing optimal learning benefits and development.

1. Making Use of Different Interactional Frames in Mediation

Underscoring that ZPD, as a transformative activity, dialectally fuses assessment and teaching, Poehner and van Compernelle (2011) identified the following interactional frames, which can be jointly co-constructed with learners through mediation: (a) eliciting learner verbalization, which enables the mediator to determine a learner's understanding and problems; (b) collaborative interactional frame, in which the mediator targets support to learner needs and tracks this throughout the process of completing the task; and (c) cooperative interactional frame, entailing co-constructing and re-specifying a goal through interaction which is not necessarily central to the immediate task, but rather promotes learner knowledge; this can be done by addressing learners' problems or questions and can be initiated by either the mediator or a learner.

2. Devising Mediation Inventories

Informed by Lantolf and Poehner's (2010) study, following an interventionist approach to DA, teachers can prepare and use a mediation inventory for their prompts during mediation, as shown in Figure 1, in which the moves are sorted from most implicit (no. 1) to most explicit (no. 8). Doing so, teachers can assign numerical value to each mediating prompt. For example, a learner who requires level 2 mediation, will receive 2.

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pause 2. Repeat the whole phrase questioningly without indicating the nature and location of the problem 3. Repeat just the part of the sentence with the error 4. Teacher points out that there is something wrong with the sentence, "There is a problem with the word .../ phrase ..., etc." Alternatively, the teacher can pose this as a question, "What is wrong with that sentence?" 5. Teacher points out the incorrect word 6. Teacher asks either/or question(s) 7. Teacher identifies the correct answer 8. Teacher explains why |
|---|

Figure 1. Mediation inventory of teacher prompts (Lantolf & Poehner, 2010, p. 20).

3. Providing Mediational Moves

Implementing DA, teachers are advised not to identify the error explicitly, nor should they provide learners with the correct answer. Instead, they must give room for self-correction, ask questions, request for verification/clarification, make reference to a previous problem, provide learners with alternate clues/prompts/forms/hints/suggestions, and make use of a detailed, graphic representation of the problematic area and/or concrete materials (e.g., cuisenaire rods). Mediators are to commence the mediation offering implicit assistance (e.g., eliciting an explanation of a certain response) and if learners are not able to spot and correct their errors, they must continue assisting them with their ZPD by resorting to more explicit mediational moves, which may reveal the nature of the problem (e.g., compare 'Can you explain that again?' with 'Let's start using present perfect tense.'). In concurrent G-DA the teacher must run through the whole array of mediating options with a single learner before moving to the next learner. However, because interactions shift between primary and secondary interactants, they must remain relevant.

Mediation cannot be offered in a haphazard manner no matter how it is offered, but rather must be gradual, contingent (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994), and "tuned to those abilities that are maturing, and as they mature further as a consequence of mediation, the mediation itself must be continually renegotiated" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005, p. 260). Put another way, mediational moves must be systematic, that is, attuned to learners' needs and abilities, graded in terms of explicitness, and consistent.

For instance, to figure out students' actual ability in a given area, teachers/mediators can ask information, yes/no, leading, and/or issue questions and use learners' response as a starting point for moving towards a more accurate analysis of the problem and continue until they find the main source of the problem. Some sample questions that can be asked include: Is there anything wrong here in this sentence? / Do you see anything wrong? / What's the right form? / So, you would say? / Do you remember? Is it ... (e.g., irregular, uncountable, etc.). Providing the answer and explaining *why* must be used as a last resort. Teachers can also start the task and hold learners responsible for finishing it, either individually or in a group with peers. Figure 2 provides a prime example of tutor mediational moves.

1. Clarifying the task
2. Accepting a response
3. Showing affect
4. Asking learner to identify the problem
5. Locating part of the text needing improvement
6. Asking to clarify meaning
7. Identifying the problem in the text
8. Asking to consider a possible solution
9. Checking conceptual understanding
10. Providing metalinguistic clues
11. Providing content clues
12. Rejecting the response with explanation(s)
13. Explaining the problem
14. Exemplifying or illustrating
15. Providing a choice of possible solution(s)
16. Providing the correct solution

Figure 2. Tutor mediational moves ranging from the most implicit to the most explicit, originally used for DA of learners' writing ability (Shrestha & Coffin, 2012, p. 61).

4. Typology of Mediation Strategies

4.1. DA of Listening

Ableeva (2010) addressed the individualized DA of L2 learners' listening abilities and devised a regulatory scale including a typology of mediational strategies as a posteriori, after analyzing the mediator's interactions with learners (see Figure 3).

1. Accepting response
2. Structuring the text
3. Replay of a passage
4. Asking the words
5. Identifying a problem area
6. Metalinguistic clues
7. Offering a choice
8. Translation
9. Providing a correct pattern
10. Providing an explicit explanation

Figure 3. Mediation strategies, addressing the DA of learners' listening abilities (Ableeva, 2010, p. 260).

Two main goals can be pursued by going through the mediational stages: first, the problem areas that hamper comprehension can be identified, and, second, learners can be assisted with their language development.

Alavi et al. (2012) developed an inventory of mediational strategies, which can be used by language teachers during interactions with a group ZPD to track and enhance learners' development in listening comprehension (see Figure 4).

1. Confirming/rejecting response
2. Replaying
 - a. listening to the entire portion
 - b. listening to a segment from the portion
3. Putting words together (by asking: 'What words did you hear?' and 'What else did you understand?')
4. Repeating the erroneous guess with a questioning tone
5. Offering contextual reminders
6. Offering meta-linguistic reminders (e.g., asking leading questions)
7. Using dictionary
8. Providing correct response and explanation

Figure 4. Typology of mediation strategies for G-DA of listening (Alavi et al., 2012, p. 38).

The strategies are ranged from the most abstract to the most concrete (no. 1-8). It is worth mentioning that 'listening to a segment from the portion' serves a diagnostic function by narrowing down the scope of the problem. The third strategy allows for co-construction of knowledge among learners, and the fourth one provides learners with the hint that their recall is incorrect. Contextual reminders, which can promote comprehension, include world schemata, topical knowledge, and situational awareness (i.e., information about discursive features, participants, setting, and goal of language use). Meta-linguistic reminders, which draw students' attention to the adjacent words and co-text and aid developing an inference about a piece of utterance/text, range from various lexical cues to different grammatical hints (e.g., collocations, phrasal verbs, parts of speech, etc.). According to the devised inventory of mediational strategies, if learners are able to process a word phonologically but not semantically, they should be advised to consult their dictionaries to identify familiar but unrecognized lexical items among a number of hypothetical options and/or look up the meaning of new words. However, if learners are not even able to decode the aural form of a word, performing the instructional function (see section 4.4. of the present work) of G-DA, the mediator can explain the correct answer to help learners move up to a higher level of ZPD (Alavi et al., 2012).

4.2. DA of Reading and Word Recognition

Looking into the DA of word recognition and reading comprehension, Carney and Cioffi (1990) identified four modes of instructional episodes ranging from least to most intrusive: first, learners can be given independent easy silent reading tasks to report on. Second, learners can be given instruction on specific comprehension skills (e.g., figuring out the main idea/specific details). Third, general instructional support (e.g., activating schemata, preteaching low frequency words, etc.) can be offered. Fourth, learners can receive instruction on the use of metacognitive strategies (e.g., having control over reading, visualizing, thinking about the way (s) of processing information).

Carney and Cioffi (1990) argue that DA of word cognition and reading comprehension must be done through different instructional episodes, informed by learners’ responsiveness to previous instruction, until they either give the correct response or are proven unable to identify it (see also Table 1).

TABLE 1
 FRAMEWORK FOR DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT (CARNEY & CIOFFI, 1990, PP. 188-189)

Assessment Content (Rapid and Correct Identification)	Alternative Instructional Episodes
1. Word Recognition in Isolation (Rapid and Correct Identification)	display word for analysis present word in context (contextual analysis) divide word into syllables (phonic analysis) divide word into morphemes (structural analysis) compare word with a similar but easier item (initial phoneme substitution) identify word for student (direct instruction)
2. Word Recognition in Context (Unrehearsed Fluent Reading)	preteach low frequency vocabulary provide opportunity for rehearsal model passage for student
3. Comprehension - Oral and Silent Reading (Correct Response to Comprehension Questions)	Prereading Activities preteach low frequency vocabulary activate appropriate prior knowledge preteach difficult concepts provide direction for reading identify organizing principles Postreading Activities provide forced-choice response ask student to find answers direct student to key section of the text

As shown in Table 1, conceiving of DA as a response-to-instruction paradigm, a number of DA procedures that mediators can use to help learners achieve success in word recognition and reading comprehension have been summarized. For full details of the implementation of each instructional episode, the explanation of which is beyond the scope of the present meta-synthesis, refer to Carney and Cioffi (1990).

4.3. DA of Writing and Speaking

Figure 5 presents a mediation typology for mediating learners’ speaking ability. For a sample of tutor mediational moves while dealing with learners’ writing sample, see Figure 2.

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping move narration along 2. Accepting response 3. Request for repetition 4. Request for verification 5. Reminder of directions 6. Request for renarration 7. Identifying specific site of error 8. Specifying error 9. Metalinguistic clues 10. Translation 11. Providing example or illustration 12. Offering a choice 13. Providing correct response 14. Providing explanation 15. Asking for explanation |
|--|

Figure 5. Tutor mediation typology, originally used for DA of learners’ speaking ability (Poehner, 2005, p. 160).

4.4. DA of Grammatical Competence

Van Compernelle and Zhang (2014) provided a description of the procedures for offering gradual (i.e., from implicit to explicit) support to L2 learners taking an elicited imitation test of grammatical competence (see Table 2). More targeted, direct assistance was given as learners failed to respond to questions correctly. In the context of the above-mentioned study, the test items were presented using audio-recordings; that is why the mediator was expected to ‘play’ the statements and ask a learner to ‘listen’ to them once more. Doubtless, the procedures can be modified to be maximally compliant with the demands of the targeted skill(s) in mediation.

TABLE 2
OUTLINE OF INTERVENTIONIST DA PROCEDURES (VAN COMPERNOLLE & ZHANG, 2014)

Step	Procedure	Points
1	Let student respond without assistance (independent performance).	4
2	If attempt 1 is not correct, prompt with: "Sorry, that wasn't quite right. Listen to the statement one more time and try to ..."; Provide a second chance to repeat the statement.	3
3	If attempt 2 is not correct, prompt with: "Sorry, that wasn't quite right either. Listen to the statement again and pay attention to ..."; Narrow the focus to a specific unit of analysis.	2
4	If attempt 3 is not correct, prompt with: "Sorry, that still wasn't quite right. Listen to the statement again and think about ... (e.g., the plural form of .../ending of the verb .../past tense form of the verb ...)"; Provide a metalinguistic prompt.	1
5	No more attempts. Provide the correct form and an explanation of the problem, and play the statement again.	0

Davin (2013) provided an insight into the way language teachers can carry out cumulative, interventionist DA. As shown in Table 3, whenever a student produced an incorrect utterance, the teacher can utilize a menu of hierarchical, pre-scripted prompts and gave the student an opportunity to correct the error/mistake. The teacher can also maintain a daily mediation record in which he/she systematically tracks the progress of each student (i.e., the number of mediation prompts required by and the source of the student's error).

TABLE 3
MEDIATION PROMPTS ORIGINALLY USED FOR CUMULATIVE INTERVENTIONIST DA OF WH-QUESTION FORMATION (DAVIN, 2013, P. 310)

Level of Explicitness	Mediation Prompt
Prompt 1	Pause with questioning look
Prompt 2	Repetition of entire phrase by teacher with emphasis on source of error
Prompt 3	Repetition of specific site of error
Prompt 4	Forced choice option
Prompt 5	Correct response and explanation provided

As can be seen, the graduated prompts become more and more explicit until the student can formulate the response correctly.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers, unfortunately, barely consider the implications of DA for classroom teaching and learning (Lidz, 2009), and the blame partly lies with DA researchers and proponents, for they may have not enunciated the relevance and conformity of DA research findings to classroom context, or they may have been inadvertently neglectful of the need for clearly recounting how teachers can embark on administering DA in practice. It seems prudent to believe that the implementation of DA practices in pedagogical practices will be hampered unless their rich understandings and interpretations, gleaned from individual research reports, are synthesized and a framework to enhance the applicability of findings of primary studies are developed. That is, relevant empirical research findings still need to overcome instructional obstacles to gain practicality.

The present meta-synthesis drew the conclusion that findings and results of scholarly articles are, at least at times, couched in academic jargon, which is not easy for teachers or teacher educators to follow. Moreover, some research articles are hard to come by due to certain constraints on their accessibility and if available, collecting relevant research reports on DA, going through them all, and scrutinizing them is rather time-consuming. All these reasons, which can dissuade practitioners from obliging themselves to abide by recent developments in the field, that may seem to be surplus to requirements, call a halt to the incorporation of DA into teachers' pedagogical practice and draw DA into an esoteric world.

Problems with the investment of resources and time in compiling updated resources remain a barrier to DA being practiced as a part of teachers' professional practice. In the hope of breaking new ground for the incorporation of DA into the mainstream of classroom assessment and instructional practices, the present work was an attempt to systematically identify the empirical evidence of the effectiveness of DA on language learning in the previously conducted research, integrate their findings and implications to obtain a broader understanding of the applicability and practicality of DA practices, and avail teacher trainers and pre- and in-service teachers with an abridged account of the benefits and guidelines of DA; implementing them can be a departure point to bridge the gap between research and professional practice.

Informed by the findings of the present meta-synthesis, recommendations pertaining to practice, education, and research can be made. As Kozulin (2009) notes, classroom context is a promising vein for the implementation of DA because, at the time being, providing a large number of examinees with mediational means in formal testing is not feasible. However, it seems that classroom-based DA has yet to break into mainstream educational practice, and instructing pre- and in-service teachers to apply the principles of DA in their classroom (e.g., holding instructional workshops and seminars) can be a starting point for implementing DA. It is hoped that putting Vygotsky's proposal into practice will illuminate the nature and developmental processes of human cognition.

Language teachers should bear in mind that for teaching to be effective, not only should links between assessment and classroom practice be made (Lidz, 1991), but also results of each stage of assessment must feed into their subsequent interventional moves. This cannot be achieved unless teacher educators and language teachers gain a clear understanding of DA, its principles, and practical application guidelines. Mediators/Teachers must monitor learners' ability to transfer principles of target constructs beyond a here-an-now given task, which heralds microgenesis, to more difficult transfer tasks.

As far as education is concerned, it is worth mentioning that whether and how DA can find its way to classroom context depends on the amount of political advocacy and educational empowerment it receives from stakeholders and policymakers. Moreover, teacher trainers/educators, who have a thorough grasp of DA and are willing to refurbish the entrenched views on classroom assessment, are to fittingly familiarize TTC attendees with the underlying assumptions of DA and some guidelines on how they can apply the principles to their own instructional practice by employing mediation with the aim of engaging in learners' ZPD, fostering learner development, and moving beyond question-response-feedback classroom discourse. Materials developers and syllabus designers are to be sensitized to the beneficial effects of DA in learner development and leave room for DA practices in the pedagogical materials (e.g., course books & teacher guides) they develop.

A key limitation of this meta-synthesis is that although meta-synthesis studies have a mechanism for identifying main areas of focus in a given line of research through the inclusion and integration of multiple studies, the interpretive findings of existing research on the effectiveness of DA in classroom context is by no means limited to those included in the research. Given the purpose and scope of the present work, those studies on DA which focused on early childhood education, language therapy, language impairments, speech disorders, learning difficulties/disabilities, intellectual disabilities, computer-mediated DA, computerized DA (C-DA), DA of discourse abilities, and DA of syntactic organization were excluded; nevertheless, the inclusion of such research could have made further data available. The inevitable over-representation of articles written by a number of leading figures in the field and the exclusion of publications other than peer-reviewed articles are among other limitations of the present work.

Considering possibilities for employing various pedagogical means (e.g., portfolios, journals, etc.) that may encourage collaborative interaction throughout DA sessions in a variety of educational contexts (e.g., computerized and internet-based DA, classroom assessment practices, tutoring sessions, etc.) can give venue for new research projects. Given that parents are expected to be informed about their children's learning status/progress, implementing classroom DA might pose a challenge to the ease of communication between teachers and parents. Further research can help sort this problem out by devising a means of systematic report for DA. Future studies can also pursue avenues for considering the transcendence of DA sessions rather than their effects on learners' microgenetic development. Last but not least, the present meta-synthesis suggests a need to further explore the effect of task difficulty on transcendence mediation and how certain tasks (e.g., cooperative learning tasks) and classroom culture may be relevant to promoting classroom-based L2 DA.

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EFL Teaching Methods

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Abstract—Language is a system of communication and it plays a vital role in human society. How can we teach language effectively and serve the purpose for human communication? Many linguists and scholars have dwelt on the question, leading to different approaches and methods in language teaching. Those approaches and methods through history have not only reflected changes in theories of the nature of language and of language learning, but also reflected changes in learners' needs.

Index Terms—language learning and teaching, teaching methods, teaching procedure

I. BRIEF DESCRIPTION

As theories of language and psychology have developed, new teaching approaches and methods have emerged to accompany them. The appearance of these approaches and methods has not only met the needs of contemporary language teaching, but also aroused the interest of the second and foreign language teachers. Though there have been many controversies among applied linguists and teachers. Unique characteristics of each method can be identified. Some methods have been adopted universally: others are confined to limited areas. Whatever the situation may be, a general review of these approaches and methods is necessary in order to get some insights into their nature, strengths and weaknesses. The result will hopefully be more effective language teaching. This passage makes a detailed comparison among influential approaches and methods in language teaching, varying from the Grammar Translation Method to the Communicative Approach in terms of definition, advantages and disadvantages, with the aim to improve language teaching.

Grammar-Translation Method mainly used by my Junior and Senior middle school English teachers although teaching materials in the text books were arranged in ALM way. The features are as follows:

- Language skills. There was no practice of English listening and speaking.
- Language used by the teacher. Students were taught mainly in Chinese, especially when teachers taught grammar and vocabulary and did the exercises. The teachers did not actively use English. My senior middle school English teacher used more English but only when she paraphrased some part of the text.
- Engage. There were no activities to stimulate students' learning motivation and interest besides reviewing the former knowledge.
- Study. The teachers taught vocabulary independently with emphasizing pronunciation, spelling and meaning. Grammar was taught deductively and specifically with emphasizing rules and neglecting more practice. In teaching the text, they put focus on translating and analyzing the sentence structure and grammar. The main task for the students was to remember the new words and all the grammar rules in order to take exams, and the application of them was ignored.
- Activate. There was no more practice apart from doing written work in the books and reciting the words, sentence patterns, grammar rules and the texts.
- The classes were typically teacher-centered. There was no interaction between teachers and students. The teachers spoke for most of the time introducing vocabulary, grammar rules and translating the text. The students just listened to them except answering some questions raised. There were no more activities like pair works or group works for students to use what they had learned.

My college English teacher who taught intensive reading mainly used Audio-Lingual Method in the first and second year. Since intensive reading is a course to train English-major students' integrated skills, I'd like to take it as an example to illustrate the characters of the ALM.

- Language skills. The English skills of speaking, reading and writing were practiced in intensive reading classes, especially speaking.
- Language used by the teacher. Little Chinese was used in the class.
- Engage. Class-report, reciting and show of dialogues or plays were carried out first to motivate students' enthusiasm to enjoy the class. The teacher was to correct some serious pronunciation, intonation and grammar mistakes.
- Study. Firstly, sentence structures were taught inductively through imitating, repeating and replacing drills from the teacher one by one with closing the books. Students are required to memorize the dialogues in pairs and show the dialogues on the stage. Secondly, vocabulary was taught with much emphasis on correct pronunciation, speech and application. In teaching the texts, the teacher usually paraphrased some difficult sentences and raised questions instead of translating the sentences and analyzing grammar rules; students were required to comprehend the reading materials, answer the questions, propose the questions for the teachers or rewrite the article sometimes.
- Activate. The teacher asked the students to make new dialogues or plays after class and checked them in the next

lesson.

- The classes were partly student-centered. The teacher’s role was to organize the class activities, guide the students to comprehend the materials and help them correct the mistakes in pronunciation, intonation and grammar. The students were given much time to participate many different, stressful but interesting and effective activities to practice what they had learned. There was much interaction between teachers and students.

As a teacher mainly teaching intensive reading in the English department of the college, my method is a hybrid of ALM, CLT and GTM. I’ve followed my college English teacher, but the difference is that I add CLT and TBT methods sometimes according to different teaching tasks. The differences are as follows:

- More group works such as discussion, retelling and debating are added in speaking, listening, reading and writing activities.
- CLT is popularly used in speaking activities. Students are encouraged to master the pragmatic, authentic and functional use of English in order to improve communicative competence. I put more emphasis on fluency than accuracy in students’ oral English.
- Vocabulary is taught individually in Grade 1 but in Grade 2 it is mainly taught in teaching the text.
- Difficult grammars in the text are pointed and explained with more examples.
- Translation is used in late Grade 2 and 3 because sometimes paraphrase is not effective enough to help students appreciate those well-written literature works.

The teachers who teach us MA courses mainly use Task-based teaching method and ask students to have a self-discovery study.

More group tasks like presentation and discussion are given to us to prepare before the class. Naturally it’s because MA students are engaged in academic study and research instead of learning more English knowledge.

II. COMMENTS

The different teaching methods mentioned in my learning and teaching experience should be contributed to predominant EFL teaching conceptions and their corresponding textbooks in different periods in our country.

1. GTM, in many peoples’ eyes, has been out of fashion, but I have to admit I benefited a lot although I was poor in speaking and listening before I entered the college. A large amount of English words, the comparatively good grammar knowledge and writing ability paved the easier way for my further English study in the college. GTM is still widely employed as a contributory method together with other strategies today. The following table can show my personal comments on GTM.

TABLE 1:
MY PERSONAL COMMENTS ON GTM

Limitations	Advantages
Listening and speaking are neglected.	Reading and writing are improved.
Function and meaning are neglected.	Syntax and form of the language are emphasized.
Teacher-centered Students are passive and easy to get bored. Interaction between teachers and students is not cared.	Much knowledge is presented deductively. It’s easy to be used, esp. in big classes. There’s no higher requirement for teachers.
It’s hard to memorize much information.	It’s helpful to master basic language knowledge.
<i>My view:</i> It’s suitable to be used in big classes where it’s hard to organize class activities or it can be used by the teachers whose English proficiency is not high, especially in speaking. It can be used to explain some part of grammar rules or difficult texts but shouldn’t be completely used in the whole process of teaching.	

2. ALM is one of the methods that I prefer to use because my pronunciation, speaking and listening, which used to be poor in my middle school study, was greatly improved in the college, especially in Grade 1 and 2. However, it seemed that my vocabulary and reading competence were not improved enough as speaking. Every coin has two sides, but from my experience, I still personally think that ALM is more suitable to teach those who are English majors in lower grades because most of them are poor in pronunciation and speaking, but it’s better to be combined with other effective methods like CLT, TBT.

TABLE 2:
MY PERSONAL COMMENTS ON ALM

Advantages	Limitations
Students’ abilities of sentence production, grammatical structures can be well trained.	Endless pattern drills may produce boredom. Training is carried out mechanically.
Oral ability can be better improved.	Reading ability may be a little weaker.
Syntax and form are emphasized.	Function and meaning are neglected.
Partly student-centered Students are more active to enjoy practice. There’s more Interaction between teachers and students.	Class activities for the learners to practice are not enough and effective. Different activities should be organized in different teaching tasks such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, text, etc.
<i>My view:</i> Its’ suitable to be used in middle school English teaching or in lower grades for English majors in the college because there are many sentence patterns, grammatical structures which should be practiced and learned. However, it’s better to be combined with other effective methods like CLT, TBT.	

3. CLT is a fashionable method, but according to my teaching experience, it's better to be used together with ALM so that students can improve both English knowledge and communicative competence effectively.

TABLE 3:
MY PERSONAL COMMENTS ON CLT

Advantages	Limitations
Students' communicative competence can be improved.	There is high requirement for the teachers' English proficiency and teaching techniques.
Oral ability can be better improved.	It's possible for students to be poor in systematical grammars.
Function and meaning are emphasized.	Syntax and form are less emphasized.
Student-centered Students are motivated to enjoy practice actively. There's more interaction between teachers and students and between students themselves.	Students' errors cannot be corrected in time. Accuracy is less emphasized.
<i>My view:</i> Its' more suitable to be used to teach primary students so that they have better communicative competence. It can also be effectively used in oral teaching. It' better to use it together with ALM.	

4. Task-based Teaching, the newest EFL teaching method developed in recent years, has been reflected in the new English textbooks of middle school in China.

TABLE 4:
MY PERSONAL COMMENTS ON TBT

Advantages	Limitations
Students are highly motivated to learn through solving problems.	There is a very high requirement for the teachers' English proficiency and teaching techniques.
Listening and speaking are lead-in activities, which was followed by reading and writing.	It's possible for students to be poor in systematical grammars
Function and meaning are emphasized.	Syntax and form are explained in limited time.
Student-centered Teachers are advisors. Students are required to finish tasks in simulated life situations by using English.	It's difficult to organize task activities and manage the students, especially in big classes. It is lack of corresponding assessment system.
<i>My view:</i> Its' a good method and suitable to be used in primary, middle school and even college teaching, but it should have two premises: Teachers' high English proficiency and effective teaching techniques; Moderate number of students.	

After reviewing the different teaching methods, I am clear that evaluation of a particular method depends on many factors, such as language and learning theories, teaching techniques, syllabus design, learner's learning stage, and teacher and learners' roles. One factor that is easily ignored is that of context. A method that can be considered beneficial in on context may not be so in another. Furthermore, a method that can be considered effective in teaching one language skill or one section of language knowledge may be ineffective in another.

As I mentioned above, I personally think in Chinese context, teachers should use different methods at the different stages of the learners' learning and different methods should be integrated to teach different English knowledge and skills. TGM is still possible to teach the course of literature, explain difficult language points and enlarge students' vocabulary by way of synonyms and antonyms. ALM can be exploited to train students in good pronunciation and necessary sentence patters. So these two traditional methods can still be used in our teaching today if they are modified appropriately or combined with CLT or TBT.

III. REVISION

As theories of language and psychology have developed, new teaching approaches and methods have emerged to accompany them. The appearance of these approaches and methods has not only met the needs of contemporary language teaching, but also aroused the interest of the second and foreign language teachers. Though there have been many controversies among applied linguists and teachers. Unique characteristics of each method can be identified. Some methods have been adopted universally: others are confined to limited areas. Whatever the situation may be, a general review of these approaches and methods is necessary in order to get some insights into their nature, strengths and weaknesses. The result will hopefully be more effective language teaching. This passage makes a detailed comparison among influential approaches and methods in language teaching, varying from the Grammar Translation Method to the Communicative Approach in terms of definition, advantages and disadvantages, with the aim to improve language teaching.

After reviewing the main teaching methods in this passage, we have a clear idea of the advantages and disadvantages of each method. But evaluation of a particular method depends on many factors, such as language and learning theories, teaching techniques, syllabus design, and teacher and learners- roles. One factor that is easily ignored is that of context. A method that can be considered beneficial in one context may not be in another. Furthermore, alternative approaches to those so far described can be found for teaching different language skills. Based on this thought, personally I think that Counseling-Learning is not appropriate to the Chinese context. For one reason, classes in middle schools and colleges are usually very large, so it is impossible for only one teacher (mower) to handle and organize a class. For another, there

are no possibilities to train large numbers of teachers with the required counseling skills. The same is true for Suggestopedia. Few teachers are likely to have the required proficiency in both Chinese and the target language. Moreover the decor and arrangement of classrooms and the use of music are beyond present conditions in China. Despite people's negative attitudes towards the Grammar-Translation and the Audio lingual Methods, with modifications they still receive wide acceptance in our teaching today.

While putting more emphasis on communication and interaction, it is still possible to use the Grammar-Translation method to teach students literary works, explain difficult language points and enlarge students' vocabulary by way of synonyms and antonyms. The Audio lingual Method can be exploited to train students in good pronunciation and necessary sentence patterns. Such training can be accompanied by an explanation of their appropriateness in the target situation. As for Total Physical Response and the Silent Way, they can compliment our teaching. The former can be reflected in our classroom language through the teachers' use of commands to elicit students' physical response. The latter shows its value in pair work, group discussions and role play where the teacher keeps silent and acts as a listener and observer.

As a common English teacher, what I can do is to look for the best combination of some methods that are suitable for the course I teach in our Chinese teaching context. I'll try to make some revision mainly on ALM and CLT methods because they are still popularly used in our country and I usually use them in my teaching of intensive reading course. The following revisions are made according to their disadvantages.

1. Revision on ALM method

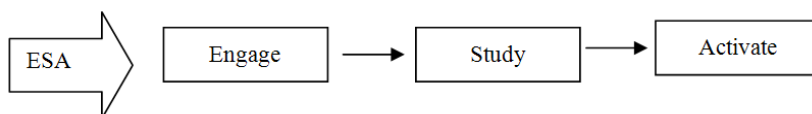
Since ALM is based on Behaviorism and Structuralism, syntax and form of the language are over emphasized while function of the language is ignored. It is easy to find that many students still can't speak English though they are trained in practicing countless sentence patterns mechanically. In my mind it is very necessary to help students master the sentence structures accurately, but teaching materials and activities in practice should be improved in order to make students less bored and master the function of the language.

1) Revision on the speaking activities of sentence pattern training. It is clear that mechanical training of sentence patterns should be the reason why the students can't speak English in the real communicative situations, so we have to try to revise it by designing some communicative activities after practicing sentence structures. From my English learning and teaching experience, some of the speaking activities used in ALM are effective and necessary, such as repetition, imitation, inflection, completion, replacement, integration, transformation, rejoinder, restatement role-play, etc. However, the aim of such activities is to make students master the language structures, which is only the first step to learn the language and receive plenty of language input. So more communicative activities should be added to help students use the language and output the language in a certain communicative environment. You may ask "Aren't those practicing activities the process of output?". Yes, of course. But I personally think that they are not the real output because language output should be the creative use of it rather than mechanical repetition and memorization.

To design communicative activities, we can refer to CLT and TBT methods. Pair works and Group discussions are two activities that can be easily and widely applied in our teaching context. Teachers can give students the following tasks:

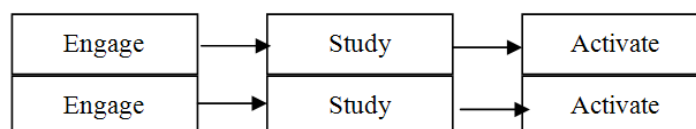
- Teachers can ask students make new dialogues or short contextual plays in pairs and groups by themselves with using some key sentence structures they have learned and practiced. These activities can be finished both in class and after class according to the difficulty of the work, the time and the students' different level at different stage.
- Teachers can design some questions about the use of the sentence structures and on the topics related to the lesson. These students are required to discuss them together at first, then answer them properly and develop further tasks such as organize the answers together to make a short speech or write a short passage.
- Teachers can ask students to finish some tasks together in pairs or groups by using the key sentence structures depending on teaching content. For example, when students are going to teach some language or structures used in our real life such as shopping, teachers can ask students to prepare some objects as articles with prices on them, and make the tables as shopping counter so that students can practise using the language in a real situation. Sometimes, students can be required to draw pictures, design or fill in some forms, tell the stories, do experiments, etc to make preparation for the speaking later.

2) Teaching procedure. ALM follows PPP (Presentation → practice → production) teaching procedure and also we can say it arranges the three teaching elements ESA (Engage, Study and Activate) in Straight Arrows sequence.

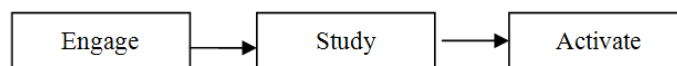


Actually, PPP or Straight Arrows lessons work well for certain structures such as "can" and "can't" because it gives students a chance to practise the language in a controlled way (during the Study phase) and then gives them a chance to Activate the new language in the enjoyable way. However, we may not be giving our students own learning styles a fair chance. These two procedures may be effective for teaching simple language at lower levels for straightforward language because lower level students need teachers' instruction in a deductive way.

Since I put more communicative activities in ALM, the procedure of the lesson should be a little different, especially for the more advanced students. For students at intermediate levels such as senior middle school students, they have mastered some basic English knowledge and formed their learning styles, so the teachers' role is to activate them to try to discover the rules by showing a lot of materials and help them to practice the rules. For advanced students such as college students as English majors, the different courses are designed to let them revise the language rules and improve their language skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation. In this way, the main learning task is to do a lot of practice in these aspects. In this sense, Boomerang sequence and Patchwork sequence are more suitable, where activation is the first goal and Study comes later if and when appropriate. The following two diagrams can be clear to see the procedures specifically.



Here I'd like to suggest a new teaching procedure, which I think is appropriate for ALM I revised above. It is similar to Patchwork sequence. For example, students are required to learn some structures on the topic of dreams.



- Engage: Teachers and students discuss the topic together. The teacher tells the students about his or her dreams briefly. Then ask students what their dreams are.
- Activate: List some questions and encourage the students to make a conversation or have a group discussion freely on this topic.
- Activate: To invite students to show the dialogues or introduce their dreams
- Study: The teacher points the main grammatical or structural mistakes in speaking and then provide some necessary words, sentence structures or speech structure that should be used in speaking.
- Engage: The teacher gives a good and complete example of the speech on this topic.
- Activate: The teacher asks students to practise using the new words and structures and prepare a speech by themselves.
- Activate: Students are invited to make the speech on the stage.

2. Revision on CLT method

CLT is based on Functionalism and Sociolinguistics, which emphasizes the function of the language and learners' communicative competence. However, the importance of syntax and of the language should be concerned because accuracy is as important as fluency, especially in language writing.

1) Revision on the teaching materials in CLT. Since both syntax and function of a language are important, so in my opinion, syntax practice should be added before students have free expression in CLT. Imitation is necessary to improve students' correct and effective expression, but I think input in CLT should be given with considering structure and grammar learning but not function learning only. If systematic English grammar rules can be properly added to teaching materials together with the functions of the language, it will be better. The following material is chosen from one lesson of a primary English textbook (for grade 3 students) I compiled and I think it is arranged as a hybrid of CLT and ALM:

Unit 7 Toys

Lesson 13

1. Look, listen and say

1. Hi, Lupy. Look, I have a new toy.

Tom

3. It's a toy car.

5. Of course.

2. Really? What is it?

Lupy

4. May I have a look?

6. How nice!

2. Look and say

I have a new *toy car*.

○
doll

○
flag

○
bike

○
balloon

○
teddy bear

○
kite

From the picture above, we can see in the first part the sentence pattern “I have...” appears in the communicative dialogue between Tom and Lupy. In the second part students can practice the structure by replacing the italicized words. So it is a good example of hybrid of ALM and CLT.

2) My thought about teaching procedure of CLT. The common procedure of CLT is: exposure → imitation → free expression. If the ideas in 1) can be acceptable, the third step — free expression should be based on enough practice and correct use of sentences. So no matter learners are primary students, middle school students or college students, the better procedure for CLT is Boomerang sequence or Patchwork sequence. It is because CLT method emphasizes activate more than study.

IV. EVALUATION

Language is a system of communication and it plays a vital role in human society. How can we teach language effectively and serve the purpose for human communication? Many linguists and scholars have dwelt on the question, leading to different approaches and methods in language teaching. Those approaches and methods through history have not only reflected changes in theories of the nature of language and of language learning, but also reflected changes in learners’ needs.

After reviewing the main teaching methods in this passage, we have a clear idea of the advantages and disadvantages of each method. But evaluation of a particular method depends on many factors, such as language and learning theories, teaching techniques, syllabus design, and teacher and learners- roles. One factor that is easily ignored is that of context. A method that can be considered beneficial in one context may not be in another. Furthermore, alternative approaches to those so far described can be found for teaching different language skills. Based on this thought, personally I think that Counseling-Learning is not appropriate to the Chinese context. For one reason, classes in middle schools and colleges are usually very large, so it is impossible for only one teacher (mower) to handle and organize a class. For another, there are no possibilities to train large numbers of teachers with the required counseling skills. The same is true for Suggestopedia. Few teachers are likely to have the required proficiency in both Chinese and the target language. Moreover the decor and arrangement of classrooms and the use of music are beyond present conditions in China. Despite people’s negative attitudes towards the Grammar-Translation and the Audiolingual Methods, with modifications they still receive wide acceptance in our teaching today

While putting more emphasis on communication and interaction, it is stilt possible to use the Grammar-Translation method to teach students literary works, explain difficult language points and enlarge students’ vocabulary by way of synonyms and antonyms. The Audiolingual Method can be exploited to train students in good pronunciation and necessary sentence patterns. Such training can be accompanied by an explanation of their appropriateness in the target situation. As for Total Physical Response and the Silent Way, they can compliment our teaching. The former can be reflected in our classroom language through the teachers use of commands to elicit students’ physical response. The latter shows its value in pair work, group discussions and role play where the teacher keeps silent and acts as a listener and observer. The distinction between acquisition and learning seems to be reasonable, but it is hard to put into practice, because it is difficult for us to distinguish where the learners’ knowledge comes from: the acquisition process or the

learning process or both of the two process; the NA emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input, but it is hard to define the so-called $i+1$ input and how to make the input comprehensible by every student; it also undervalues the importance to improve the quality of output; it is too simplified to explain the individual differences through the effective filter. Therefore we can see that there still exist both conceptual problems and practical problems in the NA. The NA belongs to a tradition of language teaching methods based on observation and interpretation of how learners acquire both first and second languages in non-formal settings.

However we must realize that this creative approach firstly occurs in American and is firstly applied in American. So if the NA is applied to China, a non-English environment, things will be different. To employ the approach well in China, it is necessary to create a native-like language learning environment. In our teaching practice, we should make our choice in accordance with the specific situations and then it will be of great significance to employ the NA in China to develop language communicative competence.

Learning is a serious matter. It is like the medicine of the day, bitter and tough to swallow. It requires consistent effort and energy on the part of the students to progress successfully. And there are more arguments about other things, such as: the role of the teacher and student-centered class; the relationship among the four skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing; the value of the intensive reading course and how to handle it; the content and quality of text-books etc. As opinions often differ, no decision has ever been reached. Problems remain unsolved. Things stand as they were. We, language teachers, sometimes feel rather frustrated for not being able to move a step forward. Moreover, foreigners who have had the experience of teaching English in China for some time will always raise an objection to our way of language learning and teaching. They think the teaching of English in our country is inferior and our method rigidly traditional. They are strongly against our intensive reading course, describing it as mere memorization of grammar rules and pre-digested texts by the students and explanation by the teachers of the grammar structure of every sentence and the semantic content of nearly every word in the texts. They say changes must take place in our EFL education. Yes, we feel the same way though we might not be of the same opinion as to the evaluation of our intensive reading course. The question is what change must be brought about and how. If change is a must, then it is necessary, I think, for us to make a study of the past so as to get a key to the understanding of why things are as they are. EFL education in China has almost always been influenced by language teaching abroad. Most of our EFLT methods or approaches have stemmed from those applied in foreign countries. So we might as well start by looking back briefly on the history of the language teaching in foreign countries, especially in Europe and America, and then proceed to see the influence of their language teaching on EFLT in our own country.

Different approaches and methods have great impacts on foreign language teaching. It is better to absorb in their advantages and combine some of the methods or approaches together instead of using only one method. It's not easy to fuse the advantages of those approaches and overcome the disadvantages, requiring painstaking effort and constant trial in concrete foreign language teaching. Thus, the flexible combination of those approaches and methods is a key factor in promoting foreign language teaching, which can bear fruitful results. To sum up, whenever a new method or approach appears, it always becomes a hit for some time. But as teachers of foreign languages, we must hold a critical attitude towards such innovations, for no single method is perfect. It would be profitable to draw on the advantages of suitable methods to make our classes effective, informative and enjoyable and eventually reach the pedagogical goal of our language teaching.

V. SUMMARY

To summarize, teaching procedure is not fixed and it depends on teachers' teaching techniques and English proficiencies. All of my revisions come from my English learning and teaching experience. Maybe they are not complete and not persuasive because teaching methods and procedures are too practical and are influenced by many factors such as teaching tasks, courses, training skills, learners' levels, student's characters, teachers' abilities, teaching materials, teaching aids and teachers' preferences, etc. For example, to use CLT and TBT methods, teachers are required to have good teaching abilities. So we teachers have to revise these different methods and adjust different teaching procedures all the time according to such influential factors listed above so that we can improve our teaching quality gradually.

NOTES

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The Study of Parents' Words, Behavior and Attitude as the Means to Build the Children's Character in Bulukumba Regency

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Abstract—Parents' words, behavior and attitude can serve as the media or means to build the children's character. This research is aimed to describe, analyze, and explain the implementation of parents' words, behavior and attitude as the means to build the children's positive character in Bulukumba Regency. The data includes parents and children speech, while the research resources were from the parents by using hand phone as the tool. The other instrument used during the research was the field note. The data of the research were analyses using the model created by Miles and Huberman (1993) consisting of data collection, unitization, note taking, service, and the tentative or temporary conclusion drawing, validation, final conclusion or hypothesis. The result of the research showed that the words, behavior and attitude of the parents toward the children in Bulukumba can be seen as follows: 1) utterance used with the declarative way which is meant as asking, containing communicative, friendship and character values 2) the implementation of the parents' words, behavior and attitude in accordance with the imperative way possesses creative character building. 3) Words uttered in interrogative way which means urgent, possesses honest character building.

Index Terms—behavior and words uttered, parents, children, character

I. INTRODUCTION

In the world of communication nowadays, men use utterance as a way of expressing their mind. The words or utterance or speech is highly dependent upon various contexts, including social context that leads to the extension of the utterance meanings. When a sentence is uttered and heard or listened by others, they tend to usually do the requested actions. The readiness of someone in doing a particular thing or job is varied; one of the factors is a cooperative will to work together among individuals. Therefore, a language one utters can be meant as a cooperative means.

In every single communication process, there is always a thing called speech event and speech act in the speech situation. Speech situation and speech act are incorporated in the pragmatic study. Speech act is an event in which linguistic interaction takes place is a speech or utterance way. Therefore, a speech act can be viewed more as the meaning or definition of an act in the speech. Speech act can be divided into two things; directly or indirectly. This speech act can occur in various ways either in the form of declarative, interogative, or in the imperative way. Speech act is regarded as the pragmatic element which involves the speaker or talker, listener, writer, or reader as well as the things explained earlier (Setiawan, 2005, p. 16)

Basically, all the speech acts wished or hoped is the speech act which is positive and can eventually trigger the development of the children character. The children in certain range of age i.e. the ranging age between 6 and 12 years old possess big potential to imitate or copy the language uttered they hear in day to day life. If the words or language they hear are good, then the words they uttered are also good and vice versa. A positive character of speech act constitutes a dreamed character. Maman (2016) argued that the development of the children character can be expected as a lightened thing. In this regard, the development of the children character is expected as the means or media to change the character of the nation from the darkness to the lightness as what is stated in every religion and is as well reflected in the national constitution particularly in the philosophy of the Republic of Indonesia.

Tolla (2013, p.6) stated and argued that within the character particularly positive character, there are numerous humanity values which is symbolized as a different or distinctive kind of character and personality between one and the others. Things like these cover or range from positive character, personality, behavior, attitude, loyalty, honesty, devotion, living life without depending on others, care to the others, associate with others socially, respect others, respect or appreciate the existing social laws and social norms, love and care to the environment, responsible and

accountable, discipline, and always try to work professionally. Afterwards, Tolla (2013, p. 7) stressed and emphasized upon the values mentioned earlier are the characteristics of the individuals who have character.

Sapir-Whorf in Loveday (1982, p.36) argued that the mind or mindset and the behavior of the human (which can be observed) occur as a result of language used or uttered. The language we acquire or use in everyday life is always integrated with the culture or custom simultaneously. According to the basic design developed by national education ministry (Kemendiknas, 2010), psychologically as well as social-culturally, the development of the character within the individuals constitutes the function or actualization of his full potential within himself or herself.

The parents populated in the regency of Bulukumba are now getting more aware of the flow of information and globalization. This will enable the parents to talk or utter in more educative ways particularly in terms of shaping the character of the children. Characters meant or wished are the positive quality characters as standardized by the Board of Research and Development and the Center of Curriculum by the National Education Ministry (2010) covering the aspects as follows; (1) religious, (2) honest, (3) tolerant, (4) discipline, (5) hard working, (6) creative, (7) independent, (8) democracy, (9) inquisitive and curiosity, (10) the spirit of nation, (11) love to own nation and motherland, (12) respecting or appreciating any achievement, (13) friendly and communicative, (14) love peace, (15) like reading (16) care to the environment, (17) social care, (18) the attitude and the behavior of a person in order to do what's his duty or responsibility as well as the obligation that are supposed to be done by oneself, society, environment, country, nation and the God Almighty.

The research in the field of sociolinguistic and pragmatic has been numerously conducted or carried out such as what Rahardi (2005) has done. He studied the imperative courtesy or hospitality in the Indonesian language. This courtesy or hospitality study is based upon the three (3) theories of courtesy or hospitality i.e. the principle of Leech courtesy. In this research, the aspect of speech act studied is around the form of speech act.

Trosborg in Gunarwan (2007, p.5) argued that the pragmatic linguistic study is the pragmatic aspect in linguistic study, while pragmatic nonlinguistic constitutes part of the sociology, psychology, ethnomethodology and literature study. Yule (1996, p.5) stated that pragmatics is the study on the relation among the forms of linguistics and the users of the forms. Based on the explanation stated earlier, it can be concluded that pragmatics is a branch of a language science which focuses its study on the meaning of the words based on the context of the speech and utterance.

Speech act occurs in the speech event. This is in line with the opinion of Verschueren (1999, p.22) who argued that speech act is the act or action expressed through sentences or statements. Speech event constitutes a social event since it relates or connects to the parties involves in the utterance or speech in certain time, in certain place. Basically, speech event constitutes the sequences or series of various speech acts which are organized in order to achieve certain goals or targets. This speech event constitutes the social symptom. Leech (1993) stated that the implementation of the speech act can be seen in various forms. One of them is in the declarative, imperative and interrogative ways.

The function of the speech act is mostly related or connected to the illocution act (a style of speech or speaking). In this regard, Sumarsono (20012, p.323) explained that the illocution act is an act or action in order to do something mostly regarded or related to the function of speech act. Praise or giving compliment, complaint, mocking, promising, humiliating and similar forms of these are called the illocution act. Leech (1993) argued that the function of speech act is correlated with the goals or targets of the speaker or talker as what is occurred in the speech act in the speech event.

Rahim (2008, p.29) stated that the types of speech act are divided based on the strategy as follows:

Based on the model, a sentence or clause can be divided into declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentence. Conventionally declarative sentence is used to tell about something, interrogative sentence used to ask something, and imperative sentence is used to order or invite someone to do something. These can be told or said through direct strategy.

Mitchell and Alan Davis in their book which was translated by Ibrahim (2008, p.41) stated that the use of certain speech act and not the other speech act is then the meaning of the statement is up to the listener, then this is considered as the indirect speech event or speech act.

Courtesy constitutes one of the implementations of how one respects someone else. Watts (2003, p.39) argued that a courtesy is indeed the ideal character of a person in his action and in his ability or competence to please other people through some positive external activities.

Mey (1994, p. 67) argued that basically a courtesy can be meant that a person or someone can communicate well and easily to be understood.

A conversation in a family constitutes a speech event in a form of dialogue. As a speech event, a conversation is a verbal activity in the social interaction which is symbolized with the change in the speech between Pn and Mt. The use of a language in a speech event can be viewed as the personal act in order to serve as the personal goal as well as the personal act or speech actor. The individual goals meant here is the personal intention of the speech actor. The social goal is the goal in which the achievement occurred as a result of mutual understanding and harmonic relations achievement based on the social-cultural norms of the speech actor.

According to Asep et al (2010, p.48) that a character can shaped through culturalization, that occurs internally within the family, community of culture of a certain ethnic, community of culture of a certain. The process of culturalization is done by the parents, people who regarded as the senior ones towards the children or toward the younger people.

The national education ministry for the center of development and curriculum (2010) that covers the following things such as: (1) religious, (2) honest, (3) tolerant, (4) discipline, (5) hard working, (6) creative, (7) independent, (8) democracy, (9) inquisitive and curiosity, (10) the spirit of nation, (11) love to own nation and motherland, (12) respecting or appreciating any achievement, (13) friendly and communicative, (14) love peace, (15) like reading (16) care to the environment, (17) social care, (18) the attitude and the behavior of a person in order to do what's his duty or responsibility as well as the obligation that are supposed to be done by oneself, society, nation country and God The Almighty. Based on the explanation stated earlier, then the children's character values which are expected from this research were the eighteen character values as what stated in Board of Research and Development and the Center of Curriculum by the National Education Ministry (2010, p.9-10) above. These characters as mentioned earlier are the characters expected from the children as a result of good speech act and speech event by the parents to the children.

The problem or the research was that "how are the real concrete speech act of the parents as the means or media to shape and develop the positive character of the children in the regency of Bulukumba?"

The goals of the research the researcher wish to achieve was to describe, analyze, and explain, the real implementation of the parents' speech act and speech event as the media or means to shape and to develop the children positive character in the regency of Bulukumba.

The result of this research is expected to be very contributive which can enrich and develop the treasure of the theory of parents' communication and interaction toward the children as the media or means to shape and to develop the children positive character. Besides, the result of this research is as well expected to be able to grow and develop more interest and willingness toward the theory of parental speech act toward the children.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of this research is qualitative descriptive, namely the typical research which is attempting to explaining things in words and descriptions, Bogdan and Taylor, (in Moleong, 1994).

With the focus of the research are the all the words, utterance and speech of the parents that serve as the objects of this research.

This research is typically a qualitative kind of research using the plan of eclectic theory i.e. the collaboration and combination of between pragmatics and sociolinguistics.

The sources of this theory were the parents in the regency of Bulukumba. The instrument of the research was the researcher with the assisting tool i.e. *cell phone and field note*.

The data were collected using Observation, interview, and recording. The check of the validity of the data i.e. the intensity of the observation and fellow researcher cross check, as well as the expert of Indonesian language, Sugiyono (2009,p .272).

The Analysis of the flow model data was taken from the theory by Miles and Huberman (1992:15). There were three steps in this analysis covering (1) data reduction, (2) data serving, (3) verification of the data and drawing the conclusion. The technique used in this research was the triangulation research findings validity checking, either the source triangulation or the method triangulation.

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The implementation of the parents' speech act as the means to develop the positive character of the children in Bulukumba can be identified through the use of speech act and the words or diction they use. The use of utterance or speech act can be seen from three models, they are (1) declarative, (2) imperative, (3) interrogative. Conventionally declarative sentence is used to tell about something, interrogative sentence used to ask something, and imperative sentence is used to order or invite someone to do something. These can be told or said through direct strategy.

A. *The Use of Speech or Utterance with Declarative Model*

In the interaction between the parents with the children using the declarative speech act somehow and sometimes used to order or ask to do something. The utterance of speech act is formulated using the Indonesian language which is not formal so that in the delivery of the speech can be identified by the type or variant of local identification particularly the Buginese language.

In the family environment context, the speech act and utterance using the declarative model with the characteristics are considered normal. It is said and considered normal since the speech act is used by the parents toward the children in their day to day interaction. The use of such speech act can create harmonic relationship and trigger the achievement of mutual understanding. This can be seen from the following data:

1 A: The noodle didn't get any carrots. (1)

I: The boiled eggs please! (2)

A: The boiled eggs perhaps. (3) (WTTOT.Dklrt. Hrs. Dt1)

(Context: the speech act was uttered by the mother obviously the housewife one along with her children about the rice sold in the cafeteria. They talk about what should be done particularly in terms of selling the fried rice in order to be delicious and attract more buyers)

The speech act above on the data (1) constitutes declarative utterance. The sample of the data conversation (1a) involves the participants i.e. the mothers and the children. This speech event is usually occurred and happened at home. The topic of this conversation is about the canteen or cafeteria snacks available at school. The sample of the conversation above used the speech act and utterance in an informal way. The utterance or speech act is delivered in the form of phrase and simple sentences. The utterance and speech act is started with the statements of the children who described that the noodle sold was not given a little carrot. Afterwards, it was responded by the mother who said '*telur masakmo*', meaning that the boiled eggs would be good. Then it was responded again by the children by saying '*Telur masak kapang*' (the eggs are boiled perhaps).

The speech act above constitutes the direct declarative model. The parents used the model to order or ask someone to do something. This is commonly happened considering that the relation between the parents and the children which are asymmetric, then whenever the parents ask the children anything, won't disturb the positive image of them and this considered normal. This is also normal in the eye of people, as the chance or potential for parents to order the children is very large. This is connected to the status of the parents with their children in the family. In certain extent, the children are supposed to keep the image of the parents so that there won't be any conflict occurred in the interaction.

The utterance and speech act is normally happened. Therefore, the utterance and speech act is categorized as the proper or polite utterance and speech act. In this case, this utterance and speech act use the informal Bahasa Indonesia. This is indicated by the use of some variants or small talks in Bugisnese local language i.e. the words ended with *-mo* particularly in the words *telur masakmo* meaning that *just the boiled eggs*. Using Bahasa Indonesia with the utterance like that sounds like or seems like trying to smoothen or soften the order. This utterance and speech act still possess choice or alternative meaning to the opponent of the talk. This can be seen from the meaning of the utterance and speech act *just the boiled eggs*. In other words, meaning that it's not an obligation to the opponent of the talk to implement that. So, the utterance and speech act can still keep the image of the opponent of the talk.

The utterance and speech act above contains the friendly, warm, and communicative character. The utterance and speech act above contains the behavior Pn and Mn which keep the good relation in the positive interaction. This is not only happened in the day to day life but also occur in terms of nation and country.

B. The Implementation of the Parents' Speech Act Using the Imperative Model

The utterances and speech acts by the parents in the conversation in a family, some are delivered in a quite imperative way. Those utterances and speech acts are used by the parents to ask, order, warn, prohibit, and tell. Those utterances and speech acts is used to state the function of them which is formulated using Bahasa Indonesia with various linguistic variants. The existence of those utterances and speech acts using imperative model tend to show the normal condition but with the different hospitality.

When the conversation takes place between parents and the children. The utterances of the parents with the imperative model are commonly used by the parents to ask something. Those utterances and speech acts are then formulated using informal Bahasa Indonesia. This is indicated by the linguistic variety of courtesy. In this regard, those utterances and speech acts are marked with the linguistic variants such as speech act which is as well indicated as the sign of respect, in form of modality, attempt and sign of the courtesy using the word politely expressed '*Nak*' meaning that '*kid*'.

In the parents' utterance and speech act especially in a family, those utterances and speech acts used are commonly the imperative models with the characteristic considered normal and polite and this is utilized as the means for parents to ask something to their children.

The use of those utterances and speech acts tend to show the creation of harmonious relationship and the mutual understanding achievement. This in shown by the sample below:

2. I: Please give me the bowl! (a)
 A: Please wait will you? (b)
 I: Please pour it here, kid!(c) (WTTOT.IMP. Mnr.

Dt 2.) (Context: uttered by the mother to the children when asked to help her when helping her children doing the project)

Those utterances and speech acts by the mother such as in the items 2 (a) constitutes utterances and speech acts with the direct imperative using literal meaning. This is aimed to ask something directly. In this case, the mother used the utterances and speech acts to ask for the child to take the bowl needed in making the project. This is happened as well in the item 2 (c) the mother asked directly to the child to pour out something i.e. the materials for making the project in the place told by the mother.

In a family context, the use of those utterances and speech acts are typically imperative and considered normal. Meaning that the mother uses those utterances and speech acts to say the request according to the authorized status, task, and the obligation when being in the family. In this regard, the mother possesses the task and the obligation to help the children in the process of getting the project done. In running the task and the obligation, the mother with higher status than the children is allowed to order something top the children and this is considered normal and usual.

The imperative model of speech act or utterance used by the mother to ask for something is considered polite still. In this regard, those utterances and speech acts are formulated by the parents using informal Indonesian Language which is indicated or marked by the use of trial modality. Just like the utterances and speech acts 9 (a and c) along with the use

of greeting or calling a children 'Nak'. The use of Bahasa Indonesia with those characteristics, utterances and speech acts in imperative model seemingly tries to soften the request. This request is asked by the mother toward the children is considered as the soft and polite request. Thus, the utterances and speech acts with the declarative model of requesting something stated by the parents to the children is deemed polite and soft. Meaning that the use of those utterances and speech acts is profitable, saving the image, or showing the respect to the teachers.

The character values contained in the utterance above is considered creative. It is said so as in the part above the speaker or talkers with the opponent of the talker have done such creative projects.

C. The Utterance and Speech Act Using the Interrogative Model

In the conversation between the parents and the children in a family atmosphere the utterances and speech acts using the interrogative model is utilized to insist on something. Those utterances and speech acts use the informal Bahasa Indonesia which is identified by the linguistic form empowered by the use of replacing words or family relation identification in form of greeting like we or kid. The utterances and speech acts are accompanied with the polite tone of language.

In a family context, the utterance in an interrogative model with such characteristics is considered normal, common and polite and used by the parents especially the mother to push something to the children. The use of this again, tends to show a harmonious relationship and mutual understanding achievement. This can be seen from the following item 3 as follows:

3. I: What did you buy just now, kid? (a)

A: (silent..) (b)

I: I said what you bought just now? (c)

A: As usual. (d) (WTTOT. INT. Aqd Data 3.)

(Context: the utterances and speech acts uttered by the mother to find out what was purchased by the child in the school, but the child rejected and then the mother pushed and insisted the children to say the truth of what she has bought)

The utterances and speech acts in the item 3 constitutes the utterance in an interrogative way in indirect model meaning in the literal way. The utterances and speech acts are used by the mother to enquire whether the child bought something at school. In this context, the child didn't want to tell the truth about the snacks she bought at school but the mother insisted. This can be proven by the interrogative utterance 3 (a) and (c). The similar meaning of the questions was repeated by the mother twice. However, the answer was not really sportive to tell the truth.

In such conversation, the utterance can mean interrogative which is used to push and insist the child is categorized as normal and usual. Meaning that the mother has shown the attention toward the children. Giving the attention toward the children is indeed one of the duties and responsibilities of the mother.

The utterances and speech acts used by the mother to insist the children are categorized polite. The language used is the informal Bahasa Indonesia indicated by the mark or indication of courtesy or hospitality of the honorific relative relation for instance *ki-* and other like *Nak (Kid)*. This is as well applied to the attitude of the children who didn't answer the question of the mother as what stated in the item 3 (b). Silence is one of the strategies of polite communication. The utterances and speech acts is such an opportunity to create the harmonious relationship, can take or keep the good image of the opponent of the talker, as well as ease us to have mutual understanding.

The values of the character within the utterances and speech acts mentioned above are honesty. It is said so that based on the utterance of the parents it seems that parents requesting the children to say something honest about the things that will be bought in the school.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The implementation of the utterances and speech acts by the parents toward the children in the regency of Bulukumba show the pattern of the conversation with the characteristics and the models are as follows: 1) declarative to formulate, declarative to request, 2) imperative to order, and 3) interrogative to insist. This is in line with the statements by Rahim (2008:33) who said that based on the survival or in survival of the communicative action, a sentence can be categorized into 3 (three): 1) declarative, 2) imperative, 3) interrogative.

Based on the data researched it was found that there were 3 kinds of character that the parents will shape based on the speech they utter namely: 1) creative character, 2) friendly and communicative, 3) honest. The utterances and speech uttered by the parents are always hoped or expected to be positive and possess values and character. Kamarudiin, et al (2010, p.74) stated that in order to create a strong nation then education through character education needs to be imprinted in the main character, one of them is friendliness or kindness, tend to try something new perseverance, honest or good judgment.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of the utterances and speech acts by the parents as the media or means to shape the character of the children is in form of declarative way i.e. to order containing the values of honest character, imperative words and

action, used to express the values of friendly and communicative character, and the utterances and speech acts with the interrogative model in order to push or insist which possess the positive character like being honest

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Cultivation of Translation Competence — A Study on Translation Teaching in College English Teaching in Leshan Normal University, Sichuan, China

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Abstract—The paper probes into the translation competence of non-English majors in college English study, based on a study carried out in Leshan Normal University in terms of translation teaching in college English teaching. Questionnaires on EFL teachers and students as well as data analysis are implemented with an aim to find out the current problems of translation teaching in college English and non-English majors' translation competence. Based on the problems, the author draws the conclusions and raises some suggestions, trying to help non-English majors to improve their translation competence and also to help EFL teachers to perfect their teaching approaches in translation teaching. The paper's findings are supposed to not only apply to Leshan Normal University but also apply to other colleges and universities in China.

Index Terms—translation competence, College English teaching, translation teaching; cultivation

I. INTRODUCTION

With the development of globalization, English is more and more commonly used in all sectors of society in China. And more and more students, especially college students, are making efforts to improve their English. For non-English majors in Chinese colleges and universities, translation competence is a good proof to show their comprehensive abilities of English. The command of translation competence decides one's ability to get information, to communicate with others as well as reading comprehension to the articles. In the process of translation, all skills such as listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill and writing skill are involved. Thus, it is of necessity to improve non-English majors' translation competence. In order to do this job, the current problems in translation teaching need to be found out in the first place. Based on a study carried out in Leshan Normal University, the paper is not only to find the current problems existing in translation teaching, but also to give advice to EFL teachers in teaching approaches.

II. PREVIOUS STUDIES OF TRANSLATION TEACHING

In his book *Beyond the Ivory Tower: Rethinking Translation Pedagogy*, Baer & Koby (2003) made a detailed analysis and interpretation about such elements on translation teaching as translation theory, translation evaluation, cultural differences, translation progress, and further discussed some approaches to translator training, as well as some of the pedagogical opportunities and changes, etc. Colina (2003) probed into how to put the translation teaching theories into practice in his book *Translation Teaching from Research to the Classroom: A Handbook for Teachers*, with a hope to find an appropriate way for translation teachers to improve their translation teaching. In addition, Gonzalez Davies (2004), in his book *Multiple Voices in the Translation Classroom: Activities, Task and Projects*, provided us with great teaching ideas which is able to be used to various learning environments and under different language contexts, based on Humanistic, Communicative and Socio-constructivist theories. Clear goals are set up in the book for the students' activities in their translation learning process like making decisions and communicating with one another, which begin from the most fundamental level of the word to the more complicated level of phrases, syntax and passages, and finally to the most difficult level of cultural clashes. The book is not only of great interest to all foreign language teachers and translation teachers who would like to combine translation into their classes, but also of big interest to those English majors who want to become teachers after graduation, and to those educators or administrators who are thinking about devising a new translation program.

Domestically, a lot of studies and researches on translation teaching have been done by language experts and teachers in China, especially after the increasing role of English in everyday life. With the further studies and researches of translation, scholars begin to be aware of the significance of translation to English competence. There is an important

book that need to be mentioned, that is *Translation Teaching and Research in China* written by Mu Lei (1999), which analyzed in a systematical way the status quo of Chinese translation teaching in the aspect of discipline construction, curriculum designing, textbook construction, teachers training, teaching approaches, interpretation teaching, translation test and teaching research, etc. And the book has stirred up the interests of scholars and educators in translation teaching, encouraging more and more EFL teachers to make further research about the translation teaching reform. In his paper *Foreign Language Education: Translation Teaching Reform Need Reinforcement in New Century* published in *Foreign language Research*, Xu Jun (2000) stressed the necessity of reform in translation teaching in China. In addition, when it comes to translation tests, Chen Xiaowei (2002) analyzed the common mistakes and errors that are often made by the students in translation parts in English tests like TEM-8, in her paper *Some Reflections on the Translations Produced by TEM-8 Candidates* (published in *Chinese Translators Journal*). Besides, she pointed out the significance of translation and further put forward advice for the translation reform.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The author implemented the research from September 2016 to January 2017 in Leshan Normal University, Sichuan Province, China. And the research is done through the following four stages: stage one is questionnaire design and subjects selection; stage two is questionnaires survey and data recollection as well as some interviews with the EFL teachers; the third stage is data analysis by SPSS 13.0; and the final stage is reaching conclusion and composing research paper.

Research Subjects

In the research, for students' part, two hundred and fifty second-year non-English majors from Leshan Normal University were selected at random as the research subjects, who came from different colleges including College of Chinese, College of Computer, College of Mathematics and Information, and College of Economics, etc. The reason why the author chose these colleges is that English level of the students from these colleges are comparatively good than other non-English majors from colleges of PE, college of Art or college of Music, etc.

And for teachers' part, 30 EFL teachers who teach non-English majors are chosen to conduct the research. Since the author is the colleague of all the subjects, it is very convenient to carry out questionnaire survey and the findings of data analysis can be further certified by causal talks and interviews.

Research Questions

The research questions about the English translation teaching and the student's translation competence are listed as follows:

For teachers:

1. What are the majors of teachers? Are they majored in translation?
2. What are their general view of English translation?
3. Is it necessary to put translation into English test? If it is necessary, what is the weight of translation in tests?
4. What are the translation teaching theories and approaches adopted by the teachers? Do they introduce them to the students?
5. What is the importance of translation teaching in college English?
6. What are decisive factors in translation teaching?

For students:

1. Can translation competence improve your English a lot?
2. What kind of translation theory do you know?
3. What are the problems and difficulties in translation learning?
4. What are important factors in translation?
5. What are suggestions to teachers in translation teaching?
6. Is translation indispensable in English tests?

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaires for both teachers and students have ten multiple-choice questions respectively. The questionnaires for the students include three parts: basic translation competence, attitudes towards translation and main problems in translation learning. The questionnaires for the teachers contain three parts: experience on translation teaching, translation theories and teaching approaches, decisive factors in translation.

Procedures

Firstly, the author gave questionnaires to 50 students and 5 teachers as a pretest to find the possible problems which may appear in the survey. Then the main study was implemented and all the questionnaires were handed out to all two hundred and fifty research subjects during their English class with the aid of their English teachers who told all the subjects that they should complete the questionnaires conscientiously, honestly on their own without signing their names on the questionnaires within fifteen minutes. Later, all the 30 EFL teachers finish the questionnaires and some causal talks and interviews were done so as to improve the accuracy and validity.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

When all the questionnaires are finished, the author recollected them and input the data into computers for further study and analysis. Specifically, for students' part, two hundred and forty five valid questionnaires were recollected, and

the other five were invalid for three subjects failed to complete all the questions and the other two wrote more choices than required; and for EFL teachers' part, all 30 valid questionnaires were recollected. With the help of the SPSS 13.0, the author analyzed the valid data. Besides, in the process of data analysis the author talked casually with some teachers who did the survey and carried out some short interviews with them as well, with an aim to understanding the results better and to certifying the validity of the results, and with an effort to find more problems in their translation teaching.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

Findings in the Aspect of Teachers

1. The research shows that most of the EFL teachers who did the questionnaires are not majored in translation. So in this sense, they are not very competent in teaching translation. Even the teachers need training in terms of translation strategies and skills. And this job is a long-term and tough one in that the teaching tasks are great burdens to the teachers who can hardly find time pursuing further training. Teachers' professional development is of great importance to the translation teaching and learning.

2. The research shows that most of the EFL teachers who did the questionnaires strongly hold the opinion that it is necessary put translation into English tests because the translation competence is a good proof for the students' comprehensive abilities in English. And further, most of the teachers advocate that the translation's weight in English tests should be raised in various kinds of form and even translation theories are tested in order to improve the students' theoretical knowledge.

3. The research shows that most of the EFL teachers who did the questionnaires attach great importance to translation theories. But in practical teaching, due to the limited English level and limited class time of non-English majors, they only introduce some methods, or techniques of translation to the students, which can hardly be called translation theories. Therefore, the teachers suggest that the school should offer translation as optional courses for those non-English majors who are interested in English translation.

4. The research shows that most of the EFL teachers who did the questionnaires firmly believe that translation is of substantial importance in their English teaching in that translation competence has a positive influence on other English abilities like listening, speaking, reading and writing. Besides translation exercises related to College English Test in which translation is tested, the teachers often provide other suitable materials for students to practice translation in their English classes.

5. The research shows that most of the EFL teachers who did the questionnaires maintain that cultural knowledge and translation skills are decisive factors in translation learning and teaching. Besides, comprehension of the source language is also important, which requires the students' vocabulary and reading competence. And further, the teachers suggest the students should practice a lot in translation so that they can master well transfer from source language to target language.

Findings in the Aspect of Students

1. The research shows that most of the non-English majors who did the questionnaires agree on that translation competence can reflect their English proficiency and translation can effectively improve their English. But on the other hand, most of the students are not confident about their translation competence so they spend less time in translation practice, which affects their English competence to a certain degree.

2. The research shows that most of the non-English majors who did the questionnaires fail to know translation theories, and probably are aware of some translation skills. They further point out that in their English class the teachers just ask them to do translation of new words or simple sentences, while for difficult sentences the teachers just give them translation answers directly. Thus, it is obvious that translation is just used as a tool to aid the teaching and the students do not put emphasis on translation theories.

3. The research shows that most of the non-English majors who did the questionnaires often have such problems and difficulties as lack of sufficient vocabulary and cultural knowledge in the process of translation. What's more, half of the students admit that they often feel difficult to understand the source language while another half of students acknowledge that they lack certain translation skills to translate long sentences and passages.

4. The research shows that most of the non-English majors who did the questionnaires regard vocabulary and grammar as the most decisive factors in translation practice. For non-English majors, it is understandable for them to ignore the importance of translation theories and cultural knowledge. In their mind, if they can know every word, every grammar, they can do the translation. Thus, the wrong belief need to be corrected in that translation is not merely a transfer from one language to another.

5. The research shows that most of the non-English majors who did the questionnaires would hope EFL teachers to introduce more materials related to their majors in translation practice rather than translation materials in tests like CET. From this aspect, it is clear that non-English majors study English out of their interest since the performance in English tests is not to decide whether they can graduate smoothly.

6. The research shows that most of the non-English majors who did the questionnaires think translation should not be a must, but a plus to English tests in that both translation and composition take a lot of time and they don't know how to prepare for it for it calls for a lot of practice. From this aspect, it is evident that the students still regard translation part as a difficult one and they feel reluctant to practice translation in their English study.

V. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the author can get some implications as follows:

1. Cultivation of awareness and curiosity: There is no denying that the time for non-English majors to learn English, compared with the English majors, is limited. So the EFL teachers should try every means to make non-English majors aware of the importance of translation competence and arouse non-English majors' curiosity to spend more time in translation study. Only in this way can non-English majors take the initiative to find more translation materials for practice in their spare time, which will do them good in improving translation competence.

2. Curriculum adjustment of translation course: From the research, the author finds it necessary to adjust our existing curriculum of translation course so as to improve translation teaching. In Leshan Normal University, translation is not an individual course for non-English majors, but one part in the course of College English, which definitely fails to arouse non-English major' concern and curiosity. Therefore, it is high time that translation course was set up as optional course for non-English majors. Only in this way can those who are interested in translation are well-trained. To be a good translator, one must do a lot of translation practice and read a great deal of books. Only in specified translation course, the EFL teachers can assign more books related to translation to non-English majors.

3. Adjustment of translation exercises and translation tests: Based on the research findings, the author finds that the percentage of translation in the tests like CET-4 or CET-6 and that of translation exercises in the textbooks need to be raised up. Only in this way can the non-English majors really realize the importance of translation in their English study in that translation competence is an integrated competence of reading comprehension, language mastery, and cultural knowledge as well as composition skills.

4. Diversity of teaching materials: Based on the research findings, the author finds that it is beneficial for the EFL teachers to adopt proper materials in their translation teaching. With the development of globalization and the explosion of knowledge in this information society, the non-English majors have to be enriched in their knowledge. So they need to do a diverse range of translation materials. Further, to learn more and more about less and less is a must. Therefore, students with different majors should practice translation in certain fields. It is highly recommended that EFL teachers should cater to this need. In their translation teaching, they should choose special materials according to different students with different majors, not just to arouse the curiosity but also to meet the demand.

5. Variety of teaching activities: Based on the research findings, the author finds that it is necessary for the EFL teachers to adopt different teaching activities in their translation class. The EFL teachers should try to create a students-centered translation class instead of teacher-centered class. In translation class, the EFL teachers should not just ask the students to translate and then give the answers. Instead, they should adopt situational teaching method. For instance, they can take the students out of class to find signals and signs in the city for practice, which can not only arouse non-English majors' interest but also improve their translation competence.

6. Students' initiative in translation study. Based on the research findings, the author finds that the non-English majors' initiative in translation study matters a lot. In the first place, the students should establish confidence of translation, not just by teachers' help but by themselves. Then, to find suitable materials that are to their like is a good way for non-English majors. Finally, there are a lot of useful mobile-phone software and available tools on the internet that can help non-English majors a lot in improving their translation competence so long as they can use the ways in a right way.

VI. CONCLUSION

It is widely acknowledged that some aspects in translation competence like psychological factors, physical conditions and cognitive ability are something people are born with, which plays a vital role in deciding whether he or she can develop into a great translator. But for ordinary translators, bilingual competence, professional knowledge, and translation skills and strategies, as well as practical translation matter more than those inborn factors. Therefore, most of people who are interested in translation have potential to improve their translation competence. And it is necessary to develop the translation competence by language training, classroom teaching and autonomous learning by the students at the same time. However, the translation teaching is not enjoying enough concern in college English teaching in most colleges and universities and this job still has a long way to go. On one hand, the administrative sections of education need to make changes in many aspects especially in the aspect of curriculum setting and tests adjustment, as well as training teachers for specialized translation strategies and skills. And on the other hand, both teachers and students should make joint efforts in translation teaching and learning under the guidance of the motto: "Interest is the best teacher."; "Practice makes perfect." Only in this way can we see the rosy aspect of improved translation teaching and cultivated translation competence.

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Do Different Instruction Modalities Matter? Exploring the Influence of Concept Mapping and Translation Strategies Instruction on the Reading Comprehension Ability of Adult EFL Learners

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Abstract—The present study was an attempt to compare the effect of concept mapping strategy instruction and translation strategy instruction on the reading comprehension ability of the Iranian EFL learners. To do so, 90 EFL learners at the intermediate level studying in a language institute in Ardabil, north Iran were randomly assigned into three equal groups (concept map, translation and control). Having taken a reading pretest, the participants in experimental groups were instructed using mentioned strategies whereas the control group learners were taught the same content with no strategies integrated. Results of analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) revealed that the participants in the experimental groups significantly outperformed the participants in the control group, suggesting that the application of concept mapping and translation strategy training can generate more positive effect on the reading comprehension ability of the learners. Also, the findings of the study indicated that the concept mapping group outperformed the translation strategy group on the reading posttest. Pedagogical implications and suggestions of the study will be discussed.

Index Terms—concept mapping strategy, strategy-based instruction, translation strategy, reading comprehension, EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the most significant source of information access in an EFL situation (Crystal, 1996). As Swalander and Taube (2007) maintain "good reading ability is the key to success in educational settings and this is why researchers try to find effective educational and psychological variables that can explain variations in reading ability and academic achievement" (p. 207). The literature on reading comprehension skill abounds studies which aim at integrating different teaching modalities to enhance the comprehension ability of EFL learners. Strategies-based instruction (SBI), in which learners get familiarize with techniques and procedures to facilitate making sense out of a text, is now widely assumed to boost the reading ability of second language learners. Antoniou and Souvignier (2007, p. 43) maintain that "effective reading requires the use of strategies that are explicitly taught". It could be argued that learners are most successful when their instructors employ different strategies to help them read and write challenging texts.

Although numerous studies have investigated and categorized the types of learning strategies employed by efficient language learners, 'there have been fewer studies focusing on the second goal of trying to teach language learning strategies in classroom settings (Chamot, 2005). One such strategy, which has attracted the reading researchers' attention, is concept mapping. In fact, the effect of concept mapping strategy instruction on the reading comprehension ability of the EFL learners has been the home of choice for ELT researchers since 1980s (Talebinejad & Mousapour Negari, 2007). The positive effect of concept mapping instruction on different educational outcomes has been shown by many studies (Chularut & DeBacker, 2004; Liu, Chen & Chang, 2010; Ojima, 2006; Snead & Wanda, 2004). There are, however, few studies investigating the effect of concept mapping on reading comprehension of EFL learners.

In a study by Chularut and DeBacker (2004), the effect of concept mapping on academic achievement, self-efficacy, and self-regulation of students in English classes as a second language was investigated. The subjects of the study were college and high school students, who enrolled for English classes. The findings of the study showed that the group of students who used concept mapping achieved higher scores in English achievement, self-efficacy, and self-regulation in comparison to control group (as cited in Salehi, Jahandar, & Khodabandehlou, 2013).

Vakilifard and Armand (2006) studied the effect of concept map on French (as L2) reading comprehension. The findings of this study showed that the experimental group did better in reading comprehension in comparison to control group.

Moreira and Moreira (2011) used concept mapping in a research in foreign language class as an instrument for context comprehension of course books and achieving meaningful learning. The findings of the study showed that concept mapping can effectively lead to meaningful learning and students got self-confidence in transferring the concept to new situations.

Moreover, translation has often been classified as one of the cognitive learning strategies (Chamot, 1987; Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Chamot et al., 1987; O'Malley et al., 1985a; O'Malley et al., 1985b; Oxford, 1990). Chamot (2005) argues that translation could be considered a learning strategy and can affect quality and process of composing essays by the learners. Gómez, López and Marin, (2011) also consider translation as a learning strategy which reduces the learners' stress in reading comprehension activities.

Bassnett (1998) believed that "translation offers a crucial lesson in how to read, since it is a critical way into the text." She saw it as an effective means of forcing students to read texts thoughtfully and to concentrate on the lexical, grammatical and textual levels, and improving general knowledge, while "unveiling students' problems in comprehending (English) texts" (Brini, 2000, p.?). Translation can be a useful tool to analyze comprehension pitfalls, which may lead to problems in discourse processing (Abdrabou, 2003). With respect to empirical studies, Hsieh (2000) found that translation benefited Taiwanese students' English reading in terms of increasing their reading comprehension, reading strategies use, vocabulary learning, and cultural background knowledge. Liao (2006) conducted both quantitative and qualitative surveys on 351 Taiwanese students on their belief about translation. Liao reported participants as believing that translation helped them acquire English language skills like reading, writing, speaking, vocabulary, idioms, and phrases.

Recently, there have been many attempts and researches for improving the situation of learning/teaching English in Iran. However, as Jalilifar (2010) points out, "despite the growing interest in learning English as a foreign language in Iran, students at the college level seem rarely proficient enough to read and comprehend English language texts" (p.98). Due to Iranian learners' problems in comprehending texts, many of them lose their interest in reading English texts and this could lead to their failure in academic English courses. As such, "finding an efficient approach which facilitates learners' learning and helps them comprehend better seems to be quite necessary" (p. 98) (as quoted by Khajavi & Ketabi, 2012).

The present study was motivated by the above mentioned researches on the importance of teaching language learning strategies. More specifically, we intended to see if explicit teaching of "concept mapping" and "translation" strategies. Can pave the way and help the learners better decode the texts. The two mentioned strategies were selected on the assumption that the translation strategy is constantly used in Iranian EFL classes and concept mapping strategy would be a cogent strategy to help foreign language learners sum up English passages and easily appreciate what the gist of reading materials are.

Considering the purpose of the study, the following research questions were formulated.

R.Q.1 Does concept mapping strategy improve reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners?

R.Q.2 Does translation strategy improve reading comprehension ability of the Iranian EFL learners?

R.Q.3 Is reading comprehension ability of the EFL learners differently improved through the concept mapping and translation strategies?

Considering the research questions mentioned above, the following null hypotheses were presented:

H01. Concept mapping strategy does not improve reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners.

H02. Translation strategy does not improve reading comprehension ability of the Iranian EFL learners.

H03. Reading comprehension ability of the EFL learners is not differently improved through the concept mapping and translation strategies.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants of the study were 90 intermediate level male and female students with the age range 18 to 25 in a language institute in Ardabil, Iran. These participants were chosen from a pool of 150 students according to their performance in a sample NELSON proficiency test.

B. Instrumentation

The data for the present study were collected by means of two tests as follows: a NELSON test and a validated researcher-made reading comprehension test which was used as both pre-test and post-test of reading comprehension development.

Based on the scores, 90 students whose scores fell within one standard deviation above and below the mean (19.83 ± 4.29) were selected as the main participants.

The second instrument was a test of reading comprehension (selected from among the reading tests presented in the test manual of the learners' course book). The test was piloted with 30 similar students. The result is represented in Table 2.2. The reliability of the test was 0.83 as measured by KR-21 method. This test served as the post-treatment reading comprehension measure.

C. Procedure

To begin with, Nelson proficiency test was administered and, as mentioned above 90 intermediate learners were randomly divided into three groups. As the treatment in the first experimental group were instructed how to use concept mapping strategies to do reading comprehension tasks. More specifically, the learners were introduced to the nature of concept map as "a special form of a web diagram for exploring knowledge and gathering and sharing information" (Shimerda, 2007, p.118). Then they were asked to employ the five steps of concept mapping strategy on the reading materials. The steps were selected based on Yağmurşahin (2013, p.590).

In the second experimental group, the participants were asked to focus on translation strategies while doing reading comprehension. The learners in this group were expected to translate the given passages prior to answering the comprehension questions or analyzing the texts. The strategies they used were obtained from O'Brien (2011), who considers "translation strategies as basis for cognitive explorations" (p.23) and introduces translation strategies such as equation, substitution, divergence, convergence, amplification, reduction, diffusion, condensation, and reordering.

The learners in the control group did not receive any specific training on the concept mapping or translation strategy trainings; however, they went through the same passages and comprehension questions with the teacher explaining the meaning of unknown words and asking the learners to read aloud as well as paraphrase difficult sentences.. The treatment sessions lasted for 20 sessions and learners in all groups sat the posttest of the study immediately after the last session.

III. DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS

As mentioned above NELSON test was administered to the original pool of the participants to select the intermediate level learners. Table I below shows descriptive statistics for the participants' performance on this test.

TABLE I.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE SCORES ON NELSON TEST

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
NELSON	150	6.0	17.0	23.0	25.44	4.294

Following the proficiency measure, the participating groups sat the pretest of the study. Table II below represents the descriptive statistics for the scores on this test.

TABLE II.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE SCORES ON PRE-TEST

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Translation	30	25.00	1.414	.258
Concept Mapping	30	23.07	1.363	.249
Control	30	26.07	1.363	.249

Once the treatment sessions were over, the participants took the posttest of the study. Table III shows descriptive statistics for the groups' performance on this test.

TABLE III.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR SCORES ON POST-TEST

Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Translation	16.877	.141	16.596	17.158
Concept Mapping	20.532	.135	20.265	20.800
Control	15.942	.132	15.680	16.203

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run to compare the means of the three groups on the post-test of reading comprehension while controlling for possible differences between their entry reading ability. Before running the analysis it was necessary to make sure that the assumptions associated with ANCOVA were met.

A. Assumption of Homogeneity of Variances

As displayed in Table IV, the results of Levene's tests were non-significant ($F(2, 87) = 1.68, P > .05$) meaning that there was not any significant difference between the variances of the groups.

TABLE IV.
TESTING HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES IN POST-TEST SCORES

F	df1	df2	Sig.
1.683	2	87	.192

B. Linear Relationship between the Covariate and Dependent Variable

The linear relationship between the covariate (pre-test) and dependent variable (post-test) was checked through scatter plots drawn for each group. For this assumption to be met, the spread of dots should fall on the diagonal showing no marked rise-and-fall patterns.

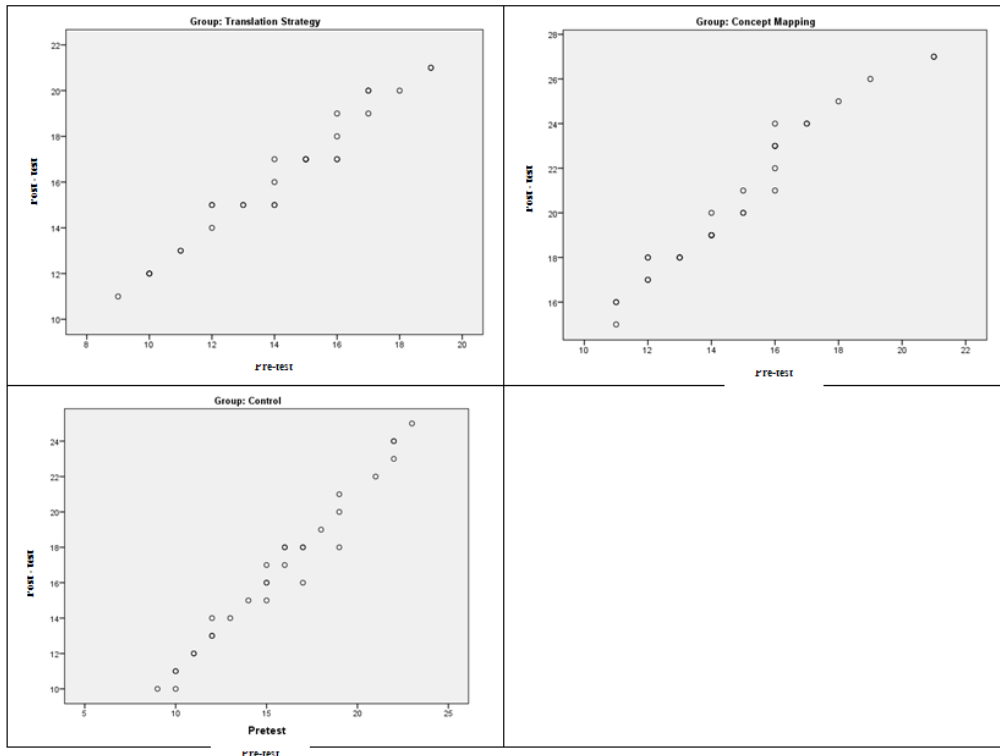


Figure 1. Scatter Plot Representing Testing Assumption of Linearity

C. Assumption of Reliability of the Covariate

The reliability of the pre-test as computed by KR-21 formula turned out to be 0.68, which can be considered as acceptable.

D. Assumption of Homogeneity of Regression Slope

The homogeneity of regression slopes can be probed by a single scatter plot containing all groups. As displayed in Scatter Plot 2 the regression slopes all showed the same trend. These results indicated that the three groups showed homogeneous regression slopes.

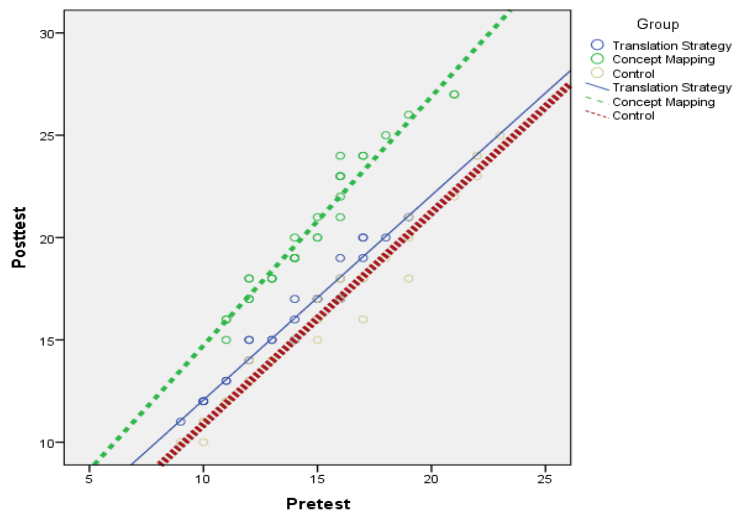


Figure 2. Scatter Plot Representing Testing Assumption of Homogeneity Regression Slope

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run to examine any likely influence of teaching strategies on reading comprehension ability of the learner. Since the sig value corresponding the group in Table V is far below the alpha level

of 0.05, it can be claimed that different interventions have been able to influence the reading comprehension ability of the learners differently ($F(2, 86) = 312.94, P < .05, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = .87$).

TABLE V.
ANCOVA ON THE POST-TEST SCORES

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pre-test	1056.996	1	1056.996	1785.742	.000	.954
Group	370.470	2	185.235	312.945	.000	.879
Error	50.904	86	.592			
Total	29875.000	90				

To find out where the exact differences lie, the post-hoc comparison tests was run to compare the groups two by two (Table VI below) in order to probe the three null-hypotheses raised in this study. The results indicated that:

A: There was a significant difference between the mean scores of the Concept Mapping ($M = 20.53$) and control group ($M = 15.94; MD = 4.59, P < .05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that the first null-hypothesis stating that "concept mapping strategy did not improve reading comprehension ability of Iranian L2 learners" was rejected. The Concept Mapping group outperformed the control group on the post-test of reading comprehension after controlling for possible effects of the pre-test.

TABLE VI.
POST-HOC COMPARISONS

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Translation	Control	.935*	.195	.000	.460	1.410
Concept Mapping	Translation	3.655*	.196	.000	3.178	4.133
	Control	4.591*	.186	.000	4.137	5.044

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

B: There was a significant difference between the mean scores of the Translation Strategy ($M = 16.87$) and control group ($M = 15.94; MD = .93, P < .05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that the second null-hypothesis as "translation strategy did not improve reading comprehension ability of Iranian L2 learners" was rejected. The Translation Strategy group outperformed the control group on the post-test of reading comprehension after controlling for possible effects of the pre-test.

C: There was a significant difference between the mean scores of the Concept Mapping ($M = 20.53$) and Translation Strategy group ($M = 16.87; MD = 3.65, P < .05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that the third null-hypothesis as "reading comprehension ability of the L2 learners did not differentially improve using concept mapping and translation strategies" was rejected. The Concept Mapping group outperformed the Translation Strategy group on the post-test of reading comprehension after controlling for possible effects of the pre-test.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The current study used two strategy-based teaching interventions and examined the reading comprehension development of two groups comparing them against the performance of a third control group. The findings revealed that integrating concept mapping strategies in the process of reading instruction might help facilitate doing reading task and consequently assist retention. It seems that using concept maps can be more promising compared to even translation perhaps because it provokes learners to develop deeper insight into the content as well as linguistic forms assumed to play a role in making sense out of a written text.

The second finding of this research revealed that the translation strategy group outperformed the control group on the post-test of reading comprehension. This also represented that instructing reading through administration of phases of text translation might have the potential to facilitate comprehension. This finding is also supported by the previous research, though most of the researches conducted have not compared the impact of translation strategy training with other strategies used in teaching reading comprehension including concept mapping. Bassnett (1998) argued that translation strategies could increase the learner (translator)'s understanding of the text. Mahmoud (1998) also researched the impact of translation in FL reading comprehension and came to know that translation strategies were a neglected didactic procedure in this regard. He then suggested employing translation as a valuable tool in teaching the foreign language reading comprehension. Azizinezhad (2006) investigated the teachability of translation strategies and came to know that translation strategies could be taught to the learners and this really could help the low level learners come up with sound understanding of the materials they cover, though it could be considered a bit time-consuming. Liao (2006) studied the EFL learners' beliefs about and strategy use of translation in English learning and found that majority of the learners believed that translation strategies could help them improve their understanding of the second / foreign language texts and developing their foreign language.

Another finding of the study emerging from post hoc comparisons of the group performances in posttest depicted that use of concept mapping strategy yielded better results compared to translation strategy. The findings of this study concerning the positive impact of concept mapping strategies on the EFL learners' reading comprehension development support some previous studies (e.g., Clayton, 2006; Deylam Salehi, et al, 2013; Douma, et al, 2009; Edwards, et al, 1983; Gómez, et al, 2011; Grab, 2002; Hadley, 2003). Our findings also corroborate Kalhor and Shakibaei's (2012) finding that categorical facilitation, which is a verbal input device within the body of concept mapping, positively affects L2 vocabulary learning and reading comprehension development in a classroom setting.

In conclusion, the results of the study suggest that use of concept mapping and translation strategies have a direct impact on students' reading comprehension ability and concept mapping seems to be even more beneficial in promoting L2 reading comprehension.

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An Analysis Report of College English Classroom Teaching in the Grading Model

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Abstract—Based on data collected from Grade 2015 and Grade 2016, the present article mainly analyzes current situations of the grading model being implemented in a west provincial university. As frontline teachers, we cannot participate in the decision of which model to use, but can try our best to conduct frequent reflection and make necessary changes in classroom teaching for the good of college students' achievements in English course. Due mostly to the limitations of one teacher's first-hand experience, the research seems hard to hold water, and more are expected to participate in this topic. Only by means of active exploration and generous contributions from all teachers and educators concerned, will China College English be improved and productive in developing all-around talents needed for the realization of Chinese dreams.

Index Terms—grading model, college English, classroom teaching, CET-4

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, more exactly since 1999, with an increased enrollment in universities and colleges throughout China, students present a wider diversity of levels in English proficiency, not only between key universities and common ones, equal level of universities in different provinces or cities, but also within one college or school, or even one major of classes in the same university. As far as I know, quite a number of universities and colleges are still very much dependent of the unitary textbooks though the grading model is underway for non-English major undergraduates. Even for some responsible teachers who adopt flexible methods in classroom teaching, it is far from satisfaction for various levels of learners' English language.

In 2007 in the latest version of College English Curriculum Requirements, State Education Commission proposes that China College English course "should ensure that students at different levels receive adequate training and make improvement in their ability to use English", because not only does the English course provide basic knowledge, but it also is a capacity enhancement course helping students to widen students' horizons and learn about diverse cultures in the world. This point is emphasized in the strategy of "one belt, one road" initiated by President Xi, China should pose a gesture of openness, inclusiveness and diversity to the world. Furthermore, the English language "not only serves as an instrument, but also has humanistic values".

Our university belongs to second-batch universities (common provincial undergraduates universities) with students from 23 provinces and cities in China. The first characteristic determines students' overall lower level of English because in a university characterized by science and engineering higher percentage of students are not ideal in arts subjects like English. And the second point decides students' sharp contrast in individuals' levels of the English language because every province (or some cities) has a slightly different testing system in College Entrance Examination. As a consequence, the thinner the grading standards are, the more efficient the classroom teaching will be, and the better it will do to students' future development in the second language acquisition.

II. REVIEW

In my previous article entitled "The Exploring Practice of Grading Model in College English Teaching", I illustrate three points of drawbacks and limitations presented in the grading model. Besides that the testing before grading is not quite scientific and this model is more exam-oriented as well, the grading teaching can strike students' confidence more than encouragement because current grading method is very rough and even going far from the initial intention of the reformation, failing to take students' learning interests, study motivation and especially their majors and preferences of their future career into consideration.

A. Initial Exploration in Grade 2015

In first semester of Grade 2015, college freshmen are ranked as level A and level B on basis of their scores of a objectively-graded test with a total score of 70 point. In table 1 below, we can see how students are distributed differently. Due to almost close standard (one point or so) of students' results in the grading test, larger numbers of classes are set up for students belonging to science or engineering majors because mostly those students are science students in senior high school, such as College of Science and science students are normally stereotyped as "not good" at language learning. To the contrary, greater numbers of students are in level A classes on account of more arts students' enrollment like School of Economics and Management, and arts students are believed to be smarter at language learning. In addition to that, the advantages of English learning are vividly shown in Item 2 of Table 1, which emphasizes how important solid foundation is, and perfect if coached intensely. Both in the first and second semesters, liberal arts schools such as schools of Economics and Management, Humanities, Politics and Law stay advantageous higher ratio than the average percentage besides an exception in College of Material and Chemical Engineering in the first semester and College of Science in the second semester, which are well worth the applause.

TABLE 1:
CLASS DISTRIBUTIONS OF GRADE 2015

Colleges &.Schools	Item 1		Item 2	
	A	B	1 st Semester	2 nd Semester
Materials and Chemical Engineering	6	7	63 (4 no show)	20.56%(4 no show)
Chemical and Pharmaceutical Engineering	3	2	58.21 (3 no show)	21.05%(2 no show)
Mechanical Engineering	5	5	54.29 (2 no show)	22.64%(2 no show)
Computer Science	4	5	59.7 (1 no show)	22.22%(5 no show)
Architecture Engineering	3	3	56.57 (2 no show)	24.39%(1 no show)
Bio-engineering	4	4	50.17 (4 no show)	20.82%(5 no show)
Automation and Electronic Information Engineering	4	5	55.95 (3 no show)	20.71%(6 no show)
Science	2	4	59.69 (1 no show)	34.19%(1 no show)
Economics and Management	6	5	77.95 (4 no show)	32.76%(6 no show)
Humanities	3	3	62.5 (1 no show)	25.77%(1 no show)
Politics + Law	3	3	67.75 (1 no show)	29.61%(3 no show)
Total	43	46	Average: 60.53	Average: 24.97%

Note: Item 1: the number of classes (level A and level B) in the first and second semester; and Item 2: percentage of students passing CET-4 in the respective college or school, "No show"=be absent from the test, and "no show" students are calculated in the percentage.

Concerning classroom teaching methodologies, the differences are obvious for the two levels of classes. Level A students are trained to take College English Test Band Four (CET-4) in middle December 2015. Thus from September to December, teachers employ the "sea" tactics, which involves tremendous amount of exercises both in class and outside class. Students follow the materials of old exams, doing mountains of exercises and teachers will explain in class. Every class is the same: training listening, doing reading comprehension, and composing essays or practicing translation. What a relief. Students' honest efforts have yielded satisfactory results for half of students at least, and over two-thirds (77.9%) for School of Economics and Management. Level B classes use unitary textbooks in classroom teaching in order to strengthen their basic knowledge.

In the second semester, things become worsening mostly in two aspects as follows. Firstly, level A students feel lost and unfulfilled. In level A 60.94% pass College English Test Band Four (CET-4) in December 2016, achieving their first success in college English study and getting ready to move on to the second goal of English learning, i.e. preparing for CET-6 in the second semester. But teachers don't train them in class because in class less than half or one-third students who fail to pass CET-4. Some teachers may show more sympathy for this part of students, and add training materials to classroom teaching, and some teachers may treat the two parts of students equally and stick to textbooks teaching in class. In this case two worlds of students lose interest and enthusiasm in English learning. As a result most of them fail to fulfill their goals after the second semester ends. The second point goes to level B students. Level B classes are not allowed to take CET-4 in the first semester. Even so, majority of students feel confident and hopeful with teachers' positive encouragement. They are motivated because they are conscious that what's done this semester is to reinforce their basic knowledge and get prepared for CET-4 in the second semester. But the truth is harsh. Altogether in level B there are 2,180 students, and 1,565 students are picked out to take CET-4 in June 2016, according to their scores of final exam papers (Final exam score = 30% class performance + 70% test papers). Obviously classroom environment is filled with complacency and disappointment with "lucky" and "unlucky" in one class. For good of students' test preparation, most teachers adopt tough exercise training in class. Ideally students who win the chance to take the test stay close to teachers and work very hard all the time. But in fact it is not the case. More than half of students give up very soon because of tough boring training over and over again, whereas, those students who don't have the chance to take CET-4, may become deserted, resentful, cynical, or frustrated. Here it is also necessary to bring up the subject of the results of CET-4 shown in Table 1 above. In this semester only College of Science and School of Economics and Management reach over one third of students who pass CET-4, and two other schools (Humanities, Politics + Law) are above the average percentage.

B. Further Improvement in Grade 2016

To change this situation to better, further improvement has been made in Grade 2016. The first semester is very

similar to that in Grade 2015. In this academic year, there is one striking feature worth mentioning. First, the once-known Materials and Chemical Engineering is divided into College of Materials and College of Chemical and Environmental Engineering. To save some resources, the two colleges are put together in the grading model. Plus, to coordinate the steps key discipline construction in our university, two key majors are established respectively: one key major of Polymer Material, Brewage and Accounting, the other being key major of Technology, Process Control, and Electric Automation. After taking a grading test in the first week of entering college, freshmen are set in level A and level B. Teaching strategies are adopted similarly as what's done in 2015 Grade. As is expected, the results of CET-4 are quite satisfactory and encouraging, which means our hard work is paid off. However, if taken a close look at the data shown in table 2 below, two points are quite conspicuous. Point 1, Key majors don't perform to their fullest potential as they are accepted in accordance to the standard of provincial key university in College Entrance Examination. Point 2, science students can also be successful in language learning, which is highlighted by School of Chemical Engineering and School of Science. Let's hope it is not lucky coincidence. To be better-directed in classroom teaching, students are further graded as level A, level B and level C in the second semester (*See Table 2*).

TABLE 2:
CLASS DISTRIBUTIONS OF GRADE 2016

Colleges & Schools	1 st Semester			2 nd Semester		
	Item 1		Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5
	A	B		A	B	C
Materials (Major of Polymer Material excluded) + Chemical and Environmental Engineering (Major of Technology excluded)	3	4	53.59 (1 no show)	2	3	2
Chemical Engineering	3	3	64.04 (1 no show)	1	3	2
Mechanical Engineering (Major of Process Control excluded)	3	6	50 (2 no show)	1	5	2
Computer Science	4	5	50.68 (2 no show)	2	5	2
Civil Engineering	3	2	60.73	2	2	1
Bio-engineering (Major of Brewage excluded)	3	5	62.62	2	4	2
Automation and Electronic Information Engineering (Major of Electric Automation excluded)	3	6	58.15 (1 no show)	2	4	3
Science	2	4	65.93 (1 no show)	1	3	2
Economics	3	2	71.98	2	2	1
Management (Major of Accounting excluded)	3	3	80.66 (2 no show)	2	3	1
Humanities	4	2	63.67	3	2	1
Politics + Law	3	3	60.64	2	3	1
Keys majors of Technology + Process Control + Electric Automation	3	2	68.02	2	2	1
Keys majors of Polymer Material + Brewage + Accounting	4	2	73.85 (1 no show)	3	3	0
Total	44	49	Average: 63.18	27	44	21

Note: Item 1: the number of classes (level A and level B) in the first semester; Item 2: percentage of students passing CET-4 in the respective college or school, "No show" = be absent from the test; and Item 3, ("no show" students are calculated in the percentage); Item 4 and Item 5: the number of classes (level A, level B and level C) in the second semester.

Level A are students who success in passing CET-4, level B students are taking CET-4 in June 2016, and level C are students who are not allowed to take CET-4 because of their lower scores in final exam papers of first semester. Specifically there are two sub-bands in level B. Level B1 is made up of students who belong to level A in the first semester but fail to pass CET-4 in December 2016, while level B2 are students who are in level B in the first semester and are selected to take CET-4 this semester. Plus there is one point in common worth mentioning: some students choose to be absent from CET-4, while some are eager to have a try but are not qualified. Very soon after the day of CET-4, "no show" students will be questioned routinely by their teachers "why?" The usual answer may be that "they are not quite confident", "they are not yet ready", or something like that. The trust might be "no show" students are not that bad and very likely to pass CET-4 successfully for rare cases. What a pity. They just don't give themselves chances to try. In this case, educational institutions may think about devising some punishment regulations for those irresponsible students. Admittedly pointing out shortcomings doesn't mean to reject this active exploration completely or negates its advantages in advancing college English reformation, but is intended to devise next course of direction.

Here comes a question: what can teachers do to improve the efficiency of classroom teaching? How can teachers satisfy different levels of students for the good of their English study? Obviously for level A, students don't have too much burden to prepare College English Test Band Six as they know CET-6 is much harder than CET-6 and it takes time and patience. What they are most concerned about is to train their practical capacity in the English language use. With teachers' proper direction and students' self-reflection, majority of level B students are confident of keeping up working hard and trying the second time in June 2017. Thus what they care about most in class is to put most trust

possible on classroom instruction and their abundant exercises after class. Last but not the least, level C students are most fragile. If taught something difficult, they might give up easily; whereas, if taught in a simple way, they might not be challenged to their potentials, which does no good for their higher stage of English learning.

III. ANALYSIS

China College English is a regular but challenging mission, so is classroom teaching for frontline teachers. Its further reformation requires people engaging in teaching (or education) profession to possess teachers' ethics and morals, and most important of all, practice the spirits of commitment, dedication, exploration and innovation on the jobs. Although the grading teaching model is a rewarding exploration in China college English reformation, there are some problems worth mentioning in the expectation that educational institutions are responding promptly so as to make necessary changes as soon as possible.

A. Overburdened Faculty Members

Yesterday when preparing for lessons for level B classes, I was very much touched by a passage in Depth Reading of Reading Comprehension in old CET-4 test papers. It tells "... Class attendance, educational success, student happiness and well-being might be improved by cutting down the bureaucratic mechanisms and meetings, and instead hiring an army of good teachers. It is bearable to attend some regular meetings which usually are not constructive with ordinary teachers sitting listening no more than half an hour. The faculty meeting is more like some notices repeated and emphasized face to face. The passage continues, "Teachers are not people who are great at and consumed by research and happen to appear in a classroom." The requirement of research is what causes faculty members a continuous headache: all teachers are required to do researches, which accounts for quite a percentage in evaluating whether he or she is an excellent one in annual assessment, e.g. How many articles are published in state core journals? How much is invested or produced in a research project? By this standard efforts and achievements in classroom teaching play a role of a relatively minimal reference. Also as is mentioned in the passage above, "Good teaching and research are not exclusive, but they are not automatic companions." Furthermore, Andrew Johnson (2015) illustrates via linkedin shares, teaching is "science in that there are strategies and practices that a body of research has shown to be effective in enhancing learning.", "an art in that teachers must bring themselves fully into their teaching and is "a craft is a skill or set of skills learned through experience." Moreover, a third point is thought-provoking too. Both teachers and students are suffered from very large sizes of classes. From Table 3, we can see in Grade 2015, the number of students are normally assigned in classes A or B ranging from 60 to 69. But in Grade 2016, in the first semester there are numbers of classes with students' number ranging from 70 and 79, and exceeding 80 in one class; what's worse, in the second semester all levels of classes expand. Among the number of students above 70, there are seven level A classes, eight level B classes and twelve level C classes. In such huge numbers of classes, it is really not an easy cake to organize effective class activities each time. Convincing reasons to explain large classes can be shortages of increased enrollments year by year and lacks of qualified good teachers. In Grade 2015 twenty-five English teachers undertake the task of English course for non-English majors freshmen. In the first semester of Grade 2016 there are twenty-nine teachers and in the second semester there are thirty-one teachers for freshmen' teaching task.

TABLE 3:
THE NUMBER OF CLASSES

Items	Grade 2015		Grade 2016				
	1 st + 2 nd Semesters		1 st Semester		2 nd Semester		
	A	B	A	B	A	B	C
99~90					1	1	1
89~80				1	2	1	4
79~70		7	6	3	4	6	7
69~60	43	34	38	45	10	18	5
59~50		5			10	15	2
49~40						3	2

Note: Items, the number of students in one English class. Column "A", "B", or "C" shows the number of classes in certain number of students in one class.

Anyone with common sense in foreign language learning can understand this kind of classroom teaching involves numerous in-class practice which requires teachers' individual instruction in most cases. Specifically teachers are supposed to correct students pronunciation, read their compositions, test their listening skills in listening and speaking; knowing every student' processes of learning activities and their increment of knowledge and skills. All in all, students, parents, universities and society ideally expect teachers to take full responsibility. But in such larger classes, what's the best of doing this? One more point may account for something. Currently in our university administrative staff noticeably outnumber classroom teachers in proportion to the amount of workload. As is stated in the reading passage above, "If we replaced half of our administrative staff with classroom teachers, we might actually get a majority of our classes back to 20 or fewer students per teacher." In such a case, better qualities of teachers are in most need. Why are there so many students in one class? One more truth will be revealed in the following.

B. *Lack of Necessary Language Teaching Equipment*

In freshmen campus of our university (40mins' commuting bus journey from main university in city) there are four language labs for 4,946 undergraduates of freshmen year in Grade 2015 and 5,976 (undergraduates of freshmen year) in Grade 2016. Obviously it is not realistic to schedule all classes in such laboratories. The second option is to use networked-computer classrooms (multimedia), however, less than half of classrooms are multimedia which satisfy the needs of all courses like computer science for non-computer majors, English for non-English majors, maths for non-maths majors, and just to name a few. The eclectic strategy is to schedule one time of English classes to the multimedia classroom every week. In our university each class period lasts 45 minutes. Usually there are two class periods each time for every course. As to English course, non-English undergraduates have four class periods (two times of 2/45-mins) every week. To remedy the shortage of classroom resources, both teachers and students have tight schedules of classes. What's more, larger sizes of classes do the trick.

Teachers are very adaptive, too. When teaching activities are conducted in traditional classrooms where textbooks, chalk and blackboard are available, teachers talk a lot as hard-working students are much dependent of taking abundant notes and feel fulfilled after class. As we know, teachers' knowledge is far too limited especially in the ages of information technologies. Tremendous amount of resources are just within one click's away. When in multimedia classrooms teachers play relevant video clips of world people, cultures, customs, festivals, music and movies, and show learning strategies in foreign language, college life or study around the globe while students watch, listen, laugh or talk. English classes can be very interesting and beneficial. Also the Requirements (2007) recommend, "In view of the marked increase in student enrollments and the relatively limited resources, colleges and universities should remould the existing unitary teacher-centered pattern of language teaching by introducing computer- and classroom-based teaching models."

C. *Relation to High School Teaching Styles*

Weeks ago on our school commuting bus I happened to sit next to a teacher of Japanese who I had been thinking about talking to him for some time. Though we are colleagues in School of Foreign Languages in our university, we have few chances to meet in person. I asked him a long-prepared question, "How can Japanese majors study well enough to seek employment after four years of university study since they haven't learned Japanese before college? You know, we English teachers feel a headache that non-English majors' English seems to stay at the same level though they have learned at least six years before college and college teachers are trying all means to help." "Just think and reexamine styles in teaching and learning. How do high school teachers teach English? For what do high school students study hard at English? You can also think about how you learned English back in high school? And upon entering college as English major, how did you train yours skills in English?" After those questions, the Japanese teacher explained how teaches Japanese majors. The talk illuminates me! Before college, junior and senior high school schools are pouring a wealth of time, energy and attention to this "most important" required course in entrance exams to next stage of education. For this topic, in my article entitled "*Rethinking the Way out for College English Teaching ---After China's Reform in National College Entrance Exam in English*" published in 2014, I talk about some in relation to "gaokao" reform in College Entrance Examination in English course. To increase students' scores in corresponding exams (e.g. Senior High Entrance Examination, CEE), teachers' usual practice is to adopt "sea" tactics: design numerous exercises in knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, reading passages, and essay-writing, which are largely based on researches of old entrance exams. From this point we can see teachers are like a strategist besides being a scientist, artist and craftsman/woman. Few teachers are concerned about students' development of comprehensive skills especially in practical use. Fortunately both in SHEE and CEE, listening comprehension is included in the test exercises. Teachers are paying some attention to it. In this way speaking skills are suggested being included in all levels of entrance examinations. Fairly speaking, under the pressure of examination-oriented education system, teachers are not the only party to be blamed or even shoulder the responsibility.

Starting from junior high school, students depend heavily on teachers' inculcation of knowledge and thus, become silent learners and responsible note-takers. Under this circumstance, neither educators nor the educated take time to conduct emotional communication and hearty exchanges. The most forceful standard is by scores in entrance examinations. Over time students have developed some old habits difficult to change when at college where they are liberated from stressful entrance exams and are encouraged to develop their personal interests in such relatively relaxing learning environment. Responsible college English teachers are conscious of the importance of strengthening students' communicative competency and increasing their cultural awareness and literacy for the benefits of their future career. Though time and chances are given for students to participate, few students (even some "brilliant" students in English course) participate in class discussion. Normally students who are willing to stand up and take part in class activities are "average-level", which sometimes put teachers in a dilemma because teachers promise to reward "active" students with extra scores in final exam but their class contributions are not good enough to be rewarded except for their courage in "speaking" English, whereas, "brilliant" students don't care about extra awards because they can achieve good grades in test papers. Seriously speaking, a tough mission presents in front of classroom teachers. As a strategist to help students to cope with numerous tests or exams in their learning career, college English teachers are expected to design some efficient strategies to arouse students' enthusiasm, stimulate their motivation and facilitate their efficacy in classroom

teaching.

IV. CONCLUSION

From what's discussed above, we can conclude as follows. To start with we are implementing the grading model for the good of avoiding disadvantages of traditional mod based on natural classed. When the new model is underway, we realize it is not thin enough to place students according to their specific majors of different colleges or schools because of numerous intangible things involved and lack of teaching resources like teachers and computer-based classrooms. On the conditions of the present grading model and its existing resources, college teachers are confronted with a tough task to devise some effective methods for the benefits of college English learners.

College English education is a long-term task of exploration, experiment and reformation. As an old Chinese proverb from "Springs and Autumns of Master Lü" goes, "Running water doesn't stink and a moving hinge doesn't stick"(or literally "Running is never stale and a door-hinge never gets worm-eaten." or a rolling stone gathers no moss.). "Currently the grading model has become a popular mainstream in college English teaching"(Haixiao Wang, 2009). Still there are some worth our attention and reflection. For one thing, we frontline teachers should be more forward-looking and innovative in using individual talents to teach and achieve the goals of the course. For another, educational institutions should make timely changes of concepts, creating favorable conditions possible for actual classroom teaching, such as increasing more computer-based classrooms and hiring more highly-skilled classroom teachers. For the third, English testing systems at all levels are in need of necessary modifications so that classroom teaching can be improved correspondingly. Whatever is done, it is for the good of an overall quality of higher education. Last but not the least, the grading model seems not to be an ideal one, it is needed to keep on experimenting till a better one is found.

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The Impact of Explicit Integrated Strategies Instruction on IELTS Applicants' Listening Comprehension

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Abstract—Listeners in a foreign language will not be able to activate the full range of strategies available to a native speaker. Because of variables such as language proficiency, motivation, age, aptitude and the like, they will be at various stages of approximation to full competence. One way to eliminate the obstacles to efficient listening comprehension is strategy instruction. The present study attempted to explore the impact of the explicit instruction of cognitive and memory strategies on IELTS candidates' listening comprehension. The sample consisted of 88 adult male/female EFL learners who attended IELTS preparation classes regularly, and were randomly assigned into three groups. Two groups were as experimental groups, in which eight memory and cognitive strategies were taught explicitly, whereas the third group did not benefit from the explicit instruction of strategies. The analysis of the data showed that the experimental groups outperformed the control group in listening, but the difference between the two experimental groups was not statistically significant. In fact, in both groups in which cognitive or memory strategies were taught explicitly, the mean scores in listening comprehension did not prove to be significant. In further analysis, the applicants' gender did not make a difference in listening comprehension.

Index Terms—explicit integrated strategies instruction, memory/cognitive strategies, listening comprehension

I. INTRODUCTION

The role of learners and learning strategies has been emphasized in effective learning. The instruction of strategies has been recommended by different scholars because using strategies is an important factor in successful language learning (Dreyer & Nel, 2003; Oxford, Crookall, Cohen, Lavine, Nyikos, & Sutter, 1990).

The traditional approaches to the teaching of listening are not effective. In such approaches, listeners review the vocabulary, listen to the text, get an idea of it, and try to answer the questions. In fact, when listeners are expected to listen to a sample, and answer the questions related to it, they are not learning how to listen, but rather they are being tested to see whether they would comprehend the text or not. In teaching learners how to listen, some researchers emphasized strategy instruction (Carrell, 1998; Klingner & Vaughn, 2000).

Although listening had not been paid much attention in the past, it remains one of the most important skills in language learning in EFL/ESL contexts (Berne, 1998; Clement, 2007; Oxford, 1993; Rubin, 1994). The first step to acquire a second or foreign language is listening comprehension (Liu, 2009). In fact, listening is the first encounter with the target language for non-native speakers when they are exposed to it (Berne, 2004). Although it is important for language learners to develop listening ability in real interaction, we seldom teach them to learn how to listen effectively (Berne, 2004; Vandergrift, 2007).

In the past decades, listening was defined as the listeners' abilities to listen to recorded samples, and be able to answer the questions, without having been instructed any strategies, skills, and techniques to help them complete such tasks (Field, 1998). No textbook was for teaching listening in a second language until the 1970s. It was assumed that through practice, listeners would automatically develop their abilities to comprehend the spoken texts. That is, listeners while being exposed to oral language would develop listening skills through repetition and imitation (Clement, 2007). However, in recent years, many researchers (Carrier, 2003; Berne, 2004; Chamot, 2004; Clement, 2007; Liu, 2009; Graham, Santos, & Vanderplank, 2011) indicated that the focus has shifted to the development and use of language learning strategies.

Language learning strategies are the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take to accomplish a learning goal (Chamot, 2004). Strategies in listening comprehension are classified into three categories: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies due to the level or type of processing. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990),

metacognitive strategies involve planning for learning, monitoring of one's comprehension or production, thinking about the learning process while it is taking place, and assessing an activity when it is accomplished. Cognitive strategies are limited to certain learning activities and involve direct manipulation of the learning material. Socio-affective strategies involve social-mediating activities and are more concerned with interaction with others.

A set of memory and cognitive strategies have been examined in the present study. Oxford (1990) classified these two categories into some distinct strategies. Memory strategies are such as semantic mapping, using keywords, structured reviewing, using mechanical techniques, grouping, associating or elaborating, placing new words into a context, and using imagery. Cognitive strategies are such as translating, analyzing expressions, getting the idea quickly, taking notes, recombining, highlighting, summarizing, and transferring. From among memory and cognitive strategies, these eight strategies were selected to be instructed to IELTS candidates due to practicality reason. These strategies were taught during IELTS preparation course and then integrated by the participants while listening to samples.

Modes of Strategy Instruction

Regarding strategies instruction, two issues have been put forward (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). One was to decide whether to teach strategies through embedded instruction or through explicit instruction. The second issue was to decide whether to teach strategy in a separate way or integrated with classroom instruction.

In embedded strategy instruction, learners are guided by the teacher through getting involved in activities and materials while not being consciously aware of the use and benefits of a certain strategy. By contrast, in explicit strategy instruction, learners get informed of the value and purpose of a certain strategy, and are taught consciously how to use that strategy in a new context (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

Taking the second issue into account, the researchers who advocate integrated strategy instruction claim that integrating strategy training into students' learning activities enables them to apply the strategies in real life situations and transfer them to other tasks and activities (Chamot, et al., 1999; Kendall & Khuon, 2006; Oxford, 2002; Zhang, 2008). However, the advocates of separate instruction find two faults with integrated strategy instruction; first, after the instruction period, learners cannot apply strategies to other new tasks, and second, all language teachers cannot be trained to have integrated strategies instruction in their classes (Gu, 1996). Following explicit instruction of strategies, Chamot (2004) claimed that language teachers should integrate instruction into their regular course work, rather than providing a separate strategy course.

While there has been some challenge between the embedded and explicit instruction, explicit instruction was proposed by some researchers (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Cohen, 1998; Oxford, 2002). As O'Malley and Chamot (1990) claimed "early research on training learning strategies following the embedded approach found little transfer of training to new tasks" (p.153). In line with these two researchers, other scholars (Ozeki, 2000; Carrier, 2003; Shen, 2003; Clement, 2007) focused on explicit strategy instruction, which has shown to be useful in maintaining strategy use over time and using strategies for novel tasks in new contexts.

Studies on Strategy Instruction

Studies done on successful language learners (DeFillipis, 1980; Laviosa, 1991a & 1991b; Murphy, 1985; O'Malley, Chamot, & Kupper 1989; Rost & Ross 1991; Vandergrift 1992) explored a number of cognitive and metacognitive strategies that listeners use. As Derry and Murphy (1986) maintain cognitive strategies are behaviors, techniques, or actions used by learners to acquire knowledge or skill, or to tackle the problems they encounter. Such strategies are elaborating, inferencing, predicting listening to the known, and visualization. Metacognitive strategies are the supervision that learners have on their learning process, the control they have on their learning process. Such strategies are functional planning, monitoring, reality testing, self-assessing, evaluating, and improving their learning approaches (Rubin, 1990). There is a consensus among researchers that successful language learners use strategies. Murphy (1985) claims that successful language learners use strategies flexibly depending on the situation, and O'Malley, Chamot and Kupper (1989) believe that they use self-monitoring strategy.

According to Laviosa (1991a), "the efficiency or inefficiency of any particular strategy employed appears to depend not only on the listeners' L2 knowledge, but mainly on individual differences in perceiving the problems and on their ability to employ strategies and manage the use of a variety of strategies" (p.109). Scholar believe that it is not just the sequence of strategies which makes a distinction between expert and novice language learners, but the way they use self-management to define tasks, perform effectively, select the strategies and evaluate their effectiveness (Vann & Abraham 1990; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994).

In a longitudinal study, Thompson and Rubin (1996) examined the impact of cognitive and metacognitive strategy instruction on 36 college level L2 learners' listening comprehension based on 15 hours of video instruction. In the experimental group, the participants were taught to develop cognitive and metacognitive strategies in the form of a treatment, while in the control group, the participants watched videos to initiate some speaking and writing activities. The results of the final video test indicated that the experimental group performed significantly higher than the control group, whereas in the audio test the two groups showed no difference. Their study as the first longitudinal, classroom-based strategy instruction, regardless of its short research period and relatively insufficient results, showed the importance of listening strategy instruction.

In another study in Taiwan, Chen (2009) explored the effect of strategy instruction on listening performance in a regular college EFL class over a 14 week span with 31 non-English major students. The focus of the study was to teach

metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective listening strategies integrated to an extension of the listening curriculum. Within each strategy category, the researcher detected selective strategies that had been proven effective in the literature. The results revealed that the participants acquired higher awareness and control in their strategy use. In each specific category of strategy, there were some important findings. *Inferencing*, *replay*, and *understanding each word* were among the most common cognitive strategies used by students. Regarding metacognitive strategies, although learners used various strategies predominantly during the treatment at different periods, as a whole, they used metacognitive strategies fairly equally. In socio-affective strategies, low and average proficiency language learners showed a great increase in their use.

II. METHOD

A. Participants

Some IELTS applicants (about 100) were given a language proficiency test to check for their homogeneity before presenting the treatment. Those participants whose scores fell one standard deviation below or above the mean (88 applicants) were selected and included in the final sample based on non-random availability sampling. They were from Afarinesh Language Institute in Tehran. Also, gender was included as a moderator variable; thus, both male and female candidates were selected. Three groups of participants were included in the study. The first group (30 learners) received explicit instruction on memory strategies (the first experimental group), while the other one (32 learners) received explicit instruction on cognitive strategies (the second experimental group) and the third group (26 learners) used the conventional prevalent techniques for practicing IELTS listening comprehension (the control group).

B. Materials

The teaching materials employed were 16 IELTS listening samples used in three groups. However, in the first group, the listening samples were taught while instructing eight memory strategies explicitly as the treatment of the study. In the second experimental group, the episodes were taught along with instructing eight cognitive strategies. In the control group, the conventional techniques were used for teaching IELTS listening samples. The point was that all the passages were chosen randomly from the IELTS passages included in IELTS sample tests.

C. Instruments

Three instruments were used to collect data. The first instrument used was a language proficiency test to help the researcher select homogenous participants for the study. The second instrument was an IELTS listening pre-test, which was administered before presenting the treatment since the candidates were expected to be homogeneous in listening comprehension as well. The third instrument was an identical IELTS listening comprehension test used as a posttest which was administered to the participants after the treatment to see if the treatment would have any effect on the participants' performance in listening comprehension.

D. Procedure

At first, 100 IELTS candidates from Afarinesh Institute were randomly selected. Having selected the homogeneous candidates through using a proficiency test, the researcher assigned the participants randomly into three groups. Then, a listening comprehension pretest was administered to the three groups to account for their homogeneity in listening comprehension before the treatment.

The first group was taught eight memory strategies, which took around 16 sessions. Eight memory strategies of '*grouping*', '*associating or elaborating*', '*placing new words into a context*', '*using imagery*', '*semantic mapping*', '*using keywords*', '*structured reviewing*', and '*using mechanical techniques*' (Oxford, 1990 cited in Brown, 2007, p.141) were instructed to the candidates explicitly. They learned each strategy in one session, and practiced to implement the strategies while they practiced IELTS listening samples during the treatment. The researchers provided the candidates with an awareness of the strategy because the purpose was not to follow "blind training" of the strategy, whereas they were expected to learn the strategy explicitly, and be able to use it practically in different contexts. Depending on the theme of listening episodes, the researchers helped the candidates to apply the strategies they had learned where they could find it useful and effective.

The second group, however, received eight cognitive strategies in the second experimental group. Eight cognitive strategies of '*highlighting*', '*summarizing*', '*taking notes*', '*transferring*', '*translating*', '*analyzing expressions*', '*getting the idea quickly*', and '*recombining*' (Oxford, 1990 cited in Brown, 2007, p.141) were instructed to them explicitly. Like the first experimental group, these candidates learned each strategy in a session, but practiced them spirally during the 16 sessions while practicing IELTS listening samples. The participants were taught to learn each single cognitive strategy explicitly every session, and be able to implement it in the new situations. In any possible context, in which they could find useful or effective, they were encouraged to use the strategies autonomously.

The third group, that is, the control group received the conventional methods which are usual in IELTS preparation programs. Regarding the listening comprehension, they attempted to listen to the text and answer the questions afterward. The researcher was made sure that in the control group, the prevalent current method in teaching listening

comprehension was utilized. They did not practice memory and/or cognitive strategies as their counterparts in the two experimental groups did.

As the next step, a listening posttest was administered to the three groups to measure their listening comprehension after the treatment. The listening comprehension test was an identical test compared with the pretest in order to minimize the practice effect. All the participants in the three groups were given the same time restriction to take the tests based on a uniform procedure to eliminate any fluctuation due to the test rubrics. The test scores were analyzed in order to detect any probable difference between the three groups.

III. RESULTS

A. The Analysis of the Pretests

At first, it was necessary to check the homogeneity of the participants in language proficiency in general and listening comprehension in particular. The three groups showed not to be significantly different based on the ANOVA results.

TABLE 1.
ANOVA RESULTS FOR THE PRETESTS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
LPT	Between Groups	39.79	2	19.90	1.499	.229
	Within Groups	1128.21	85	13.27		
	Total	1168.00	87			
Listening I	Between Groups	3.38	2	1.69	.653	.523
	Within Groups	220.35	85	2.59		
	Total	223.74	87			

Before starting the treatment, the researcher had to check for the homogeneity of the participants in listening comprehension. The researcher used ANOVA and detected that the difference between the three groups was not statistically significant. Thus, the researcher could start presenting the treatment to the candidates. The treatment was of two types: teaching eight memory strategies to one experimental group, and teaching eight cognitive strategies to the other experimental group.

B. The Analysis of the Listening Post- Test

The present study focused on the explicit instruction of eight memory and eight cognitive strategies in the two experimental groups, while in the control group, the participants were exposed to the same oral content and practiced the traditional or prevalent techniques used for listening comprehension. After finishing the treatment in 16 sessions, the researcher compared the listening comprehension mean scores of the three groups to detect whether they have shown significant difference or not. ANOVA was used and the results revealed that the difference among the groups was statistically significant.

TABLE 2.
ANOVA RESULTS FOR LISTENING POSTTEST

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	195.12	2	97.56	29.747	.000
Within Groups	278.78	85	3.28		
Total	473.90	87			

ANOVA showed the difference between the groups is significant. To detect where the significant difference lies, there is a need to apply a Post Hoc Multiple Comparison for the same analysis.

TABLE 3.
A POST HOC (MULTIPLE COMPARISONS) ANALYSIS FOR THE LISTENING POSTTEST

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Exp group(memory strategies)	Exp group(cognitive strategies)	-.766	.460	.099	-1.68	0.14
	Control group	2.791	.485	.000	1.82	3.75
Exp group(cognitive strategies)	Exp group(memory strategies)	.766	.460	.099	-.14	1.68
	Control group	3.557	.478	.000	2.60	4.50
Control group	Exp group(memory strategies)	-2.791	.485	.000	-3.75	-1.82
	Exp group(cognitive strategies)	-3.557	.478	.000	-4.50	-2.60

Based on the Post Hoc comparison, the difference between the control group and the two experimental groups is statistically significant. It is concluded that teaching memory and cognitive strategies in the experimental groups made a significant difference in the candidates' listening comprehension in the posttest; that is, the treatment or the explicit instruction of memory and cognitive strategies was effective.

However, the difference between the two experimental groups was not statistically significant. That is, the two different types of strategies had similar effect on the participants' listening comprehension. It is concluded that strategies

instruction, whether memory or cognitive, could improve the IELTS candidates' listening comprehension though not being significantly different from one another.

The role of gender in the study was also investigated. The aim was to detect whether male and female candidates show difference in their listening comprehension. To see whether gender could make a difference in listening, the researcher utilized one-way ANOVA.

TABLE 6.
ANOVA RESULTS FOR LISTENING PRE- AND POSTTEST BY GENDER

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Listening1	Between Groups	3.59	1	3.59	1.402	.240
	Within Groups	220.15	86	2.56		
	Total	223.74	87			
Listening2	Between Groups	1.27	1	1.27	.232	.631
	Within Groups	472.63	86	5.49		
	Total	473.90	87			

The results of ANOVA revealed that male and female candidates were not statistically different in their listening pretest and posttest. The values computed for each of the four measurements (sig=.240, and 0.631) are higher than 0.05; therefore, the difference is not statistically significant.

IV. DISCUSSION

The first experimental group in which eight memory strategies were being taught outperformed the control group in which the learners used to practice the texts traditionally. Also, the other experimental group in which the learners practiced eight cognitive strategies during the treatment had also better listeners. The two experimental groups showed an improvement in their listening comprehension, but the inter-group difference was not statistically significant. It seemed that the two types of strategies, that is, memory and cognitive ones influenced the candidates' listening comprehension similarly. These two types of Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI) proved to be similarly decisive in IELTS candidates' performance in listening comprehension in comparison to the control group. Based on the test results, female and male EFL learners performed similarly in IELTS listening comprehension tests.

The findings of the present study confirmed that ample evidence links strategy instruction to improved performance in learners' language (Derry & Murphy 1986). It is concluded that strategy instruction has been linked to better reading (Hosenfeld, Arnold, Kirchofer, Laciura, & Wilson, 1981), improved speaking (O'Malley, Chamot & Walker, 1987) and more effective vocabulary acquisition (Cohen & Horowitz, 2002).

The present study put emphasis on explicit strategies instruction, as proposed by Harris (2003), who compared four training models - O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990), Chamot et al. (1999) and Grenfell and Harris (1999). There are also additional models, such as in Macaro (2001) and Cohen and Horowitz (2002). There is clearly very considerable consensus among researchers and educators to strategy training. As Duffy (1993) states, listening strategies refer to those remedies which are used to solve problems that learners face in grasping meaning from the text. There is a wide range of listening strategies, from some micro text-based strategies, such as guessing the meaning of a word from context, to more conceptual macro strategies, such as subsuming the incoming information, or personalizing what they listened to.

The findings of the present study confirmed the results of the studies done by Swain, (2000) who suggested that if strategy training involves verbalizing the strategies employed together with opportunity to use the strategies explicitly in the context of communicative activity, it can be effective, and Kitajima (1997), who suggested that students could successfully learn to use a strategy presented in an instruction program and that improved comprehension might be achieved at the same time, although a causal link could not be shown, and Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto (1989) who investigated the impact of two metacognitive strategy approaches on comprehension which showed that both types of intervention improved comprehension.

The results of the present study highlighted the findings of some studies in which Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI) was the concern of the researchers, such as Kusiak (2001) who carried out a metacognitive strategy-based instruction program, and proved how these two variables- metacognition and comprehension- were related to L2 language competence. Also, a complex Strategy-Based Instruction program was carried out by Dreyer and Nel (2003), in which they investigated the impact of metacognitive strategies instruction on two groups of students, and found that while learning to use metacognitive strategies, both successful and at-risk students showed a significant difference in their comprehension.

The findings of the present study are different from those previous studies, in which the explicit instruction of strategies was not suggested for EFL learners. Regarding teaching learner strategies, there is not complete uniformity among the researchers. It is clear that teaching learner strategies is not universally successful. Concerning the effectiveness of strategy training, Macaro (2006) claims that it is hard to come up with stable conclusion because of a lack of agreement in the intervention packages and how learning outcome is assessed. Or in an experiment done by Bialystok (1983b), the strategy training proved to be less effective in promoting either comprehension or vocabulary acquisition than the other two conditions in his study. Also, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) doing a study on the effects of

strategy training on the learners' performance on a listening and a speaking task, found no significant differences among the experimental groups. They found that a group taught 'functional planning' (a metacognitive strategy) outperformed both the control group and the other experimental group taught 'cooperation' (a social/affective strategy) in the speaking task. There was no effect for strategy training in the listening task. In a study, on the impact of strategy-based instruction on speaking in a foreign language, Cohen and Horowitz (2002) found that the experimental group outperformed the control group on only one of the three oral tasks in the posttest.

Listening is described as an active process in all recent studies, in which listeners select and interpret information elicited from the oral discourse. Listeners attempt to understand what is going on and what the speaker expresses (Clark & Clark, 1977; Mendelsohn & Rubin, 1995; Richards, 1983). Language teachers attempt to help listeners integrate their world knowledge and linguistic knowledge to be able to process the information through listening process. According to Mendelsohn & Rubin (1995), language teachers should feel responsible to help their students develop listening comprehension through using strategies not merely providing a chance for them to listen.

The concern of previous studies was to investigate whether listening strategy instruction through using a quantitative method has any impact on listening comprehension. However, recently listening strategy instruction has been carried out in various contexts ranging from child language learners to adult learners, from EFL contexts to ESL contexts, and from primary school level to college level. Although these studies were subject to small sample size and short research period, their general findings confirmed that listening strategy training will result in better understanding and use of strategies and better listening comprehension. Future researchers are expected to investigate Strategy-Based Instruction (SBI) from a triangulated view; that is, from teachers' effectiveness, from experts' perception, and from learners' actual and autonomous use of listening strategies.

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An Experimental Research on the Effects of Types of Glossing on Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition through Reading*

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Abstract—A large amount of research has been conducted to delve into the means of improving the rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading, which includes providing glosses or annotations, increasing the reoccurrence of the target words and taking the advantage of dictionaries. But little has been done on the effects of different types of glossing on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. The present study has been aimed at finding out whether the three different types of glossing, i.e. glossing in Chinese, glossing in English, and glossing in both Chinese and English, have different effects on enhancing the incidental vocabulary acquisition rate through reading. From the data analysis of the present study, it has been found that in terms of enhancing the depth of vocabulary knowledge in incidental vocabulary learning through reading, glossing in both Chinese and English is the most effective glossing type, whether it be in the immediate retention testing section or the delayed retention testing section. In terms of enhancing the breadth of vocabulary knowledge, glossing in Chinese is the most effective one in the immediate retention of the breadth of word knowledge, and glossing in both Chinese and English is the most effective in the delayed retention of the breadth of word knowledge. On the basis of these findings, implications and suggestions for the arena of foreign language teaching and other related fields have been proposed.

Index Terms—type of glossing, incidental vocabulary acquisition, reading; breadth of vocabulary knowledge, depth of vocabulary knowledge

I. INTRODUCTION

After having been neglected for decades in the arena of foreign or second language teaching and learning, the teaching of vocabulary has regained its rightful and significant place in the field of language teaching. Much has been done on how to enhance the acquisition of vocabulary (Chen and Truscott, 2010; Gui, 2015; Saz et al., 2015; Tanaka, 2017; Zeeland and Schmitt, 2013).

Large numbers of scholars focus on ways to enhance incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading, including adding text-based vocabulary exercises, introducing dictionary use, providing glosses, annotations, whether in visual or aural forms (Chen and Truscott, 2010; Chun and Plass, 1996; Coady, 2001; Gardner, D., 2004; Grabe and Stoller, 2001; Gui, 2015; Saz et al., 2015; Wesche and Paribakht, 2000).

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study has been aimed at delving into the effects of different types of glossing, that is, glossing in Chinese, glossing in English, and glossing in both Chinese and English, on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading.

The specific research questions are listed as follows:

Q1: Does a better comprehension of the reading text contribute to a higher retention rate of word knowledge? In other words, is it true that the better one understands the text, the better one could acquire new vocabulary?

Q2: Which type of glossing, among the three types of glossing, i.e. glossing in Chinese, glossing in English and glossing in both Chinese and English, is the most effective in enhancing incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading?

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Subjects

Three classes of non-English-major freshmen from a college in Hangzhou, China took part in the study. One class took part in the pilot study, and the other two classes took part in the formal tests. All the students in the three classes

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are of the same proficiency, which is guaranteed by the fact that in this college students have to take part in an English proficiency test and then, according to the scores in this test, students of the same proficiency in English will be grouped into certain classes of the same level. The class taking part in the pilot study consists of 35 students, including 17 male students and 18 female students. The other two classes consist of 68 students, 33 male students and 35 female students. However, in the formal testing, among all the students, only 62 took part in all the tests and finished all the papers. What is more, two among the 62 students misunderstood one of the tests, thus being eliminated from the data analysis. In addition, eight students in the two classes in total were randomly selected to take part in the semi-structured interviews during breaks immediately after the two testing sections respectively.

B. Target Words

There are 18 target words in total in this experiment, and all of them are picked up according to the College English Curriculum Requirements (For Trial Implementation) issued by the department of higher education of the Ministry of Education and the national English Curriculum Standards for Senior Middle Schools released by the Ministry of Education. In other words, they are beyond the requirement of senior high school and are required in college English study.

What needs to be pointed out is that all the forms of the original target words in the study are replaced by nonsense words, or pseudo words, which have been directly taken from Webb (2007) or Nation (1990) or coined based on the nonsense words used by Webb or Nation. According to Webb (2005, 2007), compared with using original target words, there are several advantages in replacing the L2 forms of the target words. First of all, this is to make sure that subjects have no previous information of any kind concerning the target words, which is significant because whatever gains are observed can be ascribed solely to the treatment. Accordingly, the researcher may get a more accurate assessment of what they are trying to measure when they use nonsense words (*ibid*). In studies in which authentic L2 target words are used, the results might be questioned in that it cannot be certain that the learners did not have any prior knowledge of the target words (Webb, 2007). In most of these studies, although researchers use a pre-test/post-test design, there is still the possibility that the pre-test may not be sensitive enough to show that the learners had partial knowledge of the target words or that the participants have partial knowledge of the form, associations, syntax, and grammatical functions but just because of their uncertainty about the meaning they respond that the word is unknown (*ibid*). There is also the possibility that the pre-tests made the participants aware that the focus of their task was vocabulary learning (*ibid*). On the other hand, researchers using authentic words may find it comparative difficult to find the target words in context in which all the running words are known, since real target words are more likely to be low frequency words, which in turn tend to co-occur with other low frequency words (*ibid*).

In addition to the advantages of using nonsense words claimed by Webb, employing nonsense words was also owing to the results that we have found out in the pilot study. From the pilot study, we found that more than half of the original target words have been mastered by more than 60% of the students. That is to say, most of them knew most of the original target words. This fact has also been testified by the interview following the tests for some students. As a consequence, nonsense words were introduced to the present study.

In addition, the effect of the part of speech of the target words on incidental vocabulary acquisition has been controlled in the present study. The part of speech, or grammatical category, of words has been proved by scholars to have a great impact on vocabulary acquisition (Horst et al cited in Webb, 2007; Laufer, 2002; Coady, 2001). According to Laufer (2002), certain grammatical categories are more difficult to learn than others. Nouns seem to be the easiest; adverb, the most difficult; verbs and adjectives are somewhere in between. As a result, only nouns and verbs are taken as target words in this experiment. More specifically, there are 12 nouns and six verbs, among which four nouns and two verbs are glossed in Chinese, another four nouns and two verbs in English, the remaining four nouns and two verbs in both Chinese and English. In addition, the choice of words to be glossed in the three types is random.

C. Instruments

A reading comprehension test, a test of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge, and a test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge are used as instruments in this study. In addition, semi-structured interviews are also employed in this experiment.

1. Reading comprehension test (CT)

The reading material used in this study (see Appendix VI) is a passage that has been taken from Unit One, Book One in College English, chief-edited by Dong Yafen and published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. This set of textbooks is considered as an outstanding one and it has been recommended by the Ministry of Education. The passage remains the same with the original one except that the original target words were replaced with nonsense words and a slight change was made in the last paragraph, (i.e. we changed the form of a noun 'accumulation' into the gerund of its verb 'accumulating' to make the ratio of nouns to verbs as 2: 1).

There are 774 words in total in the reading passage, which contains 17 new words apart from the 18 target words. That means the coverage of words is about 97%, which is just between 95% and 98%. According to much research done, for basic necessity, 95% is needed, and the coverage of 98% is needed for reading for pleasure (Hirsh and Nation, 1992 cited in Laufer, 2001; Coxhead, 1998 cited in Alderson, 2007). So the present study, the coverage of words in the passage is just within this range.

The 17 new words are annotated in Chinese immediately after the word in the parentheses and the 18 target words are glossed respectively in Chinese, in English or in both Chinese and English in the margin. The glosses of the target words are taken directly from the original text book, including its part of speech and its definition in Chinese, in English or in both.

Following the passage are ten comprehension questions in the form of multiple choice. All the questions are designed on the basis of information in the passage and they cover all the paragraphs in the passage.

There are two purposes in designing the comprehension questions. Firstly, it is to answer the research question whether a better comprehension of the text leads to a better retention of vocabulary knowledge. This could also investigate how the comprehension of the text by students is related to their retention of word knowledge in the process of incidental vocabulary acquisition. In the second place, it is to ensure that subjects will not intentionally learn the target words, for their attention is drawn by the task of comprehending the text and completing all the questions following the text.

One point is awarded to one correctly made choice, and no reduction of points for wrong answers. Therefore, the highest score possible for this test is ten.

2. Test of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge (BT)

The test of the breadth of word knowledge (see Appendix V) employs the form of the Vocabulary Levels Test by Nation (1990). Three items of definitions of the same part of speech are put in one group on the left side and six corresponding choices are on the right side. Subjects need to choose three from the six choices to match the three definitions given on the left part. However, there is a prominent difference from that of Nation in the present test in that all the three items in one group on the left part may be in Chinese or in English, for the purpose of being in line with the different glossing types of the target words in the original reading comprehension test. Since among the 18 target word there are four nouns and two verbs which are glossed in both Chinese and English, the definition of two nouns and one verb among them is given in English and the definition of the remaining two nouns and a verb are in Chinese.

For example:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. ___ knowledge of sb. or sth | a. service |
| 2. ___ chance to do sth. | b. denent |
| 3. ___ careful and hard effort | c. aleand |
| | d. cheltian |
| | e. tobacco |
| | f. vinegar |
| 4. ___ 抱怨 | a. project |
| 5. ___ 分配 (任务) | b. taspe |
| 6. ___ 把.....塞进 | c. fix |
| | d. demart |
| | e. segat |
| | f. explain |

All the definitions on the left are taken directly or shortened a little for the purpose of getting a shorter definition from the original glosses in the reading passage. One point is awarded to each correctly answered item and therefore the full score for this test is 18 points in total.

3. Test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge (DT)

The test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge (DT, see Appendix VI) has been designed on the basis of Qian (2002)'s DVK format. All of the 18 target words, including 12 nouns, 6 verbs, have been taken in the test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge.

An example is given in the following:

faddam _____

A. civilization	B. plan	E. full	F. rich
C. approach	D. policy	G. great	H. ancient

As could be seen from the above example, there are four choices in the left box for synonymy. It is a little different from what Qian's format in that he has included another aspect of vocabulary knowledge: polysemy. In the present test, only synonym has been taken into consideration and the aspect of polysemy has been dropped because all the target words only appear once in the passage and only one meaning is available in the testing process for subjects. And the four choices in the right box are for collocations, which is the same with Qian's format. All the correct choices are designed based on *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, *Collins COBUILD Dictionary* and *The LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations*.

The correct answers are always four in number for each item, and the four choices may be one from the left side and three from the right, or two from both sides respectively, or one from the left side and three from the right. There are 18 items in this test, and one point is awarded to each correct choice among the four answers for each item. As a result, the full score for each item is four points.

4. Semi-structured interview

The first semi-structured interview in the first section of testing (see Appendix VII) was designed mainly to see whether the subjects read glosses or not, or which kind of glossing they paid more attention to and which kind of glossing they find more beneficial. The second semi-structured interview (see Appendix VIII) was intended to see how students felt about the word tests and word remembering.

5. Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out before the formal experiment. One class of non-English-major freshmen of the same proficiency in the English language with the subjects in the experiment took part in the pilot study. The testing papers used in the pilot study all employed the original true words as target words, including the comprehension test (see Appendix I), the test of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge (see Appendix II), and the test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge (see Appendix III). After the three tests, six students are randomly interviewed. Revision was later made according to the results collected from the pilot study.

The most interesting point found in the pilot study is that more than half of the original target words have been mastered by most of the students. That is to say, most of them have mastered much more words than required by the national English Curriculum Standards for Senior Middle Schools released by the Ministry of Education. This was also testified by the following interview with the students. As a result, the author made important revision in the experimental material and nonsense words were introduced to this study.

D. Procedure

Two classes of non-English-major freshmen from a college in Hangzhou, China took part in the present research. All the participants are of the same proficiency in English, which has been ensured by the classification of English classes according to their English scores in the large-scale National College Entrance Examination in China. All the tests were executed during normal periods of classes. In the first stage, subjects were required to finish a reading comprehension test (CT), which contains a reading passage followed by ten comprehension questions. There are 18 target words in the passage, among which six are glossed in Chinese, six in English and the remaining six in both Chinese and English. After all the subjects had finished this comprehension test, papers were collected. Then the test of the depth of knowledge of the target words (DT) was administered preceding to the administration of the test of the breadth of knowledge of the target words (BT) for the purpose of reducing practice effect. All the three tests cost two periods of normal classes.

One week after the first section of testing (or the immediate testing), the second section of testing (or the delayed testing), including the test of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge (BT) and the test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge (DT) was carried out in a normal period of class to investigate the delayed retention of the target words, both in terms of the breadth knowledge and in terms of the depth knowledge. The same testing papers were used in the second testing section and similarly, the test of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge was preceded by the test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge. The whole section cost half an hour in total.

During the class breaks after the immediate and delayed tests respectively, students were randomly selected to be interviewed by way of semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interviews was designed mainly to see whether the subjects read glosses or not, or which kind of glossing they paid more attention to and which kind of glossing they found more beneficial.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Reliability of the Five Tests Used in This Study

The following table (Table 4-1) illustrates the reliabilities of the five tests including the comprehension test (CT), two tests of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge (BT) and two tests of the depth of vocabulary knowledge (DT) employed in this experiment.

TABLE 4-1
RELIABILITY OF THE FIVE VOCABULARY TESTS

Tests	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
BT1	.804	18
BT2	.714	18
DT1	.841	18
DT2	.941	18
CT	.926	10

BT1=the First Breadth Test
 BT2=the Second Breadth Test
 DT1=the First Depth Test
 DT2=the Second Depth Test

As can be seen from the above table, in all the tests, no item in all the five tests has been excluded. In addition, the Cronbach's Alpha index of the second test of depth of vocabulary (DT2) reaches as high as .941 and that of the comprehension test (CT) reaches a level of .926. Even the lowest of the five (BT2) is as high as .714. The Cronbach's Alpha index of the first test of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge is a little higher than the second, and the first test of

the depth of vocabulary knowledge ranks third with a Cronbach's Alpha index of .841.

That is to say, all of the five tests boast a sound degree of reliability, thus testifying the reliability of the five tests. The Cronbach's Alpha index of the second test of the depth of vocabulary knowledge is higher than .91, which is the Cronbach's Alpha index gained the investigation by Qian and Schedl (2004), and the other .841 is lower than this figure. Therefore, all of them could be employed in the future studies.

B. Correlation between Comprehension and Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

This research question of "Does a better understanding of the text lead to a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition?" can be addressed from two perspectives, i.e. from the perspective of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge and from the perspective of the depth of vocabulary knowledge.

1. Correlation between comprehension and the breadth of vocabulary knowledge

Does a better understanding of the text lead to a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition in terms of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge? Before answering this question, the following table of the descriptive statistics (Table 4-2) needs to be examined.

For the purpose of a clearer demonstration and comparison, the scores used here in these two tests are the average of each item in the test paper, instead of the total score of the whole paper. That is to say, the full average score is one point for both the comprehension test and the first breadth test of vocabulary knowledge.

TABLE 4-2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CT AND BT1

	Mean	S.D.	N
BT1	.441	.233	60
CT	.793	.145	60

CT=Comprehension Test
BT1=the First Breadth Test

It could be seen that the mean of the first breadth test of vocabulary knowledge is 0.441, lower than that of the comprehension test, whose mean is 0.793. This may contribute to the fact that most of them could understand the text well, which is also in accordance with what has been obtained from the interview. In the interview after the immediate retention tests, five among the eight students interviewed told the author that they could understand the text well in spite of the fact that there were many words which they did not know.

And as to the question itself, Table 4-3 gives a definite answer in the following table:

TABLE 4-3
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CT AND BT1

		CT	BT1
CT	Pearson Correlation	1	.278(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.032
	N	60	60
BT1	Pearson Correlation	.278(*)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	
	N	60	60

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

CT=Comprehension Test
BT1=the First Breadth Test

It is obvious that the comprehension test is significantly correlated with the first breadth test of vocabulary knowledge ($p=.032<.05$). In other words, generally speaking, students who have obtained a higher score in the comprehension test tend to gain a higher score in the first breadth test of vocabulary knowledge. That is to mean, better understanding of the text, which is operationalized as the score in the comprehension test, will lead to a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition in terms of the breadth of word knowledge. As a result, the previous question raised in the beginning of this part has been answered.

This conclusion could be understood easily. In the course of reading the text and finishing all the comprehension questions, students had to pay at least some attention to the meaning of the nonsense target words in the text in order to understand the whole text. Though they did not consciously remember these words by heart, for they had not been informed of the following tests of these words in the beginning, the aspect of the meaning of some target words in the context of the reading text was indeed incidentally acquired. And the better one understood the meaning of the text, the more he was familiar with the details of the text, including knowledge about the target words, thus rendering a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition in terms of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge.

2. Correlation between comprehension and the depth of vocabulary knowledge

Does a better understanding of the text lead to a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition in terms of the depth of vocabulary knowledge? Similarly, the descriptive statistics in the following table (Table 4-4) are to be looked into. For the purpose of a clearer demonstration and comparison, the scores used here in these two tests are the average of each item in the test paper, instead of the total score of the whole paper. That is to say, the full score for each item is one

point for the comprehension test and four points for the first depth test of vocabulary knowledge.

TABLE 4-4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CT AND DT1

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
DT1	1.836	.553	60
CT	.793	.145	60

CT=Comprehension Test
DT1=the First Depth Test

Since the mean and the standard deviation have been analyzed in the pervious part, only the first depth test of vocabulary knowledge is to be explored. As could be seen from the table above, the mean of the first depth test is about 1.836 on a scale of four points, which demonstrates that less than half of the depth knowledge has been acquired. What is more, its standard deviation is about 0.553.

TABLE 4-5
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CT AND DT1

		DT1	CT
DT1	Pearson Correlation	1	-.047
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.723
	N	60	60
CT	Pearson Correlation	-.047	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.723	
	Covariance	-.004	.021
	N	60	60

CT=Comprehension Test
DT1=the First Depth Test

The above table (Table 4-5) presents to the reader clearly whether the comprehension test and the first depth test of vocabulary knowledge are correlated with each other.

From the above table, we can see that these two factors are not correlated with each other, for the value of p is as high as 0.723. Accordingly, we could come to the conclusion that the comprehension test and the first depth test of vocabulary knowledge are not correlated with each other. This indicates that a better understanding of the text may not necessarily lead to a better retention of the depth of word knowledge in the process of incidental vocabulary acquisition.

This conclusion could be easily understood that one encounter with a new word in a reading text is far from enough to acquire all aspects of word knowledge, such as synonyms and collocations. It is a long process to develop one's depth of word knowledge, which has been proved by many.

On the other hand, while reading the text and answering the comprehension question, most subjects have not paid much attention to the target words themselves. In most cases, only the superficial meaning of the target words has been noticed and other aspects have been ignored.

Therefore, the conclusion could be drawn that a better understanding of the text does contribute to a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition from the perspective of the breadth of word knowledge. However, a better understanding of the text does not guarantee a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition in terms of the depth of word knowledge.

C. Effects of Different Types of Glossing on Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

In this part, the research questions put forward in Chapter Three are to be investigated. In a word, the general research question is which kind of glossing, among glossing in Chinese, glossing in English and glossing in both English and Chinese, is the most effective one in enhancing incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. The question should be answered from the perspectives of both the breadth and the depth of vocabulary knowledge and at the same time, in terms of immediate and delayed retention.

1. Effects of glossing on immediate retention

How different types of glossing, i.e. glossing in Chinese (C), glossing in English (E) and glossing in both Chinese and English (CE), exert effects on the breadth and the depth of word knowledge in the process of incidental vocabulary acquisition in the immediate retention testing part is to be analyzed and studied in this part.

1.1 Effects of glossing on the breadth of word knowledge in immediate retention

The following table (Table 4-6) presents us the results of three different types of glossing in BT1:

TABLE 4-6
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF BT1

	N	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
CE	60	.406	.300	.00	1.00
E	60	.386	.321	.00	1.00
C	60	.531	.303	.00	1.00

BT1=the First Breadth Test

CE= (average of items Glossed in) Chinese and English

E= (average of items Glossed in) English

C= (average of items Glossed in) Chinese

Averages are used again in this part, for it is more convenient to illustrate the results of the test. The full score is one point for each item and from the table above it could be found that the mean of the scores in glossing in Chinese reaches 0.531, which is the highest among the three types and the means of the scores (i.e. 0.406 and 0.386 respectively) in other two types are very close to each other. On the other hand, the standard deviations of the three tests are close to one another, which demonstrates that the subjects did not differ much in the performance in each of the three types of glossing.

To compare the different effects of the three glossing types, Friedman Test for several related samples in the SPSS has been employed in this test.

The following table (Table 4-7) is taken directly from the result of Friedman Test.

TABLE 4-7
TEST STATISTICS IN BT1

N	60
Chi-Square	7.031
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.030

(Friedman Test)

This table demonstrates that the scores of the three types of glossing are significantly different from one another because the significance value reaches a level of .030, which is smaller than .05. As a result, it could be concluded that the effects of the three different types of glossing differ significantly from one another.

Taking into consideration what we have discussed about Table 4-6, among the three types of glossing, glossing in Chinese (C) is the most effective in enhancing the breadth of word knowledge in incidental vocabulary acquisition and also it reaches a significant level. Glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) comes next. The least effective is the type of glossing in English (E).

The reason why the type of glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) failed to obtain the highest retention rate in terms of the breadth of word knowledge may be owing to various reasons. First of all, some students did not read carefully or even just ignored the English definition on encountering this type of glossing, which is consistent with the finding from the interview with students after the first testing. English definitions, in general, are much longer than Chinese ones, or their Chinese "equivalents," more exactly. As a consequence, subjects were in such a hurry to finish the reading task that they may just scan the Chinese definition following its English counterpart swiftly and hastily. This is in line with what has been discovered in previous research (Xu, 2010). As has been claimed by Prince (1996: 489), this phenomenon is "one of attitude rather than of processing skill itself." He has further pointed out that it is needed to "remedy the situation not only by practice at developing the appropriate skills but also by working upon learners' perceptions of long-term aims and of the ways the task at hand contributes to them (ibid)."

On the other hand, for most of the subjects glossing in mother tongue is easier to understand and more convenient to memorize. Apart from this reason, it might be probable that without the long English definition preceding the short Chinese definition, subjects may experience a lower degree of anxiety while reading the gloss.

Glossing in English (E) is the least effective one. For one thing, just as has been mentioned above, English definitions are usually much longer than its Chinese counterparts. Therefore, it is more demanding for subjects to understand the English definitions and even more difficult to commit them to memory. For another, this might increase the degree of anxiety of subjects, thus forming a "vicious circle".

In a word, in the breadth test of immediate retention of incidental vocabulary acquisition, glossing in Chinese (C) is the most effective, and glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the second most effective, and the poorest is glossing in English (E).

1.2 Effects of glossing on the depth of word knowledge in immediate retention

Following the same pattern, another aspect, i.e. the aspect of the depth of word knowledge, is to be examined in this part. First of all, the results from the depth test of word knowledge (with four points as its full score) and those from Friedman Test are presented respectively in the following two tables (Table 4-8 and Table 4-9):

TABLE 4-8
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF DT1

	N	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
CE	60	1.99	.541	.17	2.67
E	60	1.825	.606	.50	2.83
C	60	1.689	.761	.17	2.67

DT1=the First Depth Test

CE= (average of items Glossing in) Chinese and English

E= (average of items Glossing in) English

C= (average of items Glossing in) Chinese

TABLE 4-9
TEST STATISTICS IN DT1

N	60
Chi-Square	10.545
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.005

(Friedman Test)

As could be seen from Table 4-8, the type of glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the highest in mean, next is the glossing-in-English (E) type and glossing in Chinese (C) is in the last place. From Table 4-9, it could be further concluded that this difference is rather significant, for the significance value reaches as high as $.005 < .01$.

Put it in other words, glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the most effective in enhancing the depth of word knowledge in the course of incidental vocabulary acquisition. And glossing in English (E) is less effective than glossing in both Chinese and English (CE), but more effective than glossing in Chinese (C) at a significant level.

The reasons for these results may be various. In the first place, mother tongue is easy to understand and also helpful in committing things to memory and using mother tongue is certainly the most rapid way (Prince, 1996). The acquisition of L2 words has been said to more often than not involve a mapping of the new word form onto pre-existing conceptual meanings or onto L1 translation equivalents as approximations (Ellis, 2002). Secondly, English definitions could provide an exact, clearer and rather full explanation for the target words, thus helping subjects build a network of words in the semantic field and acquiring more aspects of the target words. Also glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is conducive to understanding the text and also the target words. What is more important, just as Albert and Obler (1978 cited in Swan, 2002) have argued, words in one language, and their translation equivalents in the other, if there are any, are connected in the brain in a nonrandom way, much as a word and its synonym within the same language may be related in an associational network. That is to say, the mental lexicon of L1 and L2 may be connected with each other and together enhance the acquisition of words being learned. As a consequence, glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the most effective in enhancing the depth of word knowledge acquisition in the process of reading the text.

Glossing in English (E) ranks second in terms of the depth of word knowledge acquisition, for there is no mother tongue to help them with comprehension and neither connection nor association has occurred between L1 mental lexicon and L2 mental lexicon.

However, on the other hand, the so-called Chinese definitions of the target words are in most cases just their Chinese “equivalents”. These equivalents could not fully convey even the meaning of the target words, to say nothing of the knowledge about other aspects of target words. What is even worse, subject may misunderstand some aspects of the target words, thus hindering the acquisition of the depth of word knowledge. In addition, persistent reliance on L1 has been claimed to be probably one of a complex cluster of factors that lead to ineffective L2 learning and that this reliance stems largely from a desire to understand quickly (Prince, 1996). Therefore, it could be easily understood why words that have been glossed solely in Chinese (C) have been worst acquired in terms of the depth of word knowledge.

In conclusion, glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the most effective one in enhancing the depth of word knowledge in terms of the immediate retention, next is glossing in English (E), and glossing in Chinese (C) is the poorest of the three. In addition, this difference in effectiveness has reaches a rather significant level.

2. Effects of glossing on delayed retention

How the three different types of glossing affect the delayed retention of the two respective aspects of the breadth and the depth of word knowledge is to be explored in detail in this part.

2.1 Effects of glossing on the breadth of word knowledge in delayed retention

Table 4-10 and Table 4-11 in the below demonstrate the results of the second breadth test of word knowledge (with one point as its full score) and the results from Friedman Test.

TABLE 4-10
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF BT2

	N	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
CE	60	.267	.209	.00	.83
E	60	.233	.228	.00	.83
C	60	.253	.256	.00	.83

BT2=the Second Breadth Test

CE= (average of items Glossing in) Chinese and English

E= (average of items Glossing in) English

C= (average of items Glossing in) Chinese

TABLE 4-11
TEST STATISTICS IN BT2

N	60
Chi-Square	.497
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.780

(Friedman Test)

From Table 4-10, it could be seen that different from what has been found in the first breadth test or the immediate breadth test, the mean of the scores for the words glossed in both Chinese and English (CE) is the highest among the three. The type of glossing solely in Chinese (E) falls to the second place. And the same as the results in the immediate testing session, glossing in English (E) is the least effective one among the three. However, the difference in the breadth of word knowledge in delayed retention testing is not significant, for the significance value is .780, much higher than .05.

In other words, there is no significant difference among the three types of glossing in the delayed test of the breadth of word knowledge.

2.2 Effects of glossing on the depth of word knowledge in delayed retention

Following the same pattern as the previous one, this part is to explore how the other aspect, the aspect of the depth, is affected by the three different types of glossing.

Table 4-12 in the below demonstrate the results of the second depth test of word knowledge (with four points as its full score), and Table 4-13 the results from Friedman Test.

TABLE 4-12
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF DT2

	N	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
CE	60	1.386	.765	.00	2.83
E	60	1.119	.892	.00	2.83
C	60	.925	.968	.00	2.67

DT2=the Second Depth Test

CE= (average of items Glossing in) Chinese and English

E= (average of items Glossing in) English

C= (average of items Glossing in) Chinese

TABLE 4-13
TEST STATISTICS IN DT2

N	60
Chi-Square	26.995
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

(Friedman Test)

From Table 4-10, we could see the standard deviation of the type of glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the lowest, which entails that students have varied least in the performance of the depth of word knowledge test. And in addition, at the same time, the mean of CE is also the highest. And the same with the first depth test (DT1), glossing in English (E) is placed in the second place, and glossing solely in Chinese (C) is the last one. And this difference is very significant, for the significant value has reaches a level much lower than .01.

In other words, glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the most effective in the delayed retention of the depth of word knowledge at a quite significant level. In addition, glossing in English (E) is the second most effective one in enhancing this aspect of word knowledge in delayed testing. Furthermore, glossing in Chinese (C) is the least effective one.

The reasons for the most effectiveness of glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) may be explained from several aspects. First of all, just as has been mentioned in the part discussing the first depth test of word knowledge, it is very beneficial to have both English and Chinese, the mother tongue, in command to better understand the text and the target words. In the second place, the definitions in the two languages may compensate with each other, one easy to understand and remember and the other exact, precise and accurate, thus enhancing the acquisition of more aspects of

word knowledge. Last but not least, when two languages are related or associated with each other in some way, the L1 and L2 may interact with each other, thus connecting the two languages together and strengthening the network of words within the target language and between the two languages.

As to the type of glossing in English (E), it could be said that since only English is available to them, subjects could only rely on it. Some may not understand the meaning of some English definitions very well. On the other hand, networks of the semantic field could be built, but only within the English language, rather than between the English and the Chinese languages. Thus the connections of any kind may not be as strong and firm as those in the case of glossing in both Chinese and English (CE). As a result, glossing solely in English (E) is less effective than glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) in enhancing retention rate of the depth of word knowledge.

The reason why glossing solely in Chinese (C) is the least effective one lies in the fact that though the mother tongue is the quickest and easiest way to learn the aspect of meaning of new words, and in most cases the superficial meaning, it is far from accurate and exact in explaining the new words. Subjects may miss some points or misunderstand the meaning of the new word. What is more, since it is very easy to commit meanings of new words in Chinese to memory, little effort has been made, thus increasing the possibility of forgetting. As a consequence, the type of glossing in Chinese is the poorest in enhancing delayed retention of the depth of word knowledge.

In a word, from the aspect of the depth of word knowledge in the delayed testing, one aspect of our second research question has been answered, i.e. the type of glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the most effective one in enhancing the delayed retention of the depth of word knowledge, and glossing in English (E) ranks second, and glossing in Chinese is the poorest in this aspect.

V. CONCLUSION

The major findings of the present study are illustrated as follows:

First of all, a better understating of the reading passage does contribute to a higher rate of incidental vocabulary acquisition in terms of the breadth of word knowledge. However, a better understanding of the text does not guarantee a higher rate of the development of the depth of word knowledge in the course of incidental vocabulary acquisition.

Secondly, glossing in both Chinese and English (CE) is the most effective in enhancing the depth of word knowledge in both the immediate retention and in the delayed retention.

Furthermore, glossing in Chinese (C) is the most effective in the immediate retention of the breadth of word knowledge. But this type is the least effective in enhancing the depth of word knowledge in both the immediate and the delayed retention.

Moreover, glossing in English (E) is more effective than glossing in Chinese (C) in the depth of word knowledge in both the immediate and the delayed retention. However, the effect of this type of glossing is the poorest in enhancing the breadth of word knowledge in the immediate retention.

Lastly, no significant difference has been found in the delayed retention of the breadth of word knowledge among these three different types of glossing.

As could be concluded from the major findings, the type of glossing in Chinese is the most effective in enhancing the immediate retention of the breadth of word knowledge; and the type of glossing in both Chinese and English is the most effective in enhancing the depth of word knowledge in both the immediate and the delayed retention.

Therefore, here come the theoretical implications from the present study. First of all, this study sheds some light on the study of the depth of word knowledge and on how to enhance the incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. Moreover, the English language and the Chinese language have the potential to help build networks between them, and similar with the view of the similarity in structure of L1 and L2 mental lexicon found by Wolter (2001), L1 and L2 mental lexicon may be connected, or related in some way, with each other and facilitate the learning of new words.

On the other hand, there also exist practical implications for editors in the field of English textbook or English reading material publishing and for teachers in foreign language teaching.

For editors of English textbooks, it is necessary to specify different purposes of each part. For example, as for fast-reading parts in textbooks, the purpose is to enhance students' reading speed and train their reading skills. And a higher rate of the immediate retention of the breadth of word knowledge is essential for fast-reading parts. Therefore, for the fast-reading part in textbooks, the type of glossing in Chinese is recommended. As with the intensive reading part, with its main purpose to develop students' depth of word knowledge and productive word knowledge in a long run, it is important to provide glossing in both Chinese and English, for this type of glossing has been proved by this present study to be the most effective in enhancing the depth of word knowledge in both the immediate and the delayed retention. For the extensive reading part or after-class reading part, if its purpose is to improve students reading ability, glossing in Chinese is preferred; if its purpose is to enlarge the receptive vocabulary of students, glossing in both Chinese and English is recommended, for it is the most effective in long-term retention of the breadth of word knowledge.

The same is true for the glossing type in various reading materials in English, including novels, magazines and newspapers, it is important for editors to know the purpose of the reading material. If it is intended to train students' reading skills, glossing in Chinese is enough. If its purpose is to enlarge student's receptive vocabulary or develop students' depth of word knowledge, it is recommended to gloss in both Chinese and English.

Similarly, for English teachers, the types of explaining new words also depend on different purposes. For example, when making an explanation of important words, whose productive use is required, English teachers should make full use of definitions in both languages to help students build semantic networks between words. In addition, they should try to help students cultivate a sound habit and a correct attitude toward the English learning, and help them get rid of their habit of overdependence on the mother tongue in the long run (Prince, 1996; Swan, 2002). If only receptive knowledge of some words is required, it is also necessary to give an explanation of these words in both Chinese and English to enhance students' long-term retention of words. If the purpose is just for immediate text comprehension, a brief explanation in Chinese is enough.

In spite of the fact that great efforts have been made and much importance has been attached to the present study, there are several limitations to the present study due to the limitation of time, manpower, and the feasibility of carrying out the experiment. Consequently, in the future research, larger numbers of subjects should be included in the future experiment to improve the generalizability of the conclusion. Furthermore, subjects of different proficiency in English, including college students of different grades, junior and senior high school English learners, might be included. Last but not least, the time span between the testing sections should be lengthened to thoroughly investigate the long-term effects of different types of treatments (i.e. different types of glossing in the present case).

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Perceptions of Indonesian Teachers and Students on the Use of *Quipper School* as an Online Platform for Extended EFL Learning

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Abstract—In Indonesia, the globalization era has directed the policy makers to establish English as a compulsory subject in the secondary school curriculum. However, the major issue in pursuing the goal of the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) has been the imbalance between the amount of teaching materials and the time to teach the materials. The availability of the Internet has provided a concept that learning is not just a one-time event to be conducted at schools, but learning is also a continuous process that can be conducted beyond the school time. One of the learning platforms in the Internet is *Quipper School*, and this platform has been used by EFL teachers in Indonesia. This article reports the result of research on the EFL teachers' perceptions on the teaching of EFL and the reasons for using *Quipper School* as a platform for the students' EFL learning. Three EFL teachers teaching in senior high school level and six students who have used the platform with the three teachers were involved in this research. The results of the study show that the Indonesian EFL teachers used the platform not only for coping with the limited time available for EFL teaching, but also due to the significant value of the platform to support the students' EFL learning.

Index Terms—Quipper school, EFL teachers, online platform, extended EFL learning

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English has been established as a foreign language (EFL) and taught in secondary schools. Outside the schools, the students use Indonesian as a national language or vernaculars for communication with people from the same regions or islands. This means that the only English exposure EFL students may get is in the schools. Unfortunately, with the application of the 2013 curriculum, Indonesian secondary school students learn English only for two lesson hours a week (45 minutes x 2). This condition leads to an issue towards the lack of time in English teaching and learning process. Students do not get enough time to learn English so they might get problem in the process of mastering EFL. The time limitation forces the English teachers to put students' understanding on the second place. They tend to put more attention on how to cover all materials in the limited time in a semester. One way to cope with the shortage of time, some teachers turn into the role of technology.

One of the recent technologies applied in language classroom is *Quipper School*. It aims to empower teachers to help their students by combining quality learning content with an advanced online platform. The platform also provides practical experience for students in using technology in their daily life. It has two kinds of portals namely teacher (or tutor) portal and student portal. Each portal has different functions and benefits. Particularly, for English subjects, *Quipper School* covers materials which focus on the English skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Accordingly, we assumed that the shortage of time for EFL learning in Indonesian secondary schools could possibly be solved by adopting the advantages offered by integrating English learning with *Quipper School* as an extended learning platform.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nowadays, school students who were born from 1998 up to 2001 are categorized to generation Z (Robinson, 2016). Generation Z is generation of people who were born between 1995 and 2015. They are of the Internet generation, digital native people. They are fluent gadget users. Moreover, they rely much on their gadgets. They use their smart phone not only as communication aid but they also use it in most aspects in their everyday activities such as playing music, browsing, watching videos, doing assignments, online shopping, or playing games. It is even impossible to forbid them not to operate their gadgets in the classroom. Linked to the phenomena above, it is better for English teachers to integrate technology in the teaching and learning process so the students can maximize the use of their gadgets in the class for good purposes to support their learning. Cook (2015) suggested teachers adopt technology in teaching generation Z and stay connected all the time.

Our review of research reports showed that EFL teachers have utilized technologies for English learning such as Power Point, Video, Electronic dictionary, Blog, Facebook, Skype, and Edmodo. In addition, our review on previous studies showed that integrating technology in EFL learning creates some positive effects. Banados's (2006) results of research indicated that students involved in technological rich classroom showed a remarkable improvement in speaking skill and improvements in all other language skills (listening, reading, and writing) and language components, especially in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. A research study conducted by Ahmad (2012) shows that integration of media and technology to the class can boost students' participation, promote student-centered mode, create positive atmosphere, and improve the students' writing ability. Kamnoetsin (2014) found that Facebook helped to break space-time constraints and provided pleasant experiences, improved students' writing skills including grammar and vocabulary. Thus, Facebook served as an efficient means to facilitate learning process by providing important English knowledge and eased the students in sharing knowledge

Some studies focused on the students' attitudes towards the implementation of technology in English classroom. Leakey and Ranchoux (2006) found that blended CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) made students respond more positively toward the learning process and they prefer this approach to the traditional class. Lin's (2003) research showed that the majority of Taiwanese EFL learners had positive attitudes towards the use of multimedia resources in their language program. They were motivated to extend their language abilities by surfing the Internet, to record and save their own writing and to make use of multimedia resources for developing their reading skills. Suthiwartnarueput and Wasanasomsihi's (2012) research revealed that students had positive attitudes towards the use of Facebook as a means of learning grammar and writing. As an alternative learning tool, Facebook provided them a convenient and attractive means to be involved in discussions with the teacher and other users who had better grammatical knowledge.

Previous studies have shown positive sides about integrating technology for ELT. Unfortunately, a study about the application of *Quipper School* in ELT context is still a rare occasion. Therefore, this study attempts to fill the gap by providing the data about the way of English teachers and students implement *Quipper School* as their supplementary English learning. It aims to investigate the perceptions of Indonesian teachers and students on how *Quipper School* can be implemented as an online platform for extended EFL learning. This study is significant as it attempts to provide a means to make up the shortage of time in the EFL teaching and learning in Indonesian secondary schools. (www.quipperschool.com)

III. METHOD

In this study, we use a descriptive qualitative design to examine the perceptions of teachers and students on the implementation of *Quipper School* as an online platform for extended EFL learning. The subjects of the study were three English teachers and six students of a senior high school at Mojokerto City which is located in the Province of East Java, Indonesia. Best and Khan (1993) stated that care in selecting sample is more important than in increasing the size of the sample. They argue that in qualitative approach the authority of the subjects are given more emphasis over the amount of the samples.

Each of the teachers involved in this study, who is addressed by using pseudonyms, taught students from different grades. Mr. Ary taught Grade XII students; Ms. Merry taught Grade XI students; and Ms. Terry taught Grade X. Each teacher has different length of experience in teaching EFL as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
TEACHERS' DATA

Name	Teaching Experience	Grade Taught
Mr Ary	20 years	12
Ms Merry	18 years	11
Ms Terry	9 years	10

It can be seen from the table that the teacher subjects have different years of teaching experience. In addition to the teachers, two students from each grade were involved in this study.

Instrument is a tool used to collect data in order to conduct any research (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 1985: 71). To collect the data for this research, we used one instrument, the interview guide. The interview guide is semi-structured, meaning that it is not a fixed form of interview questions. Interviews were conducted with the English teachers and students (see the Interview Guides in Appendices 1 and 2). For this research, we analyzed the data in several steps as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The steps include data reduction, data display, data verification, and conclusion.

Through the process of interview, we obtained the data in order to achieve the research objectives. It should be noted that observation of the practice in using *Quipper School* was not conducted because the platform was used in the process of extended learning outside classroom. However, we tried to cross-check the teachers' data by conducting interviews with the students. The questions included in the interview refer to the subheading presented in this section and arranged conforming to the precise order.

IV. RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in two parts: teachers' perceptions and students' perceptions on the use of *Quipper School* as online platform for extended EFL learning.

A. Teachers' Perceptions on the Use of *Quipper School*

The teachers were asked to inform how they perceive about some aspects regarding the implementation of *Quipper School* as an online platform for extended EFL learning. The aspects include whether or not they applied *Quipper School*, used *Quipper School* to choose materials, and used *Quipper School* to create materials. In addition, they were also asked whether they think *Quipper school* eases their jobs, solves problems of time shortage, and there is an obstacle in the implementation. The teachers' answers to the questions are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF *QUIPPER SCHOOL*

No	Statement	Responses		
		Mr. Ary	Ms. Merry	Ms. Terry
1	Applying <i>Quipper School</i> in English learning	√	√	√
2	Choosing material in <i>Quipper School</i>	√	√	√
3	Creating material in <i>Quipper School</i>	√	x	x
4	<i>Quipper School</i> can ease teacher in teaching and learning process	√	√	√
5	<i>Quipper school</i> can solve the problem about lack of time	√	√	√
6	There is obstacle when implementing <i>Quipper School</i>	x	√	√

(1) The Use of *Quipper School* as an Online Platform

With regard to the use of *Quipper School* as an online platform, Mr Ary, a senior teacher in this school, agreed that the features of *Quipper School* were truly beneficial in coping with the lack of time in teaching English. As a pioneer, he initiated and encouraged other teachers to use *Quipper School* as extended learning platform. As a teacher who played many roles, he sometimes was absent to teach. He said "I sometimes cannot teach because of some reasons, but it is not a problem as I can rely on the use of *Quipper School*. I can pick the exercises for the students and also the deadline." Therefore, he made up the materials and had the remedial instruction by using *Quipper School*. The students whose scores were under the minimum criteria of mastery (MCM) were given an additional test or assignment through *Quipper School* to add their scores in order to reach the MCM.

Ms Merry stated that she often integrated technology in teaching. More particularly, she used *Quipper School* outside classroom for three times. She chose to use *Quipper School* because many of the students needed to do more exercises outside classroom to improve their understanding of the material. She reckoned that the amount of materials in English subject established in the curriculum had no balance with the amount of time allotment set by the government. She felt that it was impossible to cover all the materials in one semester without extra activities for the students. Accordingly, in addition to the time for classroom instruction, she asked the students to practice beyond the school hours to improve their listening ability. In her opinion, it was good to give the students additional assignments through *Quipper School* to help students learn the targeted materials.

Ms Terry, the other teacher interviewed for this study, usually used *Quipper School* for a post-learning activity. She asked the students to do exercises based on what they had learned. When the time was not enough to explain a particular topic, she asked the students to continue learning through *Quipper School*. Furthermore, before mid-term of final term examinations, more grammar-related exercises or reading passages were normally provided in *Quipper School* for the students to study independently at home.

(2) Selection of Materials and assignments in *Quipper School*

In the case of material selection, Mr Ary emphasized that he would not give difficult exercises because to the students. He stated that the intention to give exercises is to drill the students due to time limitation for classroom learning. He selected the materials on the basis of the instructional objectives and the topic discussed in the class. He argued that this was just extended learning which took place out of obligatory hours so that he only took the exercises from *Quipper School*.

Ms Merry had some considerations in selecting the learning materials to be included in *Quipper School*. She selected the materials on the basis of the topic the students have discussed. She thought if the students need extra exercises in comprehending one grammatical topic such as *tenses*, she would provide it through *Quipper School* to catch-up the time. She said, "I simply choose exercises from *Quipper School* as students' homework. The materials have been explained in the classroom". She did not make detail considerations on whether the materials contain some cultural information or not, or provide meaningful content, or use the standard English, but she ensured that the exercise is in accordance with the student's level of proficiency. In addition, she tended to combine the materials that she already has with some other materials rather than to create or adopt it.

Ms Terry clarified that she selected materials in *Quipper School* which were appropriate with the students' level of proficiency. She argued that with heavy workloads in the school and additional job as an English private tutor, she did not create new materials. She also explained that a lot of understandable materials are available *Quipper School*. Furthermore, she stated that it was easy to select materials and match the, with the topic that is discussed.

(3) Features of *Quipper School* and Obstacles in the Implementation

Quipper School is known to be different from other existing learning websites because of its features that enable teachers to analyze the students' scores. Mr Ary found that he could ascertain the range of the students' scores and monitor the progress of students' outcomes. He can also analyze the scores lower than the MCM as the consideration for giving students remedial assignments. Then the scores can be processed to determine the final scores of the students.

Ms Merry thought that *Quipper school* is a comprehensive learning website. For example, *Quipper School* outperforms Edmodo as the latter does not provide any score analysis and feedback provision. She said "Score analysis provided by Quipper School helps me, as the teacher in knowing the condition of my students and be the source of reflection." Thus, *Quipper School* offers various materials based on the topic. All participants contended that finding materials via the Internet could be risky because of the abundance. To select which materials are trustworthy and feasible to use would be very time-consuming.

Accordingly, equipped by those special features, the teacher participants perceived that this learning website could cope with the shortage of time in learning English in the classroom. The four required skills in learning English are arduous to be realized in 2 hours of lesson in a week. Hence, one of teacher participants divided those four skills into listening and reading material and exercise were given through *Quipper School* meanwhile speaking and writing skill which required intensive guidance by the teachers would be carried out in the classroom. Listening skill which is highlighted by all participants to be difficult to undertake in the classroom is sustained by the feature of *Quipper School*. The flexibility of *Quipper School* that can be accessed with smartphone or laptop allows the students to do the assignments whenever and wherever they want.

On the other hand, the obstacles in the implementation of *Quipper School* were found as well. One major problem that is highlighted by teacher participants is incapability in controlling the reliability of the students' scores. Ms Merry and Ms Terry suggested not to rely on the scores derived from assignments given through *Quipper School*. Since working the assignments through *Quipper School* is outside the school hours, the teachers cannot monitor how the students work on it. Commonly, the assignment given through *Quipper School* is in the form of multiple choice. This kind of test is known to be low in validity because it only requires students to memorize or guess the stems. Students are also more likely to cheat on the answers by copying the other students' answers. Ms Merry said that it is better to combine the scores derived from assignments given through *Quipper School* with the scores derived from other assignments, project. She added that emphasized that it was important to judge on the students' process rather than the final product.

It is important to note that the teachers perceived that the students tended be tricky as they outperform the teachers in terms of the use of technology. The students are digital natives as they relied on gadget, social media, and the Internet. Meanwhile, the teachers are digital migrants who struggle to move from the old era to the digital era whereby all the aspects of life can be integrated with technology especially on their field, TEFL. Thus, the biggest obstacles are perceived by the technologically illiterate teachers. In broad sense, *Quipper School* cannot be massively implemented if the teachers who are supposed to be technologically literate seem to be against the integration of technology with learning.

B. Supports from the Students' Perception

To complete the whole view about the use of *Quipper School*, the researchers added different perspectives from the students to confirm what the participant teachers had revealed. Besides, *Quipper School* not only can be accessed by the students only if the teacher requests them to do but also the students can access any material whenever they want and wherever they are. Mostly, the students answered that they would access *Quipper School* when the teacher gave them homework, assignment for score remedial, assignment due to the teacher is away or exercise as preparation for test in *Quipper School*. The material that could not be discussed in the class due to limited time would be given through *Quipper School* in the form of summary from the teacher. On the other hand, two of six students who got a chance to be interviewed confessed that they never accessed *Quipper School* by their own initiative. The rest of participants said that they did access *Quipper School* because they perceived that they needed more exercises that were not provided in the textbook.

Based on the students' perspectives, one of features from *Quipper School* which enable students to know their score and its analysis, can be a motivation for them to learn from their mistakes. The notification not only provides the score of the students but also the feedback. Therefore, the students realized about their strengths and weaknesses after doing the assignments. The feedback from the teachers is very helpful for them in terms of giving explanation why they did it wrong so that they can learn from the mistakes and would not do the same thing in the future. Besides, the score analysis helps them to be aware of their achievement. Knowing this information, the students admitted that they could maintain their achievement in order to avoid declining. They all agreed that this feature increased their motivation in learning. In fact, feedback can be obtained not only from the teacher but also from the students. The feature in *Quipper School* allows the students to communicate and have discussion with other students related to the assignments via *Quipper message*.

One student participant said that if she had not understood the material yet then she would log-in her *Quipper School* account to do some more exercises. The problem was revealed from student's perspective when using *Quipper School* is bad internet connection. It is the only obstacle in using *Quipper School*. There is no problem coming from the

Quipper School itself but the external factor that is supposed to support it. If they have to do the assignments in their house, for instance, they will get trouble if the area in which they live does not have smooth internet connection.

V. DISCUSSION

The analysis of the responses of the teachers and the students showed that *Quipper School* can be used as an online platform for extended EFL learning. As an online platform, *Quipper School* can be used either in the classroom or outside the classroom. Because of the limited time allocation for EFL learning in the classroom, all the teachers thought that *Quipper School* would be best applied for extended EFL learning beyond the classroom. All the teachers agreed that *Quipper School* helped them in various ways such as providing materials for exercises and assignments as well as providing tools for score analysis. Generally, *Quipper School* is beneficial for EFL learning. Based on the findings, either teachers or students perceived that *Quipper School* is helpful to support the mastery of English skills. More particularly, *Quipper school* is beneficial for practicing listening and reading skills.

In the process of selecting the materials or assignments, it is impossible to escape from the things that need to be considered in the process. The consideration of selecting materials and assignments is pivotal principal that McDonough and Shaw (1993) point out. They stated that the ability to evaluate and supplement teaching materials effectively is a very important professional activity for EFL teachers and needs to be conducted continuously. All participants tended to select material based on the topic of the meeting rather than selected the materials in accordance with the theory of material selection.

The Investigation of the pattern of material selection showed that the teachers tended to adapt the materials rather than to adopt or to create materials. The teachers tried to match the materials to the students' level of proficiency. The adoption of materials was aimed to reduce the students' difficulties in working on the materials. Kitao & Kitao (1997) said that it is better to provide assignment that is slightly higher in their level of difficulty than the students' current level of English proficiency. An important thing that cannot be slipped in selecting materials are the relevancy between the content and the students' age or cultural background (Charalambous, 2011). If adapting the material is enough to obtain reliable material and assignment then the teachers did not really have to create it anymore. Material and assignment given through *Quipper School* is just supplementary and continuation of the series of learning activity. As a matter of fact, the shortage of time doesn't only exist in English learning but also in creating the materials.

All the barriers and features should correspond very well. The teachers are supposed to be creative in handling the problems related to the use of *Quipper School* as an online platform for extended EFL learning. This practice cannot be considered to be formal blended learning which arranges the balance amount between face-to-face learning and online meeting. Blended learning is rooted in the idea that learning is not just a one-time event—learning is a continuous process (Singh, 2003). We assumed that this kind of implementation is variation of learning activities which are used by the teachers to cover the shortage of time or to solve the unexpected situation. Accordingly, the major barriers perceived by the teachers deals with the reliability of the assignments.

VI. CONCLUSION

This article has presented the results of analysis on the use of *Quipper School* as an online platform in extended EFL learning. Briefly stated, all of the teachers have implemented *Quipper School* as a means of extended EFL learning for more than a year. The capability of *Quipper School* in providing liable materials eases the teachers and students in coping with limited time. Score analysis, deadline setting, trustworthy materials and feedback provision are believed to be some of the benefits that can be earned from *Quipper School*. Moreover, this platform can also be used by all English teachers and learners who need additional learning materials and exercises. Based on what were presented, the teachers felt unimpeded in terms of giving extra exercises to the students even if they could not be taught in the classroom. In addition, the students were motivated to learn English through *Quipper School* especially for practicing listening skill since the limitation of time made them unable to practice listening in the classroom. However, the incredulity of the teachers relying on the scores derived from the assignments given through *Quipper School* is not supposed to be barriers in implementing *Quipper School*. Given that there are more benefits offered by the use of *Quipper School*, the teachers should remain considering that this website is worth using particularly in terms of giving more exercises in a limited time. In relation to blended learning, this practice cannot be considered entirely blended learning course since the use of *Quipper School* is only carried out in the moment when the teachers need it in order to catch up the time and materials. Besides, it is not part of the curriculum whereby all the schools are obliged to implement it. Yet, it is an evidence of good practice performed by the teachers in handling the issues encountered during the teaching and learning process.

APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW GUIDE USED WITH THE TEACHERS

1. Do you know about *Quipper School*?
2. Have you ever applied it in the English learning?
3. In what occasion do you usually ask your student to access their *Quipper* account?
4. Do you design your own material in the *Quipper School* or simply select it?

5. How do you select or design the material in the *Quipper School*?
6. Does *Quipper School* ease you in the teaching and learning process?
7. If so, in what way?
8. Does the platform help you to combat a problem about lack of time?
9. Do you like using *Quipper school*? Why?
10. Do you find any obstacles when implementing *Quipper School*?
11. Is there anything that should be improved from *Quipper School*?
12. Do you have any suggestions for English teachers who want to apply *Quipper School*?

APPENDIX 2. INTERVIEW GUIDE USED WITH THE STUDENTS

1. Do you know about *QuipperSchool*?
2. Have you ever applied it to learn English?
3. In what occasion does your teacher ask you to access your *QuipperSchool*?
4. Have you ever accessed your *Quipper School* because of your own need? Why?
5. Does *QuipperSchool* help you in learning English?
6. If so, in what way?
7. Do you learn English more using *Quipper School*?
8. Do you like *Quipper School*? Why?
9. Do you find any difficulties while you are using *Quipper School*?
10. Is there anything that should be improved from *QuipperSchool*?

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A Brief Study on the Qualities of an Effective Sentence

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Abstract—This paper aims to introduce the five essential qualities of an effective sentence in English, that is, correctness, clearness, unity, coherence and emphasis. By analyzing these essential qualities, English learners can make and use English sentences more effectively and efficiently.

Index Terms—correctness, clearness, unity, coherence, emphasis

I. INTRODUCTION

As we all know, sentence is a basic unit for people to communicate with others. In English, a complete sentence should be structurally complete, that is, it should contain at least a subject and a predicate. In form, it should begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop, or a question mark, or an exclamation mark. To be effective, a sentence should consist of the following qualities, that is, correctness, unity, clarity, coherence and emphasis (Wang, 2003).

II. THE FIVE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE SENTENCE

A. Correctness

The first quality of an effective sentence is correctness, that is, the sentence should be grammatically correct. For Chinese learners, they usually encounter two kinds of language difficulties in regard to this quality, that is, sentence fragments and dangles.

1. Sentence fragments

Grammatical correctness requires that a sentence possesses a subject and a predicate verb or with either of them stated or implied. A sentence lacking either of the essential elements is grammatically wrong and should not be regarded as a sentence but only a fragment (Wang, 2003). For example:

(1) Fragment: The problem being that a lot of college students can not find their ideal job after graduation.

Sentence: The problem is that a lot of college students can not find their ideal job after graduation.

(2) Fragment: He told us to go to the corner of the street. Leaving us to find the way to the new bar.

Sentence: He told us to go to the corner of the street, leaving us to find the way to the new bar.

2. Dangers

A dangler is a kind of grammatical error because it is an element unrelated to any word in a sentence. "Though it may appear in any part of the sentence, it usually occurs at the beginning. Since the subject in the sentence with a dangler is not the subject for the action described by the dangler, the way to correct this kind of error is either to supply a subject or to change the dangling phrase into a clause" (Wang, 2003, p. 47). For instance:

(1) Dangling: Opening the window, a lovely little girl caught his eye.

Revised: Opening the window, he saw a lovely little girl.

Or: When he opened the window, a lovely little girl caught his eye.

(2) Dangling: To win the English speaking competition, the first interview should be passed.

Revised: To win the English speaking competition, a student should pass the first interview.

Or: If a student wants to win the English speaking competition, he or she should pass the first interview.

(3) Dangling: Although as pretty a baby as his elder sister, his birth was practically unnoticed.

Revised: Although as pretty a baby as his elder sister, he was not noticed when he was born.

(4) Dangling: After watching the movie, what impressed him most is Alice's courage.

Revised: After watching the movie, he was impressed by Alice's courage.

Or: After he has watched the movie, what impressed him most is Alice's courage.

(5) Dangling: On entering the shop, a noisy sound was heard.

Revised: On entering the shop, he heard a noisy sound.

Or: When they entered the shop, a noisy sound was heard.

(6) Dangling: Looking out of the window, a well-dressed man attracted his attention.

Revised: Looking out of the window, he saw a well-dressed man.

Or: When he looked out of the window, a well-dressed man attracted his attention.

From the above-mentioned examples, it can be seen that fragments and dangles are undesirable grammatical mistakes. Thus, for English learners, they should have a clear understanding of the first essential quality of a sentence,

that is, correctness. In that case, they can avoid writing and making incomplete sentences and such grammatical errors.

B. *Clearness*

To achieve the purpose of communication, a sentence's meaning should be clear. However, misunderstanding and ambiguity are often caused by misplaced modifiers, vague references of pronouns, vague comparisons and confusing shifts, etc.

1. Misplaced modifiers

The meaning of a sentence can be changed dramatically by changes in the position of modifiers. For example:

He was invited to a ball this evening.

He was invited this evening to a ball.

She pretended not to know the truth.

She did not pretend to know the truth.

In the first two sentences, the modifier is "this evening". It is used to modify "the ball" and "be invited" respectively. In the first sentence, people can know that the ball is held this evening. And the second sentence means the time he received his invitation is this evening. Similarly, the last two sentences' meanings are also totally different by the changes of the position of the modifier "not". The former sentence shows that she knew the truth. On the contrary, the latter one implies that she did not know the truth.

Generally speaking, a modifier should be placed next or as close as possible to the words it modifies (Wang, 2003). Misplaced modifiers may result in ambiguity or misunderstanding. For instance:

Ambiguous: The idea he mentioned at first sounded good.

In this example, the modifier "at first" is ambiguous because it can modify "the idea" or "the idea he mentioned sounded good". Thus, the sentence can be revised as "The idea he first mentioned sounded good" or "The idea he mentioned sounded good at first". Here are more examples:

(1) Ambiguous: They sold a computer to the store that was damaged.

Improved: They sold a computer that was damaged to the store.

(2) Ambiguous: I watched a touching story in a TV program about college students.

Improved: I watched a touching story about college students in a TV program.

2. Vague references of pronouns

Ambiguity in the meaning of a sentence is sometimes caused by a pronoun and its vague reference. When people are speaking or writing, they should be sure that the reference of a pronoun is clear. "If the pronoun has an antecedent — as nearly all nouns have — the antecedent should be unmistakable. The reader should never be in doubt as to what word or idea the pronoun refers to; for if there is uncertainty the whole sentence may be confusing" (Wang, 2003, p. 54). For example:

She was knocked down by a car, but it was not serious.

He told my brother that he was right.

In each of the two faulty sentences there is a pronoun with ambiguous reference. In the first sentence, the only noun in the second sentence is "car", but "it" does not refer to it. So the sentence can be revised as "She was knocked down by a car, but was not badly hurt". In the second sentence, the second "he" can cause misunderstanding because it can refer to the subject or the "my brother". Therefore, the sentence can be rewritten as the following: "I'm right," he said to my brother, or "You are right," he said to my brother, or "He thought that he was right and said so to my brother".

More examples:

(1) Ambiguous: The railway station was crowded with people. Some were talking and laughing loudly. Others were drinking and smoking. That made the young woman sick.

Improved: The railway station was crowded with people. Some were talking and laughing loudly. Others were drinking and smoking. That atmosphere made the young woman sick.

(2) Ambiguous: Jack held a hamburger in one hand and the mobile phone in the other. He kept eating it while he talked.

Improved: Jack held in one hand the mobile phone and in the other a hamburger, which he kept eating while he talked.

(3) Ambiguous: The poet spent a lot of her time writing, but none of them was published during his lifetime.

Improved: The poet spent a lot of her time writing, but none of her poems was published during his lifetime.

(4) Ambiguous: The student used some figures of speech in his paper, which the teacher disapproved of.

Improved: The teacher disapproved of the student's use of figures of speech in his paper.

3. Vague comparisons

Ambiguous and confusing comparisons should be avoided in English sentences. In other words, the thing to be compared must be specified. "When comparing to other members of its own class, one must exclude it from the group by adding 'other', 'else', or any other word similar in meaning. But when comparing a thing to members of another group, one does not need to do so. Special care should be taken when the superlative degree of either an adjective or an adverb is used" (Wang, 2003, p. 60). For example:

(1) Vague: His voice is more attractive than I.

Improved: His voice is more attractive than mine.

(2) Vague: Linda is more clever than any students in her class.

Improved: Linda is more clever than any other students in her class.

(3) Vague: The report he has made is more practical than Mary made.

Improved: The report he has made is more practical than the one Mary made.

Or: The report he has made is more practical than that Mary made.

4. Confusing shifts

Confusing shifts in structure can often cause ambiguity. For instance:

Shift: She did the homework assigned by the teacher and the lesson taught last class was reviewed.

In this sentence, the subject shifts from “she” to “the lesson” and the active voice shifts from the active to the passive. That is to say, this sentence has confusing shifts in subject and voice. Therefore, the sentence can be revised by changing “the lesson” to “she” and the passive to active so as to have consistency in both subject and voice.

Revised: She did the homework assigned by the teacher and reviewed the lesson taught last class.

More examples include confusing shift in person or number, confusing shift in tense and confusing shift in mood.

(1) Shift: An important thing for the secretary to know is that when writing a report, you should not plagiarize (confusing shift in person).

Revised: An important thing for the secretary to know is that when writing a report, she should not plagiarize.

(2) Shift: Those who want to study history should sign his name on this sheet of paper (confusing shift in number).

Revised: Those who want to study history should sign their names on this sheet of paper.

(3) Shift: He plays football every morning and drank coffee every afternoon (confusing shift in tense).

Revised: He plays football every morning and drinks coffee every afternoon.

(4) Shift: Write a term paper and you should hand it in before next Monday (confusing shift in mood).

Revised: Write a term paper and hand it in before next Monday.

C. Unity

In terms of meaning, a unified sentence should express a single complete thought. “It does not contain ideas that are not closely related, nor does it express a thought that is not complete by itself” (Ding, 1994, p. 54). For example:

Poor: Graduated from Qingdao University of Science and Technology last year, Wang Zonglin is very passionate and helpful to others.

In this sentence, the two parts of the sentence are not logically connected. It violates the principle of unity because people who graduated from Qingdao University of Science and Technology last year are not bound to be passionate and helpful to others. Therefore, this sentence can be rewritten as the following:

Revised: Wang Zonglin graduated from Qingdao University of Science and Technology last year. After graduation, he found a job and he was very popular among his colleges because he is very passionate and helpful to others.

Another example:

Poor: Ernest Hemingway is one of the famous novelists.

Revised: Ernest Hemingway is one of the famous novelists in the United States.

This first sentence is not effective because the idea expressed is incomplete: there is no mention of the time or country. Therefore, the second sentence is better because “in the United States” makes the sentence’s meaning clear and complete.

In daily English learning, unnecessary repetition in a sentence is another kind of common violation of the principle of unity. Such as:

Wordy: I speak English equally as well as his sister.

This sentence is wordy because it repeats unnecessary words, that is “equally” and “as well as”. The adverb “equally” means “to the same extent or degree”, as in the sentence “These ways are equally important”. In other words, the meaning of “equally” is similar to that of “as well as”. Hence, it can be revised as the following: “I speak English equally as his sister” or “I speak English as well as his sister”. Similar cases are offered in the following:

(1) Wordy: Did she intend to do it deliberately?

Revised: Did she intend to do it?

Or: Did she do it deliberately?

(2) Wordy: In this city, robbery has become a commonplace thing, a thing that occurs every day.

Revised: In this city, robbery has become a commonplace thing.

Or: In this city, robbery is a thing that occurs every day.

(3) Wordy: What they are trying to say is that in their opinion, Mr. Li should further his study in Canada.

Revised: What they are trying to say is that Mr. Li should further his study in Canada.

Or: In their opinion, Mr. Li should further his study in Canada.

(4) Wordy: This thief keeps appearing in this supermarket repeatedly.

Revised: This thief keeps appearing in this supermarket.

Or: This thief appears in this supermarket repeatedly.

(5) Wordy: That country has a population of three million people.

Revised: That country has three million people.

(6) Wordy: You can go to the supermarket when I returns back.

Revised: You can go to the supermarket when I returns.

(7) Wordy: Miss Wang put a letter that came from abroad on Mr. White's table.

Revised: Miss Wang put a letter that from abroad on Mr. White's table.

D. Coherence

Coherence means that the parts of a sentence are so arranged that they stick together, and the thought progresses in a logical sequence. One way to achieve coherence is to resort to parallelism, which can clarify the relationship between a writer's parallel ideas, or between parallel parts of a single idea, by expressing similar ideas in similar grammatical forms. Generally speaking, many sentence elements can be placed in parallel structures (Wang, 2003). And a sentence by employing parallel structure can be more vivid and effective. For example:

Democrats can not say no to social programs; Republicans can not say no to military spending. The result is a tripled national debt and high interest rates. — M. Zuckerman

From the above-mentioned example, it can be seen that parallel construction is one of the most effective ways to make sentences emphatic and impressive. However, some English learners can not make coherent sentences because of the faulty parallel structure. For example:

Faulty: Frank is easy-going, considerate, and a generous man.

In this sentence, "easy-going" and "considerate" are adjectives, "a generous man" is a noun phrase. Obviously, they are not arranged in a logical order. Therefore, we can make use of parallel construction to make the sentence coherent, such as "Frank is an easy-going, considerate, and generous man" or "Frank is easy-going, considerate and generous".

More examples are in the following:

(1) Faulty: Anna is not only clever but also worked hard.

Revised: Anna is not only clever but also hard-working.

(2) Faulty: My watch is either slow or yours is fast.

Revised: Either my watch is slow or yours is fast.

(3) Faulty: A man is judged not only by what he says but also by his deeds.

Revised: A man is judged not only by what he says but also by what he does.

Or: A man is judged not only by his words but also by his deeds.

(4) Faulty: Yesterday he lost his lovely pet so he could not eat well, drink well and have a good sleep.

Revised: Yesterday he lost his lovely pet so he could not eat well, drink well and sleep well.

(5) Faulty: Mary and I don't like sweet food, so she neither eats the candy nor I do.

Revised: Mary and I don't like sweet food, so neither she eats the candy nor I do.

(6) Faulty: She took the chocolate to the classroom but which she was given no opportunity to eat.

Revised: She took the chocolate to the classroom but was given no opportunity to eat.

(7) Faulty: They went to America with a boy from Mexico and who has a long hair.

Revised: They went to America with a boy who is from Mexico and who has a long hair.

(8) Faulty: He forgot that his project was due this Monday and his boss had said he would not accept late reports.

Revised: He forgot that his project was due this Monday and that his boss had said he would not accept late reports.

E. Emphasis

To emphasize means to show the relative importance of ideas in a sentence. Therefore, emphasis is an effective means to achieve impressive expression of people's ideas. There also a lot of ways to achieve emphasis including inversion, the passive voice, repetition, negative-positive statements, climatic order, rhetorical question and some kinds of sentences.

1. Inversion

When people want to emphasize an idea, they can move the point, out of order, to the front. Such as:

(1) Happy are those who receive this exciting news after a long time.

(2) Not for one second does he think he has any hope of going to abroad.

(3) Only last night did she find that his wallet was missing.

(4) So much does Jack worry about his work that he can not eat and sleep well.

(5) Quickly and impressively he said goodbye to his wife and children.

(6) Hardly had she finished her housework when the doorbell rang.

2. The passive voice

Although the active voice is precise and direct, the passive voice is more appropriate than the active as an emphatic device just as in the following sentences.

(1) The passagers have been injured in a train accident and they have been taken to hospital.

(2) The answer to the question was given by nobody other than the president.

(3) She is promoted to the manager of the Public Relations Department by Mr. Wang, who is her former director.

(4) In this war, thousands of people were driven from their hometown.

3. Repetition

Deliberate repetition in a sentence is a kind of means to achieve emphasis. For instance:

We are human and human beings are far from perfect. To be human implies that we will make mistakes. But it's more

than that we feel human. We now feel titled.

4. Negative-positive statements

In this kind of sentences, people first state what is not the fact, and then what is. And this contrastive method can make the idea emphatic. Such as:

There were so many faults in the presentation that the result was not a failure, but success.

5. Climatic order

Climatic order is the order that goes from the general to the specific or that goes from the least important to the most important (Wang, 2003). For example:

(1) I love my village, my city and my country.

(2) He lost his pet, his wallet and his honor.

6. Rhetorical question

A rhetorical question is a particular kind of question that it does not need an answer. When people encounter a rhetorical question, they will often reflect it for a moment. Generally, a rhetorical question is used for emphasis because it is often reserved for special purpose. Such as:

(1) Was you not at the scene of the ceremony?

(2) Didn't Sally tell you that you can not go to that room?

(3) If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

7. Different kinds of sentences to achieve emphasis

a. Simple and short sentences

A simple sentence has only one subject and one predicate. Simple short sentences are often used to make important or emphatic statements. Such as:

(1) He is not smart.

(2) She is beautiful.

b. Imperative or exclamatory sentences

Imperative or exclamatory sentences are emphatic. An imperative sentence usually expresses a request or command. e.g. Stop talking. An exclamatory sentence generally expresses a strong feeling or emotion. For instance:

(1) What a lovely boy!

(2) How careless she is!

c. Periodic sentences

In periodic sentences, the main and emphatic idea is commonly expressed at or near the end. For example:

Although the boy was interested in English, he decided to study maths at last.

d. Balanced sentences

Balanced sentence is a kind of sentence in which parallel ideas are expressed in parallel constructions. Because of the parallel structures, balanced sentences are usually impressive, forceful and emphatic. For instance:

In Plato's opinion man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion philosophy was made for man. —Thomas Babington Macaulay

III. CONCLUSION

This paper mainly makes a study on the five essential qualities of an effective sentence in English, that is, correctness, clearness, unity, coherence and emphasis.

Correctness is the first quality of an effective sentence. It means that the sentence should be grammatically correct. As for English learners, they usually make two kinds of language mistakes which violates the principle of correctness, that is, sentence fragments and danglers. Sentence fragment is only a part of a sentence instead of a complete sentence. And a dangler is an element unrelated to any word in a sentence. In writing sentences, people should avoid making the above-mentioned grammatical errors.

Clearness is the second quality of an effective sentence. To achieve the purpose of communication, the meaning of a sentence should be clear. Nevertheless, ambiguity or misunderstanding usually occurs because of misplaced modifiers, vague references of pronouns, vague comparisons and confusing shifts and so on.

Unity is the third quality of an effective sentence. It requires that a sentence should express only one idea. And at the same time, the idea should be complete.

The fourth quality of an effective sentence is coherence. It means that different parts of a sentence should be arranged in a logical order. To achieve coherence, people usually resort to parallelism.

The last quality of an effective sentence that the author discussed is emphasis. To emphasize means to show the relative importance of ideas in a sentence. There are several ways to achieve emphasis, such as inversion, the passive voice, repetition, negative-positive statements, climatic order, rhetorical question, simple and short sentences, imperative and exclamatory sentences, periodic sentences and balanced sentences, etc.

By analyzing and examining a lot of examples, the author studied the five essential qualities of an effective sentence in detail, hoping to help English learners to make and use sentences effectively and appropriately.

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An Investigation into Iranian EFL Teachers' Perception of Learner Autonomy

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Abstract—There has been heated debate over the issue of learner autonomy in the arena of language education for the last three decades. To this effect, the present study intends to examine Iranian teacher's perception of learner autonomy and its desirability and feasibility in Iranian context. The beliefs and reported practices regarding learner autonomy of 123 teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) were studied via questionnaires (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). The results showed that the majority of teachers had an acceptable level of understanding of learner autonomy, but in their view, no notable amount of interest in desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy was seen. In addition, the findings implied neglected aspects of practicality of learner autonomy among EFL teachers and consequently lack of impetus to make its practice desirable. Finally, this study concludes with highlighting the role of autonomy in teacher education programs and some implications are proposed.

Index Terms—learner autonomy, desirability, feasibility, EFL, teachers' beliefs

I. INTRODUCTION

Learner autonomy is established as a significant concept in the field of EFL learning for about thirty years. Much has been written about learner autonomy, its rationale, and its implications. It is believed that it is a human right, and that it permits learners to do their best in learning opportunities in and out of the classroom (Cotterall, 1995; Palfreyman, 2003; Camilleri, 2007). In addition, enhancement of learner autonomy through collaborative online environment has been researched (Eneau & Develotte, 2012) to target final goal of fruitful learning. Regarding language learning success, Littlejohn (1985) believes that if students have the chance to act autonomously such as getting involved in making decisions about their language aptitude, they will probably be more passionate about their learning.

Basically, autonomy is defined as the extent to which learners demonstrate their ability to take control of their learning. However, it is not as easy as it may seem at first glance. Benson (2011) believes that the description of autonomy is important for two reasons: Firstly, it should be describable in terms of observable behaviors in order to construct validity of research. Secondly, in order to foster autonomy, programs or innovations must be more effective if they are based on vivid understandings of the behavioral changes which they intend to develop. Therefore, it is important that we recognize its role in the contexts of our research and practice.

While different definitions exist in the body of literature regarding learner autonomy in the works of many scholars (Barfield & Brown, 2007; Benson, 2001,2007; Burkert & Schwienhorst, 2008; Cotterall, 1995; Dickinson, 1987, 1995; Gremmo & Riley,1995; Holec,1981,1988; Lamb & Reinders, 2006,2007, 2008; Little, 1995,2007,2009; Littlewood, 1996, 1999; Murphy, 2008; Ryan,1991; Smith, 2000; Vieira, 2009), there exists a consensus on the fundamental principles of learner autonomy: i.e. learners take charge of and the responsibility for their learning; they recognize their needs; they learn how to make their own decisions on what and how to learn; they become critical learners; they increase the opportunities to practice English inside or outside the classroom.

Although Ryan's (1991, p. 210) definition of autonomy as a process of 'self-determination' or 'self-regulation' which leads to 'autonomous interdependence' is referenced typically, Holec's definition is the most often quoted definition of autonomy. Holec (1981) characterizes autonomy as an individual feature which is equal to student's independence from the teacher. Independent learner could use provided material willingly, make decisions about learning process, and actively contributes to the target educational curriculum.

Concurrently, extending the notion of autonomy and providing categorizations for it, Littlewood (1996) has made a distinction between 'proactive' and 'reactive' autonomy made by learners. Learners have proactive autonomy when they have responsibility for their learning, specify their goals, follow suitable strategies, and assess the acquired results (Holec, 1981). Littlewood (1999) believes when the direction of reactive autonomy is initiated, it allows students to manage the material autonomously in order to meet their goal. The reflection of the concepts of reactive and proactive autonomy led Flannery (1994) to differentiate cooperation learning strategies form cooperative strategies. This classification implies the fact that the sole understanding of the notion of autonomy is not sufficient as it is directly associated with desirability and practicality.

The theoretical background of this study is linked to the field of language teacher cognition, which deals with the investigation of teachers' beliefs and thoughts (Borg, 2006). According to Johnson (2006), in the last 40 years, teacher cognition in language teacher education has made the most significant contribution to our understandings of teachers and teaching. It has yielded very productive results in the field of language teaching since the mid-1990s. Intuiting visions about the landscape of teachers' cognition and its consequent effects in the arena of language teaching are extensively acknowledged (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

For the accomplishment of this study, two specific points about teachers' cognition are to be taken into account. On the one hand, teachers' ideas and beliefs can strongly shape both their action and, eventually, the learning opportunities of the learners. Henceforth, teachers' viewpoint regarding autonomy, its desirability as well as feasibility will clarify how autonomous learning takes place. On the other hand, when teacher education is designed on the basis of an understanding of the beliefs teachers have, it is expected to have positive effects on teachers' practices (Borg, 2011).

There is a reasonable literature on learner autonomy which, however, allots limited space for Iranian EFL teachers' beliefs about this concept. In other words, there is a relatively small body of literature that is concerned with the notion of learner autonomy and its two facets, desirability and feasibility respectively, among English teachers in the context of Iran. Then, our study addressed this gap by examining what 'learner autonomy' means to language teachers in Iran. Finding out such beliefs is essential to the process of persuading teachers to promote learner autonomy in their work. Respectively, the current study addresses the following questions:

1. What is Iranian EFL teachers' perception of learner autonomy?
2. What is Iranian EFL teachers' evaluation of desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Learner autonomy is the focus of interest in many conducted research projects regarding language learning. As one of key elements predicting success in language learning, it calls EFL teachers' recognition. When the notion is understood, the teachers do their best in transferring the concept of autonomy practically to language learners.

Among one of the first qualitative studies on learner autonomy, Camilleri (1999) collected questionnaire data of teachers' ideas in six European contexts to explore how learners should decide about setting course objectives and materials. The results revealed that teachers found it convincing to involve learners in some activities. In contrast, teachers working in state schools, were not positive about learner involvement in the selection of textbooks and the decision on the time and place of lessons. Replicating this study, Camilleri (2007) found much analogy in terms of the positive general views of autonomy. In contrast, this time teacher participants were found to be more positive about learners' materials selection, goal setting, and self-assessment.

Using the same instrument in Turkey, Balçıklanlı (2010) showed that the student teachers were inclined toward students' engagement in many classroom activities, but, again, they were less positive about students' decisions about the time and place of holding the classrooms. Notably, these positive attitudes of teachers towards learner autonomy could be through teachers own experiences as language learners (Martinez, 2008). However, this observation suggests that using questionnaires and interviews is not necessarily adequate to study teachers' beliefs. Thus, we must always pay attention to the possible incongruity between teachers' beliefs at the level of theory and their real classroom practices (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012).

Considering mismatch between teachers' theoretical beliefs and their practice, Bullock (2011) noted a substantial gap between language teachers' theoretical views about the value of learner autonomy with their reported classroom practices. Thus, Yoshiyuki stressed that theoretical standards and pedagogical attempts may not always concur in terms of the notion of learner autonomy. Calling for a more systematic model of L2 learner autonomy, Oxford (2003) argued that although learner autonomy has been promoted by involvement of many experts, there is still some roots of conflict even in the terminology leading to inconsistency and incomplete understanding.

Previous research has established the major role of teachers in the process of endorsing learner autonomy either practically in classes or verbally through ideas (Nunan, 1997; Littlewood, 1997; Hurd, Beaven, & Ortega, 2001) and it is unlikely to expect teachers to develop a sense of learner autonomy unless they have experienced teacher education courses including an investigative and evaluative methodology to autonomy (Burkert & Schwienhorst, 2008; Castle, 2006; Marcosa & Tilemab 2006).

In a study, which set out to determine the practice of autonomy, Yang (1998) reported an attempt to teach students how to learn and become autonomous in language learning by combining learning strategy instruction with the content course of second language acquisition. In addition, determining strategy support and amount of needed time to have explicit strategy instruction teachers should take learners' interests and maturity levels into consideration (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Thus, the teacher ought to tailor strategy guidance to the level of the class and interweave strategy assistance uniformly into lesson plans (Oxford, 1996) to make learners responsible for language learning.

There can be discrepancies between core beliefs and peripheral beliefs. The former has been recognized through practical classroom experience and the latter could be established as recently learned knowledge through training curricula which express ideally constructed performance not yet relocated to real classroom practices (Borg, 2006; Phipps & Borg, 2009). Phipps and Borg (2009), in their investigation of the fundamental motives for differences in teachers stated principles and their application regarding grammar teaching, noted 'how contextual factors such as

classroom management concerns and student expectations can cause tensions between teachers' beliefs and their practices' (p. 385). They highlighted the significance of seeing these tensions positively valuable as a way of raising teachers' awareness. The recognition of tensions between their views and their classroom exercise constitutes a powerful intention for developmental change (Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Pajares, 1992).

Reviewing the relationship between beliefs and practices resulted in interesting findings. In their study, Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) discussed the importance of teacher attitude and the interconnections with beliefs and teaching behavior and introduced a model which may help to explain why there is often a gap between statements of intent and the reality of what happens in classrooms. They concluded that beliefs about the innovation, its consequences, and contextual factors are quite important in determining behavior, even as important as attitude itself (Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996). Awareness-raising of beliefs and their origins will therefore be significant if we wish to change or get teachers to question beliefs. In other words, making teachers aware of their beliefs is the first step in helping them to change (Alexander, 2011). Awareness could be raised through specific workshops to gain teachers reflections on learner autonomy advancement (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). Consequently, there is a call to attend to teachers' viewpoint on the perception of autonomy.

As one of the most recent studies on teachers' understanding of learner autonomy, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) explored theoretical perception of autonomy teachers as well as practical dimensions (i.e. desirability and feasibility) in the context of Oman. They found out although the majority of the teachers were positively disposed to the theoretical conception of learner autonomy and engaging language learners in decision making process, they were at the same time less positive in terms of practicality of this notion. In other words, a significant discrepancy between the extent of desirability teacher felt and the extent of teachers' beliefs about the feasibility of involving learners in a range of decisions.

Considering the lack of research in the literature on teachers' perception of learner autonomy as well as its desirability and feasibility, this study aims to find out whether Iranian EFL teachers have proper level of understanding about learner autonomy, its appeal, and its practicability as these notions are not yet widely discussed.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants of the present study were recruited from 34 high schools in Sabzevar, Iran. They include 123 EFL in-service high school teachers, either instructing at public or at private schools. Their age ranged from 30 to 55 and their educational experience ranged from 5 years to 30 years. In addition, they had different levels of teaching experience, whether in primary high school or in secondary high school. Among the teachers, 60 had B.A in TEFL and 63 had M.A. in the same field.

B. Instrument

In the present paper, the instrument was taken from Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012). For the purpose of their study, they consulted the instruments available (Benson, 2007) and developed a new questionnaire, as they believed the previous ones were found to be mainly lacking in empirical information about what learner autonomy means to teachers. We used this instrument as it had been critically reviewed, largely piloted, precisely prepared, and reliably developed.

In this study, the questionnaire was administered to 123 teacher respondents. The rationale behind administering the questionnaire in such a large sample was to have enough participants to reach statistical significance for the expected results as Dornyei and Taguchi (2009, p.129) suggests that we should have a sufficiently large sample size "to allow for statistically significant results".

The first section of questionnaire was about learner autonomy which comprised 37 items of Likert-scale on a five-point scale of agreement. When the responses of the participants were obtained, the reliability of the scale of the first section was estimated via Cronbach's Alpha which turned out to be 0.84. The second part of the questionnaire addressed desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy. It included 14 items on four-point Likert scale. For the former section, the Cronbach's alpha was 0.81 and for the latter it was calculated to be 0.74.

C. Procedure

In order to identify whether teachers know what learner autonomy is, they were asked to fill first part of the questionnaire. Before completing the survey forms and after inviting the participants, the purpose of the research was clearly explained to reassure first teacher participants' confidentiality and second to elicit fair responses from them. Although the questionnaire forms were even in design, all the instructions to complete the forms were also provided for the ease of the respondents and for the prevention of ambiguity. All the participants cooperated in doing so.

In the follow-up phase of the study, to establish whether the participants find learner autonomy desirable and feasible or vice versa, they were wanted to complete the second part. By the end of the survey period, data had been collected from all teacher participants. When all the survey forms were sent back, data management and analysis were performed using SPSS 23. Then, descriptive statistics of the form statements as the output were calculated to be reported. Following this procedure, the exported data was ready to be interpreted as follows.

IV. RESULTS

This study set out with the aim of identifying Iranian English teachers' perception of learner autonomy and two aspects of desirability and feasibility. To achieve this aim, the teachers' views about three trajectories of learner autonomy, its feasibility, and desirability were elicited through their responses to well-developed questionnaire of Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012). Considering each research question, we will provide the related results to shed more light on the issue.

A. *What Is Iranian EFL Teachers' Perception of Learner Autonomy?*

The results of the first section of the questionnaire, as Table 1 depicts, showed that there was support for all items of the questionnaire; i.e. four orientations including political, psychological, social, and technical, but for 6 items including items 8, 9, 20, 23, 24, and 34. These are stated in questionnaire as follows:

- Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.
- It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.
- Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.
- Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners.
- Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.
- The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF AUTONOMY

Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD
1	3.34	1.06	14	3.95	0.78	27	3.36	1.08
2	3.44	1.03	15	3.37	1.21	28	3.90	0.86
3	3.56	0.95	16	3.89	1.00	29	4.00	0.88
4	3.41	1.14	17	3.26	1.09	30	3.06	1.12
5	3.24	1.15	18	3.30	1.07	31	3.80	0.94
6	3.59	1.10	19	3.85	0.92	32	3.55	0.89
7	3.72	1.06	20	2.28	0.82	33	4.22	0.91
8	2.54	0.99	21	3.24	0.88	34	2.57	1.03
9	2.85	1.23	22	3.30	0.83	35	3.99	0.87
10	3.59	0.96	23	2.17	0.98	36	4.10	0.90
11	4.18	1.09	24	2.55	1.02	37	3.96	0.95
12	3.76	1.03	25	3.97	0.93			
13	3.67	1.08	26	3.14	1.16			

Studying less accepted items mentioned above, it could be argued that from teachers' perspective in this study, learner autonomy is not merely equivalent to independence from teacher. This is accurately what Flannery (1994) talked about, as he highlighted the role of teacher in setting the schedule for learning concurrently with the independent acting of learners.

It is apparent from the calculated total mean ($M = 3.450$) that there is consensus among EFL teachers about the purpose of learner autonomy. With a close look at descriptive statistics of first section (see Appendix A), it is convincing that there is a governing shared knowledge between instructors in all aspects of autonomy, particularly in considering its psychological dimension. In other words, the overall responses to the majority of items were positive. In addition, it can be seen from the data in Table 1 that items 33, 36, and 11 had higher means than the others. These results suggest that EFL teachers, highlighting the differentiation of confident and motivated learners from others, agreed on the effectiveness of learner autonomy.

B. *What Is Iranian EFL Teachers' Evaluation of Desirability and Feasibility of Learner Autonomy?*

The overall measurement results of second section of questionnaire are summarized in Table 2 and Table 3. To see percentage of each item on the scale see Appendix B.

As shown in Table 2, Iranian EFL teachers did not show a strong tendency toward desirability of learner autonomy ($M = 2.82$). Teachers' elicited responses on the items of this part of questionnaire, except for items 4 and 13 (examining desirability of topics being discussed and co-operative learning), reflected that the practice of autonomy was not convincingly worthy to them. In summary, for the informants in this study, learner autonomy is not desirable. This finding calls for attention to contemplate and find out why autonomy is not believed to be properly desirable to be treated in classrooms.

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF DESIRABILITY

Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD
1	2.50	0.91	6	2.40	0.92	11	2.93	0.79
2	2.63	0.95	7	2.72	0.92	12	2.98	0.78
3	2.86	0.92	8	2.82	0.80	13	3.24	0.81
4	3.11	0.82	9	2.88	0.83	14	2.92	0.83
5	2.57	0.87	10	2.93	0.87			

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF FEASIBILITY

Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD
1	2.06	0.92	6	2.19	0.85	11	2.55	0.79
2	2.41	0.80	7	2.40	1.02	12	2.50	0.77
3	2.66	0.86	8	2.27	0.80	13	2.81	0.83
4	2.81	0.95	9	2.65	0.74	14	2.75	0.91
5	2.40	0.87	10	2.79	0.79			

Similarly, the results, as seen in Table 3, indicates there is no significant orientation in feasibility of learner autonomy among instructors (M= 2.51). The most striking result to emerge from the data is that opposed to teachers' inclination toward learner autonomy, respondents did not found it to be feasible, whether it is due to lack of fundamental facilities, predetermined course objectives, shortage of time, lack of experienced instructors, poor teacher education system, or ease-oriented language teaching.

Then, with this attitude toward its impracticality, no strong argument could be made to show the likelihood of practicing learner autonomy in language classrooms. Conspicuously, in this section, there is no statement to support teachers' belief about feasibility of autonomous practices in pedagogical context. Comparing the total mean of these two latter sections as well as individual mean of each item reveals that desirability is steadily more supported than feasibility but, after all, both are felt less promoting than key concept of learner autonomy.

V. DISCUSSION

Three objectives of this study were to figure out Iranian EFL teachers' understanding of learner autonomy concept and two facets of desirability and feasibility. To achieve this aim, 123 teachers were asked to fill the questionnaires. The findings of the first section revealed affirmative stance of teachers to learner autonomy. This is in line with many previous studies in existing literature (e.g. Camilleri 1999; Martinez, 2008; Yoshiyuki, 2011). Therefore, the consistency of teachers' support for learner autonomy in this study with those existed in the literature was seen.

However, this positive viewpoint should not be confused for readiness to enhance learner autonomy as Yoshiyuki (2011), investigating teachers' readiness for promoting learner autonomy by exploring the perceived importance and use of strategies among Japanese high school teachers of English as a foreign language through a questionnaire and focus group interview, concluded that many Japanese EFL teachers are not fully ready to promote autonomy in their learners. It seems that teachers' perception of autonomy would be of first steps towards readiness to enhance learners' autonomy. However, there is still call for more supportive actions to extend this purport in all its aspects because teachers' beliefs will shape the foundation for teacher education courses in each community of practice (Borg, 2011).

It could be claimed that providing learners with autonomy will rely on the quality of practicality and delightedness of the transfer procedures to which teacher make attempt. So, it is worthwhile to have autonomous teachers, those who have understood what learner autonomy is and how they could improve its attractiveness and practicality as Thavenius (1999, cited in Cotterall & Crabbe) elaborating on a contradiction asserted that "To help learners become autonomous, the teacher has to be autonomous, but the teacher cannot become autonomous until she has experienced the process with her learners for a substantial period of time. Still, I believe teacher autonomy is possible" (p.163). In addition, it is believed that imbalance of top-down organization and teacher autonomy (i.e. teacher's adaptation to various classroom contexts and various individual students' needs) would delay student learning (Prichard & Moore, 2016).

Responding second research question, we found that EFL teachers feel reluctant in terms of both desirability and feasibility of the notion of learner autonomy. Furthermore, regarding the latter, they feel more disinclined. This finding highlighted Bullock's (2011) idea of a departure between teachers' positive notions about learner autonomy and its practicality. In the same vein, Camilleri (1999) found out that despite general positive attitudes of student teachers towards the adoption of learner autonomy principles, the majority depicted unwillingness for their future students' participation in the decision-making process due to contextual issues which is in contrast with Littlejohn's study in 1985. Littlejohn stated that students' contribution to decision making will result in more enthusiasm about their learning.

The evidence presented in this section suggests that there is not necessarily a match between teachers' and learners' viewpoint in considering what is proper (Harmer, 2007) and certainly what is fitting for one student may not be suitable for another. As a result, when teachers train the learners to be autonomous, they need to offer them choices in learning strategies. Scharle and Szabo (2000) suggest that it is of importance to find out students' individual differences such as their knowledge level, personal attitudes, motivation degree, and learning strategies to get students aware of their own learning styles. They believe that becoming an autonomous learner is a process encompassing awareness raising, preferences changing, and responsibility transferring.

Due to the fact that learners do not automatically assume responsibility for their learning, an intervention in ongoing classroom practice is needed to promote learner autonomy to have learners who, as Chan (2003) stressed, establish a personal schedule for learning. Pennycook (1997) warns that the universal encouragement of learner autonomy without the knowledge of the social, political, and cultural context, may lead to inappropriate pedagogies and cultural impositions. It is believed that cultural issues and the educational norms are to be constrains to encouraging autonomous learning.

After all, in contrast with growing support of this notion among EFL teachers, it seems that they are still reluctant to practice it. It could be attributed to teachers' unfamiliarity with practical aspects of enhancing learner autonomy. As Alexander (2011) evidenced that the first phase of assisting instructors to developmentally change is their getting aware of the notions they believe. To summarize, teachers' different presentations of autonomy and its promotion among the majority of EFL teachers as well as incomplete preparation for fostering learner autonomy would be considered as obstacles (Yoshiyuki, 2011).

VI. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The aim of the present research was to examine Iranian EFL teachers' understanding of learner autonomy as well as its desirability and feasibility. The results of this investigation show the positive viewpoint of teachers toward the notion of learner autonomy; however, as Bullock (2011) noted the discrepancy between theoretical and practical understanding of autonomy, teachers showed less inclination toward desirability and feasibility of practically applying autonomy in their classes. In addition, referring to Little's (1995) claim about the dependability of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy, it could be argued that disinclination of teachers toward two facets of desirability and feasibility may root from their own educational background.

An implication of this is the possibility that in spite of the recognized notable status of learner autonomy shared by EFL teachers, it seems beneficiary to implement its aspects of desirability and feasibility comprehensively, whether in teacher education programs for teacher students or in language classrooms for learners, in order to achieve the most possible developmental results. Taken all together, the present study makes several noteworthy contributions to the realm of teacher education. Pedagogical implication of the results suggests the requirement of a more inclusive viewpoint toward enhancing learner autonomy by stakeholders, educational communities, teacher trainers, pedagogical practitioners, and EFL instructors.

The study is limited by the lack of information on learners' voices to find out whether teachers act upon their theoretical understanding. Another issue that was not addressed in this study was the absence of teachers' voices to determine what are the underlying reasons of this resistance toward desirable practice of autonomy in their classes.

In future, researchers of this field may employ other methods to explore learner autonomy qualitatively through interview, observation, and ethnography. Moreover, desirability and feasibility, as two key elements of an autonomous process could be investigated, with reference to their immediate pedagogical applications. They also may try to investigate the effectiveness of recognition of the concept of learner autonomy and learners' success in each particular area of language learning by employing more instruments and employing a mixed methodological process with intuitively anecdotal as well as objectively empirical accounts of autonomy. In terms of directions for future research, further work could diagnose and address potential problematic issues teacher feel in the way of applying autonomy to their classrooms. As well, further studies regarding the role of teacher autonomy would be worthwhile.

APPENDIX A. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR AUTONOMY

	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy.	7.3%	13.0%	27.6%	42.3%	9.8%
2	Independent study in the library is an activity which develops learner autonomy.	2.4%	21.1%	18.7%	45.5%	12.2%
3	Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone.	0.8%	15.4%	25.2%	43.9%	14.6%
4	Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.	6.5%	17.1%	21.1%	39.0%	16.3%
5	Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.	6.5%	23.6%	23.6%	32.5%	13.8%
6	Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom.	3.3%	16.3%	21.1%	37.4%	22.0%
7	Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.	2.4%	15.4%	13.8%	44.7%	23.6%
8	Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.	15.4%	35.0%	31.7%	16.3%	1.6%
9	It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.	17.1%	25.2%	22.0%	27.6%	8.1%
10	It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults.	2.4%	13.0%	21.1%	49.6%	13.8%
11	Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.	2.4%	9.8%	8.1%	26.8%	52.8%
12	Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would.	2.4%	9.8%	24.4%	36.6%	26.8%
13	Learner autonomy can be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds.	3.3%	12.2%	23.6%	35.8%	25.2%
14	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do.	1.6%	3.3%	13.8%	61.0%	20.3%
15	Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms.	6.5%	22.8%	17.1%	34.1%	19.5%
16	Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other.	4.9%	4.1%	14.6%	49.6%	26.8%
17	Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching.	6.5%	17.9%	30.9%	32.5%	12.2%
18	Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.	3.3%	23.6%	26.8%	32.5%	13.8%
19	Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together.	1.6%	8.9%	14.6%	52.8%	22.0%
20	Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.	13.8%	52.8%	25.2%	7.3%	0.8%
21	Learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access center.	3.3%	14.6%	43.1%	33.3%	5.7%
22	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.	1.6%	14.6%	40.7%	38.2%	4.9%
23	Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners.	26.0%	43.1%	21.1%	7.3%	2.4%
24	Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	12.2%	44.7%	22.0%	17.9%	3.3%
25	Co-operative group work activities support the development of learner autonomy.	1.6%	7.3%	13.0%	48.8%	29.3%
26	Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	9.8%	20.3%	27.6%	30.9%	11.4%
27	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials.	2.4%	25.2%	20.3%	38.2%	13.8%
28	Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.	0.8%	7.3%	15.4%	53.7%	22.8%
29	Learning how to learn is key to developing learner autonomy.	0.8%	6.5%	14.6%	48.0%	30.1%
30	Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.	13.0%	13.8%	35.0%	30.9%	7.3%
31	Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy.	1.6%	8.9%	19.5%	48.0%	22.0%
32	The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	0.8%	11.4%	33.3%	40.7%	13.8%
33	Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated.	0.8%	4.9%	13.0%	34.1%	47.2%
34	The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.	11.4%	45.5%	22.0%	17.1%	4.1%
35	The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy.	3.3%	2.4%	11.4%	57.7%	25.2%
36	Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.	0.00%	8.1%	11.4%	43.1%	37.4%
37	To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.	4.1 %	4.1%	10.6%	54.5%	26.8%

APPENDIX B. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR DESIRABILITY AND FEASIBILITY

	Desirability				Feasibility			
	Undesirable	Slightly desirable	Quite desirable	Very desirable	Unfeasible	Slightly feasible	Quite feasible	Very feasible
Learners are involved in decisions about:								
The objectives of a course	15.4%	32.1%	38.3%	13.1%	31.7%	39.0%	21.1%	8.1%
The materials used	14.6%	26.8%	39.8%	18.7%	12.2%	42.3%	37.4%	8.1%
The kinds of tasks and activities they do	11.4%	16.3%	47.2%	25.2%	9.8%	30.9%	43.1%	16.3%
The topics discussed	1.6%	23.6%	36.6%	38.2%	9.8%	26.8%	35.8%	27.6%
How learning is assessed	11.4%	35.0%	39.0%	14.6%	17.9%	32.5%	41.5%	8.1%
The teaching methods used	17.9%	36.6%	33.3%	12.2%	22.0%	43.9%	27.6%	6.5%
Classroom management	8.9%	34.1%	33.3%	23.6%	23.6%	29.3%	30.9%	16.3%
Learners have the ability to:								
Identify their own needs	5.7%	25.2%	50.4%	18.7%	17.1%	43.9%	34.1%	4.9%
Identify their own strengths	4.9%	26.8%	43.9%	24.4%	5.7%	34.1%	49.6%	10.6%
Identify their own weaknesses	6.5%	22.8%	42.3%	28.5%	5.7%	26.8%	50.4%	17.1%
Monitor their progress	1.6%	30.1%	41.5%	26.8%	7.3%	41.5%	39.8%	11.4%
Evaluate their own learning	4.9%	17.1%	52.8%	25.2%	8.9%	40.7%	42.3%	8.1%
Learn co-operatively	2.4%	16.3%	36.6%	44.7%	4.9%	30.9%	42.3%	22.0%
Learn independently	5.7%	22.0%	47.2%	25.2%	10.6%	25.2%	43.1%	21.1%

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A Cognitive Approach to Grammatical Mechanism in English Euphemism

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Abstract—Euphemism is a common linguistic phenomenon. A short introduction to euphemism in English and Chinese will benefit our future intercultural communication. Three grammatical approaches in English euphemism were analyzed in light of cognitive grammar: negation, postmodification and aspect. Thanks to negation, profile and base are changed, resulting in the prominence of “NOT” and the shift of cognitive reference point. Postmodification makes the head noun the trajector in a relational profile, hence reducing the prominence of the modifier. Aspects help to turn a bounded scene into an unbounded one and hence change the cognitive focus. These will be benefit for human’s communication.

Index Terms—cognitive grammar, euphemistic mechanism, grammatical approach

The hallmark of cognitive linguistics is the relationship between language and cognition, how humans conceptualize the world around them, how they create and represent meaning and how this is reflected in language. Euphemism is a constantly evolutive linguistic phenomenon in English, which is closely related to culture backgrounds, religious thoughts, life styles, etc. Lots of scholars had studied euphemism from various ways. Such as linguistic, social-linguistic, rhetoric view, pragmatics and so on. When existed euphemism gradually changed into Dysphemism as the increase of usage frequency, new euphemism turned up. Which grammatical mechanism operated in the complicated system of English euphemism? What the role grammatical approaches played?

I. CURRENT RESEARCH

It started from Chen Wangdao in domestic research. Hereafter, Chen Yuan, Wu Tieping, Shu Dingfang, Peng Wenzhao and Liu Chunbao analyzed and discussed about it. Early research mainly studied from the point of view of rhetoric, social linguistics, pragmatics and lexicology. Among them, Liu Chunbao (2001) pointed out that grammatical approach was one of constructive methods, but it lacked of further explanation.

As the cognitive linguistics raised, several domestic scholars attempted to interpret grammatical mechanism in Euphemism by using cognitive linguistic theory which was concentrated in cognitive semantics and cognitive pragmatics. The analysis of Shao Junhang and Fan weiwei (2004) was based on predominance and hidden concept, what they thought was that grammatical mechanism depended on transferring listener’s focus or dispersing listener’s attention, even momentarily interrupting the understanding process of listener. Applied with corpus data, Liang Chunyan (2003) thought that about 59.8% of euphemism meanings could be analyzed by synthetic space theory. Wang Yongzhong (2003) set about from the category theory in which euphemism put taboo as the collocation of archetypal meanings whose realization has been evolved from archetypal meanings to edged meanings, and has been the typical degree’s weakening of family resemblance. Shen Liwen, Zhou Fujuan and Tang Dingjun (2008) respectively investigated the function of conceptual metaphor and conceptual metonymy in euphemism mechanism. Based on space mapping theory and conceptual integration theory. Shen Liwen (2006) analyzed the cognitive differences of euphemism in discourse between English and Chinese. Zhang Ruolan (2009) researched the transfer of conceptual characteristics and the acceptability of euphemism meanings.

At the same time, it was much less for using cognitive linguistics to interpret euphemism in abroad researches. Migual (2009) put forward that euphemism wasn’t linguistic phenomenon constricting in vocabulary level, but a cognitive progress using various grammatical methods to conceptualize taboo facts.

All suggests that current research has certain limitations: 1. Analysis was concentrated on vocabulary level; 2. Perspective was confined in macro discussion by using metaphor, metonymy and conceptual integration; 3. The quantity of exemplification was limit and repetitive. Euphemism approach was one kind of cognitive mechanism, which was based on experiencing philosophy, investigated language from cognitive feature, focused on finding motivation of grammatical structure. It was limit that human interpreted English euphemism approach from the perspective of cognitive grammar. Thus, under the framework of cognitive grammar, this text discussed the grammatical approach in euphemism approach based on realistic English corpus.

II. INTERPERSONAL FUNCTION OF EUPHEMISM

The function of language is realized through communication so that language is considered as the most important communicative tool. Research on the function of language can help us understand how language plays its role in the macro

human society. Languages play different parts in different social communications and bear their unique features on different levels of languages. The function of language in the language system is realized by people's choosing different meaning potentials under different social and cultural background.

American scholar Rawson (1983) states: "Euphemisms are embedded so deeply in our language that few of us, even those who pride themselves on being plainspoken, ever get through a day without using them" (p1). Generally speaking, words that are subtle, indirect or nice are euphemisms. Allan and Burridge (1996) divide euphemism into euphemism, dysphemism and orthophemism. Rawson (1983) suggested that euphemisms can be divided into positive euphemisms and negative euphemisms. Euphemism selected by people in the process of communication is affected by a variety of factors such as context, cultural differences of the parties involved in the communication, social cognition and so on. While at the same time, it dynamically reflects the interpersonal function of language. In the course of human's stepping into civilization, euphemism is virtually the product of language adapting to society and interacting to society. Euphemism bears rich social and cultural connotation and touches upon every aspect of social life such as religion, politics, literature and linguistics. Euphemism employs the fuzziness of language to reconcile the contradiction in social relationship and interpersonal relationship. With the continuous development of social life and social relationship, the interpersonal function of euphemism will undergo alteration and metabolism to adjust to the development and change. Therefore, we should choose different euphemisms to better achieve the objective of communication and bring the interpersonal function of euphemisms into full play according to different context.

When it comes to euphemism, how many ways can we use to achieve the effect of euphemism? Are grammatical approaches the methods realizing the effect of euphemism? As a necessary part of English, grammar plays an important role during studying. But which grammatical mechanism operated in the complicated system of English euphemism?

III. COGNITIVE CONSTRUAL AND NEGATION APPROACH

The cognitive approach is an approach to foreign language teaching which is based on the belief that language learning is a process which involves active mental process and not simply the forming of habits. As the Audiolingual Method was on the decline in the 1960s, the cognitive approach developed as an alternative, in response to the criticisms leveled against audiolingualism. In the meantime the structural linguistics gave way to the generative linguistics that turned the attention from mechanistic conditioning to meaningful leaning. When it comes to cognitive approach, most people take memory for granted, and the fact that people remember more often than they forget tends to lead us to overlook the underlying complexity of memory as a cognitive process. Others think that the basic question about cognitive processes is the relationship between thinking and language. But now we will analyze grammatical mechanism from the perspective of cognitive construal.

Langacker's Construal shows one kind of cognitive capacities that people choose different scopes, make different focus prominent, use various methods to observe situation and explain contents from different perspectives for achieving the aim of thinking and expressing. Construal could be depicted from degree of specificity, scope, background, perspective and salience prominence. In these aspects, nothing is better than scope, perspective and salience prominence which are familiar with euphemism (Langacker, 2008).

An expression's 'scope' comprises the full array of conceptual content that it specifically evokes and relies upon for its characterization. The term 'lid,' for instance, evokes the schematic conception of a container, as well as the notion of one entity covering another. A conception of any type or any degree of complexity is capable of being invoked as part of an expression's meaning. Perspective means angles for describing affairs. It can directly influence understanding and expressing because different perspectives produce different reference points. The choosing of perspective is closely related to background and salience prominence. The selection of the clause subject is determined by the different degrees of prominence carried by the elements involved in a situation. This prominence is just reflected in the selection of the subject as opposed to the object and the adverbials of a clause, but there are also many other applications of what may be called the prominence view of linguistic structures. The prominence view provides the explanation of how the information in a clause is selected and arranged. Salience prominence can be categorized into two parts. One is profile-base; the other is trajector-landmark. The former describes the meaning and the later depicts relational profile. The negative approach of euphemism is mainly connected with the former. Base is one relative cognitive domain with which expressions covered. One word's base just is the scope involved in related cognitive domain and the foundation of meanings. Profile means one part which was the biggest highlighted in language body, the focus in base, and the semantic structure which words identified. Base is the starting point of the profile description; profile is focus of specific contents, identifying base's directive property. The meaning of word depends on the combination of base and profile.

In English negation is not simple addition of negative word. It involves many factors. Some negation is constructed by negative prefixes. The most frequently used negative affixes are *un-*, *non-*, *dis-*, *in-*, *mal-*, *mis-*, *anti-*, *counter-*, *-less*, etc. *Non-* can normally be regarded as corresponding to clause negation: *non-smoker* means one who does not smoke. It frequently contrasts with *un-* in expressing binary contrast, rather than the opposite end of a scale.

There are quite a number of euphemisms in English; they are showed as vocabulary substitution in the form. In reality they change views with the help of negative approach, transform the base through changing profile of prominence, replace reference point, finally attain euphemism of semantics. Take "disease" as example, in the beginning, it is a euphemism when Chaucer first used. As 1(a) shown in the figure, the profile of disease is "not" (Dis),

base is “ease”. Through the negative meaning of “dis”, Chaucer made “ease” as cognitive reference point. Accordingly, the combination of base and profile turned into “not ease” which is relative to “ease”. By contrast, in the specific name of “headache”, profile is “ache”, base is “head”. (See chart b) The combination of base and profile highlight having an explicit head pain. In other words, “dis” successfully replaces the cognitive reference point, transforms base into acceptant commendatory concept and makes general concept “not” prominent, which results in euphemism and abstraction.



Figure 1 the profile and base of negative approach

It is common that using negative approach to reach the effect of euphemism. The euphemism “illness” can be expressed as disease, disorder, infirmity, indisposition, unwell and so on. In addition, similar expressions such as disabled (crippled), imperfect (deaf), disadvantaged (poor), underprivileged (poor) are too numerous to enumerate. All these expressions use negative approach to change reference point and highlight general concept of “not” or “not enough” (under), which reach an effect of euphemism. Thus, it can be seen that negative approach could effectively guide people’s cognitive construal. So we can achieve the communicative goal of euphemism.

IV. QUANTITATIVE COGNITIVE APPROACH AND POSTMODIFICATION APPROACH

Premodification is an intensified order in English, so originally postmodification have showed the tendency of preposition during development of language. For example, a heart-disease specialist (a specialist in heart disease), Domestic-Affair Department (department of Domestic-Affair), a what’s-to-be-done-next look was still written on his face (a look that shows What’s to be done was still written on his face). However, euphemism goes in the opposite direction where they are expressed as postmodification from premodification. For example, it is “people with vision impairment” that substitute “blind people”.

In fact, America once advocated “people first” activity to change title for people with disabilities (Helena, 2011), which demanded people to use head-word “people+postmodification” to referring people with disabilities. For example, using “person with (who has/having) a disability” to replace “disabled person”, “person with mental illness” to substitute “mentally ill person”. This kind of action was comprehensively popularized in the field of psychology and pedagogy. Helena who was based on the corpus of Google and The Houston, specially conducted a study about the actual usage of “people first”. It has shown that authority advocated the way of postmodification, but people largely used non-postmodification expressions (non-PC). The postmodification to non-postmodification was 3 to 7. Apart from striving to the simplicity of news and diversity of expressions, Helena found the rules for using occasions about premodification and postmodification. The premodification expressions generally referred to non-popular members such as criminal, fictional character. The postmodification expressions referred to children and well-behaved adults. People selectively adopted postmodification when in need of euphemism. It concluded that postmodification would reach the effect of euphemism. Clearly, changing of position from premodification to postmodification concealed deeper cognitive differences what postmodification used to achieve euphemism. Take “disabled person-person with a disability” for instance, as the only modifier of person, the meaning of “disabled” restricted “person”, making cognition focus on the only character “disabled”. It made that simplex and partial distinction was amplified as overall quantitative distinction. Finally the semantic of disabled was naturally highlighted. As for “person with a disability”, it presented the relational profile above “with” to us through postmodification. The participants “person” and “disability” were asymmetric in relational profile. In the most prominent location, the trajector “person” who was a starting point of relational profile was initial focus and first participant. While “disability” that was the subordinate location and provided orientation for trajector with reference point was landmark. Thus, the cognition of “person” was intensified while “disability” relatively was attenuated. Through prominent relational profile, postmodification presented a fact that the coexistence of “person” and “disability”, which avoided making qualitative study for its entirety by means of simple feature. The same euphemism reflected in “person who has/ having a disability”.

As for cognitive process, postmodification is more complex in the aspect of constitution. Even if euphemism approach based on trajector-landmark isn’t taken into account, the cognitive difficulty of euphemism carrying with postmodification is larger than the corresponding premodification from point of vocabulary. To increase cognitive difficulty is just the effective way for achieving euphemism. Moreover, benefited by postmodification, some euphemisms use more complex or obscure expression in postmodification to increase cognitive difficulty. Such as people who are mobility impaired (cripples), person with symptoms of mental illness (crazy, paranoid), child with syndrome (mongoloid) and so on.

V. BOUND THEORY AND GRAMMATICAL APPROACH OF ASPECT

The term aspect refers to a grammatical category which reflects the way in which the verb action is required or experienced with respect to time. In its broadest possible interpretation, the perfective indicates anterior time, i.e. time preceding whatever time orientation is signaled by tense or by other elements of the sentence or its context. The present perfective signifies past time with current relevance while the past perfective usually has the meanings of past-in-the-past, and can be regarded as an anterior version either of the present perfective or of the simple past. On the other hand, the progressive presents the situation as being in progress. This implies that the situation is concerned of as having a more or less dynamic character, as opposed to being wholly static. The progressive form in English is closely related to the idea of incompleteness. It distinguishes acts and events, which are complete, from activities and processes, which are not.

Aspect in English is an important grammatical approach that helps verb realize the switch from bounded scene and unbounded scene (Declerck, 2011). According to *Modern Linguistics Dictionary* (Crystal, 2000), aspect is a category for verb grammatical description, which mainly means length of time and the types marked by verb. Obviously, the length of time of marked verb is the main function of aspect. Progressive aspect and Perfect aspect are two types in English verb. As far as aspect, progressive aspect shows the continuity, temporary, accomplishment of action, so it is unbounded. Perfect aspect presents the accomplishment and endness of action, so it is bounded. Another explanation shows that aspect actually interacts with some already existing semantic features making the interpretation complete. One of such approaches is that perfective aspect typically presents the situation in its entirety, as a whole and imperfective as a structure or, in other words, that aspect deals with the inclusion or exclusion of the endpoints of a given situation. Step by step, this could bring us to the notion of boundedness which means that one can start from an assumption that perfective aspect implies a bounded, while the imperfective aspect unbounded situation.

In order to know bounded and unbounded scene, consider the examples below:

- a. Helen was filling the bottle with water for ten seconds.
- b. Helen filled the bottle with water in ten seconds.

The progressive aspect and durational adverbials implies that (a) is telic unbounded while (b) is telic bounded.

“Bounded and unbounded” is a pair of important concepts in cognitive grammar. In cognitive grammar, “bounded and unbounded” is part of general cognitive mechanisms. People acknowledge what the bounded is from their own body, then know what unbounded is with the help of the opposition between bounded and unbounded (Shen, 1995). Reflecting on language, they are expressed by countability or uncountability of noun, continuity or discontinuity of verb, property or character of adjective. In terms of action, the occurrence and continuity of it need take up time, which results in the differentiations between bounded and unbounded. Bounded action has starting point and final point on time axis, and unbounded doesn't. The specific presentations of them, what Langacker (2008) points out, are that the inside of bounded action is heterogeneous and replicable, and the inside of unbounded action is homogeneous and unrepeatable. Shown in English, typical continuous verbs have like, need, know and so on, which refer to unbounded action, while typical discontinuous verbs have jump, go, arrive and so on, which refer to bounded action.

As same as action, based on whether there is an end, scene can be categorized into two types: bounded and unbounded.

For example, 1. Betty made a drawing on the floor.

2. (1) The athlete ran 10 kilometers.
- (2) a. The athlete ran.
- b. John was in the kitchen.
- c. Betty knew about our affair.

From the above examples, sentence1 presents a kind of bounded scene. Sentences2 (2) presents a kind of unbounded scene. It's worth noting that sentence 2(1) is bounded and sentence 2(2.a) is unbounded, although they use the common verb “run”. Thus, the same verb in a sentence, under the effect of other grammatical approaches, could change in boundedness which they referred to.

Something is to be pointed out, “bounded and unbounded” reflect people's knowledge rather than objective reality. Through different “aspect”, English euphemism uses this factor to guide people's cognition achieving the effect of euphemism in the end. The typical example is “developing”. Developing is same as underdeveloped and undeveloped, describing the lower standards of countries and regions. Compared to the directive “poor”, undeveloped and underdeveloped have already achieved the transfer of cognitive focus from poor to “developed” with the help of negative approach, which results in certain degree of euphemism (Wang, 2006). Not only undeveloped, but also underdeveloped originated from verb “develop”. Both of them are in the form of the complete body, presenting a bounded scene. They make incomplete “developed” as reference, highlight the character of end. As figure 2 is showing, under the guidance of two words, the observer cuts-over from “now”, observes a finished action at present (developed) and correspondingly stoical results (undeveloped or underdeveloped). Developing is benefited from progressive aspect highlighting unbounded action in progress. In view of homogeneity of unbounded action, the action developing referred to is homogeneous at any time on axis. That is to say, seeing from current perspective, the action of “develop” is ongoing at special time of “now”. When jumping out of time node “now”, the action of “develop” is also underway from past to present, from present to future. Therefore, from perfect aspect to progressive aspect, developing makes a good guidance for people's cognitive process, achieves the transfer from bounded scene to unbounded scene and

highlights the sustainable development process and future prospects of developing/ undeveloped, underdeveloped countries and regions, which results in the effect of euphemism. In fact, all these three words which collocate with country, nation and area refer to the same meaning. But based on the statistical results of COCA corpus in America, the usage frequency of developing is often higher than others. It owes to the effect of euphemism which grammatical approach “aspect” has.

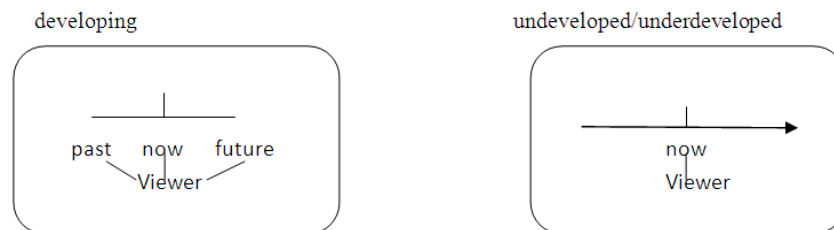


Figure2. the bounded and unbounded scene of Aspect

VI. CONCLUSION

As the rapid development of science and technology, our world becomes a global village. People from all around the world have a stronger tie than ever before. Intercultural communication turns out to be a hot topic. Every day, every time, we are having with people in various backgrounds. The application of euphemism has become an indispensable part of social life. An appropriate grammatical approach is selected in communication. The process of analysis of grammar is communication is actually a mental cognitive process of communication affected by cognitive contexts. Under the perspective of cognitive grammar, euphemism guides people’s cognition through the features of language negation, postmodification and aspect. It effectively achieves the transfer of cognitive focus and finally realizes the effect of euphemism through different operation mechanisms. Thanks to negation, profile and base are changed, resulting in the prominence of “not” and the shift of cognitive reference point. Postmodification makes the head noun the trajectory in a relational profile, hence reducing the prominence of the modifier and avoiding overall qualitative research with a single partial feature. Aspects help to turn a bounded scene into an unbounded one and hence change the cognitive focus, finally realize the effect of euphemism.

The language we use is a process which involves active mental processes and not simply the forming of habits. Cognitive approach gives importance to the learner’s active part in the process of using and learning of grammatical rules. A full view of euphemism is necessary in our daily life. When we learn to express us, a full knowledge of euphemism can avoid embarrassment in communication with multi-background people. Therefore, we should choose the appropriate euphemism according to the concrete context so as to make the communication smoother and the interpersonal relationship more harmonious. With the continuous development and changes of the social life and social relationship, the interpersonal function of euphemism will undergo alteration and metabolism to adjust to the development and change. It manifests that the interpersonal function of euphemism bearing strong vitality and will proceed to play immeasurable role in social life.

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The Comparative Effect of Portfolio and Summative Assessments on EFL Learners' Writing Ability, Anxiety, and Autonomy

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Abstract—The present study was an attempt to systematically compare the effect of portfolio and summative assessment on writing ability, anxiety, and autonomy of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The participants were 70 male and female intermediate level EFL learners, between 19 and 35 ($M_{age} = 27$), who were non-randomly selected from among 90 EFL learners through employing a piloted sample of the Preliminary English Test (PET). They were randomly assigned into two experimental groups of 35, named *portfolio assessment writing* and *summative assessment writing*. Prior to the treatment phase, the participants filled out the English versions of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) and Zhang and Li's (2004) Learner Autonomy Questionnaire. The portfolio group was instructed based on the Classroom Portfolio Model, by Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000), whereas in the summative assessment group, the common traditional summative assessment approach was implemented. After the treatment phase, both experimental groups were given another writing section of the PET test and the same anxiety and autonomy questionnaires as the posttests. The analysis of the test scores using two independent-samples *t*-tests and an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) revealed that the summative assessment group had a significantly higher post-treatment level of anxiety. Furthermore, the level of post-treatment autonomy in the portfolio assessment group was significantly higher. It was also concluded that there was a non-significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment on writing scores when controlling for the impact of pretest scores.

Index Terms—anxiety, autonomy, portfolio assessment, summative assessment, writing ability

I. INTRODUCTION

Contemporaneous with the social constructivism theory of learning which favors the active construction of language competence through a social and experiential process (Ashton-Hay, 2006; Zaker, 2016), the English Language Teaching (ELT) practice now favors learners' active and steady engagement in the process of learning (Aliweh, 2011; Zaker, 2015). Consequently, learners are now placed in the center of the learning process (Collins & O'Brien, 2003). Moreover, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners are expected to actively use the language with the goal of internalizing it more effectively (Nosratinia & Zaker, 2013). This new trend has influenced all aspects of ELT practice, ranging all the way from pedagogical techniques to assessment and evaluation.

Portfolio assessment, as a representative of this new trend, is a process-based approach which is believed to be highly influenced by the abovementioned developments in the ELT domain (Brown & Hudson, 1998). Portfolio assessment has been defined as a collection of evidence able to demonstrate learners' progress and achievement through providing a more inclusive picture (Plaza, Draugalis, Slack, Skrepnek, & Sauer, 2007). In fact, it is believed that through integrating assessment and instruction, portfolio assessment can provide considerable developments in language learning (Poehner, 2008). Furthermore, many have stated that such a learner-centered approach to assessment can provide significant developments in learners' mental, cognitive, and metacognitive characteristics (Aliweh, 2011). On the other hand, the summative assessment approaches rely on testing the final product of learners, while ignoring learners' role in the process of learning (Moya & Melley, 1994), providing EFL teachers with an incomplete picture of learners' Second Language (L2) development.

Systematic studies are required for confirming the advantage of portfolio assessment approach over the traditional summative approach which cannot provide the immediate and contextualized feedback helpful for teachers and students during the learning process (Kozulin & Garb, 2004). Moreover, it is of utmost importance to inspect the way portfolio assessment affects EFL learners' internal factors (e.g. anxiety, autonomy, and creativity) which are believed to play a major role in the process of learning (Fahim & Zaker, 2014). Hoping to address the abovementioned concerns, the present study attempted to systematically compare the impact of summative (traditional) and portfolio assessment on

both language skills and learners' mental qualities. However, in order to enhance the levels of validity and generalizability of the findings, the study narrowed its focus on dealing with writing ability, anxiety, and autonomy.

Among different language skills, writing is considered a major skill, representing one's general language proficiency (Onozawa, 2010). This skill is a significant requirement for EFL learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2013) as well as a "basic communication skill and a unique asset in the process of learning a second language" (Chastain, 1988, p. 244). However, mastering writing has always been a challenge for EFL learners. The existence of this challenge is not only attributed to learners' degree of linguistic ability, but it is also highly dependent on the degree of focus on the learning process and the feedback the learners are provided with during the learning process (Chih, 2008). As stated earlier, portfolio assessment has among its principles the focus on process and providing feedback (Plaza et al., 2007). Furthermore, major components of writing, i.e. generating ideas, drafting, redrafting, and editing, are not sufficiently assessed in a one-shot attempt of traditional summative assessment (Babae & Tikoduadua, 2013).

Anxiety is the other variable of concern in this study whose reaction to a portfolio assessment was to be assessed. It is believed that anxiety is a crucial factor in L2 learning success (O' Donnell, Reeve, & Smith, 2012). In the ELT domain, anxiety is defined as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specially associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and writing" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, p. 284). Although some studies in the ELT domain have predicted a positive association between L2 learning and anxiety (Pimsleur, Ludwig, & Morrison, 1996), numerous studies have reported a negative correlation between anxiety and L2 development (Brown, 2007; Saito & Samimy, 1996). More specifically, it has been stated that learners' inadequacy in writing skill mostly stems from anxiety (Kırmızı & Dağdeviren Kırmızı, 2015). On the other hand, considering the pedagogical concerns, it has been stated that portfolio assessment can significantly contribute to lowering EFL learners' anxiety (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002).

Finally, autonomy, the third dependent variable of the study, is regarded a major and influential factor in mastering language skills (Nosratinia & Zaker, 2015). As stated by Dickinson (1995), autonomy is "a situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decision concerned with his/her learning and the implementation of those decisions" (p. 11). According to Nosratinia and Zaker (2014), "current EFL pedagogical trends seem to primarily focus on a student-centered methodology in which learner autonomy is given a great value" (p. 1). In other words, EFL learners "are now given a meaningful role in pedagogic decision making by being treated as active and autonomous players (Nosratinia & Zaker, 2014, p. 1). Accordingly, learner autonomy is now considered a major concern when planning the language teaching programs and determining the assessment approach (Bell, 2003; Nosratinia & Zaker, 2015).

The abovementioned concerns were reflected through the following research questions:

Research Question 1: *Is there a significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment in terms of EFL learners' anxiety level?*

Research Question 2: *Is there a significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment in terms of EFL learners' autonomy level?*

Research Question 3: *Is there a significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment in terms of EFL learners' writing ability?*

II. METHOD

Participants

The participants of this study were 70 male and female EFL learners with the age range of 19 to 35 ($M_{age} = 27$) who studied EFL at intermediate level in Tehran Institute of Technology, Tehran, Iran. These participants were non-randomly selected and homogenized from among 90 EFL learners through employing The Preliminary English Test (PET). Furthermore, before administrating the PET test, a group of 30 EFL learners with the same characteristics as the target group participated in the piloting of PET test.

Besides one of the researchers, as the teacher and one of the raters, another trained rater who was an M.A. holder in TEFL with nine years of teaching experience attended the scoring of the writing sections of the PET test.

Instrumentation

In order to fulfill the purpose of the study, the following instruments were utilized:

1. The Preliminary English Test
2. The Rating Scale of PET Writing
3. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
4. The Autonomy Questionnaire
5. The Portfolio Assessment Model
6. The Course Textbook
7. Six Compositions
8. The ESL Composition Profile

The Preliminary English Test (PET)

In order to homogenize the participants in terms of language proficiency, the researchers administered a version of the PET test, adapted from the book *PET Practice Test* (Quintana, 2008). Due to some practicality issues, e.g. the

institutional rules, only the reading and writing sections of the test were administered. The reading section consists of five parts with 35 reading comprehension questions. The writing section consists of three parts with 8 questions. The allocated time for these two sections (i.e. reading and writing) is 1 hour and 30 minutes. Furthermore, in order to estimate participants' post-treatment writing ability, the writing section of another PET test was administered.

The Rating Scale of PET Writing

The analytic writing scale developed by Cambridge under the name of General Mark Schemes for Writing was employed to rate the writing section of the PET in this study. It includes a scale of 0-5 based on content, organization, cohesion, coherence, format, range, mechanical accuracy, word choice, dictation, and sentence structures.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The scale has 33 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The allocated time for completion is forty minutes, and the possible range of scores is 33-165. Horwitz et al. (1986) have reported the reliability index of .93 for the scale; however, the reliability index of FLCAS in this study was estimated to be 0.70 using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

The Autonomy Questionnaire

The Autonomy Questionnaire was developed by Zhang and Li (2004). The questionnaire has two parts. The first part contains 11 items and second 10, totally 21 items. The first 11 Likert scale items have five options, ranging from *never* to *always*. The second part is in multiple-choice format, and the participants are expected to choose the closer answer to their beliefs and their attitudes or ideas, from A (1 point) to E (5 points). The participants are required to respond in 30 minutes, and the maximum possible score of the questionnaire is 100. The questionnaire reportedly has high content validity and high reliability (Dafei, 2007). The reliability of this instrument in this study was estimated to be 0.76 using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

The Portfolio Assessment Model

The Hamp-Lyons and Condon's (2000) portfolio assessment model was used in this study. It is based on the Classroom Portfolio Model and consists of three procedures: collection, selection and reflection as shown in Figure 3.1.

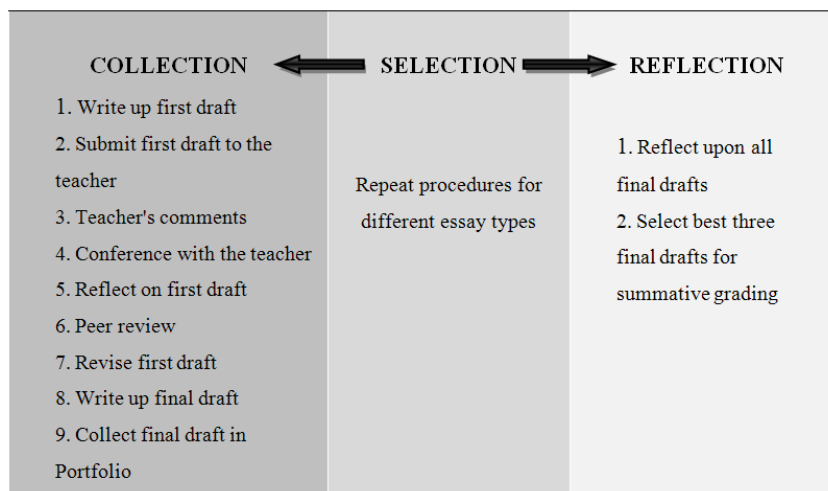


Figure 1: Classroom portfolio model designed by Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000)

The Course Textbook

The main textbook employed in both of the experimental groups during the instruction was *English Result Intermediate* by Annie McDonald and Mark Hancock (2010), published by Oxford University Press. It consists of 12 units, each including five lessons and one review. In this study, four units of the book (units five to eight) were covered. The titles were Law and Order, Encounters, Appearance, and Communication.

Six Compositions

The participants were asked to write six compositions during the treatment sessions. They had 40 minutes to write about the following predetermined topics:

1. Describe one of the best memories of your school days.
2. Describe one of your favorite films that you have watched or the book that you have read before.
3. Describe the characteristics of a good neighbor.
4. When you go shopping what processes do you follow as your shopping habit? Describe them.
5. Where do you want to go for your holidays? Explain about your accommodation and problems that you may encounter with?
6. What is the most important decision in your lifetime and the degree of hope that you wish to achieve it.

The topics of the compositions were the same across the two experimental groups. The compositions consisted of 100 to 150 words and had to be written in descriptive voice; they needed to have three basic parts: introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.

The ESL Composition Profile

In order to score the six abovementioned compositions objectively, the ESL Composition Profile rating scale by Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormouth, Hartfiel, and Hughey (1981) was employed. It is an analytic scoring scale and consists of five subcategories of content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The highest possible total score is 100.

Procedure

The researchers followed certain steps, stated in a chronological order in this section. Prior to the treatment, piloting the PET test was the very first step for implementing this study. The test (reading and writing parts only) was administered to 30 non-participating candidates who had almost the same characteristics as the target group. The three characteristics of individual items (Item Facility, Item Discrimination, and Choice Distribution) were calculated, and no malfunctioning items were found. Also, the Cronbach alpha formula was employed for calculating the reliability index.

The writing part of the PET was rated according to the rating scale by the two raters who had already discussed and reviewed the rating procedure. Later on, the inter-rater reliability was calculated which indicated the existence of an acceptable consistency between the two raters. Consequently, the final writing score of each participant was the average of the two scores provided by the raters.

The already piloted PET was administered to 90 non-randomly selected male and female EFL learners. Thence, 70 EFL learners whose scores fell between one standard deviation above and below the mean were chosen as the homogeneous participants. They were randomly assigned into two experimental groups of 35, named *portfolio assessment writing* and *summative assessment writing*. Furthermore, to ensure the pre-treatment homogeneity in terms of writing ability, the scores of the writing section of the PET were analyzed. Furthermore, in the first session, the participants in two groups completed the Anxiety and Autonomy questionnaires, making it possible to check their pre-treatment anxiety and autonomy degrees.

The two groups were instructed by the same teacher, using the textbook. The teacher tried to teach the relevant grammatical points and the essential vocabularies with special focus on the writing skill. The only difference lay in using portfolios in the portfolio writing group. During the course, the participants were asked to write six compositions, and they had 40 minutes for each topic, one topic each session. The compositions had to have 100 to 150 words, written in descriptive voice. The participants were taught how to write a composition including introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. The compositions were rated according to the Composition Profile by the teacher. The course consisted of 12 sessions of 3 hours spanning over a period of five weeks.

The Portfolio Writing Group

In the first session, this group was provided with the explanation of the nature, purpose, and the design of the portfolio and procedures of creating a portfolio based on the Classroom Portfolio Model recommended by Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000). The six compositions (explained in the previous section) were collected, and, using the ESL Composition Profile, the teacher provided notes and comments. In the following section, the papers were then returned to the participants, and they were expected to read the comments and consult their teacher in a one-to-one conference after the class.

The participants were asked to reflect on their own compositions and evaluate them. Also, they were asked to review their peers' writings in groups of three and to give their comments. By means of these comments, i.e., the instructor comments, peers' comments, and their own reflections, the participants gained information about their strengths and weaknesses in their writings and revised them. Afterwards, the participants wrote the final draft, and collected them in their portfolios. At the end of the term, the participants were asked to choose three of their writings for the final evaluation, and the portfolio score of the students was the average of scores on those three final drafts (Lam & Lee, 2008). It should be mentioned that, in order to encourage the participants to actively participate in the study, they were told that their writings were course requirements, impacting their final grades.

The Summative Assessment Writing Group

In this group, the traditional summative assessment was implemented. The participants were asked to write on the six given topics, similar to the other group, and after collecting the compositions, they were rated according to the ESL Composition Profile. In addition, the teacher wrote her notes and comments for each student; however, contrary to the portfolio assessment group, in this group the participants were not asked to reflect on, redraft, and revise their writings, and the evaluation of their writings was summative.

The Post-Treatment Phase

At the end of the treatment phase, all of the participants sat for the writing posttest. Simultaneously, the Anxiety questionnaire and the Autonomy questionnaire were re-administered to the participants so that it was possible to estimate the post-treatment degrees of these two constructs.

III. RESULTS

This study had one independent variable, the assessment technique, with two levels, portfolio and summative assessment. There were three dependent variables, namely writing ability, anxiety, and autonomy. Also, the language proficiency of the participants, intermediate level, was considered the control variable. In order to answer the research questions of this quasi-experimental study, certain analyses were carried out which are reported in this section.

The Pre-Treatment Analyses

Initially, the reading and writing sections of the PET were administered to the pilot group ($n = 30$), and items went through an NRT item analysis procedure, including item facility, item discrimination, and choice distribution. The results showed that all of the items, in the reading section of the test, exhibited acceptable IF, ID, and CD indices. Accordingly, all the test items were employed for the participant selection phase. Furthermore, the internal consistency of the PET in the piloting phase was estimated through using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (.792). In order to make sure that inter-rater reliability index for the raters regarding the writing section of the PET is acceptable, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was run between the two sets of writing scores for the piloting administration whose results indicated a high level of inter-rater reliability between the two raters, $r = .94$, $n = 30$, $p < .01$.

The piloted PET test was administered among 90 individuals. The obtained descriptive statistics indicated that the skewness ratio value (-1.76) fell within the range of -1.96 and +1.96, supporting the normality of the distribution of the scores (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Afterwards, in order to select the participants of the study, the researchers selected those individuals whose PET scores fell within the range of +1 SD and -1 SD above and below the mean score (38.2 to 53.4). Following this procedure resulted in keeping 70 individuals as the homogenous participants of the study; they were randomly assigned to two experimental groups.

Prior to administering the treatments to the two experimental groups, a pre-treatment data set was created using the scores the participants took on the three instruments of the study. Using this data set, it was attempted to make sure that the participants are homogeneous regarding their pre-treatment anxiety, autonomy, and writing ability. The obtained scores were analyzed through running three independent samples t -tests. The obtained results indicated that:

- There was no significant difference in anxiety scores for portfolio assessment ($M = 95.54$, $SD = 8.31$) and summative assessment ($M = 98$, $SD = 11.99$) groups ($t(60.5) = -.99$, $p = .32$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -2.46, 95% CI : -7.39 to 2.48) was very small (eta squared = 0.014).
- There was no significant difference in autonomy scores for portfolio assessment ($M = 65.86$, $SD = 6.95$) and summative assessment ($M = 67$, $SD = 7.95$) groups ($t(68) = -.64$, $p = .524$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -1.143, 95% CI : -4.704 to 2.418) was very small (eta squared = 0.005).
- There was a significant difference in writing scores for portfolio assessment ($M = 19.314$, $SD = 3.5729$) and summative assessment ($M = 21.486$, $SD = 2.9117$) groups ($t(68) = -2.787$, $p = .007$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -2.1714, 95% CI : -3.7261 to -.6168) was medium to large (eta squared = 0.102).

Based on the obtained results in this section, it was concluded that the participants in the two experimental groups demonstrated the same quality regarding their anxiety and autonomy levels; however, it was observed that there is a significant pre-treatment difference between the writing scores of the participants in the two experimental groups. As a result, pertinent statistical analysis, taking into account this initial difference, had to be implemented. This point will be discussed when answering the third research question.

The Post-Treatment Analyses: Checking the Assumptions

Considering the nature of the data and research questions in the present study, two parametric statistical tests were employed, i.e. independent-samples t -test and an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) test. There are a number of assumptions which apply to all parametric tests. The status of these general assumptions is checked in this section; however, the test-specific assumptions are dealt with before answering the research questions in the following sections. The abovementioned general assumptions, as stated by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), are listed and checked hereunder:

- **The dependent variable should be measured at the interval or ratio level.** Considering characteristics of the instruments used in this study (see instruments), this assumption was met.
- **Random sampling** is another assumption, favored in experimental studies. The initial 90 participants were selected non-randomly, and out of this number, 70 homogenous EFL learners were randomly assigned to the two experimental groups. Therefore, this assumption was partially met.
- **The observations should be independent.** Having the participants performing on the tests independently, this assumption was met.
- **The normality assumption** (dealt with in the following section)

Checking the Assumption of Normality

In order to inspect the normality of the data, descriptive statistics of the two experimental groups regarding their post-treatment levels of anxiety, autonomy, and writing ability were obtained. The obtained results indicated that the distribution of scores for the participants' post-treatment levels of anxiety, autonomy, and writing ability was normal as all skewness ratio and kurtosis ratio values fell within the range of -1.96 and +1.96, supporting the normality of distribution for the scores (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Answering the Research Questions

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, three research questions were framed. Based on the design of the study and the characteristics of the variables, the researchers initially opted for running three independent samples *t*-tests. However, as the initial writing-wise homogeneity of the participants was not confirmed, the last question was to be answered through running an ANCOVA test.

The First Research Question

The first intention of the study was to systematically investigate whether there is a significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment in terms of EFL learners' anxiety level. An independent-samples *t*-test was run in order to answer this research question. As reported in Table 1, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met (*Levene's F* = 4.4, *p* = .04). Therefore, the values presented in the second line of the table were used.

TABLE 1:
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES *T*-TEST FOR ANXIETY POSTTEST SCORES

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Anxiety	Equal variances assumed	4.402	.040	-5.357	68	.000	-14.171	2.646	-19.451	-8.892
Posttest	Equal variances not assumed			-5.357	60.809	.000	-14.171	2.646	-19.462	-8.881

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics pertinent to posttest anxiety scores categorized according to the received treatments.

TABLE 2:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ANXIETY POSTTEST SCORES

Treatment Type	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety Posttest				
Portfolio Assessment	35	79.40	8.965	1.515
Summative Assessment	35	93.57	12.830	2.169

As reported in Table 1, there was a significant difference between anxiety scores for portfolio assessment ($M = 79.4$, $SD = 8.96$) and summative assessment ($M = 93.57$, $SD = 12.83$) groups ($t(61) = -5.357$, $p = .0005$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -14.171, 95% *CI*: -19.462 to -8.881) was very large (eta squared = 0.296).

The Second Research Question

The second intention of the study was to systematically investigate whether there is a significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment in terms of EFL learners' autonomy level. An independent-samples *t*-test was run in order to answer this research question. As reported in Table 3, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (*Levene's F* = 1.47, $p = .23$). Therefore, the values presented in the first line of the table were used.

TABLE 3:
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES *T*-TEST FOR AUTONOMY POSTTEST SCORES

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Autonom	Equal variances assumed	1.469	.230	3.776	68	.000	7.400	1.960	3.489	11.311
y Posttest	Equal variances not assumed			3.776	65.91	.000	7.400	1.960	3.487	11.313

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics pertinent to posttest autonomy scores categorized according to the received treatments.

TABLE 4:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR AUTONOMY POSTTEST SCORES

Treatment Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Autonomy Posttest				
Portfolio Assessment	35	77.03	7.434	1.257
Summative Assessment	35	69.63	8.898	1.504

As reported in Table 3, there was a significant difference between autonomy scores for portfolio assessment ($M = 77$, $SD = 7.43$) and summative assessment ($M = 69.6$, $SD = 8.9$) groups ($t(68) = 3.776$, $p = .0005$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 7.4, 95% *CI*: 3.489 to 11.311) was large (eta squared = 0.173).

The Third Research Question

The third intention of the study was to systematically investigate whether there is a significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment in terms of EFL learners' writing ability level.

Checking the Assumptions of the ANCOVA Test

Before running the ANCOVA test, it was needed to check three major assumptions. These assumptions, according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), are:

- Linearity
- Homogeneity of regression slopes
- Equality of variance

In order to check the assumption of linearity, the following scatterplot was created.

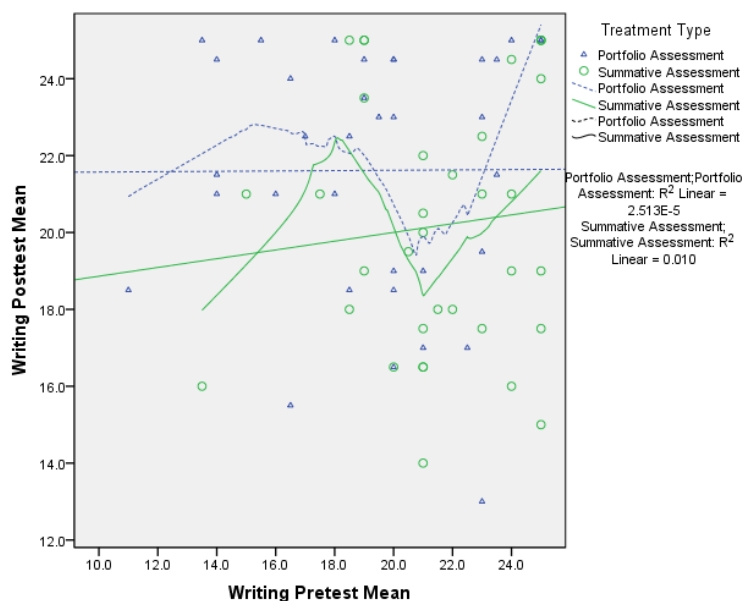


Figure 2: The ANCOVA linearity scatterplot for portfolio and summative assessment on writing

As illustrated in Figure 2, there exists a clearly linear relationship between the dependent variable and the covariates for both of the categories, and there is no indication of a curvilinear relationship. Therefore, the assumption of linearity was not violated. This procedure was followed by checking the homogeneity of regression slopes. The pertinent desired result would confirm that there is no interaction between the posttest scores and the two categories. Table 5 reports the result of the pertinent between-subjects effects.

TABLE 5:
THE TEST OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS FOR THE TREATMENTS AND WRITING POSTTEST SCORES

Dependent Variable: Writing Posttest Mean					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	40.182 ^a	3	13.394	1.197	.318
Intercept	611.766	1	611.766	54.691	.000
Treatment	5.740	1	5.740	.513	.476
Writing Pretest Mean	2.433	1	2.433	.217	.643
Treatment * WritingPretestMean	2.070	1	2.070	.185	.668
Error	738.265	66	11.186		
Total	31334.250	70			
Corrected Total	778.446	69			

a. R Squared = .052 (Adjusted R Squared = .009)

Through inspecting Table 5, it can be noticed that the Sig. value for the interaction between treatment type and vocabulary posttests (.668) is safely above the .05 cut-off value. Therefore, the interaction is not statistically significant, indicating that the assumption is met. Finally, the assumption of equality of variance was checked through running the Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances (Table 6).

TABLE 6:
LEVENE'S TEST OF EQUALITY OF ERROR VARIANCES FOR THE TREATMENTS AND WRITING POSTTEST SCORES^a

Dependent Variable: Writing Posttest Mean			
F	df1	df2	Sig.
.071	1	68	.790

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.
a. Design: Intercept + Writing Pretest Mean + Treatment

As reported in Table 6, the assumption of equality of variance is not violated as the Sig. value is much larger than the .05 cut-off value (*Levene's F* (1, 68) = .071, $p = .79$). This indicates that the variances are desirably equal. Having the three assumptions checked and met, the researchers could legitimately opt for the ANCOVA test.

Running the ANCOVA Test

After checking the preliminary assumptions, the ANCOVA test was run in order to answer the third research question. The main results of the test are presented in Table 7. This test will indicate whether the two treatments are significantly different in terms of affecting writing (the posttest scores when controlling for the impact of pretest scores).

TABLE 7:
THE ANCOVA TEST RESULTS FOR THE TREATMENTS AND PARTICIPANTS' WRITING

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
Dependent Variable: Writing Posttest Mean

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	38.112 ^a	2	19.056	1.725	.186	.049
Intercept	671.303	1	671.303	60.753	.000	.476
Writing Pretest Mean	1.679	1	1.679	.152	.698	.002
Treatment	37.615	1	37.615	3.404	.069	.048
Error	740.335	67	11.050			
Total	31334.250	70				
Corrected Total	778.446	69				

a. R Squared = .049 (Adjusted R Squared = .021)

As reported in Table 7, after adjusting the posttest scores, there was not a significant difference between the two intervention groups on the writing posttest scores (writing development), $F(1, 67) = 3.4, p = .069$, partial eta squared = .048 representing a small-to-medium effect size. This indicates that 4.8 percent of the writing posttest scores is explained by the type of treatment. It was also concluded that there is not a significant relationship between the pretest scores and the posttest scores of writing while controlling for the type of treatment. In fact, pretest scores only explain .2 percent of the variance in the posttest scores of writing. Finally, Table 8 presents the adjusted means on writing posttest scores for each treatment group. Here, the effect of the pretest scores has been statistically removed.

TABLE 8:
THE ADJUSTED MARGINAL MEANS ON WRITING POSTTEST SCORES

Treatment Type
Dependent Variable: Writing Posttest Mean

Treatment Type	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Portfolio Assessment	21.667 ^a	.578	20.514	22.820
Summative Assessment	20.119 ^a	.578	18.966	21.272

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Writing Pretest Mean = 20.400.

The main obtained values of the study are included in Figure 3 in order to get a holistic picture of the impact of the treatments on participants' anxiety, autonomy, and their writing ability.

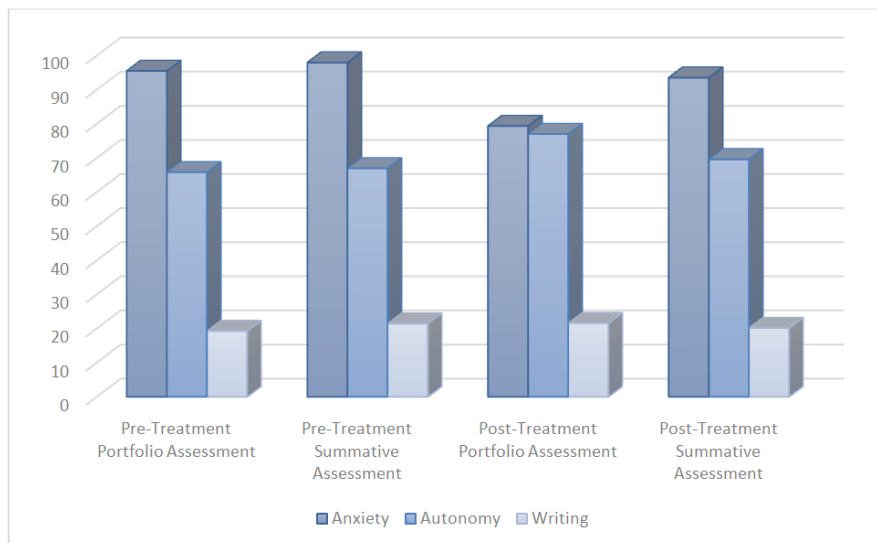


Figure 3: Pretest and posttest scores in the two experimental groups

IV. DISCUSSION

Addressing the first research question of this study through running an independent samples *t*-test revealed that the summative assessment group had a significantly higher post-treatment level of anxiety ($t(61) = -5.357, p = .0005$, two-tailed). This result was further supported by observing a very large effect size (eta squared = 0.296). Considering the pre-treatment homogeneity of participants' anxiety levels, the significantly higher level of anxiety in the summative assessment group indicates the considerable and statistically-supported role of portfolio assessment in diminishing the level of anxiety among EFL learners. This supports the argument proposed by Barootchi and Keshavarz (2002). More importantly, this finding confirms the findings of Ozturk and Cecen's (2007) experimental study which reported a significant role for employing portfolios in helping students to overcome their anxiety.

The second research question attempted to systematically compare the impact of portfolio and summative assessment on another important factor in EFL learning, autonomy (Nosratinia & Zaker, 2014, 2015). The results of an independent samples *t*-test indicated that level of post-treatment autonomy in the portfolio assessment group is significantly higher, compared to the summative assessment group ($t(68) = 3.776, p = .0005$, two-tailed). This result was further supported by the existence of a large effect size (eta squared = 0.173). Considering the pre-treatment homogeneity of participants' autonomy levels, the significantly higher level of post-treatment autonomy in the portfolio assessment group indicates the considerable and statistically-supported role of portfolio assessment in enhancing the level of autonomy among EFL learners. This result confirms the findings of Wen, Tsai, Lin, and Chuang's (2004) study which reported a significant development in learners' metacognitive awareness and autonomy as a result of implementing portfolio assessment. This finding is also in line with the findings of Koyuncu (2006) which reported an improvement in young learners' autonomy through employing portfolio assessment.

Finally, the third/last research question of the study was an attempt to systematically compare the impact of portfolio and summative assessment on EFL learners' writing ability. Comparing the impact of portfolio and summative assessments on L2 writing makes it possible to inspect the direct impact of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' language skills, compared to the first and second research questions which focused on learning-related factors. Considering the pre-treatment heterogeneity of participants' writing ability, the third research question was answered through running an ANCOVA test after checking the pertinent assumptions. Results indicated that there was not a significant difference between the impact of portfolio and summative assessment on writing scores when controlling for the impact of pretest scores ($F(1, 67) = 3.4, p = .069$, partial eta squared = .048 representing a small-to-medium effect size).

Although the results of the ANCOVA test reported a non-significant difference between the two intervention groups, inspecting the table of adjusted marginal means (Table 8) indicated that the adjusted mean on writing posttest scores for the portfolio assessment group was higher than the summative assessment group. Moreover, the partial eta squared (0.048) indicated that, despite being statistically non-significant, 4.8 percent of the writing posttest scores is explained by the type of treatment. This finding provides partial support for Fahed Al-Serhani's (2007) study which reported a significant development in EFL learners' writing as a result of employing portfolio assessment. The same level of support is also provided for Qinghua's (2010) study which reported a development in EFL learners' writing accuracy and coherence when applying portfolio assessment. Results also partially confirmed the findings of Tabatabaei and Assefi's (2010) study in an Iranian EFL context. The last point to make is that the significance or non-significance of the difference between two sets of scores is dependent on the features of the sample, e.g. sample size, mean scores, and variation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Therefore, a larger sample size could turn this non-significant difference into a significant difference.

V. CONCLUSION

This study was mainly motivated by the desire to highlight the significance of assessment in language programs and study the way the new developments in this area can facilitate and promote language learning. There is now a common consensus among language educators on the significance of the role played by assessment in teaching activities and outcomes (Kozulin & Garb, 2004). However, simultaneous with the developments in the teaching techniques and theories (Zaker, 2015, 2016), the summative assessment approach which adopts a time-bound and narrow approach to assessment has been under serious attack (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007). Moreover, it has been stated that the traditional summative assessment is unable to provide the immediate and contextualized feedback helpful for teachers and students during the learning process (Kozulin & Garb, 2004).

As stated earlier, there has been a global shift from traditional teacher-centered approaches to the student-centered approaches in language teaching (Nosratinia & Zaker, 2013, 2014) in which learners voice their opinions on the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning (Collins & O'Brien, 2003; Richards, 2005). As a result, new developments in the area of language assessment have been introduced. Portfolio assessment, as a representative of this new trend, has been defined as a collection of evidence able to demonstrate learners' progress and achievement through providing a more inclusive picture (Plaza et al., 2007). Despite all the arguments stated above, there seems to be a dire need to systematically study the advantages of employing these new assessment approaches, e.g. portfolio, in the area of language teaching and in different EFL contexts.

Therefore, this quasi-experimental study was designed to include anxiety, autonomy, and writing as the dependent variables of the study while comparing two groups, one receiving summative and the other one receiving portfolio assessment. The results of the study led the researchers to the conclusion that

- Portfolio assessment diminishes the level of anxiety among EFL learners.
- Portfolio assessment opens the road for EFL learners' autonomy.
- Portfolio assessment can develop EFL learners' writing.

The important point to mention is that portfolio assessment seems to have a reasonable potential for directly contributing to the process of language learning. Therefore, integrating alternative assessment techniques, especially portfolio, in the TEFL practice seems to be logical and justified attempt. The findings of the present study highlight the significance of adopting alternative and process-oriented approaches to language assessment in EFL contexts. Doing so will enable EFL teachers to enhance the level of learner involvement in the learning process and employ the assessment process as a motivating and informative tool simultaneously. In order for EFL teachers to employ portfolio assessments in the best possible way, they are recommended to:

- a) focus learners' attention on learning processes,
- b) value the revision processes,
- c) attempt to enhance learners' both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation,
- d) involve the learners in the process of teaching and assessment,
- e) establish a friendly atmosphere for a better communication in the class, and
- f) try to familiarize the learners with the advantages of active engagement in the process of learning.

As highlighted in the constructivist theory of learning, learners' active involvement in the process of learning is a must (Ashton-Hay, 2006; Zaker, 2016). Therefore, they should be cognizant of the fact that without playing an active role in an EFL classroom, no learning will take place. Moreover, they should welcome an assessment process which requires them to actively participate all through the period of learning. In an EFL classroom where portfolio assessment is employed, learners constantly receive comments and feedbacks on their performance. They should attempt to critically assess themselves and, through studying the comments, attempt to correct the errors they have made. It is also recommended to exchange the comments with other classmates so that they can engage in a collaborative process which can facilitate language learning.

Based on the findings of the present study, EFL syllabus designers are encouraged to prepare EFL materials in a way that learners are given the chance to engage in a self-assessment process at different points during the language course. EFL syllabus designers should also value the significance of cooperation and interaction in the process of learning, which are the tools for a fruitful engagement in the portfolio assessment process. EFL syllabi should be designed in a way that learners are exposed to a variety of tasks and numerous opportunities to give and receive comments as stated in the principles of portfolio assessment. Finally, EFL syllabi can explicitly familiarize the learners with the principles of portfolio assessment and the role learners are expected to play in it.

Considering the design of this study and its focus, the characteristics of the learners, and the peculiarities of the study, a limited number of recommendations are presented here, hoping that other researchers would find them interesting enough to pursue in the future.

1. It is suggested to compare the impact of portfolio assessment with other types of alternative assessment on language skills.
2. It is suggested to inspect the impact of portfolio assessment on other language skills and personal factors.
3. This study was conducted among EFL learners, between the ages of 19 and 34. The same study could be conducted among other age groups.
4. It is suggested to replicate this study in a way that the numbers of male and female participants are equal. Therefore, gender might not act as an intervening variable.
5. This study can be replicated employing some qualitative instruments to increase the validity and reliability of the results and interpretations.
6. It is suggested to replicate this study in a way that the treatment phase takes a longer time, with higher number of sessions and different types of writing tasks and activities. This way, it would be possible to inspect whether portfolio is able to significantly improve learners' writing performance.
7. This study can be replicated with participants with other levels of language proficiency.

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