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Foreword

Welcome to the fifth edition of the year 2011. The Iranian EFL Journal is a bi-monthly journal from 2011, and this has created a good opportunity for its readers to access to more articles. The journal has had strong growth over the last few years with a monthly readership now exceeding 2500 readers. For a journal examining the topic of EFL/ESL, Literature and Translation studies, the growth and readership has been pleasing. Statistically, readers are coming from almost 80 countries. In the fifth issue of volume seven we present fifteen articles for your reading. In the first article, Reza Ghafar Samar, Mohammad Bagher Shaabani and Mohammad Nabi Karimi have done a research on overpassivization of unaccusative verbs as a function of discourse pragmatics and verb type: testing the fit in Persian. In the second article, learners’ performance in and beliefs about problematic L2 oral communication in an EFL context: a qualitative analysis is explored by Alireza Jamshidnejad. In the third article, the effect of verbal and visual techniques on vocabulary achievement of Iranian EFL students is presented by Zahra Fakher Ajabshir. The fourth article which discusses the evaluation of an EFL English coursebook is presented by Mehri Jalali. In the fifth article, Fateme Dehghan and Ali Akbar Jabbari have studied the animacy in the acquisition of the argument structure: psych verbs. In the sixth article, Reza Aghaie and Stefanie Pillaie have presented a research on the explicit instruction of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies in Reading performance and self-efficacy. In the seventh article, the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies in English vocabulary learning: a case of Iranian high school students is presented by Hadi Salehi and Manoochehr Jafarigohar. In the eighth article of the issue, relationship between multiple-intelligences and learning grammar in EFL settings is studied by Ali Panahi. In the ninth article of the issue, Mohammadsaleh Sanatifar and Mohammad Reza Hashemi have presented a contrastive study of “pro-form” substitutions in English and Persian with reference to translation practice. In the tenth article of the issue, policy and English language teaching (ELT) in Iran is presented by Mehry Haddad Narafshan and Mortaza Yamini. In the next article, learners’ beliefs and teachers’ beliefs, is studied by Reza Dehghan Harati. In the next article, evaluation of integrative grammar teaching the case of English two-word verbs, and adjective /verb + preposition for Iranian EFL learners is done by Jaber Ahmadzad. In the last article of the issue, Tehran teaching English in the third millennium, is done by Saeed Khojasteh Nam. In the last article of the issue, Iran and teaching English in the third millennium, is done by Saeed Khojasteh Nam. In the last article of the issue, Biook Behnam and Akram Azarnoush discuss critics of brown and levinson politeness theory. And in the last article of the issue, Mahdi Dahmardeh and David Wray, present culture and English language teaching in Iran.

We hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to your readership.
Title

Overpassivization of Unaccusative Verbs as a Function of Discourse Pragmatics and Verb Type: Testing the Fit in Persian

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Abstract
A topic which has attracted considerable attention in SLA research is the development of knowledge by L2 speakers of the relationship between argument structure of verbs and their morphosyntactic realizations (Kondo, 2005). Part of this attention has been drawn towards one-argument unaccusative verbs like "Tom vanished" and "The accident happened". Unaccusative verbs are similar to passives in the movement of their argument from object to subject positions (Kondo, 2005), while, unlike passives, there is no overt morphological reflex of this movement. L2 learners of English, however, overgeneralize passive morphology to these contexts. It has been argued that some factors like discourse pragmatics, verb type and the L1 morphological configurations trigger this process. This paper therefore sets out to explore the factors involved in the overgeneralization patterns of L1-Farsi English learners in the above mentioned contexts. Using a decision-making questionnaire, we investigated Iranian English learner's overpassivization of unaccusative verbs against the variables of verb type, and discourse pragmatics (or the source of causation of the event). The results confirmed a significant difference between dyadic vs. monadic unaccusatives. Discourse pragmatics had a significant effect on the rate of overpassivization of the unaccusative verbs, too.

Keywords: Unaccusative Verbs, Overpassivization, Discourse Pragmatics and Verb type.

Introduction
One of the long-standing issues in the study of second language acquisition has cantered around how learners acquire the argument structure of verbs, what Kondo (2005) calls the development of knowledge by L2 speakers of the relationship between argument structure of verbs and its
morphosyntactic realizations. This issue still continues to be hotly debated today. Most of this debate has been drawn towards one-argument unaccusative verbs like "Tom vanished" and "The accident happened". These verbs are similar to passive verbs in that the internal argument moves from an object position to a subject position in the syntax (Kondo, 2005). In fact, the single argument of these verbs bears the thematic role of Theme or Patient which is generated in an object position in argument structure which surfaces as subject in English. Therefore, "Tom vanished" has the deep structure of \([\emptyset[VP \text{ vanished } \text{Tom}]]\) and a surface structure of \([\text{Tom} [VP \text{ vanished } t]]\). However, unlike passive constructions which carry the morphological reflex of \(BE+PP\), there is no morphological reflex of this movement. Mainly as a function of this characteristic, it has been found that speakers of some L1s learning English overgeneralize passive morphology to intransitive verbs and it is usually argued that they are more likely to do this with intransitive unaccusatives (Balcom, 1997; Zoble, 1989). This overpassivization manifests itself in a number of situations:

"(a) in written and oral production and acceptance in judgment tasks of passive unaccusatives: "*An accident was happened." (b) incorrect rejection of unaccusative verbs in grammatical noun phrase–verb (NP–V) sentences ("John left") in judgment tasks, but correct use of this sentence pattern in all other cases; (c) production and acceptance in experimental tasks of causative errors with unaccusative and unergative verbs ("*The man disappeared the ball"), but errors with unergatives are “unlearned” earlier than those with unaccusatives" (Montrul 2004, p. 241).

While the issue has been discussed in various L2s besides English, including Japanese (Sorace and Shomura, 2001; Hirakawa, 2001), Italian (Sorace, 1993), Chinese (Yuan, 1999) and French (Montrual, 1999) and with various L1 backgrounds like Chinese (Ju, 2000), Japanese (Kondo, 2005), etc, and with reference to various factors like discourse pragmatics (source of causation) and verb type, there has not yet been any contribution to this stream of research from L1 Persian learners of English. The contribution of Persian to this stream of research can be more interesting because of the exclusive characteristic of Persian, i.e., the apparent use of passive morphosyntax "shod" with intransitive verbs including most of the unaccusative verbs. In fact, upon translation of most of the unaccusative verbs, the Persian auxiliary verb "shod" meaning the same as the passive morphology of "was/were" or "become/get" accompanies their meaning and the learners may, by mistake, consider this to be indicative of the passive construction.
Research studies on unaccusative overpassivization

As mentioned before, the issue of unaccusatives overpassivization has received much empirical attention in the last decade or so. A large number of studies have been carried out on it in various L1 backgrounds. As an example, Ju (2000) studied whether conceptualizable agents in the discourse play a role in English L2 overpassivization errors. It hypothesizes that learners are more likely to make overpassivization errors in externally caused events (in which an agent or cause may form part of the speaker’s mental representation) than in internally caused events (in which the cause or causer of the event is not clear). Ju (2000) points out that any event may be viewed from several perspectives, each with a different relative topicality of Agent and Patient and proposes that the possible existence of a pragmatically conceptualizable agent, offered by logical inference or discourse information, may play a very important role in the overpassivization of unaccusatives.

Ju (2000, p. 91) uses the following examples to illustrate the argument:

(1) The Titanic sank in 1912.
(2) The Titanic was sunk in 1912.
(3) The car disappeared.
The accident happened.

For one thing, the difference between (1) and (2) is that the unaccusative (1) is by nature agentless, while (2) has a subject which has been crossed out, but can be added with a by–phrase. Through logical inference, one comes to the conclusion that something has caused the event. The series of events leading to the sinking of the Titanic shows the conceptualizable agent of both sentences, which could be bumping into an iceberg, a careless captain, or something else, depending on the viewpoint of the person interpreting the events. The conceptualizable agent, however, is not necessarily part of the semantic representation the speaker has of the sentence.

Moreover, sentences (3) and (4) show what Ju calls “the saliency of the source of causation”, both sentences do not feature an implied agent but sentence (3) can have a conceptualizable agent because cars seldom disappear by themselves. In contrast, sentence (4) does not imply a conceptualizable agent because accidents are often the result of combination of random factors. This does not mean that an agent cannot be involved, the source that causes the event, however, is much less salient and is not likely to be available as a conceptualizable agent. Discourse information can influence the saliency of cause or causer of the event; if a suspicious man was mentioned wandering around the car a conceptualizable agent, responsible for the disappearance of the car, would be more readily available than if it was mentioned that the car was parked on a steep slope. To sum up, unaccusative verbs can have more or less available conceptualizable agents, depending on the saliency of the source of causation, which is influenced by the nature of the verb and the discourse context. In light of this, Ju (2000) hypothesizes that overpassivization of unaccusatives is more likely to occur if the discourse context offers an agent interpreted as an external cause of the event than when it was inferred from the discoursal context that no external cause has been involved but that there is a cause involved which is internal to the event.

Advanced Chinese learners of English were asked to choose the more grammatical form (active or passive) in target sentences with unaccusative verbs. Each target sentence was embedded in two different contexts expressing external and internal causation. A significant difference in error rates was found between the two different contexts: Learners accepted passivized unaccusative verbs more frequently when an agent or cause was available than when it was not. This finding is taken as an indication that learners transitivize unaccusative verbs before they passivize them and that the degree of transitivization varies depending on the
presence of conceptualizable agents in the discourse. Thus, this paper argues against a purely syntactic analysis of interlanguage errors such as overpassivization and in favor of an approach that takes cognitive factors into account.

Also a study by Kondo (2005) addressed the question of whether L2 learners of English will transfer their L1 morphological patterns onto English. This study tested Montrul’s (2001) claim in the acquisition of change of state alternations in L2 English by L1 speakers of Japanese (4 elementary, 17 lower-intermediate, 20 upper-intermediate, 16 advanced, and 5 very advanced at English proficiency level), where there are 6 different morphologically marked types. They completed a 60-item acceptability judgment task with written contexts. The results show that Montrul’s claim is valid in that morphological spell-outs in learners’ L1 are influential to some extent; however, the type of morphology makes a difference in how persistent L1 influence can be, as well as the frequency of input, and the morphological status of equivalent forms in the L1 and the L2.

A third study involving the acquisition of unaccusativity (Oshita, 2001) is an extension of Oshita’s work in the development of the Unaccusative Trap Hypothesis. Oshita’s objective is to “account for a variety of seemingly unrelated target and nontarget syntactic phenomena observed with intransitive verbs within interlanguage grammars” (p. 281). In the first stage of the threestage process for the acquisition of unaccusativity in a TL, there is, according to Oshita, a Single-Argument Linking Rule. This rule causes learners to treat all intransitive verbs as unergatives. This is not a problem when the verb is indeed unergative, but the rule leads to non-native-like forms when the verb is unaccusative. As this rule is not found in any L1, it is strictly an IL rule. In the second stage, the learner becomes aware of the intransitivity split, and produces forms that deviate from those found in the L1, such as the passivization of unaccusatives, reluctance to accept NP-V word order, and the production of (it)V-NP structures. In the third stage of the process, learners “achieve a native grammar” (p. 289).

Method

Participants

The participants of the study were 30 male and female students of English Language and Literature at Azad University of Ilam with an age range of 21 to 27. Their proficiency was estimated to be elementary to intermediate. They were selected from among 84 students who
took a retired version of the TOEFL test (see below). They were known as homogenous based on their performance on the above-mentioned test.

**Instrumentation**

*Ju (2000) Forced-Choice Questionnaire*

Another instrument used was Ju (2000) Forced-Choice Questionnaire. In this questionnaire, learners are asked to read a pair of sentences, the first one (priming sentence) setting up a context for the event in the second sentence (target sentence) (Ju, 2000). Thus, learners were required to indicate the grammatical structure of each sentence (i.e. active or passive) as shown in the following example:

*The magician did a trick with a coin.*

*The coin (vanished / was vanished) instantly.*

Ju (2000) believes that this is preferable to "grammaticality judgment tests that present discrete sentences with either form of the verb and ask students to judge the grammaticality of the sentences. The rationale is that grammaticality is on a continuum and thus highly context-dependent" (Ju, 2000, p. 95). The measure enjoys an acceptable level of reliability with the present sample, .82 arrived at through the employment of Cronbach Alpha.

The questionnaire includes 54 items: 13 externally caused (+Transitive), 13 internally caused (+transitive), 5 externally Caused (-Transitive), 5 internally caused (-Transitive) sentences and 18 distracter sentences (Ju, 2000).

*A Retired TOEFL Test*

The test consisted of 100 items 40 of which being items of grammatical points, 40 items of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions and 20 items of reading comprehension. It is a test often administered in Iranian universities as an Entrance language exam and thus enjoys acceptable reliability and validity. The reliability of the test with the present sample was calculated to be .86 using Cronbach Alpha.

**Design and procedure**

An ex post facto design was employed and a repeated measure two-way ANOVA was run for the purpose of investigating the hypotheses of the study. After giving the TOEFL test to the...
participants and ascertaining the normality of the distribution of the scores through Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test, 30 of them were chosen as homogeneous in terms of language proficiency. They were, then, given the forced-choice questionnaire to answer. The questionnaires were collected and scored and the number of overpassivization errors was calculated. The results were, then, analyzed using paired-samples T-Tests on version 9 of SPSS.

Results and discussion
The hypotheses of the study, put forward in response to the two questions, were stated as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Discourse pragmatics does not significantly influence overpassivization of unaccusative verbs by Iranian L2 speaker of English.

By discourse pragmatics, here, as in Ju (2000), it is meant the source of causation of the event, i.e. whether it is internally caused or if it is externally caused. In internally caused events, the discourse guides the reader to come to the conclusion that there is no evident agent for the event while in externally caused events the reader is guided to the conclusion that there is a conceptualizable agent for the event. The assumption is that overpassivization occurs more when there is an agent conceptualized for the event. Therefore, the unaccusative verbs used in the sentences of the questionnaire were used in both contexts (externally caused and internally caused).

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in terms of overpassivization errors between the two categories of unaccusative verbs i.e. monadic and dyadic.

As to the verb type, it should be said that monadic unaccusatives are the intransitive unaccusative verbs without any transitive counterpart e.g. disappear, emerge, vanish and dyadic unaccusatives are defined as the unaccusative verbs with transitive counterparts e.g. change, collapse, dry.

<table>
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<th>Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of the Types of Sentences</th>
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<td>Factor</td>
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<tr>
<td>External Dyadic</td>
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<td>Internal Dyadic</td>
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<tr>
<td>External Monadic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal Monadic</td>
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As shown in the results, table 2, \( f = 28.76; \) \( df = 1; \) \( p<0.05 \), there is a significance difference between unaccusative verbs used in externally caused events and those in internally caused events. So, we felt quite confident in rejecting the first null hypothesis of the study. Put it another way, the inference on the part of the participants as to the existence of a conceptualizable agent significantly affected the rate of overpassivization of the unaccusative verbs.

As to the verb type, again the results, as shown in table 2, \( f = 10.74; \) \( df = 1; \) \( p<0.05 \) indicated a significance difference between dyadic and monadic types of unaccusative verbs which provides counterevidence as to Perlmuter's (1978) Unaccusative Hypothesis which states that there is one single category of unaccusatives irrespective of lexico-syntactic properties allowing or disallowing transitive counterparts.

The interaction of the two variables, discourse pragmatics and verb type, as shown in Table 2, \( f = 1.45; \) \( df = 1; \) \( p<0.05 \) however, did not prove to be significant.

### Discussion and conclusion

The rejection of the first hypothesis and the fact that Iranian L2 speakers of English allow overpassivization with intransitive unaccusatives to a significant extent indicates support for the claim that L2 speakers are sensitive to the abstract properties of argument structure when they construct their interlanguage grammars (Kondo, 2005). Indeed, they intuitively know that the subjects of unaccusative verbs are base generated in the canonical object position and not as the specifier of VP at D-Structure.

Moreover, there seems to be an L1 effect on allowing overpassivization with intransitive unaccusatives. Upon translation of most of the unaccusative verbs, the Persian verb "shod" meaning the same as the passive morphology of "was/were" or meaning "become/get" accompanies their meaning and the learners, by mistake, consider this to be indicative of the passive construction. (Examples like appear meaning "napadid shodan" in Persian, emerge

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**Table 2** Repeated Measure ANOVA Results

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<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28.76</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.74</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC*VT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>.294</td>
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As shown in the results, table 2, \( f = 28.76; \) \( df =1; \) \( p<0.05 \), there is a significance difference between unaccusative verbs used in externally caused events and those in internally caused events. So, we felt quite confident in rejecting the first null hypothesis of the study. Put it another way, the inference on the part of the participants as to the existence of a conceptualizable agent significantly affected the rate of overpassivization of the unaccusative verbs.

As to the verb type, again the results, as shown in table 2, \( f = 10.74; \) \( df = 1; \) \( p<0.05 \) indicated a significance difference between dyadic and monadic types of unaccusative verbs which provides counterevidence as to Perlmuter's (1978) Unaccusative Hypothesis which states that there is one single category of unaccusatives irrespective of lexico-syntactic properties allowing or disallowing transitive counterparts.

The interaction of the two variables, discourse pragmatics and verb type, as shown in Table 2, \( f = 1.45; \) \( df = 1; \) \( p<0.05 \) however, did not prove to be significant.

**Discussion and conclusion**

The rejection of the first hypothesis and the fact that Iranian L2 speakers of English allow overpassivization with intransitive unaccusatives to a significant extent indicates support for the claim that L2 speakers are sensitive to the abstract properties of argument structure when they construct their interlanguage grammars (Kondo, 2005). Indeed, they intuitively know that the subjects of unaccusative verbs are base generated in the canonical object position and not as the specifier of VP at D-Structure.

Moreover, there seems to be an L1 effect on allowing overpassivization with intransitive unaccusatives. Upon translation of most of the unaccusative verbs, the Persian verb "shod" meaning the same as the passive morphology of "was/were" or meaning "become/get" accompanies their meaning and the learners, by mistake, consider this to be indicative of the passive construction. (Examples like appear meaning "napadid shodan" in Persian, emerge
meaning "peyda shodan" are illustrative of this point). In addition, the results of the study lend support to Montrul's (1999) claim that unergative verbs are internally caused because some property inherent to the argument of the verb (like volition) is considered to be responsible for the event so that there is a lower likelihood of overpassivization with unergatives vis-à-vis the unaccusative category.

The second hypothesis tapped into the effect of discourse information or the internal vs. external source of causation on overpassivization of unaccusative verbs, which, overall, supported the claim that L2 speakers overpassivize unaccusative verbs more in externally caused contexts. It is argued that in externally caused contexts, the learners recognize conceptualizable agents provided through the discourse information which affects their judgment regarding voice choice. The reason seems to be that conceptualizable agents emphasize the patientlike nature of the subjects of the unaccusative verbs causes the learners to assume that the verb can bear a by-phrase. The results of the paired-samples t-test run for the dyadic-external vs. dyadic-internal pair and the monadic-external and monadic-internal pair demonstrated that learners tend to overpassivize dyadic unaccusatives more often in the presence of a conceptualizable agent than monadic unaccusatives which points out to the effect of the nature of the verb on overpassivization and to the fact that the source of causation is not so strong as to neutralize the effects of the nature of verb regarding monadic verbs.

The results of the mean comparisons of the dyadic vs. monadic categories of verbs indicated a significant difference between the two categories regarding overpassivization with dyadic verbs allowing more passivization errors than monadic verbs. The results of this study provides counterevidence to the claim that L2 learners treat all the unaccusative verbs as belonging to one category which does not differentiate those with transitive counterparts and those without transitive counterparts. Oshita (2001), for example, is specific in not distinguishing monadic unaccusatives from dyadic ones and much along the same line Perlmutter's (1978) Unaccusativity Hypothesis states that there is only one single unaccusative category irrespective of lexicosyntactic properties allowing or disallowing transitive counterparts. But these findings are contested by the findings of this study.

From the results of the study, it can also be said that L2 learners of English are sensitive to the abstract properties of argument structure which does not stem either from their L1 knowledge or the L2 input. Thus it could be said that the results gotten from this study support the claim that
"default linguistic mechanisms (from UG) play a role at the argument structure level" (Montrul, 2000, p. 231).

References


Learners’ Performance in and Beliefs about Problematic L2 Oral Communication in an EFL Context: A Qualitative analysis

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Abstract
This paper investigates the pattern of performance and beliefs of a group of EFL learners who encountered problems in the effective use of their target language in oral communication with other language users. Adopting a qualitative research approach, I collected data from a series of group discussions and interviews with a group of Iranian learners of English Literature and Translation. Analysing audio recorded data, I provide a descriptive account of the participants’ performance in problematic moments of L2 oral communication, the type and function of strategies they used and their perception of L2 oral communication in an EFL context. The findings indicate that it is unlikely that one can fully understand how participants perform without knowing who they are in the first place. This finding requires a revision in the current psycholinguistic research tradition to one which puts more emphasis on socio-cultural research.
paradigms, within which researchers are able to pay equal attention to cognitive/linguistic and social/pragmatic factors.

**Keywords**: L2 oral communication, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Speaking problems, Communication strategies, Learners, Beliefs, Qualitative approach.

**1. Introduction**

Foreign language learners, despite spending years developing their semantic and syntactic competences, have probably all, at some point, experienced the frustrating feeling of not being able to participate effectively in L2 oral communication. They often struggle with a lack of the very resources needed to communicate their intended meaning. However, some L2 speakers, in spite of their limited knowledge of the target language, can communicate effectively in a foreign language. How do they do it? They rely entirely on their ‘ability to communicate within restrictions’ by using communication strategies (hereafter CSs). CSs have variously been described as devices, tactics, ways, plans and steps taken by language users to improve the effectiveness of their communication (Littlemore, 2003: 331) or to overcome any momentarily felt inadequacy in comprehension or self-expression (Far & Kasper, 1983). More often than not, the ‘obstacle’ in communication seems to start with a vocabulary item, one which has not been learnt, or one which cannot be easily recalled.

CSs studies, as a part of L2 oral performance, have also primarily been concerned with the mental process underlying the use of strategies with particular emphasis on lexical problems (Ellis, 2008: 502). The majority of L2 lexical communication strategy research used the standard method of CSs elicitation whereby the learner was put in the situation in which they have to speak about some more or less determined ‘objects’ by the use of their target language (e.g. a story told in pictures). When the language user was faced with an element of this message that s/he did not know the word for, he tended to employ a strategy. In fact, studies on oral performance, and by implication CSs, followed the assumptions such as empirical data gathered by experiment or survey in artificial communicative setting to examine a hypothesis which are the basic features of the quantitative approach.

As ‘oral communication/ speaking’ and CSs studies have been constructed mostly on the basis of a cognitive and psycholinguistic approach to language teaching and learning (Parks & Raymond, 2004: 374; Boxer, 2004: 5), they were also influenced by the quantitative research approach. Almost all of the CSs researchers employ corpus-based data collection. They use
‘controlled’ or ‘semi-controlled’ research methods in which speakers are challenged to perform near or above competence. The followers of the quantitative approach argue that such a systematic and controlled method produced precise and reliable measurements and provided replicable and generalizable findings to the researcher using statistical analysis in a quick and valid research process (Dörnyei, 2007: 34). However, the controlled ‘laboratory’ aspect of these quantitative studies does not take into account the fact that almost every aspect of language acquisition and its use is influenced or even shaped by contextual factors (Dörnyei, 2007: 36, Collentine & Freed, 2004: 158). Richards (2003: 214) quoted Schiffrin (1994: 102) to highlight the social construction of language and meaning creation in interpersonal communication “Language [is] a socially and culturally constructed symbol system that is used in ways that reflect macro-level social meanings (i.e. group identity, status differences) and create micro-level social meanings (i.e. what one is saying and doing at a moment in time)”. Isolated communication tasks in CSs studies which do not consider the contextual variables present an incomplete perspective and interpretation of the operation of CSs in real life.

This paper, however, investigates CSs with a qualitative approach, and looks at L2 CS research from the ‘social context of communication’ point of view. The analysis of moment-to-moment and face to face discourse processing in interpersonal interaction can provide the other CSs researcher with the opportunity to study the relationship between ‘social reality construction’ and interaction. Moreover, studying the moment of potential or actual problematic communication provides another opportunity to CS researchers to look at ‘participants’ social values, their perception of social status and the procedures they use to maintain, restore or disrupt it’ (see Rampton, 1997: 300).

2. The Study

Contemporary scholars (i.e. Lazaraton, 2000; Duff, 2002: 22) emphasize the use of the qualitative approach or, at least, a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods in social science research. Qualitative research methods in language studies have been used to shed light on the complex and situated nature of L2 learning and use ‘by examining its rich sociocultural contexts’ (Morita, 2000: 282). They provide a more socially and culturally oriented methodology to explore situated strategy use (Parks & Raymond, 2004: 375).
I chose a qualitative approach as my research methodology to investigate CS usage in context and from the perspective of all of those involved in its construction (Richards, 2003: 10). To do that, I found the constructivism principle (opportunism, reflexivity, deep description) in the ‘postmodern qualitative approach’ (Holliday, 2007: 19) helpful for making me aware of interactional effects of social context on the functions of CS usage in L2 oral communication. I, therefore, believe that social world, and by implication, CSs usage in L2 oral communication, is constructed through my interpretation of people constructing the social world. Furthermore, as I decided to have less artificial and more natural settings, I focused on everyday topics in face-to-face interactions between groups of language learners to elicit CSs.

3. Participants
To choose a group of EFL learners as research participants for this CSs study, it was necessary for me to be familiar with their L1, which can be used as one of the strategies in communication; so I chose Iranian students as ‘participants’ who shared my L1. To prevent continuous interruptions in the process of communication caused by a low level of language proficiency, I chose university students from an English language department, who needed to have at least an upper-intermediate level of English to pass the entrance exam and enter the university. Furthermore, these students had studied English for at least three years at their universities and had passed several courses in grammar, reading, conversation and writing to an advanced level. So it was assumed that they had enough proficiency in L2 oral communication to take part in communicative events without a lot of hesitation.

I found 12 Iranian undergraduate students of English Literature and Translation and one postgraduate student in TEFL, both male and female, aged 20-24, who were interested in my study when I called and invited them to take part in my research. They did not receive any formal instruction of communication strategies before the study, so their usage of CSs is not affected by their formal language learning. All participation was voluntary. I guaranteed their anonymity although they gave me permission to use their real names in my research report.

4. Data Collection and Coding
To investigate participants’ performance and perception, I employed two main tools for collecting my data: oral communication recording, and interviews. All the sessions of the participants’ group discussions were audio recorded and transcribed. Audio recording allowed
me to record every word (and other audio events) during the L2 interaction between the participants. Therefore, the main source of data in this project was the audio recording of a series of communication events in which a group of 2-3 participants from both genders discussed different topics, usually chosen by them. A café, a hotel lobby, the office of the Language Department at University, the teachers’ office in a language institute and the room in a research institute were the locations I chose to create a variety of appropriate oral communication for my data collection.

To analyze the participants’ performance in L2 communication, I decided to rely on different sources of evidence: discourse markers of problems, and interlocutor’s signalling of the problems. Discourse markers or problem indicators include errors, and non-fluencies, such as pauses or pause fillers, hesitation phenomena, such as repetitions or false starts, and explicit statements, like *I mean* or *how do you say...?* which become much more frequent when linguistic difficulties were encountered and they were often interpreted by the researcher as evidence of instances of CSs.

The interview was my second tool for collecting data. The interviews helped me to become more familiar with the field and the participants and to ask the participants about their feelings and attitudes toward oral communication. In fact, all the learners’ interviews were focus-group interviews, because bad weather conditions and the long distance between the participants’ accommodation and the location of the interview made it difficult to invite participants to do an individual interview, then to do a group discussion and finally to do a recall interview. Furthermore, the participants were more interested in being interviewed in English and in a group, probably to have a further opportunity for English interpersonal communication. All interviews were audio-recorded.

The interviews were analysed based on thematic view. Thematic Analysis is an approach to dealing with data that involves analyzing and, in Holliday’s (2007: 93) words, organizing the data. The main step in thematic analysis is coding and arranging the data under emerging themes through the dialogue between data and a researcher (ibid: 94). In my analysis of the interviews, the themes were not pre-established but instead arose through a long-term series of intensive dialogues with the interview data.
5. Data analysis and Findings

In this section, I summarize my interpretation of participants’ performance and their perception of L2 oral communication. First I describe the pattern of CSs used by participants in problematic moments of L2 communication. Then I profile participant’s perception and also contextual factors of L2 oral communication.

5.1 Participants’ Oral Performance in Problematic Communication

Based on Dörnyei and Scott’s (1997) inventory of CSs, I initially analyzed the transcripts of the problematic moments of the recorded oral communication sessions and discovered that the participants employed 15 different strategies when communication broke down. The Table 1 presents the 15 different strategies, with their brief descriptions and discourse markers, based on Dörnyei and Scott’s (1997: 188-194) inventory of Strategic Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>EXAMPLES OF DISCOURSE MARKERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Clarification request</td>
<td>Requesting for more explanation, clarification or repetition to solve a comprehension problems.</td>
<td><em>What do you mean? You... what?</em>, also ‘question repeats’, that is repeating a word or a structure with a question intonation (Dörnyei &amp; Scott, 1997:16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Confirmation request</td>
<td>Asking the speaker to confirm whether the heard or understood utterance is correct or not</td>
<td>using ‘question repeat’ or questions such as ‘Do you mean...?’, ‘You mean ...?’ or ‘You said ...?’ and etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Comprehension check</td>
<td>Asking questions to check if the partner can follow the speaker</td>
<td><em>You know what I am saying? Do you understand what I mean?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Interpretive summary</td>
<td>Paraphrasing the interlocutor’s message to check if they understood it correctly or not</td>
<td><em>Hossein: so, you mean you saw your friends are learning English and makes you ...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Expressing non-understanding</td>
<td>Expressing that the interlocutor does not understand properly what was going on in the communication.</td>
<td><em>Hamid: you surely don’t believe it I have ever read books? Kabi: ... I don’t ... understand.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Requesting help</td>
<td>Requesting assistance from other partners when they are faced with a deficiency in self-expression</td>
<td><em>How can I put it in English? What you call them? I don’t know... how can I put the word?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Use of general words</td>
<td>Extending a general lexical item without needing to locate an exact referent(Carter &amp; McCarthy, 1997:16)</td>
<td><em>Thing, stuff, make, do</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of L1 knowledge</td>
<td>Using the knowledge of the mother tongue (literal translation and switching to L1) as a resource to express the meaning in breakdown communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Use of similar sound words</td>
<td>Using an alternative lexical item which sounds are more or less like the target phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Repairing</td>
<td>Repairing self or other errors in oral performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Own accuracy check</td>
<td>Checking the accuracy of the produced utterances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Verbal strategy marker</td>
<td>Using markers to inform other partners that speaker are using strategies to deal with problem in self-expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Retrieval</td>
<td>Retrieving a target word or phrase by saying a series of incomplete or wrong forms or structures before producing the ideal form of target utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Nothing to say</td>
<td>Stop speaking as the speaker is faced with a self-expression problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Use of Fillers</td>
<td>Using gambits word and phrases to fill pauses and to gain time in order to keep the conversation open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three additional strategies which did not fit within Dörnyei and Scott’s (1997) classification were used by my participants. The first, a ‘let-it-pass’ strategy, was described by Firth (1996) as being used in those situations in which the interlocutor lets the ‘unknown or unclear’ phrase ‘pass’ on to keep the conversation open. The other two strategies, named as a ‘continuer’ and a ‘complementary’ strategy by Ohta (2001, 2005), are used for ‘inviting a speaker to continue’ and ‘completing an interlocutor’s unfinished utterances’. Ohta (2005: 392) argues that ‘analyzing how the interlocutor appears to have interpreted the utterance’ provides researchers with opportunity to go deeper than the surface level of strategy usage and to explore the functions of a strategy, in addition to the traditional functions defined by previous studies. She found a variety of particular functions, in addition to confirming comprehension, for confirmation check in her study, e.g. repairing initiation, marking the unexpected or humorous, and acting as a continuer (ibid: 384). ‘Continuer’ strategies are those utterances inviting the interlocutor to go on speaking. Complementary strategies, on the other hand, are those collaborative activities for co-construction repairs in L2 interaction.
Then, I employed Ohta (2001, 2005) and Foster and Ohta’s (2005) method to analyse the possible functions of CSs. I focused on the differences between the ‘surface’ form of each observed communication strategy (e.g. confirmation check) and its possible pragmatic function(s) (e.g. to express interest rather than confusion), by looking at the wider context. To do that, I analyzed the interlocutors’ responses to the strategy usage in the following turns to see if there was any sign of problematic communication. I employed Ohta’s (2005: 388) method in analysing at least three turns in conversation: (1) the initial turn which contains the utterance causing the problem in communication, (2) the turn containing the signal of strategy usage, and (3) the turn containing the response. For example, this is an extract of CS usage in a group of discussion of this research:

1. Jafri: others, as you said, come here to have to make love to each other,

2. Hamid: (laughed) make love to each other? (laughing)

3. All participants: laughing

4. Jafri: I don’t know ... the lovers ... I mean that not only people not all the people can afford to buy high prices materials (Group discussion in shopping centre, 12/08/2008).

The first turn of the strategic conversation was studied in order to understand what the CSs referred to (line 1, Jafri’s turn). The second turn included the signal of strategy usage and helped me to identify the occurrence of strategy usage in conversation. I employed Dörnyei and Scott’s (1997) example of signals for strategy usage, e.g. for ‘confirmation check’, the language user might employ the signals like ‘what do you mean?’, ‘You saw what?’ and also ‘question repetition’ (‘a part of any utterance with a rising, questioning intonation’) (see table 1 for discourse markers of other CSs). In the above example, ‘make love to each other’ with rising intonation (?) can be interpreted as a signal of comprehension problem.

Based on Ohta’s (2005) research, as it might be hard to identify the real function of strategies (e.g. clarification request) by just relying on the second turn or the turn including the signal of strategy usage, the third turn, including the interlocutor’s reaction to the strategy usage, has to be taken into account to analyze how the interlocutor interpreted the function of strategy usage. The goal of this analysis is to investigate how each recipient of the candidate CS interprets it based upon the orientation evidenced in his or her response. Analyzing how the interlocutor appears to have interpreted the utterance provides useful evidence of how a particular utterance functions, whether or not it is the primary function of the utterance, or
whether other possible functions could be due to the context. For example, in the above extract, Hamid’s rising intonation can be the signal for hearing an unexpected or surprising utterance. His laugh probably shows his reaction to Jafri's utterance, and demonstrates his understanding of what she said. Jafri replies the ‘questioning repetition’ followed by a part of the repeated phrase ‘lovers’ and then continues her speech without giving more information about the ‘repeated phrase’. Examination of the first and third turn in the above example shows that Jafri does not interpret her partner’s request as a signal of a comprehension problem. She probably interprets her partner’s laughing as a signal marking something unexpected or humorous or even embarrassing, rather than as a comprehension problem.

Therefore, after identifying a candidate CS, a sequential analysis of each case was conducted to determine its function, or functions, based upon analysis in context. Each strategy was illustrated with samples of its main function and possible sub-function(s) (if any). Using a thematic analysis method, and based on the different functions of strategies interpreted from the key linguistic/language-related features in each extract, categories of CSs functions were developed to examine how communicators resolve difficulties when they arise. The interpreted functions of CSs are classified and summarized in the Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpreted Functions</th>
<th>CSs</th>
<th>Observed Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promoting meaning transfer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Clarification request</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Solving or avoiding problems in self-expression and comprehension)</td>
<td><strong>Confirmation request</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Comprehension check</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Interpretive summary</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Expressing non-understanding</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Requesting help for meaning negotiation</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General words</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Use of L1 knowledge</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Use of similar sound words</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>43 (31%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promoting accuracy form of language in communication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Repairing</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Monitoring, Improving and warning about the accuracy level of performance)</td>
<td><strong>Own accuracy check</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Verbal strategy marker</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Retrieval</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 helps me to interpret the general and specific picture of the strategies used in each category of performance. As can be seen in the above table, the frequency of strategies employed to promote the accuracy level of language in communication are more than those for maintaining the flow of conversation and those for promoting meaning transfer. In fact, the participants’ first concern is to promote the accuracy level of their utterances through CSs for monitoring and improving their own and their partners’ performance, for helping each other and also for signalling or avoiding the less than perfect performance in communication. The second most frequently used CSs deal with keeping the conversation channel open. To do that, they employ strategies for inviting others to continue, for collaborating with each other to complete and repair unfinished utterances, for letting their partners’ problems pass and even for filling the gaps by empty lexical items in L2 communication. The last (but not least) most important strategies are employed to promote meaning transfer through meaning negotiation strategies (clarification request, confirmation request, comprehension request and requesting help), by interpretive summary, by the use of general or similar sound words, and even by the use of L1 knowledge to solve or avoid problems of self-expression and comprehension.

However, CSs with multi-functions (e.g. requesting help strategies for meaning negotiation and also negotiation on form), and also the participants’ tendency to use a small group of CSs (from a bigger group, including at least 33 strategies in Dörnyei & Scott’s inventory of CSs) with particular functions in L2 oral communication (for promoting accuracy rather than transferring the meaning) are the main issues leading me to search for a convincing explanation for participants’ performance in this study. By reviewing the literature and referring to data, I tried to answer the following research question.
‘What factors may explain participants’ CSs usage in L2 oral communication?’

5.2 Factors Explaining Participants’ Performance

Scholars in Applied Linguistics are in agreement that speech should not be removed from the context in which it is produced, but should be analyzed with an understanding and description of the context (Freed, 2004). However, researchers sometimes do remove extracts of language from their original context in order to analyze them. Although this sort of research design has produced a great deal of insight into the linguistic performance of participants, it lacks a deep understanding of the contextual conditions that may have influenced those performances. While there is no doubt about the importance of ‘taking context into account’, there is substantial disagreement as to the level on which context should be approached: macro (external factors surrounding communication), or micro (internally-driven and dynamic factors) (Lafford, 2006: 3). However, many scholars (i.e. Lafford, 2006; Batstone, 2002, Douglas, 2004, Tannen, 1993) have recently adopted a micro-level, rather than a macro-level approach to the context of SLA. In fact, context is seen as ‘not solely constructed by factors surrounding the communication, but rather, is also defined by the perceptions of the individual learner and is subject to undergoing dynamic and rapid changes during the co-construction process at the micro-level’ (Lafford, 2006: 4). Therefore, for deep understanding of communication events, the researcher has to place the communication into a context constructed by participants’ past experience and previous assumptions on different parts of L2 communication.

At a ‘macro level’, scholars focus on situational factors, or ‘interactive resource’ in Hall’s (1995: 208) words, including composite categories of events, with a set of behavioural standards (including verbal behaviours) appropriate to them, describing a social encounter in a particular [communicative] setting (MacIntyre, et al., 1998: 553). There are several classification schemes for the factors that influence the interactive situation. Five particularly detailed ones have been offered by MacIntyre, et al., (1998: 553), and seven cyclic and interactional elements in Hall (1993: 152). Furthermore, participants’ perspectives have been seen as a rich source of data (Kanno, 2003) and Mackey (2002) has suggested that ‘researchers working in the area of input and interaction could benefit from considering learners’ perspectives’ (393).
For our purpose, four factors, mentioned as central components in both micro and macro level, appear to be particularly relevant- the setting and task (at macro level), the participants’ perception of purpose of communication and of the topic, at micro level.

5.2.1 The Setting
The setting of the current research was chosen inside an EFL context where L2 learners generally share a common mother tongue and have little or no natural exposure to the foreign language outside the classroom. Therefore, the classroom constitutes the primary (or only) target-language speech community for most of the language learners, who are remote from a larger target-language community.

In Iranian schools, English instruction consists of three to four hours a week, and is a required course from second grade junior high school. Non-native-speaking teachers and learners form the basis for most of their interaction in the target language. They are required to use a language in class that is different from the languages spoken in their home and community. Thus, language learners are frequently and increasingly each other’s primary resource for language learning. However, there is an extended and still growing private sector, providing English courses for a variety of learning groups, even at primary school and even pre-school levels. In almost all private schools functioning within the three levels of general education in my research setting namely- primary, junior and high schools, English receives striking attention and probably extra hours of practice (Talebinezhad & Aliakbari, 2002: 21).

In spite of this, opportunities for interaction with NSs are all too infrequent and often simply impossible, and the written skill has received primacy over its spoken forms in Iranian EFL educational contexts. This orientation may result from a focus on learning using traditional grammar-translation methodology, since pedagogical grammar trends to focus on how to write correctly (Malmberg, 1993: 164, c.f. Skold, 2008: 1). Learners of English sometimes notice that they speak more accurately than native speakers do, since they have learnt to use complete sentences instead of authentic spoken English.

At university level, English is also an obligatory course for all students, usually taught for a specific academic purpose, and not for oral communication. During the period of English learning, they can practice English through English newspapers, English movies and Internet communication. Therefore, when students graduate, they have been learning English for several years. However, even for students studying in the Department of English and Language Studies
who have probably been exposed to English for a longer time, L2 oral communication remains mostly limited to class interaction rather than real communication.

The participants in this study were all university students. However, they were not satisfied with their level of oral skill and were looking for opportunity to develop their language skill in L2 oral communication. The following interview extracts are useful for illustrating the types of difficulties leading the participants to learning rather than communicative orientation in L2 oral communication. Participants talk about the ‘lacks’ of current learning context to fulfil their expectation of an ideal learning context.

Amin: Before coming in university, I didn’t have any special English language learning but high school language education including reading skill and vocabulary. In my BA study, I just passed the exams, did the class activities and graduated without any fluency in oral skill which I didn’t take them seriously. By starting my MA in English language teaching, I found my speaking, my pronunciation and intonation very weak, and should do something. (Introductory discussion, 31/08/2008)

Kabiri: I began studying English when I was 11 in a language institute for 5 years. As time went by I understood I couldn’t speak just I can read and write, and I don’t like that because I want to be natural to speak as much as I can ... I prefer to speak English, in this study, and I like it, and I am interested in it (Introductory discussion, 31/08/2008).

As can be seen in the both above extracts of interviews, Amin and Kabiri were not satisfied with the oral performance opportunities offered in their past learning contexts. They also were aware of lack of communicative context to provide them opportunities for practicing L2 speaking out of their language classes:

Karb: I haven’t been in opportunity to use my language (communicate) and feel ‘ah it is good that I know language’, and I stopped more practicing in English because I found it useless (Communication Events No, 11: 23/08/2008).

Karb stopped practising because he could not find any opportunity to communicate and use his target language. Jafri supported Karb’s opinion by talking about lack of opportunity and partner for practising:

Jafri: Now and because of not having partner to practice speaking and discouraging environment for people who want to speak English out of the class made my communication skill really worse than before (Two friends interview, 18/08/2008).
Jafri identified the unsupportive environment out of the classroom and also the lack of partners as the main impediments to practising and as the main reason for low proficiency in L2 oral communication.

Participants in this study who experienced such a form-oriented educational setting found this research an opportunity to compensate for their lack of opportunities to practise and use their target language in an interpersonal communication. Therefore, they employed a range of strategies to keep interaction going and to improve the accuracy of their use of a target language in communication.

5.2.2 Task

‘Task’, as the second part of an interactive situation, involves a series of communicative language activities in which the participants interact and co-operate in various general topics. In this research, ‘group discussion task’ was chosen as according to Firth and Wagner (1997: 286), ‘... they have not, as yet, attracted the attention of SLA researchers’.

The group discussion was the main task I employed in this research. I chose group discussion as an appropriate task for CSs elicitation because I think it can provide me with communicative situations to study CSs in a comparatively open-ended, authentic and challenging setting inside an EFL context. Furthermore, interactional tasks can provide the optimal conditions for producing the corpus. Thus, the task was ‘communication situations’ in which participants with the different levels of proficiency and language experiences interacted with interlocutors to discuss everyday topics in their target language and in ‘different social situations’. I chose a variety of formal and informal setting similar to those in authentic communication in order to obtain more natural interactional discourse.

Engaging in an interactional task in a non-instructional setting in which no pre-determined role is assigned created a unique opportunity which most participants had not experienced before. The participants seemed to actively create their roles arising from their relationships with their peers or situational factors. They probably reassess the purpose and meaning of a task and also their ability to perform a task through interaction, an interpretation which is also supported by Lantolf (2000: 92).
5.2.3 Purpose of Communication

Participants’ orientation to L2 interaction has been influential in constructing the participants’ oral performance in L2 communications. Batstone (2002: 4) distinguishes between two ends participants might aim at while using their target language: communicative and learning contexts. Context is perceived as communicative if language learners aim at the use of language in interpersonal communication to convey meaning in an appropriate way according to contextual cues; context is perceived as learning if learners focus on form and take risks toward the ultimate goal of improving their linguistic expertise.

In the following interview extracts, I summarized the participants’ contextual orientation by reviewing their answer to my question about their reason of taking part in this study. One group claim that practising more in L2 oral communication is their reason of taking part in my research:

Kabi: The main reason I took part in this project is to practise speaking and to use what I know and learned.

Hamid: Me too, my speaking has become very bad, I come here to make it better (Recall interview, 11/08/2008).

Jafri: ... I take part in this research because I thought this opportunity might help me to improve my English language ability ... (Recall Interview, 23/08/2008).

Amin: It was a good chance to speak, I was looking for situation to have a group to speak English (Interview, 6/09/2008).

Karb: I would like to talk, I like to talk a lot, here or somewhere else (Interview, 6/09/2008).

Five of eight participants in this study were directly motivated by the opportunity that this research might give them to improve their speaking skill and this aim can be interpreted as participants’ taking a ‘learning context’ orientation. The three remaining participants, however, did not approach my research as an opportunity to practise speaking. Instead, they were looking for an opportunity to talk about and discuss their performance in L2 learning and communication. They perceived this research as an opportunity to talk with an expert about their problems and to find possible answers to them.

Delgarm: I took part to tell someone what kind of problems we have here and how we can solve our problem within this system, why is this in our educational system situation (Recall interview, 11/08/2008).
Moazed: It was interesting, I didn’t come here to practise, it was interesting for me what you want to do and what’s your conclusion, what you get of all these discussion (Interview, 6/09/2008).

Kabiri: the experience of contacting with someone like you, to be subject of this research, it was interesting I need to experience to contact with someone like you ... the topics were fun because I had to something to practice (Interview, 6/09/2008).

In summary, a group of participants aimed at discussing and exchanging information with others through taking part in my research. Their orientation was communicative rather than learning during the communication events of this study. Generally speaking, almost all participants, either for learning or communicative reasons, frequently demonstrated a strong interest in developing, establishing and maintaining social relation with other L2 users.

5.2.4 Topic
The topic of discourse has been identified as one of the factors affecting the context of the communicative situation (Bou-Franch, 1994: 154). The topic of a task might significantly affect the ease of language use: familiarity with certain topics might enhance one’s linguistic self-confidence, whereas a lack of this may hinder even a generally confident speaker (Maclntyre et.al, 1998: 554). There is research evidence that the interlocutors’ content knowledge about the topic of discussion may result in being more verbally forthcoming and can override certain limitations the speaker may have in his or her overall oral proficiency (Zuengler, 1993).

Lack of safe topic of discussion is also considered as one of obstacles in L2 speaking. Karb identifies unfamiliar topic as a problematic in speaking:

Karb: Speaking about unknown topic makes the speaking problematic. Thinking about new words or topic that you are not hearing or thinking before makes you spend time and then you need to do pause in L2 speaking. In fact, when you have no information about the topic or a word new for you is one of the sources make problematic speaking (Recall interview, 23/08/2008).

In his opinion, lack of information about the topic and hearing the new words and phrases in the partners’ utterances make the meaning transfer problematic. Jafri considers the following topics too difficult: job, marriage, divorce and so on:

Jafri: my main problem is the topic when they are about jobs, getting married or divorce and something like that, because I don’t have any experience and knowledge about those topics to talk about them. (Communication Events No, 11: 21/08/2008).
This opinion was supported by Salehi when she talked about the general and academic topic in L2 communication:

Saleh: Speaking in language classes are more about the routing and academic topic which are very different with natural every day conversation (Introductory discussion, 31/08/2008).

As general topics are not discussed in language classes, participants are faced with problems when the topic of discussion is chosen from every day conversation. Therefore, they are looking for opportunities for practice in every day topics than academic topics. I propose that offering discussion of free topics in this study probably encouraged participants to continue going to other sessions of group discussion, letting them to practise more oral skill in their target language.

To sum up, participants expressed a strong interest in and need to construct, maintain and develop oral communication with other L2 users. They were looking for opportunities in or out of the language classes to satisfy their learning and communicative needs. Looking at the list of participants’ needs, including talking about different topics, good pronunciation, intonation, accent, proper syntax, I interpreted that their orientation is largely ‘learning’ rather than ‘communicative’ in order to compensate for the gap between their current performance and the ideal self as an L2 speaker (ideal-self). Participants were not satisfied with their previous language learning contexts as they did not provide them with opportunities to respond to their learning and communicative needs for being L2 fluent speakers. Therefore, they approached this research with more ‘learning’ and less ‘communicative’ orientation, in hope of improving their linguistic expertise and also exchanging information with like-minded L2 speakers while taking part in L2 communication events.

6. Discussion
Participants who criticized their instructional context for not providing the opportunity to fulfil their learning and communicative need to be fluent L2 speakers, approached my research with more ‘learning’ and less ‘communicative’ orientation to develop their linguistic knowledge and also to converse in the target language. Due to their ‘learning’ orientation, participants employ a variety of CSs such as repairing, own accuracy check, requesting help to practise the correct form of language and also strategies such as let-it-pass, complementary repair and inviting to continue to maintain the flow of the conversation - reasons other than those given by the researchers into CSs. To accomplish their two-way tasks, participants need to co-operate and
coordinate with their partner to discuss the wide range of everyday topics in their informal group discussions. They employ CSs for dealing with their lack of L2 knowledge and experience about topics of interactional tasks through using other partners’ assistance and collaboration in communication.

Due to their limited experience and language proficiency, the participants encountered problems communicating in a task which they had no experience in before. Furthermore, in interactional tasks, as two-way activities, the interlocutors’ contribution is essential. Therefore, participants’ encountering a little-experienced task within a non-instructional setting, employed CSs to accomplish the task (group discussion) successfully and even go beyond the expectation of each task (each session was supposed to be around 30 minutes which participants always exceeded).

The goal or intention of an interactional discourse which direct the participants’ communicative activities in tasks is another factor constructing an interactive situation. In fact, ‘goals’ in L2 communication might be constructed through integrating the expectation of the external context (e.g. job market expectations) with the ‘internal context’ of the learners’ orientation (learning or communicative orientation) (Batstone, 2002: 2). In this study, participants’ goals were constructed by the lack of opportunity for oral communication in the form-oriented setting of the educational context and their inner orientation to interactional tasks which was mostly for ‘learning’ rather than ‘communicating’. Therefore, participants employed CSs for promoting accuracy and also keeping the conversation open in their L2 communication, probably to learn and practise more with the target language while enjoying interpersonal interaction in informal communication with other language users. This is supported by Lafford, (2004: 213) in her research on the effect of context on communication strategy usage. She proposed that learners in an ‘AH’ group (At Home) focused on form and modified their output more than learners in an ‘SA’ group (Study Abroad), probably in response to the classroom contextual expectation. In my research, although the setting was non-instructional, the participants’ inner orientation (learning rather than communication) along with task expectation (as a non- or little-experienced task, requiring interlocutors’ contributions) and everyday (general) topics constructed opportunities for the use of strategies focusing on form which carried the participants’ meaning in their L2 oral communication.
The topic of discourse has been identified as one of the factors affecting the context of the communicative situation. Participants used their content knowledge and familiarity with some topics to guess the meaning of an unfinished utterance, or ‘let-the problem-pass’ when their interlocutors did not request help. Furthermore, discussed in a non-instructional setting, topics in this project were wide-ranging and unpredictable, which tends not to be the case in instructional settings. Participants, faced with new problems when hearing new words and phrases from everyday conversations, found the topics challenging and decided to employ strategies to ensure successful participation in the discussion. I interpret that the use of ‘everyday’ topics probably encourages the participants to continue their participation in the sessions of group discussion which lets them practise speaking more in the target language. Therefore, the participants’ oral performances are partly constructed by the challenging topics and their desire to communicate in such a difficult communicative situation, as part of their wish to be an ‘ideal’ L2 speaker. In fact the participants’ oral performance in general topics depends crucially ‘on the interaction of individual and task’ (Appel & Lantolf, 1994: 480).

7. Conclusion
CSs are interpreted as social events constructed by the contextual conditions of the entire communication and by the communicators, who bring their agency into communication, an interpretation supported by Donato (2000: 46). CSs in this perspective, therefore, have ‘context-sensitive communicative functions’ (William et.al, 1997: 306), and are used for more than just the exchange of information. In fact, particular contextual conditions in L2 communication provide opportunities for those involved not only to transfer meaning, but to practise the accuracy of the target language, and to establish, maintain and develop successful interpersonal communication.

In introducing a variety of functions of CSs (e.g. promoting meaning transfer, keeping the conversation going and accuracy development), teachers can encourage their students to take risks and to use CSs. This means that learners could use all their available resources to communicate language resources without being afraid of making errors (Yule & Tarone, 1990). One way to do that is to provide students with examples of L2 models of the use of certain CSs by means of listening materials and videos which contain communication strategy usage, and then to ask learners to identify, categorise and evaluate CSs used by native speakers or other L2 speakers.
References


Title
The Effect of Verbal and Visual Techniques on Vocabulary Achievement of Iranian EFL Students

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Abstract
The presents study investigated the effect of verbal, visual and a combination of verbal-visual techniques on vocabulary achievement of Iranian EFL students. The participants were eighty-five female native speakers of Azari in intermediate level of L2 proficiency ranging in age from 16 to 28. On the basis of a Cambridge Placement Test of Vocabulary, they were selected from among seven classes and divided into three groups of fifteen, namely group 1,2 and3. The lexical items were taught to experimental groups by verbal (synonymy and exemplification), visual (pictures, flashcards, blackboard drawings and photographs) and verbal-visual techniques respectively. Results of One way ANOVA and Scheffe test showed that when verbal or visual techniques were used alone, verbal techniques manifested more vocabulary acquisition than visual modality and among three techniques employed in this study, complementary use of verbal-visual techniques was the most effective. It may be concluded that in directing the learners toward the ability of vocabulary skill, teachers should not solely rely on verbal cues and can benefit to a large extent from
non-verbal aids. Results obtained from this study may have pedagogical implications in the areas of syllabus design and teaching methodology.

**Key words:** Vocabulary achievement, Verbal techniques, Visual techniques, EFL

1. Introduction

Vocabulary acquisition is a key component of successfully developing communicative and literacy skills. Developing a rich vocabulary is a top priority and an on-going challenge for both L1 and L2 instruction. Researchers and theorists have pointed out to the fact that vocabulary acquisition is a complicated process and due to this complexity, teachers must make a comprehensive approach to lexical development in order for students to reach a higher quality and quantity of L2 output. But it seems that students' achievement in this area is not satisfactory.

In the context of Iran, even though students realize the importance of vocabulary in learning language, most of them learn vocabulary passively. They consider the teachers’ explanation for meaning or definition, pronunciation, spelling and grammatical functions, boring. They are often passive in a vocabulary section of the class, just listening to their teacher. Their young faces do not hide the frustration in EFL classes. Most of them complain about the heavy burden of words. In reading and listening sections, they are awed by the many unknown and unfamiliar words and they cannot understand the underlying message. In other words, their competence in the target language is being held because of their limited vocabulary. With a limited vocabulary they cannot rely on the strategy of guessing the meaning from context. EFL learners in Iran often complain about forgetting new words soon after learning them and look for effective ways to increase opportunities for retaining new words in long term memory.

There are different intervening factors contributing to the law vocabulary achievement among most EFL learners. One of these factors is what Grenfell (2000, p.269), describes as the “alien linguistic environment”. In many countries where English is not spoken as the first language, the learning environment is not supportive. In such an environment there are few English native speakers available for EFL learners to interact with. There are limited opportunities for learners to use the target language outside the classroom. In fact, they are not in a surrounding that fosters FL learning, nor are they receiving the necessary support in or out of the classroom to acquire the target language. As a result, the majority of students who are learning English as a foreign language end up with a limited proficiency even after many years of study.
Another factor may be the cultural distance between the two countries and the students’ lack of familiarity with the target language speakers’ culture and sociocultural significance of words. Students know very little about the basic aspects of their own culture, and certainly most of them are too young to have had the experiences about cultures of other countries. Meanwhile, fundamental aspects of the culture are incorporated into the most of the class activities. In fact, language and culture are inseparably bound and complete comprehension in any type of intercultural communication depends on the participants’ knowledge of cultural distance and sociocultural significance of words and expressions employed. So, teachers are required to give students information about the basic similarities and differences between their culture and that of the target language.

Yet, another factor contributing to the students’ limited knowledge of vocabulary is the insufficient support from teachers and schools in terms of different kinds of sources and materials. Most language teachers adopt verbal modalities (e.g. synonymy, examples, definitions) to vocabulary teaching which downplay the use of other modalities such as pictures, videos, etc. Using just one modality does not offer adequate information. Besides, it causes boredom and lack of interest and motivation on the part of learners. Since using different modalities and materials for presenting new vocabulary keeps the learning process dynamic and interesting, schools and institutes should employ different instructional aids and modalities to enhance the learning process.

In an effort to find out ways to enhance vocabulary learning, the present study suggests the integrating verbal and visual modalities for presenting new vocabulary. A few researchers investigated the effect of verbal /visual modalities on vocabulary learning (Kost, Foss & Lenzini, 1999). When we turn to existing research in the context of Iran, we find something akin to researchers’ silence regarding this particular issue, for what is noticeable is the lack of literature on the impact of verbal and visual techniques on vocabulary achievement. This study fills the gap by investigating the advantages of glossing individual lexical items through two different modalities, namely verbal and visual. It attempts to elaborate on the necessity of incorporating both of them in an integrative and supplementary manner. Considerable confidence is placed in the value of integrating both of them to enhance the learning of foreign language vocabulary.
1.2. Research questions
This study aims to answer the following questions:
1- What is the effect of verbal techniques (synonymy, exemplification, etc.) on vocabulary achievement of Iranian EFL students?
2- What is the effect of visual techniques (flashcards, pictures, photographs, etc.) on vocabulary achievement of Iranian EFL students?
3- Which one is more efficient? Visual techniques, verbal techniques or a combination of these two techniques in enhancing vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL students?

2. Literature review
2.1. Background to vocabulary teaching
Knowledge of words and their meaning is a crucial component of language proficiency both for first language acquisition and for second and foreign language learning. One cannot learn a language without vocabulary. Even though there are some language teachers who believe that vocabulary does not need to be actively taught, many students suppose that learning of new words requires tremendous effort (Nation, 1990). In fact, language learners generally agree that many of their difficulties in both receptive and productive skills arise from their inadequacy in vocabulary (Meara, 1980; Nation, 1990). Vocabulary knowledge plays a basic role in acquiring other skills of language (speaking, listening, reading and writing).

For many years vocabulary had been considered as the neglected “Cinderella” of applied linguistics (Carter & McCarthy, 1997; Laufer, 1986; Meara, 1980). It was given a little attention in many language programs and textbooks. Although course curriculum gave priority to some aspects of language such as grammar, reading or speaking, little importance was given to the role of vocabulary. Most of interest had been given to structures. Course books had provided a little guideline except word units, so that due to a few supplementary materials such as dictionary and workbooks, teachers were not able to satisfy their students’ demands for words. This situation no longer exists and vocabulary and vocabulary teaching and learning have gained more attention in EFL/ESL research for the last few decades (Beck & McKeown, 1991; Goodfellow, 1995; Hulstjin, Hollander & Greidanus, 1996; Zimmerman, 1997; Taylor, 1990).

Specialists and researchers in second and foreign language acquisition see the need for more emphasis on vocabulary for several reasons. First, vocabulary acts like a bridge between other
language skills (reading, writing, speaking & listening) which are essential for the learners’ communication. A learner is required to learn certain words in order to understand what other people say and speak to him/her and later to reply to them or to read a document and later speak or write about what s/he had just read (Shmitt, 1998).

Second, L2 language learners have difficulty with vocabulary learning. Only a small number of students come close to the threshold level in terms of breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge (Nurweni & Reed, 1999). So there should be more emphasis on vocabulary instruction.

Third, it is important to systematically design the learning and teaching of a large number of new words. A more direct and organized study of vocabulary and vocabulary instruction would be helpful for learners, although they certainly acquire word knowledge incidentally while engaged in various language learning activities (Schmitt, 1998).

A fourth reason for stress on vocabulary learning and teaching is the consistent growth of technology applications in language curricula. In the context of computer-assisted language learning technologies, vocabulary should be one aspect of language learning that instructors and curriculum designers focus on. It is one of learning tasks that can be practiced easily outside the classroom, especially when compared to a pronunciation or dialogue practice in which feedback from a qualified teacher is very valuable (Nesselhauf & Tschichold, 2002).

2.2. What does it mean to know a word?

Research on vocabulary acquisition requires a definition of lexical knowledge. In L1 & L2 research, various proposals have been made as to what is meant by knowing a word (Cronbach, 1942; Nation, 1990, 2001; Qian, 1998, 1999; Richards, 1976). However, no clear consensus exists as to the nature of lexical knowledge. Mezynsky (1983) noted that words’ meanings can be known to varying degrees. Depending on the task, a person could perform adequately with relatively imprecise knowledge. In other situations a much finer notion of the word’s meaning might be required. In fact, although sometimes L2 learners need only partial knowledge of words in comprehension, more lexical knowledge is needed in many situations. Over the past years lexical researchers have developed various criteria for understanding what is involved in knowing a word. An early definition (Cronbach, 1942) divided vocabulary knowledge into two main categories: knowledge of word meanings (generalization, breadth of meaning & precision
of meaning) and levels of accessibility (availability & application). The obvious drawback in this definition is ignoring other aspects of lexical knowledge such as spelling, pronunciation and collocation. Later on, an influential statement was produced by Richards (1976). Meara (1980) noted that the model proposed by Richards was more inclusive than the previous models, because he not only incorporated morphological and syntactic properties into the concept, but also considered some aspects like word frequency and register characteristics. She pointed to various levels in knowing a word on the basis of Richards’ model:

1. Knowledge of the frequency of the word in language, knowing the degree of probability of encountering the word in different situations.

2. Knowledge of the register of the word: i.e. knowing the limitations of use according to various functions and situations.

3. Knowledge of collocation, both semantic and syntactic: i.e. knowing the syntactic behavior (e.g. transitivity patterns, cases) and also knowledge of the word place in a network of relations between that word and other words in the language.

4. Knowledge of morphology: i.e. knowing the underlying form of the word and the derivations that can be made from it.

5. Knowledge of semantics: knowing what the word means or denotes.

6. Knowledge of polysemy: i.e. knowing different meanings associated with the word.

7. Knowledge of the equivalent of the word in the mother tongue.

This set of assumptions has frequently been taken as a general framework of vocabulary knowledge, although as Meara (1996) points out, it is not as comprehensive as it might seem at first glance. Nevertheless, it highlights the complex nature of vocabulary learning which involves more than just memorizing the meaning of a word.

It seems that Richard’s article is important because he tries to include different aspects of lexical competence in the model and shows the complex nature of vocabulary learning/teaching processes. This model implies that vocabulary instruction should go beyond helping the learners to internalize dictionary meanings and they should get familiar with diverse features of vocabulary.

Later, Nation (1990) developed a classification in which a set of 18 questions classified into three categories. Each category contained receptive and productive aspects: (a) form, including spoken form, written form and word parts; (b) meaning, including form and meaning, concept,
references and associations; (c) use, including grammatical functions, collocations and constraints of use such as register and frequency. Since the framework was written from a practical perspective, it is particularly useful for classroom teachers (Qian, 1999).

As it was mentioned earlier, learning a word includes much more than remembering the orthographic and phonological form and their corresponding meanings. This means that central purpose in teaching should be to encourage and help learners to become more aware of how native speakers and other proficient speakers use the target language and to become more sensitive to different meanings of the word. What is important for language teachers is to determine the value of a lexical item in a given context, not its dictionary meaning (Widdowson, 1978). To achieve this, teachers should be aware of various levels of meaning of a word and impart this information to the learners.

2.3. Verbal and visual techniques of vocabulary teaching

Using verbal and visual techniques for teaching vocabulary is an efficient technique. According to Singleton (2000), there is a long tradition of research in verbal memory which indicates that if learners have a longer opportunity for rehearsal, recall of memorized items will be facilitated. He argued that by deep verbal processing in which different sense relations between the new word and background knowledge are established, the items will be more memorizable. The main types of these relationships are autonomy, synonymy and hyponymy. Along with this idea, psychologists have also shown that by making different relationships between the new word and other words in the target language, learning the new word can be facilitated to a great extent (Zarei & Gholami, 2007). But, sense relationships are not the only verbal techniques of vocabulary teaching. Other techniques are the use of oral and written illustrative situations, scales for contrasting and gradable items, exemplification (Gairns & Redman, 1986), definition (Nation, 1990, P.50) and categories (Allen & Valette, 1972, p.116).

Verbal language is only one part of the way we get meaning from context. In language teaching we must learn to deal with parts of language beyond the level of word or sentence. We induce and deduce not only from what we hear and read, but also from what we see around us. Wright (1989) noted that the outside world must be simulated in the classroom. If students understand the reference and representation to the outside world, they will hopefully understand
the new language associated with these representations. Visual aids can be used to represent these simulations and nonverbal information.

There are many types of visual aids and each has its own kind of information for the observer. However, all of them have one common characteristic: providing detailed information that is difficult to grasp in text or impossible to describe accurately in words alone (Peng & Levin, 1979).

According to Gairns & Redman (1986), visual aids include flashcards, photographs, wall charts, blackboard drawings and realia. They are mostly used to teach concrete terms like places and activities. Mime and gesture are also visual techniques which are often used to supplement and reinforce the meaning. Learners remember better the material that has been presented by means of visual aids. Visuals help students associate presented material in a meaningful way and incorporate it into their system of values (Zebrowska, 1975). Read (2000), noted that the function of visual aids is to add information to what is given by the discourse; as a result we find visual aids only in conjunction with other theoretical features. So, due to their function in discourse, visuals are examples of what is being described in their accompanying texts. Visual aids facilitate recall of vocabulary in a way that words alone do not. They give us the information we need so that it plus the accompanying text add up to a meaningful unit of discourse.

Contextual guesswork is a strategy in vocabulary learning in which non-verbal information is helpful. Visually-presented information helps us to predict what the text is about and the meanings will be recognized more quickly. Singleton (2000), suggested that encouraging learners to visualize while they are reading a text for comprehension or pleasure may lead to incidental lexical acquisition.

Despite the advantages of verbal and visual techniques for teaching vocabulary, they are inadequate per se for development of accurate knowledge of lexicon. Without some kind of text explanation, no type of visual provides vocabulary information with the same clarity and precision that using both of them does and instructing vocabulary without some kind of visuals may be a tedious practice. Visual and verbal materials when used together are in most cases, work well than when each of them is used. So combining them in an integrative way is a very useful tool to exploit when teaching vocabulary.

Dwyer (1988), found a symbiotic relationship between verbal and visual literacy when the two were combined to facilitate students’ achievements. The concept of verbal/visual symbiosis is
rooted in the idea that visuals support verbal cues and vice versa. In their study, Kost, Foss and Lenzini (1999), argued that “processing information requires different degrees of cognitive effort. The two different representations (verbal & visual) allow plotting of the picture into one mental model and thereby provide a strong bond than plotting of the words” (p.269). In another similar experience, Chanier (1996, p.158) speculated that “match between prominent visual cues and linguistic ones allows for the inference of unfamiliar words”. This is simply because students can visualize what the word means and relate the words to actual objects. However, sometimes teachers fail to take advantage of the verbal/visual relationship and instead of letting them to complement each other, on the other hand put too much emphasis on one of them. With regard to the fact that some information is easier to process in a particular mode, either verbal or visual, if the teacher imparts some of the information by less efficient mode, it can distract the learner from processing into more efficient mode. So, the concern of most language teachers is the information that a visual and text gives the reader and what the physical relationship of the text and visual should be and in which order they should be presented (Wright, 1989). In this regard, the role of students is prominent too. They need to know much more about these modes processing including when and how to use each of them alone and when and how to use them together. More research is needed to show where in the learning/teaching process, verbal/visual relationship is helpful to inform the field about the effects of altering the degrees of visualization and verbalization (Chanier, 1996).

2.4. The effect of synonymy on L2 vocabulary achievement

One of the most broadly used types of verbal techniques is “Synonymy”. Synonymy occurs where several different words represent similar meanings. Very little research has investigated the effect of synonymy on vocabulary learning. Learning the synonymies of known words is very common occurrence in vocabulary learning. Intuitively and logically, learning a synonymy of a known word would be easier than learning a non-synonym. It is understandable, because the similarity between synonyms makes learning the synonymym of known words easier than learning words without known synonym. “Overlaps in collocation, syntagmatic and paradigmatic associations, grammatical functions, meaning and form between synonymy may help to facilitate vocabulary acquisition” (Webb, 2007, p. 126). Besides, students are unlikely to learn synonyms together, because they may lack the motivation to learn two new words that convey similar
information. Confirming this idea, Rudzka et al. (1985) noted that intralingual semantic relations give precise information about meaning and use in an economical and learnable way. Learning the synonyms of known words may be faster, because learners may gain large amount of L2 vocabulary knowledge from known synonyms. In fact, a transfer of L2 knowledge of known words to their synonyms can facilitate the use and understanding of synonyms.

Along similar lines, Nation (2001) proposed the term “learning burden” to suggest that learning a synonym for a word that is already known is a helpful practice. According to Nation, the general principle of “learning burden” is that the more a word represent patterns and knowledge that learners are already familiar with, the lighter its learning burden. These patterns and knowledge can be from L1, from knowledge of other languages and from previous knowledge of L2. This position has been advocated by psycholinguistics too. Psycholinguistically, the association of words helps us to remember them (Mackey & Mountford, 1978). If a newly learned word can be substituted in a sentence for known synonym, then different aspects of its use will be acquired when meaning and form are learned. However, the degree of overlap of vocabulary knowledge varies from synonymy to synonymy (Webb, 2007). Nielsen (2006) presented the words in pairs that were close in meaning, but had subtle differences and hoped that the knowledge of these differences will enable the learners to learn words more effectively.

As learners’ vocabulary increases, the number of synonyms for known words increases too, because more and more words are likely to have synonymies. Thus, vocabulary achievement would be affected by the amount of prior knowledge. If learning synonymy for known words is easier than learning a word without synonymy, it explains how some L2 learners can incidentally learn a large number of words in later stages of L2 learning (Webb, 2007). Understanding the impact of synonymy on vocabulary achievement will be very helpful to teachers and learners, because this knowledge allows them to develop more efficient vocabulary teaching and learning strategies.

2.5. The effect of exemplification on vocabulary achievement

Besides synonymy, another widely used verbal technique is the exemplification. Students use the examples that are provided by the teachers as a major part of their learning. They use examples to understand language, to recall what they have memorized, to review what they are trying to
learn, and to use new vocabulary in their communication. Examples are also sources of information. They can give the students information and insights into whatever topic they cover. Examples are important to students for understanding abstractions about English syntax and new vocabulary items and other aspects of language (Pigada & Schmitt, 2006). While selecting and using examples is one of the most important tasks of EFL/ESL teacher, little has been written about this issue in EFL/ESL classroom instruction.

Exemplification is a basic communication strategy used in the negotiation of meaning in many different contexts, in both spoken and written language. Hirsh & Nation (1992), made an important point about the nature of exemplification as part of the communication process. They stated that all acts of communication can be viewed both as being the thing itself (e.g. a poem) and at the same time as being an example of the thing (e.g. a particular genre). It is a process through which meaning is clarified by the use of linguistic forms called examples. Examples can refer to a single word or sentence used to illustrate grammar rules or new vocabulary items. However, their use is not limited to these contexts. They can be exploited in other aspects of language use. In reading and writing classes, teachers provide examples of the ways that discourse units function, and in oral communication classrooms, examples are provided of the ways in which conversations are begun, conducted, and concluded. In vocabulary teaching classrooms, new vocabulary items can be dealt with through exemplification (Hirsh & Nation, 1992). By putting a new word in an example, different aspects of the word (e.g. collocates) will be revealed. It is especially a common procedure to illustrate the meanings of superordinates, such as “furniture” “vegetable” by exemplifying them e.g. table, carrot, etc. There is no need to mention that the examples used to negotiate different aspects of language should be “good examples”. They should not be inaccurate and confusing. According to Pigada & Schmitt (2006), good examples are accurate, clear, attractive and transferable. In addition, Hirsh & Nation (1992, pp.130-133) present these characteristics of good examples:

1. They illustrate or confirm the item clearly. They are unambiguous.
2. They are understandable without more contexts.
3. They are as concrete as possible; the more concrete the better, especially in presenting words and vocabulary for beginners.
4. They do not contain difficult or rare vocabulary or irregular forms that are not involved in the particular item being illustrated.

Good examples can be powerful tools for language teachers and language learners. They are used by instructors to motivate students and explain and practice the item. Attention needs to be paid to the ways in which classroom teachers can use the examples in the presentation and practice of ESL. Further thought needs to be given to how ESL teachers can use examples for different purposes. Finally, we also need detailed information about ways in which skillful language learners use examples as part of learning skills so that we can incorporate these examples in course curriculum as an efficient practice.

2.6. The effect of visual aids on vocabulary achievement

It is said that a picture is worth thousands words. Images such as photographs capture reality in ways impossible even using the thousand words (Paivio, 1971). We, humans are highly visual creatures and surprisingly proficient at understanding images. Indeed, written communication in English would be impossible if we could not reliably distinguish between large amounts of symbols in the English alphabet. Corder (1977) noted that although information is normally imparted by language, large amount of conceptualized information is transferred to the learner by other means such as pictures, maps, charts, etc. Widdowson (1983) corroborated this idea suggesting that visual devices interact with the verbal part of the text to clarify ambiguity and thus enhance understanding. Since visuals are interest-getting and draw students’ attention they are efficient devices in interpreting and recalling materials. McDonough (1984) asserted that visual devices are not integrated with textual information and act only as an accompaniment to a stretch of language and aim to simply present additional information to the learner. The information provided by visuals serves as an aid for comprehension, retention. It functions as supplemental and supportive to verbal cues. Celce-Murcia (1991) found that foreign words associated with images or actual objects are learned more easily than those without such additional information. In a critical analysis of L2 vocabulary teaching techniques, Oxford and Crookall (1990) stated that most learners are capable of associating new information to concepts in memory by means of meaningful visual imagery that makes learning more efficient. With regard to the process of visual interpretation, Chandler & Sweller (1991) found that pictures
demonstrated deeper processing than did verbal translation; because students had to figure out the meaning which they did not have to do if they saw the translation immediately. Quantitative results confirmed their beliefs; students who accessed pictorial cues demonstrated greater vocabulary learning than those who did not have access to visual aids. Visual imagery helps learners organize information more efficiently than they could if using words alone. Al-Seghayer (2001) stated that we remember images better than words; hence we remember words better if they are associated with images. He concluded that the pictorial/verbal combination involves many parts of the brain and provides greater cognitive power. There are some studies that address the question of long term recall. These studies (Anglin, 1986; Peng & Levin, 1979) show that not only does the presence of visuals with verbal cues aid in recall, but also those effects endure over time. There are scientific rationales behind this statement. In an effort to explain the efficient recall of pictures, the theory of “dual coding” was proposed by Paivio (1971; 1986). He asserted that there are two types of memory coding: in a verbal system and in imaginal system. Verbally presented material is encoded only in verbal system, while visually presented material is encoded in visual system. So, pictures have dual coding in two types of memory codes; if these two codes provide more cues for recall, then it will be easier to remember pictures.

Despite the considerable amount of research concerning how static visuals facilitate learning, there is not a consensus among researchers about the manner in which visuals function in facilitating learning. A number of researchers have provided a variety of functional frameworks. Liu & Reed (1994) identified three general functional roles of visuals in text: (a) an attentional role, (b) a retentional role, and (c) an explicative role. The attentional role relies on the fact that pictures naturally attract attention. The retentional role aids the learner in recalling information seen in the visuals, and the explicative role explains, in visual terms, information that would be hard to convey in verbal or written terms. An alternative functional framework offered by Gu & Johnson (1996) suggests that a functional framework includes classifying visuals in text based on how they influence a learner in attending, feeling, or thinking about the information being presented. Their framework contains four major functions: (a) attentional, (b) affective, (c) cognitive, and (d) compensatory. The attentional function attracts or directs attention to the material. The affective function enhances enjoyment or, in some other way, affects emotions and attitude. Visuals serving a cognitive function facilitate learning text content through improving comprehension, improving retention, or providing additional information. The last functional
role identified by Gu & Johnson, is the compensatory role, which is used to accommodate poor learners. The other framework was proposed by Alesandrini (1981) which classifies the role of instructional pictures into three functions: (a) representational, (b) analogical, and (c) arbitrary. He stated that Representational pictures can convey information in a direct way through tangible objects or concepts or indirectly by the use of intangible concepts that have no physical existence. Photos and drawings, or models are examples of representational visuals. Analogical pictures convey meaning by acting as a substitute and then implying a similarity for the concept or topic which is presented. Arbitrary pictures (sometimes referred to as logical pictures) are highly schematized visuals that do not look like the things they represent but are related in some conceptual or logical way. Arbitrary illustrations include schematized charts and diagrams, flowcharts, tree diagrams, maps, and networks.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

Forty-five EFL learners who participated in this study were selected from among a number of EFL students who have enrolled in a six week intermediate language learning courses in two institutes in Ajabshir, East Azarbaijan, Iran. The researcher was a teacher in these institutes. The classes were held three days in a week, each day one hour and a half, in Summer, 2008. There was not any control group. The experimental groups were females, native speakers of Azari and ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-eight. None of the participants had the experience of residence in English speaking countries.

3.2. Materials

In order to conduct this study, the following instruments were used:

1. A Cambridge placement test: The vocabulary part of a Cambridge placement test was administered to participants as a pre-test to see if the participants were homogeneous enough to start the study. In order to estimate the reliability of this test, the split-half method was utilized. The questions were divided into odd and even numbers and the total score for each part was calculated. The formula used for estimating reliability was Pearson-Product Moment. The results showed that the correlation was significant: $r=0.64; p<0.01$. To ensure the validity of this test, the researcher employed criterion related validity technique. For this purpose, following the
Cambridge test, a TOEFL test of proficiency was administered to the same subjects. Then the correlation between two sets of scores (Cambridge test & TOEFL test) was measured. The results indicated an index of 0.68 with p-value less than 0.0. This implies a high level of validity.

2. A post-test: It was administered at the end of the course to measure the difference between the achievements of two groups with respect to the type of vocabulary teaching techniques employed for each group. Again to make sure of the validity of the post test, criterion related validity was utilized. The scores of post test were correlated with the scores of a vocabulary part of the TOEFL test. The correlation was significant: \( r=0.60; p<0.01 \)

3. Visual aids: These include pictures, flashcards, photographs and blackboard drawings. These were labeled and depicted their referents.

4. Textbook: The main instructional material used for these groups was “New Interchange Intro” written by Jack.C.Richards & Tay Lesley, 2000.

3.3. Procedure

This study lasted about 4 months. Before the study begins, a multiple choice Cambridge placement test was administered to measure the students’ current level of proficiency. From among sevto three groups of fifteen. The classes were marked groups 1, 2 and 3. group 1 was treated by using visual aids (flashcards, pictures, photographs and blackboard drawings). The researcher attempted to get use of visuals that could represent their referent unambiguously. Flashcards were used for most of the words. Simple blackboard drawings appeared to be more efficient in the case of concrete words. When the students had problem in getting the meaning other visuals, namely pictures and photographs were used. In the learning phase, the visuals were shown to the students for a short time (ten seconds) so that all of them could see the picture depicting its referent. Then, the corresponding word was read aloud by the teacher and students were required to repeat. When the new word was difficult to learn, it was read aloud and repeated again. This procedure insured that students could pronounce it correctly. This phase followed by elicitation. To internalize the pronunciation and meanings of the words, the teacher mixed the pictures and showed them one by one to the students to elicit the corresponding words.

Group 2 was treated by verbal techniques (exemplification & synonymy). For this group no visual aids were used, but rather they were provided with exemplification and synonyms. When using exemplification it was attempted to choose the examples from “Oxford Elementary
Learners’ Dictionary”. With regard to difficult words, more examples were provided. The researcher tried to build examples around the topic of the lesson being taught. In this group after the exemplification phase, a synonymous expression of the word was provided. Finally, the teacher asked volunteer students to provide some examples of the words’ use. The students were encouraged to recycle the words they have been taught already in previous units. While making examples, they received a lot of feedback on their learning of the words. It is noteworthy that this phase of learning/teaching process was associated with interest. The reason is that the learners were making a lot of attempt to use their own resources and background knowledge and link it to the newly learned words. In some cases, the researcher used the words that students were already using in their study of the textbook.

With regard to group 3, verbal and visual techniques were used complementarily to convey the meaning of the lexis. Different practices of group 1 and 2 were incorporated in this group. First, visual aids were used to clarify the meaning and then verbal cues were provided. At the end of the treatment a post-test was administered in order to measure the students’ level of vocabulary after treatment. The post-test was representative of the items covered during instruction within six weeks. Ten multiple-choice items and two cloze tests were included. The tests were chosen from “Cambridge Criterion Referenced Tests” covering both recognition (multiple-choice) and production skills (cloze). Both pre-test and post-test were administered for three groups at the same time and place. In scoring there was no penalty for wrong answers and the scores were out of twenty.

4. Data analysis

This study attempts to investigate the difference between the mean performances of three experimental groups being taught with verbal, visual and verbal/visual techniques of vocabulary teaching. It is a between-group study with techniques of vocabulary teaching (verbal, visual and verbal/visual techniques) being the independent variables and the level of vocabulary achievement as the dependent variable. Based on the students’ scores, standard deviation and the means of all groups were calculated (Table 1).
**Table 1.** Means and standard deviations of three groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of groups</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (verbal)</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (visual)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (verbal/visual)</td>
<td>17.06</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having a cursory glance at table 2, it is obvious that the mean of group three is more than group one and two. So, it may be assumed that the method used for group 3 is more efficient. But mere use of standard deviation and means does not guarantee our results and is not an authentic way of comparing the result of the treatment effect on three groups. The design of this study required us to compare the means of three groups simultaneously by another authentic measure, namely ANOVA. In this study, the experiment tested the effect of method of vocabulary teaching (the independent variable) on vocabulary achievement (the dependent variable). The independent variable had three levels (three methods of teaching were used in three groups). So, the technique used for testing the significance of differences in means was a one-way ANOVA. For convenience in interpretation, the results were given in table 2.

**Table 2.** ANOVA for the effect of verbal/visual techniques on vocabulary achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variance</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>26.71</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>320.91</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>7.004</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the F-value is larger than one (F > 1), we know that there is a meaningful difference among the means. But how important is that difference. Is it large enough to decide that there was a treatment effect? To find out, we turn to F-ratio table (Hatch & Farhady, 1981), for our family of ratios for 2/42 d. f.’s. We need a ratio of 1/13 for a 0/05 level of probability. Our ratio is greater than this. So, we can assume that such different ratings of three methods of vocabulary teaching could not be by chance, but due to treatment effect.
An ANOVA provides information on whether the three groups differ or not, but it provides no information as to the location of the source of difference. That is, is group 1 significantly different from Group 2 or 3? To determine the location of the difference when f value is significant, a post hoc analysis is used. Here, a comparison is made between the mean scores of the three groups using the Scheffe test.

**Table 3.** Scheffe test to show the relationship between each two group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Mean difference</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>2.147*</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>-2.11*</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal/visual</td>
<td>-2.147*</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>-2.400*</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal/visual</td>
<td>2.11*</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal/visual</td>
<td>2.400*</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A brief look at table 3 shows that the mean differences between verbal and visual group; verbal and verbal/visual group; and visual and verbal/visual group is significant (indicated by * symbol) at 0.05 level.

**5. Results and discussion**

In this section the research questions presented before are investigated one by one.

**Research Question 1-** What is the effect of verbal techniques (synonymy, exemplification, etc.) on vocabulary achievement of Iranian EFL students?

Table 3 shows that there is difference between mean of verbal group with those of visual and verbal/visual groups. Also, this difference is significant enough. It was found that verbal group outperformed the visual one, but indicates underperformance compared with verbal/visual group. It can be implicated that using verbal cues to convey the new vocabulary enhances vocabulary knowledge of the students when compared with visual cues.
Research Question 2-What is the effect of visual techniques (flashcards, pictures, photographs, etc.) on vocabulary achievement of Iranian EFL students?

From among there groups, visual group had the least performance. Different learners go through different routes and use different strategies to memorize L2 vocabulary. Depending on their individual characteristics, they have verbal or visual preferences and store information in these two systems differently. Ignoring verbal cues and overemphasis on visual gloss while in favor of visualizers, constrains the use of strategies like verbal association by verbalizers. It can be concluded that in orienting the learner toward the knowledge of vocabulary, the teachers should not solely rely on visual cues and take advantages of contiguous presentation of visual and verbal materials.

Research Question 3-Which one is more efficient? Visual techniques, verbal techniques or a combination of these two techniques in enhancing vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL students?

The mean difference of three groups indicates that verbal/visual group outperformed the verbal and visual groups suggesting that complementary use of these modalities leads to development of vocabulary knowledge. By combining different modalities each medium’s strengths compensate for the other medium’s weaknesses. Linked verbal and visual information helps students make connections, understand relationships and recall related details.

All in all, group three (verbal/visual techniques) was the best one. Group one (verbal techniques) was the second best and did much better than group two. Group two (visual techniques) was the group which acquired the least amount of vocabulary (Figure 1).

**Figure 1:** Vocabulary achievement of three experimental groups
The findings can be summarized as:

1. Making use of verbal and visual techniques in order to present new vocabulary in EFL classes in Iran is an effective strategy.
2. While using one of these techniques, verbal techniques are more efficient than visual techniques.
3. Combination of these two techniques demonstrated greater vocabulary achievement than when none of them was used alone.

These findings corroborate the theoretical concepts of “Semiotics”, “Dual coding” and “Cognitive load”. All of these concepts take humans’ visual-spatial cognition into account and theoretically lend support to our findings. Each concept and its contribution to our findings are discussed below.

5.1. Semiotics and vocabulary teaching

We can define “semiotics” or “semiology” as the study of signs, how they work and how we use them. According to Harrison (2003) semiotics would show what constitutes signs and what laws govern them. In fact, linguistics is only one part of the general science of semiology which is not limited to verbal signs only. Since language is the most important and complex sign system, semiotics is closely linked to linguistics and different components of language, e.g. vocabulary. While teaching vocabulary, if we are especially concerned with verbal and visual signs, the science of semiotics and its relationship to vocabulary teaching gains more importance. It is a fact that the primary concern of vocabulary teaching is to place the meaning of the words in the long term memory of the students. Many words possess semiotic elements. Semiotic elements provide learners with a better understanding of vocabulary item and help them develop lexical knowledge in the target language (Harrison, 2003). Hawkes (1977), stated that the use of semiotic elements included within the nature of the lexical items not only helps learners to deduce the meanings of the words but also leads to the cognitive learning of the words because of presenting visual feedback for the students. Semiotics is the study of all communication phenomena by way of signs. According to Harrison (2003), there are two central issues about semiotics: First, it deals with the relationship between the sign and its meaning. Second, semiotics studies the way by which signs are combined through certain rules. Vocabulary
teaching is an area which is closely linked to semiotics. According to Sebeok (1991), the subject matter of semiotics is the exchange of any messages and of the system of signs which underlie them. Since its concerns include considerations of how messages are successively generated, encoded, transmitted, decoded and interpreted, and how context influences this kind of transaction, it is in close relationship with vocabulary teaching.

5.2. Dual coding theory (DCT)

The effectiveness of multimodal input in language learning environments can be explained by Paivio’s “dual coding theory”. According to Sadosky and Paivio (2004), a basic premise of DCT is that all mental representations derive from external experiences and have some of the qualities of the external experiences. These experiences can be linguistic or non-linguistic. Their different features develop into two separate mental systems, or codes, one specialized for representing and processing language (verbal code) and one for processing nonlinguistic objects and events (non-verbal code). The latter is frequently referred to as the “imagery system” because its functions include the generation, analysis, and transformation of mental images. Each system or code has its own characteristic units and organization. Together, the two codes account for knowledge of language and knowledge of the world. Using multiple (auditory and visual) ways of retrieving new vocabulary, knowledge of world established which is because of the simultaneous engagement of auditory and visual memory. Dual coding also, allows the learner to process new L2 forms more deeply and to associate them directly with images from the target language, instead of merely linking the target form to an equivalent L1 form (Lafford, B; Lafford, P & Sykes, 1999). According to Stone (2003), presenting new vocabulary can be improved by associating a spoken form of the new word with a picture of the item, which can be accompanied by a written representation of the word. She proposed that instead of relying on L1-L2 translation, “natural” way of approaching the new words will be effective. By “natural”, she meant the same way humans acquired their native language, by directly associating words written and spoken form with objects, actions and ideas that convey meaning. According to Lafford, et al.,(1999) the two mental codes and our five senses are orthogonal in DCT. This means that the two codes each have subsets of mental representations that are different because of the different sensory experiences from which they originated. They asserted that we develop visual representations in the verbal code for language units we have seen such as letters, words,
or phrases (e.g. a ball). But, we also develop visual representations in the nonverbal code for nonlinguistic forms that we have seen such as common objects. Likewise, we develop auditory representations in both verbal and non-verbal codes.

DCT is a unique theory in its emphasis on the verbal and non-verbal distinctions in mental representations. It implies that the more learners associate target words with appropriate non-verbal referents (pictures, objects, events and emotions), the richer and more meaningful will be their interconnections between verbal and visual systems. As a result, they have a better recall and appropriate use of the words when they learn through two codes than when the words are coded in a single manner. Therefore, additional pictorial cues are effective in helping learners make associations between pictures and words. Some researchers have moved from the idea of distinctive skills (verbal and visual) to the concept of distinction between people who prefer to use verbal abilities and those who prefer visual processing (Paivio, 1971). Paivio argued that most information can be encoded visually and verbally and along with other factors, the verbal/visual tendency of the subjects will affect which mode is used.

5.3. Cognitive load theory (CLT)

Cognitive load is generally defined as the amount of mental resources necessary for processing information. High cognitive load requires the user to expend extra memory resources in order to deal with incoming information. Sweller (1998) stated that working memory is limited in its capacity to selectively attend to and process incoming data. CLT is concerned with the way in which a learner’s cognitive resources are focused and used during learning. He suggested that for an effective instruction, the information should be presented in a way that not overloads the mind’s capacity for processing information. Some studies investigated the effect of presentation modality by comparing retention of subjects provided with information using two different modalities (e.g. visual–auditory) to those students which are presented with information using one of modalities (e.g. visual). In one study, it was concluded that dual modality presentation would decrease the cognitive load and therefore increases working memory capacity (Mousavi et al., 1995). The reason is that when both systems are used simultaneously, limited working memory capacity might be effectively increased and information is presented in a manner that permits it to be divided between the two systems rather than processed in one system alone. This increase in capacity is manifested in better retention of the materials. So, students will be more
able to build referential connections between visual and verbal representations when both are held in working memory at the same time.

Attendance to multiple sources of information causes a “split attention” effect which interferes with reasoning capacity (Goolkasian, 2000). The split attention effect is seen when subjects must divide their attention between separate tasks and integrate sources of information mentally. It is taught that this process of integration increases cognitive load and consequently decreases performance. This effect may also be alleviated by dual modality presentation. Mousavi, et., al. (1995) stated that when verbal and visual information are presented at the same time, the necessity for mentally integrating two different modalities will disappear. This increase in capacity to focus on and process information is the result of a lowered cognitive load. So, it can be concluded that when different sources of materials are presented in the same modality, working memory is overloaded and deep processing cannot occur. If information is presented in different modalities, subjects have more space in their cognitive systems to hold the information. Also, because modalities are different, integration is not necessary and cognitive load is reduced.

6. Conclusion
This study sheds light on the issue of the effectiveness of putting audio and visual aids to use for vocabulary learning. This investigation into various vocabulary teaching techniques and a focus on verbal and visual techniques hopes to provide new insights into the issue of vocabulary learning into multimedia language learning environment and recognition of how and when devices of different types of verbal and visual are more useful. Supported by theoretical viewpoints, the results obtained from this study show that in order to develop the ability of vocabulary skill, teachers can benefit from non-verbal representations and should not rely exclusively on verbal techniques. Verbal devices are not the only way of getting meaning. Teachers can use both verbal and visual aids in order to promote the learning of materials. When using two modalities, according to Cohen (1987) students are involved in a task of problem solving which arouses their motivation to participate and follow the act of communication. He stated that by exploring non-verbal devices students take shortcuts for getting meaning in an efficient and quick way. No matter how well the meaning is negotiated by the help of verbal and visual aids together, the negotiation of meaning is facilitated to a great extent and the word is comprehended well. Teachers can develop the ability of exploiting different types of verbal and
non-verbal techniques in the students to negotiate the meanings. Non-verbal representations in the initial stages of language learning are of great help, because the learners can exploit non-verbal devices to compensate for their language difficulties (Wright, 1989). It can be implicated that by the use of different glosses and facilitating factors like visuals, language educators and material designers will be able to design course curricula for EFL learners in a way that enhance learning and decrease redundant memory load in English vocabulary learning.

Sometimes, due to lack of time and resources, teachers prefer to use verbal modes alone. This study provides a reason to claim that verbal mode is more effective than visual mode to acquire vocabulary; however, it is strongly recommended to use both of them in a supplementary manner in order to promote comprehension and retention.

In this study the focus was on using both verbal and visual techniques in teaching vocabulary. However, using verbal and visual aids extends over other areas where students are engaged in, e.g. in some seminars and lectures students are to understand a discourse which is presented through both oral and visual medium of language. On such occasions, using two modes together is of great help in the interpretation of the message.

It is noteworthy that while findings of this study suggest that use of both verbal and visual aids has some positive impact on L2 learners ‘ recall and retention of vocabulary, they cannot be generalized. As it was mentioned earlier, the subjects of this study were in intermediate level of proficiency and this study does not tell us anything about beginning and advanced L2 learners. Testing different levels of proficiency may lead to different results. In future, a follow-up analysis of different kinds of multimedia and a comparative study of them is needed to obtain a better view of their effect on vocabulary achievement. These studies may include the effect of video, audio, graphic aids and pictures on different skills like listening and reading. Future research may also take into account different language groups other than English to see if learners from other language groups may behave similarly.

References


Title

Evaluation of an EFL English Coursebook

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Abstract

Teaching a foreign language does not essentially indicate teaching from a coursebook. Nevertheless, using a coursebook is most likely the most widespread way of teaching English nowadays. Therefore, it is helpful to set up what the role of coursebooks in the learning/teaching process is or, should be. Many institutions develop their syllabus based on the chief coursebook. Teachers are supposed to cover a certain number of units in the book by a certain date. So, selecting and these textbooks should be done based on a meticulous evaluation and the purpose of this article is to evaluate "General English" textbook which has been prescribed for use by Payame-Noor University students in Iran. The merits and demerits of the textbook are discussed in detail with reference to 13 common criterial features extracted from different materials evaluation checklists. The paper also gives some suggestion as to alleviate some of the shortcomings encountered in the textbook.

Keywords: Materials evaluation, Coursebook, Teaching.
Introduction

Course books are regarded as the core of any ELT program and they are almost universal elements of ELT teaching. In today’s classroom, textbooks serve as a tool, tutor, guidebook, and gauge (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997). Teachers throughout the world base approximately 50 percents of their weekly teaching time on textbooks (Schmidt, McKnight, and Raizen, 1996). Therefore, selecting a proper textbook for a class has been one of the most important tasks for teachers. In order to help teachers select the proper textbooks, much research has been done to evaluate different textbooks. To do book evaluation in a correct way, giving a good definition about coursebook and bringing up its merits and demerits are essential. Ur (1996) states that ‘coursebook’ is a textbook that is a basis for language course and is followed systematically. Therefore, one can get that a course book must be available in hand of students and teachers. Grant (1987) mentions that course books try to solve the problem by creating opportunities for learners to use the target language in the classroom before using it in real life.

Tandlichová (2002) believes that the idea of a foreign language coursebook functions is closely connected with its validity for teaching and learning foreign language, e.g. the English language. He mentions seven functions that are considered the key ones:

1. **Informative function** means presentation of information about the English language, its socio-cultural background and contexts of its global use within the international communication, as it is one of the sources for developing acculturation;

2. **Stimulating and developing function** means the development of activity, independence and creativity of students and teachers;

3. **Integrating function** means the integration of students’ knowledge and experience from other subjects or students’ own experience in the English language, as well as the integration of other skills (e.g. dictionary use, the use of reference books, encyclopedias, etc.)

4. **Educating and motivating function** means the effort for the formation and development of learners’ personalities, their moral, ethical and aesthetic features and principles, as well as students’ intrinsic motivation for foreign language study and acquisition;

5. **Contrastive-transformational function** means the respect for contrastive approach to the linguistic material of mother tongue and foreign languages and to both cultures, traditions and
experience; it also implies the receptive and productive relations of teachers and students to the coursebook (set);

6 *facilitating and relating function* implies monitoring and facilitating role of an EFL teacher, students’ active work at school and independent work at home by means of tasks, activities, exercises, etc. in the coursebook and in the workbook; it also implies the cyclic character of the second language acquisition process through real-life situations in mother tongue and target language;

7 *testing function* means that there is material suitable for testing productive and receptive acquisition of linguistic and communicative competence from the viewpoint of a teacher and self-control of the student. If the authors of a foreign language coursebook respect the above mentioned functions, the foreign language coursebook will enable the teachers and learners to use it effectively and it can be very motivating for learning and teaching foreign language, i.e. the teacher-learner cooperation will be successful.

Because of the possible vitality of textbook, Ur (1996) states the advantages of coursebooks as follows: a) they offer a clear framework which the teacher and students know where they are going to and what is coming next, b) mostly, they serve as a syllabus which includes a carefully planned and balanced selection of language content if it is followed systematically, c) they supply ready-made texts and tasks with possible suitable level for most of the class, which save time for teacher, d) they are the cheapest way of providing learning material for each student, e) they are expedient packages whose components are bound in order, f) they are useful guides particularly for inexperienced teachers who are occasionally uncertain of their language knowledge, g) they provide autonomy that the students can use them to learn new material, review and monitor progress in order to be less teacher-dependent. Besides, coursebooks have some possible disadvantages (Richards and Renandya, 2002) a) they fail to present appropriate and sensible models, b) they propose subordinate learner roles, c) they fail to contextualize language activities, d) they promote inadequate cultural understanding, e) they fail to address discourse competence, f) they fail to teach idioms, g) they have lack of equality in gender representation.

On the other hand, Sheldon (1988) reveals both theoretical and practical problems with textbooks; the main idea is that they do not admit the winds of change from research, methodological experimentation, or classroom feedback. Allwright (1981) concludes from the
management analysis that teaching materials can contribute to but are limited in determining learning goals, content and management of language learning. He maintains that the management of learning is far too complex to be adequately catered for by a pre-packaged set of decisions embodied in teaching materials. Hutchinson and Torres (1994), on the other hand, argue that the textbook has a vital and positive role to play in the teaching and learning process, especially during period of change. Textbooks endure and flourish mainly because they are the most practical means of providing the structure that the teaching-learning system-particularly the system of change-requires. The situation has shown us that problems do exist with our teaching materials, yet the necessity of the textbook cannot be ignored. The situation also entails that as teachers it is essential for us to evaluate, select and adapt teaching materials to meet our teaching and students’ learning needs in order to maximize learning potentials.

Sheldon (1988) has presented several rationales for textbook evaluation. He suggests that the selection of an ELT textbook often indicates an important administrative and educational decision in which there is extensive professional, financial, or even political investment. A systematic evaluation, therefore, would allow the managerial and teaching staff of a specific situation or organization to distinguish between all of the available textbooks on the market. Moreover, it would provide for a sense of acquaintance with a book’s content thus supporting educators in identifying the particular strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use. This would go a long way in ultimately assisting teachers with making best possible use of a book’s strong points and recognizing the shortcomings of certain exercises, tasks, and entire texts.

If one accepts the value of textbooks in ELT then it must surely be with the qualification that they are of an acceptable level of quality, usefulness, and appropriateness for context and people with whom they are being used. Therefore, as a key area in English Language teaching the significance of material design and evaluation has grown steadily since materials, especially authentic materials are not simply the everyday tools of the language teachers: they are an embodiment of the aims and methods of a particular teaching/learning situation (Zhang 2007). Cunningsworth (1984) states that the process of evaluation is a professional judgment at every stage and could not be a purely mechanical one. While the literature on the subject of textbook evaluation is not particularly extensive, various writers have suggested ways of helping teachers to be more sophisticated in their evaluation approach by presenting evaluation ‘checklists’ based on generalizable criteria that can be used by both teachers and students in many different
situations. Sheldon (1988) suggests the use of textbook evaluation sheet in the ELT classroom. The evaluation sheets consist of a list of factors such as rationale, availability, layout, and rating (poor, fair, good, excellent). Comments also will be given at the corresponding space by the evaluator.

To avoid the danger of allowing subjective factors to influence judgment in the early stage of analysis, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasize the importance of objectivity in evaluation. They consider evaluation as a matching process in which evaluators match needs to available solutions. In order to make this matching as objective as possible, it is better to look at the needs and solutions separately. Therefore, they break up the evaluation process into four major steps, i.e. 1. defining criteria 2. subjective analysis 3. objective analysis 4. matching.

Regarding different available checklists and criteria Sheldon (1988) suggests that no general list of criteria can ever really be applied to all teaching and learning contexts without considerable modification, most of these standardized evaluation checklists contain similar components that can be used as helpful starting points for ELT practitioners in wide variety of situations. Famous theorists in the field of ELT textbook design and analysis such as Williams (1983), Sheldon (1988), Brown (1995), Cunningsworth (1995), and Hamer (1996) unanimously agree that evaluation checklists should have some criteria like physical characteristics of textbooks including layout, organizational and logistical characteristics. Other significant criteria are those that evaluate a textbook’s methodology, aims, approaches, and matching with the individual teacher’s approach as well as the organization’s overall curriculum. Furthermore, criteria should analyze the specific language, functions, grammar, and skills content that are covered by a particular textbook as well as the relevance of linguistic items to the prevailing socio-cultural environment. Finally, these criteria should observe cultural and gender components and students’ personalities, backgrounds, needs, and interests as well as those of teacher and institution.

In terms of when to evaluate a coursebook, Cunningsworth (1995) demonstrates that evaluation can be done in three types, ‘pre-use’, ‘in-use’ and ‘post-use’ evaluation. Pre-use is the most difficult one because there is no actual experience of using the coursebook. In-use evaluation involves matching the coursebook against the learner’s objective, the learner’s background, and the available recourses. On the other hand, post-use evaluation is employed
after a period of continual uses which help teachers to decide whether to use the same text book or not.

Moreover, Cunningsworth (1995) distinguishes two approaches between impressionistic assessment and in-depth evaluation. So based on the above definition the present evaluation is a kind of post-use or reflective evaluation.

Materials

Here about 10 checklists proposed by different authors and selected 13 features which were common to most of these checklists to do the evaluation are browsed. The following 10 EFL/ESL textbook evaluation schemes were consulted to evaluate the EFL textbook under study.

The list of 8 textbook-evaluation checklists:


After a close examination of the checklists, these criteria were found to be almost common to all the schemes planned by the above mentioned materials:

- Practical consideration
- Aims and objective
- Vocabulary explanation and practice
- Grammar presentation and practice
Approaches
- Periodic review and test sections
- Appropriate visual materials available
- Interesting topics
- Clear instructions
- Content presentation
- Plenty of authentic language
- Skills
- Encourage learners to develop own learning strategies and to become independent in their learning

The textbook understudy

It is important to mention that using this book like the other books in Payame-Noor University is obligatory and teachers don’t have any choice in its selection. Therefore, it is used in the branches of this big university across the country.

Results

Practical consideration and layout

Some practical concerns that relate to textbook evaluation are accessibility and availability. In order for a textbook to be purchasable, for instance, it must be currently in print and readily available. Moreover, the publisher should be accessible for additional information, teaching demonstrations, and order requests. At first glance it would seem that the book under evaluation meets many of these requirements but the publisher cannot be easily contacted for ordering information and assistance, teaching demonstrations, etc. In terms of availability, however, the condition appears to suggest something different and the book is relatively accessible.

Another important factor that relates to the choosing of a textbook is cost. While some might feel that price is not necessarily an important factor in textbook evaluation the fact that many students with limited incomes are required to purchase the book for a mandatory foreign language course changes it to an essential point. It is interesting to note that in this case, the students find it to be a little too expensive.
Other practical considerations that we should be aware of is quality. The textbook is not made of high-grade, durable paper. Most often the paper of the book is of low quality and in some cases is more like papers which are used for daily newspapers. In addition, it doesn’t contain any accessories package and supplementary materials including items such as CD's, or student workbook, and a teacher's manual. The book is acceptable regarding the clarity and orthographic beauty. The point size of the type, length of the line of type, and space between each line all work together, producing a page that is readable and accessible. However, it would be more appealing if colorful pictures of real people and real environment were used. The texts are not supported by graphic elements (illustrations, photographs, maps, etc) that follow the less-is more rules. Unfortunately, the authors overwhelmed the students with too much textual information.

The layout and design of a textbook refers to its organization and presentation of language items. In this textbook, for instance, the topics, functions, structures/grammar, and skills within each unit can be found in the introductory table of contents. The course components are also effectively and clearly organized around specific topics such as why and how do we read, using the dictionary, using reference books and libraries, etc. and they are divided up into ten, about twenty page units and the topics seem to be connected between units. However, it’s too long for self study with little or no guidance for learning how to get the meaning of the texts. The overall layout and design of this book are rather extensive vocabulary lists, expression, and grammar references with different vocabulary exercises and little reading comprehension ones.

**Aims and objectives**

At the beginning of the book there is a study guide that tries to illuminate the planned teaching objectives. This section includes introduction of different parts of the book like, word definition and exemplifications, reading passage, word formation exercises, word formation chart, comprehension exercises, structure review, appendix I, II, and III. However, there is a condition of indeterminacy as to the goals toward which the teachers and the learners are to set out. The ultimate goals of the curriculum are not clarified. The authors of the book do not clearly specify the final objectives of the curriculum in clear words so that the stakeholders know what they are expected to have learnt at the end of the program (long term objectives). Similarly, the short term objectives stay unspecified in this part. We do not know what the learners should be able to do to
reveal that they have achieved the intended objectives at the end of each course. Moreover, this section is more similar to instruction rather than stated goals and objectives.

Word definitions and exemplification of this part is concerned with why this section is built-in in the book. It reads, “The key words of the passage presented in each unit are defined and exemplified.” However, this is not applied in the book since the number of the keywords introduced in this section is significantly less than the number of the keywords in the “Reading Comprehension” section. The question that rises is how and where those missing words are to be learnt?

In sum, the final goals of the EFL program as well as the behavioral objectives which are aimed at by the curriculum designers are unclear and stay to be described. This may have different ramifications across different phases of the curriculum i.e. and evaluation. Now, the nationwide exams which are administered by the officials are playing the role of an agreement document among students which, in turn, has its own negative effects known as the ‘washback effect’.

**Vocabulary explanation and practice**

White (1997) has suggested that there are a number of criteria that can be used in the selection and grading of vocabulary. He argues that frequency (the total number of occurrences of an item in a given corpus of language), coverage (the number of things which can be expressed by any given item), range (the amount of times a word or words appear in texts within a given corpus), availability (the readiness with which a word is remembered and used by native speakers in certain situations), and potential learnability can all play an important role in vocabulary selection. Vocabulary exercises occupy the lion’s share of each unit in this book and range from matching, filling the blanks, and word formation charts. While in the study guide of this book it is mentioned that the keywords of the passage are defined and exemplified, examining this part in each unit shows that they are new words extracted from every line of the passages not keywords. Another observed problem in the explanation and use of vocabulary in the book is attributable to the poor contextualization. For example, in unit seven "There was a look of boredom on his face." Or in unit ten "They are each well-known in their respective fields." On the other hand, sometimes more than one new word is introduced in a single sentence: "I will
investigate the market for the ways of increasing profits.” Also it would be better to repeat some of the new vocabulary words in subsequent lessons to reinforce their meaning and use.

Grammar presentation and practice

In terms of grammatical structures and functions, one of the problems of this textbook is that grammar is not presented in a logical way. For example "Adjective clause" is introduced in unit one without introducing clause itself. On the other hand, "reduction of adjective clause" is presented in unit five. In this way grammar is not presented in a logical manner and in increasing order of difficulty. It's clear that these two structures are related to each other and it's better to present them in the same unit. Likewise, the authors place no emphasis on repetition or 'recycling' of structures and functions and their approach is rather deductive. Moreover, they haven’t paid attention to the essential functions, tenses, and structures required for the students at this level of language proficiency and haven’t taken learners’ needs into account. In addition, there is no sufficient oral and written practice of the grammar concepts that lead from controlled to meaningful and communicative use of the language and it doesn’t stress communicative competence in teaching structural items. However, it's better to mention that selected structures are presented clearly nd the book provides adequate models of featuring the structures to be taught.

Approaches

According to White (1988, p.92) “A complete syllabus specification will include all five aspects: structure, function, situation, topic, skills. The difference between syllabuses will lie in the priority given to each of these aspects.” It seems that the reading passages in this textbook are selected or, probably manipulated, so that they reinforce a particular grammatical point included in the grammar section of the books. However, the question of how and in what order the structures must be arranged in a structural syllabus is a controversial issue. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 88) pose the same question as writing, “what assumptions underlie the ordering in the structural syllabus? Does the verb ‘to be’ come first, because it is easier to learn? If so, in what sense? Structurally, it is the most complex verb in English. Does it come first because it is needed for later structures, for example the present continuous? Is it considered to be conceptually simpler? For many students, for example Indonesian students, it causes conceptual
problems, since in Bahasa Indonesian it is frequently omitted. Alternatively, is the syllabus ordered according to usefulness? The verb ‘to be’ is more useful than, say, the present simple tense of the verb ‘to go’. If we are operating the criterion of usefulness, what context are we referring to? Do we mean usefulness in the outside world or usefulness in the classroom?”

Nevertheless, my personal experience in teaching this book shows that students learn ‘gerunds’ with less effort than ‘the passive structure’. Moreover, they learn the ‘modifiers’ easier than ‘clauses’. Thus, it would be better to move ‘gerunds’ which is introduced in units seven and eight to unit two and introduce modifier in unit one instead of ‘adjective’ clause.

Although the reading skill, among others, looks to be of first priority in the design of the book, a big share of the lessons is devoted to vocabulary and the various forms of vocabulary exercises throughout. More than 50% of the content of each unit is occupied with vocabulary activities. This allocation seems to be unjustified because grammar is also important in carrying the meaning of a text.

**Periodic review and test sections**

Surprisingly, there are no review exercises or quiz whatsoever. It seems better to include exercises and review tests at the end of each unit or at least allocate some units to review exercises. It is worth mentioning that the tests should be comparable and compatible with the format and the testing methods which will be employed in the term final exams that are nationwide. To compensate for this shortcoming of the textbooks some authors have developed supplementary books. The final exams of this book are designed, administered and scored by state officials and the teachers play no direct roles in these processes. Therefore, despite many teachers’ and students’ high standards, they have to surrender to the strong negative washback effect of the exams, and spend some time and energy of the class on answering questions and tests similar to those which are administered by the officials every term.

**Appropriate visual materials available**

Based on Jahangard’s (2007) view visual materials can be defined as the facilities that can be employed by teachers and learners to enhance language learning in classrooms. They may range from simple hand-made realia, charts and pictures to electronic and digital materials. For the
book in question, there are no VHS films. The program doesn’t have any listening activities in the pupil’s edition or a video that is integrated with the text. It also has no CD-ROM that provides meaningful and interactive practice and can be used for classroom or individual study. Likewise, the authors don’t design a website for their book. And we can't see any worthwhile internet activities.

**Interesting topics**

It is the choice of text with regard to students’ age, interests and the level of their communicative competence which help to develop students’ knowledge about the English speaking countries in comparison with students’ own country and language. The topics of readings in this book are all scientific and related to expanding reading skills through learning suffixes, prefixes, and etc. It is difficult to judge on behalf of the learners whether those are interesting for them or not and it needs research. Nevertheless, the majority of the topics seem monotonous and it would be better for authors to select authentic topics related to the real life of the learners. And, it would be better if the topics are updated to become more congruent with the taste of the new generation which might be a bit different from that of the authors who designed the books at least seven years ago. Nowadays, learners’ needs are different from what they used to be and; hence it looks better to include texts more related to computer games, internet, and satellite programs. For instance, it is possible to take and adapt some of the texts, words and jargons which are at present used in the software such as the Windows and Linux. It is also possible to include adapted and simplified versions of quotations and sayings of scholars well-known for their wisdom and eloquence in line with higher culturally valued objectives of education such as trustworthiness, sacrifice, courage, punctuality, patience, honesty, etc.

**Clear instructions**

Most of the instructions are clear and easy to understand for the learners in the book. However, it would be better if some models are given for each group of exercises provide contextual clues for the learners as to what they are expected to do, because the learners might not be familiar with the structures and the lexis used in the instructions. On the other hand, some of the instructions and contextual information and in are beyond many of the learners’ English language proficiency in terms of linguistic complexity. For instance, in unit two, the instruction
reads: “Underline the adjectives, nouns and participles that are used as nouns modifiers in the following sentences. In addition, underline the adverbs that modify participles and adjectives in these sentences.” One possible solution might be to use the learners’ native language instead of the target language in the instructions when the learners are not able to understand such sentences.

**Content presentation**

Some of the Reading Comprehension texts tend to be more difficult for the learners to understand than others due to their structural complexity. Jahangard (2007) states that the learners misunderstand or do not comprehend some parts of the Reading Comprehension texts not because they don’t know the meaning of the new words included in them but simply because those sentences were too complex for them to parse. After applying the Readability formula developed by Fog (cited in Farhady et al. 1998, p.82), it was found that there was a logical sequencing of the texts according to the obtained text difficulty. The clear question to ask is how “is it possible for two texts which are of roughly the same readability indices to be perceived as unequally difficult by the learners?” There might be many possible factors which cause a text to be difficult or easy to understand. Content of the passage, the background knowledge of the reader, rhetorical organization, information density, number of unfamiliar words, and length and complexity of the sentences in a text are all possible candidates to make a text difficult or easy to understand.

There are different versions of Fog’s formula which make use of factors such as number of syllables or words, length of sentences, or the syntactic complexity of sentences. Jahangard (2007) also believes that if the one which is based on the number of words and sentences is used, a logical sequencing of the reading materials in the book will be found, but if the formula which is sensitive to the number of sentences and number of complex sentences is applied, a differential outcome will be appeared. On the basis of the latter formula, – i.e. \( \text{number of words} + \frac{\text{number of sentences}}{\text{number of sentences}} + \left(\frac{\text{number of compound sentences}}{\text{number of sentences}}\right) \times 40 \) – the text holding more compound and longer sentences will have greater readability indices representing more text difficulty. Bearing in mind the fact that most of the unknown words in the texts are taught before teaching the Reading Comprehension texts in the book, therefore, it is rather reasonable to conclude that the number of new words can play no main role in making the text
difficult or easy to understand for the learners, rather it is the number of longer and more compound and complex sentences that possibly determine the difficulty or easiness of the texts. Consequently, the authors of the book should have used the sentence-complexity-sensitive formula to sequence the Reading Comprehension texts. Nevertheless, to solve the problem two solutions are on hand: the first one is to ‘re-organize’ the texts according to the readability indices obtained from the sentence-complexity-sensitive formula. This solution requires more alterations and regulations of the texts since most of the Reading Comprehension texts have been selected based on the importance of the particular grammatical structures which they had and the writers had intended to contain them in the lessons. Furthermore, it needs a close re-examination of the new vocabulary that the transposed texts include. The second solution is to break long and complex sentences down into shorter and less complex ones. This solution has its own special problems and challenges, too. In many cases it is not probable to break a compound sentence down into its essential clauses and phrases and collect them into simple sentences devoid of destroying the meaning of the original sentence.

**Plenty of authentic language**

One of the important question in textbook evaluation that is worthy of a closer examination is the degree to which the language employed in the textbook was authentic and/or realistic. Since the arrival of the ‘Communicative Approach’ to language teaching in the 1970's and 80's, there has been a increasing school of idea that states that authentic reading, speaking, listening, writing, and grammatical language models should be used to teach English language skills as long as the activities or tasks related with them are also authentic and correctly ranked to the level of the students with whom they are being used. Proponents of authentic materials such as Cathcart (1989) and Lee (1995) recommend that when we render our students to these types of materials we can be certain that the models of language are not only authentic but also representative of real-life language use, mainly in terms of discourse structure. Furthermore, they point out that the use of these materials conveys greater practicality and relevance to the ESL/EFL classroom and they can enhance learner motivation. While the examples of reading texts used in this textbook are authentic, in fact exercises appear to be either semi-authentic (originally authentic but simplified) or scripted, the authors’ rationale can be supported on various grounds. First, researchers such as Young (1991) and Alptekin (1993) have suggested that authentic materials
can often produce a number of difficulties and problems for students who are in absent of appropriate cultural background knowledge or schemata to suitably comprehend a message’s meaning and content. Second, the selection of authentic texts is often rather difficult and challenging and a student’s failure to understand a text can be enormously uncomforting and in that way de-motivating in some cases (Harmer, 1996). Finally, and most significantly, since unreal or unauthentic English is easier to comprehend and more pedagogically real, and since real English is certainly genuine but more difficult to comprehend and less real pedagogically, a middle ground should be attained between these two extremes (Carter, 1988).

Skills
Three prominent authors in ELT, Swan (1985), Harmer (1996) and McDonough and Shaw (1997) advocate an integrated, multi-skills syllabus because it considers and incorporates several categories of both meaning and form. However, the book under evaluation is not a multi-skills syllabus and therefore doesn’t cover and integrate both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading). There is no section in the lessons specifically designed to develop and enhance listening and speaking skills in the learners. However, it does place a larger emphasis on reading. It has dedicated most of the space of the units to materials which largely try to develop and enhance the reading ability of the learners. Bearing in mind this fact that this book has been prepared for the purpose of self-study and the idea that the main needs of the learners might be to acquire an acceptable degree of mastery and skill in reading materials written in English, this allotment seems reasonable. However, the passages are not selected within the vocabulary range of the learners and they don’t reflect a variety of styles of contemporary English. On the other hand, they are not associated with various activities suitable for students’ levels and interests.

Regarding writing skill, if it can be defined as the ability to communicate one’s feelings and ideas to a particular person or group of readers through the orthographic form of a language, it is possible to claim that it is in some way ignored in the book. While, some exercises of the lessons are planned to improve the writing skills of the learners, they are limited to a few isolated sentence production activities in a decontextualized and sterile milieu of communication. Nowhere in the book, are the learners supposed to do writing activities to the sense which was
proposed above. The authors could have included writing activities in different formats varying from controlled to free writing according to the proficiency levels of the learner groups.

Encourage learners to develop own learning strategies and to become independent in their learning

Learner training is helpful and valuable in pushing the learners toward the intended goals, of both the learners themselves and the teachers. Regarding the point that the book under study is designed for a kind of self-study system, it is worth mentioning that nowhere in the units is there a part explicitly addressing the issue of strategy training whatsoever. Moreover, most of the exercises try to test the learners’ understanding. They are not designed to help learners to learn how to browse the whole text before starting to read and pay attention to the organization and structure of the text as well as other parts which are relevant and compatible to the goals of the reading. However, maybe "word definitions and exemplifications" and "word formation exercises" sections are designed to help students understand the passages easier and expand their vocabulary by learning different suffixes and prefixes.

Conclusion

English language instruction has many important components but the essential constituents to many ESL/EFL classrooms and programs are the textbooks and instruction materials that are often used by language instructors. And one way to modify and improve a curriculum is to improve the textbooks and the materials used in the program. Williams (1983) believes that the teacher takes over where the textbook leaves off, and he or she must be able to assess its strengths and weaknesses. English language teachers-in-training need to be acquainted with the principles of textbook evaluation. They can be given practice in analyzing textbooks in order to find out whether the organization of materials is consistent with the objectives of a given English language curriculum. When trainee teachers examine the selection of items of speech, grammar, and vocabulary in a textbook, and evaluate the way it presents reading and writing activities, they are at the same time improving their competence in the language and enhancing their skills as teachers.

It is important to mention that the evaluation of the EFL materials currently taught at Payame-Noor University which has a distance education system requires a more comprehensive analysis
and examination by a group of experienced teachers and that the viewpoints and the ideas of a single researcher might not be sufficiently reliable because it is almost impossible to be unbiased in one judgment.

References


Title

Animacy in the Acquisition of the Argument Structure: Psych Verbs

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of Animacy in the acquisition of the argument structure in the case of psych verbs. Two groups of learners within the intermediate and advanced level of proficiency were tested regarding the comprehension and production of the psych predicates through a grammaticality judgment and sentence completion task. The results showed that in the process of acquiring argument structure of the psych verbs Animacy works as a semantic cue toward the correct mapping of the thematic roles. Awareness of the semantic content of the experiencer leads the participants in correct mapping which gradually becomes a strategy in higher levels of proficiency.

Key words: Psych Verb, Argument structure, Animacy, Thematic Role.

1. Introduction

Psychological predicates denote a subjective mental change of state (vs. objective predicates referring to events or state of affairs) in which what is experienced is beyond the reach of objective observation (Brekke, 1976 cited in Sato & Kishida 2009). Two major thematic roles
were recognized for the psych verbs: experiencer and the stimulus (Belletti and Rizzi 1988, Grimshaw 1990, Pesetsky 1995). Experiencer is a verbal argument in which one experience an emotion, sensation, perception, or a mental attitude and the stimulus is what the experiencer is sentient of (Dowty 1991). Psych verbs can be categorized into two major syntactic groups of Sub-experiencer and obj-experiencer (Pesetsky 1995)

1. a. Nina fear/likes/adores the dog.          (Sub-experiencer)
   b. This dog frighten/disgusts/amuses Nina.  (Obj-experiencer)

Sub-experiencer types are group of psychological predicates in which the experiencer is mapped into the subject position and in Obj-exp type the experiencer is realized as the object (Arad 1998).

Wunderlich (2002) introduced Animacy as the sortal (referential) information which can affect syntactic realization of the arguments. Semantic content of the verbs determine the sortal salience of their arguments. Providing evidence from Algonquian languages, he claimed the role of referential salience in the argument realization.

In the following examples Sortal salience (Animacy) is encoded in stem of the verbs.

2. a. Inanimate objects: n-\textit{wapt}-an ‘I see it.’
     1-seeb.
   b. Animate objects: n-\textit{wapm}-a ‘I see him.’
     1-see-

He claimed that no linking device in realization of the arguments is exclusively on the sortal salience.

Zhang & Xiaojuan (2004) declared the use of Animacy as a cognitive strategy by middle school students in acquiring psych adjectives. Based on the result of their experiment, they claimed the effectiveness of Salience Semantic Hierarchy Model in teaching psych adjectives. It was claimed for the reason that SSHM predicts the effect of Animacy of the subject in the development of the sensitivity to the zero cause in V-ing psych adjectives.

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants
The participants of this study consisted of 60 Persian EFL learners among the students of English in Yazd University (Iran). They were selected and divided into two levels of proficiency of advanced and intermediate through the administration of oxford placement test. Each group consisted of 30 students.

2.2 tasks

Two types of task (Grammaticality judgment and sentence completion tasks) were designed to investigate the effect of Animacy in the comprehension and production of the psych predicates. The tokens were controlled in terms of the type of psych verb and the Animacy of the arguments (Type of psych verb were controlled to balance possible effect of type). To avoid any interaction of the type of sentence with the factor under study, all the tokens were provided in the active type.

The comprehension test consisted of 30 sentences in which the participants should judge the sentences in terms of their acceptability in three scales of grammatical (acceptable), ungrammatical (unacceptable), and not sure. Following examples are instances of the included tokens in the GJT:

a. Sub-exp

A/A: The teacher admired the clever student.
A/I: I dread the thought of an early marriage.
I/A: *Your skills have fully appreciated our boss.

b. Obj-exp

A/A: The handsome man bored me with the stories of Navy.
A/I: *The children entertained the movie.
I/A: The sharp tone of his voice amazed her boss.

Sentence completion task consisted of 16 tokens in which the participants were provided with a sentence as context description and an incomplete sentence containing a verb with two arguments in parenthesis. The participants were asked to make the sentences complete with the provided words considering the context descriptions. Following is an instance of the tokens in the SCT:
The painter doesn’t like the artificial modern life. He always chooses the subjects of his paintings from the nature. (The painter-excite-the subjects from nature) 
…… (Excite/s)…… (The painter/the subjects from nature)

The positions of the arguments were randomized in order to control for possible effects of positions.

3. Results

In table 1 the descriptive statistics of the GJT are displayed in terms of the Animacy of the arguments. In other words, the comprehensions of the psych sentences are represented descriptively regarding Animacy.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the GJT (Animacy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean percentage and SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>88.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>74.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A mixed between-within subjects Anova was carried out on the grammaticality judgment test with the context (A/A, A/I, and I/A) as the dependent within subjects variable and proficiency level as the independent between subjects variable.

The results of the within subjects effect showed a significant difference between three levels of the context (f (2) =18.68, p=.00) with a large effect size (eta squared=.39). The results of the pairwise comparisons showed significant difference between context 1 (A/A), context 2 (A/I), and context 3 (I/A) (p<.05) but not between context 2 and 3 (p>.05). The same results were obtained for the pairwise comparisons for each group in three contexts.

The results of the between subjects effect revealed significant difference between the advanced and intermediate groups (f (1) = 26.64, p=.00) with a large effect size (eta
The results showed a significant large interaction effect between context and proficiency ($f(2) = 5.04$, $p=.01$, eta squared=.15).

Figure 1: Grammaticality Judgment Task

Independent sample t-test carried out on three contexts showed large significant difference between two levels of proficiency for the first ($t (58) = 3.41$, $p = .00$, eta squared = .16) and the third context ($t (58) =5.95$, $p = .00$, eta squared = .39) but no significant results for the second context was reported ($t (58) = 1.60$, $p=.11$).

Figure 1 compares the mean percentages of the comprehension scores on three contexts for two levels of proficiency.

Table 2 represents mean and standard deviation for the production of the psych verbs in terms of the Animacy of the arguments.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of SCT (Animacy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean percentage and SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>86.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>73.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.826</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A pair sample t-test was conducted on the sentence completion task to investigate the effect of Animacy in the syntactic realization of the arguments. The results showed a significant difference between production score on A/A and A/I for the advanced level ($t(29) = -3.51, p = .000$) with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = .29$) but no significant results for the intermediate level ($t(29) = -1.20, p = .23$).

Figure 2: Sentence Completion Task

Figure 2 compares the mean percentages of production scores for A/A and A/I types for two levels of proficiency.

Independent sample t-test showed significant results for the difference between advanced and intermediate levels on A/A ($t(58) = 2.57, p = .013$) and A/I contexts ($t(58) = 4.23, p = .000$).

4. Discussion and conclusion

The results of grammaticality judgment and sentence completion tasks reported higher performance of the participants with advanced level of proficiency.
The results of the GJT revealed that the Comprehension of the psych predicates follows the following order for the advanced and intermediate levels:

Advanced: A/A>I/A>A/I
Intermediate: A/A>A/I>I/A

The difference between A/I and I/A was not significant for both levels but the difference between A/A and A/I or I/A were reported statistically significant for both groups.

Considering following tokens extracted from the grammaticality judgment task, 3.a containing two animate arguments is judged more accurately than b which has one animate and one inanimate argument (Both sentences contain Sub-Exp type of psych verb with two arguments, one realized as the subject and the other as the object).

3. a. The teacher (Sub-A) admired the clever student (Obj-A).
   b. The loss of innocent life (Sub-I) regretted them (Obj-A).

In other words, participants showed better comprehension of the psych verbs in the case of two animate arguments than the time one of the arguments was inanimate regardless of the order of the arguments. Sentences included in the grammaticality judgment task were designed with correct structure in terms of type of sentence so one might hypothesized that the higher accuracy in A/A contexts is the results of their awareness of the fact that the experiencer must carry Animacy feature. In other terms, assuring correct organization of the sentence syntactically they check the sentence semantically. In those cases that two arguments are animate they make sure that the required feature is applied. They face the confusion in those cases that one of the arguments is inanimate for they should go further and judge the sentences regarding the correspondence of the thematic roles and the syntactic realization of the arguments.

Production scores of the psych verbs in sentence completion task for both groups follow A/I>A/A order but it was significant only for the advanced group. The participants with advanced level of proficiency obtained higher scores in the production of the sentences containing psych verbs in those cases one of the arguments was animate and the other inanimate. Awareness of Animacy as a required feature for experiencer in psych verbs lead advanced group to use Animacy as a semantic cue toward correct mapping of the thematic roles into syntactic positions. Facing sentences containing psych verbs with an animate argument advanced group who are now sufficiently aware of the different syntactic realizations in these predicates project animate argument to the subject position in the Sub-Exp type and to the object position in Obj-
Exp type. The results of the performance of the intermediate group showed their tendency toward better production in A/I context but it was reported not significant. Considering this difference in advanced vs. intermediate level might lead to the hypothesis that the reliance on the Animacy as a semantic cue toward the correct syntactic realization of the arguments would become a strategy in higher level of proficiency.

Regarding the results obtained from this research following conclusion can be drawn on the effect of Animacy in the acquisition of the psych verbs:

- Animacy as a semantic cue is used as a clue toward mapping of the thematic roles into correct syntactic positions.

- Higher the proficiency level of the participants, higher reliance on the semantic cue in the syntactic realization of the arguments. In other terms, gaining more proficiency Animacy of the arguments becomes a strategy for the learners.

References


*Foreign Language Teaching and Research* (pp.228-235). United State: The Reading Matrix Enc.
Title
On the Explicit Instruction of Cognitive and Metacognitive Reading Strategies in Reading Performance and Self-Efficacy

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Abstract
This study explored the impact of explicit teaching of these strategies on reading performance and self-efficacy. The study employed a questionnaire adapted from Chamot and O’Malley’s (1994) cognitive and metacognitive strategies. To test the impact of explicit teaching of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies on reading performance and self-efficacy, the study examined a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group achieved significantly better results than the control group. Results of paired-sample t-tests and independent t-tests and effect size showed that reading comprehension, strategy and self-efficacy can be improved with strategy instruction; that within certain contexts, strategy instruction contributes to independent reading behaviours. Additional analysis showed that the experimental
group developed a positive attitude after strategy instruction and was able to transfer the strategies to other languages and reading materials.

**Keywords:** EFL, Language proficiency, Cognitive and Metacognitive reading strategies, Foreign language reading, and Self-efficacy.

**Introduction**

**Objective of the study**

The main objective of this study is as follows:

To examine the impact of explicit teaching of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies on reading performance and self-efficacy.

More specifically, this study hopes to address the following research question:

How does explicit instruction in cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies affect students’ reading performance and self-efficacy?

**Reading strategy training research**

A number of studies have been carried out to scrutinize the positive effects of reading strategy training on reading comprehension. Salataci & Akyel (2002) found that instruction on students’ prior knowledge positively affected the strategy use and performance of bilingual Turkish EFL students on English reading tests. After strategy instruction, students were found to use cognitive strategies such as activating prior knowledge, summarizing and finding the main idea more often. They also used more metacognitive strategies such as monitoring their comprehension and altering plans.

Similarly, in a study conducted by Dreyer and Nel (2003) over a 13-week semester, a combination of cognitive and metacognitive strategies were taught to and practised by 131 first-year Afrikaans and Setswanan L1 students learning English for professional purposes at a South African University. The students were divided into successful and at-risk groups based on standardized tests. Reading comprehension and reading strategy use were measured pre- and post-intervention. At the onset of the project, at-risk students apparently lacked metacognitive strategies for monitoring and evaluating their comprehension in order to deploy cognitive strategies to deal with reading problems. By the end of the programme, both successful and at-risk students in the experimental group achieved significantly higher comprehension scores than
the control group. There were also changes in the choice and orchestration of strategies which intervention students used.

Oxford (1990), O’Malley and Chamot (1990, 1994), and Cohen (1998, 2003) among many others, have extensively argued in favor of strategy training and offered evidence of its success. On the other hand, Kellerman (1991) dismissed strategy instruction as irrelevant on the basis that learners had already developed strategic competence in their L1 and could therefore simply transfer it to their L2. Thus, there is a need to explore whether strategic competence can be developed in their L2 as a result of explicit strategy instruction and be transferred to new tasks in L2 and other languages.

**Strategy instruction and self-efficacy**

Schunk (2003) said that strategy instruction raises self-efficacy because strategies help students to process academic material. If they know strategies to deal with difficult material, they feel capable of learning it. Therefore, high self-efficacy is an important factor in helping students to engage and persist at a different task, such as reading for understanding. However, a moot point remains as to whether explicit instruction enhances their’ self-efficacy. In other words, there exists a dearth of experimental research about the effects of explicit instruction of cognitive and metacognitive strategy on self-efficacy in the Iranian EFL context.

**Transfer of strategies to new tasks and other foreign languages**

There is limited research on transfer of strategies in second language acquisition, but new work in this area promises to provide insights that can help teachers teach transfer (Harris, 2004). As Pressley et al. (1989) noted, the learner can actively transfer a given strategy to a new learning situation only when the strategy is in awareness, i.e. when the learner has metacognitive knowledge of the strategy. Furthermore, Wenden's (1999) review of related studies indicates the key role played by metacognitive knowledge in facilitating transfer. In addition, Chamot (2001) asserted that transfer can be established in terms of the following statement: “The transfer of learning strategies from the L1 to L2 – and from the L2 to additional languages and even back to the L1” (p. 42).

However, Rees-Miller (1993, p. 681) argued that strategies could not be transferred from one person to another nor could they easily be provided as exemplars by the teacher, and she
doubted whether teachers could actually observe a student performing a strategy once it had been taught.

**Strategy instruction and transfer of strategies**

Carrell et al. (1989) conclude that the combined effect of cognitive and metacognitive strategy instruction is effective in enhancing reading comprehension. What is the moot point is that whether explicit teaching of strategies facilitates transfer of strategies. Therefore, this study hopes to close this research gap by explicit teaching strategies to Iranian high school EFL students with the aim of raising their awareness of strategies to see the effect of explicit teaching strategies on transfer of strategies.

**Methodology**

**Sampling**

To address the research, *intermediate* students were chosen for strategy training. Their general language proficiency was partially controlled by the *Nelson language proficiency test, a standardized test* given to the students at the beginning of their English studies to classify them into different proficiency levels. It was also partially controlled by the New Interchange general proficiency final test which was given to the class at the end of the term. Simple random sampling was used to select 80 students among 1100 intermediate students who were novices. They were assigned into two classes comprising 40 students in each class and considered to be at an intermediate level of language proficiency. The groups were then assigned into a control or experimental group. One of the classes was randomly selected as the control group and the other class served as the experimental group to compare the results of the strategy training.

**Instrumentation**

**Selected reading strategies for quantitative part of questions**

Cognitive and Metacognitive Reading Strategies were adapted from Chamot and O’Malley’s (1994) cognitive and metacognitive strategies (p. 61-62). This included cognitive strategies such as “guessing unfamiliar words from contextual clues”, “summarizing main ideas from a text”, “looking for logical relationships between paragraphs” and “trying to find out the organizational aspects of text” and metacognitive strategies such as “determining in advance what my reading
purpose is and then reading the text with that goal in mind”, “looking for specific aspects of information and focusing on that information while reading the text”, “checking the effectiveness in strategy use”, “checking whether the goals for reading are accomplished” and “looking for relationships between main ideas and details.”

**Self-efficacy questionnaire**

A language self-efficacy scale was adapted from Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, Carbonaro, and Robbins’ self-efficacy questionnaire (1993) to assess the participants’ self-efficacy in English. The 11 items in the scale were English Reading tasks. They were not required to carry out the tasks: instead, they were simply asked to give realistic estimates of their confidence to carry out the reading tasks (see Appendix I). The reading materials were used along with the strategy list. The reading textbook used was *New Interchange 3* (Richards, 2003).

**Translation of instruments**

To assess the reliability of the translation of the questionnaire instruments in this study, both Persian and English versions of all the questionnaires were sent to two college lecturers with doctoral degrees who have been teaching EFL at a university for fifteen years. These two experts verified that the questionnaire and instruments in English and Persian versions were the same in content and meaning. No items were revised except for the wording in Persian to make it more understandable to the students.

**Validation of questionnaires**

In order to validate the scales developed for the study for use with these Iranian students, the following procedures were adopted. Firstly, item analysis was undertaken to eliminate any items that did not provide discrimination. Secondly, factor analysis was conducted to assess the relative contribution made by each item to the constructs underlying the scale. Thirdly, Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency (reliability) of the constructs. Only those items that discriminated successfully and loaded significantly on the underlying factors were retained for the analysis. Further, only those constructs that demonstrated acceptable reliability were utilized. Item analysis makes it possible to shorten a test and at the same time increase its validity and reliability.
Although O'Malley and Chamot (1990) summarized the traits of strategy use, the constructs extracted from their study might be different from this study because "indicators may have different meanings in different places, cultures, subcultures and the like" (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991, p. 53). Therefore, exploratory factor analysis was used to identify how strategy items clustered together in this study within the EFL context.

This study computed exploratory factor analysis with the reported cognitive strategy use and metacognitive strategy use separately. As pointed out by Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991), "exploratory factor analysis is not or should not be a blind process in which all manner of variables or items are thrown into a factor-analytic grinder in the expectation that something meaningful will emerge" (p. 591). Based on the existing literature in this study (see part 2.1), cognitive strategy use and metacognitive strategy use were factor analyzed independently in this study.

**Factor analysis for cognitive strategy use**

Exploratory factor analysis was performed with cognitive strategy use items. Principal axis factoring and a varimax solution were used. Three factors had eigenvalues greater than 1.0. As a result, principal axis factoring with a varimax solution yielded three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, accounting for 51.25% of total variance. A display of the inferential statistics of factor analysis is presented in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, five items loaded on Factor 1 which accounted for 31.21% of the variance. After reading the individual items carefully, the researcher found that these items related to *use what you know strategies*. Factor 2 was represented by items 10, 11, and 3. These items especially dealt with *use your senses and background knowledge strategies*. Factor 3, accounting for 9.64% of the total variance, dealt with *use your organizational skills strategies*.

The exploratory factor analysis results in this study were consistent with what was originally hypothesized within O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) framework. The items in *Use your organizational skills strategies*, *Use your senses and background knowledge strategies*, and *Use what you know strategies* fit with the original framework with respect to cognitive strategies.
As presented in Table 2, the Barlett test of sphericity is significant for cognitive reading strategies and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is far greater than .6.

Table 2. The Barlett test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure for cognitive strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KMO and Bartlett's Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett Test of Sphericity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. Chi-Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Factor Analysis for Metacognitive Strategy Use**

Exploratory factor analysis was performed with metacognitive strategy use items. Principal axis factoring and a varimax solution were used. Two factors had eigenvalues greater than 1.0. As a result, principal axis factoring with a varimax solution yielded two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, accounting for 44.79% of total variance. A display of the inferential statistics of factor analysis is presented in Table 3.
As shown in Table 3, nine items loaded on Factor 1 which accounted for 35.47% of the variance. After reading the individual items scrupulously, the researcher found that these items related to monitoring/planning strategies. Factor 2 was represented by items 28, 24, 27, 15, 9, 7 and 29. These items accounted for 9.32% of the total variance and dealt especially with evaluation strategies. The exploratory factor analysis results in this study were partially consistent with what was originally hypothesized within O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) framework with respect to metacognitive strategies. Monitoring or Planning strategies and Evaluation strategies partially fit with the originally designed framework. Monitoring and Planning are classified in terms of different categories in the framework, while Monitoring and Planning are classified in terms of one category. One explanation of this difference might be related to context; this group of participants generally learns English in an EFL rather than ESL context. As a result, their strategy use might be different from that of O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) study, which mainly comprised ESL learners.

Table 3. Inferential statistics of factor analysis for metacognitive strategy use items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotated Component Matrixa</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MetaReadingstrategyafter28</td>
<td>.701</td>
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<td>MetaReadingstrategywhile22</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MetaReadingstrategyafter29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis  
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization  
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

As shown in Table 4, the Barlett test of sphericity is significant for metacognitive reading strategies and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is far greater than .6.
### Table 4 The Barlett test of sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KMO and Bartlett Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett Test of Sphericity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. Chi-Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Face and content validity

To validate the questionnaire in terms of appropriateness, phrasing and classification of items (i.e. face and content validity), university professors were consulted. Reliability was calculated for the instruments using Cronbach's Alpha. The overall Cronbach’s Alpha reliability for the reading questionnaire was .85, indicating it was a reliable instrument in investigating Iranians’ cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. The internal consistency reliability of each category is .73 and .77 for metacognitive and cognitive strategies respectively. Since all Cronbach’s Alpha values are larger than .70, this questionnaire has good internal consistency to evaluate students’ reading strategy use.

Reliability was calculated for the instruments using Cronbach’s Alpha. The overall Cronbach’s Alpha reliability for the reading questionnaire given as a pre-measure was .85 and .94 on the post-test.

### Validating the reading test

Item analysis was undertaken to evaluate the quality of the test to be used in the study. There was a statistically significant difference between the two groups, thus showing good discrimination.

It was found that the person separation reliability (equivalent to KR-21) of the total test was acceptable (0.78). The reliability estimate for the test using Cronbach's Alpha as a pre-measure was .74 and .83 on the post-test.

Considering the other main characteristics of the test, namely criterion validity of the test, the standardized Nelson language proficiency test (1977) was used which showed .81 of coefficient of determination – satisfactory for such a test.

### Validating the self-efficacy

Item analysis makes it possible to shorten a test and at the same time, increase its validity and reliability. All the items were statistically significant at p<0.001 and thus showed good discrimination.
Factor analysis for self-efficacy

Exploratory factor analysis was performed with self-efficacy items. Principal axis factoring and a varimax solution were used because they seemed to maximize interpretation after comparison with the results from various other methods of factor analysis and factor solutions. Two factors had eigenvalues greater than 1.0. As a result, principal axis factoring with a varimax solution yielded two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, accounting for 50.12% of total variance. A display of the inferential statistics of factor analysis is presented in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, seven items loaded on Factor 1 which accounted for 39.91% of the variance. After reading the individual items scrupulously, the researcher found that these items related to use your organizational self-efficacy items. Factor 2 was represented by items 7, 11, 5 and 9. These items accounted for 10.21% of the variance and dealt especially with use what you know self-efficacy items. The overall Cronbach’s alpha reliability for the 11-item self-efficacy given as a pre-measure was .84 and .89 on the post-test. Cronbach’s alpha of more than 0.70 was set as an indication of acceptable reliability.

Table 5. Inferential statistics of factor analysis for self-efficacy items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotated Component Matrixa</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>etemad1contexppre</td>
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<td>etemad2contexppre</td>
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<tr>
<td>etemad3contexppre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etemad4contexppre</td>
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<td>etemad5contexppre</td>
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<td>etemad6contexppre</td>
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<tr>
<td>etemad7contexppre</td>
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<tr>
<td>etemad8contexppre</td>
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<tr>
<td>etemad9contexppre</td>
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<td>etemad10contexppre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.
Face and content validity of questionnaire

Two college English lecturers of Persian origin were asked to provide feedback on the content and face validity of the survey. They were asked to comment on (a) the suitability of the items in the questionnaire, appropriate representative sample of the set of all possible items in the questionnaire and (b) whether the items were worded clearly and effectively in the Persian language to measure the chosen strategies. Their suggestions and comments were taken into consideration in improving the scales. For example, they suggested removing the variables of degree of liking English and strategy awareness from the Background Questionnaire, and to focus instead on two variables of gender and language proficiency. This is because in triangulating the data, one can have a comprehensive picture of the variables. For example, they suggested using examples for items 23 and 13 to make them more understandable for students. In item 23, they suggested adding different examples for organization such as contrast, agreement, disagreement, comparison and cause and effect. For item 13, the researcher was advised to use different examples for sources such as dictionaries, guidance books and computer programmes.

Also, content validity is .88 using a classificatory agreement between independent raters who blindly matched each of the strategy items with strategies in the taxonomy of cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Data collection procedures

The reading comprehension part of the standard New Interchange 3 test was utilized as a pre-test and post-test assessment. The reading scores of participants in both groups were collected after both tests in order to explore the possible impact of strategy instruction on their reading comprehension. They were also asked to rate their confidence in carrying out each reading task correctly on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (extremely infrequently) to 5 (extremely frequently) before and after the strategy-based reading instruction. A list of reading strategies in a questionnaire format was prepared on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (extremely infrequently) to 5 (extremely frequently). It was intended to elicit students’ reported frequency of employing these reading strategies. The questionnaire was then distributed among the participants before and after the strategy-based reading instruction.

The control and experimental groups were assigned the same reading materials. However, the control group did not receive strategy training compared to the experimental group. To avoid
any disadvantage for the control group, the researcher implemented strategy-based instruction procedures with them after the experimental study was completed.

**Results of strategy instruction on learners’ perceived use of reading strategies**

Statistics show that the experimental group performed better than the control group on both cognitive and metacognitive strategies. However, within the experimental group, metacognitive strategies (M = 4.16) were used more than cognitive strategies (4.02).

There was an overall change in the experimental group’s use of all reading strategies. The most remarkable changes were seen in their use of “I decide in advance to look at the text to see its layout, illustrations, etc.” (pre-test M = 3.15 vs. post-test M = 4.60; t = -5.73, p<.05) M =, vs. M =; p< .05), and “I decide in advance what my reading purpose is, and then I read with that goal in mind”, (pre-test M = 3.67 vs. post-test M = 4.42; t = -3.77, p<.05) which are concerned with metacognitive reading strategies. This can be justified because within the experimental group, metacognitive strategies were used more than cognitive strategies; among them, these particular metacognitive reading strategies were mostly used by students.

**Results of strategy instruction on self-efficacy**

The required level of significance for this study was p<.05. The p value for self-efficacy levels in the control and experimental groups in the pre-test was above the required level (p>.05). Therefore, there was no significant difference in self-efficacy levels. However, the p value for self-efficacy levels in both groups in the post-test was below the required level (p<.05). Therefore, a significant difference in self-efficacy levels existed as well as an increase in self-efficacy levels in the experimental group.

A dependent t-test was run to compare the mean scores of the experimental group in pre-test and post-test phases. Students in the experimental group have a mean of 2.58 on the self-efficacy scale for the pre-test, and a mean of 3.74 on the same scale for the post-test. The two-tailed significant test indicates different t-values with 78 degrees of freedom, resulting in a two-tailed p value of .021, .000, .002 (p = .021, .000, .002). These p values are statistically significant because they are less than alpha = .05. Our overall conclusion, then, is that there is a significant difference between students in the experimental group from the pre-test to post-test phases. Consequently, there was an increase in self-efficacy levels in the experimental group from the
pre-test to the post-test. This demonstrated an effect by the intervention of strategy instruction on the self-efficacy of the experimental group.

Results of strategy instruction on reading performance
An independent t-test was computed. It indicated that the control group has a mean of 44.56 in the pre-test reading scale while the experimental group has a mean of 43.52. The two-tailed significance test indicates a $t = .929$ with 78 degrees of freedom, resulting in a two-tailed $p$ value of $.356$ ($p = .356$). This $p$ value is statistically insignificant because it is more than $\alpha = .05$. Thus, we can say that there is no difference between the control and experimental groups on the pretest reading scale.

An independent t-test was also computed. It indicated that the experimental group has a mean of 48.32 on the pre-test reading scale and a mean of 56.25 on the post-test reading scale. The two-tailed significance test indicates a $t = -4.417$ with 78 degrees of freedom, resulting in a two-tailed $p$ value of $.000$ ($p = .000$). This $p$ value is statistically significant as it is less than $\alpha = .05$. Here, we can conclude that there is a difference in the experimental group between the pre-test to post-test reading scale. A likely conclusion is that the experimental group seems to have benefited from strategy instruction.

The result of the effect size shows that strategy instruction can account for about 80.80% of variance, indicating a strong association between strategy training and reading performance improvement for the experimental group. According to the effect size formula suggested by Glass at al., (1981, p. 29), the group’s effect size is 6.98. This means that the average experimental group would be over six standard deviations higher than a control group in terms of reading performance.

Discussion
Changes in learners’ perceived use of reading strategies
The combined use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in this study not only resulted in new cognitive knowledge but also new metacognitive knowledge about cognition to regulate and control it in an L2 learning activity.

The present study confirms research findings on language learning strategies that strategy instruction improves students’ language proficiency. However, the study also suggests that
strategy instruction needs to be assessed for its effects on students’ self-reported strategy use and not just on language proficiency. Further, it needs to examine whether any improvement in performance coincides with change in strategy deployment.

The strategy instruction programme started with awareness-raising activities followed by procedures through the CALLA model including explaining, modeling, monitoring and evaluating strategy use. In this study, participants in both groups were exposed to numerous strategies. The instructional procedures resulted in improvement of use and awareness of reading strategies in the experimental group. For the control group however, their use of reading strategies did not change due to lack of exposure to strategy instruction. One explanation for the change could be that a predominant part of the instruction was based on learners’ contributions in the reading activities. Byrd et al. (2001) suggested that students become self-regulated learners as they develop self-awareness, strategy awareness and task awareness. Byrd (1999) emphasized that a primary goal of Developmental Education is to assist students in becoming more autonomous learners. Therefore, in this study, students became self-regulated learners who take control of the “what, when, and how” of strategies and used them independently of a teacher, and possibly outside the classroom without any external influence because their awareness of strategies increased. Since reading is one of the most complex cognitive activities, helping learners how to read and further develop their reading skills will help them learn from texts by themselves. Hence, L2 readers must continue practicing the strategies until they have acquired the skills necessary to be self-regulated or autonomous learners. This is exactly why we may claim to be optimistic about strategic reading instruction improving students’ reading comprehension and reading strategy use. The results of this study confirm the findings of studies by Zhang (2008), Oxford (1990) and O’Malley and Chamot (1990, 1994) that have argued in favor of strategy instruction and offered evidence of its success. The findings of this study refute Kellerman’s (1991) dismissal of strategy instruction as irrelevant on the basis that learners already develop strategic competence in their first language (L1) and could therefore simply transfer it to their L2. The findings of this study create implications for learners, teachers and teacher educators in the realm of TEFL and education. It helps teachers to accomplish their challenging task of teaching English in EFL contexts where learners have less exposure to language compared to ESL contexts. Teachers can help learners to utilize different cognitive and metacognitive strategies to facilitate their reading comprehension. Textbook writers do not
include an adequate amount of information on learning strategies in the EFL context. A need for the inclusion and emphasis on learning strategies is obvious.

Both learners and teachers need to become aware of strategies through strategy instruction. The main aim of such instruction is to allow students to become more aware of learning strategies and to help them become more responsible in meeting their own objectives. Such objectives can be only achieved when they are trained in strategy use so that they emerge more independent and effective.

The teacher/researcher asked the participants to join in interactive discussions and definitions of strategies, and to use them in the reading tasks in small groups. With the passage of time, the teacher-scaffolding was gradually removed to make sure that students started using these strategies on their own so that learner autonomy (autonomy of language learning competence) or self-regulation could be regarded as an ultimate goal for the strategy-based instruction programme. This task helps the students to raise their awareness in using strategies, and lends support to Vygotsky’s (1986) sociocultural view which emphasizes that peer sharing and collaborative learning can lead to effective learning and learner efficacy. The findings of the present study show that with strategy instruction through teacher-student dialogues within learners’ “ZPD”, reading strategy use can be improved.

Improvement in reading performance
In this study, the participants in both groups were exposed to cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. However, the experimental group outperformed the control group in reading improvement. One explanation for this outcome could be that a predominant part of the instruction was based on learners’ contributions in the reading activities. Thus, the explicit strategy instruction seems to have contributed to the improvement of students’ reading performance. Moreover, it can be asserted that the CALLA model is practical and useful for teaching strategies.

The results of this study are consistent with discoveries in Zhang’s (2008) study. Quasi-experimental in design, it found that strategic instruction using reading questionnaires within a constructivist framework affected changes in ESL students’ use of reading strategies and comprehension improvement. Unlike Zhang’s (2008) study where strategy instruction based on general reading strategies was conducted in a constructivist framework in an ESL context,
strategy instruction in this study was based on a mixture of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies and conducted in a CALLA framework and explicitly in an EFL context. Although the framework and the type of reading strategies differed from Zhang’s (2008)’ study, the findings were the same: strategy instruction affected changes in EFL students’ use of reading strategies and improvement in reading comprehension. We may conclude that strategy instruction is not only practical in an ESL context, but is also likely useful in an EFL context, especially an Iranian one.

One implication of this study is that learning strategies should be explicitly taught in a progressive fashion. Learning strategies should also be integrated into the curriculum. Furthermore, teachers should explicitly teach strategies and link them to specific language learning tasks.

The findings of this study show a strong association between strategy training and reading performance improvement for the experimental group. It can be suggested that the strategy reading instruction programme helped the experimental group’s perceived reading behavior change as well as reading comprehension improvement.

The findings of this study imply that learners should not only be taught the language, but also be directed toward strategies to promote more effective learning. As Nunan (1996, p. 41) recommends, “language classrooms should have a dual focus, not only on teaching language content but also on developing learning process.”

**Discussion about self-efficacy**

In order to increase reading comprehension and self-efficacy, instructors should help students to become strategic thinkers by exposing them to various strategies. When students become strategic thinkers, they use a repertoire of strategies to read and comprehend texts proficiently (Byrd, 1999; Byrd, et al. 2001). In this study, the researcher exposed both groups to cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Following this, the instructional procedures saw changes in the experimental group’s self-efficacy levels, whereas the control group’s self-efficacy levels saw no change due to lack of exposure to strategy instruction. The findings show that the experimental group performed better with both cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Within the experimental group metacognitive strategies were used more than cognitive strategies. Such findings are likely to say that the experimental group used metacognitive
strategies more than cognitive strategies and has high self-efficacy. We may conclude that it is the use of more metacognitive strategies that leads to high self-efficacy. An important aspect in viewing oneself as a successful learner is self-control over strategy use, which can be enhanced if strategy instruction is combined with metacognitive awareness of strategies.

**Students’ reaction to strategy instruction**

In strategy instruction studies, students’ reactions to such interventions mostly went unreported; researchers reported more on improvements in pre- and post-test measures (Dreyer and Nel, 2003; Eilers and Pinkely, 2006; Salataci & Akyel, 2002; Tapinta, 2006; Zhang, 2008). However, students’ reactions to strategy instruction were reported in this study. Comments from students in the experimental group after strategy instruction show that strategy training that focused on a learner-contented approach played an important role in the development of students' strategies, and therefore in promoting their responsibility in learning. Comments from students in the control group show that they mostly tried to use translation strategy and the other decoding strategies. This can be explained by Kern's (1994) assertion that one reason for translating L2 texts to L1 was to relieve pressure on readers' working memory as they worked out L2 texts. In addition, translation supported the readers' sense that their comprehension was correct. In other words, the L1 was used to reduce the cognitive load during L2 reading comprehension.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

Explicit strategy instruction increased experimental students’ perceived strategy use, reading comprehension and level of self-efficacy. Students in the experimental group used metacognitive reading strategies more than cognitive reading strategies. Thus, this might be the reason for the transfer of reading strategies to other new materials and other foreign languages. After training, students use metacognitive strategies more frequently than cognitive strategies. The findings of this study show that metacognitive knowledge facilitates transfer. Finally, regarding the findings of this study, we may conclude that not only metacognitive knowledge but also explicit strategy instruction facilitates transfer.

Research on strategy reading shows that reading comprehension, strategy and self-efficacy can be improved with strategy instruction; that within certain contexts strategy instruction has contributed to independent reading behaviors; that additional analysis showed that after strategy
instruction, the experimental group had a positive attitude toward strategy instruction and were able to transfer them to other languages and reading materials; and that strategy instruction influenced their self-efficacy positively. Our findings also suggest that strategy instruction using cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies increased students’ self-efficacy.

There is a need for more comprehensive research on a wide range of variables affecting learning strategies use. Variables such as cultural background, belief and attitude that may have a bearing on language learning strategy use should be studied with students of different language backgrounds.

Results from this study indicate that strategy instruction improves students’ reading comprehension, strategy use and self-efficacy. These findings justify that strategies for developing high and positive self-efficacy should be given due attention in foreign language learning including teaching of reading skills. It has a significant implication for curriculum designers. By designing a learner-centred language curriculum which takes language learning strategies into account, learners may develop positive beliefs in their ability.

The other implication of this study concerns teacher-training programmes. The aim of such programmes should be to familiarize teachers with the beneficial effects of using strategies on learners’ reading comprehension. In this way, teachers’ awareness of the role of strategy encourages them to look for more efficient techniques to familiarize students with reading strategies.

To use strategies successfully, learners need to employ the strategies in a contextualized manner using their knowledge about skills and background information to select strategies. They also need to have well-developed procedures of planning, monitoring and evaluating as it is recommended in the CALLA model to be pliable and adaptable so that when they face difficulties, they can come up with alternative solutions. A further concern in strategy instruction is a need for teachers to be highly creative in findings ways to promote the development of effective strategy use by putting learners into smaller groups or using peer feedback.

References


Title

The Effectiveness of Mnemonic Strategies in English Vocabulary Learning: A Case of Iranian High School Students

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Abstract

With the advent of learner-centered and communicative teaching methodologies, language learning strategies in general and mnemonic strategies in particular have been brought to the fore as interesting topics warranting much research. At the same time, vocabulary has been much studied following the emergence of communicative approaches to language teaching. The current study investigated the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies for teaching English vocabulary to Iranian high school students. The participating subjects included all male Iranian high school grade one students studying in a non-profit high school in the city of Tehran. Based on the results obtained from a
Nelson test of English language proficiency which was conducted at the beginning of the study, sixty homogeneous students were chosen from among 105 learners. To assure the novelty of to-be-instructed words, a vocabulary pretest was also administered at this stage. The subjects were then classified into an experimental and a control group each comprising 30 students. The participants in experimental group were instructed to employ the three vocabulary mnemonic strategies of imagery, physical response, and spatial grouping, whereas the students in the control group were suggested to use the repetitive method of learning new words by memorizing a Persian equivalent for each word (i.e. rote learning). By the end of the 8-week treatment period, a vocabulary post-test was conducted in both experimental and control groups to compare the students' vocabulary achievement. The results of the post-test data analysis confirmed the superiority of the experimental group over the control group, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis.

**Keywords:** Mnemonic strategies, Vocabulary learning strategies, Visualization, Physical response, Spatial grouping, Memorization, Language learning strategies (LLSs)

1. **Introduction**

There is no doubt that vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to the language learners (Zimmerman, 1997); nevertheless, some of effective and useful techniques for vocabulary learning are still unknown even to the teachers, let alone the students and especially those who are at the beginning levels of language learning. Coady and Huckin (1997) claimed that after a long period of neglect "second language vocabulary acquisition has recently become an increasingly topic of discussion for researchers, teachers, curriculum designers, theorists, and others involved in second/foreign language learning" (P. 1).

In his article Sharifian (2002) stated that many foreign language students believe that vocabulary learning is one of the most problematic areas of language learning and find the memorization and retrieval of words very difficult. Read (1993) stated that even native speakers have only partial knowledge of the meaning of many of the words that they know. This indicates that committing the words to memory is something about which more research is required. It is perhaps for this reason that investigating vocabulary acquisition strategies in general and
memory strategies in particular, has become one of the major areas of concern for researchers in recent years.

Fortunately, the need for vocabulary learning on the part of students is something upon which both students and teachers agree; therefore, the problem is not with the importance of vocabulary learning, but ways or techniques through which students can better learn, retain, and retrieve vocabulary. Those involved in language teaching are aware of the fact that many problems in learning vocabulary are because of the learner’s unfamiliarity with the process of vocabulary learning. Students know what to learn, but they simply do not know how to learn it. Consequently, it is essential for language learners to have a variety of vocabulary learning strategies at their disposal to choose the ones which are more effective for them.

The high school students in Iran are usually required to know long lists of words, which are represented alphabetically at the end of each unit in their books. They usually ask for useful techniques to learn these words and to be able to retrieve them whenever required. So, it is not surprising to find that one of the most frequently asked questions of these students is how they can learn vocabulary in an effective way. Although there is not a definitive and clear-cut answer to this question and the effectiveness of a technique may depend on many factors such as the kind of word, the proficiency level of learners and so on, some suggestions can be made as to which strategies are more or less effective. The quest for finding such strategies appropriate to the particular level of the aforementioned students was the starting point in conducting this study. Now this study aims to probe the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies in English vocabulary learning among Iranian high school students.

2. Overview of the research

With the advent of new methodologies in language teaching, the focus on learning and consequently on the language learner has become a major area of concern in recent years. Littlejohn (1985) believed that a truly learner-centered approach to language education must provide opportunities for learner choice in the method and scope of study. Some elements of choice could be introduced into traditional classrooms with minimal organizational changes. He believed that "we must move gradually if we expect learners to take responsibility for managing their own learning" (P. 267). Therefore, the argument seems sensible because the change from teacher dominated classroom to a learner-centered one is not something which can be done
overnight. Many modifications in any aspect of the teaching process are required to reach to the optimal learner-centered classroom. However, to take the first step in helping students to become more successful learners, and more toward autonomy, having some general perception of the learning process is essential.

Focus on learning has been motivated by the belief that it is necessary to understand as fully as possible the process through which learners internalize the knowledge of a second language. Such an understanding will contribute to L2 acquisition research and will also serve as a basis for pedagogical recommendation (Ellis, 1994). To be informed of the process involved in second language acquisition, an understanding of the concept of human memory, mnemonic strategies, and vocabulary learning strategies seems inevitable.

2.1. Memory
According to Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992), "memory is the mental capacity to store information, either for short or long periods" (P. 226). They state that there are two different kinds of memory: a) Short-term memory refers to that part of the memory where information which is received is stored for short periods of time while it is being analyzed and interpreted. Once the message or information in an utterance is understood the data may become part of permanent or long-term memory. b) Long-term memory is that part of the memory system where information is stored more permanently. Information in long-term memory may not be stored in the same form in which it is received; it may be stored in a different form from the original message (P. 226).

According to Alt (1999), the ability to retain information is important in almost every educational setting. Human memory, that is the process through which information is stored and retained, is a crucial factor in the concept of learning. Since language learning is another instance of learning in general, memory is also central to the acquisition of language skills. Given the importance of memory in second language learning, it is surprising to find that relatively little research has been devoted to it. Most memory studies deal with materials in the first language while research on the role of memory in second language is still in its infancy (Sharifian, 2002).
2.2. Mnemonic strategies

Mnemonic strategies are formal techniques used for organizing information in a way that makes it more likely to be remembered. Hatch and Brown (1995) believed that these strategies are basic kinds of association used by the learner to increase memory. Most people are unaware that memory strategies have had a long and rich history going back to antiquity, and that a large number of distinguished writers and philosophers have recommended their use. It should be noted, however, that mnemonic strategies are not considered to be just the skill of simple memorization, but rather a true, rigorous art which requires imagination, effort, and a good mind. The point is that there are a large number of mnemonic strategies depending on how they are classified, and their possible range extends beyond the learning of vocabulary. Some of the most popular mnemonic strategies are pegs, imagery, loci, acronyms, physical response, rhymes, keywords, spatial grouping, chaining, acrostic, and image-naming.

Mnemonic strategies are one part of language learning strategies which in turn are part of general learning strategies (Nation, 2001). Language learning strategies encourage greater overall self-direction for learners. Self-directed learners are independent learners who are capable of assuming responsibility for their own learning and gradually gaining confidence, involvement and proficiency (Oxford, 2001). So is the case with memory strategies. Thus, students need training in memory strategies they need most. Research has shown that many learners do use more strategies to learn vocabulary especially when compared to such integrated tasks such as listening and speaking. But they are mostly inclined to use basic vocabulary learning strategies (Schmitt, 2000). This in turn makes memory strategy instruction an essential part of any foreign or second language program.

Since the researchers of the current study employ three mnemonic strategies of imagery, physical response method, and special grouping, a more detailed discussion on them follows.

2.2.1. Imagery or visualization

Instead of using real pictures, a word or the content of a passage may be visualized; this is more effective than were repetition. Thompson (1987) stated that since individuals with low verbal ability benefit more from visual than from verbal elaboration, the visualization method may be particularly helpful for these learners. According to Holden (1999), to use this method, the learner should imagine a scene or picture which has a strong association with the word or phrase
to be remembered. An image does not mean the same as the word but reminds the learner strongly of the word. He further continued that the image each person has of a word is different because people's experiences are different. Sharing and explaining one's experiences of words with others can help him/her remember them more easily. Imagery strategies are like picture-word strategies, in that new words are learned in nonverbal contexts.

According to Gairns and Redman (1986), "our memory for visual images is extremely reliable and there is little doubt that objects and pictures can facilitate memory" (P. 92). Some claims are made that the more bizarre the image, the easier it will to recall, but Gairns and Redman stated that the evidence for this is unconvincing. “If a person is given a list of unrelated words or a series of unrelated sentences to recall, this may be seen as a difficult task for which calling on imaginable information [e.g., using visualization] might help beyond simple retrieval of prior knowledge” (Hulstijn, 1997 p. 214). He further stated that using imagery appears to be effective when subjects find their task difficult to accomplish in particular when a word's form and meaning do not happen to associate easily" (P. 215).

2.2.2. Physical response method
According to Holden (1999), physical response method requires the learner to move his body or parts of his body in a certain way that illustrates the meaning of a word. Imaginable physical response in which the learner imagines acting out a word is also possible. For example, if someone is learning the word tiptoe he might imagine a thief sneaking into his home at night, or using physical response method relies on the body as well as the brain to help individuals remember words. Facial expressions are another kind of physical response that can help one recall new vocabulary (Holden, 1999).

With regard to this strategy, Thompson (1987) stated that "physically enacting the information in a sentence results in better recall than simple repetition" (P. 45). She further stated that "subjects who are interested to pretend that they were doing something (e.g., "Pretend you are a chef flipping a pancake") remembered sentence better than those who merely repeated the sentence" (P. 45).
2.2.3. Spatial grouping

To use this strategy one should rearrange words on a page to form distinctive patterns such as a triangle as opposed to just listing them in a column. Holden (1999) suggested the use of spatial grouping for the better recall of words: "try writing words in various ways in paper to help you recall them. Do not simply write columns of words that all look alike, but draw pictures using words" (P. 46). For all look alike, but draw pictures using words" (p. 46).

2.3. Vocabulary learning strategies

Foreign or second language learners may use different strategies to acquire the vocabularies in the target language. Given the importance of this fact, language researchers have sought to classify vocabulary learning strategies applied by foreign and second language learners. Gu and Johnson’s (1996) and Nation’s (2001) taxonomies are two examples of such classifications.

Gu and Johnson (1996) classified second language vocabulary learning strategies into metacognitive, cognitive, memory, and activation strategies. Metacognitive strategies include selective attention and self-initiation strategies. Language learners who prefer to use selective attention strategies know exactly which words are essential for learning to comprehend the passage, while learners using self-initiation strategies employ different means to make the meaning of new vocabulary items clear. Cognitive strategies consist of guessing strategies, skillful use of dictionaries, and note-taking strategies. Guessing strategies help learners use their background knowledge and employ linguistic clues like grammatical structures of a sentence to guess the meaning of unknown words. Memory strategies in Gu and Johnson’s taxonomy include rehearsal and encoding strategies. Word lists and repetitions are two examples of rehearsal strategies. Encoding strategies are made up of strategies such as association, imagery, visual, auditory, semantic, and contextual encoding as well as word-structure (i.e., analyzing a word in terms of prefixes, stems, and suffixes). Activation strategies encompass some techniques through which the learners actually employ newly learnt words in different contexts.

In the present decade, Nation (2001) distinguished vocabulary learning strategies into three general groups of ‘planning’, ‘source’ and ‘processes’, each of which is classified into a subset of key strategies. Planning refers to decisions about where, how, and how often to focus attention on the vocabulary item. The strategies in this group include the choice of words, choice of aspects of word knowledge, and choice of strategies as well as choice of planning repetition.
Source, the second group, refers to getting information about the new word. This information includes all the aspects involved in knowing a word. It may emerge from the word form itself, from the context, from a reference source like dictionaries, and from analogies and connections with other languages. Process, the last group, includes organizing word knowledge through noticing, retrieving and generating strategies.

To sum up, although Gu and Johnson’s (1996) and Nation’s (2001) taxonomies may slightly differ in terms of strategies they classify, they all provide a list of effective and applicable vocabulary learning strategies. There are a great number of words on which teachers may not be able to spend time within the class time limits. Hence, if students equip themselves with a number of aforementioned strategies, they can deal with these words on their own and as a result have access to a large number of target language words.

2.4. Research question and research hypotheses

The following research question aims to address the relationship between vocabulary learning on the one hand and mnemonic strategies and rote learning on the other hand:

"Is there any significant discrepancy between vocabulary learning by rote and through the use of mnemonic strategies"?

**Null hypothesis:** There is no significant discrepancy between vocabulary learning by rote and through the use of mnemonic strategies.

**Research hypothesis:** There is a significant discrepancy between vocabulary learning by rote and through the use of mnemonic strategies.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

One hundred and five students participated in the first phase of the study. The participating subjects included all male Iranian high school grade one students studying in a non-profit high school in the city of Tehran. However, sixty students comprised the final number of participants in the study. The reason for reducing the number of participants was twofold. First, after administering the Nelson Test, to ensure the homogeneity of the subjects, 15 students were excluded from the study (5 students from each class) because they had either extremely high or extremely low scores on the test. So, there remained class A with 30 homogeneous students and
two classes (B and C) with a total of 60 students. Second, in order to have equal number of students in both control and experimental groups, out of those 60 students 30 who had the same scores as the other 30 students (mentioned above) were selected. Therefore, there were two matched groups of 30 students who were randomly assigned into experimental and control groups by tossing a coin.

A pretest of vocabulary was also administered at the beginning of the study to assure the novelty of to-be-taught words. The known words were excluded from the list of intended words. After administering this test, the research was started with the same three intact classes; two of the classes were treated as control groups and the third class as the experimental group. In each group, 30 students were considered as the real participants, and the rest of the students, although participating in classes, were not included in the final analysis of data by the researchers.

3.2. Instrumentation
Three tests were used in this study. First, to assure the criterion of homogeneity, an English language proficiency test (Nelson Test) was conducted at the beginning of the study. The final participants were chosen on the basis of their scores obtained from the aforementioned test. Second, a pretest of vocabulary was also administered at the early stage of the study to ensure the novelty of to-be-instructed words and the participants' unfamiliarity with those words. The known words were excluded from the list of intended words and vocabulary items with which none of the students were familiar provided the material for the treatment. Third, at the end of the treatment, a vocabulary post-test consisting of some multiple choice items and a cloze test was developed and administered to both experimental and control groups to compare the participants' vocabulary achievement.

3.3. Procedure
To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following steps were followed in the process of conducting the study.

3.3.1. Pretest of English language proficiency (Nelson Test)
The fifty-item Nelson test was administered in the first session of the study to find the homogeneous students comprising the final number of participants in the study. This general
The proficiency test was adapted from Nelson English Language Tests book. All one hundred and five students in the three classes took part in the test. They were given forty-five minutes, as required by the test, to react to the questions. The results were then used to select those students who were supposed to be the final participants of the study. First, 15 students were excluded from the study (5 students from each class) because they had either extremely high or extremely low scores on the test. Therefore, there remained class A with 30 homogeneous students and two classes (B and C) with a total of 60 students. Second, in order to have equal number of students in both control and experimental groups, out of those 60 students 30 who had the same scores as the other 30 students (mentioned above) were selected. Therefore, there were two matched groups of 30 students who were randomly assigned into experimental and control groups.

3.3.2. Test of novelty

Some of the to-be-taught words were chosen from the students' textbook (High School English Textbook 1), and some other from General English by M. Alimohammadi and H. Khalili (2004). The words had to meet two criteria: first, they had to be appropriate for the students' level of proficiency and this was the rationale for selecting the words from High School English Textbook 1; second, the words were unfamiliar to the students so that the researchers could assess the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies in learning English vocabulary. The philosophy behind choosing the words from General English was that the book was designed on the basis of the demands of high school students for reading English textbooks. Hence a checklist of 189 vocabulary items was designed and 105 copies of it were distributed among the students who were asked to write the translation of each word in front of it. After correcting the papers, only 87 words with which none of the students were familiar provided the material for the treatment.

This test was designed on the basis of Nation's (2001) suggestion that the "items which require the learners to provide mother tongue equivalents are the best types of recognition items" (P. 5). Read (1993) also believed that "presenting words in isolation may be the only practical way of achieving the necessary coverage" (P. 337) when designing a vocabulary test.

3.3.3. Treatment and presenting the materials

After administering the test of novelty, there remained 87 vocabulary items with which none of the participants were familiar, hence providing the material for the treatment. These 87 new
words were divided into groups of 7-8 words to be taught during each session because, as suggested by Hunt and Beglar (1999) and Finocchiaro and Bonomo (1973), 7 to 8 words per session seemed to be far more manageable for the particular participants in the current study. The whole treatment covered eight weeks of instruction, three sessions a week and each session lasting 90 minutes. The decision about the number of words to be taught in each session was made based on Hunt and Beglar's (1999) suggestion asking learners to "study 5-7 words at a time, dividing larger numbers of words into smaller groups" (P. 4). Finocchiaro and Bonomo (1973) also stated that "in general, with secondary school students, no more than about eight new words should be presented at one time" (P. 88).

The first two sessions of the treatment were devoted to administering the Nelson Test and test of novelty. The third session in each group was devoted to talking about the importance of vocabulary learning in general, and introducing specific ways for presenting new words in each group, in particular. Thereafter, 7 to 8 words were devoted to each session and after each two sessions of instruction, one session was considered to reviewing the taught words in each group. Moreover, the penultimate session of the treatment was allotted to going over the total number of words in experimental and control groups respectively. The last session was also devoted to administering the vocabulary post test.

After administering the Nelson Test and test of novelty in the first two sessions of the treatment, the third session in the experimental group was devoted to talking about the importance of vocabulary learning and vocabulary learning strategies in general, and introducing the visualization or imagery strategy, physical response method, and spatial grouping, in particular. Papers including 7 to 8 new words with examples of the kinds of images to be associated with each word were distributed among the students in experimental group. The aforementioned students were also asked to write their own images which were associated with the meaning of each word. To use the spatial grouping strategy in learning new words, the researcher introduced words related to body organs to the students. He had drawn a diagram in which each word had been placed in its real part in the body and copies of the diagram were, then, distributed among the students in experimental group to learn the new words.

In order to allocate the same amount of time to the control group, in the third session the researcher talked about the importance of vocabulary learning and encouraged the students to learn the new words in class. Papers including the same 7 to 8 new words with their translations
were distributed among the learners and they were given time to learn them by reading each word and its equivalent in Persian several times.

During each session of the treatment all the students were given papers including 7 or 8 new words with their translations in the control group and with examples of memory strategy use in the experimental group. In both groups, the participants were supposed to learn the new words only in class and the papers were collected by the researcher at the end of the class. To make sure that the students were using the time to learn the vocabulary, they were asked the meaning of the words orally after the allotted time.

3.3.4. Vocabulary post-test
A vocabulary post-test consisting of some multiple choice items and a cloze test was developed and administered to both experimental and control groups to compare the participants' vocabulary achievement. The test comprised all the vocabulary items which were taught during the treatment but the order of items in the test was different from the order in which their correct responses (i.e., new words) had been taught during the treatment. The learners were supposed to select the word which was the most appropriate among other choices to complete the meaning of the provided sentence or sentences for each item and to mark it in their answer sheets.

To assure the content validity of the test, the students had to be familiar with the context and distracters of each item, so the researcher checked every item against the books they had already studied at school. After preparing all the items, two scholars in the field (university professors in TEFL) reviewed the test thoroughly and meticulously. Then the researchers made some modifications on the items based on their suggestions in order to alleviate the existing problems. At this stage, the test was administered in a class of 28 students who had almost the same English background as the real participants and had studied most of the to-be-instructed words before.

The purpose of the pilot testing was twofold. The first purpose was to determine the characteristics of the individual items such as item facility (IF), item discrimination (ID), and choice distraction (CD). The second purpose was to determine the characteristics of the test as a total unit, such as validity, reliability, and practicality. Hence the facility indexes of all the items were calculated and the items with facility indexes beyond 0.63 and below 0.37 were considered too easy and too difficult respectively. These items were revised or deleted from the test.
The item discrimination that refers to the extent to which a particular item discriminates more knowledgeable examinees from less knowledgeable ones was calculated for all the items. They all, except 7 items, had the values beyond 0.40 which is considered acceptable. Those seven items which showed discrimination value below 0.40 were revised. Neither item facility nor item discrimination can provide the test constructor with necessary information about the appropriateness of the choices. Therefore, the researchers examined the efficiency of the distracters through choice distribution and those distracters which had not attracted examinees were discarded or modified.

Based on the test scores obtained from pilot testing, the reliability of the test was calculated (r = 0.89) using KR-21 method. In addition to validity and reliability of the test, the practicality which refers to the ease of administration and scoring of the test was considered as well. Some other factors such as suitable time of administration and reasonable cost of testing contributed to the practicality of the test. Finally, in the last session, an 85-item vocabulary post-test was administered to both experimental and control groups to compare the participants' vocabulary achievement. Hence the whole study lasted eight weeks, three sessions a week; 20 sessions for teaching and reviewing new words and 4 sessions for administering the tests (Nelson Test, test of novelty, and vocabulary post-test) and introducing specific strategies regarding each group.

3.4. Data analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics covered the means, standard deviations, and frequency counts obtained from the scores of the students in the experimental and control groups on the Nelson test and the multiple-choice vocabulary post-test. They were used to reveal a general picture of two groups under investigation. Inferential statistics comprised the application of making two-tailed decisions for t-tests and tested the null hypothesis at .05 levels of significance.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Results of the pretest stage

After screening the Nelson test, there remained 80 students in 3 classes, class A with 30 homogeneous students and two classes (B and C) with a total of 60 students. In order to have equal number of students in both control and experimental groups, out of those 60 students 30
who had similar scores as the other 30 students in class A were selected. Therefore, there were
two matched groups of 30 students who were randomly assigned into experimental and control
groups by tossing a coin.

As it is shown in Table 1 below, values of the mean, median, mode, range, variance, and
standard deviation of both experimental and control groups are the same. This equality results
from the fact that pairs of individuals in the experimental and control groups were matched on
the basis of their scores on the Nelson Test. Therefore, the two groups had two sets of scores
which were almost the same.

Table 1: Values of mode, median, mean, variance, standard deviation, and range of both
homogeneous experimental and control groups on the Nelson Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$S^2$</th>
<th>$S$</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>16 / 18</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>19.63</td>
<td>29.41</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>16 / 18</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>19.63</td>
<td>29.41</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$S$ = standard deviation $S^2$ = variance

Table 2 represents the results:

Table 2: Values of the observed F and critical F on the Nelson Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$FO$</th>
<th>$FC$</th>
<th>$Level of Significance$</th>
<th>df for numerator</th>
<th>df for denominator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The observed F which had the smallest possible value was obviously smaller than critical F value
at .05 levels of significance. The equality of the mean scores of the two groups also indicated
that the difference between the two means equaled zero. Therefore, it was concluded that the
students in the experimental and control groups were homogeneous as far as their scores on the
proficiency test were concerned.
4.2. Results of the post-test Stage

After eight weeks of treatment an 85-item vocabulary post-test was administered in both experimental and control groups. The scores of the students were then used to make two-tailed decisions for t-tests and test the null hypothesis at .05 levels of significance.

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant discrepancy between vocabulary learning by rote and through the use of memory strategies. To test this hypothesis, the aforementioned vocabulary test was administered as the post-test and the participants' performance on the test was considered as the indicator of their vocabulary learning during the treatment period.

The range of scores in the control group was 28 and the range of scores in the experimental group was 48. The median in the control group was 30, whereas, in the experimental group it was 38. The values of the mean, variance, and standard deviation of both experimental and control groups were calculated, based on the scores represented in the two tables mentioned above, as a prerequisite to conduct the t-test. The table has been divided into parts for the reasons of simplicity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Values of mode, median, mean variance, standard deviation, and range of both experimental and control groups on the post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experimental Group</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S = standard deviation $S^2$ = variance

As it is shown in Table 3, the mean value of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. In other words, the experimental group outperformed the control group in the vocabulary post-test at the end of the treatment. However, a mere quantitative superiority of the experimental group mean value over the control group mean value could not be regarded as a conclusive proof for the rejection of the null hypothesis. Consequently, it was essential to account for the statistical significance of the difference between the mean scores of the two groups. To do so, a two-tailed decision for t-test was made at the customary maximum level of significance (.05) as the criterion. The result is delineated in the following table:
As Table 4 shows, the observed t (3.99) is significantly higher than the critical t value at .05 levels of significance. However, because the level of significance previously considered for the present study was .05, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis was rejected at .05 levels of significance. This indicates that the difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups had not resulted from sampling error in more than 5 out of 100 replications of the experiment. In other words, it suggests a 95 percent probability that the difference between the means of the two groups was due to experimental treatment rather than the sampling error.

5. Conclusions and implications

The present study intended to investigate the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies for teaching English vocabulary to Iranian high school students. The obtained results showed that the participants in the experimental group could learn vocabulary significantly better than those in the control group. The findings indicate that the instruction of three mnemonic strategies and the use of these strategies by the learners in the experimental group resulted in more effective learning of vocabulary in comparison to the achievement of the control group in which the participants used the translation technique for vocabulary learning by rote.

The results of the current study support the research literature on vocabulary learning that language teachers can help their students be familiar with different lexical learning strategies, which will lead to more autonomy in students. Majority of research studies in learning strategies have focused on the identification, description and classification of learning strategies employed by language learners. Hence, according to Eslami Rasekh (2003), more attention should be paid to finding whether strategies used by successful students can be taught to unsuccessful students, and if so, what instructional approaches teachers should use to teach the strategies.

ESL/EFL teachers can motivate learners identify the strong power of consciously employing language learning strategies to make the process of learning easier, quicker, and more effective. To enable all language learners become aware of choosing strategies, ESL/EFL teachers can help them recognize their own current language learning strategies by means of diaries,
questionnaires, or in-depth interviews. Moreover, ESL/EFL teachers can mix regular classroom activities with learning strategy training in a natural and explicit way, providing opportunities to practice strategies and transfer them to classroom tasks. The instruction of strategies can entail informative speech about learning styles on which the learners partially base their choice of learning strategies and can emphasize cultural discrepancies in learning strategies and styles available in any ESL/EFL classroom context. In fact, ESL/EFL teachers should weave strategy training into the real, communicative needs of students in particular situations.

The results of this study may be of benefit to EFL teachers, students, and syllabus designers, as well as to the teacher trainers. The findings may encourage teachers who still believe in teacher-centered approach in language teaching to change their viewpoints in favor of more learner-centered approaches. In this way, they may try to incorporate new teaching techniques such as strategy instruction in their curriculum. The results are especially of great value to high school teachers in Iran who are usually faced with the students' request for information about effective techniques of vocabulary learning. The findings of this research are also useful for teacher trainers to incorporate appropriate and practical techniques for the instructions of learning strategies in general, and vocabulary learning strategies in particular, into their existing training courses. In this way, teachers themselves would be informed of different vocabulary learning strategies and will develop positive attitudes toward the incorporation of these strategies into their conventional teaching programs.

Syllabus designers and textbook writers will also benefit from the results of this study as they help them to embody sections related to vocabulary learning strategies into the materials they develop. Different memory strategies can be introduced within the graded vocabulary books and other materials in accordance with the level of the students for whom the materials are designed. In this way, strategy instruction will be explicitly taught why, how, and when to use vocabulary learning strategies to facilitate the learning of new words. Consequently, they will be equipped with different techniques to learn the new words included in their books.

With regard to the present study, the following suggestions and comments can be made on the use of mnemonic strategies:

1. The successful use of mnemonic strategies requires a substantial degree of practice, and their successful deployment is also subject to individual differences, especially in the construction, maintenance or manipulation of images.
2. It is better to encourage the learners themselves to find mnemonic strategies for the retention of words in their memory (e.g., an image to be associated with a new word). If the students themselves were not able to find solutions to their problems, the teacher can offer a mediator.

3. Learning a mnemonic strategy for a small amount of material may take more time than rote learning or some alternative method particularly if learners have to generate the memory strategy cues themselves. If time is limited, mnemonic strategies can lose their advantages over other methods (Thompson, 1987).

4. People vary in their ability to form imagery (Thompson, 1987), so it may well be that visual imagery may not be helpful to some individuals. For instance, children below grade 5 do not benefit from instruction to use visual imagery, and need to be provided with a key word and an interactive image in the form of a picture.

5. It may be difficult to generate mnemonic associations for L2 words representing abstract concepts and easier to do so for concrete high-imagery words because the latter may have richer association networks. Words with roots that are not easily identifiable can also make the forming of associations more difficult (Cohen, 1998). Some classes of words are easier to learn through memory strategies than others; for instance, nouns are easier to learn than adjectives or verbs.

6. Efficacy of mnemonic strategies may depend on individual learning differences, for example, it has been shown that high verbal ability individuals profit more from verbal than from visual elaboration, while for low verbal ability learners the reverse holds true (Delaney, cited in Thompson, 1987).

7. There may be a cultural element in the utilization of mnemonic strategies. For instance, speakers whose cultures emphasize rote learning may be more reluctant to engage in visual and verbal elaboration on which various mnemonic strategies are based.

References


Title
Relationship between Multiple-Intelligences and Learning Grammar in EFL Settings

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Abstract
Typically, this article sheds light on some dark corners of learning grammar within the framework of multiple-intelligences. The current investigation employing some instruments i.e. a questionnaire, a pre-test and a post-test, was tackled in two phases. In phase one, the problem aimed at testing Gardner’s (1983) hypothesis that if the learners' dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence, their grammar scores will be higher. To this end, first, 64 male and 61 female EFL learners as hypothetical grammar learners were asked to participate in the research project. After rapid prototyping and field testing, 30 male (out of 64) and 30 female (out of 61) EFL grammar learners who had both high grammar scores and dominant linguistic intelligence were selected and ultimately a t-test was run to observe the result. In phase two, the relationship between MI of male and female EFL learners in terms of the dominance of their intelligences was explored. The findings of this study contribute to some insight into tutoring classes, large scale and small scale classes and offer a set of methodological considerations for course designers and curriculum developers.

Keywords: Intelligence and intelligences, learning grammar.
1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been a change in the interpretation, explanation, nurturance, evaluation and application of the frames and representations of mind triggered by Gardner’s (1983) revolutionary book named “Frames of Mind”. Armstrong (2000) indicates that the interpretation comes from Gardner's (2006) culture-based definition of intelligences which challenges the first intelligence tests. According to the culture-based view, mind and intelligence are affected by the culture and the contextual phenomena. Christison and Kennedy (1999) believe that the traditional and mono-dimensional views of intelligence include a narrow range of abilities. The narrow view has been replaced by the most recent views of intelligence which contain a wide extent of abilities.

In the past, intelligence was measured in relation to IQ tests. This was due to the fact that the scores of learners were indicative of their intelligence (Christison & Kennedy, 1999; Leake, 2002; Gardner, 2006; Armstrong, 2003; Alvis. et al., 2004; Najjari, 1996; Armstrong, 2000). But at present, the story of intelligence and the way of interpreting it have undertaken some changes which shed light on the nature of intelligence, the dominance of multi-dimensional view of intelligence and its position in the pedagogical context.

The new theory is that of Gardner's (1983; 1991; 2006) theory. According to which there are different kinds of minds (as also cited in Miller, 2002; Mondi, 2005; Christison, 1999; Morris and Maisto, 1999; Armstrong, 2003, 2000) which can be developed and nurtured in a variety of social and cultural contexts. These minds have been triggered by other research findings such as genetics, psychology, neurology, history, philosophy and anthropology. Based on these findings and interdisciplinary sciences, materializing the theoretical findings of MI into practice can increase to the maximum. Gardner’s (2006) view of multiple-intelligences runs in parallel with the pluralistic view of mind. That is to say, many mental abilities rather than general view of cognitive ability are taken for granted.

2. The eight intelligences

Gardner’s (2006, 1991) eight intelligences and their explicit implications are explained in-brief below.
2.1. Interpersonal intelligence: This intelligence is concerned with the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of the people (Richards & Rogers, 2002; Armstrong, 2000, 2003). To put it clearly, this intelligence allows people to work effectively with others.

2.2. Spatial Intelligence: The ability to sense form, space, color, line, and shape. It includes the ability to graphically represent some visual or spatial ideas (Christison, 1999; Armstrong (2000, 2003). In fact, spatial intelligence is the ability at which the architects, decorators, sculptors, and painters are good.

2.3. Logical-mathematical intelligence: Christinson (1999) and Gardner’s (2006, 1991) believe that this is the intelligence which includes the ability to use numbers effectively and to use the power of reasoning.

2.4. Verbal/linguistic intelligence: This intelligence includes the capacity to use language in speaking or writing. Armstrong (2000) proposes that through this intelligence, the manipulation of the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of the language are undertaken.

2.5. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence: Christison (1999) postulates that this intelligence is connected to the ability to use the body to express ideas and feelings to solve problems.

2.6. Intrapersonal intelligence: the ability to understand our own strengths, weakness, moods and intentions (Christison, 1999).

2.7. Musical Intelligence: This is indicative of the ability to sense rhythm, pitch and melody. This intelligence is usually found in people with good ears for music and in singers (Christison, 1999).

2.8. Naturalist Intelligence: Alvis et al. (2004, p.6) and Christison’s (1999, p.18) definition addresses the profound depth of naturalist intelligence. The position held by them is that the "intelligence focuses on the individual’s ability to recognize and discriminate among flora and fauna".

Remarkably, Gardner (1991) has conducted a great deal of discussion as to the inclusion of other intelligences such as spiritual intelligence and existential intelligence. Despite the proposal of these intelligences, Armstrong (2000) echoes doubt about the nature of these two intelligences and claims that they are not perfect in terms of Gardner’s (2006) practical criteria.

3. Review of the related literature

The existing literature about multiple-intelligences model and its application in pedagogical
context is rich with some theoretical and empirical findings, based on which the following issues will pave the way for further clarification of the point.

According to Campbell (1990), during the 1989-1990 school years, an action research project was undertaken to investigate students' reaction to the multiple-intelligences-based model. The analysis of data indicated the student's independence, co-operative skills, and multimodal skills.

By the same token, Incorporation of MI theory into teacher education has been conducted by Kallenbach and Veins (2001). A research conducted by them to perceive the application of MI theory to pedagogy suggested that MI exerts an impact on both teachers and learners.

Weber (2005) experimented five-phase study of MI to solve the problems of higher education students who were reserved and didn't participate in the classroom. Upon practical application of MI, he drew the conclusion that students were motivated and encouraged to participate in the classroom.

Application of MI theory in the spelling of high-frequency words is remarkably eye-catching, too. Brecher et al., (1998) have conducted a program for improving the spelling of high-frequency words. A program was developed for improving the spelling of high frequency words in daily writings across the curriculum through the use of multiple intelligences. The population consisted of second and third grade students. The problem was tackled by parent surveys; teacher interviews, observations, and writing samples. Analysis of data revealed that students performed well on weekly spelling tests, yet did not transfer this knowledge to spelling high frequency words in daily writing. Teachers reported inconsistent instruction in basic spelling. Based on the presentation and analysis of results, students showed significant improvement in spelling and transferring 100 high frequency words. The students were able to spell the words correctly and to internalize the words in writings.

Among a plethora of pedagogical manifestation of MI theory, there lies an action research conducted by Albero, et al., (1997) who looks with favor upon the point that MI has met with considerable success. The report describes a program for increasing reading test scores and the result leads pedagogically to some rich findings.

A study related to MI and Focus on Form (FonF) was conducted by Saedi (2004, 2006), in Tabriz, Iran. In this study three different treatments were used in three experimental groups: MI-FonF provided focus on form, meaning and use, along with focus on learners' strengths and
interest in language learning. Two teacher made tests involving 219 Iranian University students were used. The outcomes of the study were compared and the following findings were revealed. (1) MI-FonF instruction enabled the learners to apply grammar in context. (2) MI-based instruction had a positive role on the development of abilities in a range of intelligence areas, especially, logical intelligence. (3) MI-FonF developed in learners positive attitudes towards language learning.

In another study by Rahimian (2005), the relationship between multiple intelligences and learner types was examined. The study was observed whether there is any relationship between learner types and MI. To conduct the study, one hundred and twenty male and female subjects were chosen from Kish Institute. The participants sat through the multiple intelligence development scale and Reid's learning style inventory and a homogeneity test (TOEFL). The subsequent data analysis and statistical calculations via correlations, descriptive statistics and stepwise regression showed that: (a) all of the scores in MIDAS correlated with the scores obtained from the learner type test, (b) subjects from opposite sexes performed differently in all tests. What is more, the variable gender correlated with multiple intelligences and learning styles, (c) participants' dominant intelligences correlate with their age, (d) subjects' language proficiency correlated with their dominant learning styles.

In a nutshell, by reviewing the above-mentioned literature, one can perceive the pedagogically constructive and instructive nature of MI theory and the translation and materialization of the theory into practice in the classroom. Consequently, the study seeks to bridge the uninvestigated gap between MI and learning grammar. So, in-brief explanation about the second variable, learning grammar, is also undertaken below.

4. Teaching Grammar

Since the reappearance of grammar as the central focus of instruction, some modifications have been undertaken as to the teaching of grammar. What follows is that grammar has recently become an integral part of language use and grammar instruction assumes a new role and grammar is considered essential for communication (Widdowson, 1990; Krashen, 1987; Scrivener, 1994; Doughty and Long, 2005). As it is clear, nowadays there lies no controversy as to teaching grammar, but how to teach grammar has been taken into consideration (Richards &
One of the major impetuses for the shift of attention to the importance of grammar is immersion program in Canada (Widdowson, 1991,2002), through which the learners developed excellent comprehension skills and fluency, but they lacked accuracy and did not focus on form (Rodgers, 2001, cited in Saeidi, 2006). Based mostly on this, focus of attention has been toward revival of grammar instruction in order to develop a well-balanced communicative competence (Lightbown & Spada, 1990, Saeidi, 2006; Nunan, 1999). The present study, finally, does not consider MI in vacuum rather considers MI in connection with learning grammar.

5. Method

5.1. Participants
The participants in this study (N=125) were 64 male and 61 female who were divided into 10 classes. These participants were selected randomly from Khajeh Nasiraddine Toosi, Khaje Nasiraddine Ardebil and Setaregan language school in Ardebil. Ten language teachers were also employed for the teaching of grammar on the basis of the objectives of this study. It is worth mentioning that the male and female EFL learners were separately instructed. The participants were learners of English as a foreign language in the communicatively oriented classes and were of different ages and at various educational levels. However the sample in this research included language learners at various educational levels, an attempt was made to select the learners who were at the intermediate level or so in order to make sure of the homogeneity of the learners.

5.2. Instrumentation
Four instruments i.e. A) a questionnaire B) pre-test and proficiency test C) materials of treatment D) and post-test were used in this study as follow.

A) Questionnaire: MI questionnaire was used for the examination of the eight intelligences of the learners. The present questionnaire includes eight intelligences with six statements for every intelligence type and the questionnaire serves the purpose of examining MI of the participants. The questionnaire which was developed by Christison (1999) served to get a perception of the weaknesses and strengths of the participants. The organization of the questions
of MI questionnaire was in a way that the students ranked statement 0, 1, or 2. The participants wrote 0 if they disagreed with the statement and 2 if they strongly agreed. They wrote 1 if they were in between. It is noteworthy to say that every statement had 2 marks so that the total score for every intelligence profile was 12; The reliability for MI questionnaire was also estimated at 0.65.

B) Materials of treatment: In undertaking the present research, some educational materials were used for the treatment and for the design of pre-test and post-test questions. The content of the treatment and the tests were extracted from Barron’s preparation course and the test items were modified to meet the objectives of this study.

C) Pre-test and proficiency test: The pre-test including thirty questions with the total score of 20 was extracted from Barron’s preparation course. These items were modified in order to meet the objectives of this study. The pre-test served the purpose of selecting a homogeneous group of students for the treatment and accordingly, for assuring the possibly reliable post-test scorers. Consequently, no random scores were observed among the participants as a result of their pre-test; this shows that the learners were less or more at the same level; the reliability for pre-test was also estimated at 0.65.

A proficiency test including thirty questions with the total score of 20 was extracted from Barron’s preparation course. These items were modified in order to meet the objectives of this study. The proficiency test served the purpose of measuring the grammar knowledge of the EFL learners and was finally correlated with MI of EFL learners. A point worth mentioning is that the contents of pre-test and proficiency test, with reliability estimated at 0.65., were identical to each other. In effect, both shared the same content.

D) Post-test: A post-test including thirty questions with the total score of 20 was extracted from Barron’s preparation course. These items were modified in order to meet the objectives of this study. The purpose of post-test was to observe the numerical scores resulted from treatment. The last point to be made is that the reliability for post-test was estimated at 0.78.

5.3. Design and procedure

In order to find answers to the research questions, some procedures were taken. The contents of proficiency test and pre-test were similar to each other, both of which were extracted from Barron's preparation course for TOEFL test. The items were modified in order to meet the
objectives of this study. To start the preliminary study, at the outset, a pilot test was conducted. It provided the research with the possibly appropriate reliability for the questionnaire, proficiency test, pre-test and post-test. To achieve the purpose of the study, the following procedures were taken and the study included two phases.

**Phase 1:** To answer the first research question, first, the eight intelligences of male and female EFL learners were separately examined with use of MI questionnaire, then a proficiency test including 30 questions extracted from TOEFL, was administered to them. As a result, Pearson correlation was conducted to find the relationship between male and female EFL learners' MI and their grammar knowledge.

**Phase 2:** To find answer to the second research question, first, the eight intelligences of male and female EFL learners were examined with use of MI questionnaire. Then, a pre-test was administered to the learners which served the purpose of measuring the present grammar knowledge of the learners. Next, a treatment, related to grammar instruction for 17 sessions, was undertaken. After that, the learners took a post-test, as a result of which the scores of grammar performance of male and female were compared.

A key point worth-mentioning is that the second research question was intended to test the hypothesis that Gardner (1983) put forward. He held the view that if the learners' dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence, their grammar scores will be higher. To this end, first, the grammar scores of 30 male (out of 64) and 30 female (out of 61) EFL grammar learners who had dominant linguistic intelligence and higher grammar scores were selected. Then, a t-test of their linguistic intelligence was conducted to observe whether their linguistic intelligence scores are the same or not. Next, a t-test of their pre-test was conducted, too. After that, a t-test of male and female's post-test was conducted. Finally, it was observed that, first of all, whether Gardner's (1983) hypothesis holds true or not and second, whether male's grammar performance differed from that of female's performance or not. The design of the study was quasi-experimental: with pre-test, post-test and treatment. Quantitative study was used to answer the questions. In this study multiple-intelligences were taken as independent variable and grammar scores were dependent variables.

### 6. Research questions and hypotheses

To bridge the uninvestigated gap, the present study aimed at the following research questions:
1. Is there any statistically significant relationship between the multiple-intelligences of male and female EFL learners and their grammar knowledge?
2. Is there any significant difference between the grammar performance of male and female EFL learners whose dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence?

**Hypotheses:**
1. There is no significant relationship between the multiple-intelligences of male and female EFL learners and their grammar knowledge.
2. There is no difference between the grammar performance of male and female EFL learners whose dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence.

**7. Data analysis and the findings**

A t-test and Pearson Correlation were used to analyze the existing data. In order to answer the first research question, first, a descriptive statistics of male and females' MI and then Pearson correlation are conducted as appear below.

**Table 4.1: Descriptive Analysis of Male’s MI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MI</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7.1563</td>
<td>1.95358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7.4844</td>
<td>2.09301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7.2969</td>
<td>2.08304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8.3438</td>
<td>1.93726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalistic intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6.2969</td>
<td>1.90804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7.0469</td>
<td>1.94716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6.5625</td>
<td>2.64200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal intelligence</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7.8125</td>
<td>2.08452</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive Analysis of different profiles of intelligences (as shown in Table 4.1) revealed that mathematical intelligence ($\bar{X}=8.34$, SD= 1.937) was the most dominant intelligence and the naturalistic intelligence ($\bar{X}=6.29$, SD= 1.908) was the least dominant intelligence.

In addition to the descriptive statistics of males' MI (as shown in Table 4.1), the descriptive statistics of females' MI is also conducted as appears below.
Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of Female’s MI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MI</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7.3934</td>
<td>2.01890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7.9672</td>
<td>1.90584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7.3770</td>
<td>2.00137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>8.6230</td>
<td>2.19973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalistic intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6.0492</td>
<td>2.43876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7.1639</td>
<td>2.02633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6.2295</td>
<td>2.56511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal intelligence</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7.7213</td>
<td>1.72367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive Analysis of MI of female EFL learners (as shown in Table 4.2) revealed that mathematical intelligence ($\bar{X}$=8.62, $SD=2.199$) was the most dominant intelligence and naturalistic intelligence ($\bar{X}$=6.04, $SD=2.438$) was the least dominant intelligence. As it is clear from Table 4.1 and Table 4.2, there is no difference between MI of male and MI of female EFL learners in terms of the dominance of their intelligences.

To find out whether there is a significant relationship between MI of male and female EFL learners and their grammar knowledge, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. The results appear below:
Table 4.3: Correlation between males' MI and their grammar knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Linguistic intelligence</th>
<th>Logical intelligence</th>
<th>Spatial Intelligence</th>
<th>Bodily intelligence</th>
<th>Intrapersonal intelligence</th>
<th>Naturalistic intelligence</th>
<th>Musical intelligence</th>
<th>Interpersonal intelligence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency test</td>
<td>-0.042</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>-0.189</td>
<td>-0.030</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>-0.069</td>
<td>-0.111</td>
<td>0.256*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>0.731</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td>0.208</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>0.382</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4.3 reveals, the Sig of .04, less than .05, indicates that there is a positive relationship between interpersonal intelligence and grammar knowledge of male EFL learners, but the other seven intelligences of male participants have low relationship with their grammar knowledge. Based on this result the first hypothesis is supported cautiously.

Table 4.4: Correlation between females' MI and their grammar knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Linguistic intelligence</th>
<th>Mathematical intelligence</th>
<th>Spatial Intelligence</th>
<th>Bodily intelligence</th>
<th>Intrapersonal Intelligence</th>
<th>Naturalistic Intelligence</th>
<th>Musical Intelligence</th>
<th>Interpersonal Intelligence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency test</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>-0.247</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>-0.213</td>
<td>-0.279*</td>
<td>-0.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.615</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>0.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Table 4.4, the Sig of .02, less than .05 and the Pearson correlation of -.279, which is negative, indicate that there is a negative relationship between the musical intelligence of female EFL learners and their grammar knowledge. The negative relationship shows that the higher the musical intelligence of female EFL learners, the lower their grammar scores and vice versa. There is observed a low relationship between the other intelligence profiles of female EFL learners and their grammar knowledge. Based on the statistical finding, the first research question is supported cautiously.

In order to verify or reject the second hypothesis, first, a descriptive statistics of both linguistic intelligence and pre-test, then, an independent t-test for the grammar performance (post-test) were conducted as appear below.

**Table 4.5: an independent t-test for the linguistic intelligence of male and female EFL learners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8.7000</td>
<td>.83666</td>
<td>-1.044</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.1333</td>
<td>2.11291</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 4.5, the mean score =8.70, SD=.83) of female's linguistic intelligence and the mean score =9.13, SD=2.11) of male's linguistic intelligence indicate that there is no difference between male and female's linguistic intelligence who have higher grammar scores.

**Table 4.6: An independent t-test for the pre-test of male and female EFL learners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6.6333</td>
<td>3.38845</td>
<td>.281</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6.4000</td>
<td>3.03542</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Table 4.6, the mean scores of female and male’s pre-test are less or more the same 6.63, SD=3.38 and 6.40, SD=3.03, respectively). The mean scores and the Sig of .78 indicate that there is no difference between the grammar scores of male and female EFL learners on their pre-test.

Table 4.7: An independent t-test for the grammar performance of male and female EFL learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.90000</td>
<td>2.39756</td>
<td>2.834</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.1333</td>
<td>2.43159</td>
<td>2.464</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 4.7, the Sig of .006 which is less than .05, the mean scores =14.90, SD=2.397) of female EFL learners and the mean scores =13.13, SD=2.431) of male EFL learners indicate that there is a difference between the grammar performance of male and female EFL learners whose dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence. It is concluded that female EFL learners whose dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence performed better than that of male EFL learners on learning grammar. So the second research hypothesis is moderately rejected.

8. Discussion and conclusion

To begin with, in Table 4.3, the Correlation Analysis of males’ eight intelligences and their grammar knowledge was conducted. To this end, Pearson Correlation was employed. According to table 4.3, there is a positive relationship between interpersonal intelligence and males’ grammar knowledge. This means that the higher the scores of interpersonal intelligence, the higher the grammar scores of language learners will be. At the same time, the higher the scores of grammar, the higher the scores of interpersonal intelligence will be.

Since interpersonal intelligence bears a positive relationship with grammar knowledge, so, the teachers can pay attention to the activities related to this intelligence, especially in large scale classes. As a result of the analysis of data included in Table 4.3, the first hypothesis is supported cautiously.
Table 4.4 illustrates the relationship between MI of female EFL learners and their grammar knowledge. Obviously, there is a negative relationship between musical intelligence and grammar knowledge of female EFL learners, i.e., the higher the scores of musical intelligence, the lower the learners' grammar knowledge and vice versa.

Table 4.7 illustrates the difference between the grammar performance of male and female EFL learners' whose dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence. T-test was used to determine the difference and the results indicated that there is a difference between the grammar performance of male and female EFL learners whose dominant intelligence is linguistic intelligence. As it is clear from Table 4.7, female EFL learners with dominant linguistic intelligence performed better than male EFL learners whose dominant intelligence was linguistic intelligence.

The end-product of the study indicated that linguistic intelligence bears a positive relationship with learning grammar and that those with dominant linguistic intelligence can perform better on learning grammar. The second research hypothesis is supported by and is compatible with Gardner's (1983) claim that those with dominant linguistic intelligence can perform better on learning grammar. Of course, as Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 indicate, the first research question findings indicating that mathematical intelligence is the most dominant intelligence is practically supported by Saedi's findings (2004). According to her research findings, in MI-based instruction, through mathematical intelligence it is successfully possible to draw the attention of the learners to form.

Gardner (1991) maintains that all intelligences, both more dominant and less dominant intelligences, can be nurtured in a variety of settings. This is practically possible in virtue of gaining perception of individual learners' differences and in the small scale classes. Since in large scale classes paying attention to and nurturing the less dominant intelligences of the learners, their individual differences, and the learners' interests may be occasionally out of the control of the teachers, understanding which intelligence is the most dominant intelligence (Table, 4.1 and 4.2), can give assistance to the teachers on such occasions.

The present study focused on the investigation of MI model and the relationship between the eight intelligences, that is to say, mathematical, linguistic, spatial, bodily, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and musical intelligences and learning grammar. Since viewing intelligence as a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon (Gardner, 2006; Gardner, 1991; Alvis et
al.2004), and paying a cultural attention to intelligences (Gardner, 2006), a massive change has been observed in the educational system and pedagogy as well as in the individualized program.

Statistically put, this study proved that first, there is no difference between the dominance of the eight intelligences of male and female EFL learners. Then the study indicated that there is a significantly negative relationship between musical intelligence of female EFL learners and their grammar knowledge. This means that the higher the scores of musical intelligences, the lower the grammar scores of language learners will be. On the contrary, the higher the scores of grammar, the lower the scores of musical intelligence will be. Next, the study showed that there is a relationship between interpersonal intelligence of male EFL learners and their grammar knowledge. After that, it was revealed that the learners who had dominant linguistic intelligence performed better on learning grammar. It was finally indicated that compared to male EFL learners, female EFL learners performed better on learning grammar.

References
Campbell, B. (1990). The Research Result of a Multiple Intelligences classroom. Published in Iranian EFL Journal
New Horizons for Learning's on the Beam, Vol XI (1), 97


Appendix 1
Rank each statement 0, 1, or 2. Write 0 if you disagree with the statement and write 2 if you strongly agree. Write 1 if you are somewhere in between. Then calculate your score for each intelligence type.

**Interpersonal Intelligence**

a. ___ I’m often the leader in activities
b. ___ I enjoy talking to my friends
c. ___ I often help my friends
d. ___ My friends often talk to me about their problems
e. ___ I’ve got a lot of friends
f. ___ I’m a member of several clubs

___ TOTAL FOR INTERPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE
Intrapersonal Intelligence
a. ___ I go to the cinema alone
b. ___ I go to the library alone to study
c. ___ I can tell you some things I’m good at doing
d. ___ I like to spend time alone
e. ___ My friends find some of my actions strange sometimes
f. ___ I learn from my mistakes
___ TOTAL FOR INTRAPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE

Logical - Mathematical Intelligence
a. ___ I often do calculations in my head
b. ___ I like to put things into categories
c. ___ I'm good at chess and/or draughts
d. ___ I like to play number games
e. ___ I love to play around with Computers
f. ___ I ask lots of questions about how things work
___ TOTAL FOR LOGICO-MATHEMATICAL INTELLIGENCE

Linguistic Intelligence
a. ___ I like to read books, magazines and newspapers
b. ___ I consider myself a good reader
c. ___ I like to tell jokes and Stories
d. ___ I can remember people's names easily
e. ___ I like to recite tongue twisters
f. ___ I have a good vocabulary in my native language
___ TOTAL FOR LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE

Bodily - Kinaesthetic Intelligence
a. ___ It's hard for me to sit quietly for a long time
b. ___ It's easy for me to copy exactly what other people do
c. ___ I'm good at sewing, woodwork, building or mechanics
d. ___ I'm good at Sports
e. ___ I enjoy working with my hands - working with clay or model making, for example
f. ___ I enjoy physical exercise
___ TOTAL FOR BODILY-KINAESTHETIC INTELLIGENCE

Spatial Intelligence
a. ___ I can read maps easily
b. ___ I enjoy art activities
c. ___ I can draw well
d. ___ Videos and slides really help me to learn new Information
e. ___ I love books with pictures
f. ___ I enjoy putting puzzles together
___ TOTAL FOR SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE

Musical Intelligence
a. ___ I can hum the tunes to lots of songs
b. ___ I’m a good singer
c. ___ I play a musical instrument or sing in a choir
d. ___ I can tell when music sounds off-key
e. ___ I often tap rhythmically on the table or desk
f. ___ I often sing songs
     ___ TOTAL FOR MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE

Naturalist Intelligence
a. ___ I spend a lot of time outdoors
b. ___ I enjoy listening to the sounds created in the natural
     world
c. ___ birdsong, for example
d. ___ I can identify plant life and animal species
e. ___ I can distinguish between poisonous and non-poisonous
     snakes and/or between poisonous and edible
     mushrooms
f. ___ I enjoy observing plants and/or collecting rocks
g. ___ I’ve got green fingers - I keep pot plants at home and
     have an interest in gardening, for example
     ___ TOTAL FOR NATURALIST INTELLIGENCE

Appendix 2: Proficiency test
Name…
Choose the correct choice.
1) You had better ............... to the doctor about your cough.
   A) go                       B) going                                 C) to go                        D) be going

2) Some plants would rather ............... in shady places.
   A) to grow              B) growing                            C) will be grown          D) grow

3) A good teacher would rather that the student ............... hard.
   A) works                 B) worked                            C) work                        D) be working

4) They ............... the whole story.
   A) made me repeating                                                            B) made me to repeat
   C) made me that repeat                                                          D) made me repeat

5) Like humans, zoo animals must have a dentist ............... their teeth.
   A) fill                            B) filled                                C) filling                       D) to fill

6) I get Ali...............the book that is useful.
   A) study                        B) studies                       C) to study                    D) until studies

7) They will not let him ............... the country.
   A) for leaving            B) to leave                         C) leave                        D) will leave

8) If water is heated to 212 degrees. , .................,
   A) it will boil and escape                                                            B) will boil and escape
   C) it boils and escapes                                         D) would boil and escape
9) If American ate fewer foods with sugar, their health ............... better.
A) had B) will be C) would be D) can be

10) It is necessary ............... well in your exam.
A) do B) doing C) to do D) B and C

11) Some members of the congress are insisting that changes in the social security system .......... made.
A) will be B) are C) are being D) be

12) Never ................. her time.
A) a good student does waste B) a good student wastes
C) wastes a good student D) does a good student waste

13) When your body does not get ............., it can not meet its needs.
A) enough food B) food as enough C) enough as food D) the food enough

14) There are three kinds of solar eclipse: one is total, another is annular, and ..............
A) the other is partial B) the partial is other
C) other is partial D) partial is other

15) Only ............... of the breeds of cattle have been brought to the United States.
A) a small amount B) a little amount C) a small number D) a little number

16) If he had not gone on vacation, he ............. in his exam.
A) Succeeded B) would succeed C) would have succeeded D) had succeeded

17) She tries............... happy in life.
A) at being B) to be C) for being D) in being

18) After finding a job, he had ............. he had before.
A) twice more money than B) twice as much money as
C) Two times more money than D) two times as much money as

19) It has been estimated that .......... one thousand men took to the street.
A) Approximate B) until C) more D) as many as

20) It is generally true that the lower the stock market falls..............,
A) Higher the price of gold rises B) the price of gold rises high
C) The higher the price of gold rises D) rises higher the price of gold

21) His fingerprints are............... 
A) Different from those of any other person
B) Different from any other person
C) Different to any other person

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D) Different to those of any other person

22) she is good .......... math but weak .......... history.
A) in-at  B) at-in  C) at-at  D) all choices are correct

23) I look forward .......... from you.
A) hearing  B) to hear  C) to hearing  D) until hearing

24) I would like .......... abroad.
A) studying  B) study  C) to study  D) that I study

25) Do we need .......... sugar?
A) any  B) no  C) some  D) A and C are correct

26) She is interested .......... music.
A) to  B) for  C) in  D) at

27) .......... you like to come or .......... you rather stay here?
A) Should/ would  B) Would/ had  C) Would/ would  D) Do/ would

28) .......... does an individual seize an opportunity like this as did Gorge.
A) Not only  B) Barely  C) Sometimes  D) Once in a while

29) .......... the coffee, he washed the cup.
A) Getting drunk  B) Having drunk  C) Being drunk  D) all choices are correct

30) The Titanic, ............. went down at sea in 1912, was famous for having great wealth on board.
A) that  B) which  C) where  D) when

Appendix 3: Pre-test
Name...
Choose the correct choice.
1) You had better .......... to the doctor about your cough.
A) go  B) going  C) to go  D) be going

2) Some plants would rather .......... in shady places.
A) to grow  B) growing  C) will be grown  D) grow

3) A good teacher would rather that the student .......... hard.
A) works  B) worked  C) work  D) be working

4) They .......... the whole story.
A) made me repeating  B) made me to repeat
C) made me that repeat  D) made me repeat

5) Like humans, zoo animals must have a dentist .......... their teeth.
A) fill  B) filled  C) filling  D) to fill
6) I get Ali .......... the book that is useful.
A) study B) studies C) to study D) until studies

7) They will not let him .......... the country.
A) for leaving B) to leave C) leave D) will leave

8) If water is heated to 212 degrees, ..........,
A) it will boil and escape B) will boil and escape
C) it boils and escapes D) would boil and escape

9) If American ate fewer foods with sugar, their health .......... better.
A) had B) will be C) would be D) can be

10) It is necessary .......... well in your exam.
A) do B) doing C) to do D) B and C

11) Some members of the congress are insisting that changes in the social security system .......... made.
A) will be B) are C) are being D) be

12) Never .......... her time.
A) a good student does waste B) a good student wastes
C) wastes a good student D) does a good student waste

13) When your body does not get .........., it can not meet its needs.
A) enough food B) food as enough C) enough as food D) the food enough

14) There are three kinds of solar eclipse: one is total, another is annular, and ..........,
A) the other is partial B) the partial is other
C) other is partial D) partial is other

15) Only .......... of the breeds of cattle have been brought to the United States.
A) a small amount B) a little amount C) a small number D) a little number

16) If he had not gone on vacation, he .......... in his exam.
A) succeeded B) would succeed C) would have succeeded D) had succeeded

17) She tries .......... happy in life.
A) at being B) to be C) for being D) in being

18) After finding a job, he had .......... he had before.
A) twice more money than B) twice as much money as
C) two times more money than D) two times as much money as

19) It has been estimated that .......... one thousand men took to the street.
A) approximate  B) until  C) more  D) as many as

20) It is generally true that the lower the stock market falls.................,
A) higher the price of gold rises  B) the price of gold rises high
C) the higher the price of gold rises  D) rises higher the price of gold

21) His fingerprints are.................
A) different from those of any other person  B) different from any other person
C) different to any other person  D) different to those of any other person

22) she is good ............... math but weak ............... history.
A) in-at  B) at-in  C) at-at  D) all choices are correct

23) I look forward ............... from you.
A) hearing  B)to hear  C) to hearing  D) until hearing

24) I would like ............... abroad.
A)studying  B) study  C)to study  D) that I study

25) Do we need ............... sugar?
A)any  B)no  C) some  D) A and C are correct

26) She is interested ............... music.
A) to  B) for  C) in  D) at

27) ............... you like to come or ...............you rather stay here?
A) Should/ would  B) Would/ had  C) Would/ would  D) Do/would

28) ............... does an individual seize an opportunity like this as did Gorge.
A) Not only  B)Barely  C) Sometimes  D) Once in a while

29) ............... the coffee, he washed the cup.
A) Getting drunk  B) Having drunk  C) Being drunk  D) all choices are correct

30) The Titanic, ...went down at sea in 1912, was famous for having great wealth on board.
A) that  B) which  C) where  D)when

Appendix4:Post-test
Name: .........................
Choose the correct choice.
1) We had better ...............now or we’ll miss the bus.
A) leaving  B) to leave  C) be leaving  D) leave
2) She would rather .......... than give a speech.
A) die          B) to die          C) dies         D) dying

3) I would rather that my brother................. .
A) goes         B) go             C) went         D) be gone

4) He made me............. .
A) be crying    B) crying        C) to cry       D) cry

5) I had Ali..............
A) to go         B) go            C) goes         D) went

6) I got him ............. the needed book.
A) buy           B) buying        C) bought       D) to buy

7) Let me ............. you about the accident.
A) to tell       B) tell          C) telling      D) I tell

8) If I study hard............
A) will pass     B) I will pass   C) pass         D) passed

9) If I saw the doctor, I ............. better.
A) had           B) will be       C) would be     D) can be

10) It is important ............. hard.
A) studying      B) we study      C) to study     D) we studying

11) Ali insists that she ............. to school.
A) goes          B) be going      C) is going     D) go

12) ............. does a good teacher waste his time.
A) Sometimes     B) never         C) always       D) often

13) We need .............to survive.
A) food enough   B) enough food   C) food         D) all choices

14) To succeed we need three elements: One is purpose, ............. is motivation ............. is perseverance.
A) the other – another     B) another – the other
C) other – another         D) another – other

15) ............. of people will be present at the party.
A) a small number        B) small number
C) little number         D) a little number

16) If I ............., I would have succeeded.
A) studied           B) had studied   C) was studying   D) would study
17) We try ................ in our life.
   A) success                        B) succeeding                 C) to succeed             D) succeed

18) I have................. I had before.
   A) twice more money than                       B) twice as much money as
   C) two times more money than            C) two times as much money as

19) It is said that............... one hundred people took to the street.
   A) approximate B) until                    C) more             D) as many as

20) The more you study.................
   A) more successful you will be               B) will you be more successful
   C) the more successful you will be         D) the more successful will you be

21) He is ............... his friends.
   A) different to                B) different from              C) different in          D) different of

22) He is good................speaking but weak ................. writing.
   A) in – at                       B) at – in                          C) at – at                   D) all choices are correct.

23) At the end of the letter, we usually write: I look ...............from you.
   A) toward hearing       B) toward to hear       C) forward to hear       D) forward to hearing

24) I would like ............... his book.
   A) studying         B) study                C) to study                D)all choices are correct.

25) She doesn’t need ................. sugar.
   A) some            B) no                      C) any                       D) A and C are correct.

26) I keep interest ...............Pop music.
   A) to                               B) for                                 C) at                          D) in

27) ................you rather stay here or ................ you like to come?
   A) Should – would                   B) would – had          C) Would – would     D) Do – would

28)................does he study.
   A) not only                        B) barely              C) once in a while     D) however

29) ................, he fell asleep.
   A) getting studied              B) having studied
   C)being studied               D) all choices are correct

30) The book, ................got dirty, was famous for its content.
   A) that                         B) which              C) when             D) once
Title

A Contrastive Study of “Pro-form” Substitutions in English and Persian
With Reference to Translation Practice

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Abstract

In linguistics, a pro-form is generally defined as any element used in place of other linguistic element(s). Pronouns are the most common pro-forms used to substitute nouns. There are also other linguistic elements which may substitute greater units such as noun phrases (pro-Nps), predicates (pro-Vps) or a whole clause (pro-clause). The present study deals, in detail, with syntactic description and contrastive analysis of pro-Nps, pro-Vps and pro-clauses in English and Persian. Quirk et al. (1985) and Bateni (1377) are used for pro-form structural descriptions in English and Persian respectively. Three well-known English dramas along with their Persian translations are attempted for contrastive analysis. The concluding remarks can be useful for EFL/ESL teachers and learners as well as novice translators.
Keywords: Contrastive analysis, Translation equivalence, Cohesive devices, Pro-from, Zero substitution, Ellipsis

1. Introduction

Cohesion is a concept which refers to relations of meaning that exist within a text or sentence. It is expressed partly through lexicon and partly through grammar. In Cohesion in English, Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify five general categories of cohesive devices that create cohesion in texts including one category of lexical cohesive devices such as reiteration, synonymy, antonymy, etc. and four categories of grammatical cohesive devices including reference, conjunction, ellipsis and substitution (called ‘pro-from by Quirk et al.).

In linguistics, a pro-form is generally taken as an element used in place of other linguistic element(s). Pronouns are the most common pro-forms used to substitute for a noun or a noun phrase. ‘She’, for example, is a third-person singular pronoun used in place of a singular human female animate noun such as a woman as in, ‘A woman is coming to see you. She has called you earlier.’

Pronouns have commonly been used as examples of pro-forms, but there are other linguistic elements that have comparable properties and substitute not for a noun but for units larger than a noun such as noun phrases, verb phrases or a whole clause. Such pro-forms are called pro-Nps, pro-Vps and pro-clauses respectively in this article. ‘one’, ‘do’ and ‘so’, are examples:

- The student asked for a red sharp pen and the teacher gave him one. (pro-Np)
- He took the linguistics course but she didn’t. (pro-Vp)
- He thinks it will rain tonight but I don’t think so. (pro-clause)

2. Review of literature

2.1. Pro-forms

The term ‘pro-form’ was probably first used by Jerrold Katz and Paul Postal (1964) as a mechanism to explain both syntactic and semantic aspects of the substitutions. Syntactically, the pro-form guarantees the recoverability of a substitution or deletion. Semantically, the pro-form calls for interpretation by retrieving its equivalents.

The Encyclopedia of Linguistics (2004) writes: the term pro-form, since its introduction, has often been used alternately with pronoun, and now it seems to replace pronoun. However, some
linguistic elements seem to have comparable properties to pronouns but they are not substitutes for nouns. In fact, there are many other classes of words than nouns that get a different form in a text. Thus, the term pro-form seems appropriate to be used collectively for any kind of substitution.

In the literature of generative grammars, a pro-form is often found as an element that assumes the process of substitution. In these theories, pro-forms can be used as one of the key tests for constituency in syntax: if a string of words can be replaced by a pro-form, these words form a constituent, i.e. a structural unit within the sentence. To illustrate, in the sentence ‘The student read a book in the library,’ the pronoun she can substitute for the noun phrase ‘the student’, a there can stand in for the prepositional phrase ‘in the library’, and a did can substitute for the verb phrase ‘read a book in the library’. Consequently, we may conclude that these three types of phrases are constituents.

Moreover, there are some other terms that are used in place of pro-forms. One of these is ellipsis. Andrew Radford (1997) considers ellipsis a process by which redundant information in a sentence is omitted. Some recent work in natural language processing (e.g. by Daniel Hardt, 1993) includes pro-form as one category of elliptical forms. In ellipsis nothing is replaced for the ellipted item; in other words, ellipsis is zero substitution (Baltin, 2007).

A: Have you seen the film?
B: Yes, I have Φ.

In terms of semantics, a pro-form has no meaning in itself, rather it requires a retrieval of meaning from a previously mentioned element, or antecedent, i.e. the element for which it substitutes. In other words, pro-forms are semantically bound by other elements.

2.2. Pro-form substitutes in English and Persian

One of the most comprehensive analyses of pro-form substitution in English is presented by Quirk (1985). Elsewhere Halliday and Hassan (1976) discuss the same topic, but they apply the general term substitute for what Quirk calls pro-form.

In English, substitute may function as a noun, a verb, or a clause. To these three, correspond three types of substitution: nominal (pro-Nps), verbal (pro-Vps), and clausal (pro-clauses). Halliday and Hassan introduce ‘one/ones/that/those same’ as the most common nominal, ‘do’ as the commonest verbal and ‘so/not’ as the most used clausal pro-form substitutes in English. More often these substitutes may combine and form complex pro-forms like do so, do the same,
do it, do that, etc. While Quirk (1985) considers these expressions as a distinct category of pro-forms, Halliday and Hassan (1976) regard them as some intercross among the three types of nominal, verbal, and clausal.

Each substitute group has a non-accented and an accented form. (accented carries the tonic under typical or 'unmarked' conditions). Although the same takes originally a nominal form, it generally functions as the accented form in all three types of substitution:

Table 1
Accented and non-accented forms of substitutes (Halliday & Hasan, 1976)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-accented</th>
<th>Accented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>one(s)</td>
<td>the same/ (be) the same (thing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Do</td>
<td>do the same (thing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clausal</td>
<td>So</td>
<td>(say) the same(thing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The verbal substitute in English is do as in:

... the words did not come the same as they used to do.

There is one further type of substitution which is replaced not for an element within a clause but for an entire clause. The words used as substitutes are 'so' and 'not'. For example,

... if you've seen them so often, of course you know what they're like.

I believe so, Alice replied thoughtfully.

Halliday and Hassan have also introduced another category of substitutions which consists of the prominent and the non-prominent substitutes. They are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Prominent and Non-prominent types of Substitutes (Halliday & Hasan, 1976)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-prominent</th>
<th>Prominent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Thing (count noun)</td>
<td>one(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process/attribute/fact</td>
<td>so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Process (+…)</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clausal</td>
<td>Positive/negative</td>
<td>so/not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Quirk et al. (1985) consider as substitution may be included in each of these classes.

The pro-forms substituted for Nps in English are as follows:
1) **one/ones:**

Examples:  
Do you have any pen? I need **one**.
Do you have any pen? I need several very sharp **ones**.

2) **that/ those**

Example: Toward the end of his life, Schubert wrote two remarkable trios:  
**that** [= the one] in flat B, and **that** [= the one] in E flat.

3) **Indefinite quantifiers:**

Example: When children entered, **each** [= each child] was given a present.

4) **the same**

Example:  
A: Can I have a cup of black coffee, please?  
B: Give me the **same** please.

In addition, the followings are the pro-forms replacing Vps and clauses:

1) **pro-clause (so/not)**

Examples: Jack hasn’t found a job yet. He told me **so** yesterday.  
A: Has the news reached the home yet?  
B: I am afraid **not**.

2) **pro-complement (so)**

Example: Prices at present are stable, and will probably remain **so**.

3) **pro-predicate/ predication (do (so))**

Examples: You can take the train back to Madrid, but I shouldn’t **do (so)**, until tomorrow  
A: You have split coffee on your dress.  
B: I have **so**.

4) **pro-adverbial (so/ thus/ that)**

Example: The patient was carefully treated by the nurse with a well-tried  
**drug. He was supposed to be so/ thus treated.**

In Persian, so far, few if any comprehensive and similar studies of 'pro-form substitutes' have  
been conducted except for some descriptions in the form of passing notes in chapters under some
other topics. Bateni (1377) in his book *Structural Description of Persian Grammar* generally divides a clause into subject and predicate. He subdivides predicates into 'complements, predication and adverbials'. He further puts subjects, complements and adverbials in nominal groups (Nps), the verb in predicate groups and adverbs in adverbial groups. He goes on and explains in brief a clause and its subdividing groups and the substitutes for each, i.e. pro-clause, pro-Nps, pro-predicate, pro-complement, pro-predication and pro-adverbial. Others like Afrashi (1388), Khanlari (1369), Anvari (1368), Anzali (1366) and Qarib et al. (1327) have made similar attempts without a clear discussion of or focus on substitutes.

The following are the pro-forms replaced for Nps and their constituents in Persian:

1) **yeki** (one), **hamu** (the same thing/person), **digari** (the other), **kasi** (someone), etc.

*Example:*  
A: āyā xodkār dār-i?  
do pen have-you?  
B: bale, yeki dār-am.  
Yes, one have-I

2) **Indefinite quantifiers** (har yek (each one), te'dādi (some), chand tā (how many), etc

*Example:*  
vaqti bache-hā vāred shod-and be har yek ketābi dāde shod.  
when children entered-they to each one a book was given

3) **Hamin** (this, the one)/ **hamān** (that, the one)/ etc.

*Example:*  
A: kodām ketāb rā xarid-i?  
which book buy-you?  
B: ketāb-e tārix rā.  
book history  
A: man ham hamān rā xarid-am.  
I also the one buy-I

The following are the pro-forms replaced for clauses and their constituents in Persian:

1) **Pro-clause**

*Example:*  
A: āyā fekr mikon-i emshab mi-ras-and?  
do think you tonight arrive-they?  
B: in tor fekr mi-kon-am.  
This way think do-I

2) **pro-predicate**
Example: *man dars-am rā pārsāl tamām kard-am va xāhar-am ham hamin tor.*

*I study-my last year finish did-I and sister-my also the same way.

3) pro-complement

Example: *?u emruz xoshhāl ast ammā diruz in tor na-bud.*

*he today happy is but yesterday so was-not*

4) pro-adverbial

Example: *ma ba qatār be tehrān raft-im va ān-hā ham hamin tor.*

*we with train to Tehran went-we and they also so.*

2.3. Contrastive studies of substitutions in English and Persian

A review of literature indicates that no contrastive studies of pro-form substitution have been done already, except for some relevant ones available in the form of M.A. or Ph.D. dissertations written by Iranian scholars. Mohebbi (1998) has studied “ellipsis” as zero substitution in an M.A. thesis. He generally concludes that “ellipsis” in English and Persian is quite similar in many aspects. The results of the present study, however, might be different from those of his.

The concept of substitution has also been treated by Nourmohammadi (1988). In his study, he is more concerned with frequency of occurrence of substitutions compared to other cohesive ties, and the part it plays as to the degree of tightness in English and Persian. He believes that substitution has zero frequency in Persian, a conclusion which is a little different from that of the present study.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data collection

Parallel translation procedure was used in this contrastive research to collect data in English and Persian. In so doing, a corpus of three English novels along with their Persian translations was initially selected. The selection of novels was not based on any specific idea or factor. Fame and readership frequency of the novels were merely noted. Likewise, in choosing the corresponding Persian translation of novels, no critical idea except for the fame of the translator was attended. Next, a trustable number of all three types of nominal, verbal and clausal substitutes (based on Quirk, 1985; Halliday and Hasan, 1976) was randomly selected from several different parts of the English novels and their Persian translations. The corresponding structures in the two
languages were also examined closely to see if they were, in fact, equivalent and have reserved the same functions in Persian translations. Cases in which English pro-forms were replaced with forms other than pro-forms in Persian were also collected in that it is a way of expressing substitution.

3.2. Structural descriptions
The description of clausal substitution is based on the theoretical frameworks presented by Quirk et al. (1985) as well as Halliday and Hasan (1976). The study is subject to the above frameworks in that they have proved to be the most comprehensive ones in English done so far are still used as ‘reference’ by great numbers of researchers doing contrastive research between English grammar and that of other languages. The descriptive framework underlying the English description (Quirk, 1985) also serves as a basis for a general description of clausal substitution in Persian completed by notes on clausal substitutes in Persian.

3.3. Data analysis
To analyze the collected data, Chi square ($\chi^2$) with one degree of difference ($df = 1$) at the 0.05 level was calculated so as to find the meaningful difference between the frequency of both groups of pro-Nps and their constituents used in English and Persian.

4. Results and discussions
After a detailed study and contrastive analysis of the data collected from the aforementioned English and Persian texts, some differences were noted between pro-forms in English and Persian with regard to form and function. Some of the most outstanding differences found between pro-Nps/pro-Vps and pro-clauses in English and Persian were found in the following areas:

a) **Number of categories**: English has four groups of pro-Nps, while Persian has three:
### Table 3
Categorization of pro-Nps and their constituents in English and Persian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro-Nps in English</th>
<th>Equivalents in Persian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. one / ones</td>
<td>1. yeki / digari / hamu / kasi / in ān yeki / hamin (ke) / hamān (ke) / ?u / ān / inhā / ānhā / haminhā / hamānhā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. that / those</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. indefinite quantifiers (some, few, little, many, much, etc.)</td>
<td>2. indefinite quantifiers (te’dādi, besyāri, meqdāri, kami, ba’zi, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the same</td>
<td>3. hamin / hamān / haminhā / hamānhā / hamin + n / hamān + n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This may be due to the fact that Persian employs a larger number of single as well as combined pro-Nps – for example those with *hamin* and *hamān* – for various concepts such as time, distance, size, and etc.

**b) Count and non-count indefinite nouns.** For example, *'some'* in English includes both meanings (some = a little) and (some = little). In Persian, however, *meqdāri* and *kami* express such meanings respectively. In reverse, the only indefinite noun *kami* in Persian, which can be used for both count and non-count indefinite nouns, may be replaced with two English indefinite noun, that is, *'few'* and *'little'*.

**c) Easier recognition of ellipsis or substitution:** The recognition seems much easier in Persian than in English in that English has only one indefinite pro-Np (*none*) which differs from its corresponding determiner (*no*), whereas Persian in formal situations has a larger number of pro-Nps which are different from their corresponding determiners.

**d) Antecedent restriction:** there are cases in Persian which exclusively require animate antecedents such as *?u* or *hamu*; in English, however, not only such cases do not exist but also there are cases (pro-Nps) which normally require inanimate antecedents such as *the same* or *that*.

**e) Unacceptability of some pro-forms:** While pro-predications are common in English (for example *do (so)*), they are not so acceptable in Persian because in Persian they consist of a same verb or a verbal phrase, so it makes no sense to substitute it by a pro-form. Rarely are English pro-predicates translated in the pro-form type in Persian.

**f) Mere singularity of some pro-forms in English:** *'the same'* is always used in single form while its Persian equivalents may be expressed in single or plural form, based on the context.
g) **Difference in number of pro-clauses:** English has only two pro-clauses *so* and *not*, while Persian enjoys many different single and combined forms such as *in tor, hamin tor, chenin, in-chenin, hamin qadr, hamin rang, hamin*, etc.

h) **Number of complements:** English uses two complements at most, whereas Persian uses three. For example, “We all wish *you a happy birthday*.”

While the second or the third complements are often the non-verbal element in a verbal group, it cannot be the case in English.

i) **Number of pro-adverbials:** English is limited in the number of adverbials (three pro-adverbials [so/thus/that]) whereas Persian enjoys different kinds of single and combined pro-adverbials.

Too, it was initially assumed under a null hypothesis that no differences exist between pro-Nps and pro-clauses and their constituents in English and Persian with regard to frequency of occurrence.

**Table 4**
Chi square for Pro-Nps in English and Persian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Persian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observed Pro-Nps</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected pro-Nps</td>
<td>248.5</td>
<td>248.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[X^2 = \frac{(298-248.5)^2}{248.5} = 9.86\]

With 1 degree of difference (df = 1) at the .05 level the critical value of \(X^2\) is 9.86 which indicates a meaningful difference between the frequency of both groups of pro-Nps and their constituents in English and Persian.

**Table 5**
Chi square for Pro-Claus in English and Persian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Persian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-Clauses</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Pro-Clauses</td>
<td>211.5</td>
<td>211.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[X^2 = \frac{(288-211.5)^2}{211.5} = 27.6\]

Therefore, with 1 degree of difference (df = 1) at the .05 level the critical value of \(X^2\) is 27.6 which indicates a meaningful difference between the frequency of both groups of pro-clauses and their constituents in English and Persian.
5. Conclusions
This contrastive study was conducted to find differences/similarities between pro-form substitutes in English and Persian so as to be applied by teachers, translators and material designers in teaching, translating and designing such structures more conveniently and effectively in English language classes.

5.1. Findings
Pro-forms are used more frequently in English than in Persian. A possible explanation is that certain pro-forms, e.g. pro-predicates, have hardly any substitutive form in Persian. Still another possible justification may be related to the preference of Persian for repeating the (entire) antecedent rather than using any form of substitution.

Persian, however, has a higher tendency toward using pro-clauses and their constituents (not pro-predicates) whereas English has this tendency toward using pro-Nps and their constituents. A possible explanation may be that Persian looks for a better and easier way of communicating with their readers as well as a more lasting effect and finds this more in using pro-clauses.

Pro-Nps are more translated as “pro-Nps” in the target language (Persian) than pro-clauses which are translated more communicatively or often not translated at all. This may be due to the fact that translation of pro-Nps as “pro-Np” seems a much easier process than pro-clauses because they cause no complexity in reference-making task which is seen in the translation of the latter. This might be due to the long and numeral constituents included in a clause.

Generally speaking, English is a much richer language than Persian with regard to forms of substitutions (pro-forms). On the other hand, Persian is a relatively richer language than English in terms of functions, so that in many cases one form in English corresponds with more than one function in Persian. With regard to the frequency of use, pro-forms in general and pro-Nps in particular, are used more frequently in English than in Persian. Likewise, pro-clauses (except pro-predicates) appear with higher frequencies of occurrence in Persian.

5.2. Pedagogical implications
This section mentions some implications of the findings of the study and basically provides readers with practical suggestions. In general, a pedagogical contrastive grammar is the final goal of contrastive studies. However, it should not be considered the most effective aid and is not
at all a pedagogical panacea as it is believed wrongly by many. Its effectiveness is certainly limited, but still great enough to justify the time and effort spent on its preparation (Fisiak, 1981). The findings of the present contrastive research can be expected to be used by different groups of people such as teachers, learners, material writers, course and syllabus designers, test makers, novice translators, etc. and to a more limited extent, those who learn and teach Persian as a foreign language.

a) Language learners are among those who can most benefit from the results of contrastive studies in the process of language learning. Taking into account the differences/similarities between pro-forms in English and Persian helps language learners in a better, clearer and quicker understanding of the relationship between pro-forms and their antecedents. Furthermore, language learner can use the results of this study in writing as well. Taking into consideration the differences/similarities between the use of pro-forms in English and Persian will lead learners to a better and more accurate application of pro-forms in English.

b) Teachers are the second group who may find the results of this study useful. In the best way, language teachers can make use of the results of the contrastive studies for contrastive teaching and diagnosis purposes. In the particular case of pro-forms, the language teacher can present the pro-forms to the learner and at the same time contrast it with the learners’ mother tongue, i.e. contrast it with the concept already there in their minds.

c) Test makers may also make use of the results of contrastive studies for the particular purposes of testing: “what to test”, i.e. the sampling of test content and “how to test”, i.e. choosing an appropriate form of testing. It will be more informative for the tester to test only the learning problems predicted via contrastive analysis (James, 1980). In our particular case, pro-predicates/predications which cause pedagogical problems for test takers, are proper materials to be included in the test as blanks to be filled or options to be chosen by test takers.

d) Selecting and grading suitable pedagogical materials has always been a challenging job for materials writers and book compilers, requiring the feedback reflected by learners, teachers, test makers, etc. In other words, these people attempt to answer the question:” what to teach (selection), when to teach (gradation), and how to teach (methodology)”. The first two refer to the product design and the latest to the process design (Corder, 1981). The findings of contrastive studies should, particularly, answer the above questions. In the case of this study, the
pro-forms which are typically different (and partly similar) in English and Persian, are suitable features to be selected and graded (on the basis of difficulty) for pedagogical materials.

e) Novice translators will probably find the results of the contrastive studies most useful for their own purposes of translation. Searching proper equivalents for pro-forms, in particular, both in English and Persian seems a challenging task to the novice translators. Therefore, drawing on the results of this contrastive study and suggested equivalents –if any– for pro-forms, the novice translator may totally or partially overcome his problems.

The present contrastive study is limited to drama and novel type of texts. Thus, the researcher was highly restricted in the sense that he could not generalize his findings to all types of texts. Therefore, he believes the approach outlined in this contrastive study should be replicated in future studies in different, but related contexts with different types of texts and by other students interested in contrastive topics. Some other related topics that could further be carried out are: substitute pro-forms in expository, narrative, every-day conversations, or journalistic texts, co-reference pro-forms in drama, novel, expository, narrative, every-day conversations, or journalistic texts.

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Title

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Abstract

The overall goals of a language teaching program usually derive from a national language policy with many associated implications for the development of the curriculum. The goals stated in terms of a national language policy will be directly related to the whole educational setting in which the teaching is to take place (Mc Donough & Shaw, 2003). Statement of the goals, related to the language policy leads to the selection of an appropriate type of syllabus content & specification. The materials and methods can not be seen in isolation, but are embedded within a broader language policy. Language policies decide which languages to select as the second or foreign language, when to begin teaching the second or foreign languages, how much time and effort to devote to these languages, and what to set as appropriate proficiency goals. Policy consequences or policy effects often develop in unintended or unplanned ways, but wherever on
the educational landscapes language policies fall, they have some consequences for the language teaching and learning. The present study shows the importance of the policy in ELT. Open questions and the answers to these questions are used to know the kind of the policy which is controlling English teaching at Iranian high schools. Through analyzing English books and English teachers, it wants to find in what ways do policies affect language teaching and learning in Iran and how policies get thought about and enacted in the curriculum.

**Keywords:** Policy, English teaching & learning, Governments, Families, Schools, English books, English teachers

1. Introduction

Policies are based on various beliefs about language, develop within various social groups, and commonly result in efforts to manage the language practices of others. Pronunciations, spellings, words or kinds of language are discouraged, forbidden, punished or required, as obscene, sacrilegious, violent, impure, foreign, appropriate or modern. Language policy can apply to pronunciation, to spelling, to lexical choice, to grammar or to style, and to bad language, racist language, obscene language or correct language (Spolsky, 2004).

Particular languages are sometimes held in either high or low esteem because of economic, political, or cultural values associated with them. Students, therefore, come to language learning with positive or negative attitudes derived from the society in which they live, and these attitudes in turn influence their motivation to learn the second language (Stern, 1991).

The relative emphasis to be placed upon a particular language in the curriculum is generally determined by the political forces in the wider community or nation. Mackey (1970a) has developed an ‘interaction model’ which places language learning into its sociopolitical context.
An educational system is a large and complex organization which involves the co-ordination of many components, and all the components are controlled by a central organization (ministry of education). Whatever is happening at schools, the books, the methods, the teachers’ motivation, the students’ attitudes, and all the process of language teaching and learning is following the policies of the central system. For example: the aim of English language teaching in Malaysia is stated to be, to create a society that is able to utilize the language for effective communication as the need arises, and as a key to wider experiences. For those furthering their studies, the skills learned should become an instrument with which they may cope with the necessities of using the language. The new guidelines for language teaching in Japanese schools include such statements as ‘to develop understanding of language and culture through a foreign language’, to develop a
positive attitude towards communication in a foreign language, and a basic practical
communication ability in hearing and speaking (Mc Donough & Shaw, 2003).
English language teaching has been in Iran for many years and its significance continues to
grow. Graddol’s study (2000) suggests that in the year 2000 there were about a billion English
learners-but a decade later, the numbers will have doubled. There are more non-native than
native users of the language. What are the implications of this? Planning a successful language
program involves consideration of factors that go beyond mere content and presentation of
teaching materials. It is clear that English is considered as a global language, as the language of
modernization. English is a real challenge for higher education worldwide, and also in Iran. In
order to be effective, the teaching of English must have a clearly defined place within the
educational system which constitutes the wider setting. Without understanding the system and its
policy, the language teachers and students are not in a position to play their role constructively.

2. Policy & English language teaching (ELT)

2.1. Governments & English language teaching policy

The governments are responsible for public education, and also establish language acquisition
policies. There is an association between language policy and power & authority (Spolsky,
2004). In countries that there is authority of governments over their citizens, the government
establishes the policy of language teaching & learning, and has the means to enforce or
implement that policy. The dominated religion of the country or the religion of the authoritative
government has an important role in the language policy of that country. Ferguson (1982)
claimed that religion has been one of the most powerful forces leading to language change and
language spread. All religious belief systems include some beliefs about language. Cooper
(1989) noted that the language choices are made by religions, such as the preference of Islam or
Judaism.

20 high school English teachers were asked this open question: what is your idea about Iran’s
government policy on English language teaching in Iran?
70% of the teachers believed that the governments in Iran consider English speaking countries as
Iran’s enemies, and they don’t like Iranian to speak English fluently as their second or foreign
language. Because of political and religious reasons, the governments in Iran prefer Arabic as the
second or foreign language choice. They try to find Farsi equivalents for English words, but
Arabic terms are welcomed because Arabic is the language of Islam & Quran. 20% of them said that the problem is not just English teaching. The problem is the whole educational system in Iran. Most of the courses in Iran are taught theoretically, not practically. Theories are considered important, but the practical use of these theories is ignored. Nowadays we can see some changes, going toward practical teaching, but unfortunately not for English. 10% of them answered that whatever the policy is, it is a good policy. It is an easy way of teaching English for both the teachers and the students. You teach English in Farsi so it is easier to control the class, and you need no special skill.

2.2. Families & English language teaching policy

The family considered as a social unit, follows three factors (practice, ideology, and management) which make the policy of the family towards English learning. In some families being able to speak English fluently, is a sign of being modern and high class and maybe a key to progress and some regard it as a bad sign of forgetting one’s own language and culture. In many families a monolingual language policy is the result of the members of the family having proficiency in one language alone (their mother tongue). And in most of the families the language management policy will be based on practice and ideology which will affect the language policy at schools in an unplanned & unwanted way.

30 high school students’ parents were asked this open question: what is your idea about English and the way that it is taught at schools in Iran?

50% of the parents consider English just as a means to pass the universities entrance exam. They do not expect their children to speak English fluently after studying English for seven years at school. The families think that English is just for answering the tests. And no one practices speaking English at home because it is not regarded as a language to be spoken out of the classroom. 30% of them believe that English is an important language and it is necessary that the students can speak English, but unfortunately schools are not useful. Nowadays most of the scientific sources are in English so if they want to promote they need to know how to use English practically. Therefore they send their children to English institutes or other English private classes out of the school. 20% of the parents say that there is no use in speaking English. It makes no difference if the students can or can not speak English. If they understand English and be able
to speak it fluently, they will forget their own culture and follow foreigners’ culture. So it is better that they can not speak English.

2.3. Schools & English language teaching policy

The policy of language acquisition at schools is the teaching of other languages in addition to their mother tongue. A country with a bilingual policy is expected to develop students’ proficiency in the other language at school. The school is a central domain for language policy (Spolsky, 2004). But the school itself does not establish the language policy. The government and the families will decide the language acquisition policy and it will be dictated to schools. Schools considering these policies will decide which languages to select as the second or foreign language, when to begin teaching the second or foreign languages, how much time and effort to devote to these language, and what to set as appropriate proficiency goals.

15 high school heads were asked this open question: what is your idea about the importance of English in the educational curriculum of schools in Iran?

All of them believed that schools in Iran follow the government and the families’ policy. The goal is not to communicate using English as the second or foreign language at class or out of class. The goal of teaching English in the educational curriculum is just reading the texts, translating them, memorizing some vocabulary, and knowing the grammar rules. They know that it is the time for some changes but they think that there are some courses more important than English to be considered in the educational curriculum.

3. Policy & English language teaching (ELT) in Iran

3.1. Policy & English books at Iranian high schools

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) suggest that the textbook has a vital and positive role to play in the teaching and learning process, especially during periods of change. Textbooks survive and prosper primarily because they are the most convenient means of providing the structure that the teaching-learning system requires. Textbooks play a vital role in innovation. They can support teachers through potentially disturbing and threatening change process, demonstrate new and untried methodologies, Introduce change gradually, and create scaffolding upon which teachers can build a more creative methodology of their own.
Sheldon (1988) says that textbooks not only represent the visible heart of any ELT program, but also offer considerable advantages when they are used in the ESL/EFL classrooms. No other medium is as easy to use as a book. The reality for many is that the book may be the only choice open to them (O’Neill, 1982). It is clear that the book is an important part of English teaching & learning process, but we have to know that an inappropriate choice can waste funds, time, and motivation of the students. The fact is that the book itself does nothing; it is the content of the book that makes it worthy. And the content of the book follows the language policy determined by the government and dictated to the educational system of the schools. So to find the policy of Iranian high school English books, it is essential to analyze the content of Iranian high school English books.

There is no variety in the form of the texts; they are just simple sentences & short readings written by Iranian authors. The texts are not authentic because as Johnson and Johnson (1999) mentions texts are said to be authentic if they are genuine instances of language use as opposed to exemplars devised specially for language teaching purposes. If the students use the texts in real situations, they can be considered as authentic. But the students’ use of English language through the book is limited to reading texts and translating them. The pictures used for the passages and readings are not attractive, there are no colorful pictures of real people or real environment. There is no cultural integration; the texts or pictures show nothing about the target language culture. It seems that the policy is that the students learn English through their own culture & situations. They don’t get familiar with the culture and real life situations of the target language.

There is no appropriate balance of the four language skills. The focus of the book is on reading skill and grammar. The purpose of the texts and exercises is developing and enhancing the reading and grammar ability of the students. Vocabulary is limited to the texts, and there is lack of correspondence between the different senses of the words introduced in the new words section and the senses which are used in the reading comprehensions, and also the contextualization of the new vocabulary in the new words section is poor (Jahangard, 2007). Most of the exercises are controlled and they practice accuracy not fluency. There is no creative thinking, no cooperative learning, no discovery learning, and no communicative development. So it makes no motivation for the students to participate. It seems that the policy is just being able to pass the universities.
entrance exam, not being able to communicate in English. Fluency is not important, accuracy is important.

3.2. Policy & English teachers at Iranian high schools

The heart of every educational enterprise, the force driving the whole enterprise towards its educational aims, is the teaching faculty (Johnson, 1989). The single most important feature of any program is the teaching faculty. Good teachers make good programs. A major problem world-wide in the field of language teaching is the popular belief that anyone who can speak a language can teach it, but just as in any other field of specialization, language teaching requires education, training, and skill (Esky, 1982).

It is clear that the teacher is an important part of English teaching & learning process, but English teachers in Iran are not fluent enough to speak English at class so most of them teach English in Persian. There is no interaction between the students or the teacher and the students at class in English. The target language input is limited to the texts used for reading. The methodology used at class by the teachers is grammar-translation method; the goal of teaching English is not communication. You will be a successful teacher if the students can read a text and translate it to Persian, memorize some vocabulary, and know some grammar rules. There is no teacher’s guide so they can teach using any possible way that they like. Teachers teach in a way that their students can pass the final year tests or university entrance examination. It seems that the policy is just teach English, but who, how, and why is not important.

4. Conclusion

I myself always wondered why the students in Iran can not speak English (not even a sentence) after learning English for seven years at school. But now I know the answer.

If we want the students to believe English as a second or foreign language, it is essential to change the policy of English teaching at Iranian high schools. The government, the families and the schools should change their attitude towards English language. At first this question should be answered by the government, the families and the schools. How important is it to learn other languages? This is the question of value. It implies value judgments as the positive value of language (the study of language as worthwhile or good) or the negative value of language (the study of language as worthless or bad). Students will have positive motivation by changing their
attitudes towards second language culture and using second language effectively. Students will find it difficult to learn a second language in the classroom if they have no motivation. The easiest and best form or class of second language learning is which on that the students know and accept the target culture and language, want to get something of the second language learning for themselves, are eager to experience the benefits of bilingualism and are thirsty for knowledge (Cook, 2008). Littlewood, 1981 mentions that students should be given opportunities to develop strategies for interpreting language as it is actually used by native speakers. Students will be better motivated by texts that have served a real communicative purpose, and authentic texts provide a rich source of natural language for the learner to acquire language from (Little et al., 1988).

Learning a second language implies some degree of learning a second culture (Brown, 2000). Moving from first language to second language will lead the learner to a comparison of cultural values in two different societies. The way in which members of the second language community are perceived or approached is an expression of ethnic value judgments. Even the desired degree of bilingual competence to be achieved by the students is ultimately a value question (Stern, 1991). Second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target-language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language (Schumann, 1978). Culture is not something that we can separate it from language. If the students do not know anything about the target language culture, it means they do never learn that language completely. Social and psychological distance influence second language acquisition by determining the amount of contact learners have with the target language and the degree to which they are open to the input that is available (Mc Laughlin, 1987).

The teacher’s treatment of the language learner and of the learning process indicates philosophical values. Are learners participants in the teaching-learning process, or are they treated as passive recipients of pre-arranged mechanical activities? (Stern, 1991). The students need to get familiar and practice a variety of texts and topics. The texts and the topics should be interesting enough to satisfy all tastes. Harmer (2000) mentions that one of the greatest enemies of successful teaching is students’ boredom, and variety is the key to success.

Grammatical competence is just one part of language competence. Learning a language means knowing more than just grammar and vocabulary (Brown, 2000). The communicative approaches stress the significance of language functions rather than focusing solely on grammar.
and vocabulary. It means training the students to use the language forms appropriately in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes. In real communication, the accuracy of language is less important than successful achievement of the communicative task they are performing (Harmer, 2001). By learning to communicate, students will be more motivated to study a foreign language since they will feel that they are learning to do something useful with the language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). The students should have a desire and a purpose for communicating.

It is hard to understand why we should waste the teachers and the students’ time and energy, why the parents should spend extra money on English institutes when they can learn English at schools. Just by changing the policy of English teaching and learning, and then changing the system, the method, the attitude, and the books; the government can save a lot of money, energy, and time. And English teachers and learners will experience an effective English teaching and learning process at schools.

**References**


Title
Learners’ Beliefs, Teachers’ Beliefs: Are They Different?

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Abstract
The purpose of this study is to investigate the undergraduate EFL learners’ beliefs toward FLL and that of their teachers at Sheikhbahaee University to see whether there is any gap between the beliefs of the two above mentioned groups or not. In this study, 30 linguistically homogenous female students (based on OPT scores- intermediate group) and ten of their teachers were selected and asked to complete the Persian version of Horwitz' BALLI. The findings revealed that learners had different beliefs toward learning English as a foreign language. In fact, the results were more in line with other previously conducted studies. The mismatch between learners’ and teachers’ beliefs was more apparent in greater emphasis of students on the role of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and translation indicating the fact that their beliefs are more in line with traditional approaches to language learning. They also tended to underestimate the length of time it takes to become fluent in L2. Moreover, Students and teachers had different beliefs as far as the influence of one's gender and intelligence on foreign language acquisition processes is concerned.

Keywords: Learning a language, teachers’ beliefs, Learners beliefs.
1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Purpose of the Study

In the last three decades, there has been a shift in focus in the field of second language acquisition from teaching methods to learner characteristics. It has become clearer that much of the responsibility for success in language learning may rest with the efforts of individual learners. Consequently, numerous studies have been conducted from the learners' perspective, and these perspectives have come to inform the field of language pedagogy. Among these perspectives are learners' beliefs about language learning which are the result of a number of factors that shape one's thinking and belief formation, including past experiences, culture, context, and numerous personal factors (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005).

Learners beliefs, according to Richardson (1996, cited in Peacock, 2001), are “psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true”. Since learner beliefs about language learning may be among the most accessible to change by the learner (Horwitz, 1987) they are important to consider. For example, Horwitz (1987) states from her own experience that many anxious language learners believe that they are supposed to understand every word in their foreign language class. Young (1991) adds that unrealistic beliefs about the importance of correctness in grammar or pronunciation, or about the time it takes to learn a foreign language, can also lead to frustration and anxiety.

In the classroom context, the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and metacognitive knowledge that students bring with them to the learning situation have been recognized as a significant contributory factor in the learning process and ultimate success (Breen, 2001). For example, second or foreign language students may hold strong beliefs about the nature of the language under study, its difficulty, the process of its acquisition, the success of certain learning strategies, the existence of aptitude, their own expectations about achievement and teaching methodologies. Identification of these beliefs and reflection on their potential impact on language learning and teaching in general, as well as in more specific areas such as the learners' expectations and strategies used, can inform future syllabus design and teacher practice in the course. Pedagogy has the capacity to provide the opportunities and conditions within which these learner
contributions are found to have a positive effect upon learning and may be more fully engaged (Breen, 2001; Arnold, 1999).

This study aims to investigate learners’ and teachers’ beliefs toward learning English as a foreign language learning in the Iranian context by using the students’ and teachers’ version of Horwitz’ BALLI and determine the potential gap that may exist in the learners' and teachers' held beliefs toward FLL.

1.2. Research Question and Hypothesis

Research Question: Is there any mismatch between learners' beliefs among undergraduate students majoring in English language at Sheikhhahae University and that of their teachers toward FLL?

Null Hypothesis: There is no mismatch between the beliefs of the above mentioned learners and that of their teachers toward FLL.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study can complement previous studies by its direct focus on the potential gap that might exist between learners' and teachers' held beliefs toward FLL in the Iranian context.

The significance of this study is that it can shed light on Iranian university students' problems regarding the beliefs that they hold as learners, compared to that of their teachers, toward FLL. Identification of any gap between their (teachers' & learners') beliefs can help both learners and teachers in the process of learning and teaching.

In short, the findings of this study can be theoretically and practically helpful to both teachers and learners. The findings of this research may help teachers to better understand and consequently meet the expectations that learners have for their English class. And finally, if certain beliefs were found to be different from that of their teachers, attempts to modify these beliefs can help reduce the existing gap and consequently improve the learning and teaching of this internationally accepted language.

2. Review of the related literature

In this part, the pertinent literature on the beliefs about foreign language learning will be reviewed. But Before reviewing, it seems necessary to become familiar with what Horwitz’ BALLI include:
The BALLI was developed by Horwitz (1983, 1988) to identify students' beliefs about language learning. The BALLI contains 34 items related to beliefs in five major categories: 1) foreign language aptitude, 2) difficulty of language learning, 3) natures of language learning, 4) learning and communication strategies, and 5) motivations and expectations.

2.1. Beliefs about Language Learning

2.1.1. Studies on learners' beliefs about language learning

In this part, two studies conducted by Horwitz herself on learner beliefs in late 1980s (1987, 1988) by means of the BALLI together with other related studies are discussed.

The first conducted study was in 1987 in ESL classrooms at the University of Texas at Austin, with 32 ESL students from different backgrounds involved. Horwitz suggests that students come to ESL classroom with preconceived beliefs about language learning, among which some are consistent with instructional activities, while some are not. The origins of the learner beliefs of language learning may vary from the students’ previous experiences as language learners to cultural backgrounds and different beliefs about language learning may well be “as significant source of culture clash” (Horwitz, 1987: 119). The findings of the study reveal some popular beliefs of these ESL students. For example, most of these ESL students do not believe that they personally lack the capacity to learn a language. Seventy-five percent of them believe that some languages are easier to learn than others. Many people believe that learning a language is merely a matter of translation from English or learning grammar rules or vocabulary words. From the study, Horwitz points out that the knowledge of student beliefs not only help students to “clear up some misconceptions about language learning”, but also help with teacher intervention.

In another study in 1988, Horwitz investigated the beliefs of 241 first-semester foreign language learners of German, French, and Spanish. She found some expressed beliefs were potentially problematic and detrimental to successful language learning. For instance, the learners seemed to be generally optimistic about language learning and somewhat underestimated the difficulty of language learning: 53% of the learners believed that they would learn to speak another language well and 43% of them thought that one would become fluent within two years if one spent one hour a day learning a foreign language. Sixty-three percent of
the students (most learners of Spanish and Germany) believed that a foreign language was mostly a matter of translating from English. Horwitz (1988: 292) proposed that such beliefs-mismatch between student expectations and realities might result in “negative outcomes for many language learners”. She also indicated that students who believed that language learning consisted of translation, or vocabulary memorization, or grammar application might adopt more traditional approaches of language learning and beliefs stressing the importance of target language accuracy were “a contributing factor” to anxiety reaction in foreign language learning (ibid: 292). In her 1990 report, Horwitz illustrated the potentially anxiety-producing tensions that could arise from such mismatches in students’ and teacher’ beliefs about language learning:

Many teachers using communicative approaches have encountered students who complain if their every mistake is not corrected, or if the teacher requires them to say something they have not practiced. At the same time, students who value the communication of meaning over grammatical accuracy may bristle when their utterances are corrected constantly (Horwitz, 1990: 24-25, cited in Kern, 1995: 72).

Mantle-Bromley (1995) used the BALLI (with five items omitted and one item expanded) to investigate the beliefs of 208 seventh grade middle school students learning from what teachers commonly held. Similar to Horwitz’s study (1988), the students underestimated the difficulty of language learning to a certain extent. For instance, 51% of the students believed they would learn to speak another language well. A majority of them 69% believed that one could become fluent in an L2 in 2 years’ time or less. On foreign language aptitude, a total of 41% of the students believed that some people are born with a special language learning aptitude, whereas only26% believed that they personally had that ability. The students also had their own conceptions related to how one learns another language. Thirty-six percent of the students did not believe that cultural understanding was necessary for language acquisition, and 33% of them did not believe that it would be better to learn the language in a country where the language was spoken. These conceptions however, “may hinder the students’ progress and persistence in language study” (Mantle-Bromley, 1995: 373). Mantle-Bromley concludes that positive attitudes and realistic beliefs have “links to proficiency” and recommends that teachers design and implement lessons on the language learning process that in corporate attitude-change methods, although she also addresses that researches need to be conducted to determine if such lessons can indeed alter students’ beliefs.
Shimo (2002) discovered two negative beliefs reported by 5 Japanese students studying at an American university. One was “listening is difficult”. All respondents reported that those who could pronounce English well could catch English sounds better. They believed that good pronunciations and listening comprehension skills were the keys to improve their listening comprehension skills. The other was “One cannot learn listening effectively in Japan”. These learners believed that the English learning environments in Japan could not provide enough opportunities to promote their listening comprehension competence.

Another study by Bernat (2004) used BALLI to explore 20 adult Vietnamese ESL learner beliefs about language learning. The findings indicated that all of respondents (100%) either strongly agreed or agreed the importance to repeat and practice the target language being acquired as well as better English proficiency was likely to bring greater job opportunities. Most of them (80%) endorsed the importance of excellent pronunciations. Only 55% learners agreed the statement “it is necessary to know about English speaking cultures to speak English”.

2.1.2. Studies on the gap between teacher and learner beliefs

During the last two decades significant advances in studying teacher beliefs have been made and the connection between teacher beliefs and educational practice has already been well established (Borg, 2003). However, there is still paucity in literature reporting the relationship between language teachers’ beliefs and their students’ beliefs about language learning. Understanding the gap between teacher and learner beliefs is the first step to bridge the gap. Recently some studies contrasting teacher and learner beliefs have been carried out.

Nunan (1988) compared the rating of “useful” ESL activities of 60 Australian ESL teachers and that of 517 Australian migrant ESL students conducted by Willing (1988, cited in Nunan, 1988) and he reports little correlation between teacher and learner viewpoints. Students rated pronunciation practice and error correction much higher, and self-discovery of errors, pair work, and listening to/ using cassettes much lower that the teachers. Nunan concludes that teachers seem to favor “communicative” activities, while learners like “traditional” activities more.

Block (1994) used an oral diary technique supplemented by classroom observation and interviews to investigate further the perceptual gap between teachers and learners in an EFL situation. One EFL teacher and six EFL learners were asked to comment on language classes on
a day-to-day basis. Block pointed out that there was a major gap between teacher and learners’ perceptions of the pedagogical purpose of activities, despite a high degree of agreement in what informants reported. For instance, the teacher’s objectives of the tasks are not well spelt out to the students, and students either have perceptions which differ from the teacher’s perceptions about the rationale for the tasks or no idea at all why they are being asked to do such tasks. Block suggested that teachers should make pedagogical purposes explicit to learners and further researches on individual differences in language learning process need to be conducted.

Kern (1995) conducted a study with the BALLI at the University of Berkeley, comparing one group of students’ beliefs about language learning with those of their teachers. She suggested that the unit of analysis was crucial to the result of the research. From the global level of analysis, students and teachers appear to be quite similar in terms of their beliefs about language learning. From the particular level, however, more differences between students and teachers come to light, from the nature of language learning (learners rated the usefulness of pronunciation practice, learning grammar rules, translation, and error correction much higher than did teachers) to pedagogy (error correction cultural knowledge) to length of time needed to become fluent.

Peacock (1998) conducted a research on teacher’ and learners’ beliefs about “useful” activities for EFL in Hongkong. One hundred and fifty-eight EFL students and thirty EFL teachers in Hongkong University participated in the study. A considerable mismatch between learner and teacher beliefs was found, in particular, learners rated error correction and grammar exercises much higher, and pair work and group work much lower, than did the teachers. Peacock concludes that this wide gap almost certainly had a negative effect on learners’ linguistic progress, satisfaction with the class, and confidence in their teachers. Finally Peacock proposes that teachers at least consider giving more autonomy in choosing activities, and also make clear to learners the rationale behind unpopular activities --- particularly group work and pair work.

Peacock also did a study in 1999 investigating the beliefs about language learning of 202 EFL students and 45 EFL teachers in Hongkong. The primary aim was to determine if the differences between student and teacher beliefs about language learning affect proficiency. He used the BALLI questionnaire, proficiency test and the self-rated proficiency as well as learner interviews. The results of the BALLI were similar to those found by Horwitz, Kern and Mantle-
Bromley in that students responses differed from common teacher perceptions on the same items. A statistically significance association was found between learner beliefs and proficiency on four items. The students who agreed that “learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rule” were less proficient than those who disagreed. The students who disagreed with the statement “If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on” were more proficient than those who agreed. Students who underestimated the difficulty of learning a foreign language were less proficient than those with a more realistic view. The students who disagreed with the statement “You shouldn’t say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly” were more proficient than those who agreed. Peacock concluded that a number of different learner beliefs were detrimental to language learning and they also resulted in many dissatisfied and frustrated students who could not understand that rationale behind the tasks they carried out in class.

In a recent study, Siebert (2003) explored beliefs about language learning held by 156 ESL students and 25 teachers at institutions of higher education in the Northwest region of the US, using a survey questionnaire. Findings obtained in the US context reveal that students placed strong emphasis on pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary learning and translation. Siebert also noted that a number of student beliefs, such as those related to language learning methods, differed from those held by their teachers and that this had significant pedagogical implications.

In another recent study, Davies (2003) investigated the mismatch of 18 teachers’ and 97 learners’ beliefs in a tertiary institution in a small territory of Macao (a special administrative region of China). Using a survey instrument, Davies reported robust differences between the two groups. For example, students were much stronger than teachers in their belief that:

- teachers should correct students when they made grammatical mistakes in order to prevent the formation of bad habits;
- most of the mistakes L2 learners made were due to interference from L1;
- teachers should present grammatical rules one at a time and students should practice each of these before moving on; and
- teachers should use materials that expose students only to those language structures that have already been taught (this matter being of greatest disagreement).
Davis concluded that students sought a more structured and safer approach, basing their views on a different theoretical underpinning from that of their teachers, and thus essentially supporting very different classroom practices.

Classroom activities and tasks were also investigated by Eslami-Rasekh and Valizadeh (2004) using 603 EFL Iranian students and 27 teachers. Unlike many other studies, findings revealed that students had indeed a higher preference for communicative activities than did their teachers, and that their teachers were not aware of this mismatch.

Chiou (2006) also investigated the English listening beliefs held by teachers and students. Ninety-six students and sixty-three teachers (S = 96, T = 63) participated in the study. Research findings revealed that the students stressed the importance of excellent English pronunciation. All teacher subjects endorsed the concept of the importance in understanding English-speaking cultures to better understand the language. Both of the groups felt that it was permissible to guess the meaning of inputs when they did not know the vocabulary or idioms. Besides, both of groups placed high value of prior knowledge while processing incoming messages. However, though all of the teacher subjects place a very high value on knowing about English-speaking cultures in order to better understand the language, only about half of the student subjects support the concept.

These studies show the difference in learner beliefs in both the context and the method by means of which these studies have been carried out. Therefore, it can be concluded that any generalization in this regard may be out of place.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

In the initial phase, 67 undergraduate students majoring in English language at Sheikhbahaee University participated. After administering the OPT (Oxford Placement Test- Appendix A), 30 linguistically homogenous female students were selected on the basis of their OPT score. The age of these 30 participants ranged from 18 to 24 with the mean of 20.03. For the sake of answering the research question, ten of their teachers also participated in this study by completing the teachers’ version of Horwitz’ BALLI (Appendix D).
3.2 Instruments

3.2.1. The English language proficiency test
In order to control the sex factor, the male students were not allowed to take part and to control the proficiency factor; there was a need to linguistically homogenize the participants according to their level of L2 proficiency. To do so, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was used to select the intermediate group. The test consisted of 60 questions. There were five cloze test passages (25 questions), 19 multiple choice questions related to the knowledge of vocabulary, 11 multiple choice questions which assessed the participants knowledge of grammar, and five questions related to their knowledge of different signs and notices used to indicate particular meanings.

3.2.2. Beliefs about foreign language inventory (BALLI)
Horwitz’ (1985, 1987, 1988) BALLI (teacher and student versions- Appendix B & D) were used to collect data. The teacher version has 27 items and the students’ version has 34 items. Both instruments contain statements related to the following categories:

1. The difficulty of language learning: Items 3, 4, 15, 25 and 34.
2. Aptitude for language learning: Items 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 16, 19, 30 and 33.
3. The nature of language learning process: Items 8, 12, 17, 23 and 27, 28.
4. Learning and communication strategies: Items 7, 9, 13, 14, 18, 21, 22 and 26.

All respondents were required to rate their agreement to each statement on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

The BALLI, as Horwitz puts it, could be “helpful to teachers both determining popular beliefs of their students as well as identifying minority groups or individuals with differing opinions” (Horwitz, 1985: 271). For the ease of responding and preventing any misunderstanding, the Persian version of BALLI was used for the current study.

3.3 Procedure
In the initial phase, the OPT (Appendix A) was administered to 67 female undergraduate students majoring in English language. Then, on the basis of their scores, the intermediate group (students with scores between 28-47) was selected. In order to control the sex variable, the male students were excluded from this study. In the second phase, the selected students
(n=30) and ten of their teachers were asked to complete the Persian versions of BALLI (Appendix C). Before completing the scales, they were given the necessary instructions. The results of the research question were also described through comparing learners' beliefs with that of their teachers.

4. Results

4.1. The gap between teachers' and learners' beliefs toward FLL

In this section, the beliefs of students and teachers toward FLL are compared to see whether there is any gap or not.

Since all items in the teachers' version of BALLI are not applicable to students, just 26 items were found to be common between them. In this section, the comparison is based on the logical categorization of Horwitz whose grouping created five categories:

1. The difficulty of language learning,
2. Aptitude for language learning,
3. The nature of language learning process,
4. Learning and communication strategies and finally

4.1.1. The difficulty of language learning

The five items of this category are concerned with the general difficulty of learning a foreign language and the specific difficulty of the students’ particular target language (English). The responses given to the items of this category reveal that while both students and their teachers agreed that some languages are more easily learned (item 3), their beliefs were not in line with each other as far as the length of time taken for learning English is concerned (item 15). Whereas 64% of the participants believed in learning English in less than two years, just 30% of their teachers had such a belief. In fact, 70% of the teachers believed in learning English after 3 years (50%) or even after five years (20%).
Table 4.1.1 (the difficulty of foreign language learning)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.</td>
<td>80*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. English is**</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. If someone spent one hour a day learning English, how long would it take them to speak English very well:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) less than a year,</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 1-2 years,</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) 3-5 years,</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) 5-10 years,</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) You can't learn a language in 1 hour a day.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. It is easier to speak than understand English.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. It is easier to read and write English than to speak it.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Frequency of responses (in %). A= scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D= scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree. **A= very difficult or difficult language; N = language of medium difficulty; D = A very easy or easy language.

4.1.2. Foreign language aptitude

Both the learners and the teachers of the present study believed in the easier learning of English by children and those who already speak a foreign language. They also believed in the ability of everyone to learn to speak a foreign language, the role of aptitude in language learning and the lack of any distinction between an aptitude for the sciences and an aptitude for the humanities subjects.
The main mismatch in this category relates to items 19 and 30. While students believed more in the role of intelligence, their teachers emphasized the superiority of women in learning English as a foreign language.

Table 4.1.2 (Foreign language aptitude)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>T</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.</td>
<td>80*</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Some people have a special ability for learning foreign language.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Frequency of responses (in %). A= scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D= scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

4.1.3. Nature of language learning

In this category, the role of target culture, natural setting and the beliefs students hold toward the role of grammar, vocabulary and translation are emphasized.

The discrepancy of the responses between teachers and learners is more apparent in this category. Greater emphasis of students on the role of grammar, vocabulary and translation indicates the fact that their beliefs are more in line with traditional approaches to language learning.

The similarity of the responses between the two groups relate to items 8, 12, and to some extent 27 in which both agreed about the role of target culture, natural setting and the difference between learning English and learning other academic subjects.
Table 4.1.3 (Nature of language learning)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. It is necessary to know about English-speaking culture in order to learn to speak English.</td>
<td>*70</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The most important part of learning English is learning vocabulary words.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Learning English is different from learning other academic subjects.</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Frequency of responses (in %). A = scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N = Neutral; D = scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

4.1.4. Learning and communication strategies

The first and most noticeable discrepancy between held beliefs of learners and teachers is seen in item 7 which shows great importance of excellent pronunciation for students. Both groups disagreed with item 9 almost strongly by believing in not postponing speaking till achieving full fluency. By considering the fact that learning a foreign language like English (in Iran) happens through trial and error, the responses seem logical. Teachers and learners showed their agreement about items 18 and 26 by emphasizing the importance of repeating and practicing and the role of cassettes or tapes in learning English.

Table 4.1.4 (Learning and communication strategies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. It is important to speak English with excellent pronunciation.</td>
<td>87*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. It is okay to guess if you don't know a word in English.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. It is important to repeat and practice a</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.

It is important to practice with cassettes or tapes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>---</th>
<th>---</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Frequency of responses (in %). A= scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D= scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

4.1.5. Motivations and expectations

According to the teacher version of the BALLI, there were just two items of this category applicable to both teachers and learners. According to Table 4.4.5, While 70% of the students thought that speaking English is important for Iranians, just 40% of their teachers had such a belief (item 20). By emphasizing that students' competency can provide them with better job opportunities, both teachers and learners strongly agreed with item 29.

Table 4.1.5 (Motivations and expectations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. People in my country feel that it is important to speak English.</td>
<td>S 70*</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T 40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. If I/students learn to speak English very well, I/they will have better job opportunities</td>
<td>S 93</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T 90</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Frequency of responses (in %). A= scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D= scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree

5. Conclusion

5.1. Beliefs about Language Learning

The responses to the BALLI items revealed that the motivation of Iranian students in this study was both instrumental and integrative (items 24, 29 and 32). For example, 28 out of 30 students (93%) believed that learning a foreign language would help them find better jobs (item 29) and also had integrative motivation for their intention to learn English so that they could know native speakers of English better (54%, item 24) and were eager to have friends whose mother tongues are English (76%, item32).
Eighty four percent of the participants (23 out of 30) believed that they would ultimately learn to speak English very well. Although 50% of the participants rated English as a language of medium difficulty (item 4), 47% believed that two years for learning English would suffice (item 15).

While 77% of the participants (23 out of 30) believed that some students have a special ability for learning English (item 2), just 53% (16 out of 30) believed in having such an ability themselves (item 16) and this belief that they are not equipped with such an ability might have negative effects on them.

The students of this study also attached great importance to the role of vocabulary in learning English (70%, item 17), speaking with excellent pronunciation (87%, item 7) and the importance of knowing about the English-speaking culture (70%, item 8). They also were in favor of learning English in an English-speaking country (70%, item 12), practicing English with native speakers of English (86%, item 13) and guessing the meaning of a word they do not know (85%, item 14). Practicing and repeating a lot (100%, item 18) and easier learning of English by children (80%, item 1) were other statements that could noticeably attract the attention of the participants.

5.2. The gap between teachers' and learners' beliefs toward FLL
The findings revealed that the mismatch between learners and teachers beliefs were more apparent in greater emphasis of students on the role of grammar, vocabulary and translation indicating the fact that their beliefs are more in line with traditional approaches to language learning. They also tended to underestimate the length of time it takes to become fluent in L2. Students and teachers also held different beliefs as far as the influence of one's gender and intelligence on foreign language acquisition processes are concerned.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications
The findings of this study can have several important pedagogical implications for both learning and teaching.

The analysis of the BALLI items revealed that different students had different beliefs towards learning English as a foreign language. Iranian students in this study showed their great eagerness to learn this internationally accepted language very well (100%, item 31) and this is
surely a very helpful belief that can facilitate language learning. But, maybe these good and correct beliefs cannot guarantee their learning because of the other harmful beliefs that they hold such as placing a great deal of emphasis on excellent pronunciation (87%, item 7) and believing that less than two years for learning English is enough (47%, item 15). In this case, the students are faced with mismatching beliefs clashing with the reality of language learning and consequently frustrations and disappointments might emerge. In such cases, it is the role of the teacher to “confront erroneous beliefs with new information” (Horwitz, 1987, p. 126).

Not only in this study, but also in other previously conducted studies the mismatch between teachers and learners’ beliefs is seen. There are some strategies that might help reduce this mismatch.

Sometimes the source of such wrong beliefs goes back to what is known as culture or background. Therefore, culture and background of the students should also be taken into account by teachers. It seems that there is a need for teachers to devote sessions to talk with students about the real and helpful beliefs about language learning. This will help both students to become familiar with correct and realistic beliefs and teachers to get most from their classes.

It is worth mentioning the strategy suggested by Sim (2007) who found that by integrating a structured and explicit focus on goal setting each week, and getting students to become more proactive and autonomous learners, he was able to change the beliefs of participants in his treatment group to fit closer to those of their teachers. In an experimental study involving 84 pre-entry university students, Sim found that by the treatment group had received instruction and guidance in setting own autonomous learning goals and in using specific strategies. Seeing the benefits of implementing these new goals and active learning strategies, their beliefs, which were re-tested at the end of a 10-week, period had shifted.

The first and the most noticeable limitation of this study relates to the nature of the instruments used in this study. The BALLI is a self-report measure and the results of such studies depend to a high extent on the willingness and ability of the students to respond accurately to the items.

The second limitation may go back to the choice of participants themselves. The low number of teachers and the 30 selected participants used in this study may not fully represent Iranian undergraduate students and teachers in other universities. Therefore, any generalization in this regard may be out of place.
The participants of the present study were female students whose major was English and possibly this would influence the beliefs they hold toward their field (English). It seems necessary to conduct other similar studies in other universities and majors before making any generalization.

The only self-report instruments used in this study (BALLI) may not suffice. Therefore, it is recommended to supplement such instruments with observations or interviews in order to gain richer data.

Learners’ beliefs are susceptible to change during time and this change may also decrease or increase the level of anxiety. Therefore, as it is pointed out by Horwitz (1988) "it is essential to determine how student beliefs change over the course of language instruction" (p. 291).

Since all the participants of the present study were female students, the role of sex was totally ignored. It is recommended to conduct other studies in which the role that sex might play on both the level of anxiety and held beliefs be investigated.

The last but not the least, this study was conducted among Iranian undergraduate EFL learners which means they have already studied English as a foreign language for at least seven years (three years at junior high school and four years at high school). As a person who has had the same experience, it seems necessary to me to investigate the past experience of students while learning English as a factor that shapes their beliefs (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005) and modify textbooks or teaching methods if necessary.

References


Appendices

Appendix A

Oxford University Press and University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate

Name: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Date: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Quick Placement Test

Version 1

This test is divided into two parts:

Part One (Questions 1 – 40) – All students.

Part Two (Questions 41 – 60) – Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Time: 30 minutes

Part 1

Questions 1 – 5

- Where can you see these notices?
- For questions 1 to 5, mark one letter A, B or C on your Answer Sheet.
1. **Please leave your room key at Reception.**
   - A in a shop
   - B in a hotel
   - C in a taxi

2. **Foreign money changed here**
   - A in a library
   - B in a bank
   - C in a police station

3. **AFTERNOON SHOW BEGINS AT 2PM**
   - A outside a theatre
   - B outside a supermarket
   - C outside a restaurant

4. **CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS**
   Lessons start again on the 8th January
   - A at a travel agent’s
   - B at a music school
   - C at a restaurant

5. **Price per night:**
   - £10 a tent
   - £5 a person
   - A at a cinema
   - B in a hotel
   - C on a camp-site

**Questions 6 – 10**

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the text below.
- For questions 6 to 10, mark one letter A, B or C on your Answer Sheet.
Scotland

Scotland is the north part of the island of Great Britain. The Atlantic Ocean is on the west and the North Sea on the east. Some people (6) ................. Scotland speak a different language called Gaelic.

There are (7) ................. five million people in Scotland, and Edinburgh is (8) ................. most famous city.

Scotland has many mountains; the highest one is called ‘Ben Nevis’. In the south of Scotland, there are
a lot of sheep. A long time ago, there (9) ................. many forests, but now there are only a (10) ................. .

Scotland is only a small country, but it is quite beautiful.

6 A on        B in        C at
7 A about     B between   C among
8 A his       B your      C its
9 A is        B were      C was
10 A few      B little    C lot

Questions 11 – 20

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the texts.
- For questions 11 to 20, mark one letter A, B, C or D on your Answer Sheet.

Alice Guy Blaché

Alice Guy Blaché was the first female film director. She first became involved in cinema whilst working for the Gaumont Film Company in the late 1890s. This was a period of great change in the cinema and Alice was the first to use many new inventions, (11) ................. sound and colour.

In 1907 Alice (12) ................. to New York where she started her own film company. She was (13) ................. successful, but, when Hollywood became the centre of the film world, the best days of the independent New York film companies were (14) ................. . When Alice died in
1968, hardly anybody (15) .................. her name.

11 A bringing  B including  C containing  D supporting
12 A moved  B ran  C entered  D transported
13 A next  B once  C immediately  D recently
14 A after  B down  C behind  D over
15 A remembered  B realised  C reminded  D repeated

**UFOs – do they exist?**

UFO is short for ‘unidentified flying object’. UFOs are popularly known as flying saucers, (16) .................. that is often the (17) .................. they are reported to be. The (18) ..................

"flying saucers" were seen in 1947 by an American pilot, but experts who studied his claim decided it had been a trick of the light.

Even people experienced at watching the sky, (19) .................. as pilots, report seeing UFOs. In 1978 a pilot reported a collection of UFOs off the coast of New Zealand. A television (20) .................. went up with the pilot and filmed the UFOs. Scientists studying this phenomenon later discovered that in this case they were simply lights on boats out fishing.

16 A because  B therefore  C although  D so
17 A look  B shape  C size  D type
18 A last  B next  C first  D oldest
19 A like  B that  C so  D such
20 A cameraman  B director  C actor  D announcer

**Questions 21 – 40**

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence.
- For questions 21 to 40, mark one letter A, B, C or D on your Answer Sheet.
21 The teacher encouraged her students .................. to an English pen-friend.
    A should write  B Write  C wrote  D to write

22 They spent a lot of time .................. at the pictures in the museum.
    A looking  B for looking  C to look  D to looking

23 Shirley enjoys science lessons, but all her experiments seem to .................. wrong.
    A turn  B Come  C end  D go
24 from Michael, all the group arrived on time.
A Except B Other C Besides D Apart

25 her neighbour’s children for the broken window.
A accused B Complained C blamed D denied

26 my friend went the homework with me.
A by B After C over D on

27 whether she’s a good actress or not is a of opinion.
A matter B Subject C point D case

28 the decorated roof of the ancient palace was by four thin columns.
A built B Carried C held D supported

29 you if we came on Thursday?
A agree B Suit C like D fit

30 be handed in until the end of the week.
A doesn’t need B doesn’t have C needn’t D hasn’t got

31 it out with your pen.
A cross B Clear C do D Wipe

32 , we’re good friends.
A differ B Oppose C disagree D divide

33 two days of purchase.
A by B Before C within D under

34 important information.
A many B Another C an D a lot of

35 to London?
A move B to move C to be moving D moving

36 to increase their of
vitamins.
A upturn B Input C upkeep D intake

37 I thought there was a ................. of jealousy in his reaction to my good fortune.
A piece B Part C shadow D touch

38 Why didn’t you ................. that you were feeling ill?
A advise B Mention C remark D tell

39 James was not sure exactly where his best interests ................. .
A stood B Rested C lay D centred

40 He’s still getting ................. the shock of losing his job.
A across B By C over D through

Part 2

Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Questions 41 – 50
• In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best fits each space in the texts.
• For questions 41 to 50, mark one letter A, B, C or D on your Answer Sheet.

The tallest buildings - SKYSCRAPERS

Nowadays, skyscrapers can be found in most major cities of the world. A building which was many (41) ................. high was first called a skyscraper in the United States at the end of the 19th century, and New York has perhaps the (42) ................. skyscraper of them all, the Empire State Building. The (43) ................. beneath the streets of New York is rock, (44) ................. enough to take the heaviest load without sinking, and is therefore well-suited to bearing the (45) ................. of tall buildings.

41 A stages B steps C storeys D levels
42 A first-rate B top-class C well-built D best-known
43 A dirt B field C ground D soil
44 A hard B stiff C forceful D powerful
SCRABBLE

Scrabble is the world’s most popular word game. For its origins, we have to go back to the 1930s in the USA, when Alfred Butts, an architect, found himself out of work. He decided that there was a market for a board game based on words and scale. To design one. Eventually he made a wealth from it, in spite of the fact that his original receipt was only three cents a game.

Questions 51 – 60

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence.
- For questions 51 to 60, mark one letter A, B, C or D on your Answer Sheet.

51. Roger’s manager ............... to make him stay late if he hadn’t finished the work.
   A. insisted  B. Warned  C. threatened  D. announced

52. By the time he has finished his week’s work, John has hardly ............... energy left for the weekend.
   A. any  B. Much  C. no  D. same

53. As the game ............... to a close, disappointed spectators started to leave.
   A. led  B. Neared  C. approached  D. drew

54. I don’t remember ............... the front door when I left home this morning.
   A. to lock  B. Locking  C. locked  D. to have locked

55. I ............... to other people borrowing my books: they always forget to return them.
   A. disagree  B. Avoid  C. dislike  D. object

56. Andrew’s attempts to get into the swimming team have not ............... with much success.
   A. associated  B. Concluded  C. joined  D. met
Although Harry had obviously read the newspaper article carefully, he didn’t seem to have ................. the main point.

A. grasped  B. Clutched  C. clasped  D. gripped

A lot of the views put forward in the documentary were open to ................. .

A. enquiry  B. Query  C. question  D. wonder

The new college ................. for the needs of students with a variety of learning backgrounds.

A. deals  B. Supplies  C. furnishes  D. caters

I find the times of English meals very strange – I’m not used ................. dinner at 6pm.

A. to have  B. to having  C. having  D. have

Scale and the Key of Oxford Placement Test:

1-17 (Beginner), 18-27 (Elementary), 28-36 (Lower intermediate), 37-47 (Upper intermediate), 48-55 (Advanced), 56-60 (very advanced).

Appendix B

Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

English Version

Below are some statements about learning foreign languages. Read each statement and then decide if you (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree. There is no right or wrong answers. We are simply interested in your opinions. Questions 4 & 14 are slightly different and you should mark them as indicated.

REMEMBER:  
1. Strongly disagree  
2. Disagree  
3. Neither agree nor disagree  
4. Agree  
5. Strongly agree

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn English.
2. Some people have a special ability for learning English.
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.
4. The English language is: 1) a very difficult language, 2) a difficult language, 3) a language of medium difficulty, 4) an easy language, 5) a very easy language.
5. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak the English language very well.
6. People in my country are good at learning English.
7. It is important to speak the English language with an excellent pronunciation.
8. It is necessary to know about English-speaking culture in order to learn to speak English.
9. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
11. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning English.
12. It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.
13. I enjoy practicing English with native speakers of English.
14. It is okay to guess if you don't know a word in English.
15. If someone spent one hour a day learning English, how long would it take them to speak English very well: 1) less than a year, 2) 1-2 years, 3) 3-5 years, 4) 5-10 years, 5) You can't learn a language in 1 hour a day.
16. I have a special ability for learning English.
17. The most important part of learning English is learning vocabulary words.
18. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.
19. Women are better than men at learning English.
20. People in my country feel that it is important to speak English.
21. I feel timid speaking English with other people.
22. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.
23. The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar.
24. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know native speakers of English better.
25. It is easier to speak than understand English.
26. It is important to practice with cassettes or tapes.
27. Learning English is different from learning other academic subjects.
28. The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.
29. If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities for a good job.
30. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.
31. People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.
32. I want to learn to speak English well.
33. Everyone can learn to speak English.
34. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.

**Appendix C**

Persian Version of BALLI:

دستور اجرای تست:

دانشجوی عزیز، جملات (34-1) در مورد باورهای شما نسبت به یادگیری زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبانی خارجی می‌باشند. لطفاً پاس از خواندن دقیق هر جمله گزینه‌ای را که می‌پینید برای انتخاب نپذیرید.
20. صحتی کردن به زبان انگلیسی برای مردم کشورمان امری مهم به شمار می‌آید.

21. من از اینکه با دیگران انگلیسی صحبت کنم هراس دارم.

22. اگری که زبان امریکایی در مرحله مقدماتی اجازه اشتیاک داده شود در اینده درست صحتی کردن به‌روش مشکل خواهد شد.

23. مهمترین بخش دادنی‌کردن زبان انگلیسی یادگیری گرامر است.

24. از علاقه مندی که انگلیسی را بیاموزم ما بتوان آزادین انگلیسی زبان را بهتر بشناسیم.

25. صحبتی کردن به زبان انگلیسی از درک آن سادتر است.

26. تمرینی کردن زبان انگلیسی با نوار و ضبط مهم است.

27. یادگیری زبان انگلیسی از یادگیری دیگر دروس دانشگاهی متفاوت است.

28. مهمترین بخش دادنی‌کردن زبان انگلیسی اموختن چه نوعی تجربه کردن از زبان مادری (فارسی) به زبان انگلیسی است.

Appendix D

The Teacher Version of the BALLI

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn English.
2. Some people have a special ability for learning English.
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.
4. The language I am planning to teach is: 1) a very difficult language, 2) a difficult language, 3) a language of medium difficulty, 4) an easy language, 5) a very easy language.
5. It is important to speak English with excellent accent.
6. It is necessary to know about English-speaking culture in order to learn to speak English.
7. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.
8. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
9. It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.
10. It is okay to guess if you don't know a word in English.
11. If someone spent one hour a day learning English, how long would it take them to speak English very well: 1) less than a year, 2) 1-2 years, 3) 3-5 years, 4) 5-10 years, 5) You can't learn a language in 1 hour a day.
12. The most important part of learning English is learning vocabulary words.
13. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.
14. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.
15. The most important part of learning English is learning the grammar.
16. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.
17. Women are better than men in learning English.
18. It is easier to speak than understand English.
19. Learning English is different from learning other academic subjects.
20. The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language.
21. If students learn English very well, they will have better opportunities for a good job.
22. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.
23. People who are good at math or science are not good at learning English.
24. Iranians think that it is important to speak English.
25. People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.
26. Iranians are good at learning English.
27. Everyone can learn to speak English.
Title

Evaluation of Integrative Grammar Teaching
The Case of English Two-word verbs And Adjective /verb + Preposition For
Iranian EFL Learners

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BIO data
Jaber Ahmadi holds an M.A. in TEFL. He has taught English in Iran for twenty three years. He is now teaching English courses at several universities including: Islamic Azad University, Farsan Branch, and Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord Branch, Farsan Applied Science & Technology University, Shahrekord Technical College and Shahrekord Teacher Training Center. His area of research is mainly teaching methodology and testing.

Abstract

This study addresses the issue of integrative grammar teaching to EFL students with the focus on form and meaning. Integrative grammar teaching consists of three major stages: (a) exploration: This stage is characterized by inductive learning. Students are given sentences illustrating a certain grammar rule and are asked as a group to find the pattern. (b) explanation: As students find sequences or patterns in the examples they used during the exploration stage, the teacher or the students can summarize what was previously discovered, now focusing on the form, and (c) expression: In this stage, students start practicing the production of meaningful sentences in peer groups in interactive tasks. The rationale of this stage is to provide students experience in applying their acquired knowledge in practice by making meaningful sentences. This study has attempted to investigate a) whether instruction of two-word verbs and adjective/verb + preposition through integrative teaching is more effective and bears more lasting effect than instruction of the same structures through a traditional way, namely, memorization, repetition,
and translation. For this purpose, two homogeneous groups of third grade high school students were selected as control and experimental groups. Four tests: A proficiency test, a pretest; a posttest and a delayed posttest were administered in each group. The results of data analysis indicated that: Learners who received instruction on two-word verbs and adjective; verb + preposition through the integrative grammar teaching did better on the post-test and the delayed post-test than those who received instruction on the same structures through the traditional way. Key words: Grammar, Integrative Grammar teaching, ZPD, The EEE Method.

1. Introduction

Beginning in the 1970’s, interest in the teaching of language has increased as scholars have become more and more interested in the language used in various social and cultural settings. As a result, there has been a rapid shift of research and practice from audio-lingual and grammar translation methods to the exploration of communicative language teaching. Savignon (2002) makes clear that 'communication can not take place in the absence of structure, or grammar, a set of shared assumptions about how language works…. ' (P. 7). Canale and Swain (1980) included grammatical competence into their model of communicative competence. They did not suggest that grammar was unimportant. They sought rather to situate grammatical competence within a more broadly defined communicative competence.

A comparison of communicative to form-based approaches (Ellis1997) shows that communicative language teaching enables students to perform spontaneously, but does not guarantee linguistic accuracy of the utterances. On the other hand, form-based approaches focus on the linguistic and grammatical structures, which make speech grammatically accurate, but this accuracy is observed in prepared speech only, and students lack the ability to produce spontaneous speech. There are not many studies that compare communicative to form-based approaches. Prabhu (cited by Berreta & Davis 1985) conducted an experiment in communicative language teaching and found that the experimental group, which received meaning-based instruction, did well on the meaning-based test, but showed low results on the discrete-point test. The control group, on the other hand, having received structural instruction, performed better on the grammar structure tasks, rather than on the global and integrative tests. The outcome is quite
logical and can be explained by the washback effect. Students’ performance was better on the tasks they were trained for.

A review of the research starting from 1970’s (Ellis 1997) shows that communicative L2 teaching was perceived as a departure from grammar in favour of focusing on the meaning only. Discussions of CLT not infrequently lead to questions of grammatical or formal accuracy. The perceived displacement of attention toward morphosyntactical features in favour of focusing on meaning only has led in some cases to the impression that grammar is not important, or that proponents of CLT favour learners’ ability to express themselves without regard to form. While involvement in communicative events is seen as central to language development, this involvement necessarily requires attention to form (Savignon 2002).

The acquisition of two-word verbs presents learners with several tasks. First, learners must first learn that such verbs when followed by particles will have different meanings. Second, they must learn that such verbs can be stated in different ways, and that they are different from adjective/verb preposition structures both in form and meaning. My experience supports that one notable problem students have in learning the latter structure through the traditional way is that some prepositions, when translated into Farsi, cause interference and learners often have difficulty in applying the correct preposition. The other problem, based on my experience, is that students’ performance on such structures decreases if the time interval between the instruction and the exam is long. This is perhaps due to the fact that they are either taught linguistic rules detached from context or if they are taught in a communicative way, the linguistic rules are not brought to their focal attention.

The question then rises, what method is the most effective? As a possible solution, integrative grammar teaching combines a form-based with a meaning-based focus. Spada and Lightbown (1993) have argued 'that form focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of communicative interaction can contribute positively to second language development in both the short and long term' (p. 205). Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell (1997) call it "a turning point" in communicative language teaching (p. 141), in which "explicit, direct elements are gaining significance in teaching communicative abilities and skills" (p. 146). Kumaravadivelu calls this a "principled communicative approach" (cited by Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell, 1997). Musumeci (1997) mentions the idea of connecting form and meaning in grammar teaching as a developing trend in reference to the proficiency oriented
curriculum. She points out that students should be able to learn explicit grammar rules as well as have a chance to practice them in communication in the authentic or simulation tasks.

**Integrative grammar teaching**, which presupposes students' interaction while learning, can be viewed as a cognitive process of learning an L2 that reflects the sociocultural theory proposed by the Russian psychologist Vygotsky (1978). In talking about the development of a child's brain and his socialization, Vygotsky argues that there is a strong relationship between learning and cognitive development, in which cognition develops as a result of social interaction and sharing the responsibility with a parent or a more competent person. From an early age, children look to their parents for clues to acceptable social behavior. This brings us to Vygotsky's **zone of proximal development (ZPD)** in which there are two main stages of an individual's development. The first stage is what a child or learner can do by himself; the second stage is his potential, what he can accomplish with the help of another, more competent person. The distance between two points is called the zone of proximal development. Vygotsky also introduces the notion of a mediator - a person who helps students to accomplish what they cannot do by themselves. According to Appel and Lantolf (1994) and Lantolf and Pavlenko (1995), the role of the mediator in teaching an L2 is placed on an L2 teacher, whose task is to direct students in the right direction and help them reach the second stage in the ZPD. Learning through interaction was proposed as an alternative to learning through repetition and habit formation. Vygotsky's view of the zone of proximal development focuses on the gap between what the learner can currently do and the next stage in learning-the level of potential development—and how learning occurs through negotiation between the learner and a more advanced language user. To take part in these processes the learner must develop interactional competence. Personality, motivation, cognitive style may all play a role in influencing the learners willingness to take risks, his or her openness to social interaction and attitudes towards the target language and user of the target language (McCarth 2001: 83).

Based on the mentioned problem elaborated on earlier, the following research questions are proposed:

1. Does the application of integrative L2 grammar teaching have any significant effect on improving students’ grammar knowledge in comparison with those learning L2 grammar through the traditional way?
2. Does the integrative L2 grammar teaching account for long-term retention of grammar rules better than the traditional way of teaching?

Based on the two research questions, the following null hypotheses are proposed.
* There is no significant difference between students learning L2 grammar through the integrative teaching method and those learning it through the traditional way of teaching.
* There is no significant difference between students learning L2 grammar through the integrative teaching method and those learning L2 grammar through the traditional way of teaching in case of long-term retention of grammar rules.

2. Methodology

2.1. Subjects:

The subjects for this study were sixty male EFL students who participated in the English classes (English 3) at Esteki high school, Shahrekord, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. The subjects were to be selected randomly from a group of one hundred and twenty third grade high school students. All subjects were from the intermediate or low intermediate proficiency level, as determined by the students' scores on the Nelson Test of English Language.

2.2. Design

This study has attempted to investigate the effect of integrative grammar teaching on students' grammar knowledge. For this purpose, two homogeneous groups of third grade high school students were randomly selected as control and experimental groups. Then, a treatment (instruction of two-word verbs and adjective/verb + preposition through the integrative teaching was offered to the experimental group, and a placebo (instruction through a traditional way of teaching: memorization, repetition and translation) was offered to the control group. Three tests: a pretest; a posttest and a delayed posttest were administered in each group.

2.3. Instruments

The study measures consisted of: (1) - A proficiency test- the test used in this study was Nelson test (W.S. Fowler and Norman Coe (1976). The test consisted of 50 questions (2) - A pretest consisting of 50 questions: 20 multiple-choice questions on two-word verbs, 20 multiple-choice
questions on adjective/verb + preposition and 10 completion type questions to be filled with an appropriate preposition or particle. (3)- A post-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups after the treatment. The content of test was the same as the one used for the pretest except for the sentences, which were different. (4)- A delayed posttest (similar to the pretest and posttest) was administered to both groups to see whether such a method accounts for long-term retention of grammar rules or not.

2.4. Procedure

2.4.1. Phase one:
To select the subjects, one hundred and twenty grade three high school students were tested on their previous experience and knowledge of English through a Nelson test of fifty multiple-choice items (W.S. Fowler and Norman Coe, 1979). Sixty subjects were selected from among those whose scores ranged from one SD below to one SD above the mean on the Nelson test and they were randomly divided into the experimental and control groups. Table 1. displays the statistical information of the placement test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Descriptive Statistics for the Placement Test</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<th>Sum</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>9.46</td>
<td>50.52</td>
<td>2784</td>
<td>89.53</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4.2. Phase two:
Each of the two groups was pre-tested on their knowledge of English two-word verbs and adjective/verb + preposition through a pre-test consisting of 50 questions. The purpose behind administering such a test was to see whether the results obtained from the groups would be the same in case of their knowledge on the two structures mentioned above. The scores obtained from the two groups were computed through running a T-test.

2.4.3. Phase three:
One week after grouping and pre-testing, each group of subjects received instruction on two-word verbs and adjective/verb + preposition structures in English. The two groups were given
treatments which differed with respect to formation of the structures: One group (the experimental group) received instruction on the above structures through the integrative teaching method; the other group (the control group) received instruction on the same structures through the traditional method. In what follows you will see a brief sample of how the method works.

Definition of the stages of Integrative Grammar Teaching

Exploration:
This stage is characterized by inductive learning. Students are given sentences illustrating a certain grammar rule and are asked as a group to find the pattern and, with the help of the teacher, to formulate the rule. In this stage, students should be given opportunities to figure out everything by themselves, receiving help only when necessary. To make the task easier in the beginning, some grammatical forms or endings can be highlighted. Exploration, then, works as an excellent tool for motivation.

"Examples"
The rule: The usage of two-word verbs in three different ways.

Students were given the following sentences and asked as a group to find the grammatical pattern. (Instruction was done in both English and the students' native language).

2.a: She turned on the TV.
   b: She turned the TV on.
   c: She turned it on.
   d: She turned on it. (Wrong)

The teacher (the researcher himself): Now I want you to look at your papers. You will see several sentences. Words in bold determine how we can state them. Your task will be to think why we use different sentences and to find the grammatical patterns.

Examples of adjective/verb + preposition.

3. a: Amin lost his pen. He is looking for his pen now.
   b: Amin lost his pen. He is looking for it now.
   c: Amin lost his pen. He is looking it for now. (Wrong)

Note: Enough time should be given to the students to find the pattern.
In the following, you will see a sample of teacher-student(s) interaction in the exploration of grammar rules in the first two examples.

1. Teacher: Did you find out how we can state the sentences?
2. Student A: I don’t know.
3. Student B: ..........................
4. Teacher: What do you mean? (the interaction continues ........).

Explanation:
As students find sequences or patterns in the examples they used during the exploration stage, the teacher or the students can summarize what was previously discovered, now focusing on the form. The explanation stage is quite important because students feel safer when they know the rules and have some source to go back in case of confusion or for future reference.

Teacher: Very good. You proved to be very good students. Some of you found the rule correctly. In the examples you had, we can state them in three different ways, then the teacher gives more examples to the students to make sure they have learned the patterns.

Expression:
After discovering certain grammatical patterns in the exploration stage and getting to know the rules in the explanation stage, students start practicing the production of meaningful sentences with each other in communication and interactive tasks. The rationale of this stage is to provide students experience in applying their acquired knowledge in practice by making meaningful sentences. On the one hand, this may also serve as a motivation technique, since learners can actually see what they can do with what they have learned. On the other, the expression stage gives them the opportunity to practice communicating under the teacher's supervision, which usually assures the students that they can produce a correct utterance. Communicative interaction and completion of some designed pedagogical tasks are recommended in this stage.

Examples of Language exercises and communicative activities
Write the past tense form of these verbs:

throw away, write down...............,
Now think of four things you did yesterday. Write sentences in the blanks.
First I got up and__________________________________________
Then______________________________________________________,
Next______________________________________________________

Communicative activity
Write two hobbies or activities you like / like doing. (Use adjective / verb + preposition).
1.__________________________________________________________
2.__________________________________________________________
Then ask each person in your group what they like / like doing.
Teacher: Now split into pairs, ask and answer questions. Remember to use only adjective/verb +
preposition and two-word verbs.
1. a: ask your friend what he is interested in?
   b: .............................................
A brief sample of student-student interaction is presented below.
Group A: One of you should ask the other students the above questions. If your friend’s answer
was wrong, you can answer. (You can use the following words, too).
(responsible for, look after,.................)
Leader: What are you interested in?
Student A: .........................
Leader: What are...............?
Student B: I am afraid .................
Leader: In two ways.
Student B: .............................
Leader: ..............................?

2.4.4. Phase four:
Two months after finishing the instruction, a delayed posttest, which was also a judgment test,
was administered to the experimental and control groups. Then the results were computed
through running a T-test to see whether or not instruction through the EEE method bears more
lasting effect than the traditional way of teaching.
3. Data analysis and results

To accept or reject the stated null hypotheses, the data were analyzed in different steps. First, the means, standard deviations, co-efficient variations of the two groups on the pre-test were calculated. Table 2. displays the descriptive statistics for the groups on the pre-test.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for the two groups on the Pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mode</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.93</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>20.64</td>
<td>8.27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.06</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>19.12</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the standard deviations of the two groups, we find out that the scores are not widely spread. So it can be concluded that the two groups are homogenous at the outset of the experiment. The co-efficient variation shows the degree of variation among the scores obtained by the subjects. Since different attributes have different measurement scales and through standard deviation we can not compare variability among the scores, co-efficient variation is used to represent the variation of scores in percentile. It is clear that the co-efficient variations for the experimental and the control groups are almost the same and the samples are homogeneous.

Second, in order to find out whether there is any initial difference between the groups, the two group's raw scores on the pre-test were subjected to a T-test computation. Table 3. indicates the results of the T-test on the pre-test.

Table 3

T-test for comparing the experimental and control groups on the pre-test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
<th>Variances</th>
<th>T.v</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>T.crit</th>
<th>Prob&gt;/T/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.93</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>Unequal</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>2.009</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.06</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2.009</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 3. indicates there was no significant difference between the two groups in knowledge of two-word verbs and adjective/verb + preposition at the outset of the experiment. Since the obtained T-value (–0.1854) is less than the T-critical 2.009, and prob.>0.05, it can be
concluded that both groups are about the same concerning their degree of acquaintance with the two structures mentioned above.

Third, when the pretest was administered, the treatment began in the experimental group. Then, after about four weeks of treatment, the posttest was administered to the two groups. Table 4. displays the descriptive statistics for the groups on the posttest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>CV</th>
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<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>35.96</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>23.16</td>
<td>69.41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24.96</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>15.61</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As table 4. shows, the mean, standard deviation and the co-efficient variation of the experimental group are higher than those of the control group. Thus, we may conclude that individuals respond differently to instruction through integrative teaching method.

To see whether the treatment was more effective or not, the two groups’ raw scores on the posttest were compared through T-test. The result of the T-test is presented in table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
<th>Variances</th>
<th>T.v</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>T-Crit</th>
<th>Prob.&lt;&lt;/T/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35.96</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>Unequal</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>2.009</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24.96</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2.009</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 5, the observed t-value 6.5497 is larger than the critical t-value 2.009 and prob. <. 05. Therefore, the null hypothesis assuming that there would be no significant difference between students learning L2 grammar through the EEE method and those learning it through the traditional way is rejected at the o.05 level of significance.
Finally, after finishing the treatment, a delayed post-test was given to the two groups. This was done to see whether or not instruction through the integrative grammar teaching accounts for long-term retention of grammar rules better than instruction through the traditional way. Table 6. indicates the descriptive statistics for the groups on the delayed post-test.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics for the groups on the Delayed Post-test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33.83</td>
<td>8.53</td>
<td>25.22</td>
<td>72.83</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>19.57</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 6. shows the means of the experimental and the control groups are 33.83 and 20.63 respectively. It is clear that the experimental group outperformed the control group, however, the mean score of the two groups decreased on the delayed post-test in comparison with that on the post-test. But this difference for the control group was larger than the experimental group. Moreover, the co-efficient variations for the experimental and control groups are 25.22 and 19.57. Compared with the co-efficient variations of the two groups on the post-test, we find out that the co-efficient variation of the experimental group increased from 23.16 on the post-test to 25.22 on the delayed post-test and that for the control group increased from 15.61 on the post-test to 19.57 on the delayed post-test. The researcher concluded that this small difference might be due to the effect of instruction or individual learner factors.

Then, in order to find whether there is a significant degree of difference between the two groups, the two groups' raw scores were subjected to T-test. As table 7. shows the experimental group outperformed the control group, since the observed t-value 7.65 is larger than the critical t-value 2.009 and prob.< .05, we are safe in rejecting the second null hypothesis assuming that there would be no significant difference between the two groups in case of long-term retention of grammar rules.
Table 7

T-test for comparing the Experimental and Control groups on the Delayed Post-test.

| Cat | N  | Mean | Std Dev | Std Error | Variances | T-V | Df  | T-Crit | Prob.<|T/ |
|-----|----|------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----|-----|--------|-------|
| Ex3 | 30 | 33.83| 8.53    | 1.55      | Unequal   | 7.65| 41.4| 2.009  | 0.0001|
| Co3 | 30 | 20.63| 4.03    | 0.73      | Equal     | 7.65| 58  | 2.009  | 0     |

4. Discussion

As the result indicated the instruction through the new method was effective, the researcher concluded that teacher-student interaction in exploration of the grammatical rule is important and the way the teacher gives the task in stage one can be useful, this invitation to participate had, as the result shows, a positive effect on the students. It contained several implicit messages. One was that because making new rules is a discovery, it is acceptable to make mistakes; students need not to be afraid of talking and expressing their thoughts. Another was encouraging confidence and students' potential, who were responsible for investigation and participation in the learning process.

The break in the teacher-student response sequence is a vivid example of how ZPD theory works. The teacher starts from where the students are and with his help they improve their knowledge of grammatical structure. As soon as they reach a certain level in which they (or at least some of them) feel confident, they are eager to show their understanding of the subject matter. It completely agrees with Lantolf (1993) who emphasizes that ZPD is negotiated between the teacher and the student(s).

4.1. Conclusion

The results of this study supported the positive effect of instruction through the integrative teaching method. The results refuted the stated null hypotheses and revealed that learners who received instruction on two-word verbs and adjective /verb + preposition through the integrative teaching method performed better than those using the traditional teaching method. The results also indicated that instruction of the above structures through the integrative teaching method
bears more lasting effect than instruction of the same structures through the traditional teaching method.

4.2. Pedagogical implications
First, as foreign language teachers, we need to explore possibilities to improve language learning; we also need to be familiar with strategies and methodologies that can translate theory into practice.

Second, utilizing tasks makes students feel involved in classroom activities. They do not sit passively to be attacked by mass of information. They respond to the tasks designed for them in a way that has proved, at least in this study, to be useful.

Third, to teach grammar rules as a main part of language, tasks, at least in this study, are productive and advantageous. English language teachers ought to take the application of tasks seriously and use them as teaching and reinforcing devices for presenting grammar rules in the classroom. It would be better if syllabus designers modify the traditional views on designing language learning curricula and allot at least a small part to tasks in a way that would be appropriate for enhancing the grammar knowledge of the students.

Considering the personality factors, the proficiency level of the students and the unsettled debate about the easy and hard rules, the questions which further research needs to take into account, then, will be:
1. What individual learner factors influence the way a learner responds to instruction through integrative teaching?
2. Are all grammatical structures amenable to integrative teaching?
3. Do we get the same results with learners of different proficiency level?

References
Title

Iran and Teaching English in the Third Millennium

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Abstract

The 21st Century Learner has many educational characteristics that older educators may not be familiar or comfortable with. As we move further into the new millennium, it becomes clear that the 21st Century classroom needs are very different from the 20th Century classroom needs. In the 21st Century classroom, teachers are facilitators of student learning and creators of productive classroom environments in which students can develop the skills they will need in the workplace. The aim of this research study is to investigate the traditional and innovative curricula of teaching English in Iran. It highlights the innovative teacher, classroom, teaching aids, and syllabus in the third millennium, and how all these are not available in Iran.

Keywords: English, Teaching, Third millennium, Iran, Reflective teacher.

1. Introduction

The 21st has many educational traits that older learners may not know about. These traits include moving toward group activities, creative thinking tasks, respecting social conventions and language institutions, being fascinated with new technologies, and being comfortable with ethnic and racial diversity. Today and tomorrow’s learners are also digitally literate; mobiles
(with English learning softwares) are always on their hands. Computers are not just technology; they are parts of their life. In today’s world, multimedia format pervades nearly every part of life, from television, to audio, animation and text. Students live in a world of digital, audio, and text. Because of that, they expect a similar approach in classroom. Considering the United States for instance, Burt et.al (2003) state that, Adult English Language Instruction in the 21st Century provides an overview of the field of adult English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) instruction in the United States today. First, it places adult ESOL in the broader context of the U.S. education system, and then it describes trends and issues in the areas of program design and instructional practice, assessment, teacher training and professional development, integration of research and practice, and technology. Too, they focus on to two innovative programs a) Family ESOL literacy programs which address the family as a whole, providing English language and literacy instruction for adults and children. Often they include parenting elements and information that parents can use to further their children’s literacy and general educational development. Some programs, such as Even Start, are collaborations between K–12 and adult education programs. And b) English Literacy/Civics (EL/Civics) programs which integrate English language instruction with opportunities to learn about civil rights, civic participation and responsibility, and citizenship. While instruction of this type has been offered in some programs for some time, there has been new interest in developing EL/civics classes since a specific EL/civics initiative was enacted by the U.S. Department of Education in fiscal year 2000. So the new world needs innovative syllabi to be applied in every English class in the third millennium. In this study we highlight some of the innovative programs in the modern world and compare them with the traditional programs in Iran.

2. Teaching English in the third millennium

Cates (2000) indicate that as language teachers in the 21st century, we live in critical times. Our world faces serious global issues of terrorism, ethnic conflict, social inequality, and environmental destruction. He advocates the global education in the new millennium and states that “Global education” is a new approach to language teaching that attempts to answer these questions. It aims to enable students to effectively acquire a foreign language while empowering them with the knowledge, skills, and commitment required by world citizens to solve global problems. Global education has been defined as “education which promotes the knowledge,
attitudes and skills relevant to living responsibly in a multicultural, interdependent world. Global educators emphasize that global education is a pedagogical approach, not just a new “teaching technique,” and usually designate peace, human rights, development, and the environment as the four content areas of global education. As two British global educators point out, we live in a world “where a distant political struggle is a luggage search for plane passengers at Manchester airport, an upheaval in Iran is a lowered thermostat in Buenos Aires, an assassination in India sparks off demonstrations in South London, the uranium requirement of French nuclear power stations is the desecration of aboriginal homelands in Australia” (Pike and Selby 1988). Global education is as much a matter of how we teach as of what we teach. For many teachers, this involves a shift from passive to active learning, from teacher- to student-centered classes, from language as structure to language for communication about the world. Cates (2000) put down four main recommendations (considering language teaching) which were announced by the UNESCO first:

1) Be aware of their responsibility to further international understanding through their teaching.
2) Increase language teaching effectiveness so as to enhance mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and cooperation among nations.
3) Exploit extracurricular activities such as pen-pal programs, video exchanges, and overseas excursions to develop international understanding.
4) Lay the basis for international cooperation through classroom cooperation using language-teaching approaches responsive to students’ interests and needs.

Further recommendations called for UNESCO and its member nations to take steps to inform students and their families of the potential of foreign languages to promote better knowledge of world issues and concerns; and to organize workshops for foreign-language teachers and students on contemporary world issues of direct relevance and interest to young people, such as environmental protection and the struggle against poverty and hunger. Collier (2007) in her article states that there is a shift from the traditional to the 21st century syllabi and literacies. She proposes two scenes to the 20th and 21st century English teaching programs and syllabi:
First scene: A 20th century secondary school. A teacher gives a presentation on a novel under study, using handouts, the chalkboard, and a poster; students take notes using pens and paper, in preparation for an essay assignment.

Second scene: A 21st century English classroom that uses 21st century literacies. Here students and teacher are grouped around computers, where they are collaboratively using moviemaking software to edit a video book trailer about a novel, which will be posted on a classroom wiki. So to help the students promote in the world of 21st century literacy, teachers need to become fluent in the language of newer technologies. These new technologies do not eliminate existing curricula. Instead, teachers can use these literacies to broaden and complement what they have always taught. Ogunbiyi (2008) talks about the challenges of English teaching in the third millennium and argues that teachers should know that language has an important function which is communicating our ideas and facilitating our thoughts. It also helps to encode our ability to remember those things, we had met before. He indicates that all the functions of language should be taken into account:

1) Expressive function: we use language to express our emotions. It helps us to get rid of our nervous energy when we are stressed.

2) Social interaction: language enables us to interact with people in the same speech community. By relating with each other, we try to reduce tension. People are friendlier when they can engage in discussions affecting their lives.

3) Expression of identity: it is through language that our political belief and ideologies are expressed.

4) Education: it is through language that knowledge is passed from one generation to another.

3. The traditional trends of teaching and syllabi in Iran

In the pre-technology education context in Iran, the teacher is the sender or the source, the educational material is the information or message, and the student is the receiver of the information. Let us go to Iran and see what is going on in this country regarding language teaching. According to Safi (1992), before the establishment of Dar al-moalemin and Dar-al-moalemat in 1918, teachers in Maktabs and schools did not receive any education and were usually selected from among the most studious students. Dehgan (1949) stated that to establish a comprehensive cultural program and to bring a reform in institutes and to educate qualified...
teachers we should change the system of education. As a matter of fact, teachers were not that much qualified in the field of teaching and teaching was just a matter of bread wining. One of these old-fashioned teachers says that some teachers are born teachers. He means that even without any education in teaching and methodology every one can teach. There were some developments in the 1940s in Iran, though. Until 1966 various teacher training centers were established and different syllabuses were written (Safi, 1992). The teachers to be were taught the methodology of teaching and some lessons in psychology. In this period new syllabuses and new educational policies were adopted by the new teachers, still there were those who favored the mundane ways of conducting their classrooms. Too, institutes such as Shokooh language institute, Kanoon Zaban-e Iran with nearly forty years of experience, and Kish language institute with nearly ten years of experience are available but no teacher educating attempts have been done by them. Their actual purpose is making money. Consequently the outcome came to be as follows:

In Iran a teacher is considered good or great if he/she is authoritative and has the power to rule over his/her class with an iron fist. Having the power to control the class is much more important than having the power of teaching new things. That is one misconception of being a good teacher. The other is that a teacher who gives a large extent of pass scores in class is considered great by the principle or his/her colleagues. There is no supervision on any of the teachers from any of the authorities in the field; teachers are free to apply their own set of rules and ways of teaching. Some of them teach in a way that they had been taught; they use the rules that used to be applied on them earlier, the indelible imitations of teaching from their own experiences as students. There is no special outline prepared in advance in most of Iranian teaching situations. What I as a teacher recognized during five years of teaching is that as the teacher enters the classroom, he/she starts teaching a new lesson without really caring about any of the affective and cognitive factors of his/her students. Teachers are often inconsiderate of any of their students’ socio-cultural and affective factors. Feelings have little place if any in Iranian teaching situation except for those considerate up-to-date reflective teachers. The teacher sees that it is not his business to intrude a student’s private life by asking him about his family background or what occupied his mind. He ends the lesson in about fifteen minutes and sit on his comfortable chair letting the students do all the required exercises by themselves not in pairs or in groups but individually (because group work would cause noise). To be fair, there is a little
monitoring from the teacher; however, in most cases the teacher asks a student (a smart one) to work on his behalf.

3.1. Significant Problems of Language Teaching in Iran
1) Large class size
2) Lack of qualified teachers
3) Lack of infrastructural materials
4) Lack of language teaching aids
5) Lack of language laboratories
6) Inadequate material resources

There are many inadequacies in both human and non-human resources in language teaching. The language classes are too large for effective teaching. At a secondary school level, for example, the students are within fifty to seventy in a class. This makes it difficult for teachers to correct their assignments and give feedback. Most of the teachers are not qualified to teach language. In schools where teachers available there are no teaching aids or technology. There are no language laboratories in almost all the schools. In few schools where they exist, they are not of good standards and are not well equipped.

4. Characteristics of a 21st Century Classroom
Commitment to the Role of Teacher as a Facilitator of Learning (2007) indicates that as we move further into the new millennium, it becomes clear that the 21st Century classroom needs are very different from the 20th Century classroom needs. In the 21st Century classroom, teachers are facilitators of student learning and creators of productive classroom environments in which students can develop the skills they will need in the workplace. The focus of the 21st Century classroom is on students experiencing the environment they will enter as 21st Century workers. The collaborative project-based curriculum used in this classroom develops the higher order thinking skills, effective communication skills, and knowledge of technology that students will need in the 21st Century workplace. The interdisciplinary nature of the 21st Century classroom sets it apart from the 20th Century classroom. Lectures on a single subject at a time were the norm in the past and today collaboration is the thread for all students learning. 20th Century teaching strategies are no longer effective.Teachers must embrace new teaching strategies that
are radically different from those employed in the 20th Century classroom. The curriculum must become more relevant to what students will experience in the 21st Century workplace.

4.1. Changes in the Classroom

The 21st Century classroom is student centered, not teacher centered. Teachers no longer function as lecturers but as facilitators of learning. The students are learning by doing, and the teacher acts as a coach, helping students as they work on projects. Students learn to use the inquiry method, and to collaborate with others--a microcosm of the real world they will experience once they leave the classroom.

Students no longer study each subject in isolation. Instead, they work on interdisciplinary projects that use information and skills from a variety of subjects and address a number of essential academic standards. For example, books assigned in reading or English, may be set in a country that is also being explored in social studies. The final reading of an English book report may require that specific social studies standards be met as well. Textbooks are no longer the major source of information. Students use multiple sources, including technology, to find and gather the information they need. They might keep journals, interview experts, explore the Internet, or use computer software programs to apply what they have learned or to find information. Instead of being reserved only for special projects, technology is seamlessly integrated into daily instruction. In this new classroom, flexible student groupings, based on individual needs, are the norm. The teacher still uses whole group instruction, but it is no longer the primary instructional method used. Teachers assess student instructional needs and learning styles and then draw on a variety of instructional and learning methods to meet the needs of all the students in the classroom. Just as student learning has changed so has assessment of that learning. Teachers use a variety of performance-based assessments to evaluate student learning. Tests that measure a student’s ability to memorize and to recall facts are no longer the sole means of assessing student learning. Instead, teachers use student projects, presentations, and other performance-based assessments to determine students’ achievement and their individual needs. The goal of the 21st Century classroom is to prepare students to become productive members of the workplace.
4.2. The syllabi of the new millennium

4.2.1. Scenario-based learning

There is a growing consensus among language teaching community that, comparing to classical “instructivist” learning emphasising vocabulary and formal grammar rules, better course completion rates and better learning outcomes can be achieved by using approaches that enhance opportunities for students to engage with authentic situations and tasks. Some of such approaches, influenced by constructivist philosophy, are problem-based learning (Felix, 2002) and scenario-based learning (Kindley, 2002). Scenario-based learning is defined as “… learning that occurs in a context, situation, or social framework. It is based on the concept of situated cognition, which is the idea that knowledge can’t be known or fully understood independent of its context” (Kindley, 2002). Scenario based instruction is grounded in situated learning theory, which focuses on the importance of contextualizing learning activity in real life scenarios and contexts. In scenario-based learning, learners participate in a fictional context-based meaningful authentic learning environment and collaborate with other participants in completing activities structured into scenarios reproducing real-world situations. Decisions made by the learners affect the outcomes of the scenarios. Continuous feedback is provided for guidance and scaffolding. The benefits of scenario based learning and its successful uses in language teaching are well documented (Gee, 2004). Scenarios are selected to reflect common and/or particularly important situations that are likely to occur in the actual language use.

Scenarios and case studies are a common way to structure business-related knowledge. Therefore, in our view, scenario based learning is a paradigm particularly suitable for teaching business English. In case of business English, common business scenarios can be used, resulting in authentic, immersive learning environment. In such an environment, linguistic knowledge can be acquired directly as tacit knowledge, without formalizing it as grammar rules or vocabulary lists. At the same time, scenario-based learning allows learners to focus on the target context of language usage (in our case – business English communication), resulting in more student interest and involvement in the learning tasks.

1) Adult learners prefer to learn language which is meaningful. In scenario-based teaching, learners are applying the target language in scenarios simulating real-life situations. Hence, the context guarantees that the language is meaningful.

2) Adults learn best when they feel safe to make mistakes. The main reason for most adult learners to have fear of making language mistakes are because they feel they are poor language learners either due to age factor or due to previous unsuccessful attempts to learn the target language. Second language classroom environment can easily intimidate adult learners, especially if they had not experienced successful learning experiences in formal classrooms before. As animated pedagogical agents are not human, but, in a limited way, can act intelligently, they realize an ideal situation when feedback, including encouragement and reassurance, is provided, while, at the same time, the learner, if desired, can study in privacy, with no fear of judgment by the teacher or by classmates. On the other hand, scenarios involving multiple students offer considerable pedagogical advantages (Wang, 2004) and should be provided for students who have sufficiently built up their confidence.

3) Adult learners prefer constructive feedback on each learning task they have accomplished. Scenario based approach has an advantage here because this approach focuses on successful completion of tasks rather than achievement of grades. Animated pedagogical agents’ capabilities to use verbal (e.g. instructional explanations) as well as non-verbal forms of communication (e.g. gaze and gestures) when giving feedback to learning tasks can contribute to enhancing learners’ motivation and cognitive engagement in accomplishing the tasks (Andre et al., 1998; Lester et al., 1997; Atkinson, 2002).

4.2.2. A detailed comparison between traditional and innovative types of teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional syllabi consideration</th>
<th>Innovative syllabi considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher is judge, no one else sees student work</td>
<td>Self, peer and authentic assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum is meaningless to students</td>
<td>Curriculum is connected to students’ interest, experience, talents, and the real world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print is the primary vehicle of learning and assessment</td>
<td>Performance, projects and multiple forms of media are used for learning and assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diversity in students is ignored | Every syllabus address student diversity
---|---
Literacy in the for skills separately is focused | Multiple literacies of the 21st century aligned to living and working in a globalized new millennium
Classes are full with students | 12 students in each class is considered a norm
No technology equipment | Innovative technology aids are used
Time-based | Outcome based
Lessons focus on the lower level of Bloom’s Taxonomy – knowledge, comprehension and application | Focus: what students Know, Can Do and Are Like after all the details are forgotten
Textbook driven | Research driven
Passive learning | Active learning
Learners work in isolation- classroom within 4 walls | Learners work collaboratively with classmates and others around the world- the global classroom
Teacher- centered | Teacher is a coach – student centered
Fragmented curriculum | Integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum

5. Conclusion

This study probed to investigate the changes that are or will be made in teaching English in Iran and other parts in the world. Too the writer tried to make a comparison between the Iranian English teaching form and some innovative forms of teaching English. Applying new pedagogical approaches and syllabi needs the infusion of social interaction and experiential and immersive activities within the classroom and blended learning environments. Collaborative immersion through the use of technology such as videoconferencing and whiteboard integration will further meet the learning needs and expectations of the third millennium Leaner. Regarding Iran, to move all of this forward, a concerted effort must be immediately undertaken in the realm of, primary and secondary and even faculty training. Iranian learners need to have a new set of expectations of faculty with respect to their knowledge of and incorporation of technology within the learning space. Stake holders in Iran need to foster a technology culture with an
emphasis on continuous teacher training, sufficient resources and support available and proper rewards for innovation in the creation of technology-rich learning environments.

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Title

Critics of Brown and Levinson politeness theory

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Abstract

Brown and Levinson’s work consists of two parts. The first part is their fundamental theory concerning the nature of ‘politeness’ and how it functions in interaction. The second part is a list of ‘politeness’ strategies with examples from three languages: English, Tzeltal, and Tamil. The theory has been the preferred framework, for example, in empirical work on particular types of speech acts in a wide range of languages and cultures and in cross-cultural work considering the ways in which two or more cultures differ in their realizations of politeness. Various aspects of this theory have also been widely criticized. However, only sporadic attempts have been made to suggest alternative frameworks. In this paper 11 critiques of Brown & Levinson presented from various scalars' point of view.

Key word: Brown & Levinson theory, Critiques
1. Introduction

A large number of theoretical and empirical books and articles concerning linguistic politeness and/or the notion of face have been published in the last decades. In most of the studies, the politeness has been conceptualized especially as strategic conflict-avoidance or as strategic construction of cooperative social interaction (Eelen, 2001, Watts, 2003). In the West, the greatest attention to social exchange relevant to face and self presentation is evidenced in the work of Ervin Goffman (1959, 1967). To Goffman, face is both a characteristic of the person and a characteristic derived from social system. But the conceptualization of face has roots in early 1900s, with most of the early work conducted by Asian scholars viewed face as a predominantly Chinese/Asian concept. In this view face refers to a universal aspect of interaction concerning how we present ourselves as well as a basis for self evaluation. It is a form of exchanges and type of interaction among two or more parties within a defined social context. It is beyond the limits of this paper to give an exhaustive overview of politeness-related research.

Recently, some critical and thorough overviews and analyses of politeness studies have been presented politeness as a research topic of much concern has been and is still enjoying much popularity with people specialized in the areas of, say, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psychology anthropology, inter-cultural and intra-cultural communication and even cognitive linguistics. The criticisms of Brown & Levinson's theory have been summarized in various works (Kasper, 1990; Thomas, 1995; Escandell-Vidal, 1996; Watts et al., 1992a; Meier, 1995).

2. Brown and Levinson’s work

Brown and Levinson’s work consists of two parts. The first part is their fundamental theory concerning the nature of ‘politeness’ and how it functions in interaction. The second part is a list of ‘politeness’ strategies with examples from three languages: English, Tzeltal, and Tamil. In the theoretical part of their work, Brown and Levinson introduce the notion of ‘face’ in order to illustrate ‘politeness’ in the broad sense. That is to say, all interactants have an interest in maintaining two types of ‘face’ during interaction. In Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (1987), a participant is considered a Model Person (MP), who is “a willful fluent speaker of a natural language, further endowed with two special properties—rationality and face” (p. 58). A MP has a positive face (the want to be liked by people) and a negative face (the want to maintain personal territory). In terms of rationality, each speaker is
capable of reasoning and knowing what options or strategies best suit the face needs (both faces) of interlocutors. Utilizing this notion of ‘face’, ‘politeness’ is regarded as having a dual nature: ‘positive politeness’ and ‘negative politeness’. ‘Positive politeness’ is expressed by satisfying ‘positive face’ in two ways: 1) by indicating similarities amongst interactants; or 2) by expressing an appreciation of the interlocutor’s self-image. ‘Negative politeness’ can also be expressed in two ways: 1) by saving the interlocutor’s ‘face’ (either ‘negative’ or ‘positive’) by mitigating face threatening acts (hereafter FTAs), such as advice-giving and disapproval; or 2) by satisfying ‘negative face’ by indicating respect for the addressee’s right not to be imposed on. In short, ‘politeness’ is expressed not only to minimise FTAs, but also to satisfy the interactants’ face regardless of whether an FTA occurs or not. Positive politeness strategies include exaggerating interest, using in-group identity markers, avoiding disagreement, and asserting common ground. Negative politeness strategies include being reluctant, apologizing for the impingement and using passive voice.

It is important to keep in mind that both negative and positive face wants occur to some degree at the same time. These two wants create a paradox in which “both aspects of face must be projected simultaneously in any communication” (Scollon & Scollon, 1995). Speakers do not choose expression of absolute negative or positive politeness, but instead choose expressions which indicate different degrees of negative and positive politeness.

Important to note is that Brown and Levinson treat politeness as a “redressive action” (p. 25) because some communicative acts (e.g. request, compliment, invitation, etc.) are considered to be intrinsically face-threatening acts (FTA); interaction is thus “the expression of social relationships and is crucially built out of strategic language use” (p. 56). The desire to avoid face damage acts as a constraint in language, seen in our avoidance of the simplest and most straightforward option when we choose what we say. The assumption is that we are usually trying to avoid damaging face, by adjusting our choice of words in order to protect the interlocutors from unease (Ungureanu, 2004). Exactly how we adjust our language depends on our perception of the circumstances of the exchange and of the role of the producer and recipient. Exactly how we adjust our language depends on our perception of the circumstances of the exchange and of the role of the producer and recipient.

The three social factors which influence participants’ ‘calculation’ make up the following ‘formula’: \( Wx = D(S, H) + P(H, S) + Rx \). (The Distance, Power between the Speaker
and the Hearer and Ranking of imposition contribute to the Weightiness of an FTA). Social
distance is defined in terms of similarity, frequency of interaction and intimacy. Ranking of
imposition is defined by the degree to which the act interferes with face wants. All of these
factors are relevant only to the point that the communicators believe that the assessment is
shared.

3. Criticisms on face work

Most of the research into politeness since the 1987 republication of Brown & Levinson’s theory
may be characterized as somehow related to Brown & Levinson’s theory (Watts, 2003,p. 98–
99). The theory has been the preferred framework, for example, in empirical work on particular
types of speech acts in a wide range of languages and cultures and in cross-cultural work
considering the ways in which two or more cultures differ in their realizations of politeness.
Various aspects of this theory have also been widely criticized. However, only sporadic attempts
have been made to suggest alternative frameworks. Some of widespread criticisms of Brown
& Levinson are as follow:

3.1 Universality versus Cultural Relativity

Brown & Levinson (1987) base their theoretical assumptions on data from just three languages;
English, Tzeltal and Tamil, and therefore the claim for universality may naturally be criticized.
One of the central themes in post-Brown & Levinson research on politeness has been the
universality versus cultural relativity of the notion of politeness, and at the heart of this
discussion have been Brown & Levinson’s use of the term face and the conceptualisation of
politeness as a set of rational strategies to soften the potentially unwelcome effects of face-

The first criticism of B&L is that their model of politeness is ethnocentric, deriving "directly
from the high value based on individualism in Western culture" (Kasper, 1990, p.252-253). As a
result, its claim of universality is cast in doubt. This criticism seems to have originated in
Wierzbicka (1985), later to be followed by many others: Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1994), Liao
Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Wierzbicka (1991), Watts et al. (1992a,b), to name a few. In
individualistic, broadly ‘liberal’ late capitalist cultures like Britain and America (especially
within white middle class subcultures), perhaps this assumption that individualism is the ‘natural’ model for understanding others is justified, but in many other cultures, such as China, Greece and Japan where the relation between the individual and the group is much more important in terms of deciding on politeness strategies, such a focus on individual atomistic needs cannot be sustained (Fukushima, 2000; Sifianou, 1992). Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that much of the critique of Brown and Levinson’s notions of ‘face’ and ‘politeness’ should target the claim of ‘universality’.

Typically drawing data from non-English speaking cultures, these studies find that many speech acts are perceived differently on the dimension of politeness in different cultures. For example, an explicit performative is a typical way to give advice in Polish, while a bare imperative is "one of the softer options in issuing directives" (Wierzbicka, 1985, p. 154). Similarly, the Chinese view as 'polite' those imperatives which are used to make offers (Chen, 1996) and to invite the hearer to dinners (Mao, 1992). Since Brown&Levinson categorize imperatives as a Bald on record strategy, one that is the most imposing, hence most 'impolite', Brown&Levinson's claim of universality fails. While it is true that imperatives are considered by B&L the most imposing way of "doing an FTA, B&L, however, are fully aware that they can be polite even in English speaking cultures. In their discussion of Bald on record (1987, p. 94-101), they list a number of factors in a speaker's choice of imperatives, among which is "interest to H", a use that is "actually oriented to face" (1987,p. 99), such as offers, invitations, and sympathetic advice or warnings.

Besides, the fact that a particular speech act is viewed as having different degrees of politeness in different cultures is taken care of by Brown&Levinson's formula of calculating a strategy, discussed above, which includes 'R', the force of imposition of a FTA perceived in a given culture. In other words, B&L would say that since the Polish and Chinese view acts like giving advice and making offers as less imposing than English speakers, they would assign a lesser value to W, resulting in a lower-numbered strategy, such as Bald on record, than their English speaking counterparts. One of the permanent features of face is culture which reveals that face is independent to self.
3.1.1 Interdependent Self
Arguably, such a cognitive, individualistic, and antagonistic characterization of the (Anglo-American) interactants outlined in the Brown and Levinson’s model is too narrow to accommodate the social needs of the ‘interdependent self’ that seem predominant in other cultures (Kitayama & Marcus, 1994). The pragmatic notion of ‘politeness’ enacted by interactants in non-Anglophone cultures will be affected by personal and interpersonal needs and group and social norms which are incompatible with Brown and Levinson’s model. In such cultures, e.g. Southern European, South American and Arabic-speaking cultures, open displays of ‘positive politeness’ usually enhance the positive face of both interactants through self-affirmation and cement the new or existing relationship. At the same time, the threat to negative face is minimal or non-existent, as distance (both physical and interactional) is generally less than in English-speaking cultures. Interestingly, however, the aspect of interactional politeness that is the object of this paper seems to contrast with this well-documented behavioral pattern.

Gu (1990) finds that the model does not apply to the Chinese social interaction. Finally, Chang & Holt find that “Western understanding of face work is very much influenced by the idea of impression management, reflecting the dominant individualistic characteristics of Western cultures. This can be contrasted with the Chinese conception of mien-tze which places more emphasis on the nature of the relationship” (p. 126).

3.2. Self-Image
Against Brown & Levinson's theory, Mao (1994) has made two major arguments. The first concerns Brown & Levinson's overall conceptualization of face as a 'self-image'. In his view, such a self-oriented characterization of face, which may be applicable in the West, can be problematic in Chinese culture where self is not valued nearly as much. The Chinese notion of face emphasizes not the accommodation of individual desires but the harmony of individual conduct with the views and judgments of the community. For this reason Mao concludes that Chinese face represents a public image, rather than a self-image.

Mao's second point of argument is that the Chinese concept of face (as expressed by the word mianzi) does not contain a component of negative face. Mianzi communicates something different, viz. a Chinese desire to secure public acknowledgment of one's prestige or reputation. An individual is expected to seek the respect of the community, but not in order to satisfy the
desire for freedom. The Chinese concept of face (as expressed by another word, lian) bears only limited resemblance to positive face, as both lian and positive face identify an individual's desire to be liked and approved of by others.

### 3.3 Individualistic Concept of Face.
Chinese scholars have also provided thorough and consistent critiques of Brown & Levinson’s work (Gu 1990, Mao 1994 & Lim 1994). One of the major criticisms, presented by them, is that Brown & Levinson assume an *individualistic concept of face*, which is not appropriate to cultures with broad value tendencies in emphasizing the importance of in group interests over individual wants. Among the seminal works on the notion of face were Hu (1944) and Goffman (1967), who draws on Hu’s description of the Chinese ‘face’. Chinese scholars have interpreted Chinese notion of face as an essentially public and positive concept, consisting of three positive face-types (Lim, 1994), and as a situational construct, as firmly embedded in situational interpersonal relations (Ho, 1994).

Werkhofer (1992, P.156) argues that the Brown & Levinson account of politeness is essentially individualistic: it presents the speaker as a rational agent who at least during the generation of utterances is unconstrained by social considerations and is thus free to select egocentric, asocial and aggressive intentions. In other words, Matsumotos (1988) criticisms of Brown & Levinson (1987) are twofold: that they have over-emphasized the notion of individual freedom and autonomy, and that they have ignored the interpersonal or social perspective on face.

### 3.4 Negative Face & Positive Face
They have also questioned the validity of the Brown & Levinson’s notion of *negative face* in cultures where the individual’s freedom of thought and action are determined by the social status that the individual has in the group. In a similar vein, several researchers from other Asian cultures, as well as from Islamic and African cultures, have criticized the individualistic interpretation of face and/or the validity of the notion of negative face in Brown & Levinson’s theory (e.g. Matsumoto 1988, Ide1993, Nwoye 1992; Watts 2003, P. 102–103). For instances Ting-Toomey argues that Brown & Levinson’s theory conceptualizes “positive face” and
“negative face” from the individualistic culture framework. Matsumoto criticizes that negative face want of preservation of individual territories seems alien to Japanese.

The second criticism of Brown & Levinson is that their distinction between negative politeness and positive politeness is dubious (Meier, 1995, p. 384). This problem, according to Meier (1995, p. 385), has arisen from the fact that B&L categorize many FTA’s as threatening both negative and positive face. The corresponding strategies to redress these FTA’s, as a result, can be seen as both negative and positive politeness strategies.

This fact, Meier (1995, p. 384-385) believes, has led to conflicting findings in subsequent studies: the same culture has been labeled differently by different researchers. Americans, for instance, have been believed to be positively oriented by some (Scollon & Scollon, 1983), but negatively oriented by others (Tannen, 1981).

Cross-listing certain FTA’s as threatening both negative and positive face, however, is not necessarily a problem for Brown & Levinson. On the contrary, it suggests the complexity of social interaction and reflects the multi face tends of utterances: since one utterance can perform more than one act, it is only natural that a particular speech act can damage more than one kind of face, and hence a particular strategy can be oriented toward different face wants.

Brown & Levinson’s characterisation of politeness strategies as either positive (paying attention to the others’ face needs) or negative (ensuring that the other is not imposed on) has been modified by Scollon & Scollon (1995). The Scollons assert that it is preferable to refer to such strategies as ‘involvement’ or ‘distancing strategies’ as this terminology avoids the implicit evaluation contained in Brown and Levinson’s terms. They also suggest that ‘the concept of face has built into it both aspects: involvement and independence must be projected simultaneously in any communication’, but they go on to argue that ‘the reason involvement and independence are in conflict is that emphasising one of them risks a threat to the other’ (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 38).

On the other hand, at least some Japanese researchers, like Fukushima (2002) and Takano (2005), regard both the positive and negative face as important in contemporary Japanese society, and especially Fukushima argues that the notion of Japanese face does not involve only the relations to others, but also the rights of individuals. As mentioned above, the Brown & Levinson (1987) account of politeness strategies has also been under discussion in politeness research. It has been criticized as overly pessimistic view of social interaction. For example,
Nwoye (1992, P.311) states that according to the Brown & Levinson interpretation of politeness, ‘social interaction becomes an activity of continuous mutual monitoring of potential threats to the faces of the interactants’, and if this view were always true, it ‘could rob social interaction of all elements of pleasure’.

3.5. Choices
One of the major problems with Brown & Levinson’s model is also the setting out the choices open to the speakers in the form of a decision-tree through which they have to work their way before they can arrive at the appropriate utterances in which to frame the FTA (Watts, 2003). This kind of system also excludes the possibility that two or more strategies might be chosen at the same time.

3.6. Limited type of interaction
Brown and Levinson’s list of ‘politeness’ strategy mainly covers certain very limited type of interaction. The examples they give consist mainly of single utterances which either have or presuppose clear communicative goals, such as asking to borrow a book or giving advice. Brown and Levinson tend to ignore the fact that most single utterances are actually just constituents of a larger exchange between two or more interactants. Firstly, they pay no attention to phenomena which occur across the entire discourse, such as back-channelling or the overall sequence of utterances (Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Usami, 1998). Secondly, they ignore any interaction, such as simply enjoying a casual conversation, which does not involve a predetermined goal.

3.7. Rational model rather than a relational one
In terms of rationality, each speaker is capable of reasoning and knowing what options or strategies best suit the face needs (both faces) of interlocutors. Another criticism of Brown & Levinson’s theory of politeness is that it is a highly rational model rather than a relational one (Chang & Holt, 1994; Gu, 1990; Matsumoto, 1988; Penman, 1994; Ting-Toomey, 1988).

3.8. Transactional
Another criticism of works by Goffman and Brown and Levinson is given by Scollon & Scollon (1994). They find that the Western literature on face work is largely transactional, whereas there
is a fundamentally moral dimension to the Eastern concept of face; face constitutes the Asian very sense of being of an Asian. They suggest that the concept of self is perhaps more applicable in looking at Western social interactions as exemplified by Carbaugh’s recent work. This resonates with Ho’s (1976) idea that “the Western mentality, deeply ingrained with the values of individuality, is not one which is favorably disposed to the idea of face, for face is never a purely individual thing” (p. 882).

3.9. Logo centric
Finally, Tracy & Baratz (1994) point out that the politeness theory is logo centric, suggesting that it excludes other means of politeness such as nonverbal ones.

3.10. Not using the same criteria
Another problem is that both FTAs and politeness strategies cannot be identified using the same criteria. For example, as Meier (1995, P. 383) correctly points out, apologies are negative politeness strategies in Brown&Levinson's framework, but they are regarded as positive politeness strategies by Leech (1983) and as both negative and positive strategies by Holmes (1990). Certain speech acts (such as offering, inviting, promising, etc.) may not be treated as FTAs at all in different cultures (Gu, 1990; Nwoye, 1992). This realization, however, should only urge us to keep looking for better explanations for the various kinds of polite verbal behaviors exhibited in different cultures.

3-11. Implicature
One main problem Brown and Levinson’s theory face has to do with the idea that politeness is communicated as an implicature. Fraser (1990,p.233) notes that Brown and Levinson’s view that politeness is communicated as an implicature is counterintuitive since politeness is normally “anticipated”; there is a “norm” of polite communication, and it is the breach of this norm that is signaled (Kasper, 1990; Kingwell, 1993; Jary, 1998; Fraser, 2001, 2005; Terkourafi, 2003). This is an important point, but easy to misunderstand. It is not the claim that implicatures cannot be anticipated, nor the claim that there cannot be a norm to use a certain type of utterance with a conversational implicature in a certain type of utterance situation. The point is rather that we take an utterance to be polite even if an implicature of politeness is absent. What is implicated must
be meant by the speaker, and an utterance can be polite even if the speaker does not mean anything polite.

4. Conclusions

Every theory presented worldwide pose some merits and demerits, among this is Brown & Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory as a sociocultural theory to describe human interaction. Kasper (1998) pointed that most of sociopragmatic ability are universal and need not to be thought and transferable from L1, so most researchers worked on the differences across cultures and found out that major aspect of politeness theory is culture-bound and need to be evaluated based on social structure of a particular society. The finding presented in this paper can shed light on the issue that some aspects of this theory need to be re-evaluated more specifically.

References


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Culture and English Language Teaching in Iran

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Abstract

The present article arises from a three-year cross sectional investigation into English language teaching in secondary schools in Iran and it aims to discuss the role of the culture of English speaking countries within English language teaching in Iran.

In order to investigate this situation, a range of research instruments were used including a thorough review of literature, a desk based analysis of existing curriculum documentation, questionnaires and interviews completed by English language teachers in Iran and some of the authors of the curriculum and its linked textbooks.
It will be explained while the issue of culture has been addressed and considered within the newly designed national curriculum in Iran, this issue appears to play no role in either the textbooks or the English language teaching programme.

**Keywords:** Culture, English, Language, Teaching, Iran

1. Introduction

The integral relationship between language and culture has led to numerous debates on the role and impact of English Language Teaching (ELT) in general and of the English language programmes in Iran in particular. Ranging from English linguistic imperialism and cultural invasion to cultural neutrality, interpretations of the state of ELT in Iran are still controversial. In particular two extreme evaluations of ELT appear to be on the agenda. On the one hand English, as a school subject, is seen as representing and introducing western culture to Iranian students. On the other hand, there are voices claiming that English as it is presently taught in Iran is nothing but a representation of Persian or Islamic ideology.

English language is a compulsory subject in the Iranian curriculum but because of the lack of attention that has been given to research into the teaching of this subject, it could be argued that English has been neglected within the Iranian educational system. Dornyei’s work suggested that “most curricular topics are selected primarily on the basis of what society believes students need to learn, rather than on the basis of students’ actual need” (Dornyei, 2001, p.63). According to Dahmardeh (2009), it is also the case in countries like Iran that there is a special emphasis on achievement standards in school which results in an increased pressure on teachers to prepare their learners to take language exams as fast as possible. Dahmardeh(2009) has argued that many teachers responded to this pressure by narrowing the curriculum and teaching to the test. Given that the vast majority of language exams and tests in Iran fail to assess real communicative language content, teaching communicative skills has become, and remains, a neglected component in many foreign language classrooms. Consequently, the result is a lack of success on the part of students in communicating in English after studying it for seven years (three years in middle school and four years in secondary school).

The present article arises from a three-year crosssectional investigation into ELT in secondary schools in Iran and the role of Communicative Pedagogy within this. The study has examined the extent of communicative pedagogy within the Iranian national ELT curriculum, the
In English language teaching, there has long been a debate about the appropriateness of many of the methods used by language teachers and scholars and pervasive changes to teaching practice over the last twenty years have resulted from an approach generally known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). An important stimulus for changing the way we teach language came during the 1970s when linguists and language educators began a reappraisal of language itself. According to Nunan (1998),

During the 1970s, a much richer conceptualisation of language began to emerge. Language was seen as a system for the expression of meaning, and linguists began to analyse language as a system for the expression of meanings, rather than as a system of abstract syntactic rules. (p.9)

CLT has emerged as a prevailing theoretical framework for ELT as attested by its widespread use in titles of books, conference papers and lectures. But as with the tale about the five men who touched separate parts of an elephant in a dark room and each one described something different, the word communicative has been applied so broadly that it has come to have different meanings for different people.

CLT aims to empower students with an ability to communicate in situations where a language is being taught as the second or foreign language. According to Ellis “CLT aims to develop the ability of learners to use language in real communication” (Ellis, 2003, p.27). To fulfil such an aim, according to Das (1988) and Celce-Murcia (2001) there are some criteria involved; message, meaning, form and structure that must be taken into consideration.

From what has been said, it could be concluded that CLT is not just bits of grammar, it also involves language functions. Furthermore, if students get enough exposure to language and opportunities for its use and if they are motivated then language learning will take care of itself. Also, CLT is used in programmes for ELT to show that the goal of language learning is communicative competence.

The reason for considering the Iranian ELT curriculum within the framework of CLT could be justified by using the work that has been done by McDonough and Shaw (2003). They attempted to explain that there are a number of reasons why CLT is very successful, providing a rich teaching and learning environment. It can,

- include a wide consideration of what is appropriate as well as what is accurate;
- handle a wide range of language, covering texts and conversations as well as sentences;
- provide realistic and motivating language practice;
- use what learners ‘know’ about the functions of language from their experience with their own mother tongues. (McDonough and Shaw, 2003, p.28)

Furthermore, CLT like any instruction oriented toward proficiency goals, is not bound to a particular methodology or curricular design, but represents a flexible approach to teaching that is responsive to student needs and preferences. That is why Hadley emphasised that “in many ways, CLT represents a repertoire of teaching ideas rather than a fixed set of methodological procedures, and as such is not easily defined or evaluated” (Hadley, 2001, p.118).

CLT has left an indelible mark on the teaching and learning of second or other languages, resulting in the use of communicative activities in classrooms all over the world. Its advocates understand language to be inseparable from individual identity and social behaviour. Savignon (2002) has also argued that not only does language define a community; a community, in turn, defines the forms and use of language. Savignon (2002) appeared to be suggesting that the norms and goals appropriate for pupils in a given setting, and the means for attaining these goals, are the main concerns in CLT. So,

CLT is properly seen as an approach, grounded in a theory of intercultural communicative competence that can be used to develop materials and methods appropriate to a given context of learning. (Savignon, 2002, p.22-23)

In order to investigate this situation, a range of research instruments were used including a thorough review of literature, a desk based analysis of existing curriculum documentation, questionnaires and interviews completed by English language teachers in Iran and some of the authors of the curriculum and its linked textbooks.

2. The educational system in Iran

To understand the main discussion, some initial information will be required about the educational system in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Since 1979, when the Islamic Republic came into being, the educational system of Iran has changed several times. At the moment, the system is divided into five cycles: pre-school, primary, middle (guidance), secondary (high school) and post secondary (university). Iranian textbooks are produced for students in:
Primary school for ages 6-11, Grades 1-5;
Guidance (equivalent to Middle School) for ages 11-13, Grades 6-8;
High school (equivalent to Secondary School) for ages 14-17, Grades 9-12.

The schools are under the administration of the Ministry of Education. English language textbooks are designed by the Ministry of Education and there are no alternatives - all schools, both state and private, being compelled to use these textbooks.

At present the dominant trend in Iran is towards an increasing emphasis upon ELT. As a required course from the second grade of middle school, English is taught for three to four hours per week. There is an extensive and still growing private sector of education in the country, a distinctive feature of which is introducing English at primary school and even pre-school levels. In almost all private schools English receives a great deal of attention and probably extra hours of practice (Aliakbari, 2004).

Aliakbari (2004) has argued that English is perceived by Iranians as so crucial that the quality of the English programme and the skill of the teacher or teachers working in each school may determine a family’s choice to send their children to one school or another. Private language schools or institutes have attracted an increasing number of interested learners from young children to adults. The multiple variations observed in the programmes delivered signify a great desire to learn English in Iran, on the one hand, and an endeavour to fulfil the learners’ communicative needs, on the other.

Furthermore, there are some distinctive features about Iran and the role of ELT which make it a unique context in comparison to its neighbours or any other country which English is taught. These features could be classed as political, cultural and religious. First of all, English is regarded as a foreign language and most Iranian people believe that it originates from America. So, this is the first stereotype that exists in the country. Also, the political chaos in relation that has been existed between Iran and America as well as the current political situation where an American ex-president (i.e. George W. Bush) has addressed Iran as an enemy nation and axis of evil may not dispose the Iranian government to have a positive view towards the English language. As a result there are some people in positions of influence who genuinely believe that English is the language of the enemy (Dahmardeh, 2009).

Furthermore, based on a study that was executed by Groiss and Toobian (2006), in Iranian school textbooks the West is depicted as an entity with a multitude of sins. It occupied whole
continents, annihilated or oppressed their indigenous inhabitants, plundered their wealth, impoverished and maltreated them. Western nations exploited the colonised countries for their own economic benefits, promoted the opium and slave trades, and tried to impose their own cultures and erase the local ones.

This study further expressed the view that hostility towards America was apparent everywhere in textbooks. It was backed by a set of provocative titles of which 'the Great Satan' is exclusively reserved for America, while others, such as 'the Arrogant Ones', 'World Devourers' and 'the Diabolic Powers' are sometimes shared with other Western powers, or the former Soviet Union.

Further research into Iranian textbooks (sponsored by the American Government) was published in 2007. According to this study, the textbooks of the Islamic Republic of Iran have changed since 1979 and there has been a movement to make them compatible with the post-Revolution political system. Through textbooks, Iran hopes to transform school children into devout Muslim citizens with little regard for the world beyond Iran. Apparently, the children of Iran are not learning as much as they could be about international standards of human rights as envisioned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations conventions on civil, political, social and economic rights.

Swearing at and making slogans against western countries, particularly America, the country which majority of people think that the English language belongs to and Great Britain as the secondly most known English speaking country among Iranian people is something which is quite common in Iran and part of people’s daily lives.

3. Research design

As stated earlier, this article will report one part of a three-year cross sectional study investigating ELT in Iranian secondary schools. The main research question that this study was aiming to address is:

To what extent does the Iranian ELT curriculum include a communicative pedagogy?

This was broken down into a number of sub questions of which the most relevant to this article is:

 What is the role of the culture of English language speaking countries in the curriculum?

The data for this study derived from a variety of sources. The first piece of data used for the purpose of this research was a literature review. In this phase the literature on Communicative
Language Teaching (CLT) was considered and reviewed. As a matter of fact, a huge number of books, articles, research findings were considered (more than 300 titles). The second phase consisted of a desk-based analysis of the ELT curriculum in Iran, using CLT criteria as a guide. The third phase of data collection consisted of distributing questionnaires among Iranian English language teachers in secondary schools - both private and state (51 questionnaires were collected, and their breakdown is given in figure 1 below) as well as interviewing 3 teachers, interviewing 3 authors of the Iranian national curriculum and conducting 1 interview with one of the authors of English language textbooks for secondary schools.

![Figure 1: Number of teacher participants according to their gender and type of schools](image)

Each questionnaire was divided into two main parts:

a. Teacher’s understanding of the programme which was composed of 26 questions mainly seeking about goals of the programme, student’s achievements, the extent of including 4 language skills (Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing) in the programme, the importance of the culture of English speaking countries and whether it was included, chosen topics and subjects within the textbooks, role of meaning and form, student’s motivation, student centredness, role of supplementary and authentic materials, student’s attitude towards the programme and textbooks and any guidelines that might be introduced by the educational system.

b. Teacher’s personal teaching strategies. This second part was to find out how important it is for an English language teacher to speak English and how much the participant speak
English, goals of the participant, role of activities like role-playing, group working and game in the class and student’s assessment and tests.

Furthermore, 20 questions were being prepared for each interview. The questions were aimed to address issues like, goals of the curriculum, student’s achievements, availability of the curriculum, whether the curriculum documents includes communicative materials, authors’ constraints, the importance of the culture of English speaking countries, the balance in presenting 4 language skills, supplementary and authentic materials, chosen topics for the curriculum, the role of meaning and form, student’s motivation, student centredness, whether an English language teacher should be able to speak English, role of activities like role-playing, group working and game and testing and assessment.

Data collection involved a piloting stage as well as many other strategies that were applied in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the whole process of data collection as well as data analysis; however, due to limited space these procedures will not be described in detail here. Prior to proceeding further, it may be worth clarifying that the textbooks and the ELT programme that was running in Iran during the execution of this research were not written or based on the curriculum document that was considered for the purpose of this research. In fact according to the author participants, the above materials (Textbooks and ELT programme) are not based on any agreed document that could be referred as the national curriculum or syllabus. Apparently, in 2007, the first Iranian national curriculum for teaching foreign languages was being developed by a team working under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. However, it has been decided to include all of these materials into the investigation in order to present differences, advantages, flaws and in total a flavour of ELT in Iran to the reader.

4. Constraints and limitations
Every researcher needs a detailed plan prior to implementing a research project. They may start by considering the method that is going to be applied for the purpose of research and then there would be some predictions about the procedures for data collection and the possible constraints that might merge in this. Afterwards during the research implementation, the researcher might encounter situations or difficulties that he/she may have not been prepared for. This is absolutely normal and was certainly true for the current study. While it was predictable that certain possible problems might emerge during the execution of the research, there were other problems that
were unforeseen. In this section some of the limitations and constraints of this research will briefly be discussed.

One of the main problems surrounds the relatively small amount of data which the research had, in the end, to work with. Plans were originally made to collect a greater range of data, including classroom observations of teachers in action, and a large number of interviews with teachers. However, permission to collect such data was not given by the Iranian authorities. The reasons for this lack of permission were never explicitly stated, but the likely explanation stems from a worry that this data would be published in Great Britain or anywhere else outside of Iran, thereby risking possible criticism of the Iranian Educational system.

On the other hand, one of the main advantages of this research would be the interviews that were conducted with authors of textbooks and curriculum document since they provided great insight into the ELT system in Iran and confirmed many of the issues that were raised and discussed by teachers. Another advantage of this research might be its uniqueness and pioneering nature. Apparently, according to the participants as well as some authorities within the Iranian Ministry of Education, no one has ever before done such research on such a scale in Iran. Bearing in mind the shortage of relevant literature and research about ELT in Iran, the current study might be considered fairly precious.

5. Discussion
As discussed earlier, a variety of methods i.e. desk-based analysis of the curriculum, questionnaires, interviews were used in order to collect data for the purpose of this study. In this section we will bring together the collected data and discuss the meanings and implications of the findings. The findings will be compared with what might have been expected from the literature. As Berns (1990) and many other scholars have indicated, culture is one of the issues given a great deal of attention in language programmes. Lange stated that although there has been a strong commitment to including culture in the language curriculum for over 40 years, “culture still remains a superficial aspect of language learning …” (Lange, 1999, p.58). Walker and Noda added that “in the story of language, nothing has been discussed more and with less effect than the relationship between language and culture” (Walker and Noda, 2000, p.187).

Culture is recognised as an instrument in shaping speakers’ communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages (Berns, 1990). The issue of culture has been considered
quite important within language programmes, in fact it was regarded as one of the main components of communicative competence, sociocultural competence by Savignon (1983, 2001). Savignon (2001) has argued that cultural awareness rather than cultural knowledge becomes increasingly important. Apparently, just knowing something about the culture of an English speaking country will not suffice. According to Savignon (2001), what must be learned is general empathy and openness towards other countries. It should be kept in mind that foreign/second language learning is not exclusively a subject within the educational programme but also is a representative of the cultural legacy of the speakers of that language. It has been suggested that knowing a language is inseparable from understanding the culture in which the language is spoken (Brown, 1990); that is, according to McGrath (2002), that without cultural knowledge of fairly specific kinds, one cannot fully understand what is said or written. In fact, according to Dornyei (2001),

The learning of foreign/second language involves far more than simply learning skills, or a system of rules, or a grammar; it involves an attraction in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being, and therefore has a significant impact on the social nature of the learner. (p.15)

The analysis of the curriculum document suggested that an enormous attention had been given towards the cultural values of English speaking countries and how important they were for language learners to be familiar with. Almost in every section of the curriculum there was a reference to this matter, for instance, it was clarified in the main goals of the curriculum that (p.20), [Students should be]

- Acquiring a deep understanding of how a language and culture work by comparing issues, language and cultural structures of a foreign language with the ones in the mother tongue.

- Establishing and strengthening self-esteem through an emphasis on Iranian-Islamic identity as a scale to assess and criticise other thoughts and cultures as well as reasonably encountering to political and cultural issues of the current world.

The authors of the curriculum also considered it very important to teach the culture of English speaking countries. According to them, language works within a cultural framework and is not a mechanical process, so separating it from culture would be equivalent to taking out the soul of a language from its body.
One of the authors of the curriculum further expressed the view that one of the aims of the curriculum was that students were supposed to get a deep understanding of how language works. So, when they focus on language use, and language use occurs in a cultural context, then the cultural patterns of language use become very important. And comparing the cultural patterns of the target language with the first language becomes a basis for a better understanding of how language works.

Similarly, the author of course books considered the cultural issue as a very important matter. With respect to the teacher participants, one person refused to make comments since the participant believed that it was a controversial issue and might result in some troubles for the participant. The reasons for this were not quite clear but it was discussed that the respondent had lived in Great Britain for many years and this person talked a lot about how the community and culture had helped the respondent to learn English.

Another respondent thought that it was not important at all. While the third interviewee thought that since the purpose of language education in Iran was to develop reading skills then culture was not very important because most of the reading passages that students would deal with at university were supposed to be academic, so they were not required to know much about culture.

In terms of responses gathered via questionnaires (teacher participants), the question below was designed to find out participants’ views on this issue.

- To what extent is the culture of English speaking countries important for learning English?

Out of 51 responses, almost three quarters of the participants (37 - 72%) expressed the view that culture had an enormous influence on English language learning. On the other hand, 6 (12%) people claimed that it was not very important and 8 (16%) of these teachers preferred not to make any comments.

The participants were further asked whether cultural issues were included in the curriculum, programme and textbooks. According to one of the authors of the curriculum, during the process of designing the curriculum a distinction was made between culture in terms of cultural artefacts i.e. literature, arts, way of life, food etc. and the cultural patterns of language use. Accordingly, the majority of members of the team believed that the cultural patterns of language use were part of language
learning and were very important but the cultural artefacts might not be important for all students. Therefore, since the cultural artefacts might be important only for the small proportion of pupils who were learning English for very specific purposes then they were considered of little importance for inclusion in a language programme.

Regarding the textbooks, the situation was a little different. The cultural content of the ELT textbooks in Iran has never been explicitly discussed. There is a serious absence of thorough studies that examine the quality and the types of materials used in teaching culture. Aliakbari (2004), in a study regarding the place of culture in Iranian ELT textbooks, concluded that these textbooks did not prove helpful in developing intercultural competence and cultural understanding in Iranian secondary schools. According to Aliakbari (2004),

"The evidence does not suggest a positive contribution, since the books, deliberately or not, distract attention from culture or cultural points. (p.11)"

Aliakbari (2004) further argued that the texts included in the course books were limited not only in the depth of cultural information they contained but also in the range of the cultures they depicted. In the four books that were examined, information about other countries, English-speaking or otherwise, averaged less than twenty percent of the total content. Aliakbari (2004) continued to emphasise that it was right to worry that such biased and simplistic cultural presentations reinforce pre-existing assumptions and stereotypes because the literature indicates that shallow presentation of culture can reinforce inaccurate stereotypes. Aliakbari further concluded that “the ELT textbooks in Iran appeared too weak to provide new information or broaden students’ world view or cultural understanding” (Aliakbari, 2004, p.15).

When the author of the textbooks was asked about this issue, the author claimed that the project was supervised by a committee of experts when the textbooks were being prepared and they strongly asked the author not to include any cultural factors and values. So, although, the author considered cultural issues as a very important factor, during the process of designing the textbooks no permission was granted to include any cultural values or factors of English speaking countries in the textbooks. This is also supported by the research that was conducted by Dahmardeh (2009).

When the teacher participants were asked during their interviews if any cultural aspects were included in the programme, one interviewee stated that the programme considered them to a
great extent. Another one believed that the cultural aspects to some extent were included in the programme while the third participant argued that these aspects were not included at all.

In terms of responses gathered via questionnaires (teacher participants), it seems that the respondents interpreted the programme as being less concerned with culture than they would like. Only 1 person thought that the cultural values were included in the programme to a great extent and 9 (18%) teachers preferred ‘to some extent’ as their answer. On the other hand, 25 (49%) respondents believed that cultural values were hardly included in the programme and 14 (27%) participants expressed the view that cultural values were not included in the programme at all.

Moreover, as discussed at the very beginning of this article, two extreme evaluations of ELT exist on the agenda. On the one hand English, as a school subject, is seen as representing and introducing western culture to Iranian students. On the other hand, there are voices postulating that English as it is presently taught in Iran is nothing but a representation of Persian or Islamic ideology. The findings of the current study appear to support the second assessment and are similar to the claims of Aliakbari (2004) and Dahmardeh (2009). To exemplify, the illustrations below which are 3 pages from 3 different textbooks could be used as evidence to support this claim. As can be seen in all pages the women are dressed in an Iranian style of dressing and the setting is illustrated according to the Persian culture. This is the case in the rest of the textbooks as well.

To sum up, according to what the teachers as well as the author of textbooks indicated it could be concluded that cultural issues had a place within neither the current ELT programme nor the textbooks but that the new curriculum represented an attempt to fill this gap.
Furthermore, there is another issue related to the cultural issue that might be worth discussing. Unlike the normal academic definitions of culture and cultural issues, in Islamic countries like Iran “the culture of English speaking countries” is often interpreted as meaning immorality, drinking alcohol, brutality, adultery etc., features which are distinctly contrary to Islamic ideology. Largely, because of lack of appropriate knowledge among common people and scholars alike within Iranian society, what most people think about Western countries, the stereotypes, did not feature in the teaching of the cultural values of English speaking countries.

Furthermore, it needs to be borne in mind that in countries in which there is a mostly negative attitude towards the countries whose language is taught or there are chaotic political relations between them, there are bound to be concerns regarding cultural issues. Nevertheless, making students familiar with other countries’ culture does not necessarily involve jeopardising their own native culture and does not mean that students have an obligation to behave in accordance with the conventions of the target culture. On the contrary, introducing new cultural values could give pupils a better understanding of their own identity, promoting cross-cultural understanding.

Similarly, Kramsch (1993) has argued that knowing about a culture (i.e. gaining cultural competence) does not mean that one has an obligation to behave in accordance with conventions of that culture. Thus the ultimate goal of cultural learning is not to convey information about a culture nor to promote the acquisition of culturally influenced ways of behaving, but rather to help students see their culture in relation to others so as to promote cross-cultural understanding. Thus, according to Celce-Murcia (2001), the complexity of teaching culture lies in the fact that, unlike speaking or writing, culture does not represent a separate domain of foreign/second language instruction; instead, the learning of the foreign/second language culture makes pupils better communicators. The most important long-term benefits of teaching culture may be to provide pupils with the awareness and the tools that will allow them to achieve their academic, professional, social, and personal goals and become successful in their daily functioning in foreign/second language environments.

Concerning empirical evidence to support why culture needs to be taken into consideration as well as its role in foreign/second language learning, Peterson and Coltrane’s work (Centre for Applied Linguistics, 2003) is relevant. They reported that, through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language; in fact,
students cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996, p. 27).

Moreover, Jiang (2000) reported to a survey of the word associations of native Chinese speakers (NCE) contrasted with those of native English speakers (NES), which showed an intimate relationship between language and culture. Jiang (2000) further concluded,

Between language and culture there is always an interactive influence: the two cannot exist without each other. They combine to form a living organism. If we compare the society to a swimming pool, language is a swimming skill and culture is the water. When both are present, people swim well (communicate successfully). They swim confidently and rapidly when they are familiar with the water (i.e. within their native culture), but cautiously and slowly when it is unfamiliar to them (within a foreign culture). (p.332)

Although teaching culture has a lot of merits, it has its own disadvantages too. According to Rivers (1981), one of the drawbacks of teaching culture is that students who have experienced a uniform culture often suffer from cultural shock when confronted with different ways of thinking, acting and reacting. Rivers further argued that in attempting to fit complicated cultural systems into a simplified framework which is comprehensible to an early level student, “we run the danger of imparting or reinforcing stereotypes of attitudes and behaviour” (Rivers, 1981, p.323). According to Rivers (1981), too much emphasis on the exotic or the different in superficial details makes another culture seem “weird or irrational”.

6. Concluding remarks

According to Brown, “it is apparent that culture as an ingrained set of behaviours and modes of perception, becomes highly important in the learning of a second language” (Brown, 2000, p.177). Brown (2000) further explained that a language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are “intricately interwoven” so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.

Therefore, language learning is a deeply social event that requires the incorporation of a wide range of elements of the second language culture. Some scholars like Byram (1997) went even further and expressed the view that the main goal of language teaching should not be simply to teach communicative competence but rather ‘intercultural communicative competence’.
The purpose of this article was to discuss the role of culture within English Language Teaching in Iran. It was explained while the issue of culture has been addressed and considered within the newly designed national curriculum in Iran, this issue appears to play no role in either the textbooks or the ELT programme. Having said that, it could be postulated that changes have to be made if we want to prepare the students to communicate in the multicultural world of English and if we want to use the nationally developed textbooks for the optimum benefit.

There are two factors that are crucial within Iranian society; culture and religion. The findings of this research suggest that apparently, many of the policy makers as well as course planners are very concerned with these issues and are trying to preserve Islamic and Iranian culture and religious values. Future research in this area could explore how teaching and learning English can affect these two values within Iranian society.

References


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*Open Source Centre-hosted, conducted by Science Applications International Corporation (31st December 2007)

* Each interview lasted about an hour and according to the participants’ preference, all of them were conducted in English.

* Each interview lasted about an hour and according to the participants’ preference, 2 of them were conducted in Persian and another one in English language.

* The interview lasted about an hour and according to the participant’s preference, it was conducted in English.