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سنجد پویا در نظریه ی فرهنگی اجتماعی ویگوتسکی به عنوان رویکردی نوین در سیستم آموزش و سنجش

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چکیده
در سیستم آموزشی سنتی (دستوری) فرآیند آموزش و سنجش دو فرآیند جدای از هم هستند. در واقع آموزش معمولا نسبت به سنجش الویت پیدا میکند، به طوری که ابتدا فرآیند آموزش صورت می‌گیرد و سپس سنجش در پی آن می‌آید. این دو در توجه به نظریه ی فرهنگی اجتماعی ویگوتسکی با هم ترکب می‌شوند و فرآیند سنجش پویا را تحت عنوان سنجش پویا به‌وجود می‌رساند. آموزش و سنجش یکی می‌شود و سنجش برای آموزش و آموزش برای سنجش در راستای رشد ذهنی افراد رخ می‌دهد. به نظر می‌رسد که نواحی ذهنی کانویانی آنها در آموزش رشد می‌یابد و در سنجش ارزیابی می‌شود، بلکه پتانسیل رشد ذهنی آنها نیز تیره‌پاش هایه و جامعه‌ی عمل پیدا می‌کند. در نهایت آنچه که اکنون هستند رشد یافته و مورد ارزیابی قرار می‌گیرد، بلکه آنچه با کمی حمایت می‌توانند در سطح فعلی خود باشند و رشد در سنجش پویا به‌وجود آمده، این تغییر جنبه‌ی جدیدی به اطلاعات و سنجش‌های فرد با نظریه‌ی فرهنگی اجتماعی دست به حمایت و رشد در سنجش پویا می‌زند. این تغییر جنبه‌ی جدیدی به سنجش و سنجش پویا دستاوردهای رویکردی مبتنی بر نظریه‌ی فراه یا نظریه‌ی کننده‌ی بزرگ در سنجش از میان محققین در نظر گرفته می‌شود. این کاندیدا ورودی‌ای در سنجش و سنجش پویا در کننده‌ی منابع از میان سنجش‌های بسیاری از که در هر یک از آنها این نظریه به‌وجود می‌آید. مطالعه‌ی حاضر سعی بر این دارد تا جنبه‌های بسیاری از نظریه و عملیات این رویکرد نوین را برای رشد ذهنی و توانایی‌های کانویانی و پتانسیل افراد در سیستم جامعه‌ای به‌کار برده و تحلیل کند.

کلید واژه‌های نظریه فرهنگی اجتماعی، سنجش پویا، پتانسیل رشد ذهنی، تعامل گرا، تداخل گرا

ABSTRACT
The instructive education considers a dualistic view toward teaching and assessment. In that, the teaching process takes place first, and then, the assessment plays its secondary role. However, the two processes are merged in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory under the concept of dynamic assessment. Teaching and assessment are unified within dynamic assessment, in that, the teaching contributes to the assessment, and the assessment develops teaching for the sake of cognitive development. Not only the learner's actual level of development improves in teaching and is evaluated in assessment, but also the potential level of development is strengthened and realized. Not only their current functioning is taught and assessed, but also, their potential future is developed and assessed through support and mediation. Moreover, teachers support learners in accordance with the sociocultural line of thinking through their change of roles in dynamic assessment. This change of approach toward teaching and assessment requires the modification of curriculum designers and teachers. Individuals are grown in the social and cultural environment, therefore, the social and cultural context affects on what they understand of teaching and assessment. The current study aims at discussing the theoretical and practical perspectives of dynamic assessment for the development of the actual and potential functioning of learners in the social context.

Keywords: Sociocultural theory, Dynamic assessment, zone of proximal development, interactionist dynamic
مقدمه

اگر ما، که خود دست پروردهی سیستم آموزشی کشورمان هستیم نگاهی به آن بیاندازیم، بی شک ضعف‌هایی را منصفانه می‌توانیم به آن دانست.

از همان سالهای ابتدایی دبستان فراگیران تحت تأثیر فضای مدرسه قرار می‌گیرند و معلمین و مسئولین آموزشی سعی بر این دارند که مخزن ذهن این فرد را از داده‌ها و دانش حاصل شده در سایر کشورها بپر شوند (فریر، 0791.).

معلمین در یک طرف کلاس، با حجمی از مطلب رو به رو هستند که حتی الامکان باید تا پایان سال تحصیلی به فراگیران انتقال داده، فراگیران نیز در طرف دیگر سیستم آموزشی چاره‌ای جز دریافت مطالب ندارند.

حفظ کردن مطالب، بازگویی درس‌ها، و سردرگمی در هزارتوی مفاهیم انتزاعی و نظری از فراگیران نوعی ماشین اطلاعات می‌سازد که در واقع جایی برای ابراز خلاقیت و استعداد، اگر نگوییم به طور کامل، تا حد بسیار زیاد نمی‌گذارد.

سیستمی که از آن سخن رفته و همواره سعی در اصلاحاتی در آن انجام می‌شود در واقع در دسته‌بندی رویکردهای آموزشی، به نام سیستم آموزش دستوری شناخته می‌شود.

در این سیستم، معلم به عنوان منبعی بی‌نقص از دانش است، و فراگیران همچون مخزنی هستند که از تعالیم تک‌سوی معلم سرشار می‌شوند.

کمبود وقت، مطالب پیچیده، و عدم پذیرش اشتباه فراگیران به دلیل عطش پیشرفت از جان بی خود و فراهم نمی‌گردد شرایط پیشرفت از طرف سیستم سرخورده‌شده و یا برای دستیابی به خواسته‌های افراد، این نتایج به‌طور مداوم می‌تواند باشد.

مشابه افرادی که در هر سو چنین سیستمی در کشورهای دیگر می‌توانند به وسیله مهاجرت به کشورهای دیگر راه‌برد می‌خواهند، در طول دوازده سال ابتدایی، متوسطه ی اول و دوم که افراد را در برای پیش بینی آینده آن‌ها، یا حاصل شده در امتحانات پایان سال تحصیلی می‌تواند سند خوبی برای هر دوی آینده‌ها و دانش‌ها باشد.

یکی از رفتارهای ایمنی در تحلیل سیستم آموزشی و رشد افراد تقسیم بندی می‌شود:

1. رفتار قدرت‌طلبانه که در آن از قوانین، پاداش و جریمه برای کنترل و رشد افراد استفاده می‌شود.

2. رفتار حمایت‌گرایی که در آن تعامل، همکاری، بحث و گفتار افراد به رشد و توانایی فراگیران بپردازد و نمایندگی‌های اجتماعی و سواد انتظامی خانواده را به خاطر می‌آورد.

3. رفتار خلاق‌گرایی و عملکردگرایی که در آن روحیه‌های عمومی و نیازهای شخصی برای رشد دستیابی و پیشرفت شخصی اجتناب می‌شود.

در این جستار سعی می‌شود نوع دوم رفتاری را که نظریه فرهنگی اجتماعی ویگوتسکی است، به بحث و بررسی در سطح‌های مختلف ویژه عملکرد ذهنی فراگیران و رشد ذهنی افراد به‌عنوان منظور اصلی آن در نظر گرفته شود.

1 Instructivism
در واقع هنگام امروز به به واسطه ی نظریه ی فرهنگی اجتماعی خود در میان محققین حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در واقع فاصله ی بین توانایی کنونی افراد در حل مستقل مسائل و توانایی عملکرد ذهنی افراد در حل توضیحات بالا در واقع این حوزه ی توانایی است که در یک سوی ر دو بتوانند نقش فعال برای رشد معلم تنها نقش حامی و باید بوجود اوردن تغییرات کیفی در تفکر، بنابراین میتوان گفت که میانجی گری یعنی بکارگیری سیستم طبق البته نوع

6. معلم یا با تغییر نظریه ی فرهنگی اجتماعی ویگوتسکی، یک بدنی یا به واسطه ی آنچه که در قبل تجربه کرده و آموخته سطحی از دانش را همراه خود خواهد بردن. البته این تلاش کننده حاضر باشد تا به وسیله حامی کمک معلمین در این رویکرد دیگر دانای کل نبوده و مطالب را آماده و حاضر به فراگیران ارائه نخواهد داد، بلکه این خود فراگیران هستند که در مورد افراد صورت پذیرد.

بررسی سیستم (2010) میانجی گری گوئی به این سوالات بدهیم از دیدگاه نظریه ی فرهنگی-اجتماعی ویگوتسکی به سیستم آموزشی و بیانی/ویگوتسکی و سیستم آموزشی میکنیم در این جستار به این سوالات به‌دست آمده از دیدگاه نظریه ی فرهنگی-اجتماعی ویگوتسکی به سیستم آموزشی خواهد بود.

2 نظریه ی فرهنگی-اجتماعی ویگوتسکی و سیستم آموزشی

از شهرت بالایی برخوردار است. این باید روش و روش‌های تکنیک برای حل متغیرات مربوط به جوامع بیولوژیکی مشکل در این اقلیت در زمینه جامعه به یادآوری بیگانه، در زمان مدرک، دیلی و همکاران، (2007) البته این کست در مورد حوزه ی توانایی مدرک دانشجویان در طیت درک می‌شود، البته می‌شود که این افراد می‌توانند نقش فعال در بررسی این اقلیت در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد را بپیوند.

پیشینه‌ها و این اقلیت در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه خواندن که این افراد می‌توانند برای جامعه مفید بوده و به این اقلیت در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه خواندن که این افراد می‌توانند برای جامعه مفید بوده و به این اقلیت در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در زمینه خواندن که این افراد می‌توانند برای جامعه مفید بوده و به این اقلیت در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد در دو سطح می‌تواند وابسته به یافته‌های بیلینگز و پردن (1997) باشد که در حوزه ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی
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مهمت این مفهوم در سیستم آموزشی هنگامی آشکار خواهد شد که معلم توانایی های کلاس به طور خاص و افراد تاکنون مشاهده کرده ایجاد تاکنون در مورد اهداف آموزشی 

متن در مورد نظر ذکر شده در پایان داشته باشد. در نتیجه مدرسه نمی تواند همه افراد را به تعیین یابد آنکه چه کلیات و برنامه آموزشی کلاسیک بکف از یکدیگر باید مدت منظر قرار گیرد (مهری، 2014). 

مهمت حوزه پتانسیل افراد در تحقیق 

3. مهمت حوزه پتانسیل افراد در تحقیق مبنی بر توانایی افراد یا می‌توان به توانایی افراد در روزه‌ی اولیه به نظر بسته به یکدیگر و یا همکلاسی است (ورش، 0711، ص. 19). 

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همکاری ممکن است که افراد توانایی ذهنی پایین‌تر یا بالاتری از آنچه که در تعریف دروس و اهداف آموزشی در مورد نظر باید مدت منظر قرار گیرد (مهری، 2014). 

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کنسرت مقام جامعه ای انگیزه‌ای که در تعامل بین افراد در زندگی کشور می‌گذشتی یا آن‌ها را به‌دست می‌دهد یک شک ناتوانی پرورانی در کارکردهای ذهنی آنها می‌باشد (برون، 1983). این اتاق نظری که در شرایط واقعی زندگی می‌کنند می‌تواند در تماشایی دانش بانی در آزمایشگاه کارکرد را در مقتضی‌های زندگی باشد. در مقایسه با این شرایط، فراگیری در منطقه‌های محرور زندگی منطقه‌ای که می‌کند ممکن است در حوالی دو تا سه ماه از توانایی دانش بانی رخ دهد. در مقابل این افراد، فردی دیگری در زندگی ممکن است در حوالی دو تا سه ماه از توانایی دانش بانی رخ دهد.

معنای پیشین زندگی نباید در آینده آموزشی و رشد ذهنی آنها نقش محوری بازی کند. هرچون فرد مورد نظر ما در دانشگاه برتر تحصیل کند بی‌شک می‌تواند حال آنکه ما در سیستم سنجش یک فرد از توانایی دانش بانی رخ دهد، پس از حذف گروه دوم را بتواند شود. حتی در افراد کند و عقب‌مانده نیز این تغییر و روند سنجش ما نباید اساساً تاثیری بگذارد چرا که تمامی افراد پتانسیل ذهنی دارند و قابل پیشرفت. حال آنکه چگونه می‌توانیم ارزیابی منصفانه و درستی از میزان عملکرد ذهنی هر فرد از طریق دیگر، سوالاتی که در جلسات امتحان پایانی به فراگیران داده می‌شود، آنها را به صورت انفرادی مورد ارزیابی قرار می‌دهد.

هم‌اکنون نیز بسیاری از افراد جامعه رویکرد تک بعدی آموزش و سنجش می‌تواند به طور خاص در آینده علمی و پژوهشی و به طور عام در رشد سطح تفکر و ترقی جامعه تاثیر بسزایی کند. حال اگر سازمان سنجش و ارزیابی توانایی ممکن است در این میان نظریه ی شرایط فراگیری که در منطقه‌ی محروم زندگی می‌کند ممکن است تا حدودی بتواند با تلاش مضاعف کمبود امکانات را جبران کند. کار این چهار گزینه ست، همین چهارچوب امتحانی نیز که به منظور دریافت میزان سطح دانش و توانایی افراد ست، می‌تواند به اعتبار تست در جلسه ازمون سوالات به صورت در جلسه یقات میدانی مورد تایید قرار گرفته، نتواند به خوبی در چهارچوب تصمیم گیری خود قرار دهد، در بحث عدالت در حالیکه افراد نیز می‌کند، بر این است که افراد که در شرایط مرفه زندگی می‌کنند از توانایی بالایی برخوردار نیست، اما می‌تواند سطح عملکرد کنونی ذهنی ممکن است افراد در آزمون مسئله‌ای که از نظر تحقیق ادبی مورد تایید قرار گرفته، نتواند به خوبی در چهارچوب تصمیم گیری خود قرار دهد، در بحث عدالت در این میان نظریه ی شرایط فراگیری که در منطقه‌ی محروم زندگی می‌کند ممکن است تا حدودی بتواند با تلاش مضاعف کمبود امکانات را جبران کند.

abohe می‌هماند و موثری در رفتاری که ما آنرا به طور عام تحت عنوان تقلب بگیرند چرا که در غیر اینصورت اعتبار تست از بین می‌رود و رفتاری که ما آنرا به طور عام تحت عنوان می‌هماند و موثری در رفتاری که ما آنرا به طور عام تحت عنوان تقلب بگیرند. می‌هماند و موثری در رفتاری که ما آنرا به طور عام تحت عنوان تقلب بگیرند چرا که در غیر اینصورت اعتبار تست از بین می‌رود و رفتاری که ما آنرا به طور عام تحت عنوان تقلب بگیرند. می‌هماند و موثری در رفتاری که ما آنرا به طور عام تحت عنوان Tک اندازه‌گیری کند و در بعضی موارد سندرم افراد از طریق سنجش که در جلسه امتحان پایانی به فراگیران داده می‌شود، آنها را به صورت انفرادی مورد ارزیابی قرار می‌دهد.

تقلب بسیاری نیز می‌شود تا این تاثیر شرایط آزمون کاهش یابد، حال اگر سرفه مردم به خوبی در نتیجه اگر بتوانیم سنجش را به گونه‌ی تعامل گرا برگزار کنیم که بتواند علاوه بر حوزه‌ی پتانسیل رشد ذهنی آنها را نیز مورد سنجش قرار دهد، بس کار شگرف و مهمی در انتخاب افراد تواناتر کرده ایم.
فرصت و چشم پوشی سیستم سنجش بر پتانسیل رشد ذهنی این فرد از دایره انتخاب سازمان سنجش در حضور در دانشگاه های برتر حذف شود، و در نتیجه مسیر زندگی این فرد نیز متعاقبا تغییر کند.

4. سنجش پویا از دیدگاه ابزارایر ارزیابی

پس از کنونکاو در روبرک فرهنگی اجتماعی ویگوسکی و جنبهٔ عملی تجربیات انجام گرفته در این هزینه عموماً در روبرک عمدهٔ برای سنجش معمول مطرح می‌شود. در روبرک تداخل گروه‌های سنجش توانایی کنونی ذهنی و سنجش پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد قرار می‌گیرد. یکی از این افراد به دانشگاه‌های برتر می‌پردازد، و در نتیجه مسیر زندگی این فرد نیز متعاقبا تغییر کند.

4.1. سنجش پویا از دیدگاه ابزارایر ارزیابی

رویکرد تعامل گرا و رویکرد تداخل گرا دو رویکرد عمده برای سنجش معتبرتر افراد مطرح می‌شود. این دو رویکرد اساسی بر پایه تعاملی یا یکپارچگی است. البته هردوی این رویکردها مبنای عملی خود را بر پایه سنجش توانایی کنونی و سنجش پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد قرار می‌دهند.

قبل از بحث در مورد این دو رویکرد سنجش پویا بپردازیم، لازم است تاکید کنیم که اساس دو رویکرد بر پایه تعاملی یکپارچگی است. البته این دیالوگ مبنای نظری مستقلی دارد ولی علاوه بر این باید دیالوگ را در بستر نظریه فرهنگی اجتماعی بررسی کرد.

نکتهٔ دوم این ست که محور اصلی سنجش پویا که هم سطح توانایی کنونی و پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد را می‌سنجد، ذاتاً آموزش را نیز در بنیان خود دارد. و در فرآیند سنجش برای دستیابی به میزان پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد، باید دید که آنها تا چه میزان از تعامل و حمایت معلم یا سنجش گر سود برده و می‌توانند آموزش ببینند (پوهنر، 2011).

5. روبرک تداخل گرا

در روبرک تداخل گرا مراکزی می‌باشد که بر روی سنجش گر نیز تفاوت‌های مشکلاتی دارد. در این سنجش، سنجش گر نیز بخشی از آموزش است و برعکس، آموزش گر نیز بخشی از سنجش است. در واقع آموزش و سنجش که در سیستم آموزشی سنتی دو فرآیند جدایی از هم بودند، در سنجش پویا دو رویکرد برای سنجش افراد مطرح می‌شود. البته هردوی این رویکردها مبنای عملی خود را بر پایه سنجش توانایی کنونی و سنجش پتانسیل رشد ذهنی افراد قرار می‌دهند.
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‫درک بهتر از مسئله حمایت می کند‪ .‬البته این نکته را نباید فراموش کرد که در دیالوگی که بین فراگیر و میانجی شکل می گیرد عالوه بر‬
‫سنجش پتانسیل فرد‪ ،‬میتوان علت مشکل فرد را نیز یافت (پوهنر‪ .)2119 ،‬اینکه آیا شخص اساسا از مباحث یا مفاهیم مطرح شده در آزمون‬

‫فرد اول در تله ی آموزشی افتاده و به سوال پاسخ نادرست بدهد و فرد دوم هم بر حسب شانس تنها گزینه ای را انتخاب کند‪ ،‬چگونه میتوان‬
‫این دو را از هم تمیز داد؟‬
‫پوهنر (‪ )2111‬در مطالعه ی خود شیوه دستیابی به علت مشکل فرد در حل مسائل و یا کشف علت پاسخ اشتباه آنها را از طریق راهبردهای‬
‫فراشناختی میسر می سازد‪ .‬در فرایند تعامل‪ ،‬معلم یا میانجی می تواند علت انتخاب پاسخ از سوی فراگیر را از وی بپرسد‪ .‬معموال این نوع‬
‫دیالوگ با سوالی همانند‪" :‬چرا این پاسخ را انتخاب کردید؟" شروع می شود‪ .‬طی پاسخ به این سوال‪ ،‬فراگیر سعی بر این دارد که به درجه ای از‬

‫آگاهی از تصمیم و رویکرد خود برسد‪ ،‬آن را بررسی کند‪ ،‬و در تعامل و دیالوگ با میانجی درک و کنترل بهتری نسبت به تصمیم و پاسخ خود‬
‫بیابد‪ .‬میانجی نیز از طرفی دیگر‪ ،‬با فهم از علت پاسخ فراگیر می تواند دلیل اصلی پاسخ را متوجه شود‪ .‬اگر پاسخ درست باشد‪ ،‬راهبردهای‬
‫فراشناختی سندی بر اعتبار سنجش خواهد بود‪ .‬اگر پاسخ درست نباشد‪ ،‬با راهبردهای فراشناختی میتوان علت پاسخ و ریشه کج فهمی در‬
‫مبحث مورد سنجش را در ال به الی دیالوگ فراگیر کشف کرد‪.‬‬
‫در رویکرد تعامل گرا با سوال در مورد درک فرد از مبحث و میزان توانایی وی برای پاسخ به سواالت میتوان پتانسیل رشد ذهنی وی را سنجید ‪.‬‬
‫البته طرز عملی کردن این رویکرد کمی دشوار است‪ .‬در سنجش های کالن رویکرد تعامل گرای سنجش پویا حجم داده های زیادی را در‬
‫اختیار مسئولین قرار می دهد که همین شاید سازمان دهی اطالعات را مشکل ساز کند‪ .‬گرچه رویکرد تعامل گرا به سنجش گران مجرب و توانا‬
‫احتیاج دارد ولی دقت و کیفیت داده های حاصل از دیالوگ در این رویکرد آنقدر باالست که با وجود محدودیت ها در اجرای این رویکرد در‬
‫سنجش های کالن‪ ،‬همچنان نمیتوان از آن چشم پوشی کرد (پوهنر‪ .)2111 ،‬البته در سنجش های خرد ب سیاری از محدودیت های ذکر شده‬
‫برطرف می شود و درجه ی عملی کردن این رویکرد سهل خواهد شد‪.‬‬
‫‪ .6‬رویکرد تداخل گرا‬
‫در رویکرد تداخل گرا‪ ،‬نوع راهنمایی‪ ،‬حمایت‪ ،‬میزان و درجه ی وضوح شگردها به طور مشخص برای سنجش گر و معلم تعریف شده است ‪.‬‬
‫سنجش گر یا معلم در این رویکرد با اطمینان بهتری می داند که در رویارویی با نیاز فرد به حمایت‪ ،‬چه رفتار و دیالوگی را از خود بروز دهد‬
‫(همان)‪ .‬البته استفاده از این رویکرد نمی تواند تمامی نیازهای فرد را در فرایند پاسخگویی به آزمون برآورده کند‪ .‬بلکه سنجش گر نکاتی را باید‬
‫انتخاب کند تا در فرایند دیالوگ و حمایت مطرح شود‪ .‬انتقادی که همانند رویکرد تعامل گرا‪ ،‬به این رویکرد وارد است نیاز آن به دیالوگ رو در‬
‫رو و یک به یک است‪ .‬البته چنین نقدی توسط محققین تا حدود بسیار زیادی برطرف شده است‪ .‬پس از اتخاذ نوع راهنمایی در هر آزمون و‬
‫مراحل مستقیم و غیرمستقیم بو دن آن‪ ،‬میتوان رویکرد را به طور کالن نیز عملی کرد‪ .‬استفاده از سنجش پویا رایانه ای (پوهنر و لنتولف‪،‬‬
‫‪ )2101‬یکی از جدید ترین حوزه های تحقیق و علمی کردن رویکرد تداخل گراست‪ .‬رویکرد تداخل گرای رایانه ای این امکان را برای سنجش‬
‫گر به وجود می آورد که با طرح هر سوال در پنجره ای جداگانه در سیستم سنجش رایانه ای‪ ،‬فراگیر را از درجات حمایت و راهنمایی گوناگون‬
‫برخوردار کند‪ .‬سیستم بدین گونه عمل می کند که اگر فراگیر بدون نیاز به حمایت به سوال پاسخ گوید‪ ،‬بیشترین امتیاز را (برای مثال ‪1‬‬
‫امتیاز) بدست می آورد‪ .‬اگر وی به حمایت احتیا ج داشته باشد‪ ،‬اولین فراخوان را برای حمایت به سیستم اعالم می کند‪ .‬سیستم نیز متقابال‬
‫راهنمایی بسیار غیرمستقیمی برای دستیابی به پاسخ برای فراگیر فراهم می کند‪ .‬اگر فراگیر توانایی استفاده از این راهنمایی را داشته باشد و به‬
‫پاسخ درست دست یابد‪ ،‬می تواند درجه ای دیگر از امتیاز را بدست آورد (برای مثال ‪ 1‬امتیاز)‪ .‬این فرایند ادامه می یابد تا اینکه مستقیم ترین‬
‫حمایت و توضیح رسیدن به پاسخ به فراگیر ارائه می شود‪ .‬این مرحله کمترین امتیاز را داراست‪ .‬اما نکته ای که شایان توجه است‪ ،‬تمایز در‬
‫میزان توانایی افراد در استفاده از حمایت هاست‪ .‬اگر فردی سطح توانایی ذهنی کنونی خوبی در مبحث مورد سنجش داشته باشد می تواند‬
‫بدون راهنمایی به سوال پاسخ دهد‪ .‬در مرحله ی بعد اگر پتانسیل رشد ذهنی باالیی داشته باشد می تواند از غیرمستقیم ترین راهنمایی سود‬
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‫درک درستی دارد‪ ،‬یا اینکه تا حدودی آنها را می داند‪ ،‬و یا اینکه بر مبحث تسلط دارد ولی تنها در تله آموزشی افتاده‪ ،‬تفاوت را بین ف راگیران‬
‫مشخص می کند‪ .‬مبحث تله ی آموزشی در آزمون های کالن از اهمیت باالیی برخوردار است‪ .‬طراحان سوال سعی بر این دارند تا میزان ذکاوت‬
‫و هوش افراد را در پاسخ دهی به سواالت با افزایش درجه ی سختی سواالت و نکته های ریز بسنجند‪ .‬اما سنجش گر چگونه می تواند تفاوت‬
‫بین فردی را که مباحث و مفاهیم حوزه ی مورد نظر را به شدت مطالعه کرده با فردی که اساسا هیچ درکی از سواالت ندارد شناسایی کند‪ .‬اگر‬


ببرد، این فراگیران تا چنین ادامه می‌کنند تا در مرحله‌ی آخر واضح ترین و مستقیم ترین نوع حمایت در واقع پتانسیل رشد ذهنی پایین افراد را نمایان می‌کند.

در نتیجه با اطمینان بالاتر و به طور کلی عدالت و انصاف بیشتری می‌توان سطح توانایی افراد را شناسایی کرد.

کوزولین و گارب (2110) در مطالعه‌ی ای درباره سنجش پویای درک مطلب فراگیران زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی، فرمولی را برای ارزیابی تصویری از آزمون پذیرش همبسته می‌نمایاند. این فرمول برای ارزیابی سطح کنونی افراد در زمینه‌ی درک فراورده‌های آموزشی و سنجش می‌تواند میانجی گری را برای پیشرفت در توانایی فراگیران به عنوان یکی از ابزارهای استفاده شده در زمینه‌ی سنجش و آموزش ابتدایی قدرتمند در مرحله‌ی پس از آزمون، سنجش کردار دیگر تنظیم کنند.

بر اساس این آزمون، سنجش پویا که نشان می‌دهد که سنجش پویا در حین نظریه‌ی مستقیم‌ترین نوع حمایت تا کنون موجود به عنوان یکی از کاربردهای ابزاری گزارش پذیر می‌باشد.

پس از اینکه میانجی گری انجام می‌شود، سنجش پویا برای ایجاد تغییر در کارکردهای ذهنی فراگیران استفاده می‌شود. خود این فرمول برای ارزیابی سطح کنونی افراد در زمینه‌ی درک فراورده‌های آموزشی و سنجش می‌تواند میانجی گری را برای پیشرفت در توانایی فراگیران به عنوان یکی از ابزارهای استفاده شده در زمینه‌ی سنجش و آموزش ابتدایی قدرتمند در مرحله‌ی پس از آزمون، سنجش کردار دیگر تنظیم کنند.

به طور کلی، سنجش پویا به عنوان یکی از ابزارهای استفاده‌ناپذیر پایه نظری برای تفکیک افرادی که از پتانسیل بالا و پتانسیل پایین برخوردارند می‌باشد.

طبق ادعای کوزولین (همان) فراگیری که در پیش آزمون نمره‌ی برفرض 11 را آورده باشد، در مرحله‌ی پیشرفت در پس آزمون به نمره‌ی 011 دست یابد و نمره ای باعث نمی‌شود که در آزمون مورد نظر بدست آورده شده است. این فرمول پایه نظری برای تفکیک افرادی که از پتانسیل بالا و پتانسیل پایین برخوردارند می‌باشد.

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در سنجش تخصصی سطح کنونی افراد در ابتدا سال تحصیلی صورت می‌پذیرد تا اطلاعاتی برای بررسی جمع آوری شود. در اینجا آموزشی صورت می‌پذیرد. در سنجش تخصصی، سنجش تخصصی فی روانی آموزشی صورت می‌گیرد. در نهایت در سنجش پیگیری مطالعات آموزشی نهاد و مطالعات مرتبط با سال‌های قبل مورد ارزیابی قرار داده می‌شود.

در اینجا، مقدمه افراد توانایی آنها را رشد و ضعف افراد را می‌گویند. هر آنچه گفته می‌شود فرصتی موجود افراد را رشد داده و ضعف افراد را نشان می‌دهد. هر آنچه گفته می‌شود فرصتی موجود افراد را رشد داده و ضعف افراد را نشان می‌دهد. هر آنچه گفته می‌شود فرصتی موجود افراد را رشد داده و ضعف افراد را نشان می‌دهد.

M. فرانسویسکی، تحلیل آزمون‌های افراد در صورت اینکه افراد آموزشی مرحله نا آشنا آموزشی در سطح ابتدایی دهه نوزدهم صورت می‌گیرد.

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THE EFFECT OF SEMANTIC MAPPING STRATEGY ON EFL LEARNERS’ VOCABULARY LEARNING

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ABSTRACT
Learning vocabulary is very important factor in developing a foreign language, so EFL teachers always try to use new techniques and methods that help their students to enhance their vocabulary competence. This study tries to investigate the effect of teaching vocabulary through semantic mapping strategy on Iranian EFL vocabulary learning. This study conducted in Guilan university of Iran. Thirty out of 40 male students with intermediate language proficiency level that homogenized with Nelson Proficiency Test participated in this study. The age range of students was between 23-27. Thirty students randomly assigned into two groups,15 students in control group and 15 students in experimental group. In order to assess students' vocabulary knowledge and also, to ensure the homogeneity of two groups a teacher-made vocabulary test as a pre-test was given to the two groups. Instruction for two groups lasted for three weeks. While students of experimental group practiced new vocabularies through semantic mapping strategy, but the control group followed their traditional approach. After six sessions, a post-test was given to the students of both classes to see if this method affected students’ knowledge of vocabulary. Results based on comparing the mean scores of two groups on post-test by applying t-test, demonstrated that proper use of semantic mapping strategy can lead to successful teaching and learning of new vocabularies.

Key words: Semantic mapping, Strategy, Vocabulary, EFL

1. Introduction
Vocabulary is central to language and is of great significance to language learners (Zimmerman, 1998). Vocabulary is the basic access to a language. It is the foundation of a pyramid. Without words, there would be no language structures. Words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning (Nation, 2004). The prominent role of vocabulary knowledge in second or foreign language learning has been recently recognized by theorists and researchers in the field. Accordingly, numerous types of approaches, techniques, exercises and practice have been introduced into the field to teach vocabulary (Schmitt, 2000).

As Nation (2004) notes, memory strategies, one kind of the language learning strategies, are considered vital in vocabulary teaching. Oxford (1990) advocated that memory strategies are regarded as "powerful mental tools" for language learners to cope with vocabulary learning difficulties, because they "make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (p.8).

Based on Oxford’s (1990) explanation, memory strategies served as "a highly specific function: helping students store and retrieve new information"(p.37). She found out that "language learners have a serious problem remembering the large amounts of vocabulary necessary to achieve fluency"(p.39). To deal with the learning problem, memory strategies were of great help. Thus, memory strategies become a key group in Oxford's strategy classification system.

Barcroft (2004, p.200) defines semantic mapping as “the increased evaluation of an item with regard to its meaning”. A semantic map can be used as a tool for discovering the conceptual relationships between vocabulary items. Semantic elaboration seems to enhance word learning and retention, through a learning phase called ‘integration’ (Shostak, 2003). Integration is based on the view that in order for learning to occur, new information should be incorporated into what the learner previously knows (Christen and Murphy, 1991, cited in Shostak, 2003).

Semantic mapping is also a useful strategy that can be introduced to learners at any level of proficiency. It involves drawing a diagram of the relationships between words according to their use in a particular text. Semantic
mapping has the effect of bringing relationships in a text to consciousness for the purpose of deepening the understanding of a text and creating associative networks for words. It is best introduced as a collaborative effort between the teacher and the class (Stahl & Vancil, 1986, cited in Nation & Newton, 1997). Such a diagram visually shows how ideas fit together. This strategy incorporates a variety of memory strategies like grouping, using imagery, associating and elaborating and it is important for improving both memory and comprehension of new vocabulary items (An, 2006).

In a guided semantic mapping, learners work with the teacher to develop a semantic map around a topic, the teacher deliberately introduces several target vocabulary items and puts them on the map as well as elaborating on them with the learners who then use the semantic map to do a piece of writing. If the writing is done in a group, a learner in the group can be assigned to ensure that the target words are used (Nation, 2001). This study intends to investigate the effectiveness of vocabulary instruction via semantic mapping against the established traditional vocabulary teaching technique that is widely used in Iran.

1.2.1.2.Literature review

There are a number of studies on the effectiveness of word clusters on L2 vocabulary learning. Johnson, et al., (1984) compared semantic mapping and semantic feature analysis with a modified basal approach for effectiveness as pre-reading instructional treatment for both vocabulary acquisition and passage comprehension. In the basal approach, the teacher explained the story and students discussed the important words used in the story. Pointing to the list of target words on the chalkboard, he told students that they would be doing His study showed that L2 word pairs of comparable semantic-relatedness will produce differential semantic relatedness rating scores and reaction time in L2 speakers, depending on whether the words share the same L1 translations. Based on the findings, it was concluded that semantic mapping can be helpful and facilitative in lexical acquisition and recall.

Furthermore, Sanchez (2004) investigated the effect of semantic mapping on EFL vocabulary learning. Thirty linguistically homogeneous participants were divided into an experimental and a control group. The experimental group (semantic mapping) showed several changes in the organization of information in different stages of learning. The students' semantic maps in the post test were more similar to the one produced with the expert data. So, he concluded that learning lexicon with this kind of instruction causes changes in learners' cognitive structures in their mind.

Contrary to the above studies, Riazi, et. al., (2005) discovered that semantic mapping strategy is not commonly used by Iranian EFL learners. A questionnaire which was completed by 213 students indicated that the most frequently used strategies were shallower cognitive strategies, and the less commonly used strategies were those that involved deeper cognitive processing, such as, keyword technique and semantic mapping. The results also showed that language learners make more use of traditional vocabulary learning strategies such as taking notes in class, and using new words in sentences.

Ossen (2004) investigated the effectiveness of two methods of vocabulary instruction on the vocabulary recognition and comprehension of science textbook material with English and Spanish speaking elementary school students. The subjects of the study were 136 students. They were assigned to one control group and two experimental groups: semantic mapping and context definition respectively. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores between the semantic mapping and the control group. Besides, there was a significant difference between the mean scores for the science Achievement Test with the Semantic mapping group scoring significantly higher than the context/definition and control group. The results indicated semantic mapping was a more effective method of instruction in helping students comprehend science textbook material than the context/definition of text-only-method.

Srinoawaratt (2001) examined the effects of two methods of vocabulary instruction on the vocabulary learning of the eleventh grade Thai EFL students. Schema theory, semantic field theory and semantic network theory provided the theoretical framework for the experimental method of vocabulary instruction which used mainly the semantic mapping technique as the pre reading vocabulary teaching strategy. The traditional method of vocabulary teaching in which students were provided with lists of difficult words in the reading passage was used as the vocabulary strategy in the control group. The subjects of the study were 52 Thai EFL students from two intact classes in a secondary school. The results indicated that the experimental group performed significantly better on the listening comprehension section of the standardized proficiency test. The researcher concluded that the experimental method (semantic mapping) might be used as an alternative method useful for vocabulary instruction for EFL students.
1.3. Definition of key words

Semantic Mapping

Semantic mapping enables learners to understand the relationships among words by helping them use their prior knowledge since the right “interpretation of new information hinges on its congruency with the schemata currently activated” (Nassaji, 2007, p. 82). The use of semantic mapping in the classroom may be divided into five phases in general. These are “introducing the topic, brainstorming, categorization, personalizing the map, post-assessment synthesis” (Zaid, 1995: 9). In Zaid’s variation, phrases are explained below:

- Introducing the topic: The teacher declares the topic by drawing a large oval on the blackboard and writes the topic inside of it. This topic is about the passage students will read. Through this, the students can guess the purpose of the reading passage.

- Brainstorming: The teacher wants the students to think about keywords and ideas which are interrelated to the topic. This fact enables the students to use their background knowledge and experiences. Brainstorming is an application of the schema theory, which is necessary for connecting known and unknown concepts. Thus, prior knowledge can be used as a stepping block to new knowledge.

- Categorization: In this phase According to Zaid (1995) the students grow experience in practicing some valuable cognitive skills, particularly categorizing and exemplifying and they also learn comparing and contrasting, cause and effect relationships and making inference. This part also can be termed as pre-assignment.

- Post-assessment synthesis: The last part of this procedure is used to record the assignment. After they read the passage and add or eliminate some items, the whole class decides the final shape of the map. The new version, serves as a visual image of the knowledge they gained from the map.

A semantic map of word “Transportation”

Taken from Abu RADWAN, A., & Rikala-Boyer, J., (2011)

The figure that has presented above shows the organization of semantic mapping and also presents an example of how teachers can apply semantic mapping strategy in the classroom. Semantic maps like the above figure, makes
vocabulary learning interesting for students and because it is based on grouping that is a memory strategy, so it will help students to learn vocabularies easily.

**A Strategy**: It is a conscious plan employed to make learning more effective, easier and effortless. “A strategy is potentially a conscious plan for solving what to the individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular goal” (Farch, 1980).

**Vocabulary**: the term “vocabulary is defined as a set of lexemes including single words, compound words and idioms” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

**EFL**: English as a Foreign Language.

### 1.4. Significance of the Study

Teaching and learning vocabulary always have been very important for both teachers and students during language teaching and learning history and teachers try to apply methods that have positive effect on students’ learning. This study is based on the idea that a method called semantic mapping may help students and teachers to overcome many problems they encounter in their teaching and learning and enhance students’ knowledge of vocabulary.

### 1.5. Objectives of the Study

The primary object of this study is to compare the effectiveness of semantic mapping strategy and traditional method for teaching vocabulary. The outcome of this study can be important for language teacher to select the best method for teaching vocabulary.

### 1.6. Research Questions and Hypothesis

1. Is there any relationship between using semantic map strategy in the classroom and students’ vocabulary learning improvement?
2. Is semantic mapping strategy effective than traditional method for teaching vocabulary?

Concerning these questions, the following hypotheses will drive the present study:

1. There is no relationship between using the semantic mapping strategy and students’ vocabulary learning improvement.
2. There is no significant difference between using semantic mapping strategy and traditional method for teaching vocabulary.

### 2. Methodology

#### 2.1. Participants

Thirty out of 40 male students with intermediate language proficiency level that were homogenized based on Nelson proficiency test participated in this study. The participants ages ranged between 23-27. They randomly assigned into two groups, 15 students in control group and 15 students in experimental group.

#### 2.2. Instruments and Materials

Two instruments were used in this study: The first one, was a test of Nelson (adapted from Nelson English Language Tests, by Fowler and Coe (1976), series 200 B) that helped us to select homogeneous students for the study and the second one was a teacher-made vocabulary test that developed based on course materials used for pre-test and post-test. Before giving the vocabulary test to the target group it was administered for a small group of students similar to the target group, for pilot study and all the weak and difficult items were discarded. The materials were six units, each containing a reading passage and some vocabulary exercises and activities. The reading passages were adopted from "Vocabulary Builder" volumes 1 & 2 by Seal (1987) and also some vocabulary exercises were adopted from "Intermediate Vocabulary Book" by Thomus (1986).

In order to ensure that all the words in the materials are new for students a list of 100 words were given to a group of subjects similar to the original sample and they were asked to write the meaning of the words they know and then based on their answers a list of 60 words that were new and unknown for students were selected for the study and preparing semantic maps.

#### 2.3. Design of the Study

The study is a quasi-experimental design in which there are both a control group and an experimental group and samples were selected intentionally and there was no true-randomization. Using semantic mapping strategy
and traditional method for teaching vocabulary are independent variables and students' vocabulary learning improvement is dependent variable.

2.4. Procedures

To accomplish the purpose of this study, 30 out of 40 male students with intermediate language proficiency level that were homogenized based on Nelson test participated in this study. This study was conducted in Guilan university of Iran. Thirty students were randomly assigned into two groups, 15 students in control group and 15 students in experimental group. Then, a teacher made vocabulary test as pre-test was given to the students in order to assess students’ knowledge of vocabulary and also, to ensure the equivalence among the two groups in their vocabulary performance at the beginning of the experiment. and the outcomes were recorded.

Instruction for both control group and experimental group lasted for three weeks, two sessions each week and each session with 90 minutes long. In each session students read a passage that was adopted from “Vocabulary Builder” by Seal (1987) volumes 1& 2 and did some exercises. In experimental group after students read the passage they received semantic mapping strategy instruction according to the following phases proposed by Morin & Goebel(2001):

Phase 1: In the first session the strategy was presented and described explicitly, then it was explained why, when and how this strategy can be used.

Phase 2: In each session, after reading the passage, the teacher wrote the central theme of the text on the board.

Phase 3: Then the class divided into small groups, each group was given a part of the central concept and invited to provide related words. Students were encouraged to ask for words they didn’t know and were not included in the passage.

Phase 4: The teacher wrote the suggested words on the board and connected them with lines and arrows to the main topic. All the semantic maps were created on the board, so that they could be shared with all the students in the class.

Phase 5: After the creating semantic maps, the groups had to manipulate the words and concepts by explaining to the rest of the class why they have included them in their semantic maps and how they relate to the central concept. Students also explained and described words that they had produced and were not in their text and were not known by the rest of the classmates, then the students copied the maps in their notebooks. In order to teach same words in the experimental group, in addition to the maps which were created by students on each topic, a similar map which was prepared for the purpose of this study in advance was also given to the students.

Phase 6: At the last phase, vocabularies produced in these activities were reviewed a number of times in the following class periods.

In control group, first the passage was read by the teacher and then, the teacher asked students to underline new words and then, the teacher wrote new vocabularies on the board and presented their pronunciations and their direct translations. In this group like experimental group students had opportunity to acquire, review and expand their vocabularies. After six sessions of vocabulary instructions for both groups, the post-test was given to the both groups.

2.5. Data Analysis

For the purpose of the study, the collected data analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS, version 16) software program. After six sessions of teaching vocabulary through semantic mapping strategy, in order to determine its effect on students’ vocabulary knowledge, mean scores of both control and experimental group were compared by using an independent t-test analysis.

3. Results and Findings

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher collected the data from the Pre- and post-tests of vocabulary and the Nelson test as a proficiency test to determine the homogeneity of the groups. In the end the findings were discussed and interpreted comprehensively. A total of 30 male students within the age range of 23-27 participated in this study they completed two parallel tests before and after implementing semantic mapping technique. The following table displays their position before the treatment.

| Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Semantic Mapping Strategy Measurement: Pre-test |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| T-test          | N              | Mean            | Std.Deviation   | Std.ErrorMean  |
| control Pre-test| 15             | 15.6000         | 1.42984         | .5216          |

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Before conducting the treatment, an independent t-test was run to compare the pre-test scores for both groups (i.e. control & experimental group). According to Table 1, there was no significant difference in mean scores for control group (M= 15.6, SD=1.42) and experimental group (M=15.4, SD=1.64). Finally, after the six sessions, a post-test parallel to pre-test was administered to investigate the effect of the treatment on experimental group. Therefore, another independent t-test was needed. The following tables summarize the results of this new t-test administered to investigate the effect of the treatment on experimental group.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-test for Semantic Mapping Strategy Measurement: Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Deviation</th>
<th>Std.Error</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.300</td>
<td>1.25167</td>
<td>.39581</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.300</td>
<td>1.15950</td>
<td>.36667</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 2 illustrates, after the treatment the mean of the experimental group has increased from 15.4 in pre-test to 17.3 in post-test performance, while for the control group the mean has remained more or less the same and it has altered from 15.6 in pre-test to 15.3 in post-test. As Table 2 displays, at the end of the treatment the mean of the overall scores on the post test for the control group was 15.3(SD=1.25) and the mean of the overall scores on the post-test for the experimental group was 17.3 (SD=1.15). According to the results, there was a significant difference in scores for control group and experimental group. As Table 2 displays experimental group has outperformed control group on post-test, so this shows that semantic mapping strategy has been more effective than traditional or direct translation method for teaching vocabulary.

Conclusion

In this study, the subjects were 30 male EFL students in two randomly selected classes. The performance of control group and experimental group on both placement test and post-test compared with each other. The mean of both groups on placement test was approximately the same, so two groups were homogeneous before treatment. We used semantic mapping strategy on experimental group for teaching vocabulary, while control group benefited from traditional approach. After six sessions a post-test was given to both groups in order to assess the effect of semantic mapping strategy on vocabulary learning. There was significant difference between scores of two groups. As Table 2 showed the mean of experimental group has increased from 15.4 in pre-test to 17.3 in post-test performance, while for the control group the mean has remained more or less the same and it has altered from 15.6 in pre-test to 15.3 in post-test. So, we concluded that effective use of semantic mapping strategy can help both teachers and students in teaching and learning new vocabularies. The generalizations that we arrived at should be considered with care since this study involved only 30 students. More research studies should be conducted involving more students, with different levels of education, age, sex, and length of instruction in order to generalize the outcomes with more confidence.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SILENCE IN CONVERSATIONS

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ABSTRACT:
Modern life is full of noise. Everywhere we go there is a constant barrage of noise from traffic, media, and voices. It is almost impossible to get away from background noise, other people's noise, and technology. Even when going for a run people will often take their music with them, or they lie on a beach and listen to their radio books, or travel on a plane or a train and still are in constant contact with the outside world. We seem to constantly feel the need to be in touch, to be stimulated and engaged mentally. But, there should be a way out of this trance. The present study is going to investigate on the effects of silence and its role in everyday conversations. As it may seem apparent silence does not mean lack of conversation and exchanges of messages, rather it is sometimes more powerful than the mere use of solid words and expressions and it may have a deeper influence on continuing the conversation. To communicate what you mean, you sometimes use silence. There are other uses of silence which will be discussed in this article.

Keywords: noise, silence, conversation, communication

Introduction:
Modern life is full of noise. Everywhere we go there is a constant barrage of noise from traffic, media, voices. It is almost considered impossible to get away from background noise, other people's noise, technology. Even when going for a run people will often take their music with them, or they lie on a beach and listen to their audio books, or travel on a plane or a train and still are not in constant contact with the outside world.

In our modern world there is hardly ever a complete silence. People also avoid silence and even seem to be afraid of it. There is always some background noise, whether that is traffic, music or a TV or other objects dangling around us. It is difficult for some of us to be in silence because it so clearly brings up our own identity into view. We are so often playing a role and are actually embarrassed or ashamed of who we are. We are not in peace with ourselves so we try to keep our mind busy with different kinds of input so that we do not have to think of who we really are.

In recent years, researchers have suggested that silence is not simply an absence of noise but constitutes a part of communication as important as speech (e.g. Jaworski, 1993, 1997; Tannen & Saville-Troike, 1985). Silence at a macro level may involve a total withdrawal of speech at a communicative event; for example, the unanimous silence of the participants in religious events (e.g. Maltz, 1985), or it can also include silence of individuals while others are talking, for instance in a classroom (e.g. Jaworski & Sachdev 1998) or in court (e.g. Eades, 2000). Similarly, in everyday and business conversations, some participants remain silent for a certain period of time while others engage in conversation (Nakane, 1984).

Literature review:
Bonvillain (1993: 47) rightly defines silence as “an act of non-verbal communication that transmits many kinds of meaning, depending on cultural norms of interpretation.” Silence conveys meanings just like other forms of communication with emphasis on some points. Some conflicts may arise whenever silence is misunderstood.
In showing the co-operative aspect of silence, Wardhaugh (1985: 51) states that one can generally exercise the right to speak or to be silent. Even when two or more people are gathered in a situation in which communication seems necessary and one person attempts to initiate a conversation but the others refuse, you cannot say that there was absolutely no communication or nothing has been exchanged. The refusal to converse is itself a form of communication, either. Somebody who refuses to participates or who withdraws after initial participation is, consciously or unconsciously, making a statement addressing others. Silence as part of communicative interaction can occur before, during or after a chunk of discourse and depends on the message being conveyed.

The silence of women in public life in the West is generally deplored by feminists. It is taken to be a result and a symbol of passivity and powerlessness; those who are denied speech, it is said, cannot influence the course of their lives or of history. In a telling contrast, however, we also have ethnographic reports of the paradoxical power of silence, especially in certain institutional settings with different objectives. In episodes as varied as religious confession, exercises in modern psychotherapy, bureaucratic interviews, oral exams, and police interrogations, the relations of coercion are reversed: where self-exposure is required, it is the silent listener who judges and thereby exerts power over the one who speaks (Foucault, 1979). Silence in American households is often a weapon of masculine power (Sattel, 1983), while it may not be so in other parts of the world. But silence can also be a strategic defense against the powerful, as when Western Apache men use it to baffle, disconcert, and exclude white outsiders (Basso, 1979), and it can be used as a strategy in different negotiation settings. And this does not seem to exhaust the meanings of silence. For the English Quakers of the seventeenth century, both women and men, the refusal to speak when others expected them to marked an ideological commitment (Bauman, 1983). It was the opposite of passivity, indeed a form of political protest. (Gal, 1991, p. 175)

Silence strategies mentioned by Shafiee_ahrkhalaji & et al, (2013):

A) **Silence as a Face-Saving Strategy**
   It seems that silence by female students acts as a face saver for the self. Their silence partly is to protect their positive face; they want to be ratified, understood, admired and liked (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In fact, they consider participation as a great threat to their own positive face. Female students use silence more to preserve and save their own face not the interlocutor's. The male students may also use silence as a face saver for the self.

B) **Silence as a ‘Don’t do the FTA’ Strategy**
   Since acts such as criticism, disagreement or confrontation are highly face threatening for the addressee, some students, mostly females, remain silent to avoid ‘dis-preferred seconds’ (Pomeranz, 1984; Sacks, 1987).
   On the contrary, male students consider covering up confrontation with silence silly. They think this silence leads to socio-pragmatic failure because there is not a mutual understanding of intended illocutionary force and/or attitude between speaker and listener, i.e. the lecturers interpret silence as agreement and do not notice the hidden criticism. Nakane (2006) considers this as the silence of ‘nonresistance’ or ‘non-negotiation’ and as politeness strategy of ‘Don’t do the FTA’. But silence does not always mean agreement and it can be considered as disagreement too.

C) **Silence as a Power Strategy**
   Many interactional situations in classroom settings are heavily influenced by differences of position in hierarchy and status differences. One indicator of dominance in interactions and of powerful talk is silence. As the types of speech act and syntactic phrasing indicate different power strategies, silence is not neutral in some situations; it shows dominance of those who employ it and rely on it to influence others. Not surprisingly, silence patterns also strongly reflect the influence of status and hierarchy in Persian culture, unlike some other cultures.

D) **Silence as an Off-Record Strategy**
   The silence of female students when being asked for a comment or response can be identified as an ‘off-record’ politeness strategy. Many male students interpret this silence of female students as an indirect message that they do not know the answer and their silence entitles others to speak and violate the turn-taking rule in conversations.

1- **The role of silence in conversations among different interlocutors:**
   It’s kind of Zen-like to say this, but one of the most important parts of any conversation is the silence and it may reinforce the message. Silence can serve many functions in a conversation and how you manage it determines your level of sophistication in communication in different situations. Here are some points to keep in mind about silence in communication.

A) **Allowing silence in a conversation puts pressure on the other person.**
   It’s conventional in US society and in some other countries as well, not to allow any sort of extended silence in a conversation. It is common in some cultures to do this, but not in the US, and this use of silence is one of the things
that can cause multicultural strain on parties in conversations. For instance, in some cultures, if you are a young person and want to talk with a person of authority, you are expected to approach them and wait to be recognized to start. You aren’t supposed to speak until you are acknowledged. This sort of silence is a sign of respect in some societies. However, in conversation between two peers and equals, it’s expected both parties will contribute to the conversation, and there will be no glaring silences. If there are any, it causes discomfort – in some cases even physiological pain to the participants.

B) Silence can indicate hostility or disagreement.

While it’s almost never an indication of indifference, silence can indicate that the other person is having negative emotions regarding what has been pointed out. When we experience anger, fear, or embarrassment, our thinking brain shuts down. We sit there fuming, unable to speak out what we think. We become enraged and unable to find words. We become afraid and scared in speechless mode. Some people are completely “flooded” by such emotions. Think of a teenager, for instance. They are prone to withdraw into sullen silence rather than using constructive discontent techniques, talking it out, and keeping the connection going.

C) Silence can indicate profoundness, such as respect, awe or horror.

Sometimes when we’re listening to someone else, we hear something that leaves us speechless because it really goes beyond words being uttered. Listening to someone talk about a dreadful trauma they’ve endured, or a beautiful, almost-sacred interaction with other human beings, or a description of an awesome natural event such as a sunset or a volcano eruption are examples, to mention just a few examples. Somehow when we listen to such things, the ordinary “Oh” and “Wow” and “That’s awesome” don’t seem enough, and so we fall silent to stress out reaction.

D) Silence can indicate contemplation.

The more introverted your communication partner, the more likely they will think before they speak or utter a sentence. Extraverts discover what they’re thinking and how they feel by talking. Introverts figure it all out inside their own head and heart before giving voice to it.

E) Rudeness:

Sometimes allowing an extended silence can be perceived as rudeness, and even means that way. Refusing to reply to the other person is a way of ignoring them. But there may be misunderstanding happened regarding this type of trait.

F) Empathy:

Silence can be considered as an indication of empathy. When we are really tuning in to how the other person is feeling about what they’re saying, we’re listening more to the tone of their voice, cadence and speed rather than the actual words, and so replying with words may not be the attuned response to it. We indicate this to the other by being slow to respond and not jumping into words. Sometimes sounds are more attuned … a murmur, a sigh, sucking in the breath in shock, soothing, cooing sounds, clucking, or shaking the head and going uh, uh, uh. Similarly, we use the sound “hmmm” when we are deep in thought contemplating what the other has said.

When it is appropriate to use silence?

(a) During arguments: One of the best times to use the power of silence during an argument, is to stay silent. The ego will be trying to force its way out of you and finish the argument but you are the controller, not the ego. When someone is shouting at you, looking for an argument or just picking on you can literally take all the power away from them and keep all your energy by simply looking at them and saying absolutely nothing. This is extremely difficult to do but very powerful, indeed.

(b) Gossiping: When there is a crowd of people in the workplace, there are gossips who speak about other people. The thing with gossiping is that it is contagious. When we don’t like someone and someone else starts speaking about them we naturally tend to voice our opinion. You should stop yourself from catching the virus of gossiping and use the power of silence whenever it occurs. If you are a gossipier yourself and people around start to notice that you are ‘not your usual self’, don’t give an explanation.

(c) When someone is talking: Silence is a great tool for counselors if used in the right way. It’s also great when listening to friends and family. Just let people talk and listen to them and use your facial expressions and movements to acknowledge that you are listening to them. This can be a tough thing to do, but silence is an extremely powerful for both you, as the listener, and the talker.

(d) When the house is empty: The silence of the home can be quite disturbing to some people as there is a natural need to fill the void of silence. We turn on the radio, play some music, call friends or family, or turn on the TV to fill this void. Silence helps us to work through, in our minds, the events of the day or project what we want to happen during the day ahead.
The Benefits of Silence:
Silence holds the key to a wholesome life, ultimate liberation and attainment of happiness. In silence we can get clarity about our visions and wishes, our patterns of thinking and feeling and how we act in our world. Silence is a tool which helps us know and experience fully who we are and what our purpose in life is. There is a Chinese aphorism: “A sage does not say what he does; but he does nothing which cannot be said.” Thomas Carlyle says: “Speak not, I passionately entreat thee, till thy thought hath silently matured itself, till thou hast other than mad and mad making noises to emit: hold thy tongue till some meaning lie behind to set it wagging. Consider the significance of SILENCE.” Martin Farquhar Tupper: “Well-timed silence hath more eloquence than speech.”

7- Some Sayings and Proverbs about Silence:
(1) Out of the mouth comes evil.
(2) A flower does not speak.
(3) The mouth is to eat with, not to speak.
(4) Silence is golden,
(5) Silence is consent,
(6) Too much talking indicates poverty of mind. (See Sifianou 1997: 77)

8- The benefits of silence stressed in poems by great Persian poets:

There are many who regret because of speech
the tongue covers their personality
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

So many people were beheaded for speech
the tongue covers their personality
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

A silent man is secured and safe
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

If you haven’t uttered your own speech
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

Before speech, it is lower than you
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
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put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

If you haven’t uttered your own speech
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
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If you know about what is live for ever
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

The one who likes to be safe
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

Do not reveal your secrets easily
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

If the parrot could stop speaking
the tongue is the guardian for head
the tongue may change you to a loser
a person is endangered by speech
after spreading word it ranks higher than you
put a key to halt your mouth to utter anything

Do not tell your secrets to others
it wouldn’t be in cage or trapped

Deliver your treasures to others
it wouldn’t be in cage or trapped

You should start speaking when
it wouldn’t be in cage or trapped

Wise men do not start speech
it wouldn’t be in cage or trapped

There are many who regret because of speech
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Deliver your treasures to others
it wouldn’t be in cage or trapped

You should start speaking when
it wouldn’t be in cage or trapped

Wise men do not start speech
it wouldn’t be in cage or trapped
Before a man starts speaking
all his arts and fault are hidden

Silence and keeping secrets in is better
than saying and asking not to retell

Try to trade by your speech and avoid speech
do not answer before you are asked

You have been given two ears and a tongue
it means you should listen more than speech

9- Conclusion:
In our modern world there is hardly ever complete silence. People also avoid silence and even seem to be afraid of it. There is always some background noise, whether that is traffic, music or a TV. But it should be noted that silence can be a vehicle of expression, it gives others the chance to speak and us the opportunity to listen, think and reflect. Sometimes silence is the best response. In a domestic quarrel or otherwise, if we do not want to aggravate the situation we may keep silent, even if we are being wrongly accused, so long as we are the only affected party. Instead of condemning or reprimanding, when one withdraws in silent pity, it gives that person a chance to turn the corner. We may choose to keep silent if that is going to save someone’s life. There is something like unuttered speech as well. A mother who sits by the bedside of her sick child does not have to go on speaking reassuring words to her child, and yet something warm and comforting spills out of her heart, and that is felt by the child.

Research results have suggested that silence is not simply an absence of noise but constitutes a part of communication as important as speech (e.g. Jaworski, 1993, 1997; Tannen & Saville-Troike, 1985). Silence at a macro level may involve a total withdrawal of speech at a communicative event; for example, the unanimous silence of the participants in religious events (e.g. Maltz, 1985), or it can also include silence of individuals while others are talking, for instance in a classroom (e.g. Jaworski & Sachdev 1998) or in court (e.g. Eades, 2000). So silence should be taken into account seriously in all conversations.

REFERENCES:


ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A CASE OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
Given the recent emphasis on authentic communication in second language (L2) learning and instruction, willingness to communicate on the part of learners is regarded to have multiple advantages such as an increase of exposure and practice in authentic L2 communication, and development of learner autonomy. The purpose of the current study was to investigate the relationship between the Iranian EFL learners’ emotional intelligence (EI) and their willingness to communicate (WTC). In so doing, Bar-On's (1997) emotional quotient inventory and McCroskey’s (1992) willingness to communicate scale were administered to a total of 150 Iranian EFL learners. Upon the analysis of data, it was revealed that there is a positive correlation between learners' willingness to communicate and their emotional intelligence level. Moreover, it was revealed that there was a positive correlation between EI sub-scales and willingness to communicate. The results of the study were discussed by bringing evidence from the literature. And finally, implications of study were also elaborated upon.

Key words: Willingness to Communicate, Emotional Intelligence

1. Introduction
In current theories and models of foreign language learning, the importance of examining personality factors and individual differences has been considered essential (Dornyei, 2005; Brown, 2007). Nowadays individual differences in language learning contexts, such as motivation, aptitude, language learning strategies, language anxiety, and others (Brown, 2007; Dornyei, 2005), have been a key focus of second language research for more than half a century. Moreover, current thinking in foreign language pedagogy has attributed great significance to communicative interaction in class with a view to developing learners’ communicative competence. However, not every learner is willing to communicate in second language (L2). Willingness to communicate (WTC) in an L2, which is an individual difference (ID) factor deemed to facilitate L2 acquisition, has been widely investigated in last decades (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, & Noels, 1998; Yashima, 2002). The emphasis on WTC may be justified because the current communicative approaches to foreign language instruction stress the importance of learners using the L2 in oral and written tasks. Such approaches and models to language education are contingent on the assumption that learners’ competence in the L2 is developed through performance and are in line with the dominant theories of second language acquisition (e.g., Ellis, 1997; Swain, 2000). In the other hand, over the last decades, a consistent perspective has gradually emerged, indicating that individuals cannot be considered to be equally skillful at perceiving, understanding, and utilizing emotional information, suggesting that individuals differ in terms of their abilities to exert effective control over their emotional lives (see Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 2000). These individual differences are currently more commonly regarded as differences in emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Although the notion of emotional intelligence could be conceptualized somewhat differently, as a continuum of abilities, or abilities and personality characteristics by different researchers and practitioners (see Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002), it is generally suggested that the construct of emotional intelligence could provide a useful framework that allows the specification of specific skills needed to understand and experience emotions flexibly.
Many studies have been carried out to investigate L2 WTC in relation to a variety of ID variables such as personality, self-confidence, attitudes, and motivation (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Yashima, 2002). The purpose of the current study is to investigate the relationship between the Iranian EFL learners' emotional intelligence and their willingness to communicate. Considering the fact that achieving communicative competence is the ultimate goal of many language education programs, it is quite legitimate to investigate students’ personality factors such as emotional intelligence to see if their personality characteristics affect their general orientation towards communicating in another language. If this question is answered, language teachers can better decide how to help those reticent students who seem to be permanently silent.

2. Review of Literature

Willingness to communicate (WTC) in an L2 is defined as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” (MacIntyre, et al, 1998, p.547). McCroskey and Baer (1985) introduced the construct “Willingness to Communicate” in relation to communication in the native language. They mentioned introversion, self-esteem, communication competence, communication apprehension and cultural diversity as antecedents of WTC. Moreover, they suggested that any kind of generalization should be done with reference to culture.

According to Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, and Shimizu (2004) “studies in WTC originated in communication research in the United States.” (123). In fact, the importance of *Willingness to Communicate* (WTC) arises from the research of interaction-driven L2 development (Mackey & Gass, 2006). Researchers in this area have contended that language learning is facilitated through meaningful interactions. It is assumed that more interaction leads to more language development and learning (Swain, 2005).

Researchers in WTC have hypothesized that WTC generates individual differences in communication behaviors, which in turn produce individual differences in the attainment of language proficiency. In general, researchers seem to agree that language students who are more active with language use have a greater potential to develop language proficiency by having more opportunities to converse with others. Thus, the more willing-to-communicate language students are more likely to succeed in the achievement of language proficiency (MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 2001; MacIntyre et al., 2002; Yashima, 2002).

According to Dornyei (2001), competence is a necessary but not sufficient aspect of interactions and willingness to communicate is different from the ability to communicate. Therefore, with an increasing emphasis on authentic communication in L2 learning and instruction, a willingness to communicate on the part of learners is deemed to have multiple advantages such as an increase of exposure and practice in authentic L2 communication and development of learner autonomy (MacIntyre et al., 2001; Kang, 2005).

In their paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association in 1985, McCroskey and Baer presented the notion of *willingness to communicate* with reference to L1 use and speaking as its focus. They argued that it is true that many situational variables such as “who the person is, how the person feels that day, what communication the person has had with others recently, what that person looks like, what might be gained or lost through communicating, and what other demands on the person’s time are present can all have major impacts” (p.3). Nevertheless, drawing upon earlier literature, they maintained that “consistent behavioral tendencies with regard to frequency and amount of talk can be observed for each individual” (p.3). They further argued that “this regularity in communication behaviors across interpersonal communication contexts suggests the existence of the personality variable which is called *willingness to communicate*” (McCroskey & Baer, 1985, p. 3, emphasis added).

McCroskey and Richmond’s (1987) trait-like research has also produced overwhelming evidence that “there is an underlying trait-like WTC that does not supersede or discount the state-like construct but, rather they complement each other” (p. 153). According to these figures WTC in the first language (L1) is regarded as the stable predisposition to talk that is affected by personal traits, such as the degree of introversion or extroversion. In addition, Chan and McCroskey (1987) found that students who scored high on the WTC scale were more likely to participate verbally in class than those who scored low on WTC.

In spite of the findings described above, other researchers have questioned the adequacy of *Willingness to Communicate* (WTC) being treated as a trait-like attribute, arguing WTC could be situation-specific and non-transferable from L1 to L2. Clement and MacIntyre are two representatives of this view. In the following sections these two models are explained.

MacIntyre (1994) hypothesized that communication apprehension and perceived competence would be the causes of WTC when introversion would be related to both communication apprehension and perceived competence, and self-esteem would be related to communication apprehension. Based on his model, people are willing to
communicate when they are not apprehensive about communication and when they perceive themselves as capable of communicating effectively.

MacIntyre and Charos (1996) widen the structural model by adding motivation, personality, and context as predictors of not only WTC but also the frequency of communication. They hypothesized that WTC and integrative motivation would explain the frequency of communication in L2.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) argued the differences between L1 and L2 WTC. They integrated linguistic, communicative and social psychological variables to explain one's WTC in his/her second language. However, they treated WTC in L2 as a situational variable that has both transient and enduring influences. Moreover, they theorized that WTC influences not only speaking mode but also listening, writing and reading modes. They use a pyramid shaped figure to illustrate the WTC model, the pyramid model demonstrates the wide variety of factors that affect the psychological preparedness to speak. We can identify both individual factors (anxiety, motivation, attitudes, interpersonal attraction, etc.) and social contextual factors (ethno linguistic vitality, language contact, etc.) that either enhance or reduce WTC (MacIntyre, 2007).

With respect to affective variables as predictors of reported second language use, Hashimoto (2002) studied Japanese ESL students in classroom context. He showed that motivation and WTC affect reported L2 communication frequency in classroom. Perceived competence and L2 anxiety were found to be causes of WTC, which led to more L2 use, and L2 anxiety was found to negatively influence perceived competence. Although a path from WTC to motivation was not found to be significant in the original study, it was found to be significant in the present replication. In addition, a path from perceived competence was found to exert a strong and direct influence on motivation from a data-driven path.

Kang (2005) noted how situational willingness to communicate (WTC) in a second language (L2) can dynamically emerge and fluctuate during a conversation situation. He found that situational WTC in L2 emerged from the joint effect of three interacting psychological conditions of excitement, responsibility, and security, each of which was co-constructed by interacting situational variables such as topic, interlocutors, and conversational context. Based on the findings, he proposed a multilayered construct of situational WTC and a new definition of WTC in L2, in which WTC is suggested as a dynamic situational concept that can change moment-to-moment, rather than a trait-like predisposition. He also presented pedagogical implications, suggesting ways in which situational variables can be controlled to create L2 learners’ situational WTC.

Cetinkaya (2005) in an investigation of Turkish college students’ willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language found that students’ willingness to communicate was directly related to their attitude toward the international community and their perceived linguistic self-confidence. Furthermore, motivation and personality in terms of being an introvert or extrovert were found to be indirectly related to students’ willingness to communicate through linguistic self-confidence. Finally, he found that students’ attitude toward the international community was correlated with their personality.

Regarding research in the context of Iran, Zarrinabadi and Abdi (2011), in their investigation of the relationship between Iranian EFL Learners’ willingness to communicate (WTC) inside and outside the classroom and their language learning orientations, found that language orientations are more correlated with willingness to communicate outside than inside the classroom.

Baghaei, Dourakhshan, and Salavati. (2012) on the relationship between willingness to communicate and success in learning English as a foreign language, showed that two out of the three subscales of WTC (willingness to communicate in the school context and willingness to communicate with native speakers of English) were moderately correlated with success in learning English as a foreign language.

Barjesteh, Vaseghi and Neissi (2012) argue that Iranian EFL learners are not willing to start communication in unfamiliar situations. Because majority of Iranians communicate in English only in their language classrooms. That is they don’t have access to a native speaker of English or possibility of travelling to an English speaking country. Finally, Birjandi and Tabataba’ian (2012) found a significant relationship between EQ, WTC, and Foreign Language Anxiety (FLCAS). Further, the findings indicated that FLCAS, EQ, and some of its subscales were predictors of WTC.

Each learner is characterized by certain individual differences in the learning process. One of these individual differences is intelligence. Goleman discovered that emotional intelligence is a more reliable predictor of academic achievement than is the IQ(1995, p. 3). Emotionally, learners present better in an educational context than other children. Rationally, by controlling feelings and other factors in communication one can control relationships and manage an excellent connection. Each learner has different experiences, a variety of education process or special background knowledge of language learning. Thereupon, willingness to communicate is different in any different
persons based on their characteristics. Learners are able to benefit from the ability to check their own positive and negative feelings, handle difficulty, and control their motivation. WTC can as a way to facilitate having relationships with others in a supportive manner. In the same way, Emotional intelligence is also an important factor in second language learning.

Several studies have been done to illustrate that personality traits and emotional stability are related to willingness to communicate through communication apprehension and perceived language competence.

A research has been carried out by Nikbakhsh and Alam and Monazami (2013) to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, communication skills and stress in Iranian soccer super league referees. In this study the descriptive method and correlation and the data were collected via questionnaires using the field study procedure. The research consisted of all 73 soccer super league referees in the 2010-2011 seasons. The sample size was equated with the population. From among the 73 questionnaires distributed to the referees, a number of 67 questionnaires (91.78%) were regarded as valid and analyzable. Emotional intelligence scale developed based on the model of emotional intelligence, communication Skills Questionnaire, Referees Stress Questionnaire. Findings revealed that Iranian soccer super league referees had low levels of stress and had above average emotional intelligence and communication skills. The results also indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and communication skills in the referees. Since, EI training plans are considered for the referees in order to amplify communication skills in them.

A similar study has been done by Jorfi and Fauzy Bin Yacob and Mad Shah (2011). The study aimed to investigate the relationship among demographic variables, emotional intelligence, communication effectiveness, motivation, and job satisfaction. As a result, it was established that emotional intelligence is a fundamental aspect that helps sustain communication effectiveness and job satisfaction. Finding revealed that demographic variables such as; age, gender, job position, educational level, and work experience, have a positive relationship with emotional intelligence. It was also uncovered that that motivation influenced by dimensions of emotional intelligence (i.e. intrapersonal, interpersonal; adaptability, general mood, and stress) influences communication effectiveness and job satisfaction. All in all, this research proved the existence of the relationships among emotional intelligence (i.e. intrapersonal, interpersonal; adaptability, general mood, and stress), communication effectiveness, motivation, and job satisfaction.

Similarly, another research has been done by Mohammadzadeh and Jafarigohar (2012), in which linguistic, interpersonal, and musical intelligences were shown to have dealings with WTC components. This study intended to measure Iranian EFL learners’ perception of the factors that seek Iranian EFL learners’ perceptions of factors that contribute to willingness to communicate in English language classrooms. The goal of this study was to check the existence of any possible relationship between willingness to communicate (WTC) and multiple intelligences (MI) among over 500 EFL learners. Research’s data were collected by using a three-part questionnaire which was presented in the students’ native language. A revised version of Gardner’s MI measure was used to assess the participants’ intelligences. Students’ WTC was measured through a twenty-item WTC scale. Moreover, a bio data questionnaire was employed to obtain some demographic information about the learners. The result exposed that the MI profile of learners of English has a significant correlation with their willingness to participate in L2 communication and that the link between MI and WTC is affected by gender. In conclusions, this study indicated that MI is a factor responsible for determining an individual’s degree of willingness to communicate. Linguistic, interpersonal, and musical intelligences were shown to have relations with WTC components.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Birjandi and Tabatabaian (2012) investigated the interrelationships among emotional intelligence, foreign language anxiety, and willingness to communicate. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among emotional intelligence (EI), foreign language anxiety, and willingness to communicate (WTC). For the purpose of the study, 88 upper intermediate were asked to complete 3 questionnaires: Bar-On’s EQ-I, Foreign Language Anxiety (FLCAS), and Willingness to Communicate (WTC). The findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between EQ, WTC, and FLCAS. The correlation between FLCAS and WTC was also significant. Several subscales of EQ were also correlated with FLCAS and WTC. It also became clear that stress management and interpersonal skills were good predictors of foreign language anxiety. Findings showed that, the higher the EQ, the lower the anxiety level. Moreover, Four subscales of EQ correlated with WTC. These subscales included: General Mood, Stress Management, Adaptability, and Intrapersonal Skills.

Considering the importance of both WTC and EI in accounting for the success or failure in learning a foreign language as supported by a number of studies mentioned above, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between these two variables therefore the research question can be formulated as:
Is there any statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ willingness to communicate and their emotional intelligence?

3. Methodology
3.1 Participants
The participants of the present study were 180 undergraduate students of English Literature and English Translation at Islamic Azad University of Tehran (North and South branches), Iran. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 31. In order to make sure of the accuracy of participants’ answers the completed questionnaires were rigorously analyzed and the imperfect ones were discarded, and after sifting through all the data, 150 complete questionnaires were selected. This sample included both male (N=53) and female (N=97) college students. They were originally from different L1 backgrounds like Persian, Turkish, Kurdish, etc. Since L1 is not of concern here, its details are not elaborated upon. Nevertheless, most of the participant had at least a little competence in one language other than English and Persian.

3.2 Instrumentation
3.2.1 Willingness to Communicate Scale: McCroskey’s (1992) Willingness to Communicate Scale is composed of 20 items. Eight of the items are fillers and 12 are scored as part of the scale. The scale is designed as a direct measure of the respondent’s predisposition toward approaching or avoiding the initiation of communication. Use of the direct approach assumes the respondent is generally aware of her/his own approach/avoidance tendencies. The 12 items on the scale represent the crossing of three types of receivers with four types of communication context. Participants were supposed to put the percentage of times they would choose to communicate with each type of situation ranging from 0 for ‘never’ to 100 for ‘always’. The reliability of the Willingness to Communicate Scale is estimated to be 0.92 by McCroskey’s (1992).

3.2.2 Bar-On’s Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) This instrument was originally developed by Bar-On in 1980. The Emotional Quotient Inventory was used to measure the Emotional Intelligence of the participants. Bar-On’s inventory is a self-report questionnaire that includes 133 Likert-scale items. In the current study, a translated version of this questionnaire into Persian was employed. Bar-On’s EQ-i was translated to Persian by Samouei (2005) and her colleagues. They made some changes in the number of items and omitted some of them to make them appropriate for Iranian context. and reduced the total number of items to ninety. The reliability and validity of the altered questionnaire have been empirically verified by them. The final version of this questionnaire is composed of 90 behaviour-descriptive statements which are designed in Likert-type scales, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) are indicated the different degrees of emotional intelligence.

3.3 Procedure
This study was a correlational research which intended to measure the degree of correlation between willingness to communicate and emotional intelligence. Then data collection was conducted during a period of 10 weeks. Two sources of data were compiled and reviewed in this study: results of WTC and EQ-I. The battery of questionnaires was administered to 150 students in intact classes toward the end of the first term of the 2014 academic year. The willingness to communicate questionnaire was given to all the participants at the beginning of the main study. The necessary instruction as how to fill the questionnaire was given before starting it. The required time given to fill out the WTC questionnaire was 50 minutes. After finishing the WTC scale, the EQ-I was distributed during the same session to all 150 participants as well. In order for students to understand every statement and also to avoid any problem related to the lack of their foreign language proficiency, EQ-I was translated to Persian. The back-translation procedure was carried out to make sure that the translated version has the same interpretation.

3.4 Data Analysis
Scores from each of the instruments were computed and entered into SPSS version 20. First, normality of the distributions was examined using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. After that, a correlational design using Pearson Product Moment analysis was used to answer the research question of the study.
4. Results and Discussion
First the internal consistency of the instruments was investigated employing Cronbach Alpha for the 150 respondents of the study. The Cronbach Alpha values for WTC and EQ-I instruments were 0.82 and 0.86 respectively (see Table 4.1) indicating the acceptable reliability index of the instruments used in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>N of items</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WTC</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Hatch and Lazarton (1991), one of the assumptions of parametric tests is the normality of distribution of the data under investigation. In order to see whether this assumption is met in our sample, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test of normality of distribution was run for both WTC and EI variables. It was revealed that both variables could bypass the significant level of .05, hence they could meet the normality condition. Table 4.2 shows the results of K-S test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal Parameters</th>
<th>WTC</th>
<th>EI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>54.8400</td>
<td>304.9467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>9.45806</td>
<td>15.52408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Extreme Differences</th>
<th>WTC</th>
<th>EI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolute</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>-.112</td>
<td>-.075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z</th>
<th>WTC</th>
<th>EI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>.897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Afterwards, Pearson Product Moment correlation was carried out between the WTC and EI instruments. Table 4.3 shows, the obtained P-value for this analysis was 0.01 which proves significant (P-value < 0.05). Thus, it can be argued that the two instruments, and by extension willingness to communicate and emotional intelligence are inter-related. In other words, the statistical analyses proved that the degree of WTC of Iranian EFL learners correlates with their level of emotional intelligence, and vice versa. As Table 4.3 shows, the Pearson Correlation Index for the two instruments is 0.65, which indicates a relatively good degree of go-togetherness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WTC</th>
<th>EI</th>
<th>WTC</th>
<th>EI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.65**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EI</th>
<th>WTC</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>0.65**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Then, in order to exactly uncover the existing relationship between the two variables, the correlation between each component of EI and WTC was probed. The results of correlation analysis showed that there are meaningful relationships between emotional intelligence subscales (intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, and general mood) and willingness to communicate. The significant level was put at .01 level. And the relationships between emotional intelligence subscales and willingness to communicate hierarchically are: 32 percent relationship with
adaptability, 22 percent relationship with intrapersonal, 19 percent relationship with interpersonal, 15 percent relationship with general mood.

Table 4.4 Correlation between WTC and EI Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WTC</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>*0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>*0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress management</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>*0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General mood</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>*0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* P<0.05

Table 4.4 shows that 4 subscales of emotional intelligence (intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, and general mood) have meaningful relationships with willingness to communicate.

The investigator’s aim of this study was to provide an account of possible relationships between emotional intelligence and willingness to communicate among Iranian EFL learners. Another objective was to suggest potential relations among willingness to communicate and different components of emotional intelligence, which may be useful in describing, explaining, and predicting L2 communication.

The results of the data analysis indicated that there is a significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ willingness to communicate (WTC) and their emotional intelligence (EI). The findings of the study support the existing empirical evidence suggesting that L2 WTC is subject to the influence of many individual difference variables, such as L2 confidence, attitudes, and motivation (Clement et al., 2003; Yashima, 2002). The findings also substantiate the interpersonal-relationship aspect which is the ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships with others. The results of the study are consistent with other similar studies conducted in different contexts (e.g., Cetinkaya, 2005; MacIntyre, 1998; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Mohammadzadeh & Jafarigohar, 2012; Murphy, 2008; Riasati, 2012; Xie, 2011).

The obtained result was also confirmed by MacIntyre’s (1998) Pyramid-Shaped WTC Model, especially, enduring influences which consist of variables including motivation, self-confidence, intergroup attitudes, communicative competence, climate, social situation and personality. Moreover, the result of this research supports findings of Nikbaksh, Alam and Monazami (2013) study in which they tried to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, communication skills and stress in Iranian soccer super league referees. Similarly, these results prove the findings of Mohammadzadeh and Jafarigohar’s (2012) in which linguistic, interpersonal, and musical intelligences were shown to have a direct relationship with WTC components. In addition, the outcome of the current study is in line with that of Birjandi and Tabatabaian (2012).

Furthermore, the results of the data analysis of the sub-scales of EI revealed that except for stress management subscale, there is a positive relationship between other EI components (Intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, general mood) and WTC. Such results might suggest that those who are more aware of emotions in themselves or others and also recognize and are able to manage emotions may create and sustain more positive and effective relationships. Such results might be insightful for teachers in order to get aware of the EI profile of their learners and move in a direction to boost those EI components of the students which can improve their WTC to cope with daily environmental demands and difficulties. Due to the fact that not many learners and teachers are aware of their inner personality or their psychological differences; they can employ five steps or abilities in order to increase their EI. The first one is the ability to be aware of, distinguish and understand one’s emotions in order to increase intrapersonal proficiency. The second one is the ability to form and sustain mutually satisfying relationships in order to improve their interpersonal proficiency. The third one is the ability to adapt one’s feelings and thoughts to change in order to increase adaptability. The forth one is, the ability to manage one’s strong emotions and stressful conditions by positively dealing with problems in order to increase stress management. And finally, the last one is the ability to remain optimistic and positive as well as to enjoy life in order to increase general mood.

5. Conclusion
This study focused on willingness to communicate in a foreign language as its point of departure. The research question motivating the researcher to conduct the current study was concerned with the relationship between
willingness to communicate (WTC) and emotional intelligence (EI) among a group of Iranian EFL students. Moreover, the researcher also attempted to provide an account of possible relationships between EI sub-scales and willingness to communicate. The methodology of the study consisted of the use of two instruments; the McCroskey’s (1992) Willingness to Communicate Scale was used to collect information about willingness to communicate, and the Bar-On’s Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) was used to collect information about emotional intelligence. The findings suggested that those students who have stronger emotional intelligence may be more willing to participate than others in communications in second language. From the theoretical point of view, the findings of the current study might enrich the existing bank of knowledge related to both WTC and EI. This also highlights the significance of personality factors and psychological variables in foreign language learning. It might lead us to conclude that with the appearance of psychology and personality factors in the academic context, learners have been considered as individuals with all of their needs, challenges, weaknesses, and strengths, who are notably different from each other (Brown, 2001). This view of learners and the learning process has inspired teachers and educators to plan various approaches and methods to satiate these needs and desires.

As far as pedagogical implications are concerned, it is hoped that this finding will be adopted and will be translated into practice by psychologists and educators and ELT practitioners who are interested in teaching and learning a foreign language to take action to enhance the communicative competence and higher speaking skill of students in L2 context. Through incorporating the results of the current study, ELT methodologists and practitioners can benefit from awareness of individual differences to devise appropriate teaching techniques through which they have the opportunity to construct varied teaching curriculums. The importance of individual differences was stressed by Richards and Rodgers (2001) who suggested that attention to individual characteristics of the students makes the language class as the place for a series of instructional support systems aiming to make the language learner a better planner of his/her own learning experiences. And finally, the outcome of the present study could also contribute to course book designers, educational planners, and foreign language institutes. They could take advantage of the findings of this study for providing the activities, lesson plans, and curricula which are most likely to be relevant to the students with different EI profiles.

REFERENCES


COLLABORATIVE OR INDIVIDUALISTIC WRITING: WHICH ONE IS A BETTER VENUE TO IMPROVE IRANIAN PRE-UNIVERSITY FEMALE STUDENTS’ WRITING SKILL?

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F. Behjat
Saeedeh Arvane
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ABSTRACT
The present research was an attempt to obtain a better understanding on the effects of individualistic and collaborative writing on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill. Furthermore, the focus of analysis was on the performances of learners to discover whether there is any difference between two groups of participants (control and experimental groups) regarding the improvement of their writing skill. This study was conducted in Booshehr, Iran. The participants of present study were selected from Pre-university students in one of the high schools in Boosheher. PET test was administered to choose 40 participants with an intermediate level of proficiency. This study was conducted with female pre-university students at the age range of 16-19. This research was done in two stages: instruction and evaluation. First a test of writing was administered to check homogeneity and for later comparisons. In instruction, the participants were divided into two groups; both were taught how to write paragraphs and essays. The participants took part in six sessions. While the experimental group practiced writing through pair work and collaboration, in the control group, the participants had individualistic writing. Then, the researcher compared the score of pretest and posttest to consider the effect of collaboration in writing improvement. To analyze the data, T-test was run. Analyzing the results indicated that individualistic writing did not have significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill, while collaborative writing had significant impacts on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill. The results also indicated that the difference between the post-test scores of two groups of participants reached significance and two groups of participants did not perform equally.

Key words: Collaboration, Collaborative writing, Foreign language learning, Writing Skill

Introduction
Over time, the interest in a more communicative approach to language teaching has resulted in the growth of pair work in second language contexts (Hawkey, 2004). This provides language learners with opportunities to interact in collaborative situations, in which two or more learners do activities together. For a situation to be collaborative, the pairs should be more or less at the same level. According to Roschelle and Teasley (1995), collaboration is a coordinated, synchronous activity that results from a continued endeavor attempt to build and maintain a shared conception of a problem. It has been said that students can learn best in a more learner-centered, collaborative learning context compared with individualistic and competitive learning settings (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Learners participate actively in a collaborative learning context and construct their linguistic knowledge through interacting with other learners. As such, Boud (2001) has introduced the term peer learning as an effective way for pairs to learn from and with each other.

Although writing is generally considered an individual activity through which ideas are transmitted from an addressee, collaboration in writing has been drawing an increasing attention in language teaching and assessment (e.g., DiCamilla & Anton, 1997). Collaborative writing, which is maximizing learners’ engagement and involvement in language learning practices, has turned into a value-laden, purposeful, and communicative objective. This collaboration provides the students with opportunities to interact and challenge their language knowledge in a more effective learning environment (Willis, 1996, cited in Biria & Jafari, 2013).

With the value placed on collaboration in both academic and workplace settings, teachers are beginning to realize the need for more opportunities for students to develop collaborative and decision-making skills. Writing, which is traditionally viewed as a solitary activity, could be a venue for enhancing students’ collaborative skills. Despite
these benefits, researchers suggest further investigation especially on learner interaction and on how a group arrives at decisions. Roskams (1999) explains that many teachers believe that active participation and accurate, appropriate, and meaningful feedback in Asian cultures are constrained by fear of mistakes and politeness norms. Gokhale (1995) also stressed that more evidence has yet to be presented to establish its effectiveness at the college level. Hayes (2000), moreover, draws attention to the few studies on problem solving and decision-making processes in classroom writing. In addition, the researcher sees the need for a study on this area because projects or academic requirements in universities are often done in small groups. Undergraduate essays, term papers, and research projects are often accomplished collaboratively because of the high number of students per class (Lee, 2012).

As for improvements in writing, the process of peer writing and editing can be effective in raising students’ awareness of important organizational and syntactical elements that they otherwise might not notice on their own. As noted in Hansen and Lui (2005), and substantiated by others (Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Storch, 2005), peer editing leads to more meaningful revision, as these revisions are superior in vocabulary, organization, and content. Studies by Gousseva-Goedwin (2000) and Storch (2005) further found that advanced ESL learners’ collaborative essay grades were higher than those done independently and tended to have greater grammatical accuracy. One reason for the higher grades may be that the collaborative process can lead to more productive feedback sessions (Murphy & Jacobs, 2000). Perhaps most importantly, the entire collaborative process can have the end result of producing writers who are more independent, “as they have attained the skills necessary to self-edit and revise their own writing” (Rollinson, 2005, p. 29). It can be inferred from the above that through collaborative writing, students can learn multiple language skills more effectively than by working alone (Mulligan, & Garofalo, 2011).

However, collaboration makes the writing task more difficult compared to individual writing, to reduce such complexity, the present study makes use of pair writing in which only two students collaborate and interact to create a composition. This study is conducted to contribute to the Iranian EFL community, in particular, and to all EFL students, in general. Collaborative writing can be away to open up new possibilities for both learners and teachers.

Research Questions
The present study attempts to find answers to the following questions:
1) Does individualistic writing have any significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners’ writing skill?
2) Does collaborative writing have any significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners’ writing skill?
3) Is there any difference between two groups (control and experimental groups) regarding the improvement of their writing skill?

Review of Literature
The study of Vaughn, Hughes, Schumm, and Klingner (1998) was a year-long researcher-teacher professional development group with a next-year follow-up was conducted with seven general education teachers from two elementary schools in a large urban school district in the southeastern United States. The two schools had recently restructured their special education programs to include students with LD in the general education class full-time. These teachers were taught four reading and writing practices (one during each nine-week grading block). All but two of the teachers partially or completely implemented the practices during the nine-week period. Sustained implementation during the school year was maintained by four of the seven teachers, and three of the seven teachers continued high implementation of the instructional practices during the next school-year.

The study of Storch (2005) set out to investigate collaborative writing. The study was classroom based, and the participants were adult ESL students completing degree courses. Students were given a choice to write in pairs or individually. Although most chose to work in pairs, some chose to work individually. All pair work was audiotaped and all completed texts collected. All pairs were also interviewed after class. The study compared texts produced by pairs with those produced by individual learners and investigated the nature of the writing processes evident in the pair talk. The study also elicited the learners’ reflections on the experience of collaborative writing. The study found that pairs produced shorter but better texts in terms of task fulfillment, grammatical accuracy, and complexity. Collaboration afforded students the opportunity to pool ideas and provide each other with feedback. Most students were positive about the experience, although some did express some reservations about collaborative writing.

The study of Lee (2010) reported on a case study involving 35 university students at the beginning level who contributed to wiki pages over a period of 14 weeks. The affordances and constraints of using wikis for collaborative writing were drawn from data triangulation: (a) group wiki pages, (b) student surveys, and (c) final interviews. The results showed that creating wikis had a positive impact on the development of students’ writing skills.
through collaborative engagement. Scaffolding through peer feedback played a crucial role in the L2 writing process through which students not only helped each other organize the content but also made error corrections for language accuracy. In addition, the results indicated that task type affected the amount of writing produced by each group. The study suggested that the instructor needs to guide students during the revision process and offer them hints and tips for effective use of feedback.

The study of Chen (2012) examined and compared cooperative learning (CL) techniques and the traditional whole-class method in terms of the English achievement of junior college students. Two freshman English classes participated in the study. The control class was taught using the whole-class, teacher-led method, and the experimental class was taught using CL. Evaluation of students' achievement was conducted by achievement tests administered before and after the experiment. T-test procedures were used to determine (a) whether the experimental class achieved higher overall scores than the control class, and (b) in which component(s) of the test the experimental class outscored the control class. The results revealed that students in small cooperative groups achieved significantly higher scores on the overall test and the cloze test component than those in the teacher-led learning environment. The achievement gained under CL was attributed to the method's reward structures and carefully structured interaction.

The study of Li and He (2012) was an empirical study introducing the implementation process of cooperative learning of English writing in network environment. The research results showed that cooperative language learning in network environment can achieve better effects in improving the English writing skills of Chinese students. Moreover, the research also shed some lights on pedagogy, illustrating the role of the machine, the student and the teacher in task-based cooperative learning and showing that cooperative learning in network environment does benefit college English teaching.

The objectives of the study of Baliya (2013) were to determine how the use of cooperative learning approach affected the writing abilities of primary class students. The investigator took up 42 students of grade 5th of K.V. No1 Jammu (J&K-INDIA) for this experimental study. The research study was one-group pretest and post-test design. The pretest and post-test scores of writing test were compared using a dependent samples t-test measure; the study revealed that the students' post-test score was higher than their pretest score at the .01 level of significance. The study concluded that cooperative learning provides a less anxiety-producing context in terms of discussing, creating, and thinking in a group rather than in a whole class. A comfortable non-stressful environment is useful for learning and practicing English.

Methodology
Participants
The participants of present study were selected from Pre-university students in one of the high schools in Boosheher, Iran. PET test was administered to choose 40 participants with an intermediate level of proficiency. This study was conducted with female pre-university students at the age range of 16-19.

Instruments
The data collection instrument which was used in the present study was a placement test to determine the proficiency level of the participants and then in the pretest stage the students had paragraph writing. Finally, in the posttest, which was of the same nature, the researcher used t-test for the comparison between pretest and posttest of the students' score.

Procedure
This research was done in two stages: instruction and evaluation. First a test of writing was administered to check homogeneity and for later comparisons. In instruction, the participants were divided into two groups; both are taught how to write paragraphs and essays. The participants took part in six sessions. While the experimental group practiced writing through pair work and collaboration, in the control group, the participants had individualistic writing, and individuals should write paragraph with 250 words in a limited time. In the final session, the teacher gave the same topic to two groups and asked them to write. This was their posttest. Then, the researcher compared the score of pretest and posttest to consider the effects of collaborative in writing improvement.
Results
In order to place the participants in intermediate group, the participants took a proficiency test. 40 participants, who were at the intermediate level of proficiency, were selected from among 60 EFL students based on their proficiency test scores. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the participant’s proficiency test scores.

Table 1, Descriptive Statistics for PET Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PET</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29.95</td>
<td>6.613</td>
<td>1.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>6.308</td>
<td>1.410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 1, the mean scores of two groups of control and experimental in PET test are 29.95 and 32.00 respectively which are approximately the same. Then the participants were divided into two identical groups of control and experimental. In order to check their homogeneity, an Independent Samples Test was run on their proficiency scores. As it is clear from table 1, the mean score of two groups are approximately the same (29.95 and 30.00). But in order to be sure whether there is any significant difference among the mean score of the two groups or not, the data were analyzed through an Independent Samples Test the results of which are shown in table 2.

Table 2, Independent Samples for PET Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PET Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>.611</td>
<td>-1.003</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td>-2.050</td>
<td>-6.187, 2.087</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PET Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-1.003</td>
<td>37.915</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td>-2.050</td>
<td>2.044</td>
<td>-6.187, 2.087</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results of Independent Sample Test in Table 2, there is not a significant difference between two groups of participants regarding their proficiency level: Sig>0.05.

Before examining the first research question, it was needed to test the normality of scores dispersion of two groups of participants in both pre and post-test. In order to do this, the scores obtained from the performance of two groups of participants were put into SPSS and one-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was run. Table 3 shows the result of the one-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for scores dispersion normality.

Table 3, One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Scores Normality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Parameters</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>13.4188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>2.92830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Extreme Differences</td>
<td>Absolute</td>
<td>.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>-.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z</td>
<td>.667</td>
<td>.637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.766</td>
<td>.811</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 3, the normality of the scores in pre-test and post-test of two groups of participants is assured, as Sig>0.05.
The First Research Question
The first research question was to investigate whether individualistic writing has any significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners’ writing skill. To answer the first research question a paired sample T-test was run to see if there is any significant difference in the writing scores of pretest and posttest of participants who practiced writing individually. Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics of paired sample T-test for the first group of participants.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test scores of Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13.2750</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.96459</td>
<td>.66290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.4125</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.95167</td>
<td>.66001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 4, the mean score of the pre-test and post test in control group are approximately the same and there is not a significant difference between them. Table 5 shows the results of the paired sample T-Test for the first group of participants.

Table 5. Paired Sample T-Test for the Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre-test - Posttest</td>
<td>-13.750</td>
<td>.46929</td>
<td>.10494</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 5, the writing mean score for the control group, in the posttest is a little more than the pretest and significance level is smaller than 0.05 (t (19)= -1.310, p= .206), so it can be concluded that the writing improvement measurement in the control group has shown a little increase. So the answer to the first question is negative and the first research hypothesis, which stated that individualistic writing has not significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill, is retained.

The Second Research Question
The second research question was to investigate whether collaborative writing has any significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners’ writing skill.

To answer the second research question a paired sample T-test was run to see if there is any significant difference in the writing score of the pretest and posttest of experimental group (collaborative writing). Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics of paired sample T-test for the second group of participants.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test scores of Experimental Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13.5625</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.96124</td>
<td>.66215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.7500</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.53138</td>
<td>.56603</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 6, the mean score of the pre-test and post test in experimental group are not the same and there is a significant difference between them. Table 7 shows the results of the paired sample T-test for the second group of participants.

Table 7. Paired Sample T-Test for the Experimental Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre-test - Posttest</td>
<td>-13.750</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 7 shows, the writing mean score for the experimental group, in the posttest is bigger than the pretest and significance level is smaller than 0.05 (t (19) = -11.694, p= .000), so it can be concluded that the writing improvement measurement in the experimental group has shown a significant increase. So the answer to the second question is positive and the second research hypothesis, which stated that collaborative writing has significant impacts on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill, is retained.

The Third Research Question
The third research question was to investigate whether there is any difference between two groups (control and experimental groups) regarding the improvement of their writing skill. To answer this question an Independent Samples Test was run. Table 8 shows the descriptive statistics in two groups. The variances equality in the two groups was needed for testing of the means.

As Table 8 shows, the mean score of collaborative writing group (16.7500) is higher than the mean score of the individualistic writing group which is 13.4125. In order to see whether this difference between two groups of participants is statistically significant or not, an Independent Samples Test was conducted. Table 9 shows the results of Independent Samples Test for two groups of participants.

As the results of Independent Samples Test indicates, the difference between the writing skill post-test scores of two groups of participants reached significance. The values obtained for the F and p value showed that the two groups of participants did not perform equally, because of the different types of correction they had for their writing activities.

Discussion
The first hypothesis, which was retained, was that individualistic writing has not significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill. This result is in line with the Biria and Jafari's (2013) study. Their study
aimed to examine the impact of practicing in pairs on the writing fluency of Iranian EFL learners. To this end, an OPT test was administered to female EFL learners according to which 90 homogenous learners at an intermediate level comprised the research sample. The participants were randomly divided into two groups including a control group of 30 students, each producing a written text individually and an experimental group of 60 learners working in pairs. The results obtained from the essays written in the first session of the writing phase revealed that pairs produced less fluent texts than the individual writers. More specifically, the average number of words, T-units, and clauses in individual essays was less than that of pairs. The essays written in the last session revealed that there was a considerable improvement in the use of T-units and clauses produced by pairs. The findings also revealed that practicing in pairs did improve the overall quality of the learners' writing productions even though the fluency of written texts did not change significantly.

In supporting the first research hypothesis, Kemp (2013) states that the greatest disadvantage to working alone is the responsibility. By this, the researcher is solely responsible for the content and the quality of the work. While individual acclaim couldn’t be enhanced, individual failure would also be noted. While there is something to be said for sole authorship, especially toward promotion and tenure, the chance of rejection over time can weigh on the individual. The second hypothesis was that collaborative writing has significant impacts on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill. The result of the second research question is in line with the study of Jacobs, Curtis, Braine, and Huang (1998). They believed that students usually accept peer feedback in writing because feedback which is given by peers makes them feel more comfortable and confident in the writing learning environment. These researchers collected anonymous questionnaire data on whether second language learners prefer to receive peer feedback as one type of feedback on their writing. Participants were first-and second-year undergraduate ESL students of lower intermediate to high proficiency, 44 in a university in Hong Kong and 77 in a university in Taiwan. All were enrolled in writing courses in which peer, self, and teacher feedback were used. A statistically significant percentage of participants (93%) indicated they preferred to have feedback from other students as one type of feedback on their writing.

The result is not in line with the study of Hong (2006). He investigated perceptions of helpfulness of peer response among 22 advanced English major students. Data collected over onesemesterthrough observations, interviews, and questionnaires revealed that participants had very negative reactions to peer response. Hong reported that the students did not take much interest in doing peer editing activity. They looked carelessly through each others essays, made few comments and ten minutes later started to talk about unrelated issues. Throughout the eight sessions only two or three pairs of students treated the peer editing seriously, arguing, discussing and making improvement. The results of the study indicated that the writings of the students in the experimental group improved more than those in the control group. Also, those engaged in peer review method were motivated to write more essays and enjoyed writing. It was concluded that peer review provides learners with an authentic audience, increases the students' motivation for writing and enables them to receive different views on their writing.

Maarof, Yamat and Li (2011) examined ESL students’ perception of the role of teacher, peer and combined teacher-peer feedback in ESL writing. A total of 150 students from five secondary schools responded to a questionnaire comprising 32 items on a 4-point Likert scale, two multiple-choice items and three open-ended items. Results from the study showed that most of the students liked the combined use of teacher and peer feedback in ESL writing. An implication of this study was that the two forms of feedback can play an important and complementary role in enhancing the acquisition of writing among ESL students.

In their study, Vcsmr and Rao (2013) highlighted on encouraging cooperative learning process among students which is a system of teaching and learning techniques in which students are active agents in the process of learning instead of passive receivers of the product of any given knowledge. They made a comparison between cooperative learning and traditional group learning and showed that cooperative learning process could increase students' academic learning as well as personal growth. In addition their study validated that cooperative learning was considered must and the best instructional format enhancing learner's communicative competence and also in a cooperative environment, students become members of a learning team, instead of solitary learners. The result is not in line with the study of was that there are some differences between two groups (control and experimental groups) regarding the improvement of their writing skill. In contrast to teacher feedback which is product-oriented occurring at the end of the task (Lee, 2009), peer feedback is given during the task as a process, so it is more conductive and practical.

Swain and Lapkin (1998) examined peer learning in a French immersion classroom through applying a story construction task. They found that learners’ accuracy was developed because of peer-peer interaction.
Conclusion
As a conclusion, this study focused on the writing progress of EFL students' through individualistic and collaborative writing methods. It was found that not only did students, who practiced writing collaboratively, enjoy the process and product, but also a significant development was observed in their writing ability. The results of the present research indicated that individualistic writing does not have significant impact on the improvement of EFL learners' writing skill while students in experimental group, those who practiced writing collaboratively, wrote more fluently and accurately, and got useful feedbacks from each other. Students who wrote collaboratively believed that peer and group writing engage them in a social interaction, encourage and develop their reflection, and improve their writing skill. They also reported that during collaborative writing activities, their motivation was increased and they enjoyed of writing. Moreover, collaborative writing improved their information and knowledge literacy. In general, developing such a curriculum in EFL settings can serve as an effective method of improving learners' writing ability and teacher can manage their teaching schedule better.

REFERENCES
Murphy, T., & Jacobs, G. M. (2000). Encouraging critical collaborative autonomy. JALT Journal, 22, 228-244.


A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY AND INSTITUTE EFL STUDENTS’ USE OF GAMBITS

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ABSTRACT
The activity of speaking is conducted spontaneously and there is no much time to preplan or even arrange the speech the speaker intends to deliver. It is also known that people speak in their own style. One way to help students acquire oral proficiency is to teach gambits that support the prosocial skills being emphasized. Gambits refer to the words or phrases facilitating the flow of conversation through giving the speaker time to organize his or her thoughts, maintain or relinquish the floor, or specify the function of a particular utterance. The purpose of this study is to compare and contrast the different categories of gambits and their functions as used by EFL learners. The participants of the present study consisted of two upper-intermediate groups of university students (USs) and language institutes students (LISs) who got engaged in the process of talk show sessions. To count the frequency of gambit tokens and identify their functions the recorded data were analyzed using Keller and Warner’s classification of conversational gambits. The results of Chi-square test revealed a significant difference between UIUSs and ULIISs based on the occurrences of gambit categories. Based on the study findings, it is suggested that EFL teachers encourage the students to use conversational gambits as they are involved in the speaking activities to be able to deliver their speech effectively.

Keywords: Gambits, Conversation, Gambit Categories, Gambit Token, Conversation Formula

Introduction
Language can be viewed as a vehicle for communicating meaning and messages. Gertrude Boyd, as quoted by Donna E. Norton (1980) says: Language is the most important form of human communication. Not only is language human, it is uniquely human and the key to all human activities. It is a vehicle through which the world can be understood and appreciated. Without language, people are isolated and helpless.

Training is indispensable for equipping learners with tools to eventually become autonomous (see Benson & Voller, 1997; Wenden, 1991). The role of the teacher in self-directed learning is more of a facilitator providing the students with the tools to become autonomous through opportunities to learn and strategy instruction.

During conversations, people share some common principles which lead them to interpret each other’s utterances as contributing to conversation. Routine formulae or “highly conventionalized prepatterned expressions whose occurrence is tied to more or less standardized communication situations” (Coulmas, 1981, p. 2) seem to abound in everyday conversation. In other words, a great deal of communicative activity includes routine formulas that are usually fixed expressions. Routine formulae are defined by Wray (2000) as “A sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other meaning elements; which is, or appears to be, prefabricated; that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar.”

Weinert (1995) focused on fluency in production and faster processing is another function of formulas. Fluency in production can be conceptualized in four different ways (Fillmore, 1979, as cited in Kormos & Denes, 2004). First, Fillmore defined fluency as the ability to talk at length with few pauses and to be able to fill the time with talk. Second, a fluent speaker can not only talk without hesitations but also express his/her message in a coherent, reasoned and "semantically dense" manner. Third, a fluent speaker knows what to say in a wide range of contexts. Finally, fluent speakers are creative and imaginative in their language use. Fillmore contended that a maximally fluent speaker has all of the aforementioned abilities.
As suggested by Yorio (1989), by employing routine formulae the language learner appears more like a native speaker. Moreover, the speaker can be confident that his message would be understood by the interlocutors in the intended way (Wildner-Bassett, 1994). In general, being situationally-bound, routine formulas are highly frequent and beneficial for improving L2 learners’ performance (Roever, 2011).

Little (1991, p. 4) believes, “The capacity of autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts”.

Fluency, as Fillmore (1979) conceptualizes, is the ability to talk at length with few pauses and knowing what to say in a wide variety of contexts. It seems that with regard to fluency, gambits as Keller (1979) defines them ‘semi-fixed’ expressions might have a say in the matter.

According to Keller (1979), speakers use some strategies to structure the content of their message and their conversational procedure. These strategies, which are the main concern of psycholinguistic analysis of conversational discourse, have an overt and verbal representation in the form of semi-fixed expressions called ‘gambits’.

Gambits are used at the service of various functions. These functions include introducing a topic, structuring turn-taking, indicating a speaker’s readiness to receive some information. Gambits are often used to avoid speech pause during spoken conversations since speakers feel uncomfortable when silence occurs.

Gambits are a way of making our conversation sound natural. A gambit refers to a word or phrase which helps us to express what we are trying to say. For instance, we use gambits to introduce a topic of conversation, to link what we have to say to what someone has just said, to agree or disagree, or to respond to what we have heard (Eric Keller & Sylvia T Warner, 1988).

While Richards and Schmidts (1983, p. 116) said that conversation is an activity, which is directed to social goals (e.g. the establishment of roles, presentation of self) as well as the linguistic goals (communication of meanings). Furthermore, Elizabeth (2003, p. 66) states that “conversation is an exchange of thoughts and feelings in an informal setting in real time”. Unlike speech in which a single person holds the floor for a long time, conversation is marked by an exchange of comments.

As a result, gambits may be referred to as ‘discourse lubricants’ which are used by speakers to maintain the smooth flow of an ongoing talk. They often serve the function of turn-taking, when the speaker is in need of time to plan for his/her message through formulating their thoughts and reacting to what the previous speaker has said. They also serve the function of hearer-supportive devices. In other words, it is not uncommon for a hearer to use expressions like ‘really’, ‘indeed’, ‘oh!’ which clearly supports the speaker by showing an interest for and understanding of what he says, but does not contribute to the structure of the discourse.

Gambits can either stand alone or occur during a speaker’s turn. Whenever several gambits are used within one turn they can be categorized according to the order in which they occur.

Generally, gambits are of frequent use when the speaker is imposing something on the hearer such as requesting or suggesting something or when he/she is disagreeing with what the hearer has just said. It is noteworthy that gambits are of great utility in spoken discourse than written one. This notion is important for the study of chat room discourse compared to spoken discourse, since chat room discourse is argued to share characteristics of both written and spoken discourse.

Not all gambits are pre-patterned. According to Nikmehr and Farrokh (2013), the quantity of gambits and their functions cannot be restricted. That is to say, the infinite nature of gambits demands that we avoid handing them out on ‘a silver platter’ to the learners.

As stated by Keller (1981), gambits not only make the conversation sound more natural and more confident, but they also make it possible to talk easier. Furthermore, investigating ‘conventionalized language forms’ as gambits into the settings of language teaching was emphasized by Yorio (1980).

Keller (1988) defines gambits as “a certain set of signals in the conversationalist’s speech, used to introduce level shifts within the conversation or to prepare listeners for the next turn in the logical argument”. While Hornby (1995) states that gambit is an opening move in any situation that is calculated to gain an advantage. Gambit can make spoken English more natural and make it easier for foreign language learners to carry on a conversation.

Another function is to give the speaker time to find words for his idea and they also act as fillers (Coulmas, cited in Yuksel (www. yuksel.org).

Developing learner autonomy can be referred to as one of the main goals of the post method era. It seems that gambits will have quite a say in this matter, one that cannot be simply overlooked. Teachers play a significant role in encouraging students in learning these expressions. However, not all gambits are pre-patterned; that is, the quantity of gambits and their functions are limitless. Therefore, not all gambits should be handed out directly to
the learners and doing so is quite pointless considering the infinite nature of gambits. It, then, entails presenting some well-known gambits to the learners and leaving the rest up to them to discover. Any attempt to restrict gambits by providing a definition in concrete terms is contrary to the nature of gambits. In fact, what is required of an applied linguist is only to point out to the possibilities and, thereby, provide food for thought for language users.

The gambit analysis is focused on casual conversation. Eggins and Slade (1997, p. 19) define casual conversation as “talk which is not motivated by any clear pragmatic purpose.” In this study, gambits are classified into three categories: opening, linking, and responding gambit. In analyzing gambit on the casual conversation, for the sake of being consistent, the analysis on Eric Keller and Sylvia T Warner’s (1988) theory of conversation gambits is used. In general, gambit functions as an introduction to certain topics, therefore the listeners become ready to receive the information. By applying gambit in speech, the conversation being made sounds more natural (Keller, 1988). According to Keller (1988, p. 4), gambits are “ritualized, idiomatic expressions which are used to establish, maintain and end a conversation.” Furthermore, he finds the other types of gambits and he classifies gambits into three categories: opening, linking, and responding gambit as the following:

1. Opening gambit
   This type of gambits is used to introduce ideas to the conversation or even during the conversation. Opening gambit helps us to introduce ideas into the conversation. It is used to lead into something that we have on our mind because the beginning of a conversation is usually the most difficult part for most people. This kind of gambit is needed to start a conversation. The examples are: “first of all”, “in my view”, “excuse me for interrupting”, “I’d like to know”, “to begin with”.

2. Linking gambit
   This type of gambits is used to make the listeners become more prepared to the speakers next opinion, argument or view. In conversation, the speakers cannot only talk about the same topic for a short time. They must then move in a different direction, or give someone else a chance. Linking gambits are used to tie what has just been said. If they want to link into a conversation, they need this kind of gambit. The examples are: “In case like this”, “But the question is”, “To start with”.

3. Responding gambit
   These gambits are used to give respond to the other speaker. They are used to give the speakers’ conversational partner some feedback about what the speaker is saying. The gambits in this section allow the speakers to agree or disagree at different level. The examples are: “That’s correct”, “I don’t know”, “Either can I!” Keller (1981, p. 94) defined gambits as “[...] a certain set of signals in the conversationalist’s speech, used to introduce level shifts within the conversation, or to prepare listeners for the next turn in the logical argument.” He also assigned four main functions to gambits. The first one relates to the role of gambits as semantic introducers. The second function of gambits relates to the social context of the conversation. Third, they may indicate a participant’s state of consciousness. The final function of gambits relates to the communicative control function which ranges from pause fillers such as ‘you know’ to special gambits checking the continuous flow of communication.

It is well attested by linguists and discourse analysts that gambits and routine formulae deserve attention in foreign language teaching. The acquisition of gambits not only distinguishes an eloquent speaker, they might also be of advantage to any foreign language learner. In other words, any skillful user of gambits may gain time to think of what to say next. Although they are devoid of any communicative content, routine formulae help to give the impression of greater fluency than is actually there. Further, the use formulaic language signifies the speaker as a cooperative member of the conversational group (Coulmas, 1981).

Non-native speakers are usually in need of culturally appropriate gambits to avoid conversation breakdown. For instance, the use of effective strategies can mitigate the face-threat inherent in interruptions during clarification requests. Thus, formulae such as ‘I am very sorry to interrupt, but ...’ show that the speaker is reluctant to violate conversational rules.

Routine formulae lend themselves easily to pragmatic interferences analyses for the non-native speakers, regardless of their significance in discourse. Some of the most salient mistakes indeed result from the lack of any equivalent expression to the routine formulae in the foreign language and from their direct semantic translation. The purpose of the present study is to compare and contrast the different categories of gambits and their functions as used by EFL learners. So the research questions are as follows:

1) What are the different kinds of gambits used by University students and non-governmental institutes?
2) In which group gambits are more frequently used?
3) What type of gambit is frequently used?

**Literature Review**

Studying daily conversational interaction, Sorhus (1977) found that twenty percent of all words used in conversational interaction were fixed-expressions. Sorhus (1977) concluded that routine formulae facilitate conversational planning and also maintain a smooth flow of interaction.

Dörnyei (1995) set out to explore the teachability of a variety of communication strategies to EFL learners. He found that students’ ability to use fillers or hesitation devices in spontaneous oral production was significantly increased after direct instruction. He concluded that instruction does increase the use and appropriateness of these routines.

In her study, entitled “An Analysis of Conversation Gambits Produced by The Participants (Broadcaster and Caller) of English Interactive Program “Pro 2 English” Time on RRI Semarang” Mukhoyyaroh (2010), she analyzed the gambit used by the participants of that program both the broadcaster and caller and tried to find out the purpose of conversation gambit which were produced.

The data analysis of Mukhoyyaroh’s study was descriptive analysis in the form of qualitative description and a bit of quantitative measurement to find what kinds of gambit mostly used. This study was carried out through six activities. The activities began from recording, sorting, transcribing, sequencing, tabulating, and coding.

Based on this study, as the writer mention above, it is found that there were three kinds of conversation gambits. Those are opening gambit (25%), linking gambit (28%) and responding gambit (47%).

It was contended by Wildner-Bassett (1984) that language learners tend to incorporate literal translations of gambits and routines into the foreign language system, regardless of their function. Her data collection includes surface structures such as ‘may I beg you’ in English. The learner might have tried to add impact to a request by using this form instead of the common expression ‘may I ask you’. She came up with the conclusion that even fairly advanced learners of English utter so-called ‘near misses’ such as ‘that’s a very pity’ or ‘I would be very appreciated’.

Studying a group of L2 speakers’ performance in two conversational roles (holiday foods vs. major fields) with native speakers, Zuengler and Bent (1991) found that while nonnative speakers used more pause fillers when discussing food, the native speakers back-channeled more. The opposite occurred in the discussion of the topic related to their mutual major fields; that is, native speakers talked more than nonnative speakers and the nonnative speakers back-channeling more.

Wildner-Bassett (1984) sought to explore the effectiveness of two teaching methods, a cognitive approach and an adaptation of the SALT or Suggestopaedia approach, in the teaching of gambits. The findings of her study showed significant increases in the quantity and quality of these gambits from both methods, but no significant differences between methods.

**Methodology**

**Participants**

The participants of current study include two groups of upper-intermediate university students (UIUSs) and those of language institutes (UILISs) who got engaged in the process of show talk sessions. The subjects are in range of 19 – 23. The first group (UIUSs) are all university students who are under formal education in state university, and the second group (UILISs) are English learners who are busy learning in different non-governmental institutes. All the participants are in upper-intermediate level. The participants’ native language is Persian. The two groups are under the study for two months in 12 sessions of talk show (conversation) classes. The teachers, who are native speakers too, are the other part of the participants. Both teachers are of experienced teachers with 11 years of teaching experience. In addition to their experience, the teachers are fluent in English, high qualified and respected teachers who were well-liked by their students.

**Instruments**

Three sources were used for data collecting, namely, the textbook, the teacher and the students. The book used in this study was ‘Top Notch’ 2B, by Joan Saslow and Allen Ascher (2011). The purpose of the book series is to help students engage confidently in interaction with both native and non-native speakers of English. All conversation models feature the language people really use.

The teacher talk is another source of this study. The teacher talk is recorded for analyzing the data used. The students’ talk show conversation is the last instrument.
During the 12 sessions of talk show the students’ discussion and conversation were recorded. The gambits used by them are the main source of data.

Design
To describe the data collected and also to clarify the research questions and hypothesis a qualitative research was used. The first three chapters of the textbook were studied and examined to find the gambits used. The list of gambits used in the textbook was prepared as the first source of data. For the other sources of data, teachers and students of the two groups, data were collected based on methods of recording, transcribing, sorting, and coding. Recording the teachers’ talk and also students’ discussion and conversation in the last ten sessions, the researchers transcribed, sorted and prepared two separate lists of gambits used based on the recordings transcription. An American native speaker was also asked to comment on the gambits used in the two different situations of the research in order to evaluate the participants’ use of gambits qualitatively. The native speaker was an EFL teacher.

Results and Discussion
Based on the analysis of the first two sources of the study (textbook and teachers output), the results are shown in table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Kinds of Gambits</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textbook</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29.83</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32.81</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 1, the total number of gambits used in textbook is 57 and in teachers’ output is 64, and totally 121 gambits were used in the two mentioned sources. Among 57 gambits used in the textbook, 29.83% were Opening gambits, 36.84% Linking gambits, and 33.33% were Responding one, and among 64 gambits used by teachers, 32.81% were Opening gambits, 35.93% Linking, and 31.26% were Responding one. Interestingly, among the 64 gambits used by teachers, 54 were the same as those of the textbook and 10 of the gambits were the gambits other than those of the textbook.

The distribution of the gambits used in University group (USs) is shown in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gambit Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of the gambits used by Language Institute group (LISs) is shown in table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gambit Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 shows the percentage of gambits used by the two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(USs) group</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>44.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LISs) group</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>55.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>194</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is shown in tables 1 and 2, in (USs) group the number of gambit types of Opening, Linking and Responding are 34.88, 39.54, and 25.58 respectively. Gambit types used by (LISs) group in Opening, Linking, and Responding types are 37.97, 31.48, and 30.55 respectively. Tables 3 and 4 show that the number of gambits used by (LISs) group is significantly different.

In Table 5 the gambits used in the two groups of students are compared.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Kinds of Gambits</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(USs) group</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39.54</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LISs) group</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37.97</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>71</strong></td>
<td><strong>68</strong></td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
<td><strong>194</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 5 number of Opening gambits are 71, Linking gambits 68, and Responding one are 55, and totally 194 gambits are used by students. The number of gambits used by the two groups is significantly different, that is, the (LISs) group used more gambits generally. The Opening and Responding ones are used more and Linking one is used less by the (LISs) group.

In Table 6 we can recognize the dominant type of gambit occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gambit Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>36.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>35.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>194</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that the Opening Gambit type is the dominant type of gambits used by the two groups of students. Interestingly again, we see that from among the 86 gambits used by (USs) group, 62 gambits are the same as the textbook, 4 gambits are the same as the gambits used by their teacher, and 20 gambits are used other than the gambits used by the first two sources. And from among the 108 gambits used by (LISs) group, 57 gambits are the same as the textbook, 5 gambits are the same as the gambits used by their teacher, and 46 gambits are used other than the gambits used by the first two sources.

**Conclusion**

After analyzing and describing the data we conclude that all the students tried to use different types of gambits. For example from among 24 classes and purposes of linking gambits the two groups used the gambits for 16 purposes. The number of gambits used by Institute group is more than the other group. The (ILSs) group used Opening and Responding ones more while the other group used Linking one more. The Opening Gambit type is the dominant type of gambits used by the two groups of students. It seems that the atmosphere of the class in the two different situations may cause the amount of freedom for choosing and using of gambits.

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ON ETYMOLICAL ELABORATION AND ITS POTENTIAL EFFECT ON THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNER’S KNOWLEDGE OF OPAQUE IDIOMS

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ABSTRACT
Idioms are much more than ‘decorative icing’ to the language; they are an integral feature of both written and spoken English. The ability to comprehend and use idiomatic language is one of the distinguishing marks of native-like competence. In this research study, the target population of study were 60 female EFL students at intermediate level of proficiency. All of the participants were native speakers of Persian studying at the Iran Language Institute of Rasht; Iran. After calculating OPT results and validating the idioms test through pilot study, the participants were divided into two groups to receive different treatments: Control Group: received no Etymological knowledge, but they received treatment through a conventional method, (definition of the opaque idioms with examples). Experimental Group: received instruction through etymological elaboration, (Etymological Information with examples). The research question sought to investigate which technique of teaching idioms yields better results in improving learners’ opaque idioms knowledge. The results of the opaque idioms posttest indicated that the group instructed through etymological elaboration had better performance; the group receiving explicit instruction of opaque idioms’ definitions had lower performance. However, the T-Test procedure revealed that the difference between the performances of the two groups were statistically significant. In other words, etymological information of the opaque idioms had significantly different effect on the learners’ knowledge of opaque idioms. Based on the results, it can be concluded that etymological information of idioms has differential effects on the knowledge of opaque idioms of Iranian EFL learners. In addition, etymological information is conducive to Iranian intermediate learners’ knowledge of opaque idioms.

Keywords: Etymological elaboration, Idiomatic language, Opaque idioms

1. Background
The main goal of learning English language in Iran is just knowing some grammatical rules and communicating just to satisfy our basic needs. Yet nowadays the goals of learning English are very different from those times. In addition to grammatical rules, one must know cultural norms of that language as they are called cultural connotation. Learning the culture of the language needs more attention and it is a complicated matter in our country, Iran. Because, originally we are a traditional country and our focus is more on the grammatical cases of language.

The importance of idioms has been emphasized by linguists and language teachers in recent years. Bortfeld (2003) believes that the increasing number of idioms in Dictionary of American Idioms is indicative of the essential role idioms play in daily language use. According to Salehi (2012), in recent years, idioms have received considerable amount of attention in EFL contexts. Linguists have sought ways to promote learning and teaching methods of these prefabricated language chunks. It is now believed that the meaning of all idioms is not arbitrary but somehow ‘motivated’ by their literal, original usage. This technique is called ‘etymological elaboration’.

As Boers (2004) argues, Etymological awareness can be built by providing learners with the relevant information about the idiom origin or by asking them to hypothesize about the origin of the phrases before the etymological
feedback is provided - a procedure known as etymological elaboration. Pierson (1989) proposed a pedagogy with etymology instruction at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In particular, he tried to encourage meaningful vocabulary learning in ESL by incorporating knowledge of words’ origins. Although Pierson’s (1989) examples came with no empirical data in support of the effectiveness of etymology on vocabulary acquisition, his pedagogical proposal has been accepted and further developed in experiments by other researchers. Boers, (2007) conducted a series of experiments that examined the extent to which knowledge of the idiom’s origin can facilitate the comprehension of their figurative use. Rather than providing etymological information to the learners, the learners were asked to make hypotheses about the source domains of the idiomatic phrases, their meanings and their level of formality.

In Dual Coding Theory (Clark and Paivio, 1991), as the etymological information is likely to call up a mental image of a concrete scene which then can be stored in memory alongside the verbal form, and which can subsequently provide an extra pathway for recall. Cassiari and Glucksberg (1991) conducted a research study in terms of etymology use. They believed that by knowing the origins of idioms, students can more easily figure out the metaphorical meanings. They mentioned that the etymology of words and phrases help students understand how language transforms over times and, thereby, enable them to hypothesize in a more meaningful way the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.

Shang-fang-Gue (2008) studied the differential effects of etymological elaboration and rote memorization on idiom acquisition in EFL learners. In his investigation one group received instruction in the form of etymological familiarity while subjects in the comparison group were asked to memorize idioms on the basis of their given meaning. In this study for the purpose of encouraging long-term retention, elaborating on the original usage of idioms is preferable to asking students to learn idioms by rote. According to Liontas (1999, 2001, 2006) language learners can use idioms successfully if the idiomatic knowledge is properly taught during language instruction and L2 learners have difficulties making sense of idioms even after they have learned the semantic meaning of the individual words.

Zolfagharkhani and Ghorbani Moghadam (2011) conducted a study with Iranian upper- intermediate EFL learners in order to show the impact of etymological instruction on vocabulary learning. The results of their study revealed that the participants receiving treatment (introducing prefixes, suffixes, roots, and origin of the words) in the experimental group out performed those in the control group, which followed its normal education.

2. Present study

Idioms are an important part of any language and there are many types of idioms. So, they should be learnt and thought appropriately since they are part of what is broadly considered to be general English (Moreno, 2011). It is hoped that this study will have pedagogical values in the sense that the findings might suggest an effective strategy for teaching opaque idioms to Iranian EFL learners. As a result, teachers of English can use the effective procedure to enhance knowledge of opaque idioms. In addition, EFL learners can partly overcome the problems they encounter in understanding and acquiring English opaque idioms as well as their use in daily life.

2.1 Purpose of the study

The main objective of this study was to facilitate the way opaque idioms are learned by Iranian EFL learners. Teaching of those idioms that are unfamiliar to most of the learners of English was the focus of the present study, to this end the main goal was to find an effective solution to make their meaning more transparent to the students.

2.2 Research Question and Hypothesis

This research sought to find an empirically justified answer to the following question:

Q: Does the etymological knowledge of English idioms produce any promising effect on the learning of opaque idioms by Iranian EFL learners?

A pertinent null hypothesis was formulated as follows:

H 0 : The etymological knowledge of English idioms has no promising effect on the learning of opaque idioms by Iranian EFL learners.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The target population of this study was 60 female EFL students at intermediate level of proficiency. All of the participants were native speakers of Persian studying at the Iran Language Institute of Rasht in Iran. It should be noted that the participants were required to attend the researcher’s private institute and receive treatment through the two methods of instructions. The participants received remuneration for their participation in the study.
3.2 Instruments
To select a sample of homogenous participants from the target population, the standardized Oxford Placement test (OPT) was administered to 150 female EFL students at intermediate level of proficiency. All of the participants were native speakers of Persian studying at the Iran Language Institute of Rasht, Iran. The participants answered three sections including the structure, vocabulary and reading comprehension sections of the test. To randomize the participants, the researcher used Super Cool Random Generator as a randomization tool.

After calculating the OPT results, 90 participants abided and 30 of them considered as pilot group to obtain a reliable and valid test of opaque idioms which were teacher-made. The researcher asked the participants to answer the 80 high frequency opaque idioms that were selected from reliable dictionaries such as: American Heritage Dictionary, McGraw Hills Dictionary, Collins Dictionary, Oxford Dictionary, Cambridge Dictionary, Longman Dictionary and also reliable books of English Idioms such as: Idioms Organizer, All Clear, Speak English Like an American, English Idioms in Use, Idioms in English, Street Talk 3 and so on.

By using TAP (Testing Analysis Process) application developed by Brooke, the item facility of the opaque idiom questions was measured. 60 items with facility indices close to zero were selected and included the final draft of the test.

The reliability of 60 items of the idiom test was approximated through a pilot study on 30 EFL learners. Moreover, the index of reliability was interpreted according to the reliability standards suggested by Barker, Pistrang, and Elliott (1994). (See table 1 under the list of tables)

3.3 Procedures
Before giving any instruction a pre-test was administered to the two target groups (control and experimental groups) and the students answered the questions with their own knowledge (See table 2 under the list of tables)

After analyzing the results through SPSS application the findings showed no significant difference between two groups, that is to say the two groups belong to the same population.

To compare the performances of the both control and experimental groups in their pretest an independent sample t-test was run. (See table 3 under the list of tables)

\[ \text{sig} = 0.077 \quad > \quad 0.05 = \alpha \]

After calculating pre-test results, the researcher instructed two different treatment to the participants. The control group received conventional method (definition of opaque idioms with several examples) and the experimental group received etymological elaboration (etymological information of opaque idioms with several examples).

4. Results
After the instruction a post-test administered to control and experimental groups. (See table 4 under the list of tables)

The results showed the mean score of experimental group on their post-test was much higher than on pretest as it was an indication of positive impact of the etymological information of opaque idioms.

The Levine’s test showed the significance level came to .000 which rejects the assumption of groups’ equal performance on the posttest performance. The data is summarized as:

\[ \text{sig} = 0.000 \quad < \quad 0.05 = \alpha \]

(See table 5 under the list of tables)

In this section, two sets of statistical procedures were adopted to find out the result of the hypothesis. At first descriptive data analysis was conducted for the both control and experimental groups’ performance on the two tests of idiom. The results showed that there is a difference in the learners’ performance in terms of their mean scores on the two pretests. Further, the posttests were descriptively compared with each other. The results showed differences in the groups’ performance. Second, inferential data analysis was conducted to obtain sound information on the comparison of the two test results. Two T-tests were run to compare the test results of pretests and posttests inferentially. The same results were achieved as the participants in the experimental groups showed a significant improvement after the treatment comparing the control group posttest who received the conventional instruction. Finally, the results were provided on the hypothesis, and the research question was answered according to the data gathered by the researcher. The results showed that the hypothesis is rejected the hypothesis that etymological information has no significant effect on the knowledge of opaque idioms.

5. Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications
The present study was an attempt to answer the question of whether there is significant difference between the effects of etymological elaboration and definition of idioms on Iranian learners’ knowledge of opaque idioms.
The research question sought to investigate which technique of teaching idioms yields better results in improving learners’ opaque idioms knowledge. The results of the opaque idioms posttest indicated that the group instructed through etymological elaboration had the best performance, the group receiving explicit instruction of opaque idioms’ definitions had the lowest performance. However, the T-Test procedure revealed that the difference between the performances of the two groups were statistically significant. In other words, etymological information of the opaque idioms had significantly different effect on the learners’ knowledge of opaque idioms. Based on the results, it can be concluded that etymological information of idioms has differential effects on the knowledge of opaque idioms of Iranian EFL learners. In addition, etymological information is conducive to Iranian intermediate learners’ knowledge of opaque idioms. Therefore, as Zhang (2009) declares, etymological information has a positive effect on the productive knowledge of target idioms.

The results of this study may have some pedagogical implications. As it was discussed in the previous chapters, teaching and learning idioms play a crucial role in acquiring a second or foreign language. So, it has received special attention recently.

The findings of the present study can have significant implications for many teachers: first, rather than applying a single method in teaching idioms, they can use multiple techniques in their idiom classes in order to enhance their students’ knowledge of opaque idioms. As an example associating contextualized idioms with their etymology can be more effective than decontextualized idioms. Secondly, by knowing the advantages of etymological elaboration in productive knowledge of idioms, teachers can use this strategy to improve students’ idiom knowledge. The present study can also have implications for students in that instead of the traditional rote learning of idioms, they can try a mixture of different techniques in their own learning experiences. The finding of the present research study can also have implications for syllabus and textbook designers. They can provide idioms books which are more comprehensible for students through accompanying idioms by their etymology, short sentences as a context as well as definitions of constituent parts of each idioms. Hence, syllabus designers can design syllabuses for idiom courses based on each of these techniques according to students’ interests, level, gender, and culture.

6. Suggestions for Further Research

The present study did not aim to investigate the age of the participants. As learners in different age groups tend to be more eager to specific strategies in learning idioms (for example in Cain and Knight (2009), very young learners were more successful in inferring from context than adults), age can be an important independent variable that has not been taken in to account in this study. Therefore, this study can be replicated with participants of different age levels.

As the present study examined the effect of etymological elaboration on the knowledge of opaque idioms, further research can be carried out on other specific types of idioms such as, transparent, decomposable, or non-decomposable. In the same vein, further research can be done to compare the effect of these strategies on other areas of language such as vocabulary in general, proverbs, collocation, and so on. The present study was carried out with intermediate female learners, and it can be replicated with male learners at different levels of proficiency.

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List of tables

Table 1. Reliability Statistics for the idiom Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idiom test</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
<th>N of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idiom test</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for experimental and control groups’ pretests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>score</th>
<th>Exp. Pre.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exp. Pre.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.84</td>
<td>2.477</td>
<td>4.953</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont. Pre.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.38</td>
<td>2.716</td>
<td>5.240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Independent sample test of control and experimental groups’ pretests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>4.167</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>-2.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-2.121</td>
<td>80.417</td>
<td>.077</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for experimental and control groups’ posttests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>score</th>
<th>Exp. Post.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exp. Post.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46.02</td>
<td>3.170</td>
<td>5.749</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cont. Post</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24.09</td>
<td>4.231</td>
<td>8.901</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Table 5. Independent sample test of control and experimental groups' posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>assumed</td>
<td>11.142</td>
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<td>Equal variances</td>
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<tr>
<td>not assumed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.703</td>
<td>71.929</td>
<td>.000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
THE EFFECT OF METADISCUSSION AWARENESS ON EFL LEARNERS’ LISTENING COMPREHENSION PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT
As the Cinderella skill, listening used to be a frowned upon section of any language instruction until recently. The present study examined the effect of metadiscourse awareness on listening comprehension of EFL intermediate students by using metadiscoursal taxonomies proposed by Hyland (2005). Two intact classes, comprising 60 intermediate EFL learners, were randomly selected and assigned as the experimental or control group. A pre-test of listening comprehension was given to both the experimental and control groups to check their initial performance in listening comprehension. Then the experimental group was exposed to instruction of metadiscourse markers for five sessions. The control group received no specific instructions in metadiscourse. Finally, both groups were given a post-test to measure their listening ability. The findings revealed that explicit instruction of metadiscourse markers improves EFL learners’ listening comprehension ability. These findings have some implications for language teachers and material developers. They should pay more attention to metadiscourse markers in making EFL curricula and try to raise the learners’ awareness toward MD markers to improve their listening comprehension ability.

Keywords: Metadiscourse awareness - Interactive resources- Interactional resources- listening comprehension

1. Introduction
According to Nunan (1997), listening is the Cinderella skill in second language learning, and has always been ignored by its elder sister, speaking. Listening has often been viewed by teachers as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. Research into second language acquisition has done much to raise awareness of how important listening is in second language classrooms. Nunan (1997) stated that learning cannot begin without understanding input and listening is thus fundamental to speaking. Though often linked to reading as a receptive skill, listening can prove to be much more daunting for students in a second language classroom. A reader usually has the chance to refer back to a text to clarify understanding, something which a listener in most listening contexts cannot. Oxford (1993) pointed out that among language skills, listening is the most fundamental language skill which can be developed; therefore, it should be a clear focus of classroom instruction.

Listening is now considered as an active skill that involves many processes. Byrnes (1984) characterizes listening comprehension as a “highly complex problem-solving activity” that can be broken down into a set of distinct sub-skills (p. 318). As Richards (1985) points out, “current understanding of the nature of listening comprehension draws on research in psycholinguistics, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and cognitive science” (p. 189).

Metadiscourse (MD) is a widely used term in current discourse analysis and language education. Zellig Harris was the first researcher who coined the word “metadiscourse” in 1959 and his aim was to elaborate on text elements playing some role in conveying the information of the text (Hyland, 2005). There are various taxonomies for metadiscourse (Vande Kopple, 1985); Crismore, Markkanen & Steffensen, 1989; Hyland, 2004, 2005).

Vande Kopple (1997) defined MD as discourse that writers use to help readers connect, organize, interpret, evaluate, and develop attitudes toward the informational material. Using Lautamatti’s (1978) taxonomy and Williams’ (1981) work, Vande Kopple (1985) identified two main types of MD markers: textual and interpersonal. He divided them into seven subcategories: text connectives, code glosses, illocution markers, validity markers, narrators, attitude markers, commentaries.
Crismore et al. (1993) tried to improve Vande Kopple’s (1985) MD taxonomy. They defined metadiscourse as the linguistic material intended to help the reader or listener organize and interpret information in texts, but does not add any information to the propositional content. They also distinguished between textual and interpersonal metadiscourse but further subdivided the textual category into textual markers (logical connectives, sequencers, reminders and topicalizers) and interpretive markers (code glosses, illocution markers and announcements) and interpersonal category into hedges, certainty markers, attributors, attitude markers and commentary.

Hyland (2005) proposed a new model for classification of MD markers. He believes that “metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or services, but also involves the personalities, attitudes and assumptions of those who are communicating” (p. 3). Hyland (2005) has divided MD expressions into two main categories: interactive and interactional. Hyland’s taxonomy is seen bellow.

Interactive elements are features of a text that index the assumptions a writer makes about his/her reader. The interactive function refers to the way writers show their awareness and interests to produce a text in line with the needs of their learners. In other words, the writers consider the goals of the readers to help them fulfill their needs. Interactive resources include transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses. Transitions (e.g., in addition, and) establish relations among main clauses and mark additive, contrastive, and consequential steps in the discourse. Frame markers (e.g., finally, my purpose is, let us turn to another...) mainly refer to the sequences of actions and topic shifts. Endophoric markers (e.g., see Figure 2) refer back or forward to information in other parts of the same text. Evidentials (e.g., according to Einstein) refer to information expressed in other texts and available sources. In fact, they are utilized in order to build premises on established grounds and attribute the commitment to the other members of the community. Code glosses (e.g., namely, meaning that) clarify presumably ambiguous terms and concepts both briefly and extensively through defining, reformulating, and exemplifying; therefore, they help readers better understand a particular text element the propositional meanings.

Interactional element refers to expressions of the writer’s position and stances, and therefore is an expression of the writer’s voice or community based personality. As such, interactive features embody the writers’ performance in their texts, whereas the interactional factors represent it. Interactional resources include hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions and engagement markers. Hedges (e.g., possible, might, and perhaps) are devices that refer to the level of certainty or uncertainty of the writer. These markers show that a statement is based on the writer’s way of reasoning and has not been mentioned anywhere else. Boosters (e.g., clearly, obviously, and demonstrate) help writers show their certainty among several possible and presented alternatives. Attitude markers (e.g., arguably, unfortunately) refer to the emotional mood of the writer (e.g., tiredness, interest, and surprise). They indicate his or her appraisal of, surprise at, or agreement with the proposition. Self-mentions (e.g., me, mine, we, our, and ours) refer to the extent of the writer’s presence that can be realized by the use of personal pronouns and possessive adjectives. Therefore, these markers make an explicit reference to the writer to remind readers that the proposition is produced by the writer himself or herself rather than someone else. Engagement markers (e.g., you can see that, note) help the writer explicitly build relationship with reader.

Since the emergence of metadiscourse, it has been investigated from different aspects. Some studies have focused on the role of metadiscourse in pedagogy. These include the effect of MD awareness on learners’ writing abilities (Steffensen & Cheng, 1996; Dastjerdi & Shirzad, 2010) and reading comprehension (Khorvash, 2008; Jalilifar & Alipour, 2007).

Steffensen and Cheng (1996) conducted an experiment to investigate the effect of targeted instruction on metadiscourse on the writing abilities of native-speaker university students. An experimental group that had been taught the form, function and purpose of metadiscourse learned to use it effectively and produce compositions that earned significantly higher scores than those of a control group, which had received no instruction on metadiscourse.

Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010) investigated the impact of explicit instruction of metadiscourse markers on advanced, intermediate, and elementary English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ writing performance. The participants of their study were undergraduate students majoring in English Literature at the University of Isfahan. Their findings indicated generally that explicit instruction of metadiscourse markers significantly improves EFL learners’ writing ability, however, in their study the learners at the intermediate level improved significantly greater than those at the advanced and elementary levels that shows that the practitioners should pay more serious attention to metadiscourse markers in making EFL curricula.

Khorvash (2008) investigated the differential impact of explicit instruction of types of metadiscourse on Iranian EFL learners’ achievement in reading comprehension. She used four groups of Persian learners of English (three experimental groups and one control group) as the participants in her study. All 80 students (20 in each group) were at the intermediate level of English in a language institute. The first experimental group received instruction
in both textual and interpersonal metadiscourse; the second, instruction in only textual metadiscourse; and the third, instruction in only interpersonal metadiscourse. The comparison group received no instruction in metadiscourse, only relevant exercises for reading in general. Analyses of the post-tests revealed a positive effect for instruction in metadiscourse. The findings clearly showed that the types of metadiscourse do not similarly affect learners’ reading comprehension. The first experimental group (the one that received instructions in both textual and interpersonal metadiscourse) did much better than the other three groups on the post-test. The second experimental group performed better on the post-test than the third experimental group, and the third experimental group performed better than the control group, which scored the lowest on the test.

A study by Jalilifar and Alipour (2007) attempted to determine the effect of MD presence and instruction on TOEFL reading passages for three groups of students with pre- to intermediate reading proficiency. Ninety students were selected and given three versions of the same test, original, modified and unmodified metadiscourse-free texts. The significant result was that the omission of metadiscourse markers from a text does not hinder the comprehensibility of the propositional content presented in the text, when enough structural modifications are made in the text. The explicit MD instruction was argued to have helped participants notice and become aware of these language forms and their functions while reading. The removal of these markers broke the propositional chains in the texts and thus made them confusing.

Despite these attempts to underscore the role of MD on reading and writing ability of the learners, there has been little attention paid to the role of metadiscourse in listening comprehension (Sa, 2008; Heshemi, Khodabakhshzade & Elahi Shirvan, 2012) and few have been of an experimental nature.

Heshemi et al. (2012) investigated the effect of inclusion and exclusion (absence/presence) of MD markers on listening comprehension of EFL learners. They found that exclusion of metadiscourse can significantly influence intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension if they are already familiar with the concept of metadiscourse.

Sa (2008) investigated the effect of inclusion and exclusion (absence/presence) of MD markers on listening comprehension of EFL learners. The study aimed at exploring the role of metadiscourse in listening comprehension. Two groups of participants listened to different versions of the same TEM8 mini-lecture, one with metadiscourse while the other without, and both of the groups were required to finish the same tasks and questionnaire after listening. Statistical results showed that metadiscourse plays a vital role in listening comprehension, with significant differences.

Thus, this study is partially inspired by the few studies conducted recently and is an attempt to somehow bridge the said gap in the literature on metadiscourse and highlight the crucial role of MD markers in EFL students listening comprehension.

Following what was mentioned above, this study aimed at investigating the impact of explicit instruction of MD markers on Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension performance.

2. Research Question and Hypothesis
The study poses the following research question and null hypothesis:
RQ: Does explicit instruction of MD markers affect Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension ability?
Based upon the research question above, the researcher postulated the following null hypothesis:
H0: Explicit instruction of MD markers doesn’t affect Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension ability.

3. Participants
The present study was conducted in Iran Language Institute, Urmia branch, Iran. Two intact classes, comprising 60 intermediate EFL learners, were randomly selected from five intermediate classes available at the institute. They were female and their age ranged from 16 to 21. One of the selected intact classes was randomly assigned as the experimental group and the other one as the control group. Both groups were taught by the same teacher for the same duration of time. The treatment group was provided with instruction of MD markers.

4. Design
The study employed a quasi-experimental design to examine the effect of explicit instruction of MD markers as an independent variable on the listening comprehension of Iranian intermediate EFL learners as a dependent variable.
5. Instrumentation

Three instruments were used in this study. The Preliminary English Test (PET), a second level Cambridge ESOL exam for intermediate level learners, was administered to ensure the initial homogeneity of the participants in terms of language proficiency. The test included four sections of Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. Speaking and Writing sections were removed for practical and administrative reasons. Before providing the treatment, in order to check the performance of both the experimental and control groups in listening comprehension, the researcher gave them a pretest of listening comprehension. After the treatment stage, a posttest of listening comprehension was administered to both groups to check whether there was any significant difference between the performances of the two groups.

6. Procedure

At the outset of the study, the Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to learners to ascertain the homogeneity of participants in terms of language proficiency. Before the application of any instruction on MD markers, the researcher gave them a pretest of listening comprehension to check their initial performance in listening comprehension. The purpose was to establish a baseline from which achievements in the participants’ performance on the posttest could be measured. Then, the researcher launched the five-session treatment. The experimental group (EG) was instructed on MD markers. They were given awareness about MD markers. Having based this work on Ken Hyland’s framework for metadiscourse, the researchers applied his definition and classification of the term. In each session, the participants in the EG were familiarized with definitions and examples of some types of MD markers proposed by Hyland (2005) to gain awareness and mastery of MD markers. The treatment was conducted on two days a week which included roughly 30 minutes of MD markers instruction at the end of each session. Since this study aimed at determining the effects of MD markers instruction on the learner’s performance, the control group (CG) received no specific instructions on MD markers. The learners in the CG followed their routine classroom activities. After the treatment stage was completed, a posttest of listening comprehension was administrated to both experimental and control groups to see whether MD markers instruction had any effect on the participants’ performance or not. The participants’ scores on the pretest and posttest were then compared to find the degree of improvement of each group.

7. Data Analysis

The data obtained through the procedure described above were analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to answer the research question. The research question was answered by running two independent samples t-test on the pre- and posttest scores of the experimental and control groups.

8. Results

The research question in this study addressed the effect of explicit instruction of MD markers on Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension performance. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the participants’ pre- and posttest scores of listening comprehension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>std</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.84</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.13</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.27</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A pre-requisite to any comparison of two independent means is equality of variances. First, equality of variances was investigated using Levene’s test of. The results of the test, \( p = .88 \), indicated that an independent t-test could be run. Then, an independent samples t-test was run to see if there was a significant difference between the performance of the participants in the control and experimental groups on the listening comprehension pretest or not. The results obtained from this statistical analysis (Table 2) indicated no significant difference (\( p (0.38) > 0.05 \)) in the performance of the experimental and control groups on the pretest, that is, the two groups did not differ
significantly in their performance on the listening comprehension pretest and there were no meaningful differences between their initial listening levels.

Table 2. Independent Samples T-test for Pre-test of Listening Comprehension by Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variances</th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality</th>
<th>t-test for equality of means</th>
<th>Mean differences</th>
<th>Std. error differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.888</td>
<td>.877</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to probe the effect of MD markers instruction on the improvement of the listening comprehension ability of the EFL learners, the researcher conducted an independent samples t-test on their mean scores of the posttest of listening comprehension. As it is shown in Table 1, the mean score and standard deviation of the posttest in experimental group are (M=14.13, SD= 2.24), and in control group are (M=12.27, SD= 2.96). The results of the independent samples t-test in Table 3 for post-tests in two groups, $t(58) = 1.91, p=.04$, shows that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the post-tests of the control and experimental groups. It can be concluded that the participants of the EG outperformed the participants of the CG and it can be attributed to the explicit instruction of MD markers. Hence, the null-hypothesis as explicit instruction of MD markers does not affect the listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners was rejected.

Table 3. Independent Samples T-test for Post-test of Listening Comprehension by Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variances</th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality</th>
<th>t-test for equality of means</th>
<th>Mean differences</th>
<th>Std. error differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.912</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>41.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Discussion

This study investigated the effectiveness of MD markers awareness on Iranian EFL learners’ listening comprehension ability by using Hyland’s (Hyland, 2005) taxonomy of MD markers as a model of analysis. The result of this research indicated that explicit instruction of MD markers is quite successful for improving learners’ listening comprehension performance. In other words, once students are made aware of MD markers, they will become more effective listeners. The findings of this study are in line with those of Heshemi et al. (2012), Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010).

Heshemi et al. (2012) investigated the effect of inclusion and exclusion of metadiscourse markers on listening comprehension of EFL intermediate and advanced students. They found that exclusion of metadiscourse can significantly influence intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension if they are already familiar with the concept of metadiscourse.

As mentioned in the introduction, Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010) found that explicit teaching of metadiscourse markers can improve EFL learners’ writing ability. In this study the researchers found that MD markers play an important role in EFL learners’ listening comprehension and if intermediate EFL learners become consciously aware of the role of metadiscourse markers in their listening comprehension, their listening performance can improve more significantly than when they are not aware of them. Therefore, both studies highlight the significant
role of explicit teaching or awareness of metadiscourse markers on intermediate EFL learners’ skills such as writing and listening comprehension.

10. Conclusion

By recapitulating and looking back at the statistical procedures and the results, one can clearly observe the sharp differences in the improvements of the two groups. In fact, the learners in the MD instruction group outperformed the ones in the control group. All in all, the result of this study lends further support to Crismore’s (1985) claim that MD awareness has been very effective in foreign/second language teaching classrooms and with various parts of language skills and components.

The most important contribution of this study is its classroom applications. Both language teachers and learners should pay particular attention to the concept of MD while teaching or learning language. The result of the present study provides some directions for teachers to promote students’ awareness of MD markers. Teachers may need to introduce the concept of MD to students and make them familiar with different categories of MD markers. They should try to raise the learners’ awareness toward MD markers and help them become better listeners.

The findings are also of great importance to material designers. The results can guide them through the process of designing relevant and authentic course material containing MD markers. Appropriate language teaching materials should be written to ask learners to identify the instances of metadiscourse in texts while reading and to make proper use of them.

REFERENCES


THE STUDY ON THE ROLE OF READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGY INSTRUCTION ON ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION DEVELOPMENT AMONG INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
Taking into account the significance of strategies, few studies, if any, has observed the way it could benefit EFL reading classes. The present study seeks to examine the way three main reading strategies i.e. scanning, skimming, and paraphrasing will improve the performance of students in reading tasks. The sociocultural theory provided the theoretical basis for the implementation of the study. A pretest-posttest design was used as a quasi-experimental design. 60 intermediate level language learners were randomly assigned to two experimental and control groups. The results of paired-samples t-test showed that there was a positive relation between the participants' scores on reading comprehension. That is, attendance in strategy training courses increased students reading comprehension score.

Key words: reading comprehension; strategy instruction; reading strategy

1. Introduction
Learning strategies are very personal and specific ways which are applied by language learners while doing a particular task, making sense of a piece of information, focusing on a specific goal, and solving a specific problem. Willing (1988, p.7) defined a learning strategy as “a specific mental procedure for gathering, processing, associating, categorizing, rehearsing, and retrieving information or patterned skills”. Also, Brown (2000, p.113) referred to learning strategies as “battle plans” because of their variant and ever-changing nature. He maintained that learning strategies not only change from time to time, day to day, or year to year but also from a learner to another learner.

Before 1970s, it was believed that teacher and teaching material had the most important effect on language learning and the important role of learner was neglected, but in recent years, as asserted, it is confirmed that much of the responsibility for success at language learning rests with individual learners and with their ability to take advantage of opportunities to learn. So there has been a shift in focus from the teacher to learner – from exclusive focus on the improvement of teaching to an increased concern for how learners go about their learning task in a second or foreign language (Cohen 1990). Now it is believed that even with the best teachers and methods, students are the only ones who actually do the learning activity. Increased interest in student-centered learning approaches amongst language educators has led to numerous studies investigating individual language learning strategies (LLS) and their relationship to achievement in second/foreign languages. Learning strategies have received much attention in the late 1970s by the pioneering work of such researchers as Rubin and Stern. In general, findings showed that both the frequency with which learners apply language learning strategies and the type of strategies they choose are distinguishing characteristics between more successful and less successful learners. Skehan (1989) also considered language-learning strategies as one of the most important factors accounting for individual differences in language learning.

Taking into account the significance of strategies, few studies, if any, has observed the way it could benefit reading classes. Such gap will be bridged in the present study. In other words, the study will seek to examine the way three
main reading strategies i.e. scanning, skimming, and paraphrasing will improve the performance of students in reading tasks.
The sociocultural theory will provide the theoretical basis for the implementation of the present study. The given context provides a framework which establishes why strategy instruction may be helpful in reading programs.
As Lantolf maintained, sociocultural theory highlights the significance of interrelationship between our thinking system and events and practices in our life. Sequentially it can be argued that what happens in one’s life affects his mental functions. There are two main concepts within sociocultural theory, participation and mediation. Both these concepts clarify how beneficial strategy instruction is in reading comprehension classes.
The more one is involved or participates in social activities, the more changes his cognitive system will undergo.
As Lantolf, and Thorne, S. L. (2005, p. 201) explained; “participation in culturally organized practices, life-long involvement in a variety of institutions, and humans’ ubiquitous use of tools and artifacts (including language) strongly and qualitatively impact cognitive development and functioning.”
Therefore, participation is said to be the most interlocking concept within the sociocultural theory. Donato (2000) as a socioculturalist rejected the acquisition metaphor and replaced the term by the concept of participation. In addition a strong case can be made that learning would occur only and if there is participation. Learning in sociocultural theory is rather conceptualized as joint construction of knowledge in learner’s cognition in careful coordination and cooperation with teacher. To whatever degree participation opportunities increase in, learning opportunities are enhanced. The participation aim can be well implemented in reading classes by using reading strategies. That is, the use of reading strategies will increase the participation of the students with the activities.
Another key concept in sociocultural theory is “mediation,” which refers to the use of cultural tools and signs to bring about qualitative changes in thinking. According to Vygotsky (1987), what distinguish human beings from primates are the “higher psychological functions,” or “higher behaviors.” Contrary to primates that are merely equipped with some natural biological endowments, human beings through mediated activities -that is, through making use of cultural signs and tools- are able to perform higher order psychological functions.
Mediation, according to Vygotsky, can occur in three ways: through the use of some material tool, through interaction with another person, or through the use of symbols. Vygotsky also describes the three stages of mediation human child must go through as: object regulation, other regulation, and ultimately self-regulation. Again, reading strategies can provide a tool for students to manipulate the way they do the reading comprehension. Therefore, the use of this tool may help students to better comprehend a text to choose between different interpretations.
The principal objective of the present study is to make known the existence of any correlation between reading comprehension and strategy instruction. Since reading comprehension is an essential academic skill, finding ways of its improvement has been an unaltered concern in language teaching profession. One such way to promote reading comprehension might be incorporation of reading strategies to reading comprehension classes. Such teaching practice might have a rich potential to benefit students’ reading comprehension. Therefore, the study will make known the benefits of reading strategy instruction to students reading comprehension. This study will investigate the effect of reading strategies instruction on reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners.
The central purpose of this research is determining the existence of any relationship between scanning, skimming, and paraphrasing instruction and the reading comprehension ability language students. In this study the researcher will investigate the scores of students in reading comprehension test to determine whether or not it is influenced by the reading strategies instruction.
the study The following research questions lead
1. Does reading strategies instruction on scanning have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability?
2. Does reading strategies instruction on skimming have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability
3. Does reading strategies instruction on paraphrasing have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability?

2. Method
Quasi-experimental design was thought to be the most appropriate design for the present study. This study used a pretest -posttest design. Some reasons led to selection of quasi-experimental designs for this study. As it might appear true for any type of research, in any research there are some variables which cannot be manipulated. On the other hand, there are some other variables that can be manipulated. Through quasi-experimental designs,
Researchers are capable of manipulating independent variables in order to inspect the alteration in the dependent variables. Such researching genre permits researchers to rebuff the intervention of other redundant variables and to easily take control of the alterations in the variance of the independent variables. The present investigation was an attempt to manipulate students skimming and scanning, paraphrasing awareness (the independent variable) through different types of treatment for control and experimental group. Subsequent to this treatment, students’ reading test performance was tested using standardized reading tests. The procedure for the pre-tests, post-tests, and treatments of control and experimental groups are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre-test: Administering a reading test requiring all reading skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Treatment: Teaching scanning strategy and doing related exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Treatment: Teaching skimming strategy and doing related exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Treatment: Teaching paraphrasing strategy and doing related exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Treatment: Reviewing scanning, skimming, and paraphrasing strategies and doing related exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Post-test: Administering a reading test immediately after the course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Design of the Study for Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre-test: Administering a reading test requiring all reading skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Treatment: Teaching reading skill as teacher does regularly (the teacher received no instruction on how to teach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Treatment: Teaching reading skill as teacher does regularly (the teacher received no instruction on how to teach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Treatment: Teaching reading skill as teacher does regularly (the teacher received no instruction on how to teach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Treatment: Teaching reading skill as teacher does regularly (the teacher received no instruction on how to teach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Post-test1: Administering a reading test immediately after the course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1. Participants

Intermediate level English language learners of Mashahir Language Institute were chosen as the participants of this study. Based on the objectives, research questions, and the hypotheses of the study, purposive sampling was used in order to select participants of the study. The selected students were finally sampled based on their scores on a TOEFL test concerning reading ability comprehension. Totally, 60 intermediate level language learners were selected out of 100 intermediate level students of the institute using Testing of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). These students were randomly assigned to two experimental and control groups. That is, 30 students were located in the class experimental group and 30 other in the control group. All these participants were female students. The rationale for choosing female students was the fact that gender might in rare cases operate as an intervening variable and impact our dependent variable (students’ Reading ability). In addition, all the participants were at the same level of proficiency, that is, they were all intermediate students. Their level of proficiency was controlled because highly proficient students might exhibit good performances regardless of their awareness of skimming/scanning strategies. Besides to the point that they all belonged to intermediate levels of the institute, a reading section of a Testing of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam was administered to them and all outlier cases were eliminated from the study. In addition to their gender and level of proficiency, they owned the same native language and received equal amount and type and length of instruction during the treatment phase. All the students were young learners who had close age range. The age of the students ranged from 17 to 22. Most of the students were 20 years old. Therefore, as far as possible a group of homogeneous language students were investigated for the present project.
2.2. Instruments
2.2.1. TOEFL proficiency test.
Reading section of a standard TOEFL IBT exam was used to determine the proficiency of students in reading comprehension. TOEFL test was the first instrument used in this study. The given test was taken from ETS Practice Sets for the TOEFL IBT. The Reading Comprehension section of this test contained two reading passages and some related questions followed the passages. The questions were mainly about details which were declared or implied in the passage and about some other particular words in the texts. Since most English vocabularies have more than one meaning, it is essential to have in mind that such questions are related to the meaning of a phrase or vocabulary in the context of the text.

2.2.2. Materials for teaching reading strategies.
Some strategy instruction materials were also used to allow experimental group to work on their reading ability in this study. These strategy instruction materials had lots of fruitful activities which were employed while teaching skimming, scanning and paraphrasing strategies for the students of experimental group. An interesting feature of these materials was that they provided some useful exercises for the students to work on these strategies like timed reading or pre-reading. Timed reading activities are believed to be fruitful in improving skimming and pre reading activities promote scanning ability. The materials also offered useful exercises for improving the speed of skimming and scanning. These materials were Study Zone, FlashReading, and UEFAP. These materials are elaborated below.

2.2.2.1. The Studyzone
The Study Zone was first designed at the University of Victoria for the students of the English Language Centre (ELC). The language teachers of the ELC created the English-language lessons and practice exercises themselves. Language learners of all level can make use of the exercises in but in fact, the program is designed to be used by adult English-language students. The Study Zone (see appendix B) introduces the program as “a homework-assistance program for elementary through high school students. The program is offered as a free service to students, grades K-12, in our libraries. Students can study, do homework and get help with their questions.”

2.2.2.2 FlashReading.
FlashReading was originally designed from the techniques of Speed reading and photo reading. The ideas from Speed reading and photo reading were mixed with some issues from Neuro-linguistic programming, Hypnotherapy, and accelerated learning. Flashreading™ promotes reading speeds in a very short period of time. Flashreading draws reading to a higher level and involves the whole of cognitive mechanisms. An online training institute describes FlashReading as below.
Flash Reading will improve your memory and sharpen concentration, increase your productivity, enhance your intuition and develop your true potential, create more time in your day..... By Learning to Flashread, you will be able to get through information many times faster than (cic) you do now, and at a level of comprehension that you require. In fact, the process of Flash reading allows you to consciously understand more of what you read than traditional reading skills. As you practise this skill further you will find that your reading skills will surprise even you. (http://womensconsortium.netai.net/1_76_Previous-Training.html).

2.2.2.3. UEFAP.
UEFAP is a famous material which offers language learning materials and exercises for higher level students. English language and educational consultants of an educational company named Andy Gillett Consulting Ltd developed the UEFAP program. UEFAP provides learning materials on writing, vocabulary, speaking, reading, listening, and some many of the components of language. It also introduces other language teaching resources which seem to be considerably resourceful in that sense.

2.3. Data Collection and Procedures
2.3.1. Pre-test
The very first set of data for the present project came from the students’ pre-test in both control and experimental groups. For pre-test, standards reading test were used. The pre-tests for both groups were the same in terms of their items and contents. This test was used to determine the level of students’ ability in reading skill. The results of the pre-test were analyzed through T-test.
2.3.2. Post-test
The results of students’ post-test in control and experimental groups were the last source of data for the present project. For post-test, also standards reading test were used. The post-tests for both groups were the same in terms of their items and contents. The results of the test were intended to illustrate the influence of treatment on students’ ability on the reading skill. The results of the post-test were first coded into SPSS and then analyzed through T-test.

2.4. Procedures
Initially, the researcher administered a reading part of a standard TOEFL exam to the intermediate students (which roughly totaled 100 female students) of the institute. After scoring the students’ TOEFL exam sheet, the researcher removed the low-achiever and high-achiever students. Totally, 60 intermediate level language learners were selected. The researcher randomly assigned these students to two experimental and control group. That is, 30 students were located in the class called experimental group and 30 other in the class of control group. The students of these two groups were almost homogeneous in terms of their same level of proficiency, gender, and native language, length of maintaining with the treatment, and amount and type of instruction.

After the sample participants of the study were selected, thirty students were randomly directed to control group and thirty other were assigned to experimental group. Control group received ordinary reading instruction. That is, the teacher was not instructed on how to teach in this reading course. Therefore, the teacher was quite self-governing in how to teach the course and he did in his regular way. The students received instruction from this teacher four consecutive sessions and did lots of related exercise. Each control group lasted for three hours. In addition, where needed, the researcher provided the teacher with materials to touch up on issues related to reading exercises. After finishing the course (here five sessions) the students were tested through standard reading tests.

Similar procedures were used to administer to the experimental group. However, the teacher of experimental group had received some instruction on how to lead the course. That is, he was asked to devote the class to major reading strategies i.e. scanning, skimming, and paraphrasing. For experimental group, the concepts of skimming, scanning, and paraphrasing strategies were explained. In addition, some other useful materials were introduced to the students therefore they had the chance to read the pages to study more. The students relied mainly on learning the nature of these strategies and worked on reading tasks and exercises which were concerned with the skimming, scanning, and paraphrasing strategies. Flashreading, Linereading, Studyzone, and UEFAP were examples of the materials which provided reading exercises on scanning, skimming and paraphrasing for the experimental group.

In the first session all the sixty students sit a reading exam which required overall reading skill. However, students of the control group sit the test in their own class and students of experimental group sit in theirs. Through the second to forth session the participants of experimental groups were taught scanning, skimming, and paraphrasing strategies and were asked to do some related exercises. Control group received ordinary training on reading skill.

Different materials were used for to allow experimental group to work on their reading ability in this study. The used materials corresponded to the expected reading level of the participants. These materials consisted of some texts with comprehension questions related to each text. The intervention procedures were as follows: The exercises made the students work on the text. Skimming exercises were the first exercises students had to deal with. In skimming exercises students were provided with several minutes to read the text and to figure out the main idea. Later, they were asked to answer multiple-choice questions concerning some general ideas on the text. Thus, after the students read the instructions, they were awarded with enough time to read over the text which was displayed for them. Subsequent to skimming exercises, scanning exercises were displayed for the students. Students had only some minutes to review the text which they were provided with. Contrary to skimming exercises, scanning exercises required the students to provide answers for much more detailed multiple-choice questions. Studyzone was an example of the material which provided reading exercises on scanning. UEFAP was another example of the materials which was used to teach skimming, scanning, and paraphrasing strategies for students.

In the fifth session, students of experimental groups were busy with reviewing scanning, skimming, and paraphrasing strategies and doing related exercises. Students of control group reviewed ordinary reading instruction for four sessions. And their course finished at the same time as the course of experimental group finished. After the treatment was over, students took a post-test. Not unlike the pre-test, the students in the control group and students of experimental group took a reading comprehension test. After administering the post-test, the test papers (for both control and experimental groups) were scored. And the numerical data from the test scores comprised the raw data for the analytical examinations of the present research.
2.5. Data Analysis
The study only utilized quantitative data. That is, the study only dealt with numerical data which were analyzed using SPSS software. The quantitative data of the study were first coded into SPSS and then were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analyses were applied to present a concise depiction of the frequencies and percentages of the whole data. Meanwhile, inferential statistics was meant to allow further elucidation of the quantitative data. More specifically, one-sample $T$-test was conducted to illustrate the relations between the variables of the study.

In the experimental group students’ score were checked before and after implementing strategy instruction. In pre-test, the students’ reading ability scores were specified. After the treatment, the participants’ score were calculated. The means of scores were compared through $T$-test. $T$-test analysis was applied because it is more appropriate for indicating the amount of differences between these variables. The results of both groups were set and organized in a table. The raw data of each group were separately coded and entered into SPSS and the $T$-test was calculated. Then means of experimental group were calculated against the means of control group’s results to see if there was any difference between them after the treatment. It’s noteworthy that the greater the amount in experimental group compared to the amount in control group means the existence of strong evidence that the average of the experimental group has significantly improved.

Table 3. The frequency and percentage of participants with regards to their gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. The frequency and percentage of participants with regards to their gender.

The descriptive results showed that out of 60 participants, 29 (48.3%) were male and 31 (51.7%) were female.

Table 4. The frequency and percentage of participants with regards to group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>group</th>
<th>percent</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The descriptive results showed that out of 60 participants, 30 (50.00%) were placed in control group and 30 (50.00%) were placed in experimental group.

An essential criterion for a research data is its reliability. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was conducted to calculate the internal consistency reliability of the data. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient is a figure ranging between zero and +1. Different disciplines may prefer different figures. However, within language education research, 0.70 is preferable. As Dornyei (2003) maintained in applied linguistics research “we should aim at reliability coefficients in excess of 0.70.” Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for the data collected in this research, which was done by the SPSS software. The internal consistency reliability of questionnaire was 0.92.

2.6. Inferential analyses of the hypotheses
2.6.1. One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the test score
So far a descriptive tabulation of the score of participants in control and experimental groups was presented. Now, we need to examine the differences between the means of scores in two groups. To examine the differences between the means of scores in two groups, we need to conduct paired-samples t-test and independent-samples t-test. Before conducting these two types of t-test, we have to abide to a necessary condition of t-test. This condition necessitates that the data (in this case, pre- and post-test scores of control and experimental groups) be normally distributed. Therefore, it is compulsory to certify that the data have normal distribution. For this purpose, one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was carried out for pre- and post-test scores of control and experimental groups. (See Table 4.4 for the results).

Table 5. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for normal distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretest</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st posttest</td>
<td>0.667</td>
<td>0.726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd posttest</td>
<td>0.266</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd posttest</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 presents the Kolmogorov-Smirnov values for the scores of control and experimental groups. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov is based on P value. Since p values of all the scores are higher than .05, therefore the null
hypothesis is accepted. H0 means that all the data are normally distributed. Technically, all possible values of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z must be in the range of 1.96 and -1.96. Considering the fact that all the data numerical data of the two control group reside in the given compulsory range, all the scores have normal distribution. Since the scores are normal, t-test can be conducted to answer the research questions.

2.6.2. Certifying the proficiency homogeneity of two groups

Table 6. Independent-samples t-test of reading comprehension scores of control and experimental groups on pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pretest scores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45/50</td>
<td>5/981</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>0/179</td>
<td>0.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45/33</td>
<td>7/411</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.924</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the pretest scores of control and experimental groups. The calculations showed that the means of scores of control group was higher than the means of experimental group. However, there was not a significant difference in the means of scores of control group (M=45.50, SD=5.9) and the means of scores of experimental groups (M=45.33, SD=7.4), t (58) = 0.096, p = 0.92. That is to say, the null hypothesis (H0) is confirmed. Therefore, these results suggest that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of control and experimental groups on pre-tests.

2.6.3. Null Hypothesis 1

Reading strategies instruction on scanning does not have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability.

Table 7. Independent-samples t-test of reading comprehension scores of control and experimental groups on first posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First posttest (after skimming instruction)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46/27</td>
<td>6/164</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>0/005</td>
<td>-11/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>71/17</td>
<td>10/64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the first posttest scores of control and experimental groups. The calculations showed that the means of scores of experimental group was higher than the means of control group. Therefore, there was not a significant difference in the means of scores of control group (M=46.27, SD=6.16) and the means of scores of experimental groups (M=71.17, SD=10.64), t (58) = -11.09, p = 0.000. That is to say, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Therefore, these results suggest that the mean scores of experimental group which received scanning instruction was significantly higher than the mean scores of control group.
Table 8. Paired samples t-test of pre-test and first post-test scores of experimental group on reading test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First post test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45.33</td>
<td>7.411</td>
<td>0/116</td>
<td>-18/15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>81/10</td>
<td>8.759</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the means of scores of experimental group on pretest and first posttest. There was a statistically significant increase in students' reading comprehension scores from pre-test ($M=45.33$, $SD=7.41$) to first post-test ($M=81.10$, $SD=8.75$), $t$ (29) = -18.15, $p = .000$. Therefore, H0 is rejected. In other words, scanning instruction considerably promoted students' reading comprehension scores.

2.6.4 Null Hypothesis 2
Reading strategies instruction on skimming does not have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability.

Table 9. Independent-samples t-test of reading comprehension scores of control and experimental groups on second posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second post test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48.57</td>
<td>5.131</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>0/001</td>
<td>-13/82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>78.37</td>
<td>10.64</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the first posttest scores of control and experimental groups. The calculations showed that the means of scores of experimental group was higher than the means of control group. Therefore, there was not a significant difference in the means of scores of control group ($M=48.57$, $SD=5.13$) and the means of scores of experimental groups ($M=78.37$, $SD=10.64$), $t$ (58) = -13.82, $p = 0.000$. That is to say, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Therefore, these results suggest that the mean scores of experimental group which received skimming instruction was significantly higher than the mean scores of control group.

Table 10. Paired samples t-test of pre-test and second post-test scores of experimental group on reading test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>second post test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45.33</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>0/301</td>
<td>-19/56</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>82/33</td>
<td>9.757</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A paired-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the means of scores of experimental group on pretest and second posttest. There was a statistically significant increase in students’ reading comprehension scores from pretest \((M=45.33, SD=7.41)\) to second post-test \((M=82.33, SD=9.75)\), \(t (29) = -19.56, p = .000\). Therefore, \(H_0\) is rejected. In other words, skimming instruction considerably promoted students’ reading comprehension scores.

### 2.6.5. Null Hypothesis 3

Reading strategies instruction on paraphrasing does not have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability.

#### Table 11. Independent-samples t-test of reading comprehension scores of control and experimental groups on third posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>third post test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48/43</td>
<td>6/089</td>
<td>11.03</td>
<td>0/003</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0/000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>83/77</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the first posttest scores of control and experimental groups. The calculations showed that the means of scores of experimental group was higher than the means of control group. Therefore, there was not a significant difference in the means of scores of control group \((M=48.43, SD=6.08)\) and the means of scores of experimental groups \((M=83.77, SD=10.25)\), \(t (58) = -16.23, p = 0.000. \) That is to say, the null hypothesis \((H_0)\) is rejected. Therefore, these results suggest that the mean scores of experimental group which received paraphrasing instruction was significantly higher than the mean scores of control group.

#### Table 12. paired samples t-test of pre-test and third post-test scores of experimental group on reading test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third post test</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45.33</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>0/059</td>
<td>-18/23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0/000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>83/77</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the means of scores of experimental group on pretest and third posttest. There was a statistically significant increase in students’ reading comprehension scores from pre-test \((M=45.33, SD=7.41)\) to third post-test \((M=83.77, SD=10.25)\), \(t (29) = -18.23, p = .000\). Therefore, \(H_0\) is rejected. In other words, paraphrasing instruction considerably promoted students’ reading comprehension scores.

#### 3.Discussion

Reading comprehension is one of useful and difficult language skills because of all those complex processes and procedures it requires. Reading is totally different from innately natural processes of speaking and listening skills of the first language since it does not come for free (Crabe, 2006). Considering the significance of Reading comprehension, the study underway was conducted by observing the effect of strategy training on students Reading comprehension ability through pre-experimental design. In fact, the focus of study was to investigate the relationship between the strategy training and students Reading comprehension ability. After the tests were over,
the reading comprehension scores of the students were compared against those of control group using SPSS software. More particularly, a paired-samples t-test was computed to assess whether or not there is a relation between success in reading comprehension test and strategy training. The results of paired-samples t-test showed that there was a positive relation between the participants' scores on reading comprehension. That is, attendance in strategy training courses increased students reading comprehension score.

Pedagogical Implications
Promoting language teaching and learning opportunities is one of the principal objectives for language teaching educators. The scientific experiments are one of the major sources through which language teaching has developed. All scholars of the field have attempted to award their share of contribution. Unexceptionally, the present investigation will offer some contributions to the field. These contributions of this research will be introduced here in the form of two major implications for language teaching contexts.

First, strategy instruction remarkably promoted students' reading comprehension score. Although students received such instruction for only a limited period of time, their achievements were surprisingly noticeable. Such finding demands, language teaching institutions of Iran to include abundance of strategy instruction in their curricula. Such instruction has to be offered with the purpose of raising Iranian students reading comprehension ability. Consequently, these results offer some applicable suggestions for reading comprehension instruction to be maximally beneficial.

Second, the findings of the present enquiry put forward proof in favor of offering strategy instruction. In terms of strategy instruction, there were three types of strategies in the study. It was uncovered that all three types of strategies. Each of these strategies individually improved students reading comprehension scores. However, it was observed that the more strategies they learn the higher scores they receive. On the other hand, all such achievement may not be directly associated with the strategy instruction. Even it can be claimed that strategy instruction only motivates students into doing the test confidently.

One of the major calls of the present study is to encourage language institutions to rely more on strategy instruction in their everyday teachings. Most language institutions in Iran place only a minute time for strategy instruction. Unfortunately, classrooms are well bereft of presence of this useful language aspect. Although great care and attention were exercised during doing the present research, some shortcomings of it were totally inevitable. Some of the limitations were because of the lack of facilities; some were due to lack of time, and some other due to the issue of impracticality. there have been some issues which required further considerations in here.

The present study was limited to examining the performance of students in some classes. That is, attendance in strategy instruction, there were three types of strategies in the study. It was uncovered that all three types of strategies. Each of these strategies individually improved students reading comprehension scores. However, it was observed that the more strategies they learn the higher scores they receive. On the other hand, all such achievement may not be directly associated with the strategy instruction. Even it can be claimed that strategy instruction only motivates students into doing the test confidently.

The present study was limited to examining the performance of students in some classes. That is, attendance in strategy instruction, there were three types of strategies in the study. It was uncovered that all three types of strategies. Each of these strategies individually improved students reading comprehension scores. However, it was observed that the more strategies they learn the higher scores they receive. On the other hand, all such achievement may not be directly associated with the strategy instruction. Even it can be claimed that strategy instruction only motivates students into doing the test confidently.

Another issue is that the participants of the study were both female male students. Therefore, it might be a tentative assumption if we try to generalize the findings to the whole language learning population. The fact is that gender might have impact in students' Reading comprehension and strategy awareness.

A similar issue is the proficiency level of the students which might bias the results. The present research used intermediate level students and reached at presents results.

The present research focused only on examining the impact of strategy instruction on students' reading comprehension score. In fact, Reading comprehension is only a minute segment of a whole language skills and aspects.

The study was limited to examining the performance of students in some classes. That is, the effect of strategy instruction on students' Reading comprehension was only considered in terms of their test achievements.

Suggestions for Further Research
Some of the above-mentioned limitations can be resolved through further research. Therefore, future research suggestions here mainly aim to do away with the limitations of this project. In other words, those limitations were considered as so because they were not touched upon in this study. Therefore, future research will be persuaded to deal with those shortcomings. Future research suggestions are as below:

Some other studies are needed to be carried out to address the impact of strategy instruction on other language skills and aspects. Like listening, writing, strategies, communication skills, etc.
It will be more reasonable to conduct a large-scale version of this study using data from language institutes in provinces of Iran. Such projects will be certainly conferred of higher degree of external validity. To achieve a more comprehensive view concerning the relationship reading comprehension scores and strategy instruction, some other studies are needed to cater for the students and teachers’ perceptions of the relationship between reading comprehension scores and strategy instruction. In addition, some other studies are needed to examine students’ motivations while doing reading comprehension test if they attend strategy instruction. Or generally, experiments need to conduct to more specifically deal with students and teachers’ overall attitudes toward the relationship between reading comprehension scores and strategy instruction. Another parallel study using students of other levels of proficiency may produce different results than those produced here. Therefore, other researchers are encouraged to replicate the present research with students of different proficiency levels as well. Furthermore, some other studies need to investigate the impact of strategy instruction on other language skills and aspects in Iranian context. In addition, some other studies need to be projected to propose a detailed account of what reading comprehension aspects are improved through strategy instruction courses. Therefore, some qualitative studies are required to cater for the descriptive effects of strategy instruction on reading comprehension.

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A CROSS CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF NEWSPAPERS HEADLINES ON IRAN AND 5+1’S Geneva DEAL IN TERMS OF ATTITUDINAL FEATURES

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ABSTRACT  
Language is a means for expressing the addressee’s opinion on people, things, situations and events. There are meanings associated with opinion, viewed as resources of evaluation or appraisal in language. The Appraisal theory represents a classification which encompasses the systems of Graduation, Attitude and Engagement. Attitude, which is one kind of appraisal resources, plays a fundamental role in the expression of interpersonal meanings in language. Therefore, attitude deals with a way via which one behaves towards someone or in a situation, in particular, when this indicates how someone feels. Although they have received a fundamental importance in many recent studies, not all the aspects and features of attitude have been investigated in different fields of studies. After the big historical deal between Iran and 5+1 on Iran’s nuclear issue, there have been different attitudes towards this deal. For the purpose of this study, 15 headlines from New York Times (An American Newspaper), and 15 headlines from Iran Daily (an Iranian newspapers) which were published after 24th of November, 2013 were selected randomly, and analyzed with regard to Martin and White’s (2005) APPRAISAL system. The targeted headlines were analyzed based on attitudinal features of affect, judgment and appreciation to find the probable differences between the two corpora about Iran and 5+1 nuclear deal. We found that both the Iranian and American newspaper headlines focused on positive appraisals of the nuclear deal between Iran and 5+1.

KEY WORDS: Appraisal, Attitude, Evaluation, Geneva Deal, Headline

1. Introduction
In Appraisal Framework which is presented by Martin and his colleagues, attitude is concerned with values through which individuals give judgments and associate emotional/affectual responses with participants and processes (White, 2001). The concepts of Attitude, Engagement and Graduation constitute the Appraisal Framework in language. Appraisal Framework is an approach for exploring, explaining and describing the way language is used for evaluation, adoption of stance, construction of textual persona and arrangement of interpersonal relationships and positions (White, 2005). In the current article, Attitude is a label which is applied to represent all the attitudinal meanings proposed in the Appraisal Framework, Attitude by itself is categorized into three sub-sections, which are termed as Affect, Judgment and Appreciation. Affect is about characterizing phenomena and events with regard to judgment, emotion, and evaluating human behavior towards the social norms and standards. The term Appreciation deals with evaluating objects and products and events, instead of human behavior, based on aesthetic standards, principles and other systems bearing social value (White, 2001). Therefore, it explores how addressees give judgments on addressee, their utterances, material objects, events, and related circumstances, and accordingly makes association with those who share these views and distance themselves from those who fail to do so. It examines how individuals’ attitudes, judgments and emotive responses are explicitly displayed in texts and how they can be more indirectly implied, presupposed or assumed. Furthermore, it examines how representation of such attitudes and judgments can be carefully managed in order to take into consideration the ever-present probability of challenge or contradiction from those who hold contrasting...
views. In sum, Appraisal Framework is a system of interpersonal meanings. Addressers/ addressees use the resources of Appraisal to negotiate their social relationships, by stating their listeners/readers how they feel about things, people, and events, in other words, what attitudes they possess. It provides us an analytical tool to understand the issues related to evaluative language and to the negotiation of intersubjective positions. Evaluation can be studies by virtue of the system of evaluative lexis or phrases which appear to express speaker’s or writer’s favorable or unfavorable, agreeable or disagreeable opinion. The pioneer of this approach in the study of evaluation is Martin. His own “overall system of choices for describing this area of meaning potential is called [appraisal]” (Editors’ Introduction to Martin, 2000, p.142). In studying appraisal the focus is on the lexical choices, but it does not necessarily convey the meaning that appraisal is a mechanical action, but rather “it receives full value not only as a central aspect of evaluation but also a fundamental part of the meaning negotiation that is at the heart of all communication” (Editors’ introduction to Martin, 2000, p. 143). In the study of evaluation, the concept of appraisal has different dimensions; it includes three different, yet related systems, which are the “resources for modalizing, amplifying, reacting emotionally (affect), judging (judgment) and evaluating aesthetically (appreciation)” (Martin, 1995, p.28). In brief, Martin’s framework for the study of evaluation is the collection of the three abovementioned resources under the title of appraisal. However, another model has been recently developed for the study of evaluation that contradicts Martin’s Model, Bednarek’s recent work confines the concept of evaluation, supposing that “affect should not be considered a “type” of evaluation” (Bednarek, 2006, p.20). She holds that “even though evaluation deals with expression of opinion, the term affect is greatly used to talk about the expression of emotions and feelings” (Bednarek, 2006, p. 19). There are two reasons which appear to dispute this suggestion. First, opinion, being the expression of evaluation, is often affected by individuals’ emotion and feelings, turning out as two sources of affect, hence, they are overlapped. Second, she views that affect should not be treated as a kind of evaluation, but she does not determine under what other super-ordinate affect has to be studied. Since the question is unanswered, and other writers approve Martin’s category (see Hunston and Thompson, 2000, Thompson 2004, p.76, White & Martin, 2005, p.13 and Wagner, 2000, p. 17), affect and the two other systems (judgment and appreciation) of appraisal - Martin’s model for the study of evaluation – will be subject to question in the present study.

2. Review of the Related Literature
2.1. CDA of Media (Newspapers)
Media is an important discourse domain to which CDA has been applied. There are different researches being carried out on media discourse as Dijk (1991) has worked on the roles of news reports in ethnic relation, McGregor (2003) has worked on the role of news reports on dominant forces of society, Behnam and Moshtagi ( 2008) have referred to the existence of a biased reporting arising from the particular world-view of the papers, amounting to legitimation or de-legitimation of the Iran nuclear program, and Kress (1990) has manifested the application of particular ideological discursive structure in ideological system. Newspapers play a leading role in creating discourse on the statements of national and international prominent politicians. Newspaper editors try to build up the ideologies of what is talked about and in which manner (Henry &Tentor 2002 as cited in Taiwo). “Ideology is manifested in many fields with different, but through overlapping shades of meaning” (ibid p.221). Hence, newspapers stand as a source of imposition power in a society. Not only do the news stories work for shaping ideologies, but also headlines appear as a notable means for attraction to the readers. According to Sheyholislami (2001), themes and topics are realized in the headlines and lead paragraphs. Dijk (1998) maintains that headlines reveal the unity of discourse and are a source of information which is easily memorized by the reader. He argues that the readers who keep their own beliefs and ideas generally “adopt these subjective media definitions of what is important information about an event” (p.248). The purpose of CDA is to discover the meanings which are hidden and unstated in the discourse of newspapers. There are certain dispositions used in the language which are closely related to the social positions of those users. Kress (1990) states that the defined statements themselves express and are organized by a specific ideology.

2.2. Newspapers Headlines
Develotee and Rechniewski (2001) are of the view that newspapers headlines reveal the social, cultural and national identities, and they are usually the focus of audience more than the news articles. Their impact on readers is because of some certain linguistic features and characteristics which make them eye-catching, memorable and effective. According to Taiwo (2004), editors make efforts to use news headlines to arouse and stimulate the readers using attractive phrases, emotive vocabulary and rhetorical and graphological devices. Claude (1980), as cited in
Develotee and Rechneiwski (2001), views that newspaper headlines express the content, orientation and perspective of the readers very briefly.

There are certain presuppositions in the headlines which are expected from the reader to understand, and any person who is not familiar with the field of cultural references will not be able to decode the messages in them. Taiwo (2004) classified news headlines in terms of thematic and surface structures. Themes can be different from each other based on religious crises, various issues, politics, education, and labor matters. He classifies headlines into surface structure as plain headlines, speech as headlines, with pointer and question as headlines. There are certain linguistic features of newspaper headlines. As Develotee and Rechneiwski (2001) state, Mardh (1980) carried out a very boring study of the typical features of the headlines of English newspapers. The omission of articles, verbs, and auxiliaries, nominalizations, adverbial headlines, usage of short words, use of alliteration are certain features pointed out by him. According to Olowe (1993), different linguistic features and devices are represented in news headlines to shape ideologies in a hidden way. These devices are thematicization, passivization, presupposition and nominalization. As Huckin (1997) pointed out, presupposition takes some certain ideas for granted so that there can be no other choice.

2.3. Appraisal System

The Appraisal Framework has grown out of the functional perspective in linguistics. Functional grammar considers language as having three metafunctions, including ideational, interpersonal and textual. The interpersonal metafunction deals with interaction between the addresser and addressee in the discourse situation and with the addresser's attitude toward what he or she speaks or writes about mood, modality and key as major exponents of interpersonal meaning. Halliday, in his *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, stated the existence of other means of realizing interpersonal meaning. By emphasizing the semantics of evaluation, the Appraisal Framework has opened up a new and interesting area of Interpersonal meanings. Martin, in this framework, discusses the evaluation system in language communication, i.e. how to use language to express emotion, ethics and aesthetic value. This appraisal model is multidimensional, covering 3 kinds of semantic resources. They are *Attitude* which is the expression of feelings, *Engagement* which is the sourcing of attitudes and negotiation of heteroglossic diversity and *Graduation* which is the scaling of interpersonal meaning or for sharpening/blurring the focus of value relationships. It can be stated that each system has its own sub-systems for the writer or speaker to make semantic choices. *Attitude* refers to “our feelings, including emotional reactions, judgments of behavior and evaluation of things” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 35). The system of Attitude provides the main resource for evaluation, adopts stances, constructs textual personas and manage interpersonal positioning and relationships. Graduation and Engagement, the other two systems, are considered attendant systems contributing to the core one and may function simultaneously. The system of Graduation encompasses those resources which strengthen or weaken attitude, resources for “adjusting the volume” of items (Martin & Rose, 2003, p.41). Graduation is divided, in turn, into Force (the strengthening or weakening of the degree of evaluation) and Focus (the sharpening or softening of boundaries between categories in the context of non-gradable items). Figure 1 illustrates the main systems through which speakers construct appraisal.
2.3.1. Affect
As the first system of attitude, affect is realized basically through verbs of emotion and concerned with the appraiser's emotional states. In other words, an author can express attitude towards some phenomenon or events by indicating how that phenomenon affected them emotionally and appraising something in affectual terms. Affect occurs as either positive or negative categories. Under Affect, we are concerned with emotions, with positive and negative emotional responses and dispositions. Affectual positioning may be indicated,

- Through verbs of emotion (Mental Processes) such as to love/to hate, to frighten/to reassure, to interest/to bore, to enrage/to placate - (Your help pleases me, I hate candy.)
- Through adverbs (typically Circumstances of Manner) such as happily/sadly (Sadly the government has decided to abandon its commitment to the comprehensive school system.)
- Through adjectives of emotion happy/sad, worried/confident, angry/pleased, keen/uninterested - (I'm sad you've decided to do this, I'm happy he's joining the group, he's proud of his achievements, She's frightened of mice, etc.),
- Through nominalisation (the turning of verbs and adjectives into nouns) joy/despair, confidence/insecurity (His fear was obvious to all, I was overcome with joy).

2.3.2. Judgment
Judgment is concerned with attitudinal evaluation in which human behavior is negatively or positively assessed by some social norms. These norms include rules, conventions, social acceptability or expectations and systems of value. Author's social position and ethics can be discovered by their judging behaviors in the samples. There is a difference between social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem is categories of normality, capacity and tenacity, and social sanction is categories of veracity and propriety. Judgment refers to attitudinal evaluation in which human behavior is negatively or positively assessed by some set of social norms including conventions, rules, social acceptability or expectations and systems of value. “With judgment, we move into the region of meaning construing our attitudes to people and the way they behave – their behavior” (Martin and White, 2005, p.52). The system of judgment is social-cultural specific; “it may construe someone’s behavior in positive or negative terms within a framework of social and ethical values” (Painter, 2003, p. 89). When we judge individuals, we assess the extent to which they are unusual “normality”, to what extent they are capable “capacity”, and to what extent they are resolute “tenacity”. The three dimensions together are the criteria for the judgment of social esteem. Moreover, we can also judge to which extent people are faithful “veracity” and which extent they are ethical “propriety”. Veracity and propriety stand for the judgment of social sanction (Martin and White, 2005, p.52). The following table illustrates all the types and sub-types of judgment with reference to the concepts of being positive and/or negative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of judgment</th>
<th>Sub-types</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social esteem</td>
<td>Normality</td>
<td>fortunate</td>
<td>unfortunate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>powerful</td>
<td>weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tenacity</td>
<td>dependable</td>
<td>unreliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sanction</td>
<td>Veracity</td>
<td>honest</td>
<td>dishonest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Propriety</td>
<td>moral</td>
<td>immoral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social esteem and social sanction are two different dimensions of human behavior and character. Social esteem “involves admiration and criticism” (Martin, 2000, p.156), that is, positive and negative evaluations. Social sanction, however, “involves praise and condemnation” (Martin, 2000, p.156), again positive and negative evaluations. The first one mostly affects “self” rather than others. The second, on the other hand, affects the relationship between a person and the people around him/her. For example, somebody is lucky or unfortunate.
which are two social esteem characteristics that only affect the person evaluated. Another person is kind or deceitful which are two social sanction characteristics that affect the relationship between a person and the people around him/her by treating them kindly or deceiving them. Social sanction seems to be more serious than social esteem in the sense that it (social sanction) “is more often codified in writing, as edicts, decree, rules, regulations and laws about how to behave... with penalties and punishments as levers against those not complying with the code” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 52). On the other hand, social esteem, “tends to be policed in the oral culture, through chat, gossip, jokes and stories of various kinds” (Martin & White, 2005, p.52).

2.3.3. Appreciation
It contains values expressing both aesthetic and non-aesthetic categories of social valuation. In addition, it includes meanings such as significance and harmfulness. It evaluates natural objects, manufactured objects, as well as more abstract texts such as plans and policies. Appreciation can be subdivided into positive and negative values. It is associated with the evaluation of things, events and state of affairs. It can be defined as those “evaluations which are concerned with positive and negative assessments of objects, artifacts, processes and states of affairs rather than with human behavior” (White, 2001, p.3). Also, Appreciation can be sub-divided as to whether they catch our attention or please us “reaction”, whether they are balanced or complex “composition” and whether they are innovative, authentic, timely, etc. “valuation” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 56). For the purpose of ease, Martin (2000,p.160) sets some questions to differentiate between the types and sub-types of appreciation. The variable of reaction of impact is to answer the question: “Does something grab me?”, but for reaction of quality, it is to answer the question “do I like something?” Considering composition of balanced, it is to answer the question “does something hang together?” For the complexity composition, “is it hard to follow something?” Finally, for valuation, it is to answer the question “is something valuable?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Types and Sub-types of Appreciation (adapted from Martin 2000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>valuation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three variables of appreciation and their sub-types have been roughly generally sort out in respect of their notion of being positive and negative. Nevertheless, to decide on the positive and negative notions of evaluations, especially “valuation” “variable”, is a matter of opinion since “the valuation of things depends so much on our institutional focus” (Martin and White, 2005,p.57). Regarding reaction variable of appreciation, Martin argues that it has strong relationships to affect, even at the level of derivationally related lexes (Martin and White, 2005, p. 57) because in both of them emotions and feelings are involved, but indirectly in reaction variable of appreciation.

2.4. Inscribed and Evoked Evaluation
In Evaluation, meaning is explicitly or implicitly expressed. Martin uses the term “inscribed” evaluation for the first one (i.e., explicitly expressed meaning), and “evoked” evaluation for the second (i.e., implicitly expressed meaning) (Martin, 2000, p.154). An example is given as follows:

*Barak Omaha said the decision to invade was made on ideological grounds, instead of “reasons and facts.”*

In this example, evaluation is not directly indicated, but it appears that the sentence stimulates an attitude when it is interpreted in its contextual situation which may implies that the invasion was wrong. Given that, to understand implicit evaluation, the reader or listener needs to know the context of the given situation. However,
understanding the explicit evaluation does not necessarily require the interpretation of the context because "the speaker or producer of the message may make use of explicit evaluations in the context to orientate the recipient towards an evaluative interpretation" (Ethelston, 2004, p. 11). There has been a rapidly growing interest of researches into the functioning of specific grammatical resources for interpersonal meaning. Regarding the great variety of different types of texts that constitute journalistic discourse, research on its appraisal system or attitudinal analysis of the discourse has been surprisingly inadequate.

In summary, the APPRAISAL framework is constructed upon the concept of stance. The framework is oriented into revealing the author’s attitude and the way in which texts align with a potential or real reader/listener. This framework has a complex system of resources whose orientation is towards lexicogrammatical means. This orientation of the original APPRAISAL framework towards lexicogrammar confines its probable applications because many modern texts include not only words but also elements such as images and sounds (e.g. Web texts). However, a more recent research which has been carried out on evaluative means in texts has expanded the application of this framework to units of visual design (e.g. Economou, 2009) which makes the APPRAISAL framework as one of the most complicated tools for analyzing the expression of covert attitude through the use of evaluative language.

Being comprehensive and discourse-based, this paper based on Martin and White (2005) is going to answer the following questions:

A) How is Iranian and American's attitude towards nuclear deal realized in their newspaper headlines?
B) Are there any differences between Iranian and American newspaper headlines in terms of attitudinal features towards nuclear deal?

3. Methodology
This study analyzed newspaper headlines both qualitatively and quantitatively based on Martin and White’s (2005) APPRAISAL system. It investigated how the American and Iranian newspapers revealed their attitude towards the historical nuclear deal between Iran and 5+1 countries. Appraisal Framework is an analytical approach for exploration, description and explanation of the ways a language is used to evaluate, adopt stances, construct textual personas and manage interpersonal positioning and relationships. Under the three systems of Appraisal Framework, attention was mainly paid to the application of attitude, which also encompasses three categories: affect, judgment and appreciation. No attention was paid to engagement and graduation in this article.

The three taxonomies of affect, judgment and appreciation belong to psychology and emotional world, ethics and human behavior and nonhuman behavior, respectively because newspaper headlines appeal more to psychology than to ethics and features human rather than nonhuman behavior.

Both qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques were adopted in this study. Firstly, it explored the linguistic elements that may realize attitudinal values; secondly, the evaluation of elements were collected and underlined; thirdly, these elements were analyzed and evaluated to see how they contribute to the conveyance of attitudinal position in the samples of newspaper headlines. Through the analysis, it was hoped that those interpersonal features in samples could be summarized to support or query the hypothesis.

3.1. Data
For the purpose of this study, 15 headlines from New York Times (An American Newspaper, see appendix 2), and 15 headlines from Iran Daily (an Iranian newspapers, see appendix 1) which were published after 24th of November were selected randomly. These headlines were analyzed in terms of attitudinal features of affect, appreciation and judgment. The corpus for the study was selected from the above-mentioned newspapers’ websites. Only were those headlines included which were directly related to the nuclear deal and were published after 24th of November when the nuclear deal was established between Iran and 5+1. The frequency and the kind of the attitudinal features were investigated. However, engagement and graduation were excluded from this analysis.

3.2. Data Analysis
Considering Attitude, we were concerned with those utterances which could be interpreted as indicating that some persons, events, things, situations, actions, or states of affairs were to be viewed either positively or negatively. That is to say, we classified as attitudinal any utterance which conveyed either a negative or positive assessment, or which could be interpreted as inviting the reader to supply their own negative or positive assessments. There were different ways in which attitude can be conveyed or invoked, some of which make for easier analysis and others for less easy analysis. However, the most straightforward cases include the use of individual words or phrases which openly indicated the attitudinal position was taken by the writer or speaker.
3.3. Data Analysis Procedure

We can state attitude using a great deal of grammatical structures such as nouns, verbs, modal adjuncts, and adjectives. Furthermore, it is possible to realize it both through direct attitudinal lexis (i.e., inscribed attitude) and indirectly via the expression of ideational meanings. Firstly, the evaluation of elements was collected to clearly indicate the evaluative items (or phrases); they were underlined as well as bolded. Next, these elements were analyzed and evaluated to see how they contributed to the conveyance of attitudinal position in American and Iranian newspaper headlines. The next step was to find out the patterns of appraisal resources, whether it was affect, appreciation or judgment. Final step was to decide on the contextual value - the nuclear issue between Iran and 5+1 countries - whether the evaluation was in support “For” or “Against” the deal, or the evaluation was “positive”, “negative” “neutral” and had nothing to do with nuclear deal. In some cases, there exists more than one evaluative item in the same sentence. As a result, more than one evaluated entity or proposition arises. Although an evaluative item basically includes one word, it might happen that it is viewed a unit or a phrase rather than a single word. As mentioned before, this study mainly focuses on explicit evaluation.

3.4. Results

Table 3. Frequencies and Percentages for the Main Categories of Attitude Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Iran Daily</th>
<th>New York Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judgment</td>
<td>11 (64%)</td>
<td>17 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>5 (29%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.1. The Analysis of Affect

Affect, the first system of attitude, is indicated mainly through verbs of emotion and concerned with the appraiser’s emotional states. In other words, an author can express attitude towards some phenomenon or events by indicating how that phenomenon affected them emotionally and appraising something in affectual terms. Affect occurs as either positive or negative categories. It is composed of three subsystems In/security, Dis/satisfaction and Un/security.

Example 1: Zarif is upbeat on nuclear deal implementation (non-authorial positive Affect, happiness)

Here we do have an emoter – Zarif who is said to be generally in the emotional state of being upbeaten.

Example 2: Kerry defends Iran’s nuclear deal January (non-authorial positive Affect, satisfaction)

Example 3: Iran, IAEA in talks on 2nd phase of cooperation (non-authorial positive Affect, security)

Table 4. Frequencies and Percentages for Sub-categories of Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Iran Daily</th>
<th>New York Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In/security</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un/happiness</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dis/satisfaction</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5 (27%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By appraising events in such emotional/affectual terms, the addressers invite addressees to share that emotional response, or at least to see that response as appropriate and well-motivated, or at least as understandable. When that invitation is accepted, then solidarity or sympathy between addressee and addressee will be enhanced. Once such an empathetic connection has been established, then there is the possibility that the addressee will be more open to the broader ideological aspects of the addressee’s position. When the invitation to share the emotional response is not taken up – when the affectual value is seen as inappropriate, or bizarre or dysfunctional etc. – then solidarity or sympathy will most probably be diminished and the chance of axiological concord diminished.

We can see this strategy at work in the headlines above. Generally speaking, the political headlines are hardly ever affectual. However, we have here five headlines in our corpus which are affectual. Considering the general characteristics of political headlines which are hardly ever affectual, these headlines were not written by chance and without any reasons. What is more interesting is that we have affectual headlines in just Iranian newspaper headlines, not American ones.

3.4.2. The Analysis of Judgment

Following the work of some experts (see, for example, Martin, 1995 or Martin, 2000), the concept ‘Judgment’ has been used to refer to attitudinal evaluation in which human behavior is negatively or positively assessed by reference to some set of social norms. The cases in which Judgment is explicitly pointed out, we observe words and expressions such as corrupt, virtuously, dishonest, murderous, tyrant, bully, hero, betray, obstinate, indefatigable, abuse, defraud, courageously, skilled, genius, dunce, stupidity, foolishly, eccentric, maverick (Martin, 2000). Analyzing our corpus, we have found most of the headlines judgmental in nature: Iranian Newspaper (64 %) and American newspaper (85%), respectively.

Example 4: Commander: Nuclear deal two-way street (judgment, veracity, positive)

Here, the Iranian commanders’ attitudes towards the deal are mixed. Based on their public statements, we can ascertain that the Iranian military commanders have mixed feelings about the interim nuclear agreement concluded in Geneva. On one hand, the commanders have given conditional approval to the deal and the negotiating processes. On the other hand, they have warned the negotiating parties that they will continue to monitor the diplomatic developments, that Iran’s sovereign rights must be respected, and that the United States has not proven itself to be trustworthy. Should new sanctions be imposed on Iran, or if the Western states otherwise violate the interim agreement or attempt to trample on Iran’s rights, Iran will cancel the agreement and return its nuclear program to its previous state. According to them, compliance with the agreement is a mutual issue, and should the other side go back on its promises [under the Geneva deal], the Islamic Republic of Iran will no longer feel obliged to continue cooperation.

Example 5: Accord Reached With Iran to Halt (Normality negative Judgment) Nuclear Program.

Here there is an explicit negative JUDGEMENT directed against Iran. Presupposition that Iran was doing something and the deal stopped Iran continuing it; negative JUDGEMENT attributed to Iran.

Example 6: Sanctions Eased, Iran Gets Feelers (Normality Positive Judgment) From Old Trading

‘Eased’ can certainly be seen as referring to an emotional reaction. But we notice interestingly that the emotion has been disconnected from any specific ‘emoter’ – there is no one who is actually presented as being ‘eased’. Rather, the quality of being ‘eased’ is represented as being an intrinsic quality of ‘the easiness’. Accordingly, we do not classify such formulations as examples of Affect (though they are closely related). They are actually classed as examples of judgment.

Example 7-No Guarantee’ of Final Nuclear Deal with Iran, E.U. Official Says (Judgment negative tenacity)

It shows explicit negative JUDGEMENT of the government official for introducing non-absoluteness of the deal. They assume that a final solution will be much harder to achieve than the interim deal.
Table 5. Frequencies and Percentages for Sub-categories of Judgment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-category</th>
<th>Iran Daily</th>
<th>New York Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normality</td>
<td>5 (29%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacity</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propriety</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veracity</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11 (64%)</td>
<td>17 (85%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Frequencies and Percentages for Sub-categories of Appreciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-category</th>
<th>Iran Daily</th>
<th>New York Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuation</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2 (12%)</td>
<td>4 (16%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 8 - Most Americans support (positive reaction Appreciation) Geneva agreement.

Example 9 - Elders back (positive reaction Appreciation) final nuclear deal.

Example 10 - Iran Welcomes Start of Nuclear Deal. (Positive reaction Appreciation)

3.4.3. Positive and Negative Evaluation

Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages for Positive and Negative Attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-category</th>
<th>Iran Daily</th>
<th>New York Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>16 (88%)</td>
<td>13 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>2 (12%)</td>
<td>4 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Conclusion
The objective of this article was to find out if there were major differences between the two important newspapers of the two cultures in terms of attitudinal features about Iran and 5+1 nuclear deal. The temporary deal, the most important step in a decade in the dispute over Iran’s nuclear program, went into effect as Iran halted production of medium enriched uranium and took other steps to restrain nuclear activities. In return, the West will ease some economic sanctions for at least six months, while Iran and six world powers try to negotiate a more lasting deal to assure that Iran doesn’t acquire the capability to make nuclear weapons.

Although some few differences were found between the texts of the two cultures, the similarities exceed the differences. In analyzing the texts, no major differences were found in attitudinal features.

Firstly, both the Iranian and American newspaper headlines focused on positive appraisals of the nuclear deal between Iran and 5+1, 88% and 70% for Iran Daily and New York Times, respectively. Secondly, the Iranian newspaper headlines focused more on Affect, that is, on feelings and emotions on nuclear deal which were absent in New York Times headlines. As can be seen from the table, positive attitudes were more common than negative...
attitudes in both newspaper headlines. However, American newspaper appreciated the deal more positively than Iranian Newspapers, 16 percent and 12 percent for New York Times and Iran Daily, respectively. Considering the long history of tensions in relations between Iran and the West since the 1979 Revolution, mitigation of these pending gaps, which are, to an extent, a by-product of the great trust deficit, is bound to take more than just six months; therefore, it is natural that the attitudes of both Iranian and American newspaper headlines were somehow mixed in nature.

Although the deal has been hailed by both sides, a war of words continues about who is getting better terms in both newspapers. However, one may daresay that the most important of all is the revival of a sense of understanding, cooperation and common understanding between Iran and the West after many years during which the wall of distrust and suspicion was growing between the two sides. It is worth mentioning that the attitudes of domestic newspaper can be different from those of English newspaper published by Iran such as Iran daily that was the focus of this analysis. That is, domestic and national newspapers' attitude towards the big deal may be affective, appreciative or judgmental because the historic agreement on Iran's nuclear program has been taken as good news in most domestic newspaper headlines. However, the attitudes of English newspapers of Iran was mostly judgmental; therefore, reaching a comprehensive conclusion about attitudes to the Geneva deal between Iran and 5+1 needs some more comparative and comprehensive analysis which can be the focus of another study.

REFERENCES

**Appendix A**

**Iran Daily**

1-Nuclear deal to ‘improve’ Iran’s position Jan. 14, 2014 (judgment positive, capacity)
2-Iran, IAEA in talks on 2nd phase of cooperation (non-authorial positive Affect, security) Jan. 11, 2014
3-Speaker: West must be (judgment negative Propriety) sincere (judgment, tenacity positive) in nuclear talks. Jan. 11, 2014
4-Zarif upbeat on nuclear deal implementation (non-authorial positive Affect, happiness) January 20, 2014
5-Kerry defends Iran’s nuclear deal(non-authorial positive Affect. satisfaction) January 25, 2014
6-President: Grounds prepared for final (Normality Positive Judgment) nuclear deal January 29, 2014
7-Most Americans support (positive reaction Appreciation) Geneva agreement January 29, 2014
8-President urges (judgment, tenacity positive) examining contents of nuclear deal 13 February 2014
9-Iran, P5+1 settle (affect, positive, security) technical, political differences11 January 2014
10-Elders back (positive reaction Appreciation) final (Normality Positive Judgment) nuclear deal 1 February 2014
11-China: Final nuclear deal to benefit (judgment, capacity, positive) entire (Normality Positive Judgment) Middleast 18 march 2014
12-Final nuclear deal to reestablish global interaction (Judgment, tenacity, positive) 17 April 2014
13-Commander: Nuclear deal two-way street 22 April 2014 (judgment, veracity, positive)
14-Iran, P5+1 put comprehensive agreement on anvil 21 April 2014 (Normality Positive Judgment))
15-Amano: Iran nuclear deal implemented as planned (Normality Positive Judgment) 21 April 2014

**Appendix B**

**New York Times**
1-Accord Reached With Iran to Halt (Normality negative Judgment) Nuclear Program November 23, 2013

2-Temporary (Normality negative Judgment) Nuclear Deal with Iran Takes Effect JAN. 20, 2014

3-Negotiators Put Final Touches on Iran Accord (Normality Positive Judgment) JAN. 12, 2014

4-Iran Outlines Nuclear Deal; Accepts Limit (Normality negative Judgment) JULY 14, 2014

5-Iran Welcomes Start of Nuclear Deal. JAN. 19, 2014 (appreciation, reaction, positive)

6-'No Guarantee’ of Final Nuclear Deal With Iran, E.U. Official Says MARCH 9, 2014 (Judgment negative tenacity)

7-Obama Says He CanEnvision (Judgment positive propriety) Nuclear Deal with Iran December 7, 2013.

8-Obama Signals a Shift from MilitaryMight to Diplomacy (Judgment positive veracity) 25, 2013

9-Sanctions Eased, Iran Gets Feelers (Judgment positive normality) From Old Trading Partners. JAN. 17, 2014

10-Praise in Iran All the Way to the Top, Where Efforts Reportedly Preceded a President (appreciation positive, reaction) November 24, 2013

11-Hard-Liners in Iran Offer Mild (judgment positive propriety) Praise (appreciation, reaction, positive) for Interim Nuclear Agreement December 1, 2013

12-Nuclear Accord with Iran Opens Diplomatic Doors in the Mideast (judgment, capacity, positive) November 24, 2013

13-Longer-Term (positive Appreciation, Valuation) Deal with Iran Faces Major Challenges (judgment, capacity, negative) November 24, 2013

14- Meaningful (judgment positive, tenacity) Progress (judgment, veracity positive) With Iran. April 26, 2014

15-A Step, if Modest (judgment positive propriety), Toward Slowing (judgment, negative capacity) Iran’s Weapons Capability (judgment negative capacity)... November 23, 2013
ON THE EFFECTS OF PAIR WORK ON EFL LEARNERS’ WRITING

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ABSTRACT

Although cooperative learning and pair/group work have been emphasized by SLA researchers, they have been assumed to be the same. Recently, Storch (2002, 2005), has drawn attention to the dynamic nature of pair work based on two dimensions, namely, equality and mutuality. She introduces four patterns of dyadic interactions: Collaborative, dominant/dominant, dominant/passive, and expert/novice. This study is an attempt to explore the effects of each type of pair work on EFL learners’ written output. To this end, 64 EFL learners served as the participants. Based on some observations and an interview with the teacher, the participants were randomly paired, asked to perform a writing task (as the pretest) and to record their voices. The recorded voices were transcribed and encoded in terms of the measurements of equality (time at talk, interruptions, frequency of suggestions, suggestion types, and mitigation strategies) and mutuality (the number of feedback). Based on the results of the measurements, new pairs were formed and assigned into each one of the four patterns mentioned. They worked in their respective pairs for 10 sessions. Then, they were given another writing task (as the posttest) to be performed individually. Four paired sample t-tests and one repeated measure ANOVA were conducted. The results indicated that collaborative and expert/novice pairs did significantly improve the participants’ written performance whereas dominant/dominant and dominant/passive pairs could not bring about such results. Based on the findings, it is claimed that the extent of pairs’ contribution and involvement in a dyadic interaction is more influential than any other factor when it comes to transferring knowledge from one individual to another.

Keywords: pair work, equality, mutuality, collaborative pairs

I. Introduction

The effect of interaction on learning in general and on second language acquisition in particular is elucidated by two prominent theories, namely, the sociocultural theory of mind (Vygotsky, 1978) and interaction hypothesis (Long, 1985). In the area of second language acquisition such an effect is manifested in the form of collaborative learning and pair/group work. But what is pair work?

According to Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 86), pair work refers to “an approach to teaching and learning which makes use of learners working together in small groups”. In the opinion of Carson and Nelson (1994), the value of collaborative learning and pair work is that it motivates students “to be mutually supportive, to share responsibility for thinking by jointly managing argument construction, to model and learn different thinking strategies, and to benefit from the shared expertise of the group” (p. 18). The point is that many teachers, while aware of the constructive effect of pair/group work, implement the activity in an inconclusive way. As Donato (1994) mentions, just pairing or grouping learners and giving them some tasks to perform doesn’t necessarily lead them to learning. Therefore, the nature of pair/group work and the way it functions in peer interactions should be highlighted further in L2 studies. As Storch (2002) maintains most studies just lay stress on the language that can be learnt through group/pair work but few of them address the nature of pair work and the way they interact with each other.

According to Storch (2002), dyadic interaction can be affected by two major facets: equality and mutuality. Equality refers to the “degree of control and authority over the task” and can be manifested by using/not using mitigated (polite) strategies, imperative tone, and interruptions, whereas mutuality refers to the “level of engagement and contribution” and can be manifested by the number of feedback provided (Storch, 2002, p.127).

Based on these two dimensions, she puts forward four types of dyadic interaction: The first is collaborative pair in which there is a high degree of mutuality and equality. Both partners try to solve their problems in collaboration, and a lot of feedback is provided. The second type is dominant/passive pair where the degree of equality and mutuality is low. One of the participants takes control of the interaction and gives long monologues and the other
is silent and just listens. The dominant one controls the interaction the way he/she wants, and ignores to use mitigated strategies or lower the face-threatening acts. The passive one neither agrees nor disagrees with the dominant one and feels alienated in the decision making process. The third type of pair is dominant/dominant where both participants have a high degree of equality but low level of mutuality. They have the same tendency to reign over the interaction that is why they do whatever they can to control the interaction. Both think that they have the right to hold the floor, express their views and impose their ideas at all costs. Besides, neither of them accept the other one’s suggestions (high equality), which results in competition, disagreement, and controversy (i.e., low level of mutuality).

The last type is expert/novice pair in which there is a high degree of mutuality but low level of equality. The novice is intended to be silent during the interaction and it is the expert who provides a lot of suggestions and leads the pair work (low equality). However, the expert, paying attention to the wrong tendency of the novice to be silent, makes an attempt to lower the face-threatening acts by using mitigating strategies, positive feedback to motivate the novice to contribute in the interaction.

II. Literature review

Several studies have investigated the role of collaborative learning. Honda (2011), for example, investigated the effect of creative writing by implementing four fluency oriented activities. The activity was not confined to the classroom setting as the participants could communicate with others through the internet to accomplish the task. He came into the conclusion that the participants had greatly enjoyed the activities although they found it difficult to convey their meaning in L2.

Furthermore, Shiri Aminloo (2013) studied the effect of collaborative writing on EFL learners writing ability at elementary level with two groups. In the experimental group, the participants were asked to go through the brainstorming strategy together and provide feedback to each other. In the control group, the participants had to go through the writing process alone. The results indicated that improvement in both groups from the pretest to the posttest was significant. However, the experimental group did have significantly better performance than the control group.

Besides, Biria and Jafari (2013) probed the effect of collaborative writing on the writing of EFL learners. The participants were thirty students in the control group who were asked to perform seven writing tasks in seven sessions individually and sixty students in the experimental group who were asked to accomplish the same tasks in pairs. The results demonstrated that the control group outperformed the experimental group though the difference was not statistically significant.

Al-Nafiseh (2014) explored the effect of collaborative writing on the writing of second-year English department students of King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. He utilized three techniques: questionnaires, a sample of students’ edited drafts, and teachers’ observations. He came into the conclusion that such activities provide greater chance for interaction during the class and for cooperative learning rather than competitive or individual learning. He attributed the improvement to the opportunity this activity provided learners with regarding their various choices of words, structures, and content.

Despite the positive effect of such activities on the writing skill, few studies (such as Al-Nafiseh, 2014; Biria & Jafari, 2013; Shiri Aminloo, 2013) have explored its effect of pair work and a majority of them have paid attention to some stages in the writing process, mostly brainstorming (the first stage) (Shiri Aminloo, 2013) and peer review (the last stage) in which “students review each other’s written text and make suggestions on how it could be improved” (Storch, 2005, p. 154).

Some studies have investigated the effect of applying group/pair work on the improvement of a special target structure e.g. subject-verb agreement, articles, and prepositions (Jafari & Nejad Ansari, 2012) and the socio-cognitive processes palpable in collaborative dialogues (Storch, 2005), or investigated the role of group working, rather than pair working, on writing ability (Jafari & Nejad Ansari, 2012).

Accordingly, research on the status of each member of the pair in such activities has not been sufficient and there is still need to explore more about such interaction. Inspired by Storch (2002), this study is an attempt to delve into the nature of the pair work and investigate the four patterns of dyadic interactions to answer the following research questions:

1. Does performing collaborative pair work promote Iranian EFL learners’ writing ability?
2. Does performing dominant/dominant pair work promote Iranian EFL learners’ writing ability?
3. Does performing dominant/passive pair work promote Iranian EFL learners’ writing ability?
4. Does performing expert/novice pair work promote Iranian EFL learners’ writing ability?
5. Is there any significant difference among the above mentioned models of pair work in Iranian EFL context?
III. Methodology

A. Participants

Sixty four participants whose scores were between two standard deviations below and above the mean participated in the study. They were selected from among 87 students who had been placed at the upper-intermediate level of language proficiency by a language institute. To begin with, they took part in a writing test based on the writing section of TOEFL 2004. Their writings were scored based on Jacobs et al.’s (1981, cited in Weigle, 2002) scoring profile by two teachers. A value of (α= 0.93) was obtained for the inter-rater reliability. The mean of the participants’ writing scores was 68.91 and the standard deviation was 4.69.

B. Instruments

The instruments used were two tests based on two topics taken from the written part of TOEFL (2004) and Skehan and Foster (1999). The former was administered as the pretest to pair the participants into four dyadic interaction and the latter was given as the posttest to evaluate the improvement of the participants in their writing ability.

C. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The participants were paired on the basis of Storch’s (2002) patterns of dyadic interactions. They were asked to write in pairs on a topic selected from TOEFL (2004) and to record their voices while doing the task. Two experienced teachers were asked to transcribe the recorded voices to evaluate the equality and mutuality dimensions in each pair according to the measurements of equality (time at talk, interruptions, frequency of suggestions, suggestion types, and mitigation strategies) and mutuality (the number of feedback).

They then attended a writing class for about 10 sessions during which each pair did more or less the same activities and drills. After 10 sessions, they were given a second topic taken from Skehan and Foster (1999) as the post-test. The written production of the participants was scored by two experienced English teachers based on Jacobs et al.’s (1981, cited in Weigle, 2002) scoring profile. Then, four paired t-tests were run. In the end, a repeated measured ANOVA was run to see whether the difference in the means of the pretest and posttest of these four groups were statistically significant or not.

IV. Results

In order to check the equality in each pair, the recorded voices were encoded on the measurements of equality, that is, time at talk, interruptions, frequency of the suggestions, and mitigation strategies. Table 1 indicates a summary of the analysis for the participants who fell in the moderate to low mutuality. These pairs were supposed to belong to either dominant/dominant pairs or dominant/passive pairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>TAT</th>
<th>INT</th>
<th>FOS</th>
<th>MS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td>P1/P2</td>
<td>P1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair1</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>37.74</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair2</td>
<td>24.84</td>
<td>25.70</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair3</td>
<td>33.64</td>
<td>37.88</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39.61</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair5</td>
<td>42.67</td>
<td>43.16</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair6</td>
<td>19.31</td>
<td>19.73</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair7</td>
<td>46.93</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair8</td>
<td>29.77</td>
<td>30.82</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair9</td>
<td>217.7</td>
<td>28.20</td>
<td>7.72</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair10</td>
<td>141.84</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>15.09</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair11</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>37.57</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair12</td>
<td>192.32</td>
<td>35.37</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair13</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair14</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>22.55</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair15</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pair16</td>
<td>327.6</td>
<td>56.14</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* TAT= Time At Talk; INT = INterruptions; FOS = Frequency Of Suggestions; P1 = Partner1; P2 = Partner2; P1/P2 = Partner1/Partner2
Regarding the time at talk (TAT), Table 1 indicates the number of words each partner used while doing the task in pairs. For example, partner 1 in pair 1 produced 45.9 words in each turn on average and partner 2 in pair 1 generated 37.74 words in each turn on average. The ratio of words partner 1 used in each turn to that of partner 2 is 1.22, which shows that both partners almost produced the same number of words. As Table 1 indicates, the ratios of partners’ performance in pair 1 to pair 8 are approximately 1. It means that both partners spent the same time talking while doing the task. However, these ratios suddenly increases in pair 9 to pair 16, which indicates that one of the partners utilized more words and talked more than the other one. As a result, it can be stated that one of the partners tried to gain the control of the interaction (the dominant one).

Regarding interruptions (INT), Table 2 indicates that in 42 percent of all turns partner 1 in pair 1 interrupted the other partner, while in 35 percent of all turns, partner 2 stopped partner 1 talking; however, the ratio (1.17) which is almost 1, demonstrates that both partners interrupted each other to the same extent. In pair 1 to pair 8, a lot of interruptions occurred by both partners and the ratios of their interruptions are almost 1. This shows that both partners made an attempt to stop the other partner’s talking. But, in the other pairs, one of the partners imposed plenty of interruptions on the smooth flow of interaction, while the other partner avoided interrupting the other one. The high ratios indicated in Table 4 verify this point.

Frequency of suggestions (FOS) is another influential aspect in the equality dimension. Table 2 shows that partner 1 in pair 1 made 0.57 suggestions in each turn while partner 2 made 0.49 suggestions in each turn. The ratio is 1.16 which shows that both partners made almost the same number of suggestions in each turn. The ratios for pair 1 to pair 8 are around 1 (Table 4); however, the ratios boost in pair 9 to pair 16, which indicates that one of the partners provided much more suggestions than the other one.

Regarding the mitigated (polite) strategies each partner utilized, Table 2 shows that in just 8 percent of all his suggestions, he used mitigation strategies, and in 6 percent of his suggestions, partner 2 used these strategies. It indicated that none of these partners made an attempt to use polite ways of providing suggestions. The same argument can be provided for pair 2 (2, 6), pair 3 (11, 17), pair 4 (6, 11), pair 5 (18, 14), pair 6 (10, 13), pair 7 (21, 17), and pair 8 (11, 8) as well. However, for the other pairs, the situation is a little bit different. In other pairs, one of the partners, the one who provided a lot of suggestions (partner 1 of these pairs), almost ignored these strategies; nonetheless, the other partner (partner 2 of these pairs), in spite of providing much less number of suggestions, tried to use these strategies as much as possible. The use of these strategies for each pair by partner 1 and partner 2 respectively is as follows: pair 9 (5, 40), pair 10 (3, 25), pair 11 (11, 35), pair 12 (12, 33), pair 13 (3, 30), pair 14 (5, 36), pair 15 (8, 14), pair 16 (8, 54).

A closer examination on their transcription indicated that in these pairs, whenever one of the partners did not accept or ignored the other partners’ ideas, they raised their voice and each did what they believed in without considering the other one’s ideas. Most of the time, both were reluctant to negotiate and reach an agreement. Therefore, there was a lack of agreement between the partners and they hardly could accept each other’s view. Each wants to impose his/her own ideas at all costs even by raising their voices. The use of first person singular pronoun (1p model suggestions) such as “I mean”, “I want to say” was prevailing. They tried to underscore each other’s mistakes (such as “you are wrong”), so little collaborative completion occurred. All of these evidences corroborated their dominant characteristics.

The results gained for the other eight pairs indicate that one of the partners in these pairs was the dominant one since he/she talked much more than the other partner who was considered to be the passive one (high ratios of TAT); in spite of the fact that the passive one did not talk much or did not provide many suggestions, he/she cut the passive one’s talking and suggestions frequently as if he/she was the only one who could talk and made a lot of suggestions, mostly the imperative type; In these pairs, the dominant one could hold the floor more time and in fact he/she was like a lecturer in the pair. Here, the aggressive behavior was observed much less than the first eight pairs, maybe it was due to the fact that there was no one to oppose him/her, and most of the time, the passive one used mitigated strategies to communicate with the dominant one, which gave rise to the dominant one’s ignoring them easily.

Although in these pairs, the exchange of feedback was at a low level, the dominant ones preferred metalinguistic feedback (e.g., we don’t say it in English, or you should use this after the verb), explicit correction (e.g., this is i am looking for not I looking for, or so do I not so I do), and repetition of the other ones’ mistakes in an impolite tone more than the other types, which somehow indicates their feeling of superiority over the other one. A closer look at their roles in the pairs, the dominant one made an attempt to take the control of the interaction. He/she was the only speaker who read, found the errors, and made corrections in the text (higher TAT), while the other one, the passive one, did.
not put the dominant one’s utterance into question and hardly contributed to the composition or voiced his/her suggestions (lower TAT). The passive one just agreed or repeated the suggestions made by the dominant one and asked a handful of questions for more information or confirmation (using clarification requests more). If the passive one suggested something, the dominant one refused his/her contribution, and neglected his/her confirmation. The dominant one did not try to engage the passive one in the activity; on the contrary, he/she demotivated the passive one to get involved by his/her behavior. Mostly, the dominant one asked questions and answered them without waiting for his/her participant’s reply as if he/she was working alone.

In order to examine the abovementioned points statistically, four independent sample t-tests were run for each aspect. Table 2 indicates the descriptive statistics of these equality aspects for these two pairs.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Equality Aspects for DDP and DPP Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>DDP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.9731</td>
<td>.10785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.0485</td>
<td>3.51880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT</td>
<td>DDP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.9972</td>
<td>.17553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.7826</td>
<td>1.36865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOS</td>
<td>DDP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.9986</td>
<td>.11931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.7544</td>
<td>1.21231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>DDP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-.6250</td>
<td>4.27409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-28.8750</td>
<td>8.33988</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 indicates the results of the independent sample t-tests run in order to see whether the difference in the means for each aspect in both groups was significant or not.

**Table 3. The Results of T-Tests for the Equality Aspects for DDP and DPP Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT</td>
<td>EVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOS</td>
<td>EVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>EVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVNA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*EVA = Equal variances assumed; EVNA = Equal variances not assumed

As seen in Table 3, the differences in the means of equality aspect in both groups were significant since regarding TAT, t (14) = -4.881, p<.05, regarding INT, t (14) = -9.68, p<.05, regarding FOS, t (14) = -872, p<.05, regarding MS, t (14) = 8.526, p<.05.

Based on the analysis pointed out above, it can be concluded that the first group was the dominant/dominant pair group and the second group was the dominant/passive pair group.

Table 4 demonstrated the summary of the analysis for the participants who fell in the moderate to high mutuality. These pairs were supposed to belong to either expert/novice pairs or collaborative pairs.

**Table 4. Distribution of Equality Aspects for the Participants in the Moderate to High Mutuality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>TAT</th>
<th>INT</th>
<th>FOS</th>
<th>MS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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In these pairs, one of the partners provided more suggestions than the other partner. However, a closer look at their transcriptions showed that partner 1 (the expert) contributed to the writing and approved opinions of each other. Regarding FOS, in pair 17 to pair 24, both partners provided almost the same number of suggestions, which indicates that both of them tried to contribute in accomplishing the task to the same extent. However, in the rest of the pairs, one of the partners provided more suggestions than the other partner. But, he/she utilized interrogative strategies more in order to motivate the other partner to talk, and as can be seen, although partner 1 provided more suggestions, unlike the dominant/passive pairs, the number of suggestions provided by partner 2 in these pairs was not much less than partner 1.

In terms of MS, most of the participants in these pairs used a high degree of mitigated strategies which indicates that none of the partners intended to gain control of the other partner, and they were as much polite as possible. Based on the analysis, it can be stated that the first eight pairs were collaborative pairs since the time of talk in both partners was almost equal, the percentage of interruptions was very low in these pairs. Both provided almost the same number of suggestions. The number of mitigated strategies used was very high. Regarding the feedback, this group almost utilized all types of feedback to the same extent.

A closer look indicated that both of the partners in these pairs suggested each other new ideas as a sign of co-construction, focused on generating proper use of language, read and evaluated their co-constructed sentences in terms of accuracy and complexity, provided feedback in a nonthreatening manner, and tried to reach an agreement on the flawed parts. During their negotiation, they mostly used the first person plural pronoun, i.e., “we”. They repeated each other’s statements and tried to extend them or complete them which led to greater degree of cohesion. They attended to each other’s opinions. They explicitly repaired each other’s utterances via different types of feedback, confirmed suggestions, requested a lot, and provided information. To put it simply, they contributed to the writing and approved opinions of each other.

The other pairs considered to be expert/novice pairs. Although almost the same results were obtained for collaborative pairs in terms of INT and MS, the number of suggestions provided by one partner in these pairs was much more than the other partner; however, a closer look at their transcriptions showed that partner 1 (the expert) made an attempt to motivate partner 2 (the novice) to talk and used a lot of interrogative suggestions such as “don’t you think this is true?” and clarification requests such “how would you explain it?”. As seen in Table 4.8, although the expert spent more time talking in comparison with the novice, he/she did not try to control the interaction by using mitigated strategies; on the contrary, he/she tried to make the novice contribute in accomplishing the task. Besides simplifying the sentences they use and using very simple and frequent words, the
expert utilized more comprehension checks, clarification requests, repetition, and restatement to make sure that the novice understood the point. Regarding the feedback, the experts used elicitation and repetition more, maybe in order to motivate the novice to contribute more in the conversation and task accomplishment. The expert also tried to answer all the novice’s questions via explanation. On the other hand, the novice respected the expert’s suggestions and tried to repeat those ideas. Confirming and repeating suggestions as well as providing explanations for the novice were common in this type.

In order to verify this classification statistically, four independent sample t-tests were conducted. Table 5 indicates the descriptive statistics of these equality aspects for these two pairs.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of the Equality Aspects for ENP and CP Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>CP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.9906</td>
<td>.05985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.4102</td>
<td>.10832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT</td>
<td>CP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.9968</td>
<td>.48023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.8387</td>
<td>.63002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOS</td>
<td>CP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.0603</td>
<td>.10996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.1103</td>
<td>.52080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>CP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.4396</td>
<td>6.30790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.8328</td>
<td>10.75382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 indicates the results of the independent sample t-tests run in order to see whether the difference in the means for each aspect in both groups (Table 6) was significant or not.

Table 6. The Results of T-Tests for the Equality Aspects for ENP and CP Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>EVA*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT</td>
<td>EVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOS</td>
<td>EVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>EVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVNA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*EVA = Equal variances assumed; EVNA = Equal variances not assumed

As seen in Table 6, the difference in the means of the groups for INT and MS was not significant since t (14) = -1.16, p > .05 for INT aspect and t (14) = -1.16, p > .05; however, the difference in the means of the groups for FOS and TAT was significant since t (14) = -9.59, p < .05 for TAT aspect and t (14) = -5.58, p < .05 for FOS aspect. Based on all the aforementioned results, it can be concluded that the first group was the collaborative pair group and the second group was the expert/novice pair group.

A. Testing the Hypotheses

After implementing the treatment, the participants took the posttest individually. The descriptive statistics of all four groups’ performance in the pretest and posttest are provided in Table 8.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of all groups’ Writing Performance in the pretest and posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen in Table 7, the means in the pretest and posttest for CP were 68.78 and 85.25 respectively. The means in the pretest and posttest for DDP were 68.94 and 69.44 respectively. The means in the pretest and posttest for DPP were 68.59 and 70.31 respectively. The means in the pretest and posttest for ENP were 68.81 and 81.00 respectively. In order to see whether the difference in the means of the pretest and posttest for each group was significant or not, four paired-samples t-tests were conducted. The results are provided in Table 9.

Table 8: The Results of the Paired-Samples T-Tests for all Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DDP Pretest - Posttest</td>
<td>-8.12</td>
<td>1.940</td>
<td>.485</td>
<td>-8.46 - 2.21</td>
<td>-1.846</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPP Pretest - Posttest</td>
<td>-17.81</td>
<td>4.431</td>
<td>1.108</td>
<td>-21.142 - 5.80</td>
<td>-4.142</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENP Pretest - Posttest</td>
<td>-12.18</td>
<td>3.526</td>
<td>.881</td>
<td>-14.066 - 10.309</td>
<td>-13.82</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 shows that the difference between the means of the pretest and posttest for CP is statistically significant, i.e., t (15) = -19.469, p<.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the first null hypothesis is rejected. There was no significant effect of using dominant/dominant pairs on improving the writing ability since t (15) = -1.676, p>.05; according to the obtained results, the second null hypothesis was verified. Implementing dominant/passive pairs did not exert any significant influence on the learners’ written performance since t (15) = -1.608, p>.05. Consequently, the third null hypothesis was corroborated. The difference between the means of two tests for ENP turned out to be statistically significant since t (15) = -13.828, p<.05; therefore, it can be declared that the fourth null hypothesis was rejected; in other words, implementing expert/novice pairs would result in the improvement in writing ability.

The last hypothesis concerned a comparison between the groups and focused on detecting which ones of these four groups could yield better results. The descriptive statistics of the Participants’ written performance in the pretest and posttest without considering the groups as well as the descriptive statistics of the Participants’ written performance in each group is presented in Table 9.

Table 9. The Descriptive Statistics of All Participants’ Written Performance in the Pretest and Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Mean</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pretest</td>
<td>68.781</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td>67.794 - 69.769</td>
<td>69.769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posttest</td>
<td>76.500</td>
<td>.389</td>
<td>75.721 - 77.279</td>
<td>77.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>77.016</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>75.468 - 78.563</td>
<td>78.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDP</td>
<td>69.188</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>67.640 - 70.735</td>
<td>70.735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPP</td>
<td>69.453</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>67.906 - 71.001</td>
<td>71.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENP</td>
<td>74.906</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>73.359 - 76.454</td>
<td>76.454</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regardless of the groups, the mean of the scores in the pretest was 68.78 and the mean of the score in the posttest was 76.5 (Table 10). The scores obtained from the pretest and posttest were considered as one set of scores for each group, and the observed means for CP, DDP, DPP, and ENP were 77.016, 69.188, 69.453, and 74.906 respectively. As is...
clear, the order of their means is as follows: $\bar{X}_{CP} > \bar{X}_{ENP} > \bar{X}_{DPP} > \bar{X}_{DDP}$. In order to see whether the abovementioned differences in the means were significant or not, the repeated-measures ANOVA was run. The results of within-subjects effects are shown in Table 11.

### Table 10. The Results of the Repeated-Measures ANOVA for the Pretest and Posttest and Their Interaction with the Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>test</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Squared</th>
<th>Eta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>test</td>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>1906.531</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1906.531</td>
<td>310.360</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>test * groups</td>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>1477.141</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>492.580</td>
<td>80.153</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groups</td>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>1483.453</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>494.484</td>
<td>25.816</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.563</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error(test)</td>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>368.578</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>6.143</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in Table 9, the difference in the means of CP group ($\bar{X} = 77.016$) and DDP group ($\bar{X} = 69.188$) was significant ($p < .05$); the difference between the means of CP group ($\bar{X} = 77.016$) and DPP group ($\bar{X} = 69.453$) was also significant; the difference between the means of ENP group ($\bar{X} = 74.906$) and DPP group ($\bar{X} = 69.453$) as well as the difference between the means of ENP group ($\bar{X} = 74.906$) and DDP group ($\bar{X} = 69.188$) was also significant. However, the difference between the means of DDP group ($\bar{X} = 69.188$) and DPP group ($\bar{X} = 77.016$) as well as the difference between the means of DDP group ($\bar{X} = 69.188$) and DPP group ($\bar{X} = 69.453$) was not significant.

### V. Discussion

The first question was concerned with implementation of the collaborative pair and its effect on improving the written performance. In collaborative pairs, both of the students suggested each other new ideas as a sign of co-construction, focused on generating proper use of language, and evaluated their co-constructed sentences in terms of accuracy and complexity, provided positive feedback, asked each other various questions, and tried to reach an agreement on the flawed parts. The results demonstrated that applying this kind of pairs would bring about significant progress in writing proficiency.

One explanation for this improvement can be attributed to the way the feedback was exchanged. Since the partners had a high degree of equality, none of them tried to gain control of the interaction, and via using mitigated strategies, both partners attempted to provide feedback and suggestions in a non-threatening fashion. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006), affective factors are of paramount importance and the initial step for the rest of the cognitive processes to occur. In this kind of pairs, since the language they used during the task was not offensive and they tried to save each other’s face, the level of affective filter was low; hence, the partners could accept each other’s’ ideas, which resulted in greater transfer of knowledge. This is line with Long’s (1985) interaction hypothesis.

The second research question was concerned with the second type of pair work, i.e., dominant/dominant pairs where there was a lack of agreement between the members. They overlooked or rejected each other’s suggestions. They did not accept each other’s opinions easily, that was the reason why there were plenty of disagreements or aggression during their talk. Sometimes, they got annoyed and raised their voice. Most of the time, they were reluctant to negotiate and reach an agreement. Each wanted to impose his/her own idea. There are lots of “I” in their utterances (such as “I mean”, “I want to say”) to express their ideas and they tried to underscore each other’s mistakes (such as “you are wrong”), so little collaborative completion occurred.

The results of data analysis indicated that applying such pairs in the classroom would not exert any significant influence on the written output because no true interaction happened. Another reason may be due to the fact that such learners with their dominant characteristics were sensitive to the criticism, and when they received feedback from each other, first they considered it as a criticism rather than a constructive feedback. In other words, when the
feedback is directed at these individuals it is perceived as being more offensive and there is a high probability that the individual refuses to contemplate it. This sensitivity increased by the imperative behavior of the dominant ones and both felt that their face was threatened, all of which resulted in ignoring or rejecting each other’s ideas, suggestions, or feedback. Such face-threatening way of providing feedback or suggestions intensified the affective filter, which blocked their mind to absorb the input their partner provided.

The third research question concerned the impact of implementing another type of pair work, namely, dominant/passive pair on the written performance. In such pairs, the time at talk of the dominant ones was much more than the passive ones (TAT), when the passive ones talked, the dominant ones interrupted them a lot to put their ideas into question and discredit them (INT), the number of suggestions provided by the dominant ones was considerably more than the passive ones (POS), and though the passive ones talked much less, they tried to use some mitigated strategies; on the contrary, the dominant ones did not care about face-threatening acts and used mitigated strategies rarely (MS). Low number of feedback was exchanged between partners in this kind of pairs. Maybe it was due to the fact that the passive ones were mostly silent, even to the errors produced by the dominant ones, maybe because of lack of confidence; and the dominant ones did not attend to the passive one’s errors; therefore, they did not provide feedback. According to the reported results, this kind of pairs could not yield any improvement in the writing ability.

In dominant/passive pairs, the passive ones were inclined to be silent and ruled by the dominant ones, maybe due to their personality, the behavior of the dominant ones, a lack of confidence in his/her own language abilities, or worrying too much about being criticized (losing face) or criticizing others (Polley, 2007). The feeling of being dominant over the passive ones intensified, when the dominant ones recognized the passivity of their partners. The dominant ones took advantage of this situation, and, as Drew (1991) declares, mostly they prevented the dominant one from participating, which increased the passivity of the passive ones. Killing the passive one’s slight motivation to participate can be deemed as one of the reasons this kind of pairs could not succeed in their writing proficiency.

Another explanation can be related to the affective filter. It seems that the dominant participants in this study used face-threatening acts (FTA) more and they did not make an attempt to compensate for their behavior by using some positive politeness (mitigated) strategies.

Even in rare occasions, when the passive ones made an attempt to voice his/her ideas, the dominant ones discredited their ideas immediately and in face-threatening manner such as by raising their voices or repeating the passive ones’ ideas in a derisive manner.

This finding is in line with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) findings. Polley (2007) also states that if a participant is passive, he/she wouldn’t learn different aspects of L2 from the group. The results is in line with the results reported by Al-Khasawneh (2010) who claimed that inadequate opportunities to put into practice the second language is one of the major problems threatening the improvement of writing proficiency. The passive ones did not have opportunities to activate their L2 competence while working in pairs. This was also in line with the findings of Storch’s (2007) study in which she stated that “in dominant/passive pair interactions, opportunities to engage in deliberations about language seem to accrue for only one participant” (p. 156) and she deemed the talk generated by the dominant ones as “externalized private speech” (p. 156), and according to Donato (1994), this kind of talk resulted in little effective collective scaffolding and exerts no influence on the other partner in the pair work. To sum up, maybe due to high distance between partners, high affective filter, low motivation of the passive one to contribute, and face-threatening acts, this kind of pairs did not yield better results, so, no improvement in terms of writing proficiency occurred, and accordingly, the null hypothesis was confirmed.

In the fourth question, the impact of applying Expert/Novice pairs on the writing ability was investigated and the results demonstrated that using such pairs in the classes would bring about significant improvement in the written output.

As stated before, the novice preferred to be silent. Hwang (1993) attributed this fact to the culture and background of the learners, and found a high correlation between the culture and learners’ participation in pair/group work especially in Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. Polley (2007) also believed “Asian learners may hesitate more often in group type activities as their learning background is more teacher-fronted than other cultures” (p. 76). He concluded that cultural factors and personality types were influential factors affecting the degree of the participation. In the present study, in the expert/novice pairs, the novice, unlike the passive ones, seemed to be willing to contribute in accomplishing the task; however, they preferred to be silent and let the expert talk. Maybe this is due to the Iranian culture in which even if some have some ideas, they prefer not to express it as a sign of respecting others’ ideas. Of course, sometimes it is owing to the low self-confidence in expressing what they believe in.
Creating opportunities for increasing confidence in the pair work is of paramount importance. Being aware of this important aspect in collaborative work and in order to make a better environment, the expert tried to increase the novice’s confidence and diminish the status-threatening nature of ideas and feedback by utilizing a lot of mitigated strategies, providing suggestions in the form of questions and indirect statements, and using a good deal of positive feedback, such as, “excellent”, “you did well”, “see you could do it”, etc., which seemed to have a good effect on the progress. It can be claimed that via positive feedback, the expert endeavored to make the novice perceive their collaboration positive and reduce the affective filter, therefore, there was less feeling of being intimidated or threatened and they could tactfully prepare the novice to accept the feedback and ideas they provided. Polley (2007) states “when learner perceptions are positive there is a motivation to participate and this results in the increase of confidence and fluency of the learner. As Pica, et al. asserted, when working in appropriate group/pair atmosphere, participants would feel “greater motivation, more initiative, and less anxiety” (Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Paninos, & Linnel, 1996, p. 60); as a result, they would work more collaboratively. In such situation, certainly a good deal of collective scaffolding would occur.

On the whole, the attempts of the expert to provoke the novice to participate in the interaction and accomplishing the task were fruitful. It lessened the affective filters, increased the motivation, and boosted the collective scaffolding, all of which resulted in providing an optimal environment for good transfer of knowledge. Consequently, the partners improved in their written output in the posttest. According to what was stated, the null hypothesis was rejected.

The main point of the last research question was to compare these four groups and to detect which one of them would result in better writing ability. The analysis rendered the following results: 1. The participants in the CP group generated better written performance than those in the DPP group. 2. The participants in the CP group produced better written performance than those in the DDP group. 3. The participants in the ENP group performed better in the posttest than those in the DPP group. 4. The participants in the ENP group performed better in the posttest than those in the DDP group. 5. The difference in the written performance of the CP group and the ENP group was marginal, meaning that, none of them could outperform the other one. 6. The difference in the written performance of the DPP group and the DDP group was negligible; in better words, none of them could outperform the other one.

In the CP and ENP groups, both partners were willing to contribute and tried to provide a lot of feedback of different kinds in an unmitigated manner to draw their partners’ attention to their errors. This noticing the gap gave rise to the subsequent intake processes such as hypothesis formation and testing in order to make their partners understand (i.e., provide comprehensible input). In second language acquisition, most researchers (Ellis, 2008; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Varonis & Gass, 1985) deem negotiation as a way of providing comprehensible input. “When comprehensible input is obtained through negotiation, the environment is optimal for SLA” (Polley, 2007, p. 81), which led to more uptake and the learning of some aspects of L2.

In the DDP and DPP groups could not succeed in their writing proficiency. The reason can be detected in the low level of mutuality. None of the participants in these pairs was willing to collaboratively accomplish the task. They were either imposing their ideas (the dominant ones) or ignoring to provide ideas (the passive ones). Regarding feedback, the dominant ones behaved in a face-threatening way; therefore, the affective filter did not let the other partner to absorb the accurate information. Hence, in these pairs, as Nelson and Carson (1998) also reported, the feedback provided by the partner was either disrespected or ignored by the other partner due to affective filter (as in the dominant/passive pairs) or egotistical personality (as in the dominant-dominant pairs); so they did not apply them later in their own production (Nelson & Murphy, 1993). Consequently, it is not surprising that low level of knowledge transfer occurred.

In these pairs, partners were more interested in accomplishing the task on their own and based on their own ways, as a result, it can be stated that the major part of their talking was not a true interaction in which the information could be efficiently transformed from one partner to the other (Donato, 1994). They acted as if they were working individually (Storch, 2007). As a result, their pair work, did not yield any better results. The results were in line with what Storch (2002) predicted, i.e., in the dominant/dominant pairs and dominant/passive pairs, “members of the dyad engaged in the co-construction of knowledge about language. This knowledge was subsequently appropriated and internalized by members of the dyad” (Storch, 2002, p. 148).

VI. Conclusion

The obtained results indicated that between the two dimensions (the mutuality and equality), the mutuality (the degree of contribution) is of greater importance in knowledge transference and L2 learning since the CP group and
ENP group outperformed the DDP and DPP groups. Some of the reasons for this collaborative learning in CP group and ENP group can be as follows:

High degree of collective scaffolding by attending to each other’s errors and providing feedback in order to eliminate the flawed output;

Low face-threatening acts by using mitigated strategies so as to reduce the affective filter and encourage each other to participate in the dyadic interaction;

Repetition of the corrected forms in a non-offensive way so as to internalize them for the subsequent use, and to enhance the proceduralization of their declarative knowledge;

Increasing the confidence and motivation of each other by providing positive feedback and elicitation in order to promote the positive perception of their partners;

Making an optimal learning environment by providing a good inter-personal relationship in order to accept each other’s feedback;

Acting based on the interaction hypothesis and providing opportunities to facilitate intake processes and uptake by noticing and providing feedback.

On the other hand, in the dominant/dominant pairs and dominant/passive pairs, the condition for better transfer of knowledge was not provided for the learners due to different reasons. Some of the reasons, which require more research, can be as follows:

High affective filter caused by the behavior of the dominant ones who felt superior to their partners;

Low collective scaffolding due to not noticing to each other’s flaws or problems;

Providing a situation which was demotivating for partners to collaborate (weak inter-personal relationship);

Not following the Cooperative principle while interacting by interrupting each other;

Not following Politeness principle by avoiding mitigated strategies, using imperative tone and face-threatening acts, and imposing their ideas;

Discouraging each other to participate and being more inclined to perform the task individually.

To recap, it is pretty much true that applying pair work in the classes benefits learners in some aspects (Baleghizadeh, 2009; Baleghizadeh & Arab, 2011; Raja & Saeed, 2012; Storch, 1999), but not all types of pair work can bring about the desired outcome (Storch, 2002, 2005). Three significant conclusions that can be drawn from this study is as follows:

the outcome of the pair work depends on the nature of pair work and the partners’ inter-personal relationship, the mutuality (degree of contribution) is more effective than the equality, and dominant learners can work better individually.

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AN ALTERNATIVE STANDPOINT ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MP AND SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR: A MATTER OF DIVERGENCE OR OTHERWISE?

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ABSTRACT
The present paper recapitulates two of the prominent approaches widely embraced by a great number of scholars in the world of linguistics; i.e. MP (including its predecessor, GB) & Functional Grammar, from a differing vista. The first section presents an overview of the nature of apparently different nature of these strands of linguistics. The second section provides arguments regarding the commonalities between these two presumably distinct trends. The third section draws some logical conclusions as to the need to conceptualize these views as complementary rather than opposing ones as they stand currently.

Keywords: Functional Grammar, Minimalist Program, Government-Binding Theory, Semiosis, Functional Grammar

1. Introduction
Traditionally speaking the trend of studying the language system has been through a rather complicated spiral pattern recently. A range of prominent scholars so far have embarked upon investigating the basic and fundamental essence of language system. Even recently we hear of corpus linguistic studies incorporating considerations grappling with the essence of the intricate subtleties of language system.

To help language teachers figure out how to tackle the very quintessence of language system in the first place it appears highly significant for us to remove the fuzzy boundaries engulfing the true picture of language essence in the first place and to convert it into something way more palatable.

Targeting the language system Michael Halliday's systemic functional grammar argues that the explanation of how language works "needs to be grounded in a functional analysis, since language has evolved in the process of carrying out certain critical functions as human beings interacted with their ... 'eco-social' environment".

It is worth mentioning that although in addition to Halliday a number of major prominent scholars have contributed to deciphering the nuances of language system (e.g. Firth, Chomsky), to mention but a few, most regrettably as there has been no direct access to the core of language system, these prominent scholars in the field have mainly strived their best to provide us with their most optimal vistas of horizon as to introducing the linguistic algorithm.

Halliday (1985) declares that in the world of linguistics, in general, and the world of grammar, in particular, there have been many crosscurrents with insights borrowed from one to the other. However, such vistas are ideologically fairly different and it is often very difficult for them to have any dialog.

Insisting on this point Halliday asserts that the Chomskyan “generative grammar” is substantially a syntagmatic theory disregarding people who actually write or speak that language. However, In contrast to him, Chomsky deeply believes language should be viewed in its abstract sense.

As far as linguistic studies are concerned it seems like that these great scholars have taken two radically distinct approaches to appraise the essence of grammar (i.e. the former from the standpoint of the purposes for which language is utilized and the latter from the perspective of the edifice of language).

Recognizing the significance of the description of language system as far as the above mentioned theories are concerned, the present study has been intended to shed more light upon reevaluating these presumably diverging approaches to the study of language system as far as their linguistic backdrops are concerned.

2. Halliday’s Perspective on the Essence of Language System
Halliday’s perspective on the essence of language system (i.e. Systemic functional grammar) originally derives from the notion of “Functional grammar”. The term functional grammar is the name given to any of a range of
functionally-based approaches to the scientific study of language, incorporating the grammar model developed by Simon Dik, or Michael Halliday's (1989).

Pointing out the fundamentals of his theory, Halliday (1994) states that, by “language in use”, he puts stress on the role of a clause in language rather than “sentences in books”. In parallel with him Bloor (1995) states “it is also at the rank of clause that we usually use language to interact with others’.

Taking its lead from the work of Joseph Greenberg functional grammar is also associated with the school of “linguistic typology”. In this tradition of grammar, grammatical functions such as “subject-object” are by no means elements of syntactic representations.

Attemping to reveal the instrumentality of language with respect to what people do and achieve with it in social interaction, Halliday conceptualizes a language as an instrument of social interaction among human beings, used with the intention of establishing communicative relationships. He proposes that in functional paradigm a language is conceptualized as an instrument of social interaction among human beings, used with the intention of establishing communicative relationships.

In his book “On language and linguistics” Halliday (2003), accepts that grammar is premised on the notion of “choice”. Believing the speaker of a language can be regarded as carrying out simultaneously a number of distinct choices, he proposes that at any moment in the environment of the selections, a certain range of choices is available. This system of a range of choices or what he later called “system network” is identical to grammar, which to him is represented as a very large network of open ended systems.

Halliday proposes language system as a system of meaning or what he calls “a semiotic system”. Stating that in such a system meaning is created and changed, he suggests that human beings use numerous semiotic systems, some simple and some others highly complex.

Highlighting a set of principles he thought are usually followed by linguists working in systematic-functional linguistics in his book “on language and linguistics” (2003), he proposed that we should bear in mind that the categories used in the analysis of language are “general concepts” which help us explain the linguistic phenomena. Furthermore, emphasizing the categories of “theme” and “rheme”, he stresses that both types of these categories are defined not individually but in relation to one another. He argues that “theme” in English is defined not only in relation to “rheme” but also in relation to the “category of clause” and to other functions in the clause like “subject”, “the system of mood”, and its various options such as “declarative”.

Proposing the concept of transitivity, Halliday (1994) also asserts that experiential meanings are realized through a transitive system. According to him “transitivity construes the world of experience into a manageable set of process types”. He recognizes six processes in this system: material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal and existential.

2.1 Halliday’s Agent, Patient, Recipient

According to Halliday’s Functional Grammar (FG), functional notions play basic and pivotal roles at different levels of the language system in general and the grammatical organization in particular. Many of the rules and principles in his theory are formulated in terms of functional notions. For instance, “agent” is defined as a term used to describe the semantic role which a particular type of argument plays in a given sentence. Put differently, it denotes a person deliberately causing some state of affairs to come about. In contrast, “Patient” to him refers to a particular thematic role which associated with an entity suffering the consequences of some action. Finally “Recipient”, from his perspective, stands for the thematic role borne by an entity receiving something.

2.2 Halliday’s Antecedent/Anaphor

Halliday states that antecedent refers to an expression denoting a pronoun or anaphor of some kind. As an example in the sentence “John cut himself shaving”, “John” is the antecedent of the anaphor “himself”, since “himself” refers back to John. It could easily be detected that the antecedent needs to be higher than the anaphor as far as the structure of the language is concerned.

Pointing out that the categories used in the analysis of language are of two kinds: theoretical, and descriptive, he considers the theoretical categories are those such as meta-function, system, level, class, and realization, whereas, descriptive categories are those such as clause, preposition, subject, material process, and theme.

2.3 Ideational Meta-function

The first and foremost among them is called the ideational meta-function, he believes that such a function delineates “who did what to whom” of the utterance. Analyzed as such, a clause consists of a “process” and some number of “participants” in it.
2.4 Interpersonal Meta-function
Asserting that interpersonal meta-function is about the social world, especially the relationship between speaker and hearer, and is concerned with clauses as exchanges, Halliday (1994: 68) contends that “The most fundamental types of speech role, which lie behind all the more specific types that we may eventually be able to recognize, are just two (i) giving, and (ii) demanding”.

2.5 Textual Meta-function
The last function, called “textual meta-function” according to Halliday pinpoints a grammar for binding linguistic elements together into broader texts employing such processes as pronominalization, grammatical topicalization, thematization and expressing the news worthiness of information.

2.6 Clause from Halliday’s perspective
As regards analyzing a clause as an exchange of interactive event, Halliday realizes two components in a clause: the Mood and the Residue. To him the Mood is the component carrying the syntactic burden of the exchange which ‘carries the argument forward’ (Halliday, 1994:71). He maintains Mood consists of two parts: (1) the Subject, which is a nominal group, and (2) the Finite operator, which is part of a verbal group. As for the Residue, as he maintains, it consists of three different types of functional: Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct.

2.7 Halliday’s Semiotics
Halliday contends that there are three systems at work in the realm of language. He labels the first system as a physical system referring to the “physicality-being” system of language, the second as the “biological system” claiming it to have a sort of life feature by the mediation of which he tries to give an animate sense of the word to language so that to give it a sense of meaning and differentiate it from nonsensical communicative systems. And finally the “social system” which is in essence an assembly of biological systems having the feature of “value”.

3. Chomsky’s Perspective on the Language System
As to Chomskyan contribution to the realm of linguistics it appears worth mentioning what he has long been standing for; i.e. generative linguistics. As a flashback on his linguistic theory advancement it needs to be stated that the essence of his contribution dates back to 1960’s when he appealed to syntax as the core of language. He initiated his proposal by adhering to the phrase structure rules together with the transformational rules playing their own specific roles in making the sentences.

To him sentence is the mainstream of language and any syntactic definition aimed at tackling the concept of grammar has to revolve around the very essence of syntax in the first place. In the last version of his succession of linguistic theories in 1995 he describes syntax as a “cognitive system” connecting two other cognitive systems: the “conceptual-intentional” system and the “articulatory-perceptual” system. He maintains as syntax is linked to these two systems, not very surprisingly, then his syntactic model has to define two interface levels, one for each of them: Phonological Form (PF) is the interface to the articulatory-perceptual system, and Logical Form (LF) is the interface to the conceptual-intentional system. Chomsky maintains if, during the derivation of LF, a principle of grammar is violated, the derivation is said to crash and the clause under consideration is then considered ungrammatical. He mentions that at some point during the derivation of LF, the process of “spell-out” takes place which refers to the process of deriving PF (containing the phonological and prosodic features of the clause), which is in fact the interface form to the articulatory-perceptual system.

3.1 Chomsky’s GB
Chomsky’s “Government and Binding” theory came into vogue approximately three decades ago. It substantially assumes that a large portion of the grammar of any particular language is common to all languages; hence part of Universal Grammar. Its mainstream view is that Universal Grammar could be broken down into two major components: a) levels of representation and b) a system of constraints.

According to this language model, the human language capacity consists of a set of “universal principles” combined with “a set of parameters”. The principles are thought to be innate, to the effect that every language subscribed to them, whereas, the parameters are thought of as a set of switches mainly set in two positions. Chomsky primarily maintains that learning the syntax of one’s native language is, in essence, a matter of acquiring the correct parameter settings for the language.

Briefly speaking, GB assumed a derivational model consisting of four levels of representation seeking to capture the similarities between different categories of lexical phrases by assigning the same structure to them. Rather than
having different phrase structure rules for VPs, NPs, etc., just the two basic following rules (X- bar theory) covered all the lexical categories.

XP→ Specifier X
X' → X0 Complements (=YP*)

By appealing to X-bar theory Chomsky managed to account for the phrase structure of lexical phrases, sentences, and clauses of a variety of languages. GB generally subsumed the following components.

a) Binding principles, according to which an anaphor is bound in its local domain, a pronominal is free in a local domain, and a referring expression is free.
b) C-command, according to which α c-commands β if α does not dominate β and every γ that dominates α also dominates β.
c) Head parameter, according to which a particular language consistently has the heads on the same side of the complements in all its phrases, whether head first or head last.
d) Government, according to which there is a syntactic relationship between a governor and an element that is governed. In other words α governs β if and only if, α is a governor, α and β mutually c-commanded each other, and if α governed β then α governs the specifier of β.
e) Movement, which refers to a relationship linking the two levels of structural representation.
f) Move a, according to which a category could be moved to a target position.
g) θ-criterion principle, which constrains θ-assignment by making certain no element, gets more than one θ-role. In other words it states that each argument bears one and only one θ-role, and each θ-role is assigned to one and only one argument. As regards principles of Binding theory Chomsky posited the following: A) Anaphors (e.g. reflexives and reciprocals) must be A-bound in their governing category. B) Pronouns must not be A-bound in their governing category. C) Full NPs (also called denoting expressions or R (referential-expressions) must not be A-bound.

3.2 Chomsky's Minimalism

Minimalism refers to the recent major approach in generative linguistics. Ever since its first introduction by Chomsky in his work “The Minimalist Program” (1995) it has undergone several developments and changes. The central idea of minimalism is that a linguistic theory should contain as few non-derived assumptions as possible. Minimalism to Chomsky (1995) is an implementation of the more general “Principles and Parameters” or “GB” model according to which the human language capacity consists of a set of universal principles combined with a set of parameters. These principles are thought to be innate, to the effect that every language across the world adheres to them. In contrast to these principles there are a variety of parameters which can be thought of as switches basically set in two positions. Chomsky strongly adhered to the view that learning the syntax of one’s native language is a matter of acquiring the correct parameter settings for the language.

As already noted above MP derives from GB which dominated the world of linguistic for nearly two decades. Accordingly, many of the fundamental points between them are basically common, however, owing to the great number of interfaces and also due to the principle of economy Chomsky decided to dispense with the unnecessary rules in GB and reshape it into MP. The following items are considered as the basic assumptions proposed in MP giving it the status it has today.

1. Language is part of nature, that is to say, in Chomskyan perspective language is considered as a “biological endowment”.
2. There are at least two components to language faculty; (i) a cognitive component and (ii) a performance component.
3. The cognitive component is embedded in the performance component and it contains a computational system, a lexicon (mental dictionary) and a phonological component.
4. The performance component contains those parts of articulatory-perceptual (A-P) system and the conceptual-intentional (C-I) system that are relevant to language use.
5- In order that the A-P and C-I systems can ‘read’ an instruction, a SD (the expression of an I-language) must have a nature of, roughly, a sound and a meaning. There are two interface levels: Phonetic Form (PF) at the A-P interface and Logical Form (LF) at the C-I interface.
6- The I-language generates a set of pairs (π, λ), where π is a PF representation drawn from PF and λ an LF representation drawn from LF. Both π and λ are formal representations of sound and meaning respectively.

Among the other fundamental concepts in minimalist syntax are the concepts of “Economy”, the principle of “Full Interpretation”, and “features”. Simply put, “Economy” implies that operations of the syntax component (the computational system) must cost as little as possible. “Cost” is defined in terms of the “number of operations” that
it takes to derive a certain structure, and sometimes it is interpreted as the relative “heaviness” of different operations (i.e., some operations can be more costly than others). “Full interpretation” according to Chomsky (1986) refers to the point that every element of PF and LF which are taken to be the interface of syntax must receive an appropriate interpretation. And finally “Feature” is a term used in Chomskyan linguistics to refer to any typical or noticeable property of spoken or written language. Features are in association with the way in which words are classified in the lexicon in terms of their grammatical properties, such as “animate”, “masculine” etc.

4. Points of Convergence

Given the preliminary considerations above, it convincingly appears that, whereas Chomsky has delved into the knowhow of language system by seeking for the basic components of it, Halliday has coped with the concept of language system from an alternative angle of vision in the sense that he has dramatically insisted on deciphering it form the functions underlying it. However, it seems like a sort of common ground could be figured out as far as their basic structures are concerned.

As noted above, in his GB model of syntax Chomsky posited the “c-command conditioning” stating that “α c-commands β if and if α does not dominate β and every γ that dominate α also dominates β”. Viewing this position from a broad angle of vision a c-command conditioning could be taken into account as a condition in which a bound constituent (like an anaphor) needs to be c-commanded by its antecedent. Keeping this point in mind, it implies that the antecedent must be higher up in the structure than the anaphor it binds. So the whole notion ends up in a sort of hierarchy in which a set of certain structures follow one another in a hierarchical manner. In contrast, seemingly though, when it comes to Halliday’s proposal, we notice that he has adopted a differing standpoint as regards the language system. Proposing functional grammar, Halliday delves into such concepts as “theme” and “rheme” roughly based on a compatible hierarchical structure again.

These points of convergence, to a large extent, fall into the following considerations. Firstly, and in the meantime most surprisingly, Halliday in parallel with Chomsky, perceives of language system as “a network of systems, (my italics), or interrelated sets of options for making meaning” (Halliday 1994: 15), thus calling it as something “systemic” in the same vein as Chomsky has referred to the system of grammar (my italics).

Secondly, an alternative intriguing parallel also emerges once comparing the notions of such concepts as subject-predicate as proposed by Chomsky, and the concepts of Them vs. Rheme as proposed by Halliday.

Thirdly, addressing the notions of language faculty and cognitive faculty it seems like that Chomsky has implicitly been adhering to functionality of language as well although he has decided to just go for it under the cover term “performance component (PF)”. It seems like the “function” underpinning linguistic performance has gone unwittingly unnoticed by him. After all, there is no denying the fact that underlying any performance, there is a functional intent waiting there to be served.

The same point also applies to the notion of formal logical form (i.e. LF) to the effect that the logical form which represents the form of the language needs to seek for the fulfillment of a certain kind of function. It seems like Chomsky has stopped short of delineating the linguistic functions due to his obsession with syntactic constraints.

In addition, it is worth attending to point out that witnessing the drawbacks of his position Chomsky (1995) introduces the functional projections of IP and CP so that all sentences and clauses would fit into X-bar theory. He came to terms with the notion that a functional projection is a maximal projection headed by a functional (rather than a lexical) head.

Stressing on this point, he claims in the case of IP, the head is either the nonfinite “to” or the “inflectional features”, whereas the “complementizer” is the head of CP and in the subsequent years he introduces a number of more functional heads, and therefore projections.

Embedded in this claim, once more, Chomsky’s approach to the essence of linguistic functions could be traced. This point also convincingly underscores that the form is inherently followed by the use (and function) of it. However, it seems not wise enough to turn a blind eye on the “meaning” or as Halliday puts it, the “function” of language, and sweep it under the rug merely due to the misconception that it has already premised on the keystone of syntax.

It is also worth attending that language faculty has been claimed to play the role of a bridge by which representations of the external systems become accessible to one another. In support of this, a sort of opposing endorsements has emerged among the current linguists’ perspectives to the effect that whereas Chomsky (1957) has been considered as a minimalist, or lumper, Halliday (1973) has been taken into account as a splitter (Bourke, 2005, p. 92).

For minimalists, according to Longa and Lorenzo (2008), thought is directly externalizable, and the mind does not need to incorporate a specific grammatical system implying that the mechanisms of the faculty of language are not
different from the external systems, whereas, for Maximalists, language is a specific faculty that imposes the
output. Simply put, to maximalists, language is a specific faculty that imposes the representational format
(grammar) on thoughts in order to be translatable into psychomotor instructions (Zwart, 1998). In the same vein as,
Bourke (2005) maintained “grammar is thus a tool for making meaning” (p. 92).

5. Conclusion
An intriguing point derived out of the survey above would be that the whole structure of language system has
been attempted to holistically both by Chomsky and Halliday. The point of distinction between the two
approaches appears to be the case that the former approach has been narrowing the attention down to the delicate
structural components of language system, whereas, the latter approach has been adhering to a far broader
representation of the functional properties of the language system involved (i.e. the meaning derived out of it).
Needless to say, it should not go unheeded that Chomsky has recently strived to shift toward the language
functions mediated by the lexical items in their own right. To put it differently, Chomsky appears, although tacitly,
to have come to terms with the role played by language functions dominating the pieces of language puzzle
controlled by lexical heads, however he has decided not to take it too far to mingle it with the social/pragmatic
considerations as well.

Apparently it seems that Michael Halliday and Noam Chomsky are on two drastically different camps but at the
same time it seems logical to make a conjecture based on the point that since at the present time, which is currently
referred to as the post-MP era, it is claimed that everything could be handled by LF and it necessarily includes
semantic as well as the syntactic features, then the implication would be that, from a deep structure stand point,
these prominent scholars seem to be on the same track.

Surprisingly the same concepts, as noted above, had also been employed during the era of GB, specially applied by
Radford (1997) and Chomsky (1995). It is to say that despite having two drastically different viewpoints generative
grammarians and functionalist linguists have amazingly employed the same basic ideas to get access to the
genuine nature of grammar.

Definitely the author is not in the position to accept or reject either of these two drastically different viewpoints.
But to him such sharp differences at the same time may lead roughly to similar conclusions and consequently
contribute to the successful rearrangement of the linguistic puzzle.

It appears that both of these linguistics giants have sought for a common final objective; being acquainted with the
structure of language and how it can be engineered. However, the approaches to this accomplishment have barely
been highly convergent; one focusing on the concrete and the other on the functional features of language. Yet
looking far more closely into the matter, this divergence could convincingly be replaced with a kind of
convergence stretching a far larger territory than previously envisaged by either of these scholars: i.e. the mixed
view.

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A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF AMERICAN AND PERSIAN COMPLIMENT SPEECH ACT

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ABSTRACT
This paper reports on a cross-cultural study of complimentary speech acts in Persian and American English. Two modes of enquiry were utilized: the interview and the questionnaire. The goal in the first stage was to allow members of both cultures to describe spontaneously a multi-faceted analysis of compliment speech act. The subjects were also asked to express the circumstances under which they give and receive compliments, the topical contents of compliments, and the manner they pay compliments. In the second stage, a questionnaire was given to thirty Iranians and thirty Americans in equal proportion from males and females. It was found that complimenting is formulaic in American English and Persian. Complements in Persian were longer than those of English. Compliments are accepted more often in American English than in Persia. Iranians usually use self-lowering forms in their responses to compliments to show their modesty and humility.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Compliment speech act; Pragmalinguistics; Sociopragmatics

1. Introduction
One of the ramifications of linguistic studies which has been in vogue for decades is Pragmatics. It is one of the areas of second language research. Mitchell, Myles and Marsden (2014:210) define Pragmatics as follows:

*Pragmatics is a broad field within linguistics, which examines Context-dependent aspects of meaning, and in particular the Communicative intent of speakers, the social relationships between them and the speech acts they wish to perform.*

To Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), “pragmatics deals very explicitly with the study of the relationships holding between linguistic forms and the human beings who use these forms” (P.19). The authors hold that “pragmatics is concerned with people’s intentions, assumptions, beliefs, goals and the kind of actions they perform while using language. Pragmatics is also concerned with contexts, situations and settings within which language uses occur (P.19). Pragmatics and cultural competence have a lot in common. Both require learners to “use language in socioculturally appropriate ways” (P.20). They emphasize meaning. Thomas (1995:22) asserts that:

*Meaning is not something that is inherent in the words alone, nor is it produced by the speaker alone or the hearer alone. Making meaning is a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance (physical, social and linguistics), and the meaning potential of an utterance.*

Pragmatics falls into two categories: pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. The former has to do with “the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions” (Leech, 1983: 11) while the latter is concerned with “the sociological interface of pragmatics” (1983, P: 10). Elaborating on Leech’s definition Kasper adds that sociopragmatics refers to “the social perceptions underlying participants’ performance and interpretation of linguistic action” (1992:209). Sociopragmatics, therefore, is the study of the forms as well as the functions of language in the given social settings. The upshot of this perspective is that the pragmatic considerations are germane to Gricean cooperative maxims (1975), Lakoff’ Rules of Politeness (1972, 1974), Austin’ speech Act Theory (1962) and Leech’ Politeness Maxims. The part and parcel of which is the variability in speech which is the territory of Sociolinguistics. Mitchell and Myles (2014) maintain that:
One of the challenges of L2 pragmatics research is determining how far learners can transfer their existing L1 pragmatic competence (for example, their knowledge of how to be polite) to the new language (P: 210)

So, it behooves L2 researchers and language teachers to study this area of interest, viz, speech acts. They are defined as a set of conventionalized, frequently repeated, and routinized expressions. Ellis (2008:159) proposes that “speech acts, constitute attempts by language users to perform specific actions, in particular interpersonal functions such as compliments, apologies, requests, or complaints”.

The present study aims at scrutinizing Compliment Speech Act in both Persian and American cultures. The assumption is that the insight which is achieved via study can aid the language teachers in the betterment of the content of their classes. It goes without saying that this is one of the components of language overlooked by the majority of language teachers around the globe including the Persian teachers of English.

2. Background

Nessa Wolfson and Joan Manes (Wolfson&Manes, 1980; Manes& Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1981a, 1981b, 1983, 1984, 1988, 1989a; Manes, 1983) were the two prime movers who conducted research on compliments. They hold that the way the compliments are paid in American English indicate the formulaicity of compliments. They believe that the overwhelming majority of the compliment speech acts fall into one of the nine following formulas:

Table 1. Formularity of the American Compliments Manes & Wolfson (1981)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Formula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>NP{is, looks} (really) ADJ (PP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I (really) [like, love] NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>PRO is (really) (a) (ADJ) NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>You V (NP) (a) (really) ADJ NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>You V (NP) (really) ADV (PP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>You have (a) (really) ADJ NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>What (a) (ADJ) NP!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>ADJ (NP)!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Isn’t NP ADJ!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This made Holmes and Brown (1987) suggest a model for teaching pragmalinguistics as well as sociopragmatics. Inability in this territory would cause failure in communication as Thomas (1983) considered. Ellis (2008: P. 169) in this respect, asserts:

Thomas(1983) distinguished SOCIOPRAGMATIC FAILURE, which takes place when a learner fails to perform the illocutionary act required by the situation (i.e. deviates with regard to appropriateness of meaning), and PRAGMALINGUISTIC FAILURE, which occurs when a learner tries to perform the right speech act but uses the wrong linguistic means (i.e. deviates with regard to appropriateness of form). Brown (2014) elucidates the point through borrowing an example:

American: What an unusual necklace. It’s beautiful!
Samoan: Please take it. (Holmes & Brown, 1987, p.526)

It is crystal clear that the nonnative English speaker misunderstood the illocutionary force of (the intended meaning) of the utterance within the context. Holmes and Brown (1987:525) have found that “there is evidence that paying compliments is a troublesome aspect of English for learners from different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, Wolfson (as cited in Ellis. 2008:170) “argues that by failing to conform to native- speaker complimenting norms, learners deprive themselves of the opportunities to establish relationships with native speakers”. Learners, therefore, do need to develop their linguistic and sociolinguistic competence.

3. Definition of Compliment Speech Act

To define the sort of knowledge about compliment speech act which may be gained through the ethnographic approach, one must have a vivid definition of the term. Holmes (1988, P.446) defines a compliment as follows:
A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker. Usually the person addressed for some ‘good’ (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer.

Brown and Levinson (1987:p. 101) state that “the real purpose of most compliments is to please the addressee”. Herbert (1990:211) also believes that “the function of the compliment is to make the addressee (hearer) feel good. Pomerantz (1978:107) does not use compliments in the ordinary sense. She embraces utterances such as the following among compliments:

A: Well any way nice talking to you.
B: Nice talking to you honey.

In addition, she often uses words such as ‘compliments’, ‘praise’, or ‘credit’ interchangeably in spite of their differences in the folk taxonomy of kinds of speech acts. Wierzbicka (1991:136) presumes that what Pomerantz really has in mind is a class of speech acts which can be characterized in terms of the following semantic components:

I want to say something good about you.

The part and the parcel of above definition is based on the assumption that the speaker wants to please the addressee by saying something good about his/her possession, skill, etc. This view is in harmony with Wierzbicka’s definition in which she postulates the components of complimenting as follows:

- I perceive something good about your Y.
- I want to say something good about you because of that.
- I say: (something good about X and X’s Y).
- I feel something good thinking about that.
- I say this because I want to cause you to know that.
- I am thinking something good about you.
- I assume that you will feel something good because of that. (Wierzbicka, 1987:201)

4. Method

In order to investigate the management of compliments, in two different cultures, American and Persian, to describe similarities and differences in behavior, and to explicate the forms and the norms or better still, cultural premises that provoke compliments, two modes of inquiry were used: 1) interview and 2) questionnaire.

4.1 The interview

To permit members of both cultures an opportunity to describe spontaneously the Compliment speech act, a few interviews were conducted. The subjects, eight Persians and four Americans who were university students ranging from 18-25 years of age, equally represented by males and females were asked to comment on the following:

1. The circumstances under which they give and receive compliments.
2. The attributes (the topical content of compliments) which were praised.
3. The way the compliment is provided.

The interviews were conducted in the native language of the interviewees. The method of eliciting oral data was thought to be better to reflect naturally occurring language use. However, it was difficult for the investigator to find as many American university students in Iran because of the sociopolitical upheaval in the country in the 1979 which resulted in breaking off diplomatic relations with the United States of America. To compensate the paucity of the interviewees, the investigator decided to consider the interview as a primary stage for construction of a systematic questionnaire.

4.2 The Questionnaire

As noted above, the precise construction and administration of a questionnaire was the second stage of the study whereby the cultural variables over more population were measured. The framework for elicitation was borrowed from Barnlund and Araki (1985:16) called Complimentary Mode Questionnaire (CMQ). Twelve salient situations were constructed based on two following factors:

1. The findings of the preceding procedure, viz., the interview study.

By and large, the investigator’s assumption was that the questionnaire could satisfy the content validity which implied the adequacy of the sample. In addition, the use of the questionnaire enabled the investigator to obtain more stereotyped compliments.
Which were the prototype of the individual’s actual speech.

The following episode illustrates one of the twelve situations:
The Complimenter had to envisage what s/he would say under each circumstance:

At a conference ————- is giving a good lecture and you are highly impressed with his or her ability in making complex concepts so crystal clear.

The CMQ was given to thirty freshman students between 18 and 24 years of age who studied Humanities in their own countries. To assess the influence of both sexes as a cultural variable, equal number from males and females was asked to respond. Subjects were chosen from those who had never been to the United States of America or Iran.

4.3 The Framework for the study

Upon the completion of the interviews and questionnaires, the collected data were rearranged based on the following framework:

| Table 2. Recording Compliment data by Holmes and Brown (1978:541) |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Compliment Feature      | Example                   |
| Linguistic form         | What a great hat.         |
| Response                | Thanks I like it too.     |
| Topic                   | Appearance: clothes       |
| Context                 | Early winter morning in the street. |
| Complimenter            | Male student, age 24, friend of R. |
| Age/ sex/role           | Male student, age 20, friend of C |
| Discourse position      | Following a greeting      |
| Alternative function    | Substitute for greeting   |

This framework which has been primarily proposed by Holmes and Brown (1987:541) as format for teaching compliment data is invaluable since it can not only be used for comparative purposes, but also as a model for teaching compliment speech act in the classroom. The investigator’s assumption is that the framework will elucidate pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic similarities and differences between American and Persian cultures. The outgrowth of such a study will provide the learners with practice in interpreting authentic material.

5. Data Analysis Procedures

The norm for the analysis of such lines of research is to submit the corpus to descriptive statistics, accordingly, an attempt was made to provide a list of the structures and lexicons from more frequent to less frequent which were used by Americans and Iranians in offering compliments.

5.1 The American Syntactic Patterns

In this section, the syntactic patterns used in complimenting by American subjects are presented. Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage of the use of these patterns. In the table, N refers to the number of compliments in the corpus. The particular pattern and percentages are based on a total of 300 compliments from the exchanges between the interlocutors.
Table 3. American syntactic Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYNTACTIC PATTERN</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 NP be (Intensifier) ADJ</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Your hair looks beautiful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.a. PRON is (Intensifier) ADJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. It is great</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b. I think + 1 or 1.a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. I think your apartment is fantastic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Intensifier) like NP</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enjoy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. I really like your cake</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 What (DET) ADJ NP (NP) (V)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. what a beautiful house (you) (have bought)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 PRO be (a) (Intensifier) ADJ NP (NP) (V)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. That's a very pretty dress you're wearing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 NP V (DET) (Intensifier) ADJ N</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. You did an excellent job this evening.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.a. 1 think NP V (DET) (Intensifier) ADJ N</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. I thought you handled a good role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 You (certainly) have good taste in clothes.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Well–done</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 good work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 You have lost so much weight (What have you been doing?)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 I must compliment you on your performance.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 I learned a lot from your lecture.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 My compliments to you on this delicious cake.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 You've drawn this so well.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 You deserve a lot of credits for your taste.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 You've bought a set of beautiful dishes.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 You explained everything concisely.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most frequent syntactic pattern was (1), in which the positive evaluative load is expressed in the adjective:

NP [be/look] (intensifier) ADJ

Examples of this pattern are:
Your cake is really delicious.
Your hair looks beautiful
Your apartment is fantastic.

This pattern, along with its variants accounted for 46.6 percent. Variant (1a) is very similar to pattern (1) but uses a pronoun in initial position:

It is great.

Another variation on pattern (1) and (1a) occurred in elicitation. In this pattern, the compliment is embedded in a subordinate clause introduced by I think:

(1b) I think NP Be (intensifier) ADJ
I think your apartment is fantastic.

To understand the ideational and interpersonal function of this pattern and the distinction which is made between (1) and (1b), one can rely on pragmatic grounds. Whereas in (1) the complimenter is certain about what he praises in (1b) I think followed by a compliment may serve an important politeness function. This kind of pattern is considered as a means of mitigation. It implies that the complimenter is not sure, but s/he thinks X. Brown and Levinson (1987: 164) consider this as a hedge, “hedges may suggest that the speaker is not taking full responsibility for the truth of his utterance.”

I think / believe / assume ..............

This form of embedding suggests that it is a personal opinion and this opinion may not be shared by others, meaning, I think X, although other audiences might not agree.

In the second major syntactic pattern, pattern (2), the verb carries the positive evaluative load.

(2) I (Intensifier) like/love/enjoy admire NP
Examples of this pattern are:
I really like your cake.
I really enjoyed your talk on X.

This pattern accounted for 14 percent of the compliments. It goes without saying that this pattern has another variation as follows:

(2a) I (Intensifier) like/enjoy V + ing
For example:
I really enjoyed reading your paper on X.
However, this variation was not found in the corpus.

In pattern (3), which is, grammatically speaking, an exclamatory sentence, an adjective modifying a noun expresses the positive load. This pattern may be followed by an alternative sentence:

(3) What (determiner) ADJ NP (NP) (V)
What a beautiful house (you) (have bought)!

This pattern accounted for 10.6 percent in the corpus.

Another related pattern in this regard, which is the second type of exclamatory sentence is as follows:

How ADJ NP V ADV
How nice you look tonight!

This pattern accounted for 1.6 percent of the corpus.

In pattern (4), an adjective modifying a noun expresses the semantic positive load again. However, the pattern expressed in the statement order:

(4) Pro be (a) (intensifier) ADJ NP (V)
That is a very pretty dress you’re wearing. This pattern accounted for 7 percent of compliments in the corpus.

In syntactic pattern (5), an adjective carries the positive semantic load:

(5) NP V (DET) (intensifier) ADJ N
You did an excellent job this evening. The compliments usually use these patterns when they want to comment on durative actions. The actions which have had a process. The compliments used verbs like do, handle and make. A variation of this pattern (5a) involves embedding the compliment in a subordinate clause introduced by I ‘think’.

(5a) I think NP V (DET) (intensifier) ADJ N
I thought you handled a good role.

These two patterns accounted for 4.6 percent of the compliments.

The syntactic patterns which are below 4 percent of the compliments are also listed in Table3.
5.2 The Persian syntactic pattern
As in English Corpus, a total of 300 Persian compliments has been analyzed as well. The most frequent syntactic pattern was (1) in which the positive load is expressed in the adjective:

**Table 4. Persian syntactic patterns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYNTACTIC PATTERN</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 che( ?aejæb, cheqædr) NP+ezafe—construction( Intensifier) ADJ e. g. che keyk—e what cake of delicious ?æjæb keyk—e xoshmæzze—?i how strange cake of delicious cheqædr k.eyk—e xoshmæzze—?i how much cake of delicious</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>42.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 che( cheqædr, xeyli) ADJ (V) e. g. che xoshtip shodi how shapely you have become cheqædr xoshgel shodi how much beautiful you ‘ve become xeyli xo,shgel shodi very beautiful you ‘ve become</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (baeh baeh) che( ?aejæb) NP e.g. baeh baeh che keyk—i bravo what cake</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 che ( cheqædr ,?aejæb) ADJ e. g. che qæshænge how beautiful</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 NP+ezafe—construction NP (Intensifier) ADJ budæn e. g. soxærnæni—e shoma xeyli jaleb bud lecture of you very interesting wag</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 ( cheqædr) DET NP V e.g. cheqædr? in kot væ shæl var be shoma miyad how much this suit fits you</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Prep N—ezafe—construction N (Intensifier) V e.g. æz soxænnæni—ye shoma vaqæ?æn lazzæt bordæm from lecture of you really I enjoyed</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 xæste næbashid soxænnæni—ye shi va væ girai dasht id don’t be tired lecture of eloquent attractive you had</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 shahkar kærdi peser karet heerf nædare you did well boy your job doesn’t have speech</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 vaqæ?æn bayæd be sæl iqe—ye shoma tæbrik goft really must taste of you be congratulated</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 ?aæær in sæl iqe—ye shama hærf nædare bravo taste of you does not have speech</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 bææb bææh sæfa dad i xeyli qæshæng ‘les lah kærdi brave you got your haircut very beautiful you got your haircut</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 bayesti bazi—ye shoma ra tæhsin konæm mæn I must. play of you praise I was</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 næqshetan ra xub ?i fa kærdid mæn be shoma ?eftexar mikonaem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
your role well played I am proud of you

15 vay cheqædr qæshæng bæzi kærdi m?æ? reke bud bærekæl lah
wow how beautiful you played excellent it was bravo

16 mashaæl lah næmidunestann Chen in tævana?i ra dar bravo I didn't know such abilities in ? ej ra—ye nemayesh dashte bashi the performance of the play you had

It has two other variants (1a-1b).

(1) che (?æjæb, cheqædr) NP ezafe-construction (Intensifier) ADJ
E.g. che keyk-e besyar xoshmazze? i
What cake of very delicious!
(1a) cheqædr keyk-e xoshmazze? i
How much cake of delicious!
(1b) ?æjæb lebas-e qæshængi!
How strange clothes of beautiful!

The Persian verb budæn “to be” is usually omitted in such structures.
Shafai (1363/1984) by referring to Farshidvard (1357/1978) calls these structures “jomælat-e ?ehsasi ya hayæjani” “provocative and emotional sentences.” Shafai regards the term as something logical, since the speaker or writer conveys his or her feelings, emotions, admiration, humiliation, wishes, remorse, and disgust via these structures. Such sentences are ended with (!) token in Persian. It seems that such structures are tantamount to exclamatory sentences in English Grammar. This pattern, along with its variance (1a-1b) accounted for 42.3 percent of the compliments.

In the second major syntactic pattern, pattern (2) the adjective as in the first pattern carries the positive evaluation load.

(2) Che
  Cheqædr ADJ (V)
  Xyeli
e.g. Che xoshtip shodi!
  Cheqædr xoshtegel shodi!
  Xeyli xoshtegel shodi!

This pattern accounted for 17 percent of the data.

In Pattern (3) the noun carries the positive evaluative load, and the stress is placed on the noun.

(3) Che
  ?æjæb
  Bæh Bæh Cheqædr NP
e.g. Che keki? æjæb keyki

This pattern accounted for 7.6 percent of the compliments.
In pattern (4), the adjective per se carries the positive evaluative load

\[\text{Che} \quad \text{Cheqædr (ADJ)} \quad ? \text{ajab} \]
\[e.g. \text{Che qæshænge} \quad \text{How beautiful}\]

This pattern accounted for 4.6 percent of the data.

In pattern (5), an adjective modifying a noun expresses the positive evaluative load. However, the pattern unlike the patterns 1-4 is expressed in the statement order:

\[\text{NP ezafe-Construction NP (Intensifier) ADJ budæn} \]
\[e.g. \text{soxæmrani-ye shoma xeyli jaleb bud} \quad \text{Lecture of you very interesting was}\]

This pattern just accounted for 5 percent of the compliments.

In pattern (6), the verb carries the positive evaluative load.

\[\text{(cheqædr) Dept NP V} \]
\[e.g. \text{cheqædr ? in kot væ shelvar be shoma miyad} \quad \text{How much this suit fits you}\]

It accounted for 6.3 percent of the data.

Last but not least, pattern which was of high frequency included a verb which carries the positive evaluative load.

\[\text{Prep N-ezafe-construction N (Intensifier) V} \]
\[e.g. \text{æz soxæmrani-ye shoma vage? æn lazæzæt bordam} \quad \text{From the lecture of you really I enjoyed}\]

This pattern accounted for 8.3 percent of the data.

The aforementioned patterns among the data were of higher frequency which leads to the conclusion that Persian compliments like English are highly formulaic or predictable. These formulaic polite routines have received a fair share of attention. However, one should not forget the delicacy of Persian language since it is loaded with a set of stylistic variation. Beeman (198:10) has expressed this fact:

\[\text{Persian is a language with a very simple grammatical structure and a rich set of stylistics variable that help individuals to convey accounts of their feeling. An individual has many choices in speaking that must be determined on ‘pragmatic’ grounds. It is a function of all parties in interaction to come up with the correct interpretations of what is said.}\]

On this basis these stylistic variables were found in the corpus and they are not preplanned or predictable. These accounted for 13 percent of the data in all.

5.3 The sociopragmatic Analysis

Paying compliments is one of the most difficult and perplexing aspects of communication for the people who move from one language community to another unless they understand the pragmatic and cultural grounds. Comments on one’s appearance by a person in a given situation may be considered a courtesy in one community, and a breach of etiquette in another, so it is necessary to pay a heed to topical and functional aspects of complimenting. For a compliment to be accepted in a society, it should have two characteristics as follows:

1. It must be positively valued by participants within a society.
2. It must be attributed to the addressee.

Wolfson (1983: 90) explains that, “with respect to topic, compliments fall into two major categories - those having to do with appearance and those which comment on abilities”. Manes (1983:98) comments on the first category and talks about the “overwhelming number of compliments on personal appearance, most particularly clothes and
hair-dos” and points out those aspects of appearance “which are the result of deliberate effort” (P.99). Manes (1983:101) describes Wolfson’s second category as “the quality of something produced through the addressee’s skill or effort”. With regard to Wolfson and Manes’ analysis on compliments in American society, the interviews showed stark cultural differences between Americans and Iranians. Among Americans the most frequently praised characteristics fall into appearance and personal traits. Among Iranians a wider variety of themes was present. Complimenting on appearance among a nation with a particular cultural ethos is completely different from that of a society which is grounded in individualistic values and traditions. Compliments in Persian, are given and received on abilities such as a well-done job, a skillfully played game, a good meal, study etc. Furthermore, people compliment each other on ethical and spiritual values such as faith, benevolence and being conscientious and honest.

Honesty, however, among some Iranians is culturally tantamount to imbecility, gullibility and stupidity. Beeman (1986), in this regard, has a discussion under the rubric of “zerangi” (=adroitness) whereby he attempts to delineate one dimension of Iranian culture. Furthermore, Iranians as American pay compliment on material possessions, such as furniture, automobiles, houses, etc. While Americans say “your baby is adorable” some Iranians say “che bache zeshii” (=what an ugly child). There is a conviction among the majority of Iranians concerning “cheshm zaxam” (= harm caused by an evil eye). In order to prevent addressee from such a feeling, compliments, in Persian, purposefully violate the maxim of quality (=be truthful) (Grice 1975).

One of the other dimension of Iranian Compliments per se, is the way compliments are interpreted. The assumption is that compliment has a FLATTERY functionality: the view that compliments are paid for the vested interest. If a student, for example, in this country, who has not spoken to an instructor during the course, suddenly compliments an instructor on a lecture, an exam, the method of teaching, etc., the instructor may be justified to assume that the student’ compliment is a move to introduce a request of some sort, e.g., for an extension of the deadline of handing in the term paper or exemption of an exam. Beeman (1986) has pondered over this particular behavior among Iranians and concluded that there is an opposition in Iranians’ culture, the contrast between their “zaher” (=external) and baten (=internal). He believes that these two aspects are pervasive in Iranian schemata or thought. Beeman (1986:11) points out the features of “zaher” and “baten” as follows:

The zaher (=external) is the domain of cautions and Controlled expression where a hedge is put on one’s true feeling and where a proper public face must be put on one’s words.

Such a perspective makes Iranians be more careful about their zaher whereby they keep themselves out of danger. This does not lead one to the conclusion that all of the Iranian compliments are fake and insincere. This varies from individual to individual. Candidly speaking, the terms compliment and flattery are to a great extent, confounded in Iran since the motto of the majority of Iranians as Beeman (1986) believes is zaher ra hefz kon (= protect external appearances). Americans, however, in spite of using so many compliments, draw a sharper boundary between compliment and flattery. The crux of the discussion in this paper is that the Americans by paying compliments are after offers of solidarity. On this basis, it is a naïve interpretation that compliment speech act is mono functional, but rather, multifunctional in the sense that the compliment speech act expresses more than one illocutionary or pragmatic force simultaneously. It is the context which makes the pragmatic crystal clear.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the compliment speech act across American and Persian cultures. In doing so, two procedures were used: interview and questionnaire. The interview was a good opportunity which allowed the members of both cultures to comment on their behavior in paying compliments. Since, the interviewees did not have any information about the purpose of the interviewer, the data were not stilted, rather, they were genuine. This sort of data collection was in line with Labov. Labov (1972:209) believes that “our goal is then to observe the way people use language when they are not being observed” borrowing the term from Labov, the observer’s paradox. The large amount of information the investigator in this study obtained was collected via interview. The questionnaire was also a useful procedure since it was also necessary to get a large sample of compliment speech act, according to which the investigator could analyze the compliment forms, semantic load and social norms. The study corroborated the general findings on compliments in both American English and Persian emphasizing the fixity and formality of compliment forms. It was also found that compliments were accepted more often among Americans. Iranians usually use self-lowering forms in their responses to compliments to show their humility and modesty. Self-lowering has been considered a virtue for demonstrating respect. It is concerned with the language
of Taorof which is an indispensable facet of Iranian culture. Taorof language per se is an amazing line of research which was not in the scope of this study.

REFERENCES


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APPENDIX: Questionnaire scenarios

1. At a meeting X is giving an excellent explanation of an issue and you are impressed with his/her ability to express complex issues so simply and clearly. What would you say?

2. X has recently had a haircut. What would you say?
3. X has recently bought a new house. You are visiting his/house for the first time. What would you say?
4. X has got a new-born baby. You are visiting him/her for the first time and want to express your feeling in this regard. What would you say?
5. You are in a museum shop. X is about to purchase a set of dishes that you admire. You are impressed with his/her good taste in ceramics. What would you say?
6. X has worn a new suit/blouse and skirt and you are impressed by it. What would you say?
7. You are at university, and class has just finished. While you are putting your books away, you teacher notices your new backpack. What would s/he say?
8. You have just finished having dinner at home that was prepared by your friend’s mother. What would you say?
9. X has lost a lot of weight. You are impressed with such a change in one’s appearance. What would you say?
10. X has drawn a house beautifully. You are highly impressed with his/her skill in drawing. What would you say?
11. You have asked X to do something for you and s/he has done it in the best way possible. What would you say?
12. X has a very bright son/daughter and his/her parents are happy for that. What would you say?
YOU ARE WHAT YOU BELIEVE
TOWARDS A NEW IDENTITY ISLAMIC IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT
One of the amazing state-of-the-art areas of sociolinguistics is identity. Different types of identity have been studied thus far. The present study aims at investigating one type of identity referred to as religious or Islamic identity. One hundred prophetic aphorisms were used as the corpus of the study Islamic identity is a complex construct defined by many a component. It was found that some attributes such as knowledge, piety, moral virtues, and attention to the rights of women, an egalitarian view towards different ethnicities and racial groups as well as tolerance were the component parts of the identity construct. The study presented a social constructivist approach suggesting that how a person talks, indicates a perspective of who s/he is. It determines their own identity. This identity determines its own variety of language.

Key terms: Community of practice, Identity, Islam, speech community, constructivism

1. Introduction
Despite his advancement in science and technology, man is still in the infancy of knowing himself. He does not know his real identity. The key to understanding himself is not through science, technology and knowledge, rather it is through philosophy and religion. It is through the latter that he would understand his real identity. To define himself and the world around himself, who he is, what the world is. Although he utterly bypassed the scholasticism and resorted to scientism after the dark ages, today he is, more than ever, encountered a conundrum. Mental disturbance and disappointment, philosophical ignorance, scientific and religious disbelief and nihilism are a couple of his concerns and challenges before him. The irony is that he has understood a lot about his world but ignorant of himself.

Sociolinguistics as a young discipline has been affected by the sociological trajectory. It is not immune from theoretical trends. The metamorphosis which has been undergone is from attention to the society to the individual since it is the individual who has the real human nature. That a pivotal role is given to the individual has had a major impact on how sociolinguists approach data collection and data analysis. Whether to rely on the society or the individual was one of the ideological and scientific contentious issues in the nineteenth century. The post-modern trend in sociolinguistic studies has, since 1990s, moved from variation by large number of people in society or technically speaking, speech communities to the individuals’ use of language in communities of practice which has had a major influence on how sociolinguists look at the data collection and data analysis. Meyerhoff (2012, p.282) makes the following comment:

Deterministic social categories, or social categories imposed by the analyst, were avoided in favor of a more bottom-up, exploratory approach that treated identities as emergent and treated the relationship between language and identity as mutually constitutive—how you talk constructs a perspective of who you are, and who you are interacts with the choices you make when you talk. This approach is also known as a social constructionist approach because it sees identities as being constructed in and through social practices that include, but are not restricted to, language.
Islamic Identity is the Cinderella line of research among different and mushrooming identities which have been studied thus far: national, ethnic, gender class identities and so forth. This type of identity is not comparable with the other types of identity due to the fact that it determines our real identity. We are but our thoughts, attitudes, feelings and emotions. This is a state-of-the-art sociolinguistic issue on the ground that Islam as a school of thought, today, more than ever, is being assaulted by the diabolical minds and devilish thoughts. Its prophet is lampooned and his reputation is tarnished by pugnacious and bellicose enemies and the repercussion of this preposterous and unethical act is to sideline or marginalize more than one billion Moslems across the world. They are introducing Islam as a religion of violence and modern barbarism, a religion which is after butchering and slaughtering humanity. To them, the Islamic identity is regarded as a notorious identity. Sociolinguistically speaking, in a millennium which is called an age for dialogue among the civilizations and communication, the human society should be deprived of having interaction with the Moslems, a variation of language culturally pragmalinguistically, sociopragmatically and stylistically.

However, the picture which is painted in the holy book, the Koran concerning the identity is to adopt Mohammad as a paragon of virtue, and an exemplar. The holy book states that:

\[
\text{Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad P.B.U.H) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for the Meeting with Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much.}
\]

\[\text{Surah Al-Ahzab verse 21}\]

It behooves every Moslem primarily and all human beings in general to ponder over Muhammad’s personality and character as an apostle and a messenger of Allah to understand the attributes for which he is introduced as a paragon and an exemplar. Given this fact, one will get the way he communicated, The style he used in his communication. The whatness and howness of his speech which gave him a certain identity. This is why he was, according to himself, given the best speech and he wanted the Moslem Community to listen to his speech, record them and make the posterity aware of them. The study of identity from this vantage point is enticing and seminal.

2. What is identity
IDENTITY is a phenomenon which has been with us ever since. It determines who we are, where we come from, viz, our source and origin, how we as human beings in one way or another, are related to each other. What our definition of the world is and so many other questions. Liliana Cabral and Maria do Carmo Leite de Oliveira (as cited in Anna de Fina, Deborah Schiffrin, and Michael Bamber, 2006:189) define identity as a “performative act”, realized when people expose who they are at each moment in specific social interaction”. Identity is irreplaceable. It is better understood when one discusses ‘a crisis of identity’ for example, the prominent American political scientist Samuel Huntington (as cited in Wardhaugh: 2010, 391) says that:

\[
\text{Americans are currently experiencing a crisis of identity. For nearly two centuries they upheld the ‘American creed’ some of the components of which were the English language, Christianity, religious commitment, the rule of law, the importance of individual rights, Protestant values of individualism, and a strong work ethic.}
\]

Wardhaugh (2010:392) further comments that “According to Huntington, this creed provided Americans with a national identity that began to erode in the 1960s”. Some of the reasons for the erosion of this identity are “the influx of immigrants, a tolerance of multilingualism the encouragement of bilingualism, the rise of group identities based on race, ethnicity, and gender the growing commitment of elites to cosmopolitan identities and globalization” (392).

Regarding the genesis of identity, it was thought that it achieved its final form during childhood and culminating, in Erikson’s terminology, “identity crisis” (Erikson: 1950). In disagreement with this perspective, experts in the discipline argued about when and how larger aspects of this identity congealed. However. Some theorists as well as feminists have newly encouraged students of identity to change their views drastically suggesting that human identity is not fixed and stable, but rather, it is in a flux. Much of the work in this respect has to do with the larger aspects of identity such as gender, ethnicity, and sexual preference. Identity in this respect, is constructed individually and socially. Riley (2007) considers that identity is such a cumbersome phenomenon to be defined. He asserts that:
For over 2000 years, identity has been regarded as a philosophical aporia, a problem so deep that we can hardly formulate the questions, let alone the answers. Some idea of just how knotty a problem it is can be gathered from the fact that not only is the debate as intense now as it was in the times of Aristotle or Aquinas, say, but it is still essentially about the same issues and concepts as they are still just as intractable and just as important (2007, 70). Wardhaugh (2010:7) maintains that:

*Identity is constructed from interaction with others and is the result of our socialization, i.e., our experiences with the outside world as we have dealt with that world in all its complexity. Consequently, many factors affect it: race, ethnicity, gender, religion, occupation, physical location social class, kinship, leisure activities, etc.*

Down the decades three schools of thought have been introduced and emphasized in the discipline of psychology. The most recent school of thought is constructivism which underscores some typical themes including discourse, sociocultural factors, construction of identity, and zone of proximal development (ZPD), cooperative learning and discovery learning. Constructivism is tantamount to a hermeneutic tradition which has to do with the construction of reality or meaning. This tradition is in stark contrast with a nomothetic tradition of empiricism. Scientific methodology, and prediction (Ochner: 1979).

As noted above, meaning is the part and parcel of reality. To elucidate what one means by meaning, Thomas (1995:22) puts forward:

*Meaning is not something that is inherent in the words alone, nor is it produced by the speaker alone or hearer alone. Making meaning is a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance (physical, social and linguistic), and the meaning potential of an utterance.*

Concerning the three schools of thought: Behaviorism, cognitivism and Constructivism, Brown (2014:92) states that “ancient Greek philosophers reminded their audiences of the importance of body, mind and soul in their enquiry”. These are in harmony with the three schools of thought. To have a fully-fledged definition of identity, it is inevitable to take all dimensions of human beings: body, mind and soul into account. This is an inclusive definition of IDENTITY. Riley (2007:70) corroborates this truism in the following way:

*The mind/body/soul/brain problem, the monadic as against the multiple self, or the relationship of the individual to society, the survival of the soul after the body’s physical extinction- all those dualisms, Cartesian or otherwise, along with solipsism, relativism, determinism and various Other-isms that want to get into act.*

The investigator’s focus in this paper is on the formation of religious or Islamic identity: how each religious individual through internalizing and practicing religious precepts and examples or better still words and deeds decides who s/he genuinely is. What her or his values and preferences are. This is perceived via social interactions with one another. Through interactions one, wittingly or unwittingly, working toward the creation and re-creation of her or his identity. This identity determines one’s ethos, values, attitudes and behaviors. These are manifested in communication, so speech and communication represent one’ identity. As soon as we open the mouth we show our real character and identity. Norton (2000:5) forcefully explains the existing relationship among language, identity and context as follows:
Furthermore, she uses the term identity “to reference how a person understands his or her relationship to the world” (Norton, 2000:5). Holmes and Hazen (2014:293) underscore that “identity is indeed a matter of social indexicality, but identities are constructed and inferred in the subtle dynamics of acts of speaking”. Time and space are two factors which construct this relationship and a person can predict the possibilities for the future.

3. Method
To investigate the research question that is the degree to which one possesses Islamic identity derived from the prophet’s behavior, words and deeds with two characteristics of validity and reliability, the investigator primarily needed a corpus for this study. The corpus was borrowed from one of the great philosophers and thinkers, the ideological architect of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 in Iran. He was a prolific writer, the exponent of Islamic thought and a lecturer. Someone known across the world, Morteza Motahari. One of the books written by him is titled SEIRI DAR SIRE- NABAVI: (An investigation in prophetic conduct). In the appendix provided at the end of the book, 100 prophetic aphorisms were listed from the reliable sources. This list was already used by one of the great investigators of Iran who had decided to select 100 statements from the great prophets of Allah: Moses, Jesus Christ Muhammad and a host of others. He was going to paint a picture of each prophet, how they thought, how they behaved. The corpus was primarily translated from Persian into English. To be certain about its validity, it was compared with its Arabic version, the language used by Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). It goes without saying that the statements, gems of wisdom and aphorisms left by him are, metaphorically speaking, unfathomable oceans and it is beyond the scope of this study to include all of them. This truism regarding the corpus made the investigator embark upon the law of parsimony in collecting and designing the data.

Given that any scientific work needs at least three levels of reductionism: data reduction, complexity reduction and context reduction (Checkland, 1981). The thing that is the concern of the investigator in this line of research is clarifying the fact that ISLAMIC IDENTITY is a complex construct defined by countless number of components. It is necessary to probe the interlocking system of laws, scientifically speaking, a nomological network (Fulture and Davidson: 2007). What is required is to de-construct this type of identity, to dissect all the components of this identity. When this is done, no one dares to consider oneself an individual with a religious or Islamic identity unless s/he possesses all or some of those components.

4. Data analysis
One of the salient attributes incorporated in the corpus is the emphasis made on knowledge. The prophet prods the Moslems to be knowledgeable in all aspects. This reliance on seeking knowledge would cause Moslems to be closer and closer to their creator. This is an open-ended and unstoppable province. Knowledge is an elusive concept. For the sake of the discussion, it is necessary to pinpoint that knowledge falls into two categories: one is what is heard, the other is the predisposition to take initiative, and to be the problem-solver of the new issues. A couple of aphorisms in this regard are as follows:

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Nomological Net is a network of links between constructs, between constructs and observable variables and between observable variables. A theory specifies the hypothesized nature of the relationships, which can be tested empirically (Glenn Fulcher and Fred Davidson, 2007:373).
The prophet (peace be upon him) in Badr War, for the first time in the history of mankind decided to release the prisoners of war provided that they teach reading and writing to ten children of Moslems. This emphasis on literacy indicates that knowledge is one of the cornerstones of human beings’ identity. Likewise, the ink of the scholars and scientists, to him, was superior to the blood of the martyrs. Furthermore, he wanted his companions to arrive at literacy as well as foreign languages from the disbelievers and Jews.

It goes without saying that seeking knowledge has nothing to do with diploma certificates which are acquired through dubious ways, neither are the inflated scores. Both of these factors have been led to an identity crisis in the modern world, in other words, there is not any harmony between what the students study at the university and the licenses they hold.

2. The second factor which comes into play in shaping the Islamic identity is piety and being God-fearing. The prophet notes that:

O, mankind, verily your Lord is one, and your father is one, and Adam is from dust. There is not any superiority of Arabs over non-Arabs. The most honorable of you is the most pious.

He asserted that piety gives peace and tranquility to both body and soul. It is one of the other standards for the primacy of one over the other, a criterion for judgment and evaluation among human beings.

After 1430 years, one cannot find anyone to have so beautifully talked about the equality of mankind. This egalitarian view is in stark contrast with racism and racists who vividly or tacitly express the fallacious point of view that ‘blood will win’. This is one of the great issues treated by critical discourse analysts these days (Van Dijk, 1993). It is the duty of CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) to analyze the (re)production of the inequality and discrimination among the people of the world. One example for this discrimination and racism is Apartheid which is not necessarily germane to South Africa but in its modern forms across the world. For D’ Souza (as cited in Van Dijk, 1998) racism is believing in the existence of a biological distinction between different groups and races. This distinction would cause a feeling of chauvinism and superiority on one side, and inferiority on the other side. This feeling becomes intrinsic and innate and leads to a basis for discrimination and segregation. Different manifestations of this phenomenon today are the irrational antipathy among the people of the world with different names and ideologies and isms. Prophet Muhammad rightly believes that all men and women are the members of the same body created from one essence. If fate brings suffering to one member, the others cannot stay at rest. What is going on today, in Palestine, Iraq, Syria and currently in Yemen saddens not only the Moslems but also all of the people across the world regardless of their faith whatsoever. By and large, what is emphasized in Islam is having a religious identity. Instead of relying on race, nationality, blood, political affiliations and the like, the emphasis is made on Islamic Ummah. The Ummah has a trajectory and an aim and the role of prophet and Imam is to help and lead the people toward their goal. The Ummah has a global mission to follow the prophet’s teaching. To be a model for the people of the world.

Moral virtue and ethics are the other components of the Islamic identity. The raison d’etre of his mission was essentially for promoting morality. Muhammad, in this regard, announces that “I was delegated as a prophet to perfect moral virtues”. Sadly speaking, human society has lost very many of these moral precepts and examples. Moral maxims and culture should be intertwined; otherwise, its repercussion is the catastrophe which is ahead of human society these days.

The fourth attribute emphasized by the prophet is attention to the rights of women, to their human identity and dignity. Unfortunately, one of the illnesses of the human society is inattention to the rights of women in general. The same is true within Moslem society. Bloor and Bloor (2007:94) state that:
Consideration of gender identity is important because in most – if not all-places in the world there is still considerable gender discrimination in terms of educational opportunity, job inequality, income, and child care provision. There is a concerted struggle going on to rectify the situation. In most cases, it is the men who benefit from the status quo but not in every case.

The Moslems are advised not to trivialize the women’ role in the society and turn a blind eye on women. They are required to behave their women well. Hence, the paradise is introduced as a place that mothers primarily will step on. Women should not be sidelined or marginalized in the society. Their voices should be heard. Sociolinguistically speaking, the human society should not deprive itself from this type of variation in speech which is what sociolinguistics proper is after. Women’s variety of speech should not be dismissed as preposterous, irrelevant, inappropriate or without substance. It is incumbent upon the discourse analysts to unmask these symptoms of the sickness of the human society and bring them to the fore. Needless to mention that the status quo regarding the inequity and inequality of the rights of women caused a feministic movement which is under the scrutiny of CDA analysts. The insight gained via this analysis can be used to bring about more equity, justice, and hope which leads to the betterment of the human family. It is astounding that hundreds of years ago, the prophet paid attention to the subtlety and delicacy of the minutiae of the human society.

Despite the global propaganda and the ill-intention of the enemies of Islam, a nasty picture is portrayed about the identity and personality of prophet Muhammad that he spread his school of thought, say, Islam via violence and by wielding the sword. Nonetheless, as he was sending one of his Companions to Yemen to introduce Islam, he addressed his delegate, Mo’az, as follows:

O, Mo’az give glad tidings but do not cause the people to escape (from religion) so much so that they detest it. Take it easy and do not take it hard.

Vow! The statement is terrific! It seems that it is for today. A group of pseudo Moslems, around the globe, with their draconian laws and measures notoriously attempt to diffuse their fake version of Islam by committing heinous crimes. And what is the sad side effect of this modern barbarism? A phenomenon referred to as Islamophobia. Is that the Islamic identity? To kill and mutilate countless number of men, women and innocent children in the name of Almighty God. One is affected by this fragment of poetry of the great Persian poet, Sa’di Shirazi:

Exercise liberality; neither conflict, nor rancor

That thou mayst bring a world beneath thy signet-ring.

(The Bustan of Sa’di)

Tolerance is one of the issues emphasized by the prophet. Some might think that religion and tolerance are mutually exclusive. Intolerance would certainly lead to violence, verbally and instrumentally. To be tolerant as a religious person means to adopt a laissez stance in facing different views. It does not mean to be wishy washy, to bypass ‘the article of faith’ or to dilute one’s identity. Muhammad teaches the Moslems to eschew pugnacity. He asserts that: “After idolatry, the other thing I was prohibited to do was to be bellicose and war-like.”

Good-temperedness was also encouraged. One of the attributes of the students of Islamic identity is having a good temperament. As Rumi, one of the other great Persian poets says: “In the world of pursuit I have found no virtue better than Good temper.”

Sense of responsibility is another characteristic of the owners of the Islamic identity. Unlike the common understanding of the people who oftentimes admonish each other to paddle their own canoe, the Moslems are advised to be committed to each other and not to shrink from the responsibility. The world wherein we live today is a segregated world. What we are required today is to be together, to keep an eye on each other. However, one fact which is interspersed in the whole article is the meaning which is the bona fide definition of identity It is the robust conviction of the investigator that whoever is devoid of meaning is not apt to have the sense of responsibility. Such a person is irresponsible.

Much emphasis is made on the language and speech. It is the speech which is the yardstick for beauty. A genuine Moslem is the one who does not bother the others via their tongue, a venomous tongue, using tongue for slander, gossip and calumny. Sa’di Shirazi, in this regard says:
The tongue came (from God) for thanks and praise,  
The grateful one moves it not in slander,  
The ear is the thoroughfare for the Koran and counsel,  
Strive not to listen to calumny and falsehood.

Flattery which is abuse of the tongue is also repudiated by the prophet. He says that you should scatter dust on the flatterer’ faces. Unfortunately, flattery today has become a means by which some groups of people in the society achieve money and position. They are seeking the ladders of promotion, occupying the higher position and the repercussion of this for the society is a corrupt society, hence, one not behold the beauty of a meritocracy system, rather mugs and hooligans are given this opportunity to take control of some sectors of the society.

5. Conclusion
One of the most important features of human kind, unlike the other animals is his or her identity, dignity and individuality. Every human being due to their complexity as a species, has their own identity. What has been studied in this paper is a certain type of identity, referred to as religious or Islamic identity. To the investigator’ knowledge, this is one of the beautiful and pregnant areas which is very illuminating, and seminal. The crisis today is a human crisis, viz, the crisis of identity. Reliance on Islamic identity today is one solution to the incessant number of challenges which is ahead of human society. Although the people of the world have their own divergent identities concerning their race, nationality, class, gender and the like, they can come together around a new identity, that is, religious or Islamic identity. The components of this type of identity are not vivid. To elucidate the issue, 100 aphorisms of Prophet Muhammad were used and analyzed. This paper was written in an attempt to bring the Islamic identity to the fore in hopes that the insight gained can be used for a better variety of communication which is the determinant of one’s identity. It was found that identity is not just something one can decide on oneself, rather, it is social, constructed and emerged based on one’ religious ethos. Language and identity go together.

The crux of the current study is that the world today unlike the past has become aimless, expressionless, meaningless and useless. if there is one crisis of identity in the world today unlike what Huntington (2004) thinks, it is losing one’s religious identity. Man’s nature is Divine. It is this nature which again invites human beings to return to their religious identity. It is through which that man would be able to put an end to the mess around itself. When this happens, the variety of their speech will change and this change in language, speech and communication would construct a perspective of who you are. It is the religious identity which gives real meaning to mankind.

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INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS’ LISTENING PERFORMANCE VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY INSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT
EFL learners’ success over language learning owes a lot to the studies of strategy-based instruction. Regarding listening as an important skill in academic world, debates go on over the implementation of listening strategy instruction. Thus, the current study intended to investigate the effect of strategy training on intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension. To this end, 60 intermediate learners at the Iran Language Institute (I.L.I) were selected out of 80 through Pet test used for homogenization. They were divided into two groups, one experimental and one control group. Then, they were given Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) as pretest which was applied to know the level of familiarity of the participants about listening strategies. The experimental group undertook the training program period for seven class sessions, while control group didn’t receive any treatment. Later, both groups undertook the same listening comprehension (posttest). In order to distinguish any significant difference between the students’ use of metacognitive listening strategies before and after the training program, MALQ was administered for the second time. Analysis of the scores of posttest by means of paired t-test revealed that experimental group outperformed the control one significantly regarding the impact of metacognitive strategy training. It gives teachers different insights on the incorporation of metacognitive strategies and consider them as a part of learning strategies for listening comprehension.

Keywords: listening performance, metacognitive strategy, strategy-based instruction

1. Introduction
Most scholars believe that listening comprehension is at the heart of L2 learning and developing other language skills can be affected by the development of L2 listening skills (Rost, 2002). Despite being considered a passive process, listening comprehension is an active process (Jinhong, 2011; O’Malley, Chamot & Küpper, 1985; Rost, 2002). According to their definitions, listening comprehension is not a passive activity in which listener receives information and then comprehend it but is a process-oriented activity which process the aural input step by step and integrate background knowledge to information in the listening text.

Recent reviews on listening comprehension and its considerable role in communication have focused on factors that help EFL learners become more proficient and successful listeners. Among the effective factors, one of the most important topics in L2 and FL research has been the use and development of language learning strategies. Tarone (1980), O’Malley et al. (1985), Oxford (1990), Goh (2000) and many others have examined a wide variety of issues related to learning strategies. Regarding strategy training, Mendelsohn believes that, “A strategy-based approach teaches learners how to listen effectively by instructing them in the use of strategies” (1995,p.134).
Learning strategies, by which learning and using language is obtained, are mental and communicative procedures which can play a remarkable role in listening comprehension in order to enhance the efficiency of L2 listening instruction.

Since the evolution of theoretical basis of listening strategies, application of the appropriate listening strategies has been of great importance in order to regulate the process of L2 listening comprehension. Learning strategies are commonly divided into metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective. Clearly proficient listeners use all of them altogether, and the form of strategy use changes according to the different situations.

Regarding the variety of learning strategies, metacognitive strategies are considered to be the most important ones by which learners have the ability to monitor and regulate their development, performance, and future learning. According to McDonough (1999), instruction of metacognitive strategies explicitly impresses the listeners’ metacognitive knowledge and improves their listening comprehension. Chamot and Rubin (1994) state the significance of strategies that students use for accomplishing specific learning assignments, presenting new strategies explicitly, describing when and where metacognitive strategies can be used and supplying more practice. Various models were proposed to increase listening comprehension of learners at EFL and ESL contexts (Anderson's model (2002), Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) and Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire MALQ). Considering all above, the aim of the present study, is to investigate the effect of teaching metacognitive strategies on the learners’ listening comprehension.

2. Literature Review

Regarding listening comprehension as a requisite skill for communication, accuracy in listening is of great importance for being a communicative participant (Green, 2004). This makes the listener play an active role in cooperation with the interlocutor to fulfill the goals of interaction (Vandergrift, 1997b). Moreover, as “the amount of time a learner has to plan the different processing stages is likely to affect output” (Ellis, 2008, p. 125), it can be stated that more strategic listeners can efficiently process what is heard in a conversation, therefore, are better at creating meaning faster and responding more appropriately.

It is evident that teaching English as a foreign language owes a lot to the findings contributed to the body of literature, mainly the strategy-based instructions. “A strategy-based approach teaches learners how to listen effectively by instructing them in the use of strategies” (Mendelsohn, 1995, p.134). Mendelsohn (1995) believes that a strategy-based approach towards teaching listening benefits learners in a number of ways, such as listening more effectively. Research has shown that in general, good listeners use a variety of metacognitive, cognitive, social and affective strategies and strategy instruction helps improve listening comprehension (Cohen, 1990).

In order to clarify the concept of metacognitive listening strategy, it would be wise to briefly elaborate metacognition in cognitive psychology. Metacognition refers to an executive control including monitoring and self-regulation. In other words, Biehler and Snowman (1993, p. 390) state that “the term cognition is used to describe the ways in which information is processed -i.e. the ways it is attended to, recognized, encoded, stored in memory for various lengths of time, retrieved from storage and used for one purpose or another. Metacognition refers to our knowledge about these operations and how they might best be used to achieve a learning goal.”

Various definitions have been registered on the concept of metacognitive strategies. According to O’Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 220), metacognitive strategies are “higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring or evaluating the success of learning activity”. Cohen (1998, p.117) stated that “metacognitive strategies deal with pre-assessment and pre-planning, on-line planning and evaluation, and post evaluation of language learning activities”.

Metacognition is divided into three components: (Flavell, 1979)

1. Metacognitive knowledge (also called metacognitive awareness) is what individuals know about themselves and others as cognitive processors.

2. Metacognitive regulation is the regulation of cognition and learning experiences through a set of activities helping people control their learning.

3. Metacognitive experiences are those experiences related to do with the current, on-going cognitive endeavor.

Metacognition consists of three different types of metacognitive awareness when considering metacognitive knowledge: Paris, Cross, and Lipson (1984)

1. Declarative knowledge: (world knowledge) refers to knowledge about oneself as a learner and about what factors can influence one’s performance.

2. Procedural knowledge: refers to knowledge about doing things (displayed as heuristics and strategies).
3. **Conditional knowledge**: refers to knowing when and why to use declarative and procedural knowledge. It allows students to allocate their resources when using strategies. This in turn allows the strategies to become more effective.

Metacognitive regulation includes three skills that are essential:

1. **Planning**: refers to the appropriate selection of strategies and the correct allocation of resources that affect task performance.
2. **Monitoring**: refers to one's awareness of comprehension and task performance.
3. **Evaluating**: refers to appraising the final product of a task and the efficiency at which the task was performed.

This can include re-evaluating strategies that were used. Similarly, Chamot, Bernhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins (1999) mentioned four metacognitive strategies: planning for learning, thinking about the learning process, monitoring production or comprehension, and evaluating learning processes.

"Metacognition is a mode of instruction that focuses on «the interactive nature of reading», rather than a passive way of receiving information from the text through word identification and task analytic learning.” (Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977, p. 241). It consists of a number of components by which students construct their learning styles from a dependent to an independent path through planning, monitoring, motivation, organization and self-regulation.

Considering all mentioned above, a deep comprehension of metacognitive listening strategies rationalize the integration of metacognitive instruction into teaching listening comprehension. Therefore, this issue aroused some researchers to investigate the effect of strategy instruction on listeners' comprehension performances.

Various studies have been conducted on the potential impact of strategy training. In a study by Ahmed Al-Alwan, Sahail Assasfah and Yousef Al-Shboul (2013), a positive relationship between EFL tenth graders’ metacognitive listening strategies awareness and their listening comprehension performance was revealed. In this study MALQ, Listening Comprehension Test (LCT) were the instruments. After administrating the tests, the results showed significant correlation between metacognitive strategy use and listening performance. Bozorgian (2012) in a small scale study investigated the impact of metacognitive instruction on listening comprehension of Iranian high intermediate EFL learners in a "strategy-based" approach of advance organization, and self-management in IELTS listening tests. The results indicated that the less-skilled listeners improved more than more-skilled listeners in the IELTS listening tests. Baleghizadeh and Rahimi (2011) explored the relationship among metacognitive strategy use, motivation and listening performance of EFL students. Through the instruments such as MALQ, AMS (Academic Motivation Scale), and the listening section of the TOEFL, the result showed a significant correlation between metacognitive strategy use and listening performance, listening performance and intrinsic motivation, as well as metacognitive strategy use and intrinsic, extrinsic motivation. Birjandi and Rahimi (2012) investigated the effect of metacognitive strategy instruction on the listening performance of EFL university students and demonstrated the positive effect of metacognitive listening strategy training on the listening performance. O’Malley and Chamot (1990) conducted a longitudinal study, to investigate the impact of strategy training on ESL learners in classrooms. The purpose of this study was to explore the effect of strategy training on the performance in academic listening, speaking and vocabulary tasks. The result pointed to the positive effect of the strategy training. Coskun (2010) also explored the positive effect of metacognitive listening strategy training on the listening performance of a group of beginner preparatory school students at a university in Turkey.

Among other empirical studies showing the choice and degree of listening strategies, Chang (2008) conducted a study related to listening task type. Zhang & Goh (2006) looked into perceived usefulness of strategies and Liu (2008) investigated learners’ attributes such as their learning style.

In some educational Systems listening skill has been put aside as a passive skill and learners lack opportunities for aural input, therefore it is the instructor’s job to find most efficient way of making learners aware of their metacognitive strategy awareness in order to increase use of these strategies which can aid EFL learners to improve their listening comprehension ability.

Consequently, as an EFL teacher, I’ve always perceived the challenges students have understanding a foreign discourse sailing to their ears. In order to overcome the present barriers and have the ability to regulate a systematic learning, the EFL learners need to be equipped with some efficient techniques and strategies. So the present study set out to investigate the effect of teaching metacognitive strategies on the listening performance. To this end the following research question and null hypothesis were formulated for this study:

**Q**: Does the application of metacognitive strategies have any impact on the EFL learners’ listening performance?

**H0**: the instruction of metacognitive strategies does not have any impact on listening performance.

### 3. Methodology
3.1 Participants
In this study, eighty intermediate female students studying English as a foreign language at Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urmia, were selected. The participants were in an age range of 15 to 23. In order to homogenize the participants, Pet test (Preliminary English Test) was administered and the learners whose score were 1 SD above and below of the mean score were selected. Sixty out of eighty learners who were homogeneous were randomly assigned into two intact classes in order to formulate a control and an experimental group. Both control and experimental groups included 30 students.

3.2 Instruments
The participants of the study went through four research instruments;
1. Pet test (Preliminary English Test) to homogenize the participants: According to the official website of Cambridge ESOL, it is an exam for people who have the ability to use everyday written and spoken English at an intermediate level. It covers all four language skills, that is, reading, writing, listening and speaking.
2. Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) to judge the participants' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of listening strategies (Vandergrift et al., 2006). The questionnaire includes 21 items rated on a six-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) without a neutral point so that respondents cannot hedge.
3. Listening Comprehension Pretest based on the listening part of the students’ book (ILI English Series).
4. Listening Comprehension Posttest (the same as pretest) based on the listening part of the students’ book (ILI English Series).

3.3 Procedure
As explained before, 80 intermediate learners undertook Pettest and 60 were selected based on the 1 standard deviation (SD) above and below the mean score. Then, they were divided into two classes both of which went through a listening comprehension pretest at the Iran Language Institute (ILI). Then, they were given Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) as pretest which was applied to know the level of familiarity of the participants about listening strategies. The experimental group undertook the training program period for seven class sessions. As far as the control group in this study is concerned, they didn’t receive any treatment and only the tests were administered (listening pretest and posttest, in addition to MALQ pre- and posttest).

The training program included metacognitive listening strategies based on Chamot and O’Malley’s model (1994) of strategy instruction (five stages) which was included in Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire. The five stages are the following:
1. Preparation: Students get prepared for strategies instruction through identifying their previous knowledge about listening strategies.
2. Presentation: The teacher demonstrated the new listening strategy and explains how and when to use it. e.g.: Explaining the importance of the strategy, asking students when they use the strategy;
3. Practice: using the strategy, students practice regular class activities.
4. Evaluation: Students self-evaluate their use of the learning strategy e.g.: Self-monitoring, self-evaluating, evaluating their leaning;
5. Expansion: Students apply the learning strategy to new tasks through the combination of strategies

After the intervention program, the same listening comprehension (posttest) was applied to see whether there is any difference between the participants’ score before and after treatment. In order to distinguish any significant difference between the students’ use of metacognitive listening strategies before and after the training program, MALQ was administered for the second time.

3.4 Data analysis
These steps involved in the study constitute the principles of the quasi-experimental research. Metacognitive strategies as the independent variable and listening performance as the dependent variable are introduced. The quantitative collected data submitted to SPSS software package for the analysis of data. In order to find out whether there is any significant difference between participants in control and experimental group, paired t-test was used.

4. Results
In order to test the research hypothesis, paired t-test was proposed. Data obtained from the pre and post-test listening tasks were used to determine students’ improvement in listening proficiency.
Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for listening comprehension pre- and posttest for experimental and control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control (Pre-test)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental (pre-test)</td>
<td>8.05</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>8.37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>12.31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 1, participants outperformed in posttest (M=12.31, SD=2.15), after receiving listening strategies. On the basis of the results, it can be argued that explicit listening comprehension strategy training based on Chamot and O’Malley’s instructional model could play a significant role in enhancing intermediate EFL learners’ listening comprehension.

Table 2. Results of paired-sample t-test for mean pretest scores of samples in experimental and control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>7.84</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.37</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 2 indicates, there was no significant difference between the control and experimental group before training program (t=.95; P<.32). In order to find out whether the listening strategy training has any effect on EFL listeners’ comprehension after strategy training, the pretest and posttest scores were compared using paired-sample t-test.

Table 3. Paired sample test for pre- and posttest in experimental and control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control pre and post</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental pre and post</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>16.12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 3, there was a statistically significant difference between students’ performance of experimental group in listening comprehension in pretest and posttest due to the effect of teaching metacognitive strategies (t=16.127; P<.000), while no significant difference was indicated between pre- and posttest.
in control group (t=3.44; P<0.05). Consequently, the research hypothesis that the instruction of metacognitive strategies does not have any impact on listening performance is rejected and the instruction of metacognitive strategy enhanced the Intermediate learners’ listening performance.

5. Discussion
Over the last 30 years, the integration of metacognitive instruction into teaching listening comprehension was of great importance for many researchers and aroused them to investigate the effect of strategy instruction on the four main skills of language teaching and learning.

The present study investigated the impact of the metacognitive strategies on listening comprehension of intermediate EFL learners. The result of the study demonstrated that after the training program, the learners outperformed in their listening performance. As a result, the intervention program of teaching metacognitive strategy touched the level of learners’ listening performance. The findings are in line with the ones conducted by Ahmed Al-Alwan, Sahail Asassfeh and Yousef Al-Shboul (2013), Coskun (2010), Bozorgian (2012), Birjandi and Rahimi (2012) all of which the results demonstrated the enhancement of listening performance through the training of metacognitive strategies. The results of the study is also in accordance with the findings of Baleghizadeh and Rahimi (2011) which revealed the positive effect of metacognitive strategies on listening comprehension.

Metacognition consists of a number of components by which students construct their learning styles from a dependent to an independent path through planning, monitoring, motivation, organization and self-regulation. Providing the kind of atmosphere in which students can profit from effective, meaningful and self-regulated learning can be one of the major goals of strategy training. In such an atmosphere, the learners will show self-discipline, put work before pleasure, and finally enhance their performance.

According to the effectiveness of strategy training posed by various studies, EFL teachers are required to broaden their strategy repertoire and their comprehension of strategy-based instruction in order to incorporate metacognitive listening strategy instruction into their teaching program (Vandergrift, 1999).

This study added to the vast body of metacognitive strategies for listening comprehension research that had been conducted in foreign language acquisition literature. The atmosphere of the study was in accordance with normal conditions of class. Moreover, the instruction of listening strategies incorporated into the curriculum with no disruption of the course syllabus. The findings of this study suggest a number of implications and extensions for students, teachers, syllabus designers and text book designers.

Regarding the pedagogical implications of this study, the findings support considerable implications in several aspects of listening strategy instruction. It gives teachers different insights on the incorporation of metacognitive strategies and consider them as a part of learning strategies for listening comprehension. As a result, it is essential that EFL teachers emphasize listening in the foreign language instruction. However research on listening provides literature with a wealth of information, many questions are abandoned unaddressed. Therefore, the field of listening comprehension strategies is still a vital one for exploration. The participants of this study were limited to intermediate female I.L.I language learners, other levels were not included. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized to higher levels.

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TEACHERS' CRITERIA VERSUS STUDENTS' CRITERIA IN SPEECH ACT RATING

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ABSTRACT
Testing and assessment issues concerning second language pragmatic competence are unchartered territories in the world of interlanguage pragmatics. However, tests which have been employed to explore learners’ sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic abilities have overwhelmingly drawn upon the speech act framework. This study investigates the criteria of two sets of Iranian EFL raters in evaluating the appropriateness of the speech acts of apology. To this end, using a five-point rating scale, eighty four advanced Iranian EFL students and thirty eight Iranian English teachers assessed the appropriateness of apology speech acts for ten different scenarios. The raters were required to write down their own criteria and reasoning for choosing a particular point on the scale. Then in the data analysis procedure, the collected data were thematically analyzed through content analysis to come up with the possible underlying themes and patterns as the dominant criteria and rationale for the two groups of raters. The analyzed data revealed both similarities and differences in the operating criteria of teachers and students in evaluating appropriateness of the speech acts. The results of this study indicated that the students’ orientation for the evaluation of appropriateness of the speech acts was more linguistically-oriented while the teachers were more focused upon both linguistic the non-linguistic criteria for the evaluation of appropriateness.

Keywords: Assessment; Interlanguage pragmatics; Sociopragmatic; Pragmalinguistic; Speech acts; Apology; Rating scale

1. Introduction
Once upon a time, it was thought that the primary focus of enquiry in language teaching was the formal linguistic properties of learners’ interlanguages (Kasper & Rose, 2001). Recently, however, SLA researchers have paid significant attention to pragmatic aspects of learner language. This has been instigated in part by the belief that a full understanding of how formal properties are learnt will not be achieved without examining the way in which these properties are used in actual communication (Ellis, 2008). From this perspective, learning a language means more than building up one’s vocabulary and manipulating the ‘grammatical rules’ to put words together to form clauses. It also includes the ability to perceive the intention of the speaker as well as the ability to use the language appropriately to communicate one’s meaning and intention. In fact, since Dell Hymes (1972, cited in Ellis, 2008) introduced the term ‘communicative competence’ to refer to the type of language knowledge in sharp response to Chomsky’s limited notion of linguistic competence, many attempts have been made to identify and characterize the components of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980, Bachman, 1990, Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1995). In all these attempts, pragmatic competence has inextricably been identified as a major component of communicative competence, albeit under different labels or nomenclatures: Hymes' sociolinguistic competence, Canale and Swain's sociolinguistic competence, Bachman's pragmatic competence, and Celce-Murcia et al's actional competence. Such pragmatic aspects when brought within L2 studies are referred to as interlanguage pragmatics (ILP). The field of ILP investigates the pragmatic competence of language learners. ILP has been defined by Schauer (2009) as “the acquisition, comprehension and production of contextually appropriate language by foreign or second language learners” (p. 2). The predominant constituting elements of ILP, as Leech pointed out, are two subcomponents: pragmalinguistics, and sociopragmatics. According to Leech's distinction, pragmalinguistics is the linguistic end of pragmatics which refers to “the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions”;
sociopragmatics is the sociological interface of pragmatics referring to the fact that the underlying participants' social perceptions are relative to specific social conditions (Leech, 1983, p.11). In SLA research, the two components have been taken into account. All in all, pragmatic competence, the ability to perform language functions appropriately in social context, forms an indispensable component of L2 communicative competence, and has attracted much research interest in L2 learning.

Appropriateness of pragmatic performance depends on sufficient linguistic and pragmatic knowledge, as well as on overall strategic capacities to implement the knowledge in communicative interaction (Taguchi, 2006). However, in ILP world, traditionally, appropriateness of L2 pragmatic performance has been established through speech act production. Influenced by ordinary language philosophy, and particularly by Wittgenstein's theory of meaning as use, J.L. Austin (1962, cited in Roever, 2011) and, later, Searle (1969) developed a systematic account of what people do when they speak. The concept of speech acts was first coined by Austin who classified speech acts into verdictives, executives, commissives, behabitiives and expositives (Searle, 1975). Searle, however, categorized them into another five categories, namely representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations (Searle, 1975; p. 13). According to Austin, it is not individual words or sentences that are the basic elements of human communication, but rather particular speech acts that are performed in uttering words and sentences, namely illocutionary acts (illocution) or speech acts in the narrow sense. In fact, the essence of Austin’s theory was based on his belief that speakers do not merely use language to say things but to do things and that thus utterances could be regarded as speech acts (Crystal, 2003; Schauer, 2009). Based on this notion he developed a system which distinguished three components of speech acts: a) the locutionary act (the actual words that the speaker uses) b) the illocutionary act (the intention or force behind the words) and c) the perlocutionary act (the effect the utterance has on the hearer). We perform speech acts when we offer an apology, greeting, request, complaint, invitation, compliment or refusal. Indeed, the notion of speech act is by and large employed to allude to the concept of illocutionary act (Ellis, 2008). Admittedly, one of the speech acts which have received conspicuous attention in ILP studies is apology. We can recognize fairly easily different instances of apologies in everyday life. In addition with requests, apologies have probably instigated more research in the past two decades than any other form of speech act from a variety of disciplines, i.e. speech act theory, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, social psychology, philosophy and the teaching of foreign languages. In a very useful article entitled ‘Apologies: what do we know’, Meier (1998) reviews insightfully and comprehensively the goals and results of ‘apology research’ within the fields of applied linguistics (including sociopragmatic studies) and social psychology. She concludes, significantly, that:
the research goals of apology studies in English are remarkably similar, namely to describe apology strategies and identify the contextual factors . . . that inform their choice of strategy, whether the study be intra- or intercultural. (p. 216)

2. Interlanguage Pragmatics Assessment
Compared with a plethora of studies on the acquisition and teaching of interlanguage pragmatics, the assessment domain of ILP seems to be in its incipient stages. ILP researchers have put forth their doubts and hesitations with regard to the validity of methods for testing interlanguage pragmatic knowledge (Jianda, 2006; Kasper & Rose, 2001). However, as Roever (2011) points out, testing of second language pragmatics is a growing area of research and practice in L2 assessment and "15 years after Hudson, Detmer, and Brown's (1995) seminal study, it is time to take stock of what has been achieved and to look ahead at ways to assess the construct of L2 pragmatic competence more comprehensively. " (p. 463).

The emergence of pragmatic tests was informed by the research in interlanguage pragmatics and cross-cultural pragmatics in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Roever, 2011), especially the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989, cited in Roever, 2011). As Roever (2011) points out: CCSARP chose the speech act (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) as its unit of analysis, and focused on cross-cultural differences in the realization of requests and apologies under different settings of the three context factors identified by Brown and Levinson (1987): relative Power of the interlocutors, degree of Social Distance (i.e. acquaintanceship and membership in a similar social group), and degree of Imposition (i.e. the cost to the hearer of carrying out the interlocutor’s request or the damage caused by an action requiring an apology). (p. 465) After the introduction of CCSARP, an accumulated body of ILP research was carried out under speech act paradigm, investigating learners' knowledge of various types of speech acts (Byon, 2004; Felix-Brasdefer, 2007; Hendriks, 2008; Schauer, 2009). In one seminal study, Hudson, Detmer, and Brown's (1995, cited in Roever, 2011) took the theoretical framework underlying CCSARP and its methodological approach as their own point of departure for developing their own pragmatic tests.
In the first phase of their projects, Hudson, Detmer, and Brown (1995, cited in Roever, 2011) developed a framework for assessing cross-cultural pragmatics. Drawing upon Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory, they came up with three variables to be included in the tests: the power of the speaker with regard to the hearer, the distance between the speaker and the hearer, and the obligation of the speaker to accomplish the acts. Then in 1995, in their second phase, they described developing test instruments with a discussion from both quantitative and qualitative points of view. As shown in Table 1, they developed the six prototype measures for assessing pragmatic competence aiming the second language English learners: a multiple-choice discourse completion test (DCT), a open-ended DCT, an oral DCT, a role play, a self-assessment for the DCT, and a self-assessment for the role play (Hudson, Detmer, & Brown, 1995, cited in Roever, 2011). In order to come up with reliable test items of each of the six prototype measures, they developed several sets of test items, piloted these test items to both native speakers of English and non-native speakers, analyzed the test results qualitatively and quantitatively, and finalized the test items of each measure. Hudson et al. also developed a 1-5 rating scale, ranging from very unsatisfactory to completely appropriate, for native speakers who rated each examinee’s response drawing upon the following criteria: ability to use the correct speech act, typical expressions, amount of speech in a given situation, formality level, directness level, and politeness level.

Table 1. Classification of Test Methods (Based on Hudson, Detmer, & Brown, 1995, cited in Roever, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cued Response</th>
<th>Free Response</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper and Pencil Measures</td>
<td>Items with multiple-choices following descriptions of situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Measures</td>
<td>Items following descriptions taped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment Measures</td>
<td>Performance on face-to-face structured oral interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct observation and evaluation of the video-taped role play and DCT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking Hudson et al.’s (1995, cited in Roever, 2011) projects as their point of departure, some other researchers investigated the reliability and validity of the instruments that Hudson et al. developed in different target language teaching contexts (Brown, 2001; Hudson, 2001; Yamashita, 1996; Yoshitake, 1997). Some other researchers construct their own test instruments to assess pragmatic competence (Roever, 2001; Tada, 2005). Yamashita (1996) used an adapted Japanese version of Hudson et al.’s six test instruments with forty-seven English-speaking JSL learners in Japan to investigate the differences among different test formats. the validity and reliability of the six types of measures, using various statistical procedures, were proved to be acceptable enough. Yoshitake (1997) used the original test with 25 Japanese EFL learners. In this study, the researcher qualitatively examined written realizations and oral production data of Japanese EFL learners, elicited from the original six types of measures developed by Hudson et al. (1995). Compared with Hudson et al.’s (1995) results, Yoshitake's (1997) results revealed that Japanese ESL learners showed a wider variety of strategies and grammatically more complex structures than Japanese EFL learners. Brown (1999) indicated that all instruments except the multiple-choice DCT were reliable in Yamashita’s (1996) study, but only the self-assessment instruments had high reliability in Yoshitake’s (1997) study. All in all, the major question in ILP assessment and studies mentioned above is that after the learners have mastered the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge of linguistic forms and strategies to implement speech acts in the target language, how, and based on what strategies do we measure and elicit their acquired interlanguage pragmatics?

3. Rater Variations in ILP Assessment

As implicitly mentioned above, among a multitude of instruments and methods for assessing ILP, speech act has enjoyed much popularity. What researchers normally did was to elicit speech acts through DCTs or role plays and appraise them based on a rating scale using trained raters. Bands described in such rating scales are indicators of pragmatic aspects of language use, focusing on areas such as tone, clarity of intention, level of formality, directness, and politeness, and use of strategies and semantic moves used to support speech acts (Taguchi, 2011). In addition
to pragmatics, Taguchi(2011) states that the scales address general command of language use, including typicality of expressions, amount of speech, coherence and organization, grammar, and word choice. He also points out that the rating could be holistic, noting general impression of learners’ performance encompassing all dimensions listed above, or analytic, showing breakdowns in learners’ performance in each of the dimensions (p.455). According to Taguchi (2011), although it seems plausible that raters comply with pre-determined criteria of appropriateness in speech act rating, very few studies have investigated actual processes involved in speech act rating. In Taguchi (2011)’s study, the variability among native speaker raters evaluating pragmatic performance of learners of English as a foreign language was empirically investigated. Drawing upon a five-point rating scale, four native English speakers of mixed cultural background (one African American, one Asian American, and two Australians) evaluated the appropriateness of two types of speech acts (requests and opinions) produced by 48 Japanese EFL students. In her study, to explore the criteria and the reasoning behind the raters’ assessment practice, individual introspective verbal interviews were carried out. Then eight students’ speech act productions (64 speech acts in total) were randomly selected, and the raters were asked to rate each speech act and then explain their rating decision. Interview data revealed similarities and differences in their use of pragmatic norms and social rules in evaluating appropriateness. In a similar fashion, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the teachers' criteria versus students' criteria in rating the speech act of apology.

4. Research Questions:
What are the criteria that advanced Iranian EFL learners use in rating a particular apology speech act in a particular situation?
What are the criteria that Iranian EFL teachers use in rating a particular apology speech act in a particular situation?

5. Method
5.1. Participants
Participants of the study were 84 Iranian advanced EFL, and also 38 English teachers. The students were university students majoring in either ‘English Translation’ or ‘English language and Literature. All of them were either the first-year or the second-year college students. The teachers were mostly MA or PhD students majoring in either TEFL or English literature who have taught English for at least 5 years. Both groups contained both males and females.

5.2. Instrument and Procedure
In this study the purpose was to investigate the teachers' criteria as well as students' criteria in rating speech acts of apology. In so doing, a questionnaire (appendix A) consisting of 10 scenarios for the speech act of apology were prepared. In each scenario, the scenario was described and a hypothetical answer was provided, then the respondents were required to choose the degree of appropriateness of speech acts based on a five-point scale from 'very unsatisfactory' to 'most appropriate' then the respondents were required to write down the criteria for choosing their options. The student's and teacher's version of the questionnaire was given to both students and teachers. Prior to the completion of the questionnaires by the respondents, the researcher himself rated a sample speech act for the request speech act. The researcher recommended that the speech acts be evaluated on their overall appropriateness, in terms of their level of politeness, formality and etc. in the given situations. The respondents were free to write down their own criteria either in English or in Persian. A significant number of students wrote down their criteria in English and the rest of them wrote them in English. Overwhelming majority of the teachers preferred to write their criteria in English.

5.3. Data Analysis
After the data were collected through questionnaires administered to both teachers and students, they were analyzed through thematic analysis and content analysis focusing on identifiable themes or patterns. Although there are copious methods of data analysis in qualitative research, content analysis has been deemed the most appropriate method for descriptive studies since “it provides a rigorous structure for analyzing data” and includes ‘thematic analysis,’ ‘semantic analysis’ and ‘latent’ content analysis (Kairuz, Crump, and O’Brein, 2007, p. 372).

6. Results and Discussion
Prior to the content analysis phase the literature for apology strategies was reviewed in order to be able to have a predication of possible emergent themes. Among the significant body of literature on various taxonomies and
categories for apology strategies (Holtgraves, 1989; Meier, 1998; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Sugimoto, 1997) Olshtain and Cohen’s (1983) taxonomy was drawn upon as framework for analyzing apology strategies (Table 2).

Table 2. Olshtain and Cohen’s (1983) taxonomy of apology strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Semantic Formulas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An expression of an apology (also Illocutionary Force Indicating Device or IFID)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. expression of regret</td>
<td>I’m sorry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. an offer of apology</td>
<td>I apologize.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. a request for forgiveness</td>
<td>Excuse me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. An explanation or account of the situation</td>
<td>The bus was late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. An acknowledgment of responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. accepting the blame</td>
<td>It’s my fault.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. expressing self-deficiency</td>
<td>I wasn’t thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. recognizing the other person as deserving apology</td>
<td>You are right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. expressing lack of intent</td>
<td>I didn’t mean to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. An offer of repair</td>
<td>I’ll pay for the broken vase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A promise of forbearance</td>
<td>It won’t happen again.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to Olshtain and Cohen’s (1983) taxonomy of apology strategies, the famous three context factors as identified by Brown and Levinson (1987) were also scrutinized, these factors were relative Power of the interlocutors, degree of Social Distance and degree of Imposition.

In the content analysis, the most frequent statements mentioned by the interviewees concerning their own criteria for rating of apology speech acts were extracted and compared to the supportive literature on speech act (apology) rating and interlanguage pragmatics assessment. The majority of the themes and patterns obtained from the content analysis were in line with the supportive literature. However, there were some slightly significant differences as far as the teachers’ criteria versus students’ criteria were concerned.

Upon the in-depth content analysis of the scenarios and with an eye to the literature on apology strategies and particularly drawing upon Olshtain and Cohen’s (1983) taxonomy of apology strategies, and also the three factors mentioned by Brown and Levinson (1987) all the possible emergent themes for the criteria/strategies of apology speech act were listed as follows in Table 3:

Table 3. Possible emergent themes for the criteria/strategies of apology speech act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The degree of formality</th>
<th>The degree of imposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The degree of politeness</td>
<td>The validity of the content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree of explanation and reasoning</td>
<td>The amount of speech (concise or verbose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree of power relation</td>
<td>The degree of directness of apology strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree of social distance</td>
<td>The degree of repair or compensation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above mentioned categories were employed for data coding of all the collected questionnaires for both teachers and students. In order to answer the first research question, the data for students’ criteria in speech act rating were fed into SPSS. The result of the statistical analysis for each situation has been given below:

(b1)
As the results reveals "explanation" has the highest frequency, then formality with 8 frequencies, also the criteria of power, imposition, and directness have 4 frequencies and finally, content, politeness and repair have the frequency of 1.

Situation 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<td>formality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explanation</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<td>imposition</td>
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<td>8.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>content</td>
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<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>System</td>
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<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

As the result indicates, explanation has the highest frequency, the second frequency is of repair with 14 frequencies and then the criteria of imposition, amount of speech and politeness are the next frequencies.

Situation 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Frequency</th>
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<tr>
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<td>11.0</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
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<td>amount of speech</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>54.8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>19.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for explanation, and then directness and repair respectively.

### Situation 4

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<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>7.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>10.3</td>
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<td>explanation</td>
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<td>27.7</td>
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<td>44.1</td>
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<td>2.9</td>
<td>47.1</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imposition</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

As the result indicates, explanation has the highest frequency, the second frequency is of content with 10 frequencies and then the criteria of repair and politeness are the next frequencies respectively.

### Situation 5

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<tr>
<td>politeness</td>
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<td>22.7</td>
<td>32.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for explanation, and then imposition with the frequency of 13 and then content and politeness have the higher frequencies respectively.

### Situation 6

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formality</td>
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<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>politeness</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the result indicates, directness has the highest frequency, the second frequency is of politeness with 17 frequencies and then the criteria of explanation and formality are the next frequencies respectively. Situation 7

<table>
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<th>Frequency</th>
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<td>7.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>politeness</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
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</tr>
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<td>power</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>imposition</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>content</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>amount of speech</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>directness</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for explanation, and then directness with the frequency of 12 and then politeness and imposition respectively. Situation 8

<table>
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<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</tr>
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<td>power</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>imposition</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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<td>content</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>amount of speech</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>directness</td>
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<td>21.7</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>repair</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>83</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for **directness** (18), and then **repair** (17) and then **explanation** (8).

### Situation 9

<table>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>formality</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<td>politeness</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explanation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>distance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imposition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>content</td>
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<tr>
<td>directness</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repair</td>
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<td>10.8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for **explanation**, and then **repair** with the frequency of 9 and then **distance** and **politeness** have the higher frequencies respectively.

### Situation 10

<table>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>imposition</td>
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<td>content</td>
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<td>directness</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repair</td>
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<td>18.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As the result indicates, **repair** has the highest frequency; the second frequency is of **explanation** and **power** both with 11 frequencies and then the criterion of **politeness**.

For the second research question, again, the frequency and percentage of the criteria for each question were investigated. The descriptive statistics for each situation has been given below:
Situation 1

<table>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
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<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>power</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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</table>

As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for **formality**, and then **explanation** with the frequency of 9 and then **power** and **imposition** have the higher frequencies respectively.

Situation 2

<table>
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<th>Frequency</th>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</table>

As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for **power**, and then **imposition** with the frequency of 6 and then **formality** and **explanation** have the higher frequencies respectively.

Situation 3

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</table>
As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for repair, and then directness with the frequency of 7 and then formality and politeness respectively.

### Situation 4

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As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for both formality and power, and then repair with the frequency of 7 and then explanation and politeness respectively.

### Situation 5

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</table>
As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for imposition, and then formality and explanation with the frequency of 7 and then distance and politeness have the higher frequencies respectively.

**Situation 6**

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As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for politeness, and then formality with the frequency of 7 and then directness and explanation respectively.

**Situation 7**

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As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for directness, and then power with the frequency of 9 and then formality and imposition respectively.

**Situation 8**

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As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for directness, and then repair with the frequency of 10 and then imposition and formality respectively.

**Situation 9**

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As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for formality, directness and repair, and then distance and imposition with the frequency of 6.

**Situation 10**

<table>
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As the results indicate, the highest frequency is for power with the frequency of 23, and then explanation with the frequency of 7.

In order to investigate the difference between the criteria of teachers versus those of students in speech act rating, the statistical test of Chi Square was drawn upon.

<table>
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</table>

1. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the formality criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.213$, $df = 4$, $p = 5.817$, this value of $\chi^2$ is not statistically significant. This value indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating formality as their criterion.

2. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the politeness criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.041$, $df = 5$, $p = 11.574$, this value of $\chi^2$ is statistically significant. Therefore, this value indicates that there is statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating politeness as their criterion.

3. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the explanation criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.909$, $df = 5$, $p = 1$, this value of $\chi^2$ is not statistically significant. This value indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating explanation as their criterion.

4. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the power criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.104$, $df = 5$, $p = 9.120$, this value of $\chi^2$ is not statistically significant. This value indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating power as their criterion.

5. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the distance criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.099$, $df = 4$, $p = 7.808$. This value of $\chi^2$ is statistically significant. Therefore, this value indicates that there is statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating distance as their criterion.

6. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the imposition criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.052$, $df = 5$, $p = 13.978$. This value of $\chi^2$ is statistically significant. Therefore, this value indicates that there is statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating imposition as their criterion.

7. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the content criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.563$, $df = 6$, $p = 4.851$, this value of $\chi^2$ is not statistically significant. This value indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating content as their criterion.

8. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the amount of speech criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.145$, $df = 8$, $p = 12.135$, this value of $\chi^2$ is not statistically significant. This value indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating amount of speech as their criterion.

9. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the directness criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.477$, $df = 6$, $p = 13.577$. This value of $\chi^2$ is not statistically significant. This value indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating directness as their criterion.

10. The difference between the criteria of students versus those of teachers in the repair criterion:
The result indicates that $X^2 = 0.019$, $df = 5$, $p = 13.577$, this value of $\chi^2$ is statistically significant. Therefore, this value indicates that there is statistically significant difference between students and teachers in enumerating repair as their criterion.

As illustrated above, the results of the data coding indicated that the teachers' criteria were more inclusive and comprehensive than the students' sets of criteria. The overwhelming majority of the students attributed the degree of appropriateness of each speech act to the degree of explanation and reasoning, the degree of directness of apology strategies, and the validity of the content. These three themes were the main categories referred to by most of the students. On the other hand, the teachers' answers to the questions revealed that they not only referred to the categories mentioned by the students but they also were sensitive to some non-linguistic categories that went unnoticed by the students. The teachers could justify some of their answers by making reference to the categories such as the degree of politeness, the degree of repair, the degree of social distance, and the degree of imposition. Of course, these categories were mentioned by a limited number of students but their overall occurrence was negligible. The remainder of the three categories of the amount of speech (concrete or verbose) and the degree of formality and the degree of power relations were equally mentioned by both groups of teachers and students and no significant difference was noticed in terms of the occurrence of these two categories between the two groups. Below are a number of sample statements for each category mentioned by either students or teachers in the questionnaires:

**The degree of formality →** "the situation is friendly and informal; so the answer convinces the friends and the game can go on despite being late."

**The degree of explanation and reasoning →** "I think he should given more about his fault as the reason for his absence".

**The degree of power relation →** "the teacher holds the authority in the class; so her faults can be overlooked..." and " the students is in a position of inferior prestige when confronting the teacher...."

**The degree of directness of apology strategies →** "he must try to apologize rather than giving an account of the accident".

**The validity of the content →** "it is not satisfactory, since the deadline is not like other dates to be forgotten and justified by a usual excuse".

**The degree of repair or compensation →** "it is somehow appropriate, because s/he tried to compensate for his/her fault."

**The degree of social distance →** "it seems to be appropriate, of course, it depends on the level of intimacy between me and the manager."

**The degree of imposition →** "because the student’s forehead is bleeding, a superficial apology does not suffice, you should help him in some way as well"

**The degree of politeness →** "this apology does not seem to be satisfactory for the given situation, it should have been more polite."
The amount of speech (concise or verbose) → "I think in this situation the person's fault and the type of situation does not require such a lengthy apology..."

7. Summary and Conclusion
The data analysis of this study revealed the inharmonious sets of criteria of teachers and students when rating and evaluating the appropriateness of the apology speech acts. The students' orientation for the evaluation of appropriateness of the speech acts was more linguistically-oriented while the teachers were more focused upon both linguistic the non-linguistic criteria for the evaluation of appropriateness. For students, the degree of appropriateness was hinged upon the sets of criteria such as the degree of explanation and reasoning, the degree of directness of apology strategies, and the validity of the content. However, the teachers, in addition with the linguistic criteria which were broached by students, were also sensitive to non-linguistic sets of rationales such as the degree of politeness, the amount of required repair, the degree of social distance, and the degree of imposition. This discrepancy between the teachers and the students bears testimony to the fact that the teachers are more multidimensional and take into account a variety of dimensions (both linguistic and nonlinguistic) when they evaluate speech acts.

The findings of this study may have some implications. First, the study revealed that the there is not a solid unanimity between teachers and advanced EFL students when it comes to apology speech act rating. They may differ widely in their perceptions and interpretations of appropriateness in pragmatic performance because they do not possess the same and similar sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge. As Taguchi (2006) puts it, pragmatic performance is more than just utilizing a series of formulaic utterances and "it also entails efficient discourse and grammatical management" (p. 530). Students may have an adequate command of language proficiency as far as the language skills and sub-skills are concerned but they, by and large, lack a solid pragmatic competence whose command is vital for language learners (Kasper & Roever, 2005).

From a practical point of view and as far as ELT pedagogy is concerned, some serious attention should be exercised to enhance the ELT learners' sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge. Though the students in this study were advanced, their yardsticks for the speech act rating were mostly linguistic factors. Nevertheless, in spoken performance, some kind of problem-solving strategies should be drawn upon to compensate for a lack of linguistic and sociocultural knowledge (Kasper & Rose, 2001). Therefore, it is hoped that systematic efforts be made not only to improve the students' understanding of pragmatic development in speech act realization but also to incorporate effective methods of teaching pragmatics in the EFL classrooms.

REFERENCES


THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY AND BURNOUT AND POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

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ABSTRACT
The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and burnout with a sample of 53 Iranian EFL teachers from several private language institutes in Kurdistan and Hamedan. In addition, the probable differences in level of teachers' burnout and self-efficacy were examined with respect to their gender, degree, years of experience and age. To answer the research questions, the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey and Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale were utilized. In order to analyze the data, Pearson product moment correlation and four MANOVA analyses were run. The results of the study showed teachers' self-efficacy had significant negative correlation with burnout. In addition, it was revealed that among different demographic variables there was only a significant difference in teachers' level of burnout with respect to their gender. The results of this study can help EFL teachers to become aware of self-efficacy skills in order to overcome chronic stress and to prevent burnout.

Key words: Burnout, Self-efficacy, Demographic Variables

1. Introduction
In recent studies in language teaching and applied linguistics, teachers as leading practitioners in pedagogical settings have received much more attention since it is believed that they play an important role in educational settings. According to Sanders (1998), the “single largest factor affecting academic growth of populations of students is differences in effectiveness of individual classroom teachers” (p. 27). Teachers may have different problems associated with their job. One of these problems is experiencing stress in their job. Research studies have indicated that teachers experience high levels of stress and burnout (Reglin and Reitzammer, 2008; Rudow, 1999). Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) also mentioned that burnout studies carried out in many countries indicated different degrees of burnout among teachers (from 10% to 40% in west and east Europe and about 50% in some Asian countries). In addition, in another study conducted by Goddard and O’Brien (2003) among 123 beginning teachers in Australia, revealed that burnout level increased among teachers during eight-month period of their teaching profession. A great deal of chronic stress might lead to burnout which is a psychological syndrome and may be the most common factor among individuals whose primary role is to interact with others in emotionally demanding contexts over time (Maslach,1982).

The term burnout was first introduced by Freudenberger, a psychologist, in 1974, as a state of frustration caused by dedication to a job, way of life, cause, or relationship that cannot create the expected reward. According to Freudenberger (1974) those persons whose first occupational role is to help others over a long period of time, whether they are involved psychologically, socially or physically, are more faced with feelings of stress, frustration, overload and hopelessness over time. Maslach (1982) considered burnout as “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment” (p. 3). He believed that emotional exhaustion refers to being emotionally overextended when one feels that he has consumed all his emotional resources and he lacks adaptive resources to do his job. Depersonalization occurs when one develops negative attitudes toward his job and others (e.g., clients, coworkers, etc.) in the working environment, and reduced personal accomplishment happens when people think that they cannot perform their job well and when they have dissatisfaction of their efficacy and achievements and negative evaluation of themselves.

Burnout occurs as the result of long-term occupational stress, especially among human service workers, including teachers (Jennett, Harris, & Mesibov, 2003). Different factors have been found to be related with burnout among teachers. For example, Chang (2009) classified the factors of teachers' burnout in three groups: organizational...
factors, transactional factors and individual factors. According to Chang (2009), organizational factors involve work overload, large class size, lack of resource and students problems, and transactional factors include peer and administrative support, teacher efficacy, and internal rewards. He also believes that individual factors involve personality traits of teachers, their educational backgrounds, their years of teaching experience and marital status. Burnout might have serious negative influences not only on teachers but also on teaching-learning processes (Palomera, Fernandez-Berrocal & Brackett, 2008), and even student teacher relationship (Yoon, 2002). According to Brouwers and Tomic (2000) burned out educators are unable to cope with the problems of teaching and emotional stress successfully so this failure to deal with such problems leads to weak performance, different kinds of personal problems, and finally it can influence the learning process of students. Jennett, Harris and Mesibov (2003) mentioned that all teachers may experience stress in their work, however the effects of this stress and its reasons may be different among them.

According to Vaezi and Fallah (2011) one reason which some teachers can encounter jobs’ stress and prevent burnout can be attributed to self-efficacy as a belief in one’s capability. The concept of self-efficacy was first introduced by Bandura as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations” (Bandura, 1995, p.2). These beliefs influence people attempts in dealing with problems, their persistence in facing with difficult situations and challenges, their endurance in encountering failures and the amount of stress they experience in difficult situations (Bandura, 1977). In academic setting, teacher self-efficacy refers to teachers’ judgment on their abilities to motivate students and increase their achievement (Campbell, 1996). In addition, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001) defined self-efficacy as a teacher’s “judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning” (p. 783). They believe that self-efficacy beliefs affect teachers’ persistence when they face with problems and increase their ability in dealing with difficulties and challenges. Chwalisz, Altmaier, and Russel (1992) in a study revealed that teachers who scored low in self-efficacy reported a higher degree of burnout than their three counterparts who scored high in self-efficacy. Teachers with a higher sense of efficacy indicate greater tendency towards teaching, have longer retention in their profession and more commitment to teaching (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982). In contrast, teachers with low efficacy feel that they have less effect on their students’ achievements and such teachers become disappointed easily when they face with difficult situations and they are not able to cope with such situations efficiently (Bandura, 1997).

Different studies examined the relationship between self-efficacy and burnout. For example, Betoret (2006) in a study examined self-efficacy, coping resources, stress, and burnout on Spanish teachers. The results of his study indicated that teachers with high amount of coping support and self-efficacy showed less stress and burn out and they were more motivated and satisfied in their job. Akbari and Tavassoli (2011) examined the possible differences among teacher-related variables such as teachers’ sense of efficacy, burnout, teaching style and emotional intelligence in relation to their gender, degree and experiences among 264 Iranian English language teachers. The results of their study indicated that there were significant correlation among personal accomplishment component of burnout with all components and total score of teacher self-efficacy. In addition, Brouwers and Tomic (2000) in their studies confirmed that teacher efficacy is related to teacher burnout. Grau, Salanova and Peiró (2001) also found that self-efficacy could reduce work-related stress and it was negatively related with burnout. Moreover, Chwalisz, Altmaier and Russell (1992) found that perceived professional efficacy was an important mediator of burnout.

Different demographic variables such as age, gender, experience, educational degree, and marital status have been considered as associated with burnout in different studies such as (Akbari and Tavassoli, 2012; Jamshidirad, Mukundan and Nimelchisaleh, 2012; Vaezi and Fallah, 2011; Fallah, 2011). According to Schaufler and Enzmann (1998), age, marital status, and personality types are causes of burnout. The findings of their study indicated that burnout among younger employees is more than those teachers who are aged over 30 or 40 years, and unmarried people are more apt to burnout than married teachers.

2. Purpose of the study

Nowadays, teachers’ work involves various factors such as learning new information and skills, dealing with students, parents and community, facing with new methods; all these increase the demanding roles of teachers in educational context and their levels of stress and burnout. Awareness of the importance of some teacher-related factors such as self-efficacy and burnout can help EFL teachers to become aware of the importance of self-efficacy in order to overcome chronic stress and to prevent burnout. It seems that very few studies have been done to investigate the teachers’ characteristics and their effectiveness in educational contexts. Therefore, this study was carried out to fill this gap and to examine the relationship between two teacher-related variables, i.e. self-efficacy
and burnout in Iranian EFL context, and to explore possible differences in these two variables with respect to their teaching experience, age, gender and degree. To this end, the following research questions were addressed in the present study:

2.1 Research questions
1) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' self efficacy and burnout?
2) Is there any significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ burnout and self-efficacy with respect to their gender, age, degree, and years of teaching experience?

3. Methodology
3.1 Subjects
The participants of this study were 53 EFL teachers (male and female) aged between 20 and 47 years old with a range of between 1 and 24 years of teaching experience and with two different educational degrees (BA and MA). The majority of the teachers held BA degree (36 teachers) and the rest of them held MA degree (17 teachers), and in terms of teaching experience, the participants were classified in three groups, with teaching experiences of 1 to 8, 9 to 16 years and 17 to 24. The participants were selected from 7 private language institutes in Kurdistan and Hamedan. The institutes were selected randomly and the sampling procedure of this study was cluster sampling.

3.2 Instruments
3.2.1 Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator's Survey (MBI-ES)
In order to measure the participants' burnout, Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators’ Survey (MBI-ES) was used. This questionnaire is a 22-item self-report instrument including three components of Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA). This questionnaire is a Likert scale with 7 point response ranging from never (0) to every day (6). High scores on the EE and DP subscales and low scores on the PA subscale are characteristics of burnout. Validity and reliability of the MBI-ES has been examined in different studies (for example Iwanicki & Schwab, 1981; Gold, 1984; Akbari & Tavassoli, 2011; Pishghadam & Sahebjam, 2012; Alavinia & Ahmadzadeh, 2012) and it has been proven that it enjoys high level of reliability and validity.

3.2.2 Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale.
In order to measure teachers’ sense of efficacy, the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (also called Ohio State teacher efficacy scale (OSTES)) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was used in this study. This measure involves two versions: long form (24 items) and short form (12 items). The long form was used in this study which includes three subscales: Efficacy for Instructional Strategies, Efficacy for Classroom Management, and Efficacy for Student Engagement. Each subscale has eight items and every item is assessed on a 9-point continuum. “The factor structure, reliability and validity of the new measure were examined, as well as the appropriateness of the new scale for both preservice and inservice teacher populations” (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001, p. 796). The total reliability reported by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) is (Mean= 7.1, SD= 0.94, Cronbach’s alpha = 0.94). Validity and reliability of the instrument has been examined in different studies (for example, Rastegar and Memarpour, 2009; Akbari and Karimi Allvar, 2010; Ghanizadeh and Moafian, 2009).

3.3 Procedure
Since all the three questionnaires had been validated in earlier studies, they were not piloted in this study for their validity. First the reliability of each instrument was calculated using Cronbach’s Alpha. Next, in the main study, the 53 participants took the questionnaires home, filled them out, and gave them back to the researcher within a week. To receive reliable data, the researcher assured the participants that their information would be kept confidential.

3.4 Data analysis
A Pearson product moment correlation and four MANOVA analyses were utilized as the main statistical procedure in order to investigate the hypothesis put forward in the study.
4. Results and Discussion
In order to examine the first research question a Pearson product moment correlation was run.

Table 1. Correlations between Burnout and self-efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Burnout Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Self-efficacy Pearson Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burnout</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings in Table 1 shows that there was a significant negative correlation between teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout (-0.20 <0.05) and it can be concluded that the higher the teachers’ self-efficacy, the less likely they were vulnerable to experience burnout in their profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant relationship between teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout was rejected. This is in accordance with previous studies on the important role of self-efficacy in burnout such as Brouwers and Tomic’s (2000) study where they concluded that self-efficacy and burnout are related with each other and teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs about classroom management were significantly related to their burnout level. Teachers with higher sense of efficacy are less vulnerable to burnout (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Shaalvik & Shaalvik, 2007) and they enjoy higher levels of job satisfaction (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). According to Vaezi and Fallah (2011) teachers who feel more efficacious in their job are more likely to deal with different stressors” (e.g., job insecurity due to lack of tenure status, work overload, student’s low motivation and lack of sufficient time)” (p.92). Moreover this result is in line with the findings of (Chwalisz, Allmaier and Russell, 1992; Brouwers and Tomic, 2000; Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2002; Grau, Salanova and Peirò, 2001; Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2007; Telef, 2011; Betoret, 2006; Akbari and Tavassoli, 2011; Vaezi and Fallah, 2011; Yazdi, Motallebzadeh, Ashraf, 2013 ) where they found that self-efficacy could reduce work-related stress and professional self-efficacy was negatively related with burnout. In addition, Grau, Salanova and Peiro (2001) concluded that self-efficacy could control work-related stress.

To investigate the significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their gender a MANOVA analysis was run.

Table 2. Multivariate Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Pillai’s Trace</th>
<th>Wilks’ Lambda</th>
<th>Hotelling’s Trace</th>
<th>Roy’s Largest Root</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<td>101.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>.842</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 2, all four multivariate statistics (Pillai’s Trace, Wilks’ Lambda test, Hotelling’s Trace, Roy’s Largest Root) are smaller than α=0.05 (P<0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their gender was rejected.

Table 3. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable Type</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gender</td>
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<td>1408.02</td>
<td>9.33</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>22.59</td>
<td>22.59</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Burn</td>
<td>7692.28</td>
<td>150.82</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>35984.69</td>
<td>705.58</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
As Table 3 indicates gender showed significant mean differences in teachers’ burnout (.00<.05) but there were no differences in teachers’ self-efficacy (.85>.05) regarding their gender. It seems that male and female teachers are not equally well at addressing stress; thereby they don’t suffer the same level of burnout. The results of this study are in line with Akbari and Tavassoli’s (2011) study in which they found a significant difference between teachers’ burnout with respect to their gender. These results are also in consistent with Evers, Brouwers and Tomic (2002), Bauer et al. (2007), Maslach et al. (2001), Bayani, Bagheri and Bayani (2013) who found significant difference on the level of teachers’ burnout with respect to their gender and reported that male teachers were more subject to burnout than female teachers. Moreover, these results are in accordance with the study of Lau et al. (2005) and Timms, Graham and Callabiano (2006) in which they reported that female teachers experienced higher levels of burnout than male teachers. However, the results are in contrast with the findings of Fallah (2011) where he found that with respect to gender, teachers were not significantly different on their scores on burnout. Furthermore, this is in contrast with Jamshidirad, Mukundan and Nimechisaleh’s (2012) research where they investigated the effect of gender on the three burnout dimensions among 28 English language teachers in Malaysia. They found that gender was not a predictor of burnout and gender had no effect on burnout level of these teachers.

On the other hand, as shown in Table 3, the significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy with respect to teachers’ gender was .8 which shows that there was no significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy with respect to their gender. The findings are in line with the results of previous studies in which they concluded that that male and female teacher did not differ in their perception of self-efficacy (Tschanen-Moran & Hoy, 2002; Rastegar and Memarpour, 2009, Fallah, 2011). The results are also consistent with the study of Alibakhshi (2011) in which he found that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers in their level of self-efficacy.

To investigate the significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their degree a MANOVA analysis was run.

Table 4. Multivariate Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig</th>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
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<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
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<td>648.91</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
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<td>6.00</td>
<td>98.00</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
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<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
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<td>2.87</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>.06</td>
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</table>

As shown in Table 4, all four multivariate statistics (Pillai’s Trace, Wilks’ Lambda test, Hotelling’s Trace, Roy’s Largest Root) are greater than α=0.05 (P>0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their educational degree was not rejected and it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their educational degree.

Table 5. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Squares</th>
<th>Sum of df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>degree</td>
<td>Burn</td>
<td>109.08</td>
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<td>36.36</td>
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<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1564.11</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>183.49</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>31314.95</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>639.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>9100.30</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>36007.28</td>
<td>52</td>
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</table>
As Table 5 shows, there was no significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their educational degree. These findings revealed that the significant differences of burnout and self-efficacy with regard to their degree are .89 and .07 respectively which are greater than .05 (p > .05) and this means that there were no significant differences in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their degree. Therefore, the null hypothesis as there is no significant differences in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their degree was not rejected.

The results are supported by the findings of Akbari and Tavassoli (2011), where they found that there were no significant differences in teachers’ burnout with respect to their educational degree. However, the results are in contrast with the findings of Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998). They concluded that people who have higher educational levels experience higher job burnout. This may be related to heavier responsibilities or higher expectations of teachers that because of their level of education are imposed on them (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). In addition, the results are not supported by Mukundan and Khandehroo (2009), who examined the level of burnout among Malaysian ELT practitioners with respect to their gender, educational level, and experience and revealed that Bachelor degree holders had a higher level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in contrast with Diploma, Masters, and PhD holders. Moreover, it was indicated that MA and BA holders suffered from reduced personal accomplishment whereas Diploma and PhD holders did not.

On the other hand, the results of this section is in line with the results of Akbari and Moradkhani’s (2009) study where they found no significant differences in teachers’ self-efficacy levels regarding their degree except in one subcomponent of self-efficacy (student engagement). However, this study is in contrast with the findings of Akbari and Tavassoli’s (2011) study, in which they found out that there is a significant difference between teachers’ self-efficacy with respect to their degree. They concluded that BA and MA degree holders performed significantly better than diploma degree holders on the instructional strategies component of teacher efficacy and they were more efficacious than teachers with a diploma degree. It is also in contrast with the study of Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) where they claimed that as teachers get higher academic degrees, their sense of efficacy increases.

To investigate the significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their teaching experience a MANOVA analysis was run.

**Table 6. Multivariate Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Pillai’s Trace</th>
<th>Wilks’ Lambda</th>
<th>Hotelling’s Trace</th>
<th>Roy’s Largest Root</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>32.28</td>
<td>32.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>experience</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 6, all four multivariate statistics (Pillai’s Trace, Wilks’ Lambda test, Hotelling’s Trace, Roy’s Largest Root) are greater than α=0.05 (P>0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their teaching experience was not rejected and it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their teaching experience.

**Table 7. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>experience</td>
<td>Burn</td>
<td>263.73</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>131.86</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>2778.02</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1389.01</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Burn</td>
<td>8836.56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>176.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>33229.25</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>664.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Burn</td>
<td>91003.30</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>36007.28</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As indicated in Table 7, the findings of the study shows that there were no significant differences in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout regarding their years of teaching experience. The results of the study indicates that the significant difference among teachers’ burnout and self-efficacy were .47 and .13 respectively which are greater than .05 (p > .05) and this means that there were no significant differences in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their years of experience. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study, indicating that there is no significant difference among teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to teachers’ years of experience was not rejected.

As the results indicated, there was no significant difference in teachers’ burnout with respect to their teaching experiences. This is in line with a host of studies (e.g. Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982; Bataineh, 2009; Akbari & Tavassoli, 2011; Akbari & Momenian, 2011; Bayani, Bagheri & Bayani, 2013). Moreover, Schwab, Jackson and Schuler (1986) concluded that years of teaching experience and level of education were not significantly related to teacher burnout.

However, the findings of this study are in contrast with the results of some studies, such as MO (1991), Sunbul (2003), Lau, Yuen, & Chan (2005), Fisher (2011), Vaezi and Fallah (2011), Alavinia and Ahmadzadeh (2012), Devi (2011), and Mashhady, Fallah, and Lotfi Gaskaree (2012). These studies indicated that burnout level is different between novice and experienced teachers. They found that less experienced teachers were more prone to burnout than more experienced teachers while the findings of Friedman (1991) and Tye and O’Brien (2002) indicated that older and experienced teachers were more apt to the effects of stress, and they may suffer higher levels of burnout than the younger and less experienced teachers.

On the other hand, the findings showed that there was no significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy with respect to their teaching experience and this is in line with Rastegar and Memarpour’s (2009) results that they found no significant difference among EFL teachers with different teaching experiences concerning their self-efficacy. However, this section is not consistent with Akbari and Moradkhani’s (2009) research where they found out that experienced teachers had a significantly higher level of global efficacy, efficacy for student engagement, efficacy for classroom management, and efficacy for instructional strategies compared to their novice counterparts. In addition, this is in contrast with the findings of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007). They revealed the difference between novice and experienced teachers concerning their self-efficacy and they concluded that experienced teachers had significantly higher efficacy than their novice counterparts. Furthermore, Akbari and Tavassoli (2011) indicated that experienced teachers performed significantly better than both novice and moderately experienced teachers in both instructional strategies and classroom management components of teacher efficacy.

To investigate the significant difference in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their age a MANOVA analysis was run.

### Table 8. Multivariate Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>1324.61</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1324.61</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>1324.61</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>1324.61</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>1324.61</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>98.00</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>96.00</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 8, all four multivariate statistics (Pillai’s Trace, Wilks’ Lambda test, Hotelling’s Trace, Roy’s Largest Root) are greater than α=0.05 (P>0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their age was not rejected and it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their age.

### Table 9. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of df Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>Burn</td>
<td>49.55</td>
<td>24.77</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self</td>
<td>1342.29</td>
<td>671.14</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As observed in Table 9, the findings of the study indicate that there was no significant difference in the level of teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their age. The significant differences were .87 and .38 for burnout and self-efficacy respectively which are greater than .05 (p > .05). Therefore the null hypothesis of the study regarding there is no significant differences in teachers’ self-efficacy and burnout with respect to their age was not rejected. The results are in contrast with Yazdi, Motallebzadeh and Ashraf’s (2013) study in which they found a significant positive correlation between EFL teachers’ age and their level of burnout and they concluded that teachers’ burnout tends to increase overtime. In addition, Vaezi and Fallah’s (2011) found out that teachers’ burnout had a significant negative correlation with their age and teaching experience but teachers were not different on their level of burnout with respect to their gender.

Regarding teachers’ self-efficacy, the results are in line with Bandura’s (1995) claim that age can not correlate with efficacy because of the different routes in life that cause people to differ greatly in how efficaciously they control their lives. This is also in line with Rastegar and Memarpour’s (2009) results that they found no significant difference among EFL teachers with different ages concerning their self-efficacy. However, these findings are not consistent with the study of Yazdi, Motallebzadeh and Ashraf (2013). They revealed a negative correlation between EFL teachers’ self-efficacy and years of teaching experience and age.

5. Conclusion and Implications

The obtained results of the current study lead to the conclusion that teachers’ self-efficacy has a significant negative correlation with teachers’ burnout. It can be concluded that the higher the teachers’ self-efficacy, the less likely they were to experience burnout in their profession. In addition, it was revealed that among different MANOVA analyses run on two variables of this study with respect to teachers’ gender, degree, years of teaching experience and age, only gender showed significant differences in teachers’ burnout. The findings showed that male and female teachers were different in their levels of burnout. Moreover, the results showed no significant difference in teachers’ burnout and self-efficacy concerning their educational degree, teaching experience and age.

The findings of this study have some implications for teacher trainers and EFL teachers. Teacher trainers can help teachers to be familiar with the concept of self-efficacy and the importance of it in their pedagogical performance. Furthermore, teacher education programs can be held to improve teachers’ self-efficacy skills to help them in coping with different challenges and difficulties that they may have in their work environment and finally to enable them in preventing burnout.

Lack of large size in the number of the participants in the present study makes difficulty in generalizing to other settings. Therefore, it is suggested that the present study be replicated with a larger number of the EFL teachers.

Another limitation of this study is that this study carried out only between institute teachers, so it is recommended that this study be replicated with a diverse sample of EFL teachers among middle, and high school level teachers. Finally, different components of teachers’ burnout and self-efficacy were not analyzed in this study and the relationship between these different components was not considered. Therefore it is suggested that future studies consider the relationship between these components.

REFERENCES


CATEGORY PROMPT TASK AND REACTION TIME TO LEXICAL MEANING: AN INVESTIGATION OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS’ LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE IN L1 AND L2

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ABSTRACT
The present study aimed to investigate Category Prompt Task and Reaction Time to lexical meaning, also to investigate the effect of CP task on Iranian EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in L1 and L2. This study tried to seek answer to two questions: whether the Reaction Time to lexical meaning in using the Category Prompt Task is different in Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners’ L1 and L2. To find answer to the targeted question, 20 upper-intermediate EFL learners at institute level participated in the experiments of the study. They were selected from among a population of upper-intermediate learners via an OPT test score of at least one standard deviation below the mean and were randomly divided into two groups of experimental (L2) and control (L1). They were provided with two English lexical categories and then they were asked to recognize, orally from a list, the correct word which is the member of the categories. This experiment was repeated with the participants’ mother tongue equivalents of the categories and their corresponding member lists. In both cases, the reaction time to recognize the category was recorded. The data collected from the experiment of the study were analyzed via applying an independent samples t-test between the Reaction Time scores of the experimental and control group of the study. It was concluded that the participants were quicker in L1 lexical meaning recognition than L2.

Key Words: Category Prompt Task, Reaction Time, Lexical Meaning, Iranian EFL Learners, Lexical Knowledge

Introduction

Theoretical Framework
Three main notions were taken into consideration as the bases of the theoretical framework of this study around which the whole study turns, namely, vocabulary knowledge, reaction time and finally, the category prompt task. Thus, the study was conducted within the framework (but not limitation) of certain theories regarding the notions some of which have been elaborated here.

Guan (2013) believes that vocabulary is a fundamental component of a language and of critical importance to the EFL learners. Vocabulary teaching is an important component of language teaching. However there are still many problems existing in vocabulary teaching in China’s EFL class. The teaching forms are relatively simple, and the teaching methods are lack of innovation. In traditional vocabulary teaching, the sample sentences are usually extracted from a certain dictionary or compiled by teachers, which contain a limited amount of information and are difficult to guarantee the authenticity of the sentences. The Sentences, which show no adequacy and vividness, fail to arouse the students’ attention, and is unbefitting to cultivating learner initiative. In general, the present English vocabulary teaching still sticks to the teachers and textbooks centered pattern, and the top-down traditional foreign language teaching mode, in which teaching content and methods focus on abstract explaining and simple exercises.

According to Bualuang, Sinprajakphol and Chanphrom (2012) quoting from Alemi and Tayebi 2011, several teachers of English as well as, researchers have made effects to explore strategies and techniques for teaching and learning English vocabulary. They became aware of the important of vocabulary learning and learning a language. Due to vocabulary is a basic component of language proficiency which provides the foundation for learners performance in other skills. Inadequate vocabulary is one of the most important problems of foreign language learners at all levels; it affects their language skill development and learning ability both at present and in the...
future. And also inadequate vocabulary is a main problem almost all teachers at the primary level in Thailand have been facing. Inadequate vocabulary knowledge of students at primary level as in the result of National Test is a significant evidence of English proficiency problem (ibid, 2012).

Virpioja, Lehtonen, Hultén, Salmelin & Lagus (2011), focused on the central question, in their study of the mental lexicon, of how morphologically complex words were processed. They considered this question from the viewpoint of statistical models of morphology. As an indicator of the mental processing cost in the brain, they used reaction times to words in a visual lexical decision task on Finnish nouns. Statistical correlation between a model and reaction times was employed as a goodness measure of the model. The results for a set of inflected and monomorphemic Finnish nouns revealed that the probabilities especially the Categories-MAP version, showed considerably higher correlations to the reaction times than simple word statistics such as frequency, morphological family size, or length.

Finally, in terms of category prompt tasks, Dufour and Kroll (1995) conducted a study in which two groups of English native speakers, less and more proficient in French, performed a categorization task within and across the two languages. Participants saw a category prompt (e.g., fruit) and then an exemplar which was or was not a member of that category (e.g., pear or table). Their task was simply to decide whether the exemplar was a member of that category. Dufour and Kroll found that the less proficient French speakers were slower to respond in French than in English.

Statement of the Problem

Learning a second language involves the manipulation of four main skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading, which lead to effective communication. One crucial factor is the amount of vocabulary one possesses as vocabulary forms the biggest part of the meaning of any language (McCarthy, 1988). Vocabulary, however, is the biggest problem for most learners. In view of this, vocabulary acquisition is currently receiving attention in second language pedagogy and research. However, it is still a contentious issue how learners acquire vocabulary effectively and efficiently. Vocabulary is generally given little emphasis in the university curriculum in Asian countries (Fan, 2003). The situation is the same in Iran as an Asian country. Generally, the emphasis on English teaching in universities in Asian countries is on the four language skills. Vocabulary teaching in many classrooms is largely incidental (Fan, 2003; Catalan, 2003). Thornbury (2002) believes that lack of vocabulary knowledge impedes language comprehension and production. Allen (1983), also, states that in order to get native-like mastery over a language, learners must learn thousands of words. It can be concluded that without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in an L2 cannot happen in any meaningful way (McCarthy, 1990).

Also, the finding of the study by Barzegar & Rahimy (2012) showed that reading could afford a valuable method in language classroom for students at the intermediate level and hence, could be used to facilitate the process of vocabulary learning. Such a finding did not contradict Nagy, Herman, and Anderson (1985), Nagy, Anderson, and Herman (1987), or Nagy (1997) that showed that students could learn vocabulary from context but confirmed that for vocabulary learning to take place from reading that the texts used were of central importance. These findings lent support to Rott’s (1999) claim that ‘enhanced reading conditions’ lead to more gains in vocabulary acquisition.

Much behavioral research on cognition, including language, has focused on finding paradigms and experimental tasks where automatic mental operations, such as lexical access, could be measured without interference from strategic, task-related processes. Previous research studies elaborated on word recognition as well as its processes. Howes and Solomon (1951) demonstrated that the visual duration thresholds for words were a function of word frequency. Wheeler (1994) conducted his study on the assumption that the perceptual aspects of word recognition could be understood in terms of individual letter recognition. Finally, Pylkka¨nen and Marantz (2003) investigated the time course of word recognition with MEG in which they found out that the brain activity in the N400 time window decomposes as follows: at 250 ms, pre-lexical processing, which is sensitive to sub-lexical frequency but not to lexical frequency, occurs in the posterior parts of the left superior temporal cortex. At 350 ms, the mental lexicon is activated. At this point, processing is sensitive to factors such as lexical frequency but not to competition among the representations activated by the stimulus. After the mental lexicon has been activated, recognition of the optimal match to the stimulus must occur.

Hypotheses of the Study

In keeping with the above research questions, the following null hypotheses, accordingly, were formulated:

\( H_0: \) The Reaction Time to lexical meaning in using the Category Prompt Task is not different in Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners’ L1 and L2.
Review of the literature
Dufour and Kroll (1995) conducted a study in which two groups of English native speakers, less and more proficient in French, performed a categorization task within and across the two languages. Participants saw a category prompt (e.g., fruit) and then an exemplar which was or was not a member of that category (e.g., pear or table). Their task was simply to decide whether the exemplar was a member of that category. Dufour and Kroll found that the less proficient French speakers were slower to respond in French than in English.

Hajihassani & Rahimy (2013) in their study investigated the reaction time of recognising word meaning in Iranian EFL learners. The questions their study tried to answer were: 1) would Iranian EFL learners’ time of reaction to words meaning differ while recognising them through text versus picture? and 2) was there any difference in the time of reaction to words meaning in the participants’ L2 vs. L1? To answer the questions, they selected 30 junior B.A. translator trainees from the Islamic Azad University at Tonekabon via administering an OPT (for homogeneity), and were divided randomly into three groups of 10: two experimental groups and one control group. In the experiment 1 of the study, the first experimental group was provided with 10 concrete words along with four synonym choices in the form of picture. The second experimental group was provided with the 10 concrete words, but along with four synonym choices in the form of text+pictures, and finally, the control group of the study was provided with the same 10 concrete words along with four choices in the form of text. In the experiment 2 of the study, the steps were repeated but in the participants’ native language (Farsi). The results indicated that Iranian EFL learners recognized English words meaning in less reaction time when in the form of text+picture. In addition, the time of reaction to words meaning was less in the participants’ L1 than in their L2.

Generally, it was concluded that firstly, the Iranian participants’ time of reaction to words meaning differ while recognising them through text versus picture. Since the results indicated a better performance when they used pictures as well as texts, it can be concluded that the visual property of the traits to be recognised could result in a facilitated sort of recognition of words meaning. In addition, it was concluded that there was a difference in the time of reaction to words meaning in the participants’ L2 vs. L1. The participants performed better in the L1 word-recognition test perhaps because the visual/textual processing occurred more speedily in the participants’ L1 than their L2. The findings of the current study seem to be applicable to English language teachers, experts in language testing to devise new generation of tests and finally, material designers to develop more visual/textual-based textbooks or other materials which may contribute to teaching English to students of other languages.

In a recent study (Kroll, Michael, & Sankaranarayanan, 1998) American college students were taught a small set of Dutch words, either by learning to associate the Dutch words with their respective English translations or to pictures of the objects to which they referred. In one experiment, we attempted to make the meaning of the new words salient, by presenting them in semantically categorized lists (e.g., all of the fruits, furniture, animals, etc.). Compared to a condition in which the materials were presented randomly, there was little evidence for a benefit by virtue of having a semantic category cue. In a second experiment, we again taught American students a limited set of Dutch words by having them associate the new words to their English translations or to pictures of the objects to which they referred. However, in this experiment, the pictures were presented as one would normally view them on only half of the trials; on the remaining trials the pictures were presented in a non-canonical orientation. We hypothesized that the unusual orientation might have the effect of slowing down the retrieval of the first language name associated with the picture and therefore facilitate learning of the new Dutch word. And that was the result we obtained. When participants were asked at test to attempt to translate English words into Dutch in the absence of pictorial cues, they were faster if the word had been learned by association to a non-canonically oriented object. This finding suggests that even surface-level cues in the environment may function to uniquely cue the second language and permit access to the dominant language to be inhibited briefly.

Methodology
Participants
The participants of this study were 20 Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners of English language at institute level. They were language learners of both genders with the age range of 19-23 and with the purpose of learning L2 conversation. They were selected randomly from among a population of 100 Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners based on the results of an OPT administered: since the problem of L2 vocabulary knowledge was targeted, the 20 participants had to be representative of the weak trainees, thus, they were language learners with the scores that were at least one standard deviation below the OPT mean.

Materials
In experiment 1 of the study, two main forms of material were used: 1) Material for the OPT and 2) Material for the reaction time test. The OPT used in this study consisted of several sections including vocabulary, grammar and
sentence recognition. For each section, the participants were asked to answer the questions in the specified answer sheet. The answers were then collected and scored by the researcher. The scoring procedures will be explained in section 3.4. The reaction time test used in the study included two categories of ‘Things’ and ‘Fruit’ (Dufour and Kroll, 1995) with 10 members in each category. There was a Persian version of the test as well for the purpose of indicating the mean difference between the participants’ L1 and L2 performances in the reaction time test of vocabulary. Since the exact version of the test by Dufour and Kroll (1995) was used in this study, it was considered reliable, however, through inter-rater approach by two experts, the reliability of the test was estimated as to be 0.82 (r=0.82).

Procedure
The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of the participants’ proficiency was a paper-and-pencil test. Hence, the participants’ had to answer the questions in specified answer sheets. The time allowed was 70 minutes as had been determined in the OPT. In experiment 1, each participant was given the name of the two categories (Things and Fruit) and was asked to orally determine the category of the member heard. This was done with the participant’s L1 version of the test as well. While the participant was determining the categories, his/her time of reaction to the heard member was recorded using a chronometer, thus, the number of correct recognitions per 5 minutes (30 seconds for recognising each member) was considered.

Scoring
The OPT that was used in this study was scored on the basis of the standard criteria introduced by the test itself. The criterion for scoring the pretest and the posttest of the study was the maximum of 20 i.e. 1 point for each multiple-choice item.

Result and discussion
To analyse the data of the hypothesis of the study which targeted the probability of a difference between the participants’ scores in L1 and L2 tests of reaction time via category prompt, an Independent Samples T-Test was run through the SPSS. The results of the analysis have been presented in table (1) below:

Table 1. T-Test results of the data of the Experiment 1 of the study: the observed t was calculated between the means of L1 & L2 reaction time/category prompt tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-Test Results</th>
<th>Observed t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between the Posttest Scores of the Means of L1 &amp; L2 RT (Equal variances not assumed)</td>
<td>9.41</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table (1), the observed t value calculated between the means of L1 & L2 reaction time/category prompt tests is 9.41 (tobs = 9.41) and the degree of freedom is 18 (df=(20-1)+(20-1)=38). The level of significance is 0.000 which means that the difference has not been by chance. This rejects the hypothesis of the study. Evidence from various sources of data could help to verify the rejection. The results of the Independent T-Test of the study (see table 4.4) could be employed to confirm this analysis, accordingly, the observed t value calculated by the SPSS was 9.41 (tobs = 9.41) while the critical value of t determined on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of 0.05 (P = 0.05) was 2.021 (tcrit = 2.021). Thus, the observed t was higher than the critical t and high enough to reject the null hypothesis of this study. The second evidence to verify the rejection of the hypothesis was the value of the level of significance calculated by the SPSS to be 0.000 (Significance 2-tailed = 0.000). Since this value was lower than 0.05 (based on the SPSS regulations), the difference between L1 and L2 reaction time of CP test of the study could not by chance.

The findings of the current study indicated that using CP (Category Prompt) tasks in teaching L2 vocabulary could result in a better performance of language learners in a test of English vocabulary. These findings seem to be incompatible with the findings of the research study made into the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching and learning through various activities or tasks. For example, Lee and Muncie (2006) showed that a post-reading composition task helped ESL students improve the productive use of higher-level target vocabulary. The findings of this study were also compatible to the findings of the study made by Dufour and Kroll (1995) who examined the
first alternative in a study in which more and less fluent bilinguals performed a semantic categorization task. A category prompt (e.g. fruit) was presented in either English or French, followed by a category exemplar (e.g. pear), in either English or French.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS ON PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF REQUEST

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ABSTRACT
The present study aimed to obtain more insights into the impacts of explicit instruction on the pragmatic feature production -speech act of request-in Iranian EFL elementary learners. To do so, a total number of 60 EFL elementary male learners whose ages ranged between 14 and 26 at Zabankadeh English Institute in Kermanshah attended the study. These students whose proficiency levels seemed to be nearly the same were chosen and homogenized through the Standardized Key English Test (KET) as the main participants. Participants were randomly assigned into two groups of experimental and control, each consisting of 30 students. After administrating the KET, all of the participants took the pre-test that was a Multiple-choice Discourse Completion Test (MDCT). The MDCT was designed to elicit the request speech act in different situations and assess the learners’ knowledge of the request speech act prior to any type of treatment. In the treatment phase, the teacher involved the experimental learners in the explicit instruction and they underwent ten different treatment sessions while the control learners were taught conventionally. Later on, after an interval of around 7 days, after the treatment sessions, the post-test was administrated. The results indicated that explicit instruction in experimental learners showed statistically significant results compared to control learners in their knowledge of pragmatic competence of request.

Key Terms: Communicative Competence; Discourse Completion Test; Explicit Instruction; Pragmatics; Pragmatic Competence; Pragmatic Competence of Request; Pragmatic Failure; Speech Act

1. Introduction
Teaching foreign learners of English should involve both familiarizing them with the grammar, sounds, and vocabularies and assisting them to apply the language appropriately by familiarizing them with the pragmatic rules that manage the effective combination of communicative functions and utterances.

The ability to produce structurally correct sentences in different proper situations is defined as communicative competence (Hymes 1971). Therefore, communicative competence encompasses linguistic competence and pragmatic competence. The ability to identify language rules with the goal of producing grammatically correct sentences and utterances is referred to linguistic competence whereas the ability to apply language properly in context is referred to pragmatic competence.

Thomas (1983) subcategorized pragmatic competence into two different sections: pragma-linguistic competence that is the ability to apply structure rules in order to make different correct sentences and socio-pragmatic competence that is the ability to interact appropriately based on the social rules of a special language. Absence of each of these kinds of introduced competence may block cross-cultural interaction, defined as pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983).

In cross-cultural communication, pragmatic competence plays a very crucial role but, unfortunately, EFL learners do not have enough chance to acquire it within the extant context. This limitation triggered the raised question here that whether EFL learners can be supported to pass this limitation. It has been pointed out that EFL classroom may be a potential setting to develop students' pragmatic competence Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Edward and Cziser, 2004; Eslami-Rasekh, 2005;Kasper, 1997). So, Probably, the English instructor is the only existing resource the learners can depend on to raise and acquire their pragmatic competence.
As long as the communicative approach to second language teaching was accepted, interlanguage pragmatics view (ILP) has been inserted into language instruction and suited to be one of the major worries of linguistic researchers (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981). There has been an agreement among the scholars that pragmatic competence is one of the main parts of communicative competence and ought to be paid adequate attention by the foreign language educators and learners. In spite of a large number of studies that have been conducted to study the relationship between interlanguage pragmatic development and language instruction, great disinclination among English teachers to assist EFL learners to develop their pragmatic competence in English is still noticed. The causes of such reluctance include insufficient descriptions suggested by theoretical pragmatists, the small number of teaching references and the hard and problematic nature of pragmatics (Thomas, 1983; Matsuda, 1999). So, there is a noticeable difference between Iranian EFL learners’ nice performance in a general proficiency test and their evident absence of pragmatic competence in communications.

Many studies have been conducted to compare the impact of focus of various teaching approaches on pragmatic instruction. Most of them have chosen two sorts of explicit and implicit pedagogical intervention. Doughty (2003) has addressed the distinction between explicit and implicit teaching. Based on her, explicit teaching consists of directing students’ focus towards the target forms with the goal of elaborating those forms. In contrast, an implicit instructional approach tends to absorb the learners’ attention while refraining any kind of metalinguistic elaboration and decreasing the interruption of the communicative context.

Implicit and explicit teaching methods are not recent in second language acquisition (SLA). Many definitions are easily available. Stern (1992) mentioned that “the explicit-implicit dimension is just whether the learner should be taught to approach the learning task consciously as an intellectual exercise, or whether he should be encouraged to avoid thinking about the language and absorb it intuitively” (p.327).

Based on Stern (1992), an explicit teaching strategy counts that for many people second language learning (SLL) is a cognition process resulting in an explicit knowledge of the language. The techniques of teaching in explicit teaching are conceptualization, observation, explanation, rule discovery, mnemonic devices, relational thinking, explicit practice, trial-and-error, and monitoring. The implicit strategy has specified itself in three different ways: one is via implicit practice; next is via experiential approaches which direct the student’s attention to interesting tasks and content covering the use of the second language; and the last one is via making a receptive state in the learner’s mind.

Norris and Ortega (2000) discussed that explicit instruction was explanation of rule (deductive/ metalinguistic), or had orientation to focus on forms and achieve rules; but implicit instruction was not explanation of rule, and has no orientation to focus on forms. Doughty (2003) noted that “explicit instruction includes all types in which rules are explained to learners, or when learners are directed to find rules by attending to forms. Conversely, implicit instruction makes no overt reference to rules or forms” (p.265). Long (1991) identified focus on form (FonF) and focus on forms (FonFS). From his prospective, the latter focuses on decontextualized, highly metapragmatic, teacher-centered instruction in which the basic goal is to support students in gathering individual language items. However, the former assigned to meaning-focused tasks in which student’s attention is orbiting around the target forms as they appear haphazardly in the input. In fact, FonFS uses explicit consciousness-raising activates while FonF method like input enhancement unobtrusively and indirectly draw learners’ attention to target forms.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Sometimes English teachers are let down when they observe that their students are not proficient enough to write request notes whenever they miss the class or they are not ready for a special progressive test. Despite having few grammatical errors in such notes or in some other similar ones that the learners write, the notes look somewhat improper and abrupt. Instead of applying conventionally indirect strategies like Mitigated Preparatory (I’m wondering if you could do…) or Query preparatory (Could you do ...?), the learners often accept Imperatives or Want Statements, which convey impolite request or negative transfer from Farsi request formula.

Observing students’ unfamiliarity in producing the speech act of request triggered the present researcher to scrutinize the possible ways of developing Iranian EFL learners’ pragmatic competence in English, since pragmatic incompetency may result in misunderstandings, interactive obstacles, and learners’ stereotyping as callous, rude, or dumb (Thomas, 1983).

In spite of realizing the significant role of pragmatic competence in the field of language teaching by many specialists and linguists, little has been studied and written on the nature of the what’s and the how’s about helping students acquire pragmatic competence.
The observation of EFL learners’ incompetence in making an English request motivated the present researcher to conduct an empirical study on the explicit instruction of EFL students pragmatic competence. On the other hand, a very limited number of studies investigated the role of explicit instruction on learners’ production of pragmatic competence of request. Therefore, this study introduces a program for teaching pragmatic competence to foreign students, mainly through explicit instruction.

1.3. Significance and Justification of the Study
To improve the situation of language learning in the country, some measures must be taken to identify the problems, address them, and improve the situation. This study is an attempt in taking the mentioned measures and it will be of great significance and interest.

Through this study, the present investigator hoped to figure out how effective and appropriate explicit instructions are in assisting students achieve pragmatic competence of speech act of request and the skill to apply it in a felicitous way in communication. The present study focused on request as the objective of pragmatic instruction in that the knowledge of speech acts and their functions are fundamental principles of interaction in a second or foreign language, and request has been noticed to be one of the toughest speech acts to be acquired. Many researches have proved that pragmatic competence instruction can accelerate the achievement of EFL learners’ pragmatic competence.

1.4. Purpose of the Study
In the light of the problem statement, the present study aimed to determine whether explicit instruction is effective in learners’ production of pragmatic competence of request. However, few studies were conducted in Iranian EFL classroom settings, and the impacts of various approaches to teaching pragmatic competence are still indefinite.

The chief purpose of this study was to introduce learners to a range of various ways through which speakers soften their speech act of requests and to raise their awareness of how these ways are applied by different speakers and in various contexts within the speech community.

The present research attempted to address the following question:

1.5. Research Question and Hypothesis
1. Does explicit instruction have a significant impact on Iranian EFL learners’ pragmatic competence of request?

In order to answer the preceding questions, the following null hypothesis was formulated:

1. Explicit instruction does not have any significant impact on Iranian EFL learners’ pragmatic competence of request.

2. Methodology
2.1. Participants
In order to investigate the effect of explicit instruction on Iranian EFL learners' pragmatic competence of request, the present researcher examined Iranian elementary learners. To do so, a total number of 60 EFL elementary male learners whose ages ranged between 14 and 26 at Zabankadeh English Institute in Kermanshah attended the study. These students whose proficiency levels seemed to be nearly the same were chosen as the main participants through the placement test. Participants were randomly assigned into two groups of experimental and control, each consisting of 30 students.

2.2. Instruments
Two instruments were used in this study:
2.2.1. Standardized Key English Test (KET)
To make sure that the participants were at the same level of proficiency, elementary level, the KET was administrated.
2.2.2. Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as the Pre-Test and Post-Test
The Discourse Completion Test (DCT) is broadly applied for collecting data in interlanguage pragmatics studies. Levenston (1975) introduced DCT to assess the immigrants’ English proficiency. Later on, Blum-Kulka (1982), to examine the realization of speech acts, presented a written DCT. A DCT covers short dialogues that show various social situations in the domain of the speech act under study. Prior to the dialogues, a short description of the situation is presented. Generally, each dialogue initiates with a statement that meets a blank providing an incomplete dialogue and the participants need to clarify the relevant speech act in the study.
Another measure of learners’ speech act performance is open-ended DCT that includes a discourse completion task of written speech act.

Generally, there are four kinds of methods for data collection in pragmatic productions: multiple-choice DCT, open-ended oral role play, spontaneous speech in natural settings, and open-ended DCT. Manes and Wolfson (1981) believed that the best method to collect data is from spontaneous speech in real-life situations when speakers are not aware of being observed. Although it may be ideal, it is hard to achieve and compare naturally occurring speech across situations.

In the present study, 20 requesting situations were considered as the Multiple-choice Discourse Completion Test (MDCT) to which participants were asked to respond. As the data collection method, the MDCT applied to assess students’ pragmatic competence were the same in both pre-test and post-test. The participants’ answers in each situation were rated and finally the total DCT score for each student ranged from 0 to 20. Here an example of a MDCT is provided:

**Situation 1**
Suppose you did not attend the class last session and you missed the last lesson’s grammar. How do you ask the teacher to explain the last session’s structure?

a. Should I ask you a question?
b. How can I ask you a question?
c. Excuse me sir, may I ask you a question?

### 2.2.3. Explicit Instruction

Long (1991) has specified focus on form (FonF) and focus on forms (FonFS). From this perspective, the latter focuses on highly metapragmatic, decontextualized, teacher-centered instruction that its basic aim is to aid students to collect single language items; however, the former focuses on meaning-focused activities that students' attention is centered on target forms while arising accidentally in the input. In fact, FonFS uses explicit consciousness-raising activities. In the present study, explicit instruction was applied by the providing metapragmatic explanations such as sociopragmatic and metalinguistic information on structural accuracy and contextual felicity of the pragmatic features.

Schmidt’s (1990, 1993a, 1994a, 1995) noticing hypothesis elaborates the conscious process role in L2 acquisition. It involves the primary stage of input (the resources of L2 accessible in the student’s situation) processing and the noticing positions necessary for input to become intake (Schmidt, 1995). Schmidt’s believed that at the level of noticing learning needs awareness.

Schmidt (2001) pointed out that in order to acquire second- or foreign-language pragmatics, global consciousness to input of target language is not adequate; attention has to be designed to particular learning objects, or “directed to whatever evidence is relevant for a particular domain. . . . In order to acquire pragmatics, one must attend to both the linguistic forms of utterances and the relevant social and contextual features with which they are associated.” (p. 30).

### 2.3. Design

Based on the nature and the purpose of the research, the design was quasi-experimental. The participants were randomly divided into two groups. The control group (N=30) received conventional instruction; whereas, the experimental group (N=30) received explicit instruction type of treatment.

The major variable that the researcher hoped to manipulate in this study, independent variable, includes explicit instruction but learners' pragmatic competence of request was the dependent variable that the researcher measured to determine the effect of treatment on it in EFL elementary learners.

### 2.4. Procedure

This study was conducted in five separate phases:

#### 2.4.1. Sampling based on Standardized Key English Test (KET)

To make sure that the participants were at the same level of proficiency, elementary level, the KET was administrated. Further, the participants were randomly divided into two parallel groups, one experimental group and one control group.

#### 2.4.2. Pre-Test Administration

After the administration of the proficiency test, both groups were assigned to take the pre-test which was a twenty-item Discourse Completion Task (DCT) designed to elicit the request speech act in different situations and assess the learners’ knowledge of the request speech act prior to any type of treatment. The aim was to compare the
changes, if any, on the part of the development of the learners’ pragmatic competence of request after the final phase i.e., the post-test. In this phase none of the groups received the treatment.

2.4.3. Treatment
In this phase, the teacher involved the experimental learners in the explicit instruction (treatment) and they underwent ten different treatment sessions while the control learners were taught conventionally.

Experimental group received the instruction characterized by explicitness. Students in this group explicitly instructed the structural accuracy of the target forms and metapragmatic information about the proper request making. Learners in the experimental group were provided with the written copy of the chosen conversations and sample sentences as examples in which the linguistic forms applied to make request speech acts were highlighted. On the other hand, the learners in control group received the written copy of the same sentences without being enhanced textually and they were not presented the metapragmatic information about the proper request making. Some explicit instruction and examples provided by the teacher for EG are provided below:

Instruction 1: "Would you"

Polite requests using "May you" are not common in English. Instead we say: "Would you".

Would you come with us?
Would you have dinner with me on Friday evening?

Instruction 2: "May' and "Would like to"

Look at the following sentences:
May I borrow your book? I would like to borrow your book.
The two sentences mean almost the same thing. They are both used for making a polite request. "Would like" can be the continuation of a polite request starting with "may".

Instruction 3: "Please"

Making requests using Imperatives" are not polite in English. Instead, we say: "please".

Please open the door for her.
Please find the answer to this question for me.

2.4.4. Post-Test Administration.

There was an interval of around 7 days between the treatment sessions and the post-test (second MDCT administration) followed the last teaching session a week later.

2.5. Scoring and Data Analysis

Participants’ responses to pre- and post-test items (their use of requests) were scored based on choosing the best response to each situation; that is, each correct request was given a single point. The participants’ answers in each situation were rated then the correct answers were added up to a total sum and finally the total DCT score for each student ranged from 0 to 20.

Finally, The collected data were fed into the SPSS software to be analyzed considering the scales of measurement of the variable of this study.

3. Results

Statistical procedure in this study includes the descriptive analysis and the referential statistics of the scores were obtained on the 3 tests of KET, pre-DCT and post-DCT. In the main procedure of data analysis, the descriptive statistics of the scores were calculated. Then a series of t-tests were run to compare the results obtained from both groups.

3.1. Pre-Discourse Completion Test

Comparing the means of pre-DCT, as illustrated in table 4.1., we certainly observed that the control group's mean score was 12.63 and the experimental group's mean score was 12.40. Therefore, it could be claimed that both groups performed equally well on pre-DCT where both groups were homogenous in terms of their knowledge of pragmatic competence of request prior to the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DCT Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.633</td>
<td>1.21721</td>
<td>.22223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DCT Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.400</td>
<td>1.63158</td>
<td>.29789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As demonstrated in table 4.2., the t-test results show that there is no significant difference between the means of the two groups, because P value is larger than the alpha level of 0.05 (P=0.533). So, once again, we could confirm the homogeneity of both groups in their knowledge of pragmatic competence of request prior to the present study.

3.2. Post-Discourse Completion Test

After the treatment, the DCT was demonstrated for the second time and the following data, as shown in table 4.3., were obtained. The control group's mean score was 13.53 and the experimental group's mean score was 15.23. Therefore, it was confirmed that the experimental group outperformed the control one on post-DCT that is the experimental group was superior to control group in terms of their knowledge of pragmatic competence of request after experiencing the treatment.

Table 4.4. shows that there is a significant difference between the performances of the two groups. Since P value is lower than the alpha level of 0.05 (P=.000), there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in their knowledge of pragmatic competence of request after the treatment. Here, based on this finding, we could reject the null hypothesis in that the explicit instruction has a significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' pragmatic competence of request.

In order to depict the changes in the mean scores of both groups clearly and the usefulness of the treatment,
explicit instruction, graph 4.1 is provided.

Graph 4.1. Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DCT</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DCT</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Discussion
This chapter mainly focused on reporting the statistical analyses of the key findings and on the research hypothesis addressed in the thesis. The descriptive statistics and tables were presented with their statistical interpretations. The results have also been discussed.

As it was stated in the previous sections, the main goal of this study was to find the effects of explicit instruction on learners' knowledge of pragmatic competence of request. The study showed that there was a significant difference between those who were instructed explicitly and those who were not. In this study, explicit instruction proved to be effective in developing Iranian EFL learners’ pragmatic competence of request. Finally, explicit instruction in experimental learners showed statistically significant results compared to the control group in their knowledge of pragmatic competence of request.

The present study aimed to obtain more insights into the impacts of instruction on the pragmatic feature production, speech act of request, in Iranian EFL learners. Specifically, we studied the usefulness of a various method of teaching (i.e. explicit instruction). To sum up, it was shown that Iranian EFL students could improve significantly in requests production through explicit instruction. Clearly, the present research paved a way of contribution to previous studies that has proposed that instruction inevitably makes a difference (Norris & Ortega, 2000) and it is in line with the study that has investigated the teachability of various pragmatic features (Kasper & Rose, 2002). From this viewpoint, it may be mentioned that explicit instruction can be efficient in improving students' pragmatic competence if appropriately carried out.

Based on the fact that students were instructed explicitly performed considerably better on the post-test, we propose that metapragmatic explanations are of high importance in triggering learners to produce pragmatically appropriate and structurally accurate requests. This study is quite compatible with the line of previous studies that suggest the effectiveness of explicit instruction in pragmatic development of L2 (Billmyer, 1990; Bouton, 1994; Rose & Ng Kwai-fun, 2001; Safont, 2003, 2005; Takahashi, 2001).

4. Conclusion
This chapter presents the conclusions of this study and includes the following sections. First, an overview of the study including the participants, instruments, procedures, and summary of the key findings will be provided. Second, pedagogical implications are going to be discussed. Third, suggestions and recommendations for further research will be presented. Fourth, a brief summary regarding the findings will be discussed. Finally, conclusion of the study will be elaborated on.

In this study, 60 homogeneous Iranian elementary EFL male learners were randomly selected as the participants of the study through the KET and randomly divided into experimental and control group. Then, both groups were assigned to take an MDCT as the pre-test. Next, the teacher involved the experimental learners in the explicit instruction. After the treatment, the same MDCT was administrated as the pre-test to observe the changes of the treatment.
4.1. Summary of Findings
The present investigation has revealed that EFL Iranian elementary learners have faced different problems in making requests. In getting their message across, the students used incorrect structure of making requests which were less specific than the intended meaning. Additionally, they were willing to reform their message in a differently odd construction. Moreover, they tended to make requests based on their L1 and they often repeated special forms and items. They were also eager to make up new structures whose surface manifestation were composed in L1.

To sum up, the results of the study revealed that Iranian EFL students managed to communicate their intended requests by making inaccurate forms because of their inadequate linguistic knowledge.

4.2. Conclusion
Many learners have problems in expressing their communicative purposes. This is an outcome of the gaps in their linguistic knowledge. If learners are capable of anticipating difficulties in interaction or when they face one, they often seek for alternative ways to get their meaning conveyed. These alternative ways such as making inaccurate structures in L2 can be avoided through explicit instruction.

The knowledge of all the issues discussed so far and the insight provided can significantly assist teachers to use explicit instruction to teach various pragmatic competence such as pragmatic competence of request. The present study has really got some valuable results and surely can provide some enlightenment to EFL learning in Iran. But there are still some uncertainties and limitations needing further research.

Finally, it is hoped that the findings of this study provide further directions and guidelines for researchers and those interested in explicit instruction with the aim of enhancing learning and supporting the needs and requirements of learners. It is also hoped that by inserting explicit instruction in classroom teaching more opportunities are provided for all to equally benefit from learning and education.

4.3. Implications for Pedagogical Purposes
For pedagogical purposes, the following implications may be offered:
1. In order to develop the pragmatic competence of the students and in order to enhance learners’ proficiency in the TL, EFL teachers should set an acceptable instruction for learners to encourage them to use accurate structures in making different pragmatic competence. This kind of instruction, explicit instruction, will develop students’ competence and reduce the chance of depending on L1-based structure or avoiding interaction.
2. In order to aid students learn the language and to make it a part of their linguistic proficiency, instructors are supposed to involve learners in real-life interactive activities via explicit instruction. Moreover, language syllabi and programs should involve explicit instruction. This, in turn, helps learners in overcoming their lack of linguistic knowledge and helps in developing their motivation and self-esteem.
3. It is highly recommendable that the greatest attention should be paid to the actual use of language and to conveying intended meaning by using accurate forms.
4. To assist learners build up pragmatic competence, learners should also be explicitly instructed on accurate examples used in real-life situations by analyzing these instances.
5. Teachers should motivate learners to increase a goal of proficiency in English language rather than a goal of fulfilling a requirement because positive attitudes toward the TL would be appeared and more learners might be engaged in learning the language.
6. Teaching pragmatic competence and L2 structures are suggested since they help to keep up interaction and to convey the message correctly.

4.4. Suggestions and Recommendations for Further Research
Suggestions and recommendations for future research are provided below:
1. The sample size in this study was relatively small (N = 60). However, further research with larger samples may provide different results.
2. The proficiency level of the participants in this study was elementary. Further research with learners of different proficiency levels may provide different results.
3. This study was conducted within a period of ten different treatment sessions during which the teacher involved the experimental learners in the explicit instruction (treatment). It is conjectured that longer treatment may result in different outcomes.
4. The participants in this study were female elementary students. Further research with male learners may provide different results.
5. Context is one of the most important factors influencing the results. Therefore, it is suggested that using different contexts may produce different results. In this way, students confront the contexts in which other pragmatic competence such as invitation may be involved.

6. More research is merited utilizing different classifications of pragmatic competence than the one introduced in the present study.

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THE STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIFFERENT GENRES AND OPEN-ENDED CLOZE TEST

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ABSTRACT
In recent years, there has been placed much emphasis on the application of genre for a variety of purposes. Genre can be applied to two main areas of language teaching generally and English for specific purposes specifically. The purpose of conducting this study was to find differences in performance of Iranian EFL learners on open-ended cloze tests including book review, story and newspaper genres. The participants of this study were sixty EFL both males and female students studying at Islamic Azad University of Rasht. Two tests were utilized in the present study. The first one was an original Longman TOFEL 2004 (test of English as a Foreign Language) for homogenizing learners' language abilities. The second test included three open-ended cloze passages with different genres developed for the purpose of this study and their reliability were calculated through pilot study and their validity was approved by some university professors. In sum what emerged as the results of the statistical procedures done by t-test conducted us to the following conclusion. There is a main difference between participants' performance on tests with various genres. The theoretical findings have something to do with the nature of reading its relation to psychological factors, i.e., familiarity with genres may help learners have a better understanding of the texts they are going to read in the classroom. Practical implications will be drawn up concerning the teaching, preparing instructional materials and testing aspects of reading.

1. Introduction
There has been considerable interest in the genre-based approach to the teaching of language since 1980s. To communicate purposefully is the goal of this approach and is originated from the work of Holliday (1985), Swales (1981,1990) and Bhatia (1993). In brief, a genre is a text, to be spoken or written apply for a specific goal in the society. When researchers wanted to examine a specific genre, they looked across many texts to find the regularities for that specific genre. Recently, scholars have defined genre as a social act: "a complex pattern of repeated social activity and rhetorical performance to a recurrent situation" (pare and Smar, 1994, p.147).

Different scholars have proposed different definitions for genre: For Hymes (1972), genre is component of speech with identifiable formal characteristics. For Martin (1984) genre is goal-oriented social processes. Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) consider the communicative purpose as the most prominent criterion for the identification of genres. For Miller (1994), genre is a social action and for Freedman (1994), genres are social actions or rhetorical responses to repeated circumstances or text. Genres are essentially defined in terms of the use of language in conventionalized communicative settings. They are meant to "serve the goals of specific discourse communities, and in so doing, they tend to establish relatively stable structural form and, to some extent, even constrain the use of lexico-grammatical resources in expressing these forms" (Bhatia, 1993, p.183).
2. Related Studies

In recent years, there has been placed much emphasis on the application of genre for a variety of purposes. Genre can be utilized to response, the omission of content words or function words. Jon Jones (1991) made an attempt to find the effect of inter-sentential links on the comprehension process of non-native users of English. In another study conducted by Farhady and keramati (1996), it appeared that selecting deletion rate based on the number of linguistic and discourse structures of a passage influence the tastes' performance on cloze test. Bachman (1990), for example indicates that particular kinds of language tests (e.g., cloze, multiple-choice, dictation) themselves make genres and these activate certain expectations in test takers familiar with them, and thus facilitating the task of test taking for these persons, as causing the work more hard for test takers not acquainted with the specific kind. In addition, Bachman emphasizes, if the structure of the given input in a test is features of a genre that is not familiar to test takers, we may suppose that tasks that related to the explanation of that input would be rather problematic. Bhatia (1993) identified applications of genre analysis and genre for language teachers, course designers, curriculum developers and ESP learners and teachers (p.147).

On the other hand, within the area of language testing, the cloze procedure has been probed both theoretically and methodologically. Cloze procedure, initially introduced by Taylor in 1953, was used to determine the readability of texts in the readers' native language. Later, it gained importance as a good testing device and it is now one of the most popular testing techniques especially for assessing general language proficiency of EFL/ESL learners. Much research has aimed at determining the reliability and the validity of cloze tests. It is reported that Cloze tests have higher correlations with tests and their subtests like reading comprehension and listening comprehension etc. Oller (1973), Shohamy (1978), Hinofotis (1980) and Mullen (1980) report high correlations between cloze tests and tests of reading comprehension, writing, listening comprehension, and FSI oral interview. Kobayeshi (2004) investigated the relationship between test organization and response formats and found supporting evidence for methods formats in reading comprehension cloze tests. Fountas and Pintel (2001) uncovered that the performance on reading comprehension text influenced by different genres. The findings of these researchers reveal a relation between the scores on cloze and global language ability tests.

A growing body of research on cloze test has indicated that the features of the text out of which the cloze test is constructed, e.g., produce significant results for the field of language teaching and language testing. It can offer pedagogical applications for teachers and students as well as text book developers. Since much of learning involves reading texts it is important to find ways, or at least detect influencing factors to increase the probability of students understanding of the materials in the most efficient way possible. The attempt to make texts more comprehensible, then would have educational implications as well.

2.1. Purpose of the study

Chapalle and Abraham (1990) investigated the effect of deletion rate on the testes performance. They also examined the elements of cloze context which affect performance by determining the extent to which item characteristics with item difficulty. To that end, they interpreting these tests should not assume that such tests only assess language ability. Accordingly, this study intended to investigate the relationship between genre and Iranian ELF learners' performance on open-ended cloze test. To that, three passages with three different genres were selected (namely; short story, biography, and book review), and out of each passage open-ended cloze test was constructed. The test takes' performance on all these three tests were compared. The results may have applications for the field of language teaching and language testing. Since the primary objective of the study is to investigate the performance of learners on open-ended cloze test with different genres. The main research questions are posed which are as follows:

1. Is there any difference of students on Biographical and story genres?
2. Is there any difference in performance of students on book review and story genres?
3. Is there any difference in performance of students on book review and story genres?

Based on purpose of the study and research questions, these hypotheses were made:

1. There is not any difference in performance of students on Biographical and story genres.
2. There is not difference in performance of students on book review and story genres.
3. There is not any difference in performance of students on book review and story genres.

3. Method
3.1. Subjects
The subjects of the study were 30 senior EFL students, both males and females studying Azad university of Rasht. The participants had passed an average of 100 credits and they ranged among 20 to 25 years of age. However, the variable age and sex were not included in the present study. The logic of selecting senior English course was to have more proficient subjects who have practiced literature courses and reading and have relative familiarity with different genres. Thirty students took part in the pilot study for the sake of the validation of the tests constructed by the researcher and out of the remaining subjects, 60 subjects were chosen according to learners’ proficiency levels assessed by an original 2004 version of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL). These subjects took different tests prepared for the purpose of the study.

3.2. Instrumentation
Two testing instruments were used in this study. The first one was an original 2004 version of TOEFL (test of English as a Foreign Language). It was intended to act as a criterion to validate the other test type, i.e., the open-ended cloze test developed for the purpose of the study. Further, it was administered for the purpose of selecting subjects with a specific level of proficiency in English.

The second test (Test B.) including three open-ended cloze passages developed for the purpose of this study. Each one was constructed by deleting every 7th word out of an original and authentic passage. It is worthwhile to mention that the passages enjoyed nearly equal readability indices. To that end, the readability levels of the passages were calculated utilizing Fog’s Readability formula and Fry’s Extended Graph. It should be noted that three selected passages were in different genres since the purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between genre and the testes’ performance on open-ended cloze tests.

3.3. Procedure
In order to answer the questions that investigated the effects of different genres on students’ performance on open-ended tests, a number of statistical procedures used for data description, including basic descriptive statistics, reliability estimation and match T-Test. The tests were administrated among thirty students of 120 selected ones. The reliability of each test was calculated by using Kurder-Richardson21 formula. The reliability of biographical test was .72 story test was .65 and the book review one was .75.

3.4. Design of the Study
The present study was a descriptive one containing a number of test administrations. This test included three open-ended cloze passages. The steps involved in adopting the cloze passages were as follows. Based on the obtained average readability index, three passages with three different genres were selected after examining several passages. The genres chosen were “biography”, “short story” and “book review”. To ensure that the passages are the same in terms of readability and difficulty level, Fog’s Readability Formula is utilized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Fog’s Readability Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passage A</td>
<td>Short Story</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passage B</td>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>27.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passage C</td>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>29.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three cloze passages with every 7th word deleted and the first and the last sentences left intact were developed. Each cloze passage comprised 30 blanks to be filled by the participants in 25 minutes. It was decided that any appropriate choice could be used to fill in the blanks and, therefore, the acceptable word method was employed for scoring the open-ended cloze passages.
3.5 Data Analysis
The data analysis procedure includes the following steps: first, the basic descriptive statistics, that is, the mean, standard deviation. Minimum and maximum scores were calculated for all the test scores.

The reliability of the tests were calculated by using Kurder-Richardson21 formula, in order to find validity the correlation coefficients of each test with TOFEL were calculated. Then match T-Test was ran up to see the significant differences between different genres.

3.6 Delimitations of the Study
In order to minimize the effects of unwanted factors in this study, certain limitations were made. Firstly, the study was limited to three genres, namely, short story, biography, and magazine article. Other genres are not taken into consideration. Secondly, subjects were selected from the population of senior university students, majoring in English. The rationale for this was to have the subjects who had passed major courses in literature. Reading and writing, and gained a relative familiarity with different genres. Thirdly, the investigation was carried out within the age range of 20 to Finally, sex was not considered distinctly as a variable, the effect of which to be investigated.

4. Result
In order to answer the questions that posed, the effects of different genres on students' performance on open-ended cloze-tests. The data were analyzed by a number of statistical procedures, containing basic descriptive statistics, reliability estimation, creational analysis and match T- Test. The tests were administrated among thirty students of 120 selected ones. The reliability of each test was calculated by using KR-21 formula.

The reliability of story test was 64 and biographical test was .70 and the book review one was .73. The validation of these tests was calculated by correlating each test with TOFEL test result. The validity of the story test was 76 and biographical test 78 and the book review one was .63. The descriptive statistics will be shown on the table.1.

Table1: Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>x</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>Mi</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOFEL</td>
<td>63.98</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37.14</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>16.31</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17.31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>13.30</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first hypothesis that indicates there is not any difference in performance of students on Biographical and story genres that the result of each test was compared by pairs and the following results were obtained. The results showed that T-observed was higher than t-critical since T-observed was 7.21 and T- critical was 3.40 so it showed that performance of students on genres of story and biography was significantly different. Therefore the second hypothesis was rejected.

Table. 2 Match: T-Test for pair sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T-observed</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>2Tail sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.21</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>7.21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.51</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-observed > T- Critical

The second hypothesis that declared there is not any difference in performance of students on book review and story genres that the result of each test was compared by pairs and the following results were obtained. Tests of book review and story genre were compared by T- Test and results were like this, The T- observed was 5.36 in comparison to T- Critical which was 3.460. therefore; their differences were significant and third hypothesis was rejected.
The third hypothesis that states there is not any difference in performance of students on book review and biographical genres that the result of each test was compared by pairs and the following results were obtained. The test of biographical and book review genres were compared by T-test and results showed that the differences were significant. Since T-observed was 3.63 and T-critical was 3.46, all of these calculated at level of .05 at degree of freedom of (2)(see table 4).

Table. 4 Match: T-Test for pair sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T-observed</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>2Tail sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.51</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-observed > T-Critical

Table. 3 Match: T-Test for pair sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>T-observed</th>
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<td>5.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third hypothesis that states there is not any difference in performance of students on book review and biographical genres that the result of each test was compared by pairs and the following results were obtained. The test of biographical and book review genres were compared by T-test and results showed that the differences were significant. Since T-observed was 3.63 and T-critical was 3.46, all of these calculated at level of .05 at degree of freedom of (2)(see table 4).

5. Conclusion

In sum what emerged as the results of the statistical procedures conducted us to the following general conclusion: There is a significance difference between subjects in different genres this finding is in line with finding of Farhady and keramati (1996), Kobayeshi (2004) and Fountas and Pintel (2001). First of all, the results will help reaches have a better view on using a variety of texts with those genres that the learners can better cope with. Having the knowledge of the extent to which the students understand different genres, the teachers can provide them with the necessary supplementary and remedial tasks and programmers. Secondly, text-developers will also take benefits from this study. They can select and integrate various genres into the reading materials. Finally, from among many factors mentioned to influence the test takers performance on cloze text is the features of the text, so the manipulation of different genres in the construction of a text may have an impact upon performance on cloze test, which deserves investigation.

5.1 Pedagogical Implications and Applications

The results of such a research will have both theoretical and practical implications. The theoretical findings have something to do with the nature of reading its relation to psychological factors, i.e., familiarity with genres may help learners have a better understanding of the texts they are going to read in the classroom. Practical implications will be drawn up concerning the teaching, preparing instructional materials and testing aspects of reading. Moreover, the pedagogical implications of the findings will be enormous for teachers and teacher trainees. Having the knowledge of the extent to which students can understand different genre, the teachers can provide students with necessary supplementary and remedial tasks and programs. Additionally, in reading classes many teachers confine themselves to the teaching of vocabulary item and grammatical structures. Although vocabulary and grammar are two fundamental elements in reading, they are by no means, enough. Students need to go beyond sentence level and gain more insights into the different genres in their reading classes. At the same time, textbook writers can use the results of this study to select appropriate passages depending on genres. In fact they can select various passages of different genres and integrate them into the reading material. Finally, the result of this study may have implications for test developers. Since test writers will be able to develop tests which are more effective assessments of student's abilities in the foreign language.

REFERENCES

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REFLECTIVE TEACHING AND EFL TEACHERS’ EVALUATION OF STUDENTS’ ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to investigate the relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. The participants in this study consist of fifty EFL teachers of Doroud city. The data for this study was collected via three different instruments, namely questionnaires, observation, and document analysis. First, the participants completed three questionnaires, the first one dealt with some biographical information about participants and their teaching interest. The second questionnaire dealt with the statements relating to teachers' cognitions on their teaching process, (Adopted from Levin, B. (2001)). This questionnaire consisted of some statements checking different aspects of their teaching process. The third questionnaire prepared by Hilisbourough Colledge is a questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance. This questionnaire deals with the evaluation of different aspects of students' achievement. Following the administration of questionnaires, some random observations were carried out. Data management and analysis were conducted with SPSS software. I also used the teachers' evaluation of students' achievement in the form of standardized tests, submitted by the participants to support the findings from the third questionnaires. The analysis revealed that most of the participants' practices were consistent with their stated cognitions in all aspects. The analysis of the data also revealed that many of the teachers in this study are not aware of the outcomes of their stated cognitions on their teaching process, and consequently, on their evaluation of students' achievement. The results of this study revealed that there is a moderate relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. The results of this study implicated that the local in-service teacher education and training program should aid teachers in identifying and refining their evaluation of students' achievement, as a means of improving their beliefs towards teaching and consequently evaluation process.

Key words: Reflective teaching; Teachers' evaluation; Students' achievement; In-service Teachers.

1. Introduction
1.1 Background of the study

Reflective practice has been widely researched, starting with John Dewey in 1933, who introduced the idea of reflective thought, described as an active consideration of any belief in the light of the prior knowledge and future objectives. Before the 1970s, research in the area of teacher cognition was influenced by Behaviorism. Research in the effectiveness of teaching was measured through the correlation of students' performance. During the 1980s and the years after, researchers investigated a number of different aspects and dimensions of teachers' cognitions. The main focus was on studying the way teachers think about their own works, their mental processes in planning and carrying out their teaching process, the kind of decisions made in the course of teaching, and how these beliefs may change over time.

Teacher cognition researchers have been concerned with identifying teachers' cognitions and their practices with respect to specific subject matters, foreign/second language was also among the subject which has received attention in this respect. Comparison of teachers' teaching practices with their stated cognitions has been among the common concerns as it could be inferred from Borg (2009). Researchers have employed different instruments
which are classified into four categories, including self-reports, verbal commentaries, observations, and reflective writing. Applying these instruments, the researchers have produced data from pre-service and in-service teachers in different contexts as suggested by Borg (2006).

In language teacher cognition research, however, not all the curricular areas within the field of foreign/second language learning have received adequate attention. Evaluation of students' achievement is among those instances in language teacher cognition research which have been scarcely regarded in studies on teachers' cognition and practice.

1.2 Purpose of the study

This study might be helpful for those pre-service teachers who want to prepare themselves for teaching in an unexpected classroom situation. Wright (2010) states that "research and states of practice provide us [teacher educators] with inspiration for our own teacher education practice" (p.289). Integral to the process of evaluating students' achievement is that of self-evaluation by teachers. This is so because a question such as how mentally prepared were students for a given lesson cannot be divorced from the question of the degree to which the teacher tries to focus students' attention on the learning activities. During the evaluation process, the literature also suggests that teachers should include an assessment of their actions in relation to the learning activities presented and students' participation in these activities. That is why, the individual teachers are also to benefit from the results of this study, if they care about teaching as their job.

1.3 Research assumption

Based on the related literature, it can be assumed that reflective teaching influences their practices as it could be also induced from Foxworth (2004). That is, their cognitions are among the factors in taking responsibility for their actions as mentioned by Farrel (2001). Since, reflective teaching and its relationship with evaluating students' achievement have not been the focus of the recent studies, to a considerable extent, the nature of such a relationship will be investigated in this study.

1.4 Research question

This study tries to answer the following question.

Is there any relationship between reflective teaching and EFL teachers' evaluation of students' achievement?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

The research hypothesis of this study is as follows:

H1: There is a relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement.

2. Background of the study

2.1 Reflective Teaching

This section deals with a brief historical overview of reflective teaching research. In this area of research, different aspects of reflective teaching and teachers' reflection are reviewed.

2.1.1 Background of the reflective teaching

Language teaching research in the 1970s, can originally be seen as some classroom studies, in which there was a "process-product approach toward teaching. That is, the teachers' practical teaching and the learners' achievement were observed to see how much a particular type of teaching would lead to learners' learning". If they were found to be effective, the procedures would be recognized as helpful ones which could be adopted by other teachers (Borg, 2006, pp. 5-6).

The beginning of reflective teaching research, focusing on teachers' thought, however, can be traced back to the publication of the report by National Institute of Education in 1975. "The report, then, urged for considering the
relationship between thought and action as far as the teachers are concerned" (quoted in Borg, 2006, p. 7). Therefore, the researchers began to think on and search teachers' thought as one of the factors affecting their teaching behavior.

In the studies that were done in the 1970-80s, however, the subject matter to be taught was neglected. This is what Shulman (1986) refers to as "missing paradigm". Shulman (1986) suggested the term "content knowledge" including subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge which is to be used in a study of teacher cognition" (as cited in Tsui, 2003, p. 50). They can be defined, respectively, as knowledge of the subject matter (i.e. what is to be taught) and the knowledge of how to teach a particular subject matter. That is why teachers' knowledge of the subject matter to be taught became significant in reflective teaching.

Richards (1990, p. 12) believes that second language teacher education is to "provide opportunities to acquire the skills and competencies of effective teachers." This involves an awareness and understanding of the helpful skills and competencies on the part of the teacher educators. It should be noted that to understand teachers and teaching, and consequently those skills and competencies, as Borg (2009) states, we need to understand "the thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs that influence what teachers do' and also language teacher cognition research "has made a significant contribution to our understandings of the process of becoming, being, and developing professionally as a teacher" (p. 163).

The focus of language teacher cognition research, primarily, was on first language and it was "in the mid-1990s" to quote Borg (2009), that "second and foreign language teacher cognition research emerged" (p. 163). Since then, the research on second/foreign language teacher cognition has been mostly on five major themes: cognitions of novice teachers, in-service language teacher cognitions and stated practices, cognitions and practices of in-service teachers, cognitive change in in-service teachers, and comparison of novice and expert language teachers, as inferred from (Borg, 2006). In the present study, the third theme, i.e., cognitions and practices of in-service teachers, has been mainly focused upon. That is, the aim was to compare teachers' stated cognitions with regard to evaluating students' achievement and what they do inside the classroom.

2.1.2 Reflection-in-action and Reflection-on-action

Reflection-in-action involves teachers in critically thinking on the spot, in 'the thick of things' as discussed by (Schon 1983) about what is being taught and the intended outcome, sometimes having to assess, revise and implement new approaches and activities immediately. Schon (1987) stated that reflection occurs before and after action. This he refers to as reflection-on-action. Therefore, before teaching, teachers reflect and plan their teaching procedure and, after doing it, they consider or think about what occurred.

2.2 Areas of research in language teacher cognition

This section provides a review of the studies in language teacher cognition with regard to different curricular areas. Although this study focuses on foreign language teaching, this does not mean that language has been the only subject of studies in language teacher cognition research. Many studies can be found in relation to subjects other than language teaching. Conroy (2009) in teaching mathematics, Kenreich (2004) with geography teachers, and Zembylas (2005) with elementary school teacher.

Among the language skills, reading and writing have received some attention and in the language components, grammar can be claimed to have received the most attention in language teacher cognition research and it seems that evaluating students' achievement has been studied rarely. Communicative language teaching also was studied from this perspective. It should be mentioned that the order in which the groups of studies are presented here is based on the amount of attention that has been given to each area.

2.2.1 Grammar in language teacher cognition research

"Grammar has been one of the areas in language teacher cognition research which has received remarkable attention" (Borg, 2006, p. 109). Review of the related literature shows that studies focusing on grammar have concerned with one of the three dimensions discussed in this section. A group of teacher cognition researchers has focused on teachers' declarative knowledge. That is, they investigated teachers' knowledge of what they were teaching (rather than how to teach it). Andrews (1999) realized that non-native teachers did better in their
knowledge about language than the native ones. It was noted that this knowledge does not suffice, although it is necessary. Berry (1997) has studied students' knowledge of grammar by using a questionnaire to teachers' estimation of their students' knowledge. Many incongruities were observed between what the students knew and what the teachers thought their students would know. These incongruities were not helpful at all, as they would not lead to a satisfaction of the expectations. It was observed that teachers' views about teaching grammar were based on their own learning experiences rather than formal research (as cited in Borg, 2003).

2.2.2 Beliefs about teaching grammar

In another group of studies, the focus has been on teachers' stated beliefs about teaching grammar. In Iran, this focus has been observed in a few of studies, that two of them reviewed here. Farshchi (2009) studied 117 male and female teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar and teaching grammar by using questionnaire. The results show that teachers' gender and the place they taught were of determined factor. In another study by Moini (2009), the beliefs of 130 Iranian teachers by means of a grammar belief questionnaire have been reviewed. The findings showed that teachers' educational backgrounds and experiences were significantly influential. In addition, their workplace seemed to have a determined role in their beliefs, although the gender difference was not influential.

2.2.3 Teachers' grammar teaching representing their cognitions

These kinds of studies mainly considered teachers' stated cognition with respect to some specific behavior. In one of the recent studies, Borg (2005), following "an exploratory-interpretive view of research," (p. 326) considers teachers' grammar teaching and the cognitions behind these by analyzing two EFL teachers from different countries through interviews, observation, and found that for one of them, his knowledge of grammar was thought to be the influential element in the way he treated grammar in class while this was not the case for the other participant. In another study in Turkey in an 18-month period Borg and Philipps through using interviews and observations found that teachers' beliefs are of two kinds: core and peripheral, claiming that although the teachers may peripherally seem to be incongruent with their beliefs, their practices are in line with their core beliefs.

2.3 Reading in language teacher cognition research

Some of the studies on language teacher cognition have focused on Reading. Johnson (1992) studied practices and beliefs of six novice teachers and found that "novice teachers with little experience in teaching apply the most functional and recent theoretical stance whereas more experienced ones apply the least recent beliefs". (p. 528). In an Iranian context, Khonamri and Salimi did a study in 2010, which dealt with high school teachers' beliefs on reading strategies and incongruities between the stated beliefs and the stated practices through questionnaires. Although most of the participants declared that it is necessary to explicitly teach the reading strategies, their reported practices did not indicate their beliefs (Khonamri and Salimi, 2010).

2.4 Writing in language teacher cognition research

Another area in language teacher cognition research which has been dealt with very peripherally is writing. Tsui (1996) studied the experience of an EFL teacher with respect to process writing for two years and found that teachers' cognitions and practices change by passing of time. He also sheds some light on the way in which "institutional and curricular factors can restrict teacher's capabilities to carry out actions they feel are desirable" (Borg, 2003, p. 103)

2.5 Vocabulary in language teacher cognition research

One of the few studies in teacher cognition research focusing on vocabulary instruction is a Ph.D. dissertation by Zhang (2008). In this study, Zhang examined seven Chinese EFL teachers through interview, observation, and stimulated recalls to understand their knowledge of vocabulary instruction, their practical vocabulary teaching, and the relationship between their cognition and practices. The findings showed that teachers were in appropriate level from the aspect of knowledge of vocabulary instruction. The knowledge was found to contain three different broad categories of knowing a word, i.e., form, meaning, and use. The observed practices were reported to be congruent with their cognitions except for their practices on the pragmatic use of the words and this mismatch, according to Tsui (2003), was considered being probably due to the teachers' own lack of knowledge.
2.6 Teachers' evaluation of students' achievement

In this section, I deal with teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. Before I do so, let me discuss evaluating students' achievement, how it is used and what its characteristics are.

2.6.1 Evaluation of students' achievement

Steinberg (1991) supported the idea that evaluation is an integral part of learning development. Through regular evaluation, the teacher is better able to prepare work on students' learning needs in mind and will be able to address individual problems when they arise. Moreover, the process, if carried out effectively, will eventuate into students' progress and the improvement of teaching procedure.

James (1983), while agreeing with the statement that evaluation should be an ongoing process, took the idea further, when she stated that teachers should be deliberate in planning for evaluation. In the process of planning for evaluation, they should determine the purpose and decide on the means of measuring the processes and outcomes and collect information via observation and careful monitoring of activities. This statement highlights the fact that observation and monitoring of activities are critical to the process of evaluating students' achievement. If teachers are to follow James-Reid’s idea, there is the need to firmly establish, before teaching process, what to observe. For example, as Moyles (2002) states in a classroom they may look at how often individual students interact with them or, while checking for students' understanding of a particular concept or skills, they may look at the number of those who indicated and those who remained neutral. At the end of the teaching session, observations made during the session should be critically evaluated via the use of questions. The act of questioning is an integral aspect of the evaluation process. Highlighted later in this chapter are the kinds of questions used at the evaluation stage of teaching process. Other characteristics of evaluation highlighted by James included the fact that evaluation does not have to be on a large scale and that, overall, evaluation is concerned with the process and product of teaching, that is, teaching procedure and the outcome or results, which is, student learning.

There seems to be a consensus according to Sparapani (2000) that questions regarding students' response to various learning activities are necessary during evaluation process. However, these questions should not only focus on the achievement of cognitive skills but also on the affective. The following are some practical suggestions of how to assess students during the process of evaluating, according to Ferris and Hedgcock (1998), Foxworth (2004). They suggest the need to ask yourself: How well did students respond to the activities you planned? Were they mentally prepared for the learning activity? Were they actively involved in the learning process most of the time? Did all students learn something from the content taught? Then, try to recognize the cause of problems you encountered. Record what worked and what did not work well. Search to identify students with special weaknesses and to whom special attention must be given.

2.6.2 How teachers evaluate students' achievement

There are many questions which are essentials in evaluating students' achievement, such as forms of evaluation, areas to evaluate, and process of evaluation are critical to an understanding of how teachers evaluate students' achievement.

2.6.3 The forms of evaluating students' achievement

Computer software specifically designed for evaluation has revolutionized the form and process used by teachers to evaluate students' achievement. Bryant (1992) elaborating on the use of computer software in the process of evaluation, states that it enables the conversion of check sheets used for evaluating students' progress into electronic form making them more quantifiable. It enables not only the assessment of students and records their progress on the computer, but it also generates reports that can be used for parent reporting sessions and offer greater flexibility in modifying various aspects of a written report. It also enables teachers to reflect on the abilities that they wish to measure and minimize 'paperwork' because it allows the scanning of actual copies of students' work into the computer and have them easily available for reference.

2.6.4 Evaluating teachers' performance during teaching process
Integral to the process of evaluating students is that of self-evaluation by teachers. This is so because a question such as how mentally prepared were students for a given course of instruction cannot be separated from the question of the degree to which the teacher tried to focus students’ attention on the learning activities.

The literature does not exclude teachers looking at their actions during evaluation process. Rather, it encourages critical assessment via the use of questions directed at teachers’ actions during teaching process. Ferris (1998) support this idea. During the evaluation process, the literature also suggests that teachers should include an assessment of their actions in relation to the learning activities presented and students’ participation in these activities. During this process, Foxworth (2004) suggests a number of useful questions. For example, teachers should ask, ‘Did I guide the students through problems or examples, checking how well they were doing? Did I assess whether or not the students were ready to go on to independent practice?’ (p.65). The other areas that would require teachers’ attention during evaluation process are teaching methods and objectives.

2.7 Reflective Teaching and evaluation of students’ achievement

Having identified potentially how teachers’ evaluate students’ achievement, I try to examine what actions and thoughts indicate their use of reflective teaching in their evaluating students’ achievement. As stated in the foregoing discussion by James (1983), the overall aim of the process of evaluation is to enable teachers to prepare work with students learning needs in mind but, more important, if the process is carried out effectively, it will eventuate into students’ progress and the improvement of teaching and the teacher as a teacher. The idea of teacher and students’ progress is integral to reflective teaching. According to Cole (1997), Coyle (2002), reflective teachers are involved in analyzing, discussing, evaluating, changing, and developing their practice, which will eventuate into student improvement.

There are a number of other characteristics of reflective teaching which demand that teachers, recall, consider and evaluate their teaching experiences as a means of improving future ones, as inferred from (Farrell, 2001 and Coyle, 2002). Elder and Paul (1994) pointed out that teachers need to think critically. This involves the willingness to question, take risks in learning, try out new strategies and ideas, seek alternatives, take control of learning, use higher order thinking skills and be able to reflect upon their own learning processes. According to Cunningham (2001), they discuss and analyze with others problems they encounter in their classroom, to aid their analysis of situations, which can eventuate into improved future classroom encounters. Reiman (1999) suggests that they identify personal meaning and or significance of a classroom or school situation, confront the uncertainty about their teaching philosophies and, indeed, their competence. In addition, they should include self-examination. This involves assessing beliefs and values and engaging in discussions that lead to self-understanding and self-improvement which can eventuate into being a better teacher-learner, thus facilitating necessary changes both in self, others and teaching context, as inferred from (Coyle 2002, Posner 1989, and Hatton & Smith 1995). Calderhead (1992) stated that reflective teachers also analyze and evaluate their own practice, school, classroom relationships, context, and make use of what they have learnt to inform decision-making, planning and future action, and this can eventuate into school improvement.

3. Methods

3.1 Instrumentations

The data for this study was collected through three different sources, as follows:

3.1.1 Questionnaires

The main sources of data collection in this study were three questionnaires. They contain closed and ranked questions and also open-ended questions. In order to collect some biographical information and become familiar with participants’ characteristics, their teaching experiences and also their teaching interest, I prepared and distributed the first questionnaire. The second questionnaire deals with some questions relating to teachers' cognitions on their teaching process. This questionnaire consisted of some questions that ask respondents (teachers) if they have checked different aspects of their teaching procedure or not. In this questionnaire, participants are required to see if they have checked some basic elements in their teaching process or not. Those elements are categories such as: Purpose for learning, attention, learner-centered focus, thinking skills, assessment, anticipation of problems and finally evaluation. In the second questionnaire, the teachers are asked to answer the
questions about their reflection which deals with evaluating students' achievement. In the third questionnaire, the participants were required to complete three sections. In the first section, respondents were asked to answer to questions that deal with the number of students on first day roster and also number of students who failed to complete the course due to the quality of the work or lack of attendance. In section two, the respondents were asked to check the general education core curriculum statements (minimum of three) that they chose as applicable to this course. Finally, participants must evaluate students' performance as measured against your selected general education and cluster outcomes. In order to reduce the difficulty that some of the respondents had in translating the questionnaires, I provided respondents with Persian equivalent of questionnaires which this also improves validity of the results of this study. The questionnaires of this study have been used in different articles and this could illuminate that they are reliable and valid enough to be adopted for this study, I also calculated their reliability value for them which this also could validate the results of the study. My supervisor and advisor also affirmed this issue. Members of the committee and subcommittee must be thanked to allow me to use their questionnaires.

3.1.2 Observations

As the second source of data, the researcher had some class observations which were all recorded during fall semester. For this reason, at first, I prepared an observation sheet which controlled different aspects of the second questionnaire, and then, compared what I observed in their teaching practices with their stated cognitions on second questionnaire. The researcher made these observations randomly for ten of the participants in order to confirm or reject the data obtained from the second questionnaire answered by participants.

2.1.3 Documentary analysis

The fact that meaning and perception are evident in documents, as inferred from Hodder (2000) affirms the use of documentary analysis. Hence, the analysis of a document could reveal many of the author’s perspectives. One way to elicit people’s perceptions is to examine their writings. For this study, participants’ stated cognitions to questionnaire for faculty evaluation of students’ performance and their evaluation of students' achievement in the form of final English language tests are compared and analyzed.

3.2 participants

In order to answer the research question for this study, and understanding the action of reflective teachers, fifty participants who were teachers, teaching in high schools were selected. The participants include both male and female Table 1 participants stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-reflection questionnaire</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>FY</th>
<th>FPN</th>
<th>PPN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you share your objectives with the students you were teaching? If not? Why not?</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why are objectives important?</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you tell the students why they were learning the information in your lesson?</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If not, did you ask the students to share what they would get out of learning the information?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If neither you nor the students set a purpose for learning, why not?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is setting a purpose for learning important?</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you capture their attention?</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you keep their attention?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If not, what would you do differently?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the lesson appropriate for most of the students at the age level?</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If not, was it too easy or too hard?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Was the lesson related to the students’ interest? How do you know?  
30  20  60%  40%

Did you build on the students’ knowledge?  
35  15  70%  30%

If yes, how do you know? If not, why not?  
11  39  22%  78%

Why should you build on prior knowledge?  
19  31  38%  62%

Did you discuss meta-cognition with the students? If not, why not?  
14  36  28%  72%

Why should the students discuss meta-cognition?  
8  42  16%  84%

Did you assess student learning and performance? If not, why not?  
28  22  56%  44%

If yes, was your assessment in line with your objectives?  
34  16  68%  32%

Was your assessment authentic? If yes, how do you know?  
17  33  34%  66%

Did the students achieve your objectives?  
27  23  54%  46%

Which ones did they achieve?  
14  36  28%  72%

Which ones do you not know whether they achieved?  
10  40  20%  80%

Did you teach or assess for transfer? If not, why not?  
13  37  26%  74%

Why is transfer important?  
10  40  20%  80%

Did you have enough time? did you have plans for what to do with the extra time?  
40  10  80%  20%

Were there any problems that you had anticipated? Describe what happened.  
32  18  64%  36%

Were there any problems that you had not anticipated? Describe what happened.  
19  31  38%  62%

What worked best about your lesson?  
33  17  66%  34%

Teachers having different teaching experience. Regarding the sampling procedure in this study, it should be mentioned that it took place purposefully. To do this, different criteria were considered. One of these criteria was the awareness of teachers with the concept of reflective teaching and what reflective teachers do in their classes. If they had enough knowledge about the concept of reflective teaching, they would be selected as a participant in this study and if they had not, they would be acquainted with it. Based on that, the researcher talked to sixty five teachers among whom fifty agreed to participate in this study. The purpose and the data collection procedure of the study were clarified, besides the things they were asked to perform.

3.3 Data Analysis

This section deals with the data analysis procedures that have been followed for this study. As it was mentioned earlier, for analyzing the data, the software, SPSS 21, has been used.

2.3.1 Descriptive and statistical analysis

To analyze the data in this study and to answer the research question, descriptive statistics in the form of graphs for describing participants’ characteristics and also their answers to different questions in questionnaires was used. In inferential section, to determine the normality of the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used, and also to specify whether there is a relationship between the variables in this study Pearson Correlation was used.

In this study, for analyzing the data, at first, descriptive statistics was used to reveal the participants’ characteristics such as: age, gender, teaching experience and so on, next description of respondents’ responses to different questions in questionnaires was carried out, then, respondents’ stated responses to questionnaires were compared with observations. Finally, based on the hypothesis, to specify the accuracy of the data obtained in previous section, related statistical tests were used by using spss21 software. In order to receive a clear picture or a detailed description of some of the participants’ responses who comment to some of the questions in questionnaires, the
researcher also employed both a within case and a cross case analysis of the respondents’ comments to some of the questions in the questionnaires.

2.3.2 Within-case analysis

The within-case analysis involved a detailed description of each participant’s stated response to different questions in questionnaires. The purpose as stated by Creswell (1998), was to allow me to become intimately familiar with each participant’s response to different questions, which in turn allowed me to identify the unique patterns in each of their views and according to Eisenhardt (1989), performing this process accelerated the cross-case comparison. The fact that there was no set standard formats to carrying out within-case analysis or content analysis, as stated by Eisenhardt (1989), gave me the freedom to create my own with the help of the writing of Powell and Renner (2003).

2.3.3 Cross-case analysis

A cross-case analysis is valuable to compare the cases systematically to see factors that are present in all the responses, those that are present in some responses and not others, and those that are entirely absent. Day (1999) is of the opinion that researchers give little thought or effort to the involvement or learning of teachers who are their subjects. A cross-case analysis involves examining themes or categories across cases, to find those that were common to all cases. I started this process with the development of categories based on my examination of the responses from the within-case analysis. In the cross-case analysis process, I first categorized the answers given to the questionnaires, through a process of moving between these responses, I looked for similarities and differences, as suggested by (Powell and Renner 2003). I then through a process of further analysis, draw conclusions about differences and similarities in respondents’ views, according to the identified category.

4. Results and Discussion

3.1 Analyzing participants’ responses to self-reflection questionnaire

In this section, at first, participants’ responses to self-reflection questionnaire and questionnaire for faculty evaluation of students’ performance will be presented. Next the observations have been made to determine the congruity between responses and their practices with respect to what they have checked in self-reflection questionnaire. Then, teachers’

Table 2 Frequency and percentage of correspondence between participants’ responses and observed practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Frequency of matched</th>
<th>Frequency of not matched</th>
<th>Percentage of matched</th>
<th>Percentage of not matched</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation 1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
evaluation of students' achievement in the form of final tests have been provided to possibly confirm the findings obtained from the questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance. Participants' real names for the ethical matters and with the same aim, presenting some exact personal data is avoided according to Borg (2009) and Duff (2008). Participants' responses to self reflection questionnaire have been classified in Table 1. In this table FY stands for frequency of participants who check the question in their teaching. FN stands for frequency of participants who did not check the question in their teaching. PY stands for percentage of participants who check the question and PN stands for percentage of participants who did not check the question in their teaching process. Table 2 reveals that to what extent there is congruity between participants' stated cognitions and their observed practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation value</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Error value</th>
<th>Significant value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.555</td>
<td>correlated</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. DISCUSSION

To provide a discussion of the findings of the study, in this section the research question is restated again, and the answer to this question will be developed as follows: The research question was this: Is there relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement?

According to Borg (2009), it is not a flaw if teachers' stated cognitions are not in line with their practices. Important point is to explore the possible reasons of such incongruities. I checked the categories which they answered in questionnaires and made a comparison between what I observed in their teaching practices which were registered in the observation sheets. The results showed that there is a difference between respondents' stated cognitions and their practices and it could be inferred from table 1&2. It seems that participants' cognitions to self reflection questionnaire, mostly match with what they perform in their classes, although in some cases some incongruity observed in what they have checked in self reflection questionnaire and their practices.

Questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance was used to reveal participants' cognitions with respect to evaluating students' achievement. To see to what extent they are congruent with their stated cognitions, participants’ final tests of students’ performance were used to determine to what extent they are right with respect to their cognitions. Analyzing participants’ final tests revealed that participants are in correspondent with their stated cognitions in most of the cases but some incongruities were also recognized. In order to analyze some of the participants’ comments on some questions in questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance, within case and cross case analysis of responses were carried out. Analysis of participants’ responses revealed the similarities and differences among participants’ responses with respect to different categories of questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance. It also brought about some of the participants’ cognitions on the surface which may not be derived from their responses to questionnaires. Based on what literature revealed with regard to reflective teaching and evaluating student's achievement, especially as Foxworth (2004) suggests that some crucial questions such as: ‘Did I guide the students through problems or examples, checking how well they were doing?’ ‘Did I assess whether or not the students were ready to go on to independent practice?’ It seems that there is a kind of relationship between reflective teaching and teachers’ evaluation of student achievement. To determine the normality of the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used, and also to specify whether there is a relationship between the variables in this study Pearson Correlation was used. Table 3 revealed that since the significance value for two variables which are teachers' cognitions and their evaluation of students' achievement is likely bigger than the value of (5) (sig > 0.05), consequently, teachers' cognitions and their evaluation of students' achievement could be regarded as normal variables.

Table 3 depicted that correlation value was equal to 0.555, which this signify the existence of the moderate relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. Consequently, it seems that researcher’s hypothesis was confirmed. Taking into consideration what has been stated with respect to reflective teaching and teachers’ evaluation of students’ achievement, it seems that there is a moderate relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of student achievement and this relationship could modify teachers’ evaluation.
of student achievement if they "reflected on their actions before and after their actions" as suggested by Schon (1987). In order to depict this relationship some graphs were provided as follows.

Fig 1 Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 1

Fig 4.6.2 Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 2

Fig 3 Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 3 & 4
Fig 4 Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 5

4. Acknowledgments

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THE EFFECT OF TEACHING CIRCUMLOCUTION TASK ON IRANIAN UPPER-INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS’ CONVERSATION ABILITY

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ABSTRACT
The present study aims at investigating the effect of teaching circumlocution task on Iranian upper-intermediate learners’ conversation ability. To that end, 40 upper intermediate students of English were selected out of a pool of 110 students based on their results of OPT test. They were divided into experimental and control group, each group contained 20 learners. Then a test of speaking which was taken from PET test was administered to both groups as a pre-test to take their initial ability of conversation. The speaking section of Preliminary English Test (PET) which is a standardized Cambridge test was used to test the participants’ conversation ability. The experimental group received treatment in teaching circumlocution in twenty sessions. The control group received no treatment. Finally both groups sat for the post-test for speaking. The results were computed and analyzed through SPSS one-way (ANCOVA) and it was explored that teaching circumlocution had a positive effect on Iranian EFL learners’ conversation ability.

Key words: Speaking ability, Conversation ability, Communication strategy, Circumlocution, Task

Introduction
As cited in Dobao (2004), the first attempts to provide a systemic definition for the communication strategies concept were made by Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker (1976), and Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976). According to Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker (1976, p.100), Communication Strategies is “a systematic attempt by the learner to express meaning in the target language, in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been formed”. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976, p.78) defined Communication strategies as “a systematic attempt by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language, in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been formed”.

Compensatory strategies are processes, operating on conceptual and Linguistic knowledge representations, which are adopted by language users in the creation of alternative means of expression when linguistic shortcomings make it impossible for them to communicate their intended meanings in the preferred manner (p.192-193).

The above definition thus accounts for problems which occur not only in the planning phase but also at later stages in the speech production process. It does not only define compensatory strategies as processes, but it also specifies the outcome of these processes. Like the first definition proposed, it can include both L1 and L2 communication. It provides an explanation for cases in which the adjustment of the message is due not only to speakers’ linguistic problems, but also to an anticipation of the hearers’ processing difficulties.

Compensation strategies are those that allow language learners to use the language despite their large gaps in knowledge. This sub-class, constitutes guessing intelligently (using linguistic clues, using other clues), and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing (switching to the mother tongue, getting help, using mime or gesture, avoiding communication partially or totally, selecting the topic, adjusting or approximating the message, coining words, and using a circumlocution or synonym)

Statement of the problem
The current communicative approaches to second language (L2) instruction emphasize the importance of learners using the L2 in oral and written tasks. These approaches to instruction are based on the premise that learners’ competence in the L2 is developed via performance and are supported by the dominant theories of second language acquisition (e.g., Long, 1996; Swain, 2000).

According to Moradi and Talebi (2014) Speaking, among the four major skills, seems mostly favored as every English language learner aspires to be effective in communication with others in oral mode. The importance of
teaching speaking skill is that language is acquired through speaking and listening before one learns reading and writing. As Brown and Yule (1983) state many language learners regard speaking as the criteria for knowing a language and progress is assessed in terms of success in spoken communication.

Therefore, it is important if teachers teach students how to speak strategically for effective communication. Strategy based instruction is a process oriented approach to teaching which focuses on the learning process, and results in improvements both in the process and product of learning.

An important component of language programs is that of speaking strategies. According to O’Malley and Chamot (1990), speaking strategies are important as they help learners “in negotiating meaning where either linguistic structures or sociolinguistic rules are not shared between a second language learner and a speaker of the target language” (p. 43).

Therefore, classrooms should support the use of spoken language and provide a place where strategic speaking is valued. By assigning speaking tasks, language instructors can help learners use strategies for effective communication. These strategies may appear at three stages in task performance for (1) getting prepared for upcoming speaking tasks, (2) monitoring language input and output, and (3) evaluating or reflecting back on the task.

Significance of the study

Native speakers employ communication strategies all the time. When native speakers encounter a situation in which he/she lacks the lexical items, they will try different means to get their meaning across. However, “avoidance” is a common strategy used by many foreign language learners when they face unfamiliar communication challenges. They may avoid communicating at all in such situations. This avoidance strategy will neither get their meaning across nor help them develop the resources needed to deal with future communication problems (Tarone, 1996). Therefore, the main goal for training students on circumlocution is to develop their confidence, build up their comfort level, and improve their linguistic ability to handle the communication tasks/problems, so they will be able to try different means to communicate the intended meaning.

Review of the Related Literature

CSs have generally been observed as attempts made by learners to overcome communication problems due to insufficient linguistic repertoire, namely lexical deficiencies. They are subsumed under communicative competence, labeled as ‘Strategic competence’ in Canale & Swain’s (1980) communicative competence framework and in Bachman’s (1990) communicative ability model. It refers to the ability to use different ways and means of solving communicative problems or enhancing the effectiveness of communication via the use of strategies.

Tarone’s (1980: 420) interactional perspective proposes that CS involve “a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared”. CSs are thus regarded as interpersonal phenomena, emphasizing mutuality of efforts by both parties to convey an agreeable and shared meaning. Researchers agree that communication strategies are techniques used by the native and non-native speakers of any language, as well. The use of communication strategies is the best solution that compensates the learners’ lack of knowledge.

These strategies help the learners / students to continue a conversation when they do not know the words or the structures, to gain confidence in speaking, to increase their fluency, to appear interested in communicating, to develop a sense of autonomy.

Jeannette Littlemore: Communication strategies are the steps taken by language learners in order to enhance the effectiveness of their communication. There are two principal categories of communication strategy “compensation” strategies and “interactional” strategies. Compensation strategies are defined as the attempts that language learners make to compensate for gaps in their knowledge of the target language (see, for example Faerch and Kasper, 1983; Poulisse, 1990, 1993). Interactional strategies are used to manipulate the conversation and to negotiate shared meaning see, for example, Bialystok, 1990; McNamara, 1995).

A communication strategy is defined as an individual’s attempt to find a way to fill the gaps between their communication effort and immediate available linguistic resources (Maleki, 2007). Although there are other definitions of communication strategies as well, the basic idea remains the same. For example, Faerch and Kasper (1983a) define CS as “potentially conscious plans” which are used by an individual to solve a problem in order to reach a specific communication goal. It is believed that communication strategies play an important role in the development of strategic competence (e. g. Faucette, 2001); therefore, one can define communication strategies within strategic competence framework. According to Canale and Swain (1980), strategic competence is "verbal
and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence” (30).

Other researchers such as Tarone (1984), Bialystok (1990), Dörnyei and Thurrel (1991), Dörnyei (1995), Oxford (2001), Littlemore (2001), and many more have all praised the positive role of communication strategies in teaching and learning a second language, specifically English.

Tarone (1980, 429) summarizes types of communication strategies under five main categories, along with their subcategories. The list goes as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Paraphrase</th>
<th>B. Transfer</th>
<th>C. Appeal for Assistance</th>
<th>D. Mime</th>
<th>E. Avoidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Approximation</td>
<td>(b) Word coinage</td>
<td>(c) Circumlocution: i.e. the learners describe or exemplify the characteristics or elements of an object or action instead of using the appropriate TL structure (e.g. &quot;She is, uh, smoking something. I don't know what its name is. That's, uh, Persian, and it is used in Turkey, a lot of&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Materials and Methods**

The study was conducted with 40 Iranian sophomore students who are studying English at different institutes in Iran. Researcher tried to have the same number of female and male participants in both experimental and control group.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

The results of post test were analyzed for further discussion via ANCOVA on the scores obtained from experimental and control group to see whether teaching circumlocution task had any effects on EFL learners’ conversation ability.

**Results**

A descriptive statistical analysis was done on the collected data of OPT (Oxford Placement Test) test. The results are shown in Table (4-1).

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Proficiency Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows the result obtained from the proficiency test, OPT. The mean and standard deviation are presented.

Table (4-2) shows the number of students who took the pre-test and post-test. It should be mentioned that no one excluded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included</th>
<th>Excluded</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test*group</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test*group</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forty participants were selected for this study. They were divided into two groups, experimental and control. The descriptive statistical analysis done on the collected data of pre-test and post-test is shown in table (4-3).
Experimental  |  Mean  |  59.9  |  68.4
| N           |  20    |  20    
| SD          |  4.8   |  4.7   
Control     |  Mean  |  58.45 |  58.1
| N           |  20    |  20    
| SD          |  5.64  |  5.2   
Total       |  Mean  |  59.15 |  63.25
| N           |  40    |  40    
| SD          |  5.216 |  7.121 |

**Interpretive Statistics**

One-way Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) is particularly appropriate when subjects in two or more groups are found to differ on a pre-test or other initial variable. In this case the effects of the pre-test and/or other relevant variables are partialled out, and the resulting adjusted means of the post-test scores are compared. Through one-way ANCOVA differences in the initial status of the groups can be removed statistically so that they can be compared as though their initial status had been equated. In this study, in order to investigate the research hypothesis “Teaching circumlocution does not affect Iranian learners’ conversation ability”, the differences between mean scores of pre-test and post-test of control and experimental group were calculated through one-way ANCOVA. Before running ANCOVA, the following hypotheses were examined:

1. Linear relationship between variables (pre-test and post-test)
2. Equality of Variances
3. Homogeneity of regression

In order to examine the equality of variances, Levines Test of Equality of Error Variances was run. It tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

**Table 4: Levine’s Test of Equality of Error Variance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table (4.5) the calculated F is not meaningful. So there is equality of variances and one-way ANCOVA can be run.

The data in table (4.6) are related to test of homogeneity of regression. Before running covariance, between-subjects effects of pre-test-group should be investigated.

**Table 5: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Σ of Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>1879.82</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>626.61</td>
<td>230.93</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group (a)</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest (b)</td>
<td>802.97</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>295.95</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group<em>pretest (a</em>b)</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>97.68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46200</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (4.6) shows, between-subjects effect (a*b) is not significant (F=0.15, Sig=0.7). It shows that the data supports homogeneity of regression. Therefore, covariance should be run just for between-subjects effect of post-test and group to show whether mean scores of two groups are the same or not. The results of this analysis are demonstrated in table (6).
Table 6: Mean and Corrected Mean of speaking Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Corrected Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>5.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (4.7) shows the corrected means of dependent variable speaking ability. The data demonstrate that the means of the experimental group are upper than the control group.

Sum of analysis of covariance one-way (ANCOVA) of conversation ability in experimental and control group after eliminating between-subjects effect is demonstrated in table (7):  

Table 7: Sum of analysis of covariance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Square df</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>1879.415</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>939.71</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>818.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>818.52</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>805.42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>805.48</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>98.08</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46200</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be seen, the corrected model (f=00, F=354.48) is statistically significant. The results (F=303.84, Sig=.00, Eta=.89) shows that there is a difference between two groups. It means that there is significant difference between experimental and control group. As a result the null hypothesis “Teaching circumlocution does not affect Iranian learners’ conversation ability” will be rejected, so it can be concluded that teaching circumlocution has an effect on Iranian EFL Learners conversation ability.

Conclusion

The findings from the present study reveal that in the post-test, the frequency of use of communication strategies increased compared to the pretest, however, most students were able to use communication strategies more appropriately in the post-test than in the pre-test and less inappropriately and less incorrectly.

An important matter not related directly to the research questions but relevant to the topic in general emerged from the data. It is the students’ independence in learning to speak English. The data analysis shows that the students actively practiced language learning strategies although they received only occasional, inexplicit strategy training. Students were indeed not familiar with the concept of language learning strategies. However, when the concept was explained to them using terms they were familiar with, they could relate it to the strategies they had been practicing. Students themselves must have explored the strategies that their teacher did not provide in training.

The fact that the students actively practiced language learning strategies, without any guidance from the teacher, indicates that they were, in a sense, independent or autonomous learners. Cotterall (2008) states that autonomous learners are able to take charge of their own learning methodologically, psychologically, and socially. As demonstrated through their strategic behavior, the students in this study took charge of their own learning methodologically, by assuming responsibility for selecting methods and techniques to use in the form of language learning strategies; psychologically, by being able to make a decision and act independently in choosing and practicing the strategies; as well as socially, by independently choosing what and how to learn, ‘free’ from a classroom. It is perhaps no surprise that the students in the study showed independence because they were mature, motivated adult students.

In addition to confirming the usefulness of strategies, this study offers another reason why students use strategies in specific way, which has not yet been disclosed by other strategy studies, i.e. pleasure in using strategies. The stereotypical how and why relationship for the ways students used strategies with pleasure in using them is that students used them consciously, confidently, or effort fully. However, pleasure never became the reason why they used strategies persistently because, naturally, there is a conflicting semantic component between the two concepts. Pleasure contains the semantic component of enjoyment or fun, which, in Natural Semantic...
Meta-language (NSM) theory (Goddard, 2008; Wierzbicka, 1996), indicates ‘something is good; I feel good when I do this’. In contrast, ‘persistence’, in this study, reveals discomfort, disappointment, and threat, which indicates ‘something is bad; I don’t feel good when I do this’. This conflicting semantic component between these two concepts causes them not to be compatible to each other.

REFERENCES
EFFECTS OF NARRATIVE COMPLEXITY AND TASK STRUCTURE ON EFL LEARNERS' WRITTEN PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT
The present study is an attempt to investigate the impact of narrative storyline complexity and inherent narrative structure on the written performance of EFL learners, as displayed by its complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Forty Iranian English learners were selected as the participants of the study. They were required to write stories based on cartoon pictures prompts. Each performed two of four narrative tasks that had different degrees of storyline complexity (with or without background events) and of narrative structure (loose or tight), giving a between-participants comparison for narrative storyline complexity and a within-participants comparison for narrative structure. The written narratives were coded to measure the complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Next, the independent samples t-test and the paired samples t-test were employed to analyze the collected data. The results indicated that storyline complexity enhances syntactic complexity and fluency; narratives involving background events led to more complex and more fluent language. However, storyline complexity had no significant effect on accuracy. Furthermore, the findings of the current study revealed that accuracy was supported by an inherently tight narrative structure. However, task structure had no significant impact on complexity and fluency. Findings have pedagogical implications for the field of syllabus design.

Keywords: storyline complexity, narrative structure, written narratives, complexity, accuracy, fluency

1. Introduction
In recent years, there has been a considerable interest in tasks, both as a construct and as a research instrument (Kuiken & Vedder, 2007). In particular, over the past two decades, considerable attention has been devoted to investigating the effects of task characteristics and performance conditions on language performance. Storyline complexity and inherent structure are two narrative task characteristics that previous studies have suggested affect task performance. Interestingly enough, all of the studies in the literature focused on investigating how L2 learners' oral task performance is influenced by storyline complexity and task structure. Although writing has become to be the center of the attention of some studies recently, it has been ignored and viewed as the orthographic representation of speech for many years. For these reasons, maybe, writing tends to be the most difficult skill both for L1 and L2 learners. At the same time, with the electronic kind of writing growing popular, it is one of the most important skills in the modern world. Furthermore, writing involves both higher (planning and programming) and lower (spelling, punctuation and ...) levels of skills and L2 learners have to consider both when engaged in doing a written task. Taking all these reasons and many others into account, it is clear that planning and teaching a course in writing is not a simple task and research is needed to find out what kind of activities would help learners develop their writing skills (Rahimpour et al., 2011)

Bearing the importance of writing in mind and since all of the studies in the literature explored the effects of storyline complexity and task structure on oral performance, the current study set out to investigate how storyline complexity and inherent structure affect L2 learners' written task performance, especially in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency.

2. Literature review
2.1 Storyline Complexity
According to Tavakoli and Foster (2008), storyline complexity refers to 'whether a narrative has background as well as foreground events, with a narrative consisting of only foreground events classified as less complex than one with both'. Tavakoli and Foster (2008) state that the consideration of 'foreground and background' information as a significant characteristic of narratives is not new (Bardovi-Harlig, 1992; Dry, 1983; Reinhart, 1984; von Stutterheim, 1991). Foregrounded events have been described in the literature as those that generally move time forward, supply the main points of discourse (such as in a narrative), and are more important or central to the development of the overall discourse theme, whereas background elements have been defined as those that merely assist,
amplify, explain, evaluate, or elaborate on the events in the foreground. Tavakoli and Foster (2008) further argue that a narrative in which there are only foreground events asks less of the storyteller than one in which background events need to be incorporated, presumably at moments at which some kind of elaboration or explanation is required before the main foreground story can be moved on. Tavakoli and Foster (2008), in instructional settings, and Tavakoli (2009), in a language testing context, investigated the impact of storyline complexity on oral performance. The results indicated that syntactic complexity of L2 performance was related to the storyline complexity, i.e. more syntactic complexity was associated with narratives that had both foreground and background storylines.

2.2 Task Structure
Narrative structure refers to how the episodes within the narrative connect to make the whole. Task structure has been defined and operationalized in the literature emphasizing characteristics such as a clear time sequence from beginning to middle and end, and an appeal to what is organized and familiar in the speaker's mind (Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005). A narrative with an inherently loose structure can have its episodes reordered without loss of coherence. A narrative with an inherently tight structure cannot be reordered in this way. The processing burden of telling a story in an L2 appears to be eased if the narrative comprises episodes that are very obviously sequenced from beginning to end, but the burden is increased if the episodes are not susceptible to this neat kind of ordering (Foster & Tavakoli, 2009). Skehan and Foster (1999), Tavakoli and Skehan (2005), Tavakoli and Foster (2008), and Tavakoli (2009) examined the effects of task structure on oral performance.

Since all of the studies carried out so far have been concerned with the effects of narrative complexity of storyline and inherent task structure on oral task performance, this study set out to explore how written task performance is influenced by storyline complexity and task structure.

2.3 Previous Studies on Task Features and Written Performance
In contrast to the number of studies that have investigated the effects of different task features on oral task performance, very little research has addressed these effects on written task performance. Ishikawa (2006) set out to investigate the impact of task complexity and language proficiency on L2 written performance. The findings revealed that increasing task complexity had a positive effect on accuracy, structural complexity, and fluency of the high-proficiency learners’ performance but lexical complexity was negatively affected. Moreover, increasing task complexity had more beneficial effect on the four aspects of low-proficiency learners' performance. But four aspects of low-proficiency learners' performance were inferior to the high-proficiency learners' performance. Kuiken and Vedder (2008) addressed the effect of cognitive task complexity on written output in Italian and French as a foreign language. The learners performed two writing tasks with prompts of different cognitive task complexity. They were required to write a letter to a friend and make a recommendation out of five holiday destinations with three requirements in the simple task and six requirements in the complex one. The findings showed that cognitively more demanding task led to more accurate language. But no effect was found on measures of syntactic complexity and lexical variations.

2.4 Models of Speech Production
According to Levelt (1989), there are three main stages of speech production. Conceptualization which involves setting the communicative goals, selecting the relevant information needed to achieve these goals and producing the preverbal message which is not linguistic in nature. The second stage, formulation, involves encoding the preverbal message into linguistic form by retrieving lemmas and lexemes and thus, establishing the ‘internal speech’. During the third stage, articulation, the internal speech is executed through neuromuscular instructions. Foster and Tavakoli (2009) argue that there is a degree of parallel processing to this. Conceptualizing a prelinguistic idea can proceed as the previous one is being articulated, and when a word is selected for use, its collocations and colligations are activated along with it (Hoey, 2005, cited in Foster & Tavakoli, 2009), whereas the fine motor control needed for speech articulation has a high degree of automatization. If this were not so, speech would be characterized by very frequent pauses as articulation waited for the next concept to be hatched and delivered for formulation, and conceptualization of the next idea would be waiting for articulation of the previous one to be complete. Of course, there are always some pauses in speech. Moreover, there is monitoring and editing which cause a speaker to change tack midstream and start afresh. These may be more frequent if challenging subject matter, or external distractions, absorb too much of the speaker’s attention.
They further argue that this is a very important issue. In the context of the psychology of learning, human attention is a limited resource. Where the need for attention is greater than the resources available, as in attending to two things at once, the mind will prioritize one, with the result that the other will suffer, or it will slip attention to both tasks, with the results that they will be performed slowly or poorly (Foster & Tavakoli, 2009).

2.5 Models of Writing
Kellog’s (1996) model of writing distinguishes three basic systems involved in text production. Each system has two principle components or processes. **Formulation** is involved with planning, during which the writer establishes goals for the writing, thinks up ideas related to these goals, and organizes these to facilitate action, and translating, when the writer selects the lexical units and syntactic frames needs to encode ideas generated through planning and represents these linguistic units phonologically and graphologically in readiness for execution. **Execution** requires programming, where the output from translation is covered into production schema for the appropriate motor system involved (e.g., handwriting or typing), or executing or the actual production of sentences. **Monitoring** consists of reading, where the writer reads her or his own text, and editing, where can occur both before and after execution of a sentence and can involve attending to micro aspects of the text such as linguistic errors, macro aspects such as paragraph and text organization, or both aspects. The extent to which a writer is able to engage in monitoring depends in part on whether the writer has the time to adopt a polished draft strategy or is engaged in pressured text production.

2.6 Cognitive Approaches to L2 Performance and Language Learning
There are two conflicting theories regarding how mind works while performing a task. The first and widely accepted approach is Skehan's (1998) cognitive approach in which he distinguishes between an exemplar-based system and a rule-based system. Skehan emphasizes that the exemplar-based system includes discrete lexical items as well as ready-made formulaic chunks of language, while the rule-based system is made up of abstract representations of the underlying patterns of the language. Skehan (1998) also distinguishes three aspects of production: Fluency, accuracy, and complexity. Skehan (1998) points out that to produce a fluent language, language learners should access their exemplar-based and lexical systems. On the other hand, when more accuracy or complexity is needed and fluency is not of importance, performers must draw on their rule-based system and involve in more syntactic processing.

Skehan (2001) also believes that humans have limited attentional resources and that there are likely to be trade-offs as a learner struggles to conceptualize, formulate, and articulate messages. Thus, learners vary in the extent to which they emphasize fluency, accuracy, and complexity with some tasks predisposing them to focus on fluency, others on complexity, and yet some others on accuracy. Skehan's model of L2 performance has, however, been challenged by Robinson (2001, 2003, 2005). Robinson (2001), drawing on more recent work in psychology (Neumann, 1996), concluded that human attention is not limited, and he proposed a model of attention in which language learners can access multiple attentional pools that are not in competition. As depletion of attention in one pool has no effect on the amount remaining in another, language learners can prioritize both form and meaning and both accuracy and complexity.

3. The Study
3.1 Research Questions
1. Does narrative storyline complexity (presence of simultaneous events) have any significant impact on EFL learners’ written performance, as displayed by its complexity, accuracy, and fluency?
2. Does inherent task structure have any significant impact on EFL learners’ written performance, as displayed by its complexity, accuracy, and fluency?

3.2 Research Hypotheses
1. Narrative storyline complexity (presence of simultaneous events) has significant effect on EFL learners’ written performance, as displayed by its complexity, accuracy, and fluency.
2. Inherent task structure has significant effect on EFL learners’ written performance, as displayed by its complexity, accuracy, and fluency.

3.3 Participants
The participants of this study were 40 EFL learners, both males and females, with the average age of 24. They were studying English at a language institute in Tabriz, Iran. All the participants had Azari as their mother tongue and...
all had taken classes in which speaking and listening activities were common and they were not allowed to use Azari or Persian.

3.4 Tasks
In this study four picture stories, each comprising six cartoon frames, were chosen as instruments for data collection. Among different types of pedagogic tasks, narrative tasks are the most frequent ones referred to in the literature (Foster and Skehan, 1996; Skehan and Foster, 1999; Tavakoli and Skehan, 2005; Tavakoli and Foster, 2008). Narrative tasks as stated by Tavakoli and Skehan (2005) 'refer to those stories based on a sequenced set of picture prompts which are given to participants to elicit language performance'. The tasks used in this study were identical to the ones used in Tavakoli and Foster (2008) and Foster and Tavakoli (2009) (see the Appendix).

The variable of tight/loose narrative structure was operationalized by choosing two narratives (Journey and Walkman) in which it was possible to rearrange the pictures and create a new sequence of events without the main theme of the story being compromised and two other narratives (Football and Picnic) for which this was impossible. The variable of background events was present in the Walkman and Picnic narratives and absent in the Football and Journey narratives. Walkman and Picnic tasks had two storylines, i.e. the story developed as a result of the information provided in both foreground and background. Football and Journey narratives were tasks with one storyline, i.e. tasks in which the story was presented mainly through the foreground information.

3.5 Procedures
In the present study, storyline complexity was considered as a between-participant variable and inherent task structure was a within-participant variable. In order to avoid any practice effect, a counterbalanced design in which the participants performed the two tasks in different sequences was adopted. All the participants who took part in the study expressed their agreement before starting the data collection. The participants were told that the tasks they would complete were for purposes of research only but were not told the precise purpose of the study and they were assured that the written narratives would not be considered as part of their course grades. Apart from age and first language (L1) background, no personal information was sought. They were set free to quit if they were unwilling to participate.

Data were collected inside the classroom in two sessions with the time interval of one day. Prior to data collection, the instructions on how to perform the tasks were provided to them completely. All explanations and instructions were given in Persian to avoid any misunderstanding. Moreover, it was emphasized that their performances would be confidential and anonymous. They also received a piece of paper to write down their narratives. During the first session, the participants were given 30 minutes to perform the first narrative, while the second story was performed during the second session. While writing, the students had the picture stories in hand and were allowed to ask questions if any. Then, the written performances were collected and used for data collection.

3.6 Measures
3.6.1 Complexity Measure
The syntactic complexity of each performance was measured by finding the ratio of clauses to T-units (Yuan & Ellis, 2003). Hunt (1966: 735, cited in Foster et. al., 2000: 360) defines T-unit as 'one main clause plus whatever subordinate clauses happen to be attached to or embedded within it'.

3.6.2 Accuracy Measure
The participants' written performance, following the previous studies of Arent, 2003, and Storch, 2009, was evaluated in terms of accuracy by calculating the number of error-free T-units per T-units i.e., the percentage of T-units that do not contain any errors. All errors in syntax, morphology, lexical choice, and spelling errors were considered.

3.6.3 Fluency Measure
Fluency was measured by words per T-units (Ishikawa, 2006; Kuiken & Vedder, 2007).

4. Results
As stated in the previous section, 'complexity' was measured by finding the ratio of clauses to T-units (Yuan & Ellis, 2003), while 'accuracy' was achieved by calculating the number of error-free T-units per T-units, and 'fluency' was measured by finding the number of words per T-units. The raw scores were, then, fed into the computer software SPSS for statistical analysis. Afterwards, the independent samples t-test was used to find out the way
complexity, accuracy, and fluency of the written performance are affected by storyline complexity and the paired samples t-test was adopted to investigate the way complexity, accuracy, and fluency of the written performance are affected by inherent task structure.

4.1 The Effects of Storyline Complexity
Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task for tightly-structured narratives. As can be seen, the mean of complexity in dual-storyline task (X=1.3480) is greater than that in single-storyline task (X=1.1325). Moreover, the mean of accuracy in single-storyline task (X=.4875) is greater than that in dual-storyline task (X=.4790). The mean of fluency in dual-storyline task (X=8.4965), in addition, is more than that in single-storyline task (X=7.1715).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for learners' written narratives in tightly-structured tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>-Back</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.1325</td>
<td>.11580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>+Back</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.3480</td>
<td>.18956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>-Back</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.4875</td>
<td>.27551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>+Back</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.4790</td>
<td>.26008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>-Back</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.1715</td>
<td>.95230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>+Back</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.4965</td>
<td>1.47567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 presents the results of independent t-tests for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task for tightly-structured narratives. As the table indicates, the significance level of independent t-test in case of complexity is .000. Since .000 is lower than .01, there is statistically significant difference between the complexity of written narratives in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task. Since the significance level of independent t-test, regarding accuracy, is higher than 0.05, storyline complexity had no significant effect on accuracy of written narratives. However, the result of independent t-test shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the fluency of written narratives in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task. The significance level of independent t-test in case of fluency equals .002 which is lower than .01.

Table 2. Independent t-test for learners' written narratives in tightly-structured tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Samples Test</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 3. Descriptive statistics for learners’ written narratives in loosely-structured tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.1135</td>
<td>.08573</td>
<td>.01917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.3755</td>
<td>.2042</td>
<td>.04929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.3775</td>
<td>.19186</td>
<td>.04920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.3210</td>
<td>.22513</td>
<td>.05034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.0300</td>
<td>1.28009</td>
<td>.28624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.7520</td>
<td>2.00875</td>
<td>.4917</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 depicts the descriptive statistics for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task for loosely-structured narratives. It can be observed that the mean of complexity in dual-storyline task (X= 1.3755) is more than that in single-storyline task (X= 1.1135). Moreover, the mean of accuracy in single-storyline task (X= .3775) is more than that in dual-storyline task (X= .3210). The mean of fluency in dual-storyline task (X= 8.7520), in addition, is greater than that in single-storyline task (X= 7.0300).

Table 4 indicates the results of independent t-tests for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task for loosely-structured narratives. According to the table, the significance level of independent t-test in case of complexity is .000. Since .000 is lower than .01, there is statistically significant difference between the complexity of written narratives in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task. Since the significance level of
independent t-test, regarding accuracy, is higher than 0.05, storyline complexity had no significant effect on accuracy of written narratives. However, the result of independent t-test shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the fluency of written narratives in single-storyline task vs. dual-storyline task. The significance level of independent t-test in case of fluency equals .003 which is lower than .01.

Table 4. Independent t-test for learners' written narratives in loosely-structured tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>15.678</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-.954</td>
<td>24.620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>1.136</td>
<td>.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>37.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>6.965</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-3.233</td>
<td>32.247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 delineates the means of complexity of written narratives in single-storyline tasks versus dual-storyline tasks. As the figure shows, the means of complexity in dual-storyline tasks is higher than that in single-storyline tasks and this difference is statistically significant.
Figure 1. Complexity in single-storyline vs. dual-storyline tasks

Figure 2 illustrates the means of accuracy of written narratives in single-storyline tasks versus dual-storyline tasks. As shown in the figure, the means of accuracy in single-storyline tasks is more than that in dual-storyline tasks. However, this gain is not so big to be statistically significant.

Figure 3 displays the means of fluency of written narratives in single-storyline tasks versus dual-storyline tasks. As the figure shows, the means of fluency in dual-storyline tasks is more than that in single-storyline tasks and this difference is statistically significant.
4.2 The Effects of Task Structure

Table 5 displays a summary of the descriptive statistics for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in tightly-structured task versus loosely-structured task for narratives with only foreground events. As shown in the table, the mean of complexity in tightly-structured task (X= 1.1325) is more than that in loosely-structured task (X= 1.1135). Moreover, the mean of accuracy in tightly-structured task (X= .4875) is greater than that in loosely-structured task (X= .3775). The mean of fluency in tightly-structured task (X= 7.1715), in addition, is more than that in loosely-structured task (X= 7.0300).

Table 6 provides the results of matched t-tests for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in tightly-structured task versus loosely-structured task for narratives with only foreground events. As the table indicates, since the significance level of matched t-tests in case of complexity and fluency of written narratives are higher than .05, task structure had no significant effect on complexity, and also fluency of written narratives. However, the result of matched t-test, regarding accuracy, is .033. Since .033 is lower than .05, there is a statistically significant difference between the accuracy of written narratives in in tightly-structured task versus loosely-structured task.
Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in tightly-structured task versus loosely-structured task for narratives with both foreground and background events. It can be observed that the mean of complexity in loosely-structured task ($X = 1.3755$) is greater than that in tightly-structured task ($X = 1.3480$). Moreover, the mean of accuracy in tightly-structured task ($X = .4790$) is more than that in loosely-structured task ($X = .3210$). The mean of fluency in loosely-structured task ($X = 8.7520$), in addition, is more than that in tightly-structured task ($X = 8.4965$).

Table 8 demonstrates the results of matched t-tests for complexity, accuracy, and fluency in tightly-structured task versus loosely-structured task for narratives with both foreground and background events. As shown in the table, since the significance level of matched t-tests in case of complexity and fluency of written narratives are higher than .05, task structure had no significant effect on complexity, and also fluency of written narratives. However, the result of matched t-test, regarding accuracy, is .009. Since .009 is lower than .01, there is a statistically significant difference between the accuracy of written narratives in tightly-structured task versus loosely-structured task.
Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tight &amp; Loose</td>
<td>-.0275</td>
<td>.22937</td>
<td>.05129</td>
<td>-.13485 to .07985</td>
<td>-.536</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tight &amp; Loose</td>
<td>.15800</td>
<td>.24098</td>
<td>.05388</td>
<td>.04522 to .27078</td>
<td>2.932</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tight &amp; Loose</td>
<td>-.25550</td>
<td>1.73904</td>
<td>.38886</td>
<td>-.106940 to .55840</td>
<td>-.657</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.519</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 displays the means of complexity of written narratives in tightly-structured tasks versus loosely-structured tasks. As the figure shows, for narratives with only foreground events, the mean of complexity in tightly-structured task is more than that in loosely-structured task. For narratives with both foreground and background events, the mean of complexity in loosely-structured task is greater than that in tightly-structured task. However, the differences are not so big to be statistically significant.

![Figure 4. Complexity in tightly-structured vs. loosely-structured tasks](image)

Figure 5 illustrates the means of accuracy of written narratives in tightly-structured tasks versus loosely-structured tasks. As shown in the figure, the means of accuracy in tightly-structured tasks is greater than that in loosely-structured tasks and this difference is statistically significant.
Figure 5. Accuracy in tightly-structured vs. loosely-structured tasks

Figure 6 delineates the means of fluency of written narratives in tightly-structured tasks versus loosely-structured tasks. As illustrated in the figure, for narratives with only foreground events, the mean of fluency in tightly-structured task is more than that in loosely-structured task. For narratives with both foreground and background events, the mean of fluency in loosely-structured task is more than that in tightly-structured task. However, the differences are not so big to be statistically significant.
5. Discussion
5.1 The Effects of Storyline Complexity
With regard to complexity, the results of the present study indicated that complexity of L2 learners' written performance is affected by storyline complexity; language performance in tasks with both foreground and background storylines (Picnic and Walkman) was syntactically more complex than in tasks with only a foreground storyline (Football and Journey). The results for complexity corroborate those found by Tavakoli and Foster (2008), in instructional settings, and Tavakoli (2009), in a language testing context. One possible account of these findings is provided by Tavakoli (2009). She accounted for this effect by suggesting that presence of a background storyline in a picture story would stimulate the speakers to employ more subordination in their performances to fulfill the functional requirements of the task. It appears that in performing a task which presents two storylines, i.e. both foreground and background, the speaker needs to use more complex language to show the events occurring in the foreground, relate them to the stories happening in the background and describe the relationship between the two. Harris and Bates (1992) have also argued that use of subordination becomes more frequent when background information and events are being described in a narrative and are to be weaved into the main events in the foreground.

As regards accuracy, the results of this study showed that accuracy of L2 learners' written performance was not affected significantly by storyline complexity. The results for accuracy can be considered as support for Skehan's (1998) limited attentional model. This model means that if a task demands a great amount of attention in terms of its content (as it might if two storylines were going on at the same time), then attention to language form is diminished and this is manifest in, say, reduced performance scores all around or a trade-off between different aspects of performance. The low mean scores for accuracy in Picnic and Walkman appear here to trade-off with the high scores for fluency and complexity.

Regarding fluency, the results indicated a statistically significant effect of storyline complexity on fluency of written performance. The results are in line with Skehan and Foster's (2001, p.193) proposition that 'prioritization or predisposition (or both) seem to orient performance towards one (or two) of the three areas [complexity, accuracy, and fluency] theorized to be important, with the result that the other(s) suffers'.

5.2 The Effects of Task Structure
Regarding complexity, the findings of the present study showed that task structure had no significant impact on the complexity of the performance. However, this finding is in line with the findings of the research by Skehan and Foster (1999), investigating oral performance. Tavakoli and Foster (2008) pointed to the effect of different learning environments on complexity. Learners in Iran, as it is the case with the present study, do not benefit from the exposure to the target language (spoken and written English) outside of the classroom. As a consequence, the fail to develop more complex language. The findings can also be considered as support for Skehan and Foster’s (1999) arguments that learners have available limited attentional capacities; that the different components underlying language comprehension and production compete for such limited capacities; and that the choice to devote attention to one area may well be at the expense of other areas.

As regards accuracy, the results of this study indicated that accuracy of performance is affected by task structure. Both of the tasks with a clear ordering of narrative elements were performed significantly more accurately than the tasks without this tight order. The results for accuracy are consistent with those found by Foster and Skehan (1996) and Skehan and Foster (1997) and Tavakoli and Foster (2008), investigating oral performance. Tavakoli and Foster (2008) accounted for this effect by suggesting that the orderly nature of the narrative events, as operationalized in the Football and Picnic stories, in which the events follow on from each other in a predictable way, releases attentional resources that would otherwise have to be expended on finding connections between the pictures. As a result of having more attentional resources available, the L2 speaker can focus on other aspects of their performance, i.e. making sure their performance is accurate.

Unlike the research by Foster and Skehan, 1996; Skehan and Foster, 1997; Skehan and Foster, 1999; Tavakoli and Skehan, 2005, the results of this study revealed that the fluency of the performance is not affected by task structure. However, this finding is consistent with the findings of the research by Tavakoli and Foster (2008) who reported that task structure had no impact on the fluency of the language performance. This finding can be seen as support for Skehan’s (1998) limited attentional model. Skehan (1998) believes that there are likely to be trade-offs as a learner struggles to conceptualize, formulate, and articulate messages. Therefore, learners vary in the extent to which they adhere to each one of these three aspects of language production. Some tasks demand or attract learners' attention to accuracy, some to fluency, and yet some others to complexity. Attention to one dimension is likely to be at the expense of others.
6. Pedagogical Implications

The issue of establishing valid criteria for grading and sequencing tasks has been a major challenge for those concerned with task based language teaching and syllabus design (Long & Crooks, 1992). In Skehan's view (1998; Skehan & Foster, 2001), both task manipulation and sequencing for syllabus design should be based not just on intuitions about difficulty but on empirical findings. Therefore, the findings of the current study can be used as an empirical basis for selecting, grading and sequencing tasks. Moreover, one of the major issues regarding task-based language teaching and learning is to explore how the demands of the task being carried out affect the allocation of a language learners' limited attentional resources and impact on language performance, as displayed by its complexity, accuracy, and fluency and how a balance can be established between these performance areas. Thus, the findings of the current study make it feasible for teachers or for syllabus designers to design sequences of instructional activities that balance development in the three performance areas.

REFERENCES


Appendix

Journey task (loose structure, without background)
Football task (tight structure, without background)
Walkman task (loose structure, with background)
Picnic task (tight structure, with background)
THE EFFECTS OF FLASHCARDS ON THE EFL HIGH SCHOOL FEMALE STUDENTS’ VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE AND READING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT
Reading comprehension and learning vocabularies of a foreign language have always been two fundamental skills in the course of learning a language. As students rarely have opportunities to talk to native speakers in EFL setting, the reading skill can fulfill this gap. Thus, employing appropriate ways of teaching reading skill and vocabulary have got great importance. The aim of this study is to find out whether using flashcards can improve vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension ability of Iranian first grade high school female students. Sixty EFL first grade high school female students aged between 14 to 16 participated in this study. There were two groups consisting of one experimental and one control group in this study. The experimental group received the treatment of using flashcards for teaching the vocabularies and reading comprehension texts of foreign language. The control group, however, did not receive any instruction based on flashcards. The material used to conduct this study was pretest and posttest items prepared from the ILI elementary level of English test books including 20 items. The analysis of the results obtained through the pretest and posttest indicated that using flashcards had a significant effect on improving the students’ vocabulary knowledge. On the other hand, using flashcards did not have any significant effect on the students’ reading comprehension ability. Based on the results the study has suggested some implications for EFL teachers and learners, educational policy makers and syllabus designers as well.

Keywords: Multimedia instruction, Flashcard, Reading comprehension, Word knowledge

1. Introduction

Educational technology experts focus on using multimedia instruction as they believe that learning does not take place in vacuum. Learning is the result of direct experience and instructional methods. According to some studies using the new ways of technology can lead to the following changes: involving the students in the process of learning, high cooperation among students in the classroom, personal differences and multimedia instruction. Multimedia refers to content that uses a combination of different content forms. This contrasts with media that use only rudimentary computer displays such as text-only or traditional forms of printed or hand-produced material. Multimedia includes a combination of text, audio, still images, idea, or interactivity content forms. Multimedia usually recorded and played, displayed, or accessed by information content processing devices such as computerized and electronic devices, but can also be part of a live performance.

One of the effective tools among teaching materials is flashcards. While they are more effective, most of the teachers aren’t aware of the effective role of them on word learning and reading comprehension passages. A flashcard is a card with words, sentences, or pictures on it, used as an aid or a cue in a language lesson. However some international and local researches have been conducted on the effectiveness of using flashcards and other strategies on the students’ word knowledge and reading comprehension ability in Iran and other countries.

2. Literature review
Tan and Nicholson (1997) conducted a qualitative research that addressed the question of how training poor readers to read words faster can improve their comprehension of text. They came to the conclusion that flashcards can increase skills and the interest of poor readers.

Falk, Band and McLaughlin (2003) conducted another experimental research. The purpose of their study was to improve sight word vocabulary through the use of reading racetracks and flashcard. The participants were three nine-year old males diagnosed with a learning disability. The outcome measured was the number of correct words and errors said per minute from flashcard directly after completing a reading racetrack. The results indicated that reading racetracks are effective in increasing children’s sight word recognition.

Also, another qualitative research has been conducted on the multiple effects of direct instruction of flashcards on sight word acquisition, passage reading and errors for three middle school students with intellectual disabilities by McLaughlin, Mark Derby and Johnson (2011). The purpose of their study was to assess effectiveness of DI flashcard system in improving the sight word knowledge of three middle school boys with intellectual disabilities in a designed instruction classroom setting. Each participant was presented with three sets of twenty sight words and a multiple baseline, single subject design was used to measure students’ progress. In addition, a passage reading probe was used to assess the ability of participants to utilize sight word knowledge within passage context. Overall, results indicated a large increase in isolated sight word knowledge for all three participants following the implementation of DI flashcards instruction. However, unlike the preceding qualitative research, there have been conducted some quantitative research which are presented here.

Shahtout, McLaughlin and Derby (2012) conducted a research in order to determine if sight word identification could be improved through the use of direct instructional (DI) flashcards and a reading racetrack. The participants were two elementary students who exhibited behavioral impairments and learning difficulties and they were below grade level in reading. The number of correct words per minute was tallied. One participant required the use of edibles to increase motivation, and each participant received contingent rewards. The result showed that scores improved for both participants when a reading racetrack and direct instruction flashcard were employed.

Studying about the effectiveness of using flashcard on the students’ reading comprehension has gained interest by our local researchers too. Surly applying the result of such research in our educational programs can benefit our students in improving their word knowledge and reading comprehension skills. One quantitative research has been conducted on the development of the reading comprehension of Iranian beginner EFL learners through using comic strips by Furouzesh (2008). She chose sixty-two Iranian male and female learners of Tehran Ayandehsazan institute who were passing beginner course. The results showed that using comic strips doesn't have much effect on the learner’s reading comprehension.

Another research has done by Pirhadi(2011) for measuring the effects of metacognitive strategies training on the students’ performance in reading comprehension tests. His participants were all students of military academy (Imam Ali University in Tehran), between the age of 20 to 25 years old. They were all males and at the intermediate level. He selected two classes of thirty students as his control and experimental groups. He used a TOEFL reading test in the pretest to homogenize the groups. The result of the research showed a significant difference between the performances of the both groups on the posttest. The results of the study highlighted the importance of incorporating metacognitive strategy training in language teaching classes.

Furthermore, in a recent study concerning the use of flash cards, Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2011) investigated the effects of using flashcards and word lists on EFL students’ learning of foreign language vocabulary. The result of their study indicated that there is no significant difference in the efficiency of flashcards compared to word lists and also offered partial support to the hypothesis that flash cards could lead to better learning than word lists.

Eslahcar Komachali and Khodareza (2012) conducted another research to investigate the effect of using vocabulary flashcards on Iranian pre-university students’ vocabulary knowledge. The participants were composed of 50 female learners. They were divided into two homogeneous groups consisting of 25 learners. Before starting the treatment, two similar tests were prepared as the pretest and posttest to find out students’ vocabulary knowledge at the beginning and at the end of the study. The results showed that the students in the experimental group outperformed the students in the control group in their vocabulary knowledge. So, using vocabulary flashcards in the process of teaching vocabulary led to a higher level of vocabulary improvement.

Surly applying the results of such researches in our educational programs can benefit our students and teachers in their learning-teaching process. It seems that the role of flashcards on the students’ reading comprehension and word knowledge needs to be further expanded. Thus, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of using flashcards on the student’s reading comprehension progress and word knowledge.
3. Methodology

3.1. Research questions

The following research questions were formulated in this study:

Q1. Does the use of flashcards improve English vocabulary knowledge of Iranian first grade high school female students?

Q2. Does the use of flashcards improve reading comprehension ability of Iranian first grade high school female students?

3.2. Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses were proposed:

H01: Flashcards do not have significant effect on improving Iranian first grade high school female students’ vocabulary knowledge.

H02: Flashcards do not have significant effect on improving Iranian first grade high school female students’ reading comprehension ability.

3.3. Participants

In this study, subjects were chosen from state school students and because of the school constraints, it was not possible to assign students randomly to experimental group. Thus, it was necessary to work with intact classes. The population for this study consisted of students at Razieh High School in Urmia, West Azarbaijan. All participants were Iranian first grade high school female students and were native speakers of Turkish and Kurdish. Their second language was Persian. So, they studied English as a foreign language. They were 60 first grade of high school female students aged between 14 to 16’. There were 30 learners in the control group and 30 learners in an experimental group. The participants in treatment and control groups were judged to be at the same level of proficiency, namely elementary level of English Proficiency and their homogeneity was ensured using a modified version of ILI elementary level test as the pre-test.

3.4. Procedures

This study has been conducted as a quasi-experimental research design involving a pretest, treatment, and posttest. All tests included 20 items consisting of 10 vocabulary items and 10 reading comprehension items. The data was collected and scored. Then, the data was fed into SPSS. Mann-Whitney U test was employed to analyze and compare the results of the study in order to answer the research questions. The material used to conduct this study was first a pretest prepared from the ILI elementary level of English test books including 20 items. Because none of the students had attended outside of school English classes, so I used an elementary version of ILI test. There was only one correct choice for each item. So, for each correct answer 5 points and for each wrong or unrelated answer 0 point was considered. It is worth mentioning that for each unanswered question 0 point was considered, too. Then during three sessions, 40 new vocabularies and two reading comprehension passages were taught with using flashcards in an experimental group. The flashcards were colorful and their pictures were big enough to use in the process of EFL teaching in the classroom. They consisted of words and pictures. The collection of data has been done in five steps as preparation phase, English vocabulary and reading comprehension pretest phase, implementation and training phase, posttest phase and data analysis phase. Also, the students were assured that their scores on the pretest or posttest wouldn’t be part of their final term score to reduce any affective filter such as anxiety.

4. Results

The data analysis section has been divided into different parts in order to answer the research questions. In the first step, a pretest was given to the students to check the homogeneity of the groups. Then in the second phase, the results obtained in posttest of the learners in chosen groups are analyzed in order to answer the research questions about the effectiveness of using flashcards on the students’ vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension ability.

4.1. Posttest (vocabulary scores)
As the table above reveals, two groups did not enjoy normal distribution of their scores (sig<0.05). Therefore, the researcher was confident enough to apply non-parametric statistics. In so doing, Mann-Whitney U was run in order to compute the difference between two groups’ performance.

**Table 4.2. Rank orders for two groups’ vocabulary score at posttest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posttest_vocab</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental_total</td>
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<td>40.28</td>
<td>1208.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control_total</td>
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<td>20.72</td>
<td>621.50</td>
</tr>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As the table above shows, the experimental group had a higher performance and did much better than the control group, however, in order to find out if this difference of means was significant or not the researcher ran Mann-Whitney U test.

**Table 4.3. Mann-Whitney U test for two groups’ vocabulary score at posttest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Posttest_vocab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>156.500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilcoxon W</td>
<td>621.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-4.377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mann-Whitney U test revealed that the difference between groups at vocabulary test was significant (sig<0.05), in other words, the two groups were significantly different at posttest in terms of their performance on vocabulary test, therefore, the researcher concluded that the treatment was effective and the experimental group outperformed the control group in vocabulary test.

### 4.2. Posttest (reading scores)

As the table below shows two groups did not enjoy normal distribution of their scores (sig<0.05). Therefore, the researcher was confident enough to apply non-parametric statistics. In so doing, Mann-Whitney U was run in order to compute the difference between two groups’ performance.
Table 4.4. Normality test for two groups’ reading score at posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk Statistic</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>30</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.909</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>control_total</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.945</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5. Rank orders for two groups’ reading score at posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posttest_reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td>control_total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table above shows, the experimental group had a higher performance and did much better than the control group, however, in order to find out if this difference of means was significant or not the researcher ran Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 4.6. Mann-whitney U test for two groups’ vocabulary score at posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Posttest_reading</th>
<th>Mann-Whitney U</th>
<th>Wilcoxon W</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>353.000</td>
<td>818.000</td>
<td>-1.449</td>
<td>.147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mann-Whitney U test revealed that the difference between groups at reading test was not significant (sig>0.05), in other words, the two groups were not significantly different at posttest in terms of their performance on reading test, therefore, the researcher concluded that the treatment was not effective and the experimental group could not outperform the control group on reading test.

For hypothesis 1 which predicted that using flashcard does not have any significant effect on improving the female students’ vocabulary knowledge, the scores of pretest and posttest were compared. The result showed a significant effect of using flashcard on the students’ vocabulary knowledge. For hypothesis 2 which predicted that using flashcard does not have any significant effect on the female students’ reading comprehension ability, the scores of pretest and posttest were compared too. The results did not show any significant effect of using flashcards on the students’ reading comprehension ability. While the mean of experimental group improved to some extent, there was not any significant difference between experimental and control group.

5. Discussion
In the literature of English language teaching and learning a recurring subject has been the neglect of vocabulary. It was often given little priority in language programs and was often left to look after itself and received only incidental attention in textbooks and language programs (Hedge, 2008; Richards & Renandya, 2002). In the past of language teaching, vocabulary learning and teaching were given little importance. As Moir and Nation (2008) states at one time it was widely assumed that lexical instruction is not essential as it can happen by itself; therefore, the teaching of vocabulary was not so common (Nation, 1990). However, nowadays, it is very important to use the new methods of teaching vocabulary and reading comprehension of any language. A number of studies have been conducted about the lexical problems of language learners. Bowen (1985) has shown that lexical problems frequently interfere with communication. Therefore, there is an increased interest in vocabulary as a component of every language. One way to add new words to one vocabulary knowledge is by finding words in the dictionary and learning what they mean. But this is not a suitable way to improve our word knowledge ability. Another way is learning through vocabulary card or flashcard. As we listen and read, we often meet new words by flascard. Word lists and flashcards can be used for the initial exposure to a word, but most students continue to use them to review it afterwards. One main advantage of flashcards is that they can be taken almost anywhere and studied when one has a free moment (Brown, 2000). Another is that they can be arranged to create logical grouping of the target words (Cairns & Redman, 1990).

Some researchers show that working with flashcards help learners in learning vocabulary more effectively than word lists (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995). It can be seen that flashcards have been used for teaching a variety of purposes during the history of language teaching. An example is to help students to improve word recognition if they are poor readers (Culyer, 1988). Another example of using flashcards is to teach students to practice their vocabulary development and completion drills in the learning of foreign language (Ervin, 1988). Flashcards have also been used in teaching English as a second language (Hart, 1982). They are used not only for teaching vocabulary but also for teaching propositions, articles, sentence structures, tenses, and phrasal verbs (Palka, 1988). In addition to teaching vocabulary, flashcards have been used to improve both comprehension and reading speed (Tan & Nicholson, 1997). In one investigation on flash cards, Ehri and Roberts (1979) studied whether first graders learn printed words better in contexts or in isolation. Post-test scores indicated that context-trained children learned more about the semantic identities of printed words, while flashcard-trained children could read the words faster and learned more about orthographic forms. According to Din and Wienke (2001) using of flashcard is an effective training and learning method for high school teachers and students in chemistry study and also flash cards can be used to effectively help teachers teach students learn and comprehend chemistry vocabulary. Furthermore, in a recent study concerning the use of flash cards, Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2011) investigated the effects of using flash cards and word lists on EFL students’ learning of foreign language vocabulary. The result of their study indicated that there is no significant difference in the efficiency of flashcards compared to word lists and also offered partial support to the hypothesis that flashcards could lead to better learning than word lists. As the above discussion indicates research on the effectiveness of using flash cards in the teaching and learning process is limited. So the effect of using flashcards on teaching and learning vocabulary remains to be studied.

6. Conclusion and further research

The results of this study advocate that utilizing some appropriate picture flashcards motivates students. Moreover, it increases their interest and willing. So the use of flashcards is recommended by the current research. If the teachers use more educational flashcards in the class, they can change the atmosphere of the classroom. Nowadays because of improving modern technology in the field of teaching and learning process, it is possible to use digital computer flashcards which are more attractive than paper flashcards. So teachers should allocate more time and design some flashcards using multimedia teaching aids. In so doing, the managers of the institutes and schools should provide them suitable instruments such as computers, videos, projectors and instructional CDs. Furthermore, flashcard makers can focus on making educational and interesting flashcard with popular buildings and characters of our country in order to attract the students’ attention in the process of learning. They can even design colorful and beautiful flashcard to attract more customers and boost their business.

Since vocabulary is a very important part of the language, a teacher must use the new ways of teaching vocabulary and reading comprehension passage of language. So the results of this research can be valuable for language teachers at the level of middle school, high school, pre-university and universities. The findings of this research could help those dealing with foreign language teaching such as syllabus designers, material developers,
test makers, and the like.

Basic limitations are imposed on this study too. First, the study was restricted to the first grade high school female students in Urmia. Second, the subjects involved in this study were 60 Students. Third, in this research, the researcher subject was limited to the effect of using flashcards on vocabulary learning and reading comprehension ability. Fourth, the flashcard used in this research was limited on the text- picture (Visual) flashcards. Fifth, the researcher didn’t make any control on some other effective parameters such as intelligent, anxiety and motivation on students’ learning.

Followings are the reasearcher suggestions for those who will contribute the same study by conducting studies on the effect of using vocabulary flashcard on the students’ vocabulary learning and reading comprehension:

Conducting the reaserch for all grades.
Doing the reaserch on the effect of flashcards to all aspects of foreiegn language learning and teaching.
Extending the reasearch for different genders.
Reasearch on the impact of flashcards on the learning of other lessons.

However, it was confirmed that learning vocabulary through flashcard would lead to better learning than traditional method for four main reasons. First, new words can easily be practiced extensively with flashcard. Learners can separate cards into several categories based on their difficulty level. It helps them review difficult words more frequently than easy ones. Second, working with flashcard increases vocabulary retrieval. Since learners are presented with a second language word and its definition on the other side of the card, they can easily practice new words and recall their meanings. Third, learning words through traditional method causes rote learning. Finally, there may be problems of attention with traditional method because some words may receive less attention than others because of their particular positions in the class. Nevertheless, there is not such a problem in learning with flashcard since they tend to be more flexible. (Mondria & Mondria, Vries, 1994; Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995)

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF SUMMARY WRITING AS A CRITICAL READING STRATEGY ON READING COMPREHENSION OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
The present study investigated the effect of teaching summary writing as a critical reading strategy on Iranian EFL learners’ reading ability. This study tried to determine the extent to which awareness raising along with efficient amount of practice of English summary writing as a critical reading strategy affects the reading ability of Iranian Intermediate learners. To answer this question, 60 Intermediate language learners in an English institute in Zanjan were randomly selected via administration of a PET exam to 300 language learners. Then, they were divided into two groups of 30 participants. Participants in the experimental group were instructed on a certain plan to learn and practice the concept of summary writing. In this study the focus was on standard patterns of summary writing as critical strategy in which participants were assisted to write summaries for the texts they studied. In the control group no treatment has been done and learners received a normal routine of the semester as they always did. A validated standardized test of reading was administered to both groups, the papers were assessed carefully. The data retrieved from both groups were analyzed through calculating a t-test. The results indicated that the means of the two groups were significantly different. The experimental group scored significantly higher than control in the post test.

Key terms: reading ability, PET, summary writing, critical strategy.

1. Introduction
To the best of our knowledge, in spite of the increasing popularity of the research on critical reading, its strategies are still a new research area in universities in the EFL context. The aim of the present study was to survey the effect of summary writing as one of the critical reading strategies on reading comprehension of EFL learners in an English language institute in Iran. In this research the effect of summary writing as an approach to improvement of reading comprehension ability is investigated. It is critically important to discover different way to improve learners’ reading skill as reading comprehension ability is one of the most important skills in academic improvement of Iranian learners.

Many students may take it for granted that the intended meaning of the author lies solely in the print words on the page or screen, so that reading is no more than a process of obtaining meaning from the source. They approach reading passively, relying heavily on the use of a bilingual dictionary, thereby spending countless hours laboring over direct sentence-by-sentence translations. Despite all the efforts made, their reading comprehension remains poor. To enhance the reading comprehension ability in English, Alfassi (2004) states that students should “understand the meaning of text, critically evaluate the message, remember the content, and apply the new-found knowledge flexibly”. Since reading is a complex cognitive process, it is very important for teachers to train students to take active control of their own comprehension processes.

For many foreign or second language (L2) learners, reading is performed to obtain meaning from a text, from which vocabulary and grammatical structures are acquired at the same time. Many studies have shown that L2
learners read much more slowly in L2 than in their native language (L1) (Haynes & Carr, 1990; Segalowitz, Poulsen, & Komoda, 1991). This is because as L2 learners read, they often do so laboriously word by word and check unfamiliar words as they encounter them, implying that they lack automaticity of word recognition. By reading in this way, attention is divided into decoding the word meaning and comprehending the content, and gradually the habit of reading slowly is formed. By reading slowly, such students' exposure is limited, comprehension can be poor, and reading for pleasure nearly unthinkable. Yet, as Nuttall (1996, p. 127) put it, “speed, enjoyment, and comprehension are closely linked with one another.” A successful L2 learner not only has to master the target language knowledge but must also be able to apply the knowledge in an appropriately fluent manner (Davies, 1982; Segalowitz, 2007).

However, to read fluently in a second language is by no means easy, and Nation (2007) suggests that fluency development should be included as one of the four strands of a language course (meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency). This would provide L2 learners with opportunities to process and produce the language with ease based on the linguistic knowledge they have already acquired. Despite the importance of fluency development having become prominent in the past few decades in L1 settings, this issue has not received much attention in L2 settings and more research is called for in L2 fluency development (Grabe, 1991; Sasamoto, 2006). The current study therefore intends to include training in reading fluency within the normal instructional curriculum in the hope of shedding more light on this area.

Critical reading as a branch of critical approach has attracted the attention of many researchers in the recent years. Schallert and Reed (2004) subscribe to the view that reading skill as an evaluative tool can have a basic role in bringing the spirit of self-awareness and criticality language to classes. Therefore, EFL learners should learn how to engage in the process of critical reading. It means that learners should be persuaded to question the assumptions of the writers rather than accepting them as established facts (Goatly, 2000). From among various types of learning strategies, reading comprehension strategies have long been recognized by researchers of second/foreign language reading (Brantmeier, 2002; Slatasi & Akyel, 2002). As a matter of fact, reading comprehension strategies separate the passive, unskilled reader from the active reader. Skilled readers don’t just read, they interact with the text.

According to Bosely (2008), many college instructors assume that high school graduates can "read critically", but much research suggests that for some students critical reading strategies must be taught explicitly and reinforced through practice. As Koupae Dar et al. (2010) point out, Iranian students are mostly passive non-critical, rote-learning students who do not participate in deep learning. Maybe, one of its reasons is the student’s lack of some important reading comprehension and critical reading strategies.

2. Methodology
The current study was a quasi-experimental study in which subjects of the study were homogenously selected and then randomly assigned into two groups of control and experimental in order to investigate research question of the study. Apparently only experimental group received treatment whereas control group received placebo treatment.

2.1 Participants
The study was conducted with 60 Iranian students who had enrolled an EFL course in Zaban Iran Institute in Zanjan, Iran. The participants of the study were all female learners aged 18 to 40. In order to make sure of homogeneity, participants were selected out of a pool of 300 based on their result in a P ET test, which is a standard exam of Cambridge University. Having calculated the mean and the SD, participants with the score of 1 SD above and below the mean (± 1SD from the mean) were selected to conduct the study. All participants had already passed 10 courses in the same institute, apart from that, none had any other experience of studying English. After selection of the participants, they were randomly assigned into two groups of control and experimental. The experimental group received treatment whereas the control one didn’t.

2.2 Data Collection Procedure
As this course is a general English course, communicative Language Teaching was used in both classes and all methods except for focus on summary writing of reading comprehensions were the same. At the beginning of the study both groups were taken a reading pre-test in order to compare their reading scores. The scores were processed through a t-test calculation and the result didn’t show any significant difference between two groups at the beginning of the study. So it was concluded that regarding reading comprehension ability the participants in both groups were homogenous. In the control group the learners received a normal routine instruction as they always do, whereas in experimental group in each session for 20 minutes they were treated with focused practice
summary writing. In order to make sure of the appropriacy of the material being used, the reading texts were selected from their text book and similar text books in the same level so that the level of difficulty of the reading text would be kept the same. By the end of the study which took almost 2 months that is 30 hours of input, the students reading ability was tested again through administration of a post test (a parallel version of pre-test). And the results obtained was compared.

2.3 Data Collection Instruments
The following instruments were used for the present study:
1) Preliminary English Test (PET) which is a standardized Cambridge test so reliability of the test is not needed to be tested.
2) A reading comprehension test used to determine the ability of the learners in reading. The reliability of the test was estimated 0.69 through Chronbach Alpha coefficient. Two parallel version of test were used for pre-test and post-test.

3. Data analysis
The statistical description of post test scores which were obtained from control and experimental groups are presented in order to compare the overall achievement of participants in experimental group with their rivals in the control one. In order to do this comparison which is actually the answer to the question of the study a round of t-test has been applied between the post test scores of experimental and control group and the result are presented in table 1 as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 post test scores of experimental and control group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading score Posttest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be observed in the table above that the mean score which is obtained from the post test of experimental group is highly more than the mean of control group. It is needed to be noted that experimental group received two months of treatment, however control group didn’t. In the table above group 1 is experimental and group 2 is control. By looking at the raw scores of the participant it can be inferred that apart from one or two of them whose score didn’t improve from pre-test to post test the others have improved for one or two scores minimum. However, as mean score solely is not enough the table below is presented for more detailed investigation into the results and also discussion on the hypothesis of the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 the independent sample t-test between the scores of control and experimental group in post test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading score posttest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What should be considered in the table above is the amount of sig two tailed which is “0.013”. This score is significantly less than the predetermined amount of p value which is 0.05. Therefore, the researcher can conclude
that there is a significant difference between the groups. It can be inferred that the treatment has been successful and summary writing has a positive impact on improvement of reading compression ability. The group which received treatment has achieved significantly higher reading comprehension score than the one which hasn’t.

The result obtained from experimental group in pre-test and post-test is also analyzed. to make sure that the participants of experimental group have changed comparing to themselves. It means we need to investigate whether each participant changed or not. In order to make this comparison in a systematic manner, the scores obtained from pre-test and post-test of participants in experimental group were analyzed through a round of paired sample t-test. The reason to use paired sample t test is having two sets of scores from the same group. This is a prerequisite for using paired t-test. The results of the test are presented in table below

### Table 3 Paired Samples Statistics of experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reading score pretest</td>
<td>13.8667</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.88887</td>
<td>.34486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading score posttest</td>
<td>15.0667</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.72073</td>
<td>.31416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be observed in table above that, the mean scores obtained from the group at the beginning and end of study differ about 1.5 scores. The mean score of experimental group by the end of study is significantly higher than the ones obtained at the start of study. Table 4 shows more detailed information regarding the t score of the group for further clarification.

### Table 4 Paired Samples Test of experimental group for pre test and post test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reading score pretest</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>-1.71330, -0.68670</td>
<td>4.781</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is observed in the table above that the two tailed sig is “0” which is obviously less than predetermined value of P. Therefore, it can be concluded that the result of the experimental group from beginning to the end of study is significantly different. It means even if control group is not taken into account, the result obtained by experimental group and the amount of progress participants showed, proves that sentence summary writing can be an effective way of improving reading comprehension ability of EFL learners.

4. Results and Discussion

The focus of this research was on answering the following questions:

- Does summary writing as a critical reading strategy have any significant effect on improvement of Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability?

Based on the data obtained from the study, it was observed that the answer to the research question is “yes”. It means in experimental group in which learners received proper amount of instruction in the form of awareness raising and practice on writing summary based on the reading texts they studied in the class, the performance of participant has significantly changed. After the treatment it was observed that participants improved significantly in their reading comprehension ability. Based on the result of the current study the null hypotheses is rejected. The findings of this study revealed that teaching and practice of summary writing technique can improve EFL learners reading comprehension ability significantly. Therefore based on the findings of this study teachers can bring about new insight into teaching reading more effectively and move some steps forward to just handing some material to the learners and asking them to do some true false exercises, in which learners even do not have a clear idea of what they have read. On the other hand in teaching reading skill normally students end up having a vague
idea of what they have read. By writing summaries they have to go through the reading material more deeply and make a clear image of the material in their mind and then write about it. The result of this study showed that using this technique in the classroom can help learners to be better reader and better thinkers. Instead of finding a remedy for so called reading problem, which is a very common one between Iranian EFL learners, they can prevent the problems to happen by giving learners more awareness on the material and help them to have a better analytic mind.

A large number of learners suffer from lack of awareness regarding this issue so they are not able to comprehend a reading text. They also have enough competence regarding grammatical points but when it comes to comprehension questions, they seriously suffer from lack of ability to answer the questions. Using this method, they can deal with the problem of comprehension. This study is very significant for teachers, especially those who teach academic skills to give more inspiring tasks to their students regarding their reading texts.

From another point of view the findings of this research can lead syllabus designers to include more parts dealing with more detailed information on summary writing to help learners become better readers in the course books. There are some course books which this point has been considered in them, but the amount is not sufficient and also teachers are not given clear awareness on the importance of these sections in their guide books. This issue can be elaborated in the course books and teachers training program in order to get better results in the class.

Another important issue is for teachers’ trainers while preparing prospective teachers for their career. In training future teachers they should make them aware how to succeed in leading their learners to deal with reading problems. In the training of teachers they can be taught to put more time and energy on teaching summary writing to their students while teaching all other skills and sub skills specially grammar, to avoid the future problems of reading comprehension.

5. Suggestions for Further Research

It is suggested to the researchers of this field to do more research in the area of summary writing and its effect on reading comprehension ability. It seems that there exists a tie between these two. Prospective researchers can start with doing researches on different summary writing techniques to observe their results on reading comprehension ability. Different line of research can be done on different level of proficiency. The current research was done on intermediate students. Another researchers can test this issue on other students from other proficiency levels and compare the results with the existing one. The research also can be done on awareness raising regarding how to deal with new reading texts with unknown vocabulary items or practice of writing components or on a combination of both. A line of research can be done on the new vocabulary items and how to use them in summary writing in order to help learners deal with the reading texts more effectively. By the way it is hoped that this study could have shed some light on TEFL and especially on improvement of reading comprehension ability and chances of further research in this regard.

REFERENCES


A SURVEY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRITICAL THINKING AND READING COMPREHENSION PROFICIENCY OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT  
The present study explored the relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension proficiency of Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) student. To fulfill this objective, the data of this study were collected by using Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire and a Longman TOEFL test (PBT). The instruments were administered to 120 male and female students majoring in TEFL at Shiraz Islamic Azad University in Iran. They were within the range of 18 to 25 years. All of them were native speakers of Persian. First, in order to check the homogeneity of the students, a Longman TOEFL test (PBT) test was administered at the beginning of the study and finally 100 students were selected for the study. To explore whether there was any statistically significant relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension proficiency of EFL students, Pearson Coefficient Moment Product was run. The results indicated a significantly high correlation between two variables, and a regression analysis was conducted which revealed that total score of critical thinking was a positive predictor of the reading comprehension proficiency of EFL students. The findings provide useful implications for curriculum designers, teachers and students in language learning. By increasing critical thinking among EFL students, their language learning will improve. So, reading comprehension would be meaningful and purposeful when curriculum designers and teachers emphasize both the language proficiency and cognition. Moreover, paying attention to EFL students' learning difficulties may empower teachers to assist students in language learning.

KEYWORDS: Critical thinking, Reading comprehension, EFL students.

1. Introduction  
It is natural that all people think about every single matter and face some questions regarding that matter to distinguish if it is logical or not (Freeley & Teinberg, 2000). The way we think influences all aspects of our life. To make progress and compete in the information age, people must ask questions, discover new modes of solving problems in new conditions (Center for Critical Thinking, 1996). According to Huitt (1998), in the information age, thinking plays a significant role in one’s success in life. He goes on to say that the moment toward the information age has shifted attention to good thinking as an indispensable part of learning.

It is crucial that individuals should be equipped with the abilities to question different points of view while maintaining respect for different ideas (Hashemi, Naderi, Shariatmadari, Naraghi and Mehrabi, 2010). One of the prevailing concepts in educational reform is critical thinking. Every time we have to make a decision, the process we go through involves critical thinking. The concept of critical thinking in academic achievement, learning, and particularly language learning is now acknowledged by a large number of educators (Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010). Language learning as an essential issue in people’s lives has been heavily considered by educational systems. It is worthy to mention that
improvement in learning a foreign language is strongly interrelated to critical thinking. (Mall-Amiri & Ahmadi, 2014). Nowadays, critical thinking has been mostly used for first language education in the United States, but today its role in second and foreign language learning and teaching is of great importance (Atichon, 1997, as cited in Hassan, Rahmany and Babaei, 2013). The word critical does not include taking view or finding something wrong to criticize a person. Rather, critical applies to examining ideas thoroughly and deeply, not accepting ideas just because they seem wise, and tolerating questions. Through this process, the mind is open to all considerations, assumptions and details before forming an opinion (Soleimani & Kazazi, 2014). Critical thinkers are able to implement the process of logical thinking to confirm and disconfirm hypothesis, to discern what is true, what is false and separate facts from opinions (Wood, 2002). Also, a person who thinks critically can ask appropriate questions, gather relevant information effectively, reason logically from this information, and come to reliable conclusion (Center for Critical Thinking, 1996).

Since the 1990s, developing critical thinking skills and critical disposition in EFL learners have been set a primary goal in higher education. In hope that EFL learners make better decision within society. Regarding the role of critical thinking in language learning, the primary purpose of education is to enable EFL learners to think critically (Fahim & Aghaalikhani, 2011). Akyuz and sansa (2009) state that to teach EFL students critical thinking abilities is the purpose of academic achievement. They state that one of the most important skills for EFL students in academic achievement is to challenge other students’ opinions with those of their own.

Engaging students actively in critical thinking processes through the effective use of teacher questions, discussion and reflection in a context that supports critical thinking and values inquiry, and teachers’ perception of critical thinking skills and explicit explanations of the significance of critical thinking could help students to develop their language proficiency (Vdovina, 2013). The role of critical thinking in reading comprehension cannot be ignored. EFL students who have higher critical thinking can analyze and comprehend a passage effectively. In fact, educated EFL learners should accurately read some passages in order to analyze new ideas, deepen their understanding of these ideas and get appropriate conclusions from them (Nooshinfard, Babolhavaeji, Esmaeil and Razavi, 2014).

1.1 Statement of the Problem
In English classrooms, the majority of teachers only focus on transferring their language proficiency to EFL students. This is not enough. Teachers also should help EFL students make inferences during reading a passage and motivate their students think critically about a text. Focusing just on language proficiency hinders comprehension. According to Chafee (1992), successful learners are not defined as persons who memorize facts and learn fixed routines and procedures, instead as individuals who can mix their intellectual knowledge to think critically especially when they face difficulties or when they are learning something. Crenshaw, Hale and Harper (2011) states that good teachers should pay attention to the fact that the art of teaching and learning is established in the dynamic interaction of ideas and methods for thinking about ideas with focus on cognitive domain. So, active engagement in a reading class is not just having learners take part in a specific instructional strategy. (p.18).

1.2 Research Question
The present study aims at seeking proper response to the following research question: Is there any statistically significant relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension proficiency of Iranian EFL students?

2. Review of literature
2.1 Critical thinking
The critical thinking traces its roots in analytic philosophy which dates back over 2,500 years, as pointed out by Paul, Elder, & Bartel (1997) that the rational roots of critical thinking are ancient and go back to the teaching practice and insight of Socrates who discovered a method of investigating and questioning that people could not logically give grounds for their assertions to knowledge and justify their responses. During the Renaissance (15th and 16th centuries), a large number of scholars in Europe started to think critically about different issues such as religion, art, society, human nature, and so on.
by the belief that most of the domains of human life needed search, analysis, and critique. In the 20th century, the strong need for critical thinking in life and education was recognized.

Critical Thinking is defined as the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action (The National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking, 2013). Pithers and Soden (2000) asserted that critical thinking includes a number of skills such as the ability to focus on the problem, uncover assumptions, infer, reason, inductively and deductively, and judge the validity and reliability of assumptions and sources of information.

One of the first ways to develop critical thinking in learning is to apply the word why to the subject at hand. To think critically in a critical manner is to question every aspect of a topic, from the credibility of the source to your own subjective conclusions and opinions (Pollick, 2014). Learning to think critically is an active and continuing exercise in different individuals. EFL university students learn numerous transferable skills while following their studies. Critical thinking for EFL students supports them analyze information in a way that may predict a desired outcome and they can choose the best course of action. English teachers can incorporate critical thinking skills into their coursework in the form of active learning, where EFL students have opportunities to exercise and fortify them (West, 2014).

2.1.1 Critical thinking models

In order to improve higher order critical thinking skills in education, Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) created a taxonomy of educational objectives. The taxonomy includes six levels of learning through which a student can progress. The six levels are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Knowledge: The knowledge level refers to the capacity to produce appropriate material when resolving a problem that usually includes memorization and identification. This level focuses on whether the students can recall and recognize specific information.

Comprehension: The comprehension level refers to understanding of facts and ideas. This level emphasizes whether the students understand the meaning of a context area.

Application: It is the use of principles, theories, concepts, or procedures in a new context to solve a problem. Generally, application focuses on whether the students can apply content area.

Analysis: It is the breakdown of material into its constituent elements or parts so that the relative hierarchy of ideas is made clear and the relationship between the ideas expressed are made explicit. Actually, analysis relates to the capacity to fragment materials into components in order to establish relationship among those components and understand principles of organization.

Synthesis: It is the putting together of elements and parts so as to form a whole. This is a process of working with elements, parts, etc., and combining them in such a way as to constitute a pattern or structure.

Evaluation: This level refers to judgments about the value of ideas, materials, methods, etc.,

2.1.2 Characteristics of a good critical thinker


1. Uses evidence skillfully and fairly.
2. Asks relevant questions to the issue.
4. Is very curious.
5. Draws inferences.
6. Exactly makes clear one’s decisions.
7. Analyses the interpretation, the claims, and problems.
8. Discards improper and irrelevant information.
9. Collects data from numerous sources which are related to a problem.
10. Distinguishes between valid and invalid inferences.

2.2 Reading comprehension
Reading comprehension is “the process of simultaneously interaction and involvement with written language” (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002, p. 11). According to Tierney (2005), reading comprehension is the basic aim for students to gain an understanding of the world and of themselves, enabling them to think about and react to what they read.

Also, Reading comprehension is viewed as a process of understanding a text which integrates decoding ability, vocabulary cognition, prior knowledge of the topic and inference (Kintsch & Kintsch, 2005). Learning to read is intended to provide EFL students with skills that are necessary for proper word recognition and text decoding. The ultimate goal of reading is not limited to the recognition of isolated words, but lies in the reader accessing the meaning of the text. Reading comprehension proficiency is achieved when words are recognized and their meaning identified. Relevant knowledge is activated and inferences are generated as information is processed during the course of reading (Papadopoulou, 2013). The interaction of text-based and knowledge-based processes is essential to reading comprehension. Because the meaning of text is only partially determined by the text itself, reading must be an inferential constructive process (Shihab, 2011).

2.2.1 Types of reading comprehension:
Richard and Smith (2002, p. 433) as cited in Khoshsima (2014) stated that there are four types of reading comprehension:
(a) Literal comprehension: reading in order to understand, remember, or recall the information explicitly contained in a passage.
(b) Inferential comprehension: reading in order to find information which is not explicitly stated in a passage, using the reader’s experiences and intuition.
(c) Critical or evaluative comprehension: reading in order to compare information in a passage with the reader’s own knowledge and values.
(d) Appreciative comprehension: reading in order to gain an emotional or other kind of valued response from a passage.

2.3 Practical studies
A number of studies have practically investigated the relationship between critical thinking and various aspects of language particularly reading comprehension. For example, Kamali and Fahim (2011) explored the relationship between critical thinking ability and reading comprehension of texts containing unfamiliar vocabularies. They found that EFL learners with higher critical thinking ability had better performance on reading texts with unknown words.

Dowlatabadi, Bakhshipour, Hosseini and Sarfallah (2012) investigated the relationship between critical thinking, reading comprehension, and reading strategies of Iranian EFL students. The findings of their study revealed that there was a significant relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension. The findings also revealed which reading strategies along with critical thinking act as the best predictors of learners’ reading comprehension ability.

Fahim and Mirzaei (2008) examined the relationship between critical thinking and lexical inferencing of Iranian EFL students. 130 male and female EFL students participated in this study. Findings indicated that those students with high critical thinking outperformed the ones with low critical thinking ability in lexical inferencing.
Magno (2010) conducted a study to investigate the role of metacognitive skills in developing critical thinking. To this end, the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire and the Metacognitive Assessment Inventory were administered to 240 freshmen college students in Philippines. The findings showed that the factors of metacognitive are significantly related to critical thinking.

Boloori (2010) sought to evaluate the predictive power of critical thinking of EFL learners on their performance on inferential reading comprehension test. She explored that there was a significant relationship between critical thinking and inferential reading comprehension. Myers and Dyer (2006) studied the effect of students’ learning style on an critical thinking skill. 135 students at the Florida university were chosen. The George Style Delineator was administered to assess the preferred learning style of each student.

To determine the critical thinking skills of each student, the cornel critical thinking test was administered. Students with deep learning style preferences had higher critical thinking scores.

Gomez (2010) reported that students, who received structured reading lessons had better performance on critical thinking skills test in comparison with those who received traditional reading instruction.

Nosratnai and Sarabchian (2013) designed a study to find out the relationship among EFL learners’ five personality traits and predictability of their critical thinking ability. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between critical thinking and domains of personality.

Behdani (2009) sought to explore the relationship among critical thinking ability, autonomy, and reading comprehension of the Iranian EFL students. The results indicated that there was a positive relationship among critical thinking ability, autonomy, and reading comprehension of EFL learners.

Hashemi and Zabihi (2012) studied the relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ critical thinking and their English language skills and reported a statistically significant relationship between variables.

Soodmand and Rahimi (2014) did a study to find out the relationship among critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and speaking abilities of Iranian EFL learners. In this study, one hundred learners participated and these instruments were used the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) form B, and an interview. Results showed that there was a significantly positive relationship among critical thinking emotional intelligence, and speaking abilities.

Assadi, Davatgar and Jafari (2013) designed a study to find out the effect of critical thinking on enhancing writing among Iranian EFL learners. Findings showed that critical thinking instruction had effect on writing of students.

Wang (2009) surveyed that students who took part in critical thinking English conversation class attained better critical thinking skills. He further stated that after applying the critical thinking ability learning system in the class, students had an appropriate level.

3. Methodology

In this section, a brief description of the participants, instruments, procedure, and the data analysis of the study will be provided.

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were 120 male and female students majoring in English Teaching at Shiraz Azad University in Iran. All of them were native speakers of Persian. Their age ranged from 18 to 25. The initial number of participants was then reduced to 100 after the administration of TOEFL test to homogenize them.

3.2 Instruments

Two instruments were administered in the present study: The first instrument was Longman TOEFL test (PBT) which was adopted from the book, Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL (2001). This test included three sections: (a) structure and written expression with 30 items, and (b) reading comprehension with 40 items, and (C) listening comprehension with 30 question. The allocated time to take the test was 120 minutes, and the scoring was estimated out of 100.

The second instrument which was used in this study was the Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire (WGCTA) in order to investigate critical thinking abilities. It includes 80 items which were constructed around five subsections, namely, drawing inferences, recognizing assumptions, making deductions, interpreting evidence, and evaluating arguments. It included 16 items with two to
five alternatives, which was completed in 50 minutes. Scoring was facilitated through the availability of an answer key, yielding a composite score for the five subsections of the questionnaire from 0 to 80.

3.3 Reliability and Validity of Longman TOEFL Test Score and The Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire (WGCTA)

To ensure the validity of Longman TOEFL test and The Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire (WGCTA), the committee members' advice was sought. Each strongly confirmed the appropriateness of them. In order to estimate how reliable the test was, the internal consistency of the questionnaire was computed based on Cronbach’s alpha. As Table 1 presented, the alpha coefficient for ‘Longman TOEFL test (PBT)’ was 0.88, suggesting that this test had relatively high internal consistency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Reliability Statistics of Longman TOEFL test (PBT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach's Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To avoid any misunderstanding, the Persian version of the Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire (WGCTA) was translated by Faravani (2006). The reliability coefficient of its Persian adaptation was estimated by Cronbach's alpha. According to Table 2, The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for ‘The Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire (WGCTA) was 0.83, which indicated a high level of internal consistency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Reliability Statistics of The Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach's Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Data collection procedure

Before administration, the researcher explained to the participants how to answer the test and WGCTA Questionnaire. In the current study, data collection was done in two sessions. At the first session, a TOEFL test was administered to 120 participants in order to homogenize the sample group. The analysis of the scores indicated that 20 of the participants whose scores were beyond one standard deviation and below the mean were excluded from the study. The other ones were selected as the participants of the study. The scores of the participants on the reading section of the same TOEFL test were used to measure the reading comprehension performance of the participants. In the next session, they were asked to answer WGCTA Questionnaire in 50 minutes. The participants were assured that all the information would be kept confidential and would not be used anywhere except for the purpose of the study.

3.5 Data analysis

In order to analyze the data, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to see whether there is any statistically significant relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension proficiency of Iranian EFL students. Then, a regression analysis was conducted to see whether critical thinking can be a predictor of reading comprehension proficiency.
4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

To examine the research question, coefficient correlation between critical thinking and reading comprehension was calculated and they were shown in Table 3. The correlation between critical thinking and reading comprehension was $r = .822$ and the p-value was .000 which was smaller than 0.5 ($p < .05$). So, the correlation between the two variables was significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>.822</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Concerning the research question, it can be found that there is a positive and strong relationship between the two variables. Also, in order to see whether critical thinking can be a predictor of reading comprehension proficiency, a regression analysis was conducted (Table 4). According to Table 4, the results revealed that total score of CT was a positive predictor of the reading comprehension proficiency of EFL students.

Table 4: Coefficient between critical thinking and reading comprehension proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>30.358</td>
<td>4.800</td>
<td>6.325</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>4.637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 5, the results showed that the model including scores of CT questionnaire can predict 60 percent of EFL students’ reading comprehension proficiency. Its square value is .601. This means that about 60% of the variation in reading comprehension is explained by taking their critical thinking into account.
Table 5: R square for CT as the predictor of reading comprehension proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.822(a)</td>
<td>.601</td>
<td>.604</td>
<td>13.04327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Predictors: (Constant), critical thinking

4.2 Discussion

Regarding the findings of the study, we can conclude that by boosting levels of critical thinking, reading comprehension goes up. The findings of this research back up the previous research findings highlighting that the level of critical thinking and language learning are strongly interrelated. Learners with higher levels of critical thinking had higher reading comprehension levels and conversely students with lower levels of critical thinking had lower levels of reading comprehension. This can be due to the fact that students with higher critical thinking make inferences to do well. So, they try much and perform very efficiently while reading a text. In case of critical thinking and reading comprehension proficiency in general, the findings supported Ficione’s (2007) study that there is a statistically significant relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension, “improvements in the one are paralleled by improvements in the other” (p.18). The findings of this research are in agreement with the findings like those of Golpour (2014), Kamali and Fahim (2011) who examined the correlation between critical thinking and reading skill when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary. These kinds of studies indicated the essential role of critical thinking for being successful in language learning. Also, Critical thinking and its relation to different aspects of language learning is in agreement with findings of Hashemi (2012), Hassani, Rahmany & Babaei (2013), Boloori (2010), Wang (2009), Karamloo (2014) and Magno, 2010). More successful EFL readers are those who have benefited from critical thinking abilities. The more critical thinking the EFL readers have, the more successful they are in reading comprehension.

5. Conclusion

It is clear that EFL students' critical thinking determines their proficiency in reading comprehension. To fortify EFL students' critical thinking, teachers should improve their thinking abilities. When teachers know how to promote their thinking skills, they will be able to convey their skills to students. Consequently, EFL proficient readers can make inferences and attain an appropriate level in reading comprehension. Proficient EFL readers are active constructors of a text meaning. They use a wide range of critical thinking skills to understand a text. They should also be actively engaged by using critical thinking skills to improve their reading comprehension proficiency. It is emphasized that critical thinking supports students to dedicate their mental abilities to the meaning of text rather than to identifying words, allowing them to use reading as a skill to acquire new ideas and information. Poor critical thinking prevents EFL learners from tackling comprehension difficulties. Moreover, EFL students with poor critical thinking level rely strongly on rote learning. More attempts should be made towards producing a learning system that leads to lifelong learning. Specifically, EFL students with high critical thinking are most likely to excel those with poor critical thinking. When students want to learn a language, they should both use their linguistic and cognitive abilities. Cognitive psychologists investigated the association of data in memory and its relation to language learning. In cognitive domain, critical thinking is problem solving in conditions that solutions cannot be proved empirically. Presently, the supremacy of critical thinking has become ever more obvious. Cognitive domain emphasizes on meaning, context and making inferences. To improve critical thinking skills, proficient readers should process meaning at both literal and inferential levels of thinking. Thus, reading comprehension proficiency requires cognition. Without cognition, EFL students will not be able to
understand a reading passage efficiently. Reading just for literal meaning hinders comprehension. In sum, if EFL students fortify critical thinking, they will be confident in adjusting to a new situation or even finding innovative ways to learn a foreign language effectively.

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AN EVALUATION OF COMMONLY USED GENERAL ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS OF IRANIAN UNIVERSITY CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT
The process of decisions about how to select and evaluate a General English textbook for students of non-English majors is of great importance. The purpose of this study was to evaluate four General English language textbooks commonly used at Iranian universities from the English instructors’ point of view. The target textbooks were Concepts and Comments, Select Reading, Reading General English of SAMT publication, and PNU General English. The participants of the study consisted of 100 English teachers randomly selected from different universities in Iran. The evaluation of the textbook was conducted quantitatively through an adapted checklist developed by Shatery and Azargoon’s (2012), a modified and localized version of Mikley’s (2012) checklist. It was adapted and applied in order to see what textbook is more appropriate in the Iranian universities context. The findings for the five extensive subheadings included in the checklist showed that Concepts and Comments with the total means of 41.36 obtained higher scores of the textbooks under evaluation and matched the common worldwide features of EFL textbooks. The results of the study revealed that teachers’ perceptions about these criteria were favorable in general. The results also indicated that the book is really appropriate in increasing the learners’ level of cultures, along with improving the use of reading strategies for Iranian non-English major students in General English Courses.

Key words: EFL material, textbook evaluation, general English course.

1. Introduction
Teaching English language involves considering many issues; textbooks and materials seem to be crucial ones. In order to evaluate a textbook in a correct way, it is necessary to define it at first. Tomlinson (2011a) defines a textbook as a book “which provides the core materials for a language-learning course” (p. xi) in which a variety of issues are covered considering the learning requirements of the students within the course period. Textbooks play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful source for both teachers and learners. Davison (1975), for example, suggests that after the teacher the textbook is the most important component in the foreign language classrooms. One of the most important parts of teaching English is the selection of the textbooks for the course. And this in turn has accurate effect on teaching and improving students' interest in learning. In fact selecting and evaluating textbooks in EFL context is of utmost importance. In simple words, the importance of the role of textbooks is clear and definite in teaching and learning process from the teachers' and students' perspectives. In this line, Brown (2007) says that as a relatively new teacher, your first concern will not be to choose a textbook, but rather to find creative use for the textbook that has been handed to you by your supervisor. So, the challenge is to make the very best use of the textbook that is in hand.
In some contexts like the Iranian EFL context, the issue of general textbook evaluation is ignored, and also there is limited research conducted to evaluate the General English textbooks that are already in use or those that are intended for use in future in the academic contexts. Therefore, evaluation of general textbooks in Iranian university seems to be essential.
In this regard, the present study examines four General English textbooks most commonly used in Iran's universities for non-English majors, namely Select Reading, Concepts and Comments, Reading General English, and PNU textbooks to understand which book is more appropriate for Iranian university contexts. In doing so, this research adapted the criteria for evaluating this textbook from Shatrey and Azargoon’s (2012) checklist, which is according to a certain amount of general features that not only agree with the local requirements, but also have adequate flexibility to be applied universally with some modifications.

1.1 Statement of the Problem
Selecting a course book is an extremely critical stage in the process of teaching and learning English as a second language because they are the main source of input along with teacher. In other words, both learners and teachers heavily rely on textbooks. Therefore, we cannot get a good picture about acceptability and suitability of a book until we have been working through it for some time. Teachers do not seem to be aware of most appropriate General English textbooks that may help them in better teaching and increasing level of students’ knowledge because they are not certain about appropriateness of books in Iranian universities. Due to the importance of General English courses in improving and developing the students awareness and knowledge and the role of textbooks in language learning context, present study intends to investigate the adequacy of present major general textbooks used in Iranian universities. Another main problem is that, many students get low marks in this course and also, most of the don not show interest or have not necessary confidence for learning General English, this problem may be solved by selecting an up to date textbooks or an appropriate one.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was evaluating major General English textbooks used in ESL/EFL classrooms in Iran universities. This study was significant as it paves the way for novice and in some extent for experienced teachers with guidance in adopting the appropriate textbooks for General English courses.

1.3 Research Questions

The present study was conducted to seek answers to the following questions:

1) Are the commonly used General English textbooks different according to Shateri and Azargoon’s (2012) textbooks evaluation checklist?

2) Which of the commonly used textbooks better satisfy the criteria as represented in Shateri and Azargoon’s (2012) textbooks evaluation checklist?

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Role of textbooks in English language teaching

Textbooks play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful source for both teachers and learners. English text books are usually considered as the best resources in achieving goals and objectives based on the learner need.

Cunningworth(1984) states that textbooks should be the teachers’ servants not their masters. Nowadays textbooks or course books are basic elements in teaching English language (ELT) especially in schools or even in universities. Nowadays, the use of course books in ELT classes more common or more popular than before, especially after innumerable ELT preparatory classes have been established for a large number of departments at universities, private schools, and some state schools.

As Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that course books are avoidable elements of the curriculum because they specify content and define coverage for syllabus items. According to Cheng(2010), textbooks assures a measure of structure, consistency, and logical progression in a class. It meets a learner’s needs or expectations of having something concrete to work from and take home for further study; It may provide multiple resources: tapes, CDs, videos self-study workbooks etc. Thus, decisions related to textbook selection will affect teachers, students, and the overall classroom dynamic. It is probably one of the most important decisions facing ESL educators.

Kayapinar.(2009) in an evaluation by teachers gathered data using questionnaire (n=94) and open-ended interview (n=40) from teachers who taught in English preparatory classes and used particular course book packages in the classroom environment. The results revealed that teachers did not have positive impressions about the course book packages used. Moreover, the general conceptions of the teachers suggested that course books should be developed and used to meet the needs of the learners in the national context. In general he suggests that that the course book packages did not represent the teachers' expectations, and they did not meet the needs of learners in the teaching process.

2.2 A Review of Textbook Evaluation Research Studies in Iran
In Iranian EFL context, the issue of textbook evaluation has attracted the attention of several researchers. Since English is a foreign not a second language in Iran, classroom serves as the main source of exposure to English for students. Therefore, materials, especially course books play a vital role in exposing the students to the English language for students. In the one statement textbooks are the main materials which is used in undergraduate courses in Iranian universities. Textbooks are an important source of input and a great opportunity for EFL learners to communicate in the target language, which is realized only in classroom settings in most public schools and universities in Iran. In other words, since the primary users of textbooks are the teachers, a comprehensive evaluation can only be carried out while the teachers and their ideas are also taken into consideration for improving the quality of textbooks.

In Iran, different projects have been carried out to evaluate textbooks. They have studied textbooks from a number of perspectives or different point of views. This section is an attempt to review these studies which are classified based on different perspectives and issues.

Javanmehr (2013) studied about to evaluate the effectiveness of the “English Book 2” which is taught in Iranian second grade of high schools based on vocabulary and structure criteria. As the study was conducted at High Schools in Urmia, 100 second grade high school students participated in it. So, The checklist proposed by Doaud and Celce- Murcia (1979) was used to conduct the study. Study tries to answer the following question Are the vocabulary and structure of English Book 2 effective in any way in the case of Iranian high school students? There for, The results indicated that the criteria studied in this study had no effectiveness in improving English knowledge of learners. It can be said that the students were not satisfied with their educational source, i.e. English book 2 Therefore, the aimed book needs considerable attention and revision.

Moghadi (2014) studied high school EFL textbooks from the perspective that why they should be modified. She evaluated, compared, and determined the strengths and weaknesses of Iranian EFL high school textbooks from different perspectives and explained the reasons for changing these textbooks. So, her findings indicate that there may be an essential need for the prescribed EEL textbooks to be modified by the Iranian syllabus designers and textbook developers and also she believed that good parts or sections of any textbooks should be kept and the weak parts should be eliminated.

Zohrabi (2010) Investigated a study of course book development and evaluation for English for general purpose course (EGP). The study was done in University of Tabriz, Iran and described the process in which the researcher developed and evaluated a course book (Reading English in Action) for the English for General Purposes (EGP) course at this university. In order to investigate this coursebook’s weaknesses, the researcher taught it for four semesters and asked six of his colleagues to use it for their EGP courses. A questionnaire was developed based on a checklist that had been prepared by the researcher and distributed to the six language professors who taught the coursebook and 480 students who studied it for one semester. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the six professors and twenty four students. The aim of the study was to carry out in-use and post-use coursebook evaluation because these are more valid and reliable than pre-use one. Since the objective of the EGP course was to develop the students’ reading skill and strategies, the present coursebook was written to fulfill these goals, but results of the study reports that mere emphasis on reading bores the students, and they require more interactive communicative use of the language.

DehGhaedi (2013) examined lexical analysis of general English (GE) textbooks in Iranian universities. He compared GE textbooks in terms of vocabulary size, vocabulary levels and text coverage. His criteria for selection of GE textbooks were based on the popularity of GE textbooks and frequency of use in 10 Azad universities in Iran. According to his findings, GE textbook containing more readings for academic purposes are suggested as far as academic vocabulary learning is the goal. And as the other important factor to consider, when choosing college GE textbooks, is the appropriateness of book levels.

One of the main studies in evaluation field refers to Ansary and Babaii (2002), who analyzed a corpus of 10 EFL/ESL textbook reviews plus 10 EFL/ESL textbook evaluation checklists and outlined what they perceived to be the common core features of standard EFL/ESL textbooks. The major phenomena in this study were, content presentation, physical make-up, and administration concerns. Each set of major features of EFL/ESL textbooks consists of a number of subcategories. They concluded that not all of these characteristics would be present in each and every textbook. And also they indicated that materials which would interest everyone were not principally possible.

3. Methodology
3.1 Participants
The participants were both female and male teachers who teach English courses. Their years of teaching experience varied between 2-28 years. The checklist of the study was sent to randomly selected teachers from their list by email to fill out; of course some teachers answer the checklist Physically. Finally total of 100 teachers answered the check list.

3.2 Instruments
To collect the necessary data for this study one instrument was needed. That was a check list as the main tool which had a major role in this study. It is called Textbook evaluation Checklist, which was developed by the Shateri and Azargoon's (2012) general English evaluation , Which is, in fact, the modified and localized version of Miekley’s (2005). The original checklist was developed by Miekley with 21likert-scale items. The instrument of this study includes 5 general -items on evaluation of text books namely, A: context, B: vocabulary, C: Exercise and activities, D: Physical make up, and E: culture.

3.3 Procedure
The purpose of this study was to evaluate the General English language textbooks most commonly used at Iranian universities context. In order to do so, the following steps were taken. After a pilot study of the checklist prepared by the Shatery and Azargoon's (2012) the 34-item questionnaire about different characteristics of the Iranian ELT textbooks was finalized. Before implementing the instrument, the researcher informed the participants of the purpose of the study and data collection procedure. English language Instructors were randomly selected as the participants of the study from among the target population. Many E-mails were sent to them to fill the checklist. As just 75 of the participants send back the filled questionnaires, so researcher was given the questionnaires, and let answer the questions on their own. The questionnaires were collected a few days later or in some cases immediately so that the participants would have enough time to reflect on the questions. At the end, 100 instructors filled the questionnaires. Later these survey results were quantified and analyzed in order to answer the research questions. They were informed that it was not necessary to write their names and their answers. To evaluate the effectiveness of the intended textbook, the participants were asked to give their opinion on a three-point scale: purely applicable (PA), fairly applicable (FA), and non-applicable (NA).

3.4 Data analysis
In this descriptive study, the quantitative data were obtained through the teacher textbook evaluation checklist. In analyzing the data and for the statements in the “Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale” a Likert-type of equal-range item including three options used. The statements have been labeled as; 2- purely applicable, 1- fairly applicable, 3- non applicable. The data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS.20). In order to provide a clear picture of the responses given to the 43 items of the questionnaire, the items were grouped together and analyzed. In presenting the results of the study, the means, standard deviations and percentages of each item were calculated to describe and summarize the responses of teachers. Mean was selected as the best representative of central tendency among the three measures of central tendency because of the fact that it is less affected by the extreme data at either end of the scale (1 and 3). The individual items of the questionnaire were in fact grouped together and analyzed based on the mean of the answers given to them. The results of items that relate to each evaluation criteria were presented in tables and explanations were provided accordingly. This provides an idea about the extent to which each characteristic is satisfied in the textbook. Then it was attempted to identify the type of different characteristics of the textbooks, and also the appropriateness of the textbooks from teachers’ view. The mean of different domains was calculated and finally all the means were classified. Also, between groups ANOVA was used to determine the differences between the teachers’ view in terms of different parts of the textbooks based on the checklist.

4. Results
4.1 Results of the Data Analysis for Overall Comparison
The following table gives information about total score of each group. Based on this table, Concepts and Comments obtained the higher mean score (41.36), the next highest means score belonged to Select Reading (38.52). PNU and General English respectively obtained the lowest means (31.96 and 32.76).

### Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics for Overall Aspect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concepts and Comments</td>
<td>41.36</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Reading</td>
<td>38.52</td>
<td>6.35</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNU</td>
<td>31.96</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General English</td>
<td>32.76</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The results are graphically presented in the following box plot (figure 4.1). As the plot shows Concepts and Comments obtained the highest total mean score. And also, PNU and General English received the lowest total mean scores.

To understand whether the differences between groups are significant or not, a one way between groups ANOVA was used.
As the table suggests, the difference between the overall means of the groups was significant \( \text{F}(3,96) = 7.146, \ p<0.005 \). As there was a significant difference between the groups, a post-hoc comparison was conducted to find the exact place of the differences. The results are shown in the following table (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2**

**ANOVA Results of Overall Aspect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total score</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1545.230</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>515.077</td>
<td>7.146</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>6919.520</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>72.078</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8464.750</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Bonferroni post-hoc tests in this table indicate exactly where the differences among the groups are. In the results presented below, PNU book was statistically and significantly different from Concepts and Comments (\( p=0.001 \)). PNU was also significantly different from Select Readings (\( p=0.045 \)). GE was statistically different from Concept and Comment book. It can be concluded that in terms of overall evaluation, there was a significant difference between PNU textbook and other textbooks in this study (Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3. Multiple comparison of overall**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Name of the Book</th>
<th>(J) Name of the Book</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General English</td>
<td>Concepts and Comments</td>
<td>-8.600*</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select Reading</td>
<td>-5.760</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PNU</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts and Comments</td>
<td>General English</td>
<td>8.600*</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.003</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select Reading</td>
<td>2.840</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PNU</td>
<td>9.400*</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Reading</td>
<td>General English</td>
<td>5.760</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.110</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concepts and Comments</td>
<td>-2.840</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PNU</td>
<td>6.560*</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNU</td>
<td>General English</td>
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<td>2.401</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concepts and Comments</td>
<td>-9.400*</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select Reading</td>
<td>-6.560*</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

5. **Discussion**
The present study, focusing on the importance of General English in Iran, attempted to
evaluate major General English textbooks used in ESL/EFL classrooms in Iranian universities. The analysis of the results of the ANOVA analysis indicated that the examined textbooks were significantly different with regard to physical makeup, culture and overall comparisons. This study is significant as it paves the way for novice and in some extent for experienced teachers with guidance in adopting the appropriate textbooks for General English courses. This study also evaluated additional factors for General English course books and suggested more than vocabulary level and size. The other factors are also so important in selecting appropriate Textbooks such as cultures, physical make ups, and exercise and activities. Based on the present study, the researcher found that all of criteria in the selected checklist are important for a suitable textbook as a General English course. The results suggested that Concepts and Comments may better indicate the observed criteria. In the other words, this textbook can be a more appropriate option for this course because it obtained higher mean scores from the teachers' perspective.

In relation to the Evaluation of General English Coursebooks in Iranian Universities in the present study, it is important to note that the Evaluation of General English Coursebooks in Iranian Universities seemed to be essential. In what follows, the research questions are answered in light of the findings of the study.

6. Conclusion
The results indicated that there were significant differences between General English textbooks commonly used in Iran according to Shatery and Azargoon’s (2012) checklist. As the data suggested from among the four selected textbooks, General English, Concepts and Comments, Select Reading, and PNU, Concepts and Comments seemed to be the most appropriate in terms of over all aspects (culture, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and activities, and physical make up) of this checklist. It should be noticed that only in the section of context in this checklist, Select Reading revealed as more favorite than Concepts and Comments. Another remarkable result of this study was that there was a significant difference in the culture section of PNU textbook and the three others textbooks. So, in regard to the importance of interpreting culture Persian discourse patterns are often not transferable to standard British or American English, so students need to be instructed about target cultures if they are to be able to use target language discourse patterns. In simple words English language needs to be seen as a separate discourse system reflecting cultures and values different to those of Iran, and these values need to be made explicit. As Brown (2007) believed that culture is really an integral part of the interaction between language and thought. In general the findings of this study offered convincing evidence that the English language textbooks currently taught at Iranian universities, as General English textbooks were not stable.

As the results of study represented, unlike the school settings in Iran, there is not one prescribed curriculum and textbook for the universities to follow as a standard benchmark. Despite the opportunities given to the faculty members to decide on the appropriate books for the classes which are in line with the objectives of the courses and needs of the students, there has not yet been provided a guideline that can be followed to decide on this matter. Therefore, the results expanded the existing research in the area of textbook selection and evaluation in the country. However, in order to make sounder judgments about different characteristics of these textbooks, more research of this kind needs to be conducted.

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EFFECTS OF GLOSSARY ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS’ ENGLISH WRITING SKILL

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ABSTRACT
The present study was an attempt to investigate the effects of glossary use on the essay writing of Iranian EFL learners at Shiraz University. The participants of the study were 33 senior students majoring in English literature who were asked to write about an IELTS topic in 40 minutes. The participants were divided into three equal groups; two experimental groups, one with English glossary and the other with Persian glossary, and the control group who did not receive any glossary. The results revealed that although there were no significant differences between the experimental groups and the control group with respect to their overall writing score, glossary use affected the experimental groups’ performance on vocabulary aspect of writing. Those who used a glossary, regardless of using a native or a target one, could enrich the vocabulary of their writings. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers use supplementary materials in writing courses in order to improve the students’ writing ability.

Keywords: Vocabulary; Writing; Glossary; Iranian EFL learners

1. Introduction
Individuals need to write effectively in order to communicate interculturally with other people. Writing skill has become crucial due to both educational and non-educational reasons; therefore, writing instruction has gained major significance in second and foreign language education (Weigle, 2002). According to Brown (2001), written language is known with its rich vocabulary. He believes that vocabularies used in written texts are chosen from a wide variety of words, and are less frequent than words in oral texts. Therefore, vocabulary knowledge is very critical for writers, and they need to find ways to effectively benefit from a comprehensive repertoire of vocabulary in order to be able to communicate meaning through their writings. Furthermore, Learners should consider their lexical competence as a sub-component of communicative competence, and should be informed that to become proficient language users, they must improve their knowledge of vocabulary (Decarrico, 2001).

Writing skill is very challenging for both native and non-native speakers, and what is undeniable is the influence of rich vocabulary knowledge as one of the characteristics of written language, on the skill of writing. “Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, and write.” (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 255). Moreover, according to Carter and Nunan (2001), lexical competence is considered as an important predictor of general language ability. Recently, many studies have been done to investigate the effect of vocabulary knowledge on reading, listening, and writing. To this end...
the focus of this investigation is on assessing the effect of using glossaries on the writing ability of Iranian EFL learners.

2. Literature review

In the following sub-sections, first a review of literature will be presented on the effect of vocabulary on reading comprehension, next the relationship between vocabulary and listening comprehension will be studied, then the role of vocabulary in writing will be addressed, and finally the effect of glossaries on language proficiency will be discussed.

2.1. Vocabulary and reading comprehension

It is indisputable that learners need to have at least an adequate knowledge of vocabulary in order to have a good reading comprehension. Second language research has highlighted the importance of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension. Guo (2008) in a study conducted to investigate the role of vocabulary knowledge, syntactic awareness, and metacognitive knowledge in reading comprehension of 278 undergraduate Chinese English learners, showed that vocabulary knowledge was highly correlated with reading comprehension. The study indicated that vocabulary knowledge/syntactic awareness significantly contributed to the variance in reading comprehension. In another study, Chou (2011) investigated the effect of vocabulary knowledge and background knowledge of 159 Taiwanese EFL learners. The research showed that the students who studied a list of vocabulary outperformed the students who relied on background knowledge.

“As learners’ vocabulary expands in size and depth, extensive reading and independent strategies may be increasingly emphasized.” (Hunt & Beglar, 2001, p. 264). According to Qian (1998), scores on vocabulary tests are positively correlated with scores on reading comprehension tests. He conducted a study in which he explored the relationships among vocabulary size, depth of vocabulary knowledge, and reading comprehension in English. The results of the study showed that learners with higher scores on vocabulary tests got higher scores on reading tests. Besides, the depth of vocabulary knowledge has an imperative role in reading comprehension processes.

2.2. Vocabulary and listening comprehension

Listening is considered a fundamental and important skill in language acquisition since it is the source of input for language learning. Listening, as a receptive skill, involves learners in the active comprehension processes. In order to be able to comprehend the listening texts perfectly, learners need to recognize the words and know their meanings. According to Buck (2001), Knowledge of colloquial vocabulary, which is one of the characteristics of listening, is important for listening comprehension.

With regards to the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension, few studies have been done. Kasmani and Bengar (2013) addressed the effect of vocabulary learning strategy on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL undergraduate learners. The results of their study showed that metacognitive strategies had a significant contribution to listening comprehension. They showed that students who were adept at using metacognitive strategies for guessing the meanings of new words had better listening comprehension ability than did others. The researchers of the study believe that making EFL learners familiar with different types of vocabulary learning strategies can actually help learners have a better understanding of the meanings of new words they hear in the listenings.

In another study, Mehrpour and Rahimi (2010) investigated the effect of general and specific vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL learners on reading and listening comprehension at the same time. The results of their study revealed that general vocabulary knowledge influenced learners’ reading comprehension, while it was not very effective in their listening comprehension performance. Moreover, they showed that specific vocabulary knowledge influenced both reading and listening comprehension of learners.

2.3. Vocabulary and writing skill

Concerning the effect of vocabulary knowledge on students’ writing ability which is the focus of the current study, some studies have been done that show the significant role of vocabulary on writing ability. Oskuee, Pustachi, and Salehpour (2012) investigated the effect of pre-teaching vocabulary and collocations on the writing skill of Iranian EFL learners. Through an experimental research, they found that after twenty sessions of instruction and increasing learners’ awareness of collocations, the experimental group who received the instruction outperformed those in the control group who didn’t receive the treatment in expository writing. Another study done by Yonek (2008) compared the effect of rich instruction and traditional instruction on students’ vocabulary knowledge and
using the words effectively in expository writing. In Rich instruction, students learned the definitions of words, their context of use, as well as the active processing of each word. In Traditional methods students were involved in learning dictionary definitions, and doing activities such as matching, cloze sentence activities and sentence writing. Findings revealed that both groups had equal word meaning knowledge. But, those who received the rich instruction outperformed the other group in tasks which measured depth of word knowledge, writing quality and number of target words used in writing.

In a comprehensive study, Stahr (2008) investigated the effect of vocabulary size on three skills of reading, listening, and writing. The researcher showed the importance of vocabulary knowledge on EFL students’ language proficiency. The results indicated that reading was highly dependent on vocabulary size and it showed a correlation of 83% with vocabulary size. Listening was found to be the least dependent skill and had a correlation of 69% with vocabulary size. Moreover, writing had a significant and a high correlation of 73% with vocabulary size.

2.4. Glossary and language skills
A Glossary is a specialized vocabulary list containing terms and their definitions, used while working on texts with specific terminology. “The advantage of the glossary is that the words can be defined specifically in the context in which they appear in the textbook.” (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 326). Regarding the effect of glossing, some researches have been conducted. Mansouri (2011) investigated the effect of Persian and English glossary on learning and retention of technical vocabularies of Iranian EFL learners. She found that students who used a Persian glossary outperformed the other group in reading comprehension tests and learning technical vocabularies. It is shown that using a glossary of unknown vocabulary items helped Iranian EFL learners at low levels of proficiency with their performance on listening comprehension tests (Farrokhi & Modarres, 2012).

Electronic and non-electronic glossaries have positive effects on vocabulary learning of low proficiency students; however, electronic multimedia annotation is more effective in improving vocabulary knowledge (Zainol Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, Sharbaf Shoor, Cheong, & Janre, 2011). Mehrpour and Rahimi (2010) showed that providing learners with glossaries which contain the meaning of vocabularies encountered in reading and listening comprehension tests, has a positive influence on the learners’ performance on listening and reading tests.

Having reviewed the literature on the effect of vocabulary knowledge on reading, listening, and writing skills, we come to the conclusion that applying different methods for improving vocabulary knowledge is very effective in developing language proficiency. The purpose of the present study is to see whether providing learners with a glossary containing words they can use in their writing, will help them have a better performance on writing tasks.

2.3. Significance of the study
As English is becoming the global language for disseminating academic and non-academic knowledge, it is effective to look for ways to improve our English language knowledge. As far as the writing skill is concerned, we can apply different ways to improve this ability. The aim of this study is to investigate whether using a glossary can be considered as an effective way of improving writing ability. This study holds importance in that, to the best of the researchers’ knowledge, no study has addressed the effect of using a glossary on writing ability. The findings of this study can be useful for both teachers and learners.

2.4. Research questions
The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of providing learners with a glossary on the writing skill of Iranian EFL learners. The research questions that guide the study are:

Q1. Is there any significant difference between the mean score of students who used a glossary in their writing and those who didn’t use any glossary?

Q2. Is there any difference among the three groups of students regarding their scores on the vocabulary aspect of writing?

3. Method
3.1 Participants
The participants of the study were 33 Iranian University students as foreign language learners who took part in the study in 2013. They were all senior students studying English at Shiraz University. The population consisted of both male and female (8 males and 25 females) who were Persian native speakers. The students were
assigned to three equivalent groups, one control group and two experimental groups, based on their scores obtained from an essay writing course.

3.2 Materials
A glossary which was developed by the researchers was used in the study. In order to make the glossary, the researchers analyzed and elicited words from 3 professionally written essays on the topic chosen for the research. Then, the researchers extracted some more words based on their frequency and saliency from The Academic Word List (AWL) which was developed by Averil Coxhead as her MA thesis at the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. The list contains 570 word families which were selected according to the principles. The list does not include words that are in the most frequent 2000 words of English. The AWL was primarily made so that it could be used by teachers as part of a program preparing learners for tertiary level study or used by students working alone to learn the words most needed to study at tertiary institutions. The Academic Word List replaces the University Word List which was previously developed by Paul Nation, an Emeritus Professor in Applied Linguistics at the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies (LALS) at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

3.3 Procedures
To conduct the study, the students were assigned to three equal groups based on their final exam score in an essay writing course. There was no significant difference among the three groups regarding their writing scores. Data needed for the study was collected in one session and the researchers were present during the session. The students were given an IELTS exam writing topic, and were asked to write about the topic in 40 minutes using at least 200 to 250 words. The experimental groups used the glossary which was developed based on the topic, while the control group didn’t receive any glossary. One of the experimental groups received the glossary which contained the English words along with their English definitions (English experimental group). The other experimental group received the glossary which consisted of English words with their Persian definitions (Persian experimental group). An analytic IELTS rating scale which provides information about students’ performance on different aspects of writing was used for the assessment.

3.4 Data analysis
Before initiation of the treatment, the three groups’ scores on final writing exam in an writing course were compared using a one way ANOVA to ensure the homogeneity of the three groups in terms of writing ability. Moreover, In order to assess the effect of glossary on the students’ vocabulary scores on an writing test and to show whether there was a statistically significant difference between the performance of the students in the three group, a one way ANOVA was conducted.

4. Results and discussion
Before conducting the study, the students were divided into three similar groups based on their essay writing course scores. One way test of analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run in order to confirm that three groups were similar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>108.943</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.631</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108.955</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 1, there was no significant difference among the three groups regarding their writing ability: $F (2, 30) = .002, p= .99$.

To explore the impact of using glossary on participants’ writing scores, ANOVA test was conducted. Table 2 represents the results of descriptive statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of writing test scores
According to Table 2, thirty students took part in the study. They were divided into 3 equal groups (11 students in each group). As Table 2 indicates, mean scores of students in the control, English experimental, and Persian experimental groups are 6.36, 7.27, and 7.15 respectively. As it is obvious, the mean score of students in the control groups is lower than the experimental groups. In order to see whether the difference is statistically significant, we refer to Table 3 which indicates the results of one way ANOVA.

Table 3. Results of ANOVA for the effect of glossary on writing scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>5.398</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.699</td>
<td>2.559</td>
<td>.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>31.636</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.055</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37.034</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results show, there was not a statistically significant difference at the p < .05 for the three groups: F (2, 30) =2.55, p=.094. As it is shown above, using glossary had no effect on writing scores of students. The result of the present study was just in line with one part of the study done by Mehrpour and Rahimi (2010) which showed that general vocabulary knowledge didn’t influence students’ performance on listening comprehension. However, the result obtained from the present study was contrary to those of Guo (2008), Chou (2011), Qian (1998), Mansouri (2011), Kasmani and Bengar (2013), Stahr (2008), Yonek (2008), Farrokhi and Modarres (2012), Mehrpour and Rahimi (2010). They all indicated the significant effect of vocabulary knowledge on language proficiency. An explanation for this result is that the whole score of writing is not exclusively related to vocabulary. It is composed of 4 different scores which are related to 4 aspects of the task, cohesion and coherence, vocabulary, and grammar.

In order to answer the second question of the study which addresses the effect of using glossary on vocabulary aspect of writing, one way analysis of variance was conducted. Table 4 represents the results of descriptive statistics of the scores of vocabulary aspect of writing.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of scores of vocabulary aspect of writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.1818</td>
<td>1.07872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EExp</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.4545</td>
<td>.68755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PExp</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.3636</td>
<td>.92442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7.0000</td>
<td>1.06066</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 4, vocabulary mean scores of students in the control, English experimental group, and Persian experimental group are 6.18, 7.45, and 7.36 respectively. To see whether the differences in mean scores were significant, we consider the results of one way ANOVA.
Table 5. Results of ANOVA for the effect of glossary on vocabulary aspect of writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>11.091</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.545</td>
<td>6.679</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>24.909</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.830</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36.000</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results show, there was a statistically significant difference at the p < .05 level in vocabulary scores for the three groups: F (2, 30) = 6.67, p = .004. The effect size, calculated eta square was .3. The difference in mean scores between the groups was large. Post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of post-hoc analysis for the effect of glossary on vocabulary aspect of writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Groups</th>
<th>(J) Groups</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>EExp</td>
<td>-1.27273*</td>
<td>.38854</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EExp</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>-1.18182*</td>
<td>.38854</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EExp</td>
<td>PExp</td>
<td>1.27273*</td>
<td>.38854</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PExp</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>.09091</td>
<td>.38854</td>
<td>.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PExp</td>
<td>EExp</td>
<td>1.18182*</td>
<td>.38854</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EExp</td>
<td>PExp</td>
<td>-.09091</td>
<td>.38854</td>
<td>.973</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the post-hoc analysis show that the mean score for the control group was significantly different from the English experimental group (p = .01 < .05). Moreover, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the control group and Persian experimental group (p = .01 < .05). The Persian experimental group didn’t differ significantly from the English experimental group (p = .97 > .05). The results show that using glossaries in the target language or native language didn’t affect using vocabularies in their writing.

All these findings confirmed the significant effect of using glossary on vocabulary of writing. However, using glossary didn’t influence the whole score of writing.

5. Conclusion
The present study was an attempt to investigate the effect of vocabulary knowledge on students’ writing ability. The results revealed that vocabulary knowledge influenced the vocabulary aspect of students’ writings. However, vocabulary knowledge didn’t have an impact on general writing ability. One possible explanation may be that the general writing ability depends on some different aspects, not exclusively vocabulary knowledge. In analytic scoring, writings are rated on several aspects of writing such as content, cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, etc.

This study provides several implications for EFL teachers. Firstly, language teachers need to be aware that writing skill is composed of several features. In order to help the students improve their writing ability, all the aspects should be enhanced. Secondly, familiarizing the students with vocabularies which they need for writing on a topic can help the students enrich the vocabulary aspect of their writing. Since this study addressed only the vocabulary dimensions of writing, the researchers recommend that others can investigate the effect of enhancing other aspects of writing on the general writing skill. Moreover, researchers can make inquiries about the relative importance of each aspect of writing on the whole writing performance.
REFERENCES
WHICH GRAMMAR TEXTBOOK BEST FITS MY ATTITUDE TOWARD FORM-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION? A CASE OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
This study was an effort to evaluate grammar exercises in four English grammar textbooks which have been used for teaching grammar to Iranian university students majoring in English. Moreover, the researcher tried to find the Iranian EFL learners’ preferences for two types of form focused instruction (FFI): isolated and integrated FFI. Ur’s (1996) classification of grammar practice from accuracy to fluency was applied to investigate different types of grammar activities in the four books. To investigate the learners’ preferences for two types of FFI, a Likert questionnaire developed by Spada, Barkaoui, Peters, So, and Valeo (2009) was used. Findings revealed that Mosaic2 contained a nearly balanced range of exercises from accuracy-oriented to fluency-oriented exercises. Lessons in Mosaic2 included a combination of both form-focused and meaning-focused activities. The other three books mainly focused on form-focused activities, and neglected meaning-focused activities. The result of isolated-integrative FFI questionnaire showed that the Iranian EFL learners had a positive attitude toward integrative FFI, and a neutral attitude toward isolated FFI. Therefore, the researcher suggests that Mosaic 2 best suits Iranian students since it provides fluency oriented activities which fit students’ orientation to learn grammar through interactive communicative exercises.

Keywords: textbook evaluation; grammar textbooks; form focused instruction; grammar exercises; Iranian EFL learners

1. Introduction
Textbook evaluation is conducted by educators for a rational and reasonable selection of materials which fit a general or specific educational program. Textbook evaluation is very crucial since “the most obvious and common form of material support for language instruction comes through textbooks” (Brown, 2001, p. 136). Textbooks consist of three components which are content, examples, and exercises or tasks, therefore the exercises or tasks are considered as key components of every textbook (Byrd, 2001). Both teachers and students benefit from textbooks and expect to find the three components introduced by Byrd (2001) in the books.

Activities presented in the grammar textbooks are very important in helping learners to learn grammatical structures of a specific language and internalize them. Learners need to become familiar with different grammatical rules to improve their linguistic competence (Vooren, Casteleyn, & Mottart, 2012). Moreover grammar is considered as a skeleton or key constituents of a language. Grammar is “rules by which we put together meaningful words and parts of words of a language to communicate messages that are comprehensible,” besides; there are two conditions of grammar: 1) knowing the rules, and 2) applying the rules (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 161).
Through the history of language teaching methods, different views with regard to teaching and practicing grammatical structures were introduced. In the Grammar - Translation method, students were most of the time busy translating texts from L2 to L1. Therefore, they were deprived from practicing grammatical structures they have learnt through different activities. Audio-Lingual method highly focused on form of language and welcomed form-oriented exercises. Communicative approaches focused on meaning, and appreciated meaning-oriented activities. The goal of communicative approaches was to enhance learners' fluency in learning and using grammatical structures. The result of applying the audio - lingual method was that learners knew the structures completely, but couldn’t produce them in texts and meaningful communication. On the other hand, communicative approaches taught learners to use the structures communicatively. These approaches nurtured fluent production of grammatical structures, while they were inefficient in solving the problem of accuracy which learners faced while using the structures.

Now a days the prevalent view is focused on form-focused instruction (FFI) in the communicative framework. Spada and Lightbown (2008) have mentioned both isolated and integrated FFI. In an isolated grammar instruction the activities are separated from communicative interaction. Integrated FFI on the other hand, is provided to learners within ongoing communicative or content-based instruction. The overall focus remains on the exchange of meaning. The two types of FFI have different goals, and both are valuable of grammar instruction.

Teachers and school authorities consider textbook as one of the factors which affect Iranian students' achievement in learning English (Azizfar, Koosha, & Lotfi, 2010). The reason to conduct this study is to find the learners’ preferences for isolated or integrated grammar instruction, and to see which grammar textbook is more in line with learners’ attitudes to grammar instruction through the analysis of grammatical exercises in the textbooks. Therefore, this study discusses an evaluation of exercises presented in four English grammar textbooks, and learners’ attitude to two types of FFI by addressing the following questions.

1. Which types of exercises are presented in Kernel lessons (intermediate)?
2. Which types of exercises are presented in English Grammar in Use (intermediate)?
3. Which types of exercises are presented in Mosaic2?
4. Which types of exercises are presented in Understanding, and using English grammar (intermediate)?
5. Which type of form focused instruction (integrated or isolated) do Iranian EFL learners prefer?

1.2. Objectives and significance of the study
The present study intends to analyze the distribution of different types of grammatical activities in four grammar textbooks which are Kernel lessons, English Grammar in Use, Understanding and using English grammar and Mosaic2 which have been taught to English students at some Iranian Universities. The researcher aims to find the learners' preferences for isolated or integrated grammar instruction, and to see which grammar textbook is more in line with learners’ attitudes to grammar instruction. This study is important since, to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, no study has analyzed types of grammatical activities in grammar textbooks. It also enjoys importance due to the fact that it attempts to evaluate learners’ attitudes toward grammar instruction and tries to introduce a grammar textbook which is well-matched to their attitudes.

2. Literature review
Grammar knowledge is one of the subcomponents of communicative competence; the learners need to know both the rules and ways of applying the rules in communication in order to be considered proficient language users (Richards & Renany, 2002). Freeman (2001) believes that grammatical structures are forms used to convey appropriate meaning in context. She introduces a three dimensional framework of grammar which consist of form, meaning, and use. She believes that educators should present these three dimensions when teaching a specific grammatical structure in order to help the learners use grammatical structures accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately. Moreover, the learners need to practice structures so that they learn them thoroughly. Therefore, a range of exercises which focus on form, meaning, and use should be provided, that is both form-oriented, and meaning-oriented activities should be presented to learners in order to help them internalize three dimensions of grammar framework.

"Textbooks nevertheless remain a contentious issue for many teachers and researchers." (Crawford, 2002, p.81), the reason is that “Textbooks play a very crucial role in the process of language teaching and learning” (Azizfar, Koosha, & Lotfi, 2010). One of the educators’ concerns in teaching English grammar is selection of grammar textbooks in which a balance between form and function is achieved The problem with some grammar books is that activities which focus on meaning are missed. The students learn the structures and do the activities
in these textbooks completely, but they are ineffective in applying the structures they have learned to actual use. The goal of teaching grammar is to help students to use the structures in communication via oral or written texts. Learners are provided with exercises as one of the elements of textbooks in grammar books in order to practice structures. One way of enhancing grammatical structures is offering a range of grammar activities from accuracy-oriented exercises to fluency-oriented ones to students. Ur (1996, p. 83) believes that teachers should help students to move from accuracy to acceptable fluency by providing a “bridge” which is a collection of context-embedded grammatical activities that focus on structures’ both form and communicative meaning.

Harmer (2001) believes that activities should be selected without considering the language or language skills. He states that by balancing the variety of exercises in the classroom, teachers can engage and motivate learners. Byrd (2001, p. 422) is of the opinion that “A textbook with appropriate content and a variety of possible teaching activities can serve both teachers and students’ needs.” Moreover, Crawford (2002) states those textbooks which consist of a well-provided package of a variety of activities, linguistic input, and cultural materials is considered as teachers, gadgets to fulfill learners’ needs and develop a rich teaching program. Therefore, grammar books that teachers use should consist of a variety of exercises which are interesting for different learners. Ur (1996), offers a description of a number of practice activities, these activities are from very controlled, accuracy-oriented, or form-focused to fluency-oriented, or meaning-focused ones. Box2.1 (Ur, 1996, p. 84) represents different types of practice activities accompanied with their detailed characteristics and examples.

### Box 1. Types of grammar practice: from accuracy to fluency

| Type 1: Awareness | After the learners introduced to the structures, they are given opportunities to encounter it within some kind of discourse, and do a task that focuses their attention on its form and/or meaning. Example: Learners are given extracts from newspaper articles and asked to find and underline all the examples of the past tense that they can find. |
| Type 2: controlled drills | Learners produce an example of the structure: these examples are, however, predetermined by the teacher or textbook, and have to conform to very clear, closed-ended cues. Example: Write or say statement about John, modeled on the following example: John drinks tea but he doesn’t drink coffee. a) Like: ice cream/cake b) speak: English/Italian |
| Type 3: Meaningful drills | Again the responses are very controlled, but learners can make a limited choice of vocabulary. Example: Again in order to practice forms of the present simple tense: Choose someone you know very well, and write down their name. Now compose true statements about them according to the following model: He/She likes ice cream; or He/She doesn’t like ice cream. a) enjoy: playing tennis b) drink: wine |
| Type 4: Guided meaningful practice | Learners form sentences of their own according to a set pattern, but exactly what vocabulary they use is up to them. Example: Practicing conditional clauses, learners are given the cue if I had a million dollars, and suggest, in speech or writing, what they would do. |
| Type 5: (Structured-based) free sentence composition | Learners are provided with visual or situational cue, and invited to compose their own responses; they are directed to use the structure. Example: A picture showing a number of people doing different thing is shown to the class; they describe it using the appropriate tense |
| Type 6: (Structure-based) discourse composition | Learners hold a discourse or write a passage according to a given task; they are directed to use at least some examples of the structure within the discourse. Example: The class is given a dilemma situation (“You have seen a good friend cheating in an important test”) and asked to recommend a solution. They are directed to include modals (might, should, must, can, could, etc.) in their speech or writing. |
| Type 7: Free discourse | As In Type 6, but the learners are given no specific direction to use the structure; however, the task situation is such that instances of it are likely to appear. Example: As in Type 6, but without the final direction. |
Considering the important role of textbooks in education, especially in English language teaching and learning, some Iranian researchers have conducted several studies to evaluate English textbooks.

Zarei and Khalessi (2011) investigated cultural components in Interchange series. The results of their study indicated that these instructional textbooks are based on cultural assumptions and biases of their authors. Findings revealed that Interchange series are replete with western cultural values which can be troublesome for learners grown up in other societies with different cultures. However, it is believed that western cultural components in these books are helpful in “providing the opportunity for the self-promotion of the culturally different individuals” (Zarei & Khalessi, 2011, p.300).

In another study two series of English textbooks used for teaching high school students were evaluated by Azizfar, Koosha, and Lotfi (2010). The researchers evaluated pronunciation points, content, and grammar in Graded English (GE) series and Right path to English (RPE) series. In the books the learners become familiar with the material through dialogues and readings, and then learners learn some grammatical structures and patterns. In the end, they do some listening and speaking exercises. GE series don’t provide students with listening activities, while RPE series offer some listening activities to students. Regarding the classification of drills in these two series, GE series consist of 93 mechanical drills, 1 meaningful drill, and 9 communicative drills which are all lengthy ones and seem to be boring. Therefore, GE series don’t provide learners with a variety of types of drills for practicing structures. RPE series offer 110 mechanical drills, 16 meaningful drills, and 3 communicative drills. The findings indicate that RPE does not present an adequate number of meaningful and communicative drills. All in all these books don’t give the learners the opportunity to practice what they learn communicatively.

Bahman and Rahimi (2010) evaluated gender representations in English textbooks of Iranian high schools. According to their study, there is not a balanced representation of males and females in these textbooks. Male names, nouns, pronouns, and adjectives are used more than female ones in these books. Moreover, males take up first-place occurrences more than females in instructions, exercises, and sentences. Out of 22 reading passages in these books, 10 were about males, while just one passage has been about a female character. Besides, many male generics referring to both males and females are found in Iranian high school English books. To sum up, sexism is present in different eras of this series, and females are unnoticed.

Regarding students’ opinion about grammar instruction, Incecay and Dollar (2011) showed that students preferred that grammar be taught in a communicative way. By analyzing the belief of 26 Turkish university students, the researchers found that grammar was considered as a very important component of language by learners. Moreover, the learners in the study wanted grammar to be taught in an implicit and communicative way.

3. Method
3.1 Participants
Participants of the study comprised 100 BA students, both males and females majoring in English literature. They were freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior students ranging in age from 18 to 26, studying at Shiraz University. They filled the integrative-isolated orientation questionnaire.

3.2 Materials and instruments
The English grammar textbooks selected for conducting the study are:

Thirty grammar topics were chosen from each of these four books to analyze grammar exercises provided after introducing each topic. To conduct the evaluation, Ur’s (1996) classification of grammatical activities that consists of descriptions of exercises for various grammatical structures was used. Ur (1996) present different types of exercises from accuracy-oriented exercises to form oriented one with their definitions and examples in his classification.

To assess learners’ preferences for two types of form-focused instruction (FFI) -isolated and integrated FFI-a questionnaire developed and validated by Spada et al. (2009) was used. The questionnaire was a reliable and valid instrument for measuring integrative and isolated FFI. The content validity of the instrument was confirmed by 12 experts and construct validity of the instrument was assessed by principal component analysis. Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the internal consistency reliability of the instrument. The 10-item isolated scale and the 10-item integrated scale achieved an alpha coefficient of respectively 0.63 and 0.69. In this study the alpha coefficient for isolated and integrated scales were 0.68, and 0.71 respectively.
4. Results and discussion

In this section the research questions are restated and the results related to each question are discussed in order.

Research question one: Which types of exercises are presented in Kernel lessons (intermediate)?

To answer this question, Table 2 and Figure 1 are provided to show the distribution of grammar exercises.

Table 1. Distribution of grammar exercises in the kernel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type1</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 1 and Figure 1 indicate, most of the exercises suit the description of types 1, 2, 3, and 4 which are accuracy oriented exercises, but to ignore fluency oriented exercises. The activities are designed to help the learners learn the rules, but the activities through which learners can apply the rules in real communication are not provided. Therefore, this book lacks a well provided variety of activities and according to Crawfords (2002) may not be suitable for developing a rich teaching program. Examples of type 1 and type 3 are presented following.

As an example of type 1 exercise we can refer to the part named conversation in each unit practice. Type 3 example is “write two sentences for each of the prompts, one sentence with I’ll… and one with Will you…? a) that letter b) the tickets for the concert c) a porter” (O’Neill, Kingsbury, & Yeadon, 197, p.85).

Research question two: Which types of exercises are presented in English Grammar in Use (intermediate)?

According to Table 2 and Figure 2, types 2 and 3 are provided more than the other types in this book. Meaning focused exercises are not provided. Referring back to the three dimensional grammar framework introduced by Freeman (200), the focus of this book is on one dimension which is the form of structures; it ignores the two other dimensions of meaning and context. Activities are designed to help learners to use the forms accurately; however, the students don’t become familiar with using the forms meaningfully and appropriately. Therefore, the book lacks a variety of exercises to help the learners to learn structures meaningfully and appropriately. An example of type 2 which is the dominant type provided by Murphy (2004, p. 11) is “Complete the sentences. Put the verb in to the correct form, positive or negative. 1) it was warm, so I …… off my coat. (take)”.

Table 2. Distribution of grammar exercises in Grammar in use
Type 6:

Read the fairy tale “Little Red Riding Hood” and then in groups, prepare a skit for the story. As you act out the skit, be sure to emphasize Little Red Riding Hood’s exclamations, “what big ears you have! What big eyes you have! What big teeth you have!” (p.120)

Type 7:

Use your imagination. Pretend that you were one of the crew with Vasco da Gama, Christopher Columbus, or Ferdinand Magellan. Write or more journal entries about your journey. Tell about your commander and your ship, the supplies on board, the food for the journey, and so on. Describe your hopes, your fears, and your encounters with new places. (p.96)

Research question four: Which types of exercises are presented in Understanding, and using English grammar (intermediate)?

Table 4 presents the different types of grammar exercises in the book. The book has provided both types of exercises, although the focus was mostly on form focused exercises. As the results show, there are only 10 exercises out of the whole 132 which help learners to be familiar with meaning and context of the structures. The book is well-organized to improve accuracy but lacks sufficient activities to help students to move from accuracy to acceptable fluency. As an example of type 2 we can refer to “Use the simple past or present perfect. In some
sentences, either tense is possible but the meaning is different. 1. I (attend, not) ........ any parties since I came here." (Azar, 1999, p.36).

Table 4. Distribution of grammar exercises in English grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type1</th>
<th>Type2</th>
<th>Type3</th>
<th>Type4</th>
<th>Type5</th>
<th>Type6</th>
<th>Type7</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Distribution of exercises in English Grammar

Research question five: Which type of form focused instruction (integrated or isolated) do Iranian EFL learners prefer?

To answer this question, first the individual’s mean attitude scores on integrated and isolated scales were calculated. Secondly, t-test was used to compare students’ attitudes toward isolated and integrative FFI. The results of descriptive statistics are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of students’ attitudes toward isolated-integrative FFI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.130</td>
<td>.5406</td>
<td>.0541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4.030</td>
<td>.6420</td>
<td>.0642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings showed that the mean score of isolated scale was 3.1, and the mean score of integrated scale was 4.03. Standard deviation of isolated and integrated scales were .54, and .64 respectively. According to the results, learners have a moderately positive attitude toward integrative FFI, while they have a neutral attitude toward isolated FFI instruction. The result of this part was in line with the study done by Incaci and Dollar (2011) which showed that the learners preferred learning exercises in a communicative way.
Table 6. Results of paired sample t-test of students’ attitude toward integrated-isolated FFI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFI types</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig-(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isolated-Integrative</td>
<td>-11.840</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A paired sample t-test was conducted to evaluate the difference between mean scores of integrated and isolated FFI scales. There was a statistically significant difference between students’ belief about isolated-integrated FFI, p<.0005 (two-tailed). The eta square statistic (0.58) showed a large effect size.

5. Conclusion

The present study aimed at analyzing grammar exercises in four grammar textbooks. Besides, the Iranian EFL learners’ preferences for two types of form focused instruction were investigated in order to see which textbook provides the best suited exercises for learners. The result of the study showed that Iranian EFL learners preferred integrative FFI in which activities are included in communicative interaction, while they had a neutral attitude toward isolated FFI. The result of the textbook analysis revealed that Mosaic2 provided a nearly balanced set of both form-focused and meaning-focused exercises. The activities in the book were focused on improving both fluency and accuracy of the students’ grammar knowledge. The other three books—Understanding, and using English grammar, Grammar in Use, and Kernel lessons—mostly provided accuracy-oriented exercises. These textbooks contain some fluency-oriented activities, but the numbers of these activities are small compared to the accuracy-oriented ones.

Regarding pedagogical implications of the present study, the findings suggest that specific attention should be paid to teaching and learning grammar consistent with contemporary theory that emphasizes on teaching forms within a communicative approach. Recently cognitive approaches have lost their popularity and communicative approaches which focus on actual use of structures has been welcomed (Freeman, 2001). Moreover, students who learn forms during communicative interactions are more successful in internalizing the forms. Another implication of the study is that it is better to first investigate the students’ attitudes toward different teaching approaches, and then choose an approach which is in line with their attitudes. In this way teachers can provide a rich teaching program which is suitable for specific groups of students.

One important fact to consider is the significance of the textbooks in the teaching programs. Selecting suitable textbooks for students improves the language learners’ achievement. Considering the results of textbook analysis and students’ preferences for two types of FFI, the researcher suggests that teachers use Mosaic2 for teaching grammar since distribution of activities are in line with student preferences for grammar learning. Mosaic2 contains both form-focused and meaning-focused exercises approximately equally, while the activities in the other three books are chiefly designed to improve learners’ accuracy in grammar, and ignore improving grammar fluency. Therefore meaning-focused activities in Mosaic2 are fit students’ preferences for learning grammar rules while involved in communicative interaction. Hence, it sounds logical to pay attention to new models of teaching grammar which focus on form, meaning, and context at the same time.

REFERENCES


THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF PLAGIARISM IN ESP/EAP COURSES

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ABSTRACT
There has been a noticeable increase in academic dishonesty and plagiarism in recent years; a phenomenon which has consequently concerned many researchers in different academic disciplines. The unethical practice of plagiarism is ever increasing in most educational systems and research is also expanding to treat it in various academic contexts. The present study was an attempt to investigate the concept of plagiarism using university students' opinions in ESP/EAP courses. In addition, this study endeavored to delineate potential causes of plagiarism as stated by the students. At last, some preventative measures have been proposed based on the participants' standpoints.

Key words: Plagiarism; ESP/EAP students; Perceptions; Causes; Solutions.

Introduction
With the current shift from examination-based evaluation paradigms to the continuous assessment of coursework (Brown, 2001), there is a wide range of assessment techniques including essays, reports, projects, and research articles. In postgraduate studies, too, writing theses and dissertations is an integral component of the program. However, a very common problem with this type of evaluation is the high incidence of plagiarism committed by students. Although the availability of books and other sources has always made plagiarism possible, the prevalence of technology such as computer and the Internet has exacerbated the problem and has turned plagiarism into a tempting and easily-achieved task (McCabe and Drinan, 1999; Evans, 2000; Park, 2003; Kasprzak and Nixon, 2004). An obvious and common instance of plagiarism is handing in someone else's work as one's own. This can include copying someone else's work without acknowledging its original source (Clough, 2000).

The number of students in higher education levels who tend to commit plagiarism to accomplish their assignments, tasks and research papers is increasing daily. Despite the serious warnings and, in some cases severe punishments students receive, more and more students tend to plagiarize (Yusof, 2009). There are several reasons expressed to justify plagiarism, including pressure to meet deadlines, being overwhelmed by other responsibilities such as working and family commitments, as well as having poor writing skills (Dawson, 2004). Whatever the reason, students in higher education levels seem not to take the issue seriously enough or may not be aware of the dangers inherent in committing plagiarism.

Different researchers have addressed the issue of plagiarism from different perspectives. Marshall and Garry (2005), for example, compared non-English speaking background students’ attitudes, perceptions and understandings of plagiarism with those of English speaking students' background. Results indicated differences in understanding and the extent of plagiarism among English- and non-English speaking background students. It was shown that non-English speaking background students are significantly more likely to have committed serious forms of plagiarism than English speaking background students. Overall, it was found that plagiarism is a very common phenomenon among students and that it reflects one’s uncertainty about what actually constitutes plagiarism as well as disrespect from the Internet.

In an exploratory study, Yusof and Marson (2013) investigated Malaysian students’ understanding of plagiarism. Questionnaires consisting of three sections were emailed to students studying in various institutions locally and abroad.

Results show that Malaysian students have a shallow understanding of plagiarism and that they are not well aware of the concept of plagiarism. They do not even know that there are different levels of plagiarism. It is thus suggested that educators need to familiarize students with the concept of plagiarism and ways to avoid it.
In an exploration of students’ perception of plagiarism, Handa and Power (2005) investigated Indian postgraduate students’ attitudes toward academic integrity and plagiarism who were studying in Australian universities. One hundred and twenty questionnaires were given to the undergraduate students, asking about their understanding of plagiarism and referencing rules and experiences of plagiarism. The researchers also provided a questionnaire for lecturers in the university, concerning teaching referencing and penalties for plagiarism in their faculties. Based on the findings, postgraduate students revealed that referencing had not been expected of them or they had been asked only to provide a reference list or bibliography at the end of their papers. The majority of undergraduate students claimed that they use ideas and words of others in their writing and 85% responded that they acknowledge the sources they use.

In a study in China, Xiaojun, Hongli and Fan (2010) conducted a study which investigated students' attitudes toward plagiarism and examined how the universities in China react to their students’ plagiarizing in the realm of academic misconducts. They found out that they crucially need to have a course to familiarize the students with rules of plagiarism and there should be a clear punishment regulation to prevent the plagiarism occurrence. Students were also asked whether or not teachers should use plagiarism detection software. 78% of the students had negative ideas about such actions. According to the findings, half of the students suggested expelling from the course, 25% chose formal warning and 16% offered zero mark for punishment of plagiarism in university. Finally, they concluded that proactive teaching and raising the awareness of both teachers and students would be useful, and using detection tools and punishment would be difficult and less feasible.

In a comparative study, Pritchette (2010) sought to investigate the differences between university faculty and their undergraduate students in terms of their perceptions of plagiarism. An on-line survey questionnaire was administered to college undergraduate students and faculty members in four institutions. Results demonstrated that there were no significant differences in perception of plagiarism between the two groups, i.e. faculty members and students.

In terms of the gender of faculty members, it was found that there is a significant difference between males and females in their perception of plagiarism. However, as for students, no difference was detected. With regard to seriousness of plagiarism, faculty perceived plagiarism to be a more serious issue than students. Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that it is necessary to build students’ awareness of plagiarism and advance the use of technology in order to promote academic integrity.

Interestingly, among many of the studies carried out on plagiarism, Asian students have been proved to be more accused of committing plagiarism (Introna, Hayes, Blair and Wood, 2003). A lot of reasons have been stated for such tendency, including students’ interest in quoting from a well-known authority as a sign of respect and deep reverence for the authority (McDonnell, 2003). Despite the prevalence of plagiarism in Asian countries, there seems to be dearth of research on the concept of plagiarism in higher education in Iran. Such being the case, the present study aims to delve into the perception of ESP/EAP students regarding plagiarism and to discover the reasons why ESP/EAP students plagiarize.

What is plagiarism?
Unacknowledged adaptation of the ideas or statements of another person is called plagiarism. A researcher must give praise the originality of others and acknowledge gratitude whenever he or she quotes another person’s words, paraphrases another person’s words, uses another person’s opinion, and borrows facts, or other expiatory materials, unless the information is common knowledge. In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.

However, one should be cautious about labeling a work as a plagiarized one since most definitions of plagiarism cannot appropriately distinguish between "submitting someone else’s text as one’s own or attempting to blur the line between one’s own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source", and ‘carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source’. This distinction is the border line between intentional and unintentional plagiarism.

Objectives
The issue of plagiarism has recently gained attention among the academia in all academic contexts. This has led to a growing interest in research regarding this topic. However, the number of studies which concentrate on the students’ own reflections and perceptions of plagiarism, especially in ESP/EAP courses, is minimal. As such, the main objective of this study was to investigate the concept of plagiarism through the reflections of university students taking ESP/EAP courses.
The target objective was to delineate the most important causes of plagiarism based on ESP/EAP students' opinions and also to propose some solutions based upon their reflections.

Research questions
This study was an attempt to provide answers to the following research questions, which were formed based on the objectives of the study:
1- How do university students taking ESP/EAP courses perceive plagiarism?
2- What are the fundamental causes of plagiarism based on the students' viewpoints?
3- What steps can be taken to marginalize plagiarism from prospective research works at the universities?

The study
Participants
The participants of this study were comprised of 60 university students participating at ESP/EAP classes at Islamic Azad University, Shiraz Branch. These students were randomly selected among a larger population of ESP/EAP students. The participants were both male and female, ranging from 18 to 25 years of age. These participants were enrolled in 2 ESP/EAP classes, namely English for the students of Chemistry, and English for the students of Law.

Instruments
Two instruments were used for the purpose of this study. First, the participants of the study took part in a questionnaire survey which was developed by Delvin and Gray (2007). This questionnaire has been developed to decode academic individuals' opinions about plagiarism, their perceptions and attitudes, main causes and practical solutions. Additionally, a total number of 20 participants, 12 males and 8 females, were selected based on accessibility random sampling technique to take part in one focus-group discussion session. The reason for running such a session was that firstly it was too difficult to run separate interview sessions due to time limitations of the students. Secondly, a focus-group discussion provided an open atmosphere for the students to address the issues which were not pointed to in the questionnaire survey. In other words, it provided an open and flexible space for the students to communicate their ideas and to negotiate their standpoints in detail.

Results and discussion
This study gained significant results which are reported here under three main sections of Opinions about plagiarism, Causes of plagiarism, and Solutions for plagiarism. These categories correspond directly to the research questions of the study.

Opinions about plagiarism
The findings of this study reflected that ESP/EAP students had a very simplistic recognition of the issue of plagiarism. This indicated that it has to be worked on more closely for ESP/EAP students at universities. First and foremost, the students should develop a deep understanding of the meaning of plagiarism and the ways to avoid it. The students' unsophisticated and simplistic standpoints made the researchers to conclude that some awareness-raising steps should be followed if we wish to remove plagiarism from future research works of these students.

Causes of plagiarism
The participants of this study mentioned a number of reasons for plagiarism. These reasons were among the most frequent causes which motivate plagiarism among university students:
1- Lack of strict punishment measures
2- Time pressure for submitting the assigned projects
3- Competition with other peers in one course
4- Having a blurred idea of the concept
5- Having no insight on the ways to prevent it
6- The pressure received from the educational system
7- The low probability of being caught
8- The frequency of the practice among the students
9- Poor academic skills
10- Some personality factors such as being lazy
11- Fear of failure
12- Getting better grades in shorter time
13- Having a negative attitude towards a course or an instructor
14- Poor time management skills

Solutions for plagiarism

Most of the solutions proposed by ESP/EAP students were collected in the focus-group discussion session. The students, who had gained an insight about plagiarism during the questionnaire survey and also the discussion session, had various recommendations, some of which are reported below:

1- We recommend that colleges and universities focus on creating healthy ethical environments that support ethical choices, rather than simply focusing on stopping students from cheating.
2- The academic society should clearly express the values and expectations of the institution and reinforce processes that can help those values and expectations be achieved.
3- Unfortunately our academic settings are too idealistic rather than realistic. They should try hard to be more realistic in enhancing education. We need to be taught not only specialized subject matters, but also the associating concepts like plagiarism. When the students have no idea on one concept like plagiarism, it is so probable for them to jump in it.
4- Our instructors lack the support they need to prevent cheating and address it when they see it. The educational systems should sufficiently empower their faculty members to forcefully and strongly address the problem when they notice it. This can be in the form of instruction or punishment.
5- The educational system which is responsible for our education should train the students for not committing plagiarism in practice, by teaching such skills as paraphrasing, referencing and quoting, building support for researched writing, stating their policies and expectations for documenting sources and avoiding plagiarism, teaching students the conventions for citing documents and acknowledging sources in their field, and allowing students to practice these skills, engaging students in the process of writing, which produces materials such as notes, drafts, and revisions that are difficult to plagiarize, discussing some plagiarized papers with the students, and reporting different cases of plagiarism to administrators for avoidance measures.

REFERENCES


A COMPARATIVE SEMANTIC-SYNTACTIC INVESTIGATION INTO THE CHARACTERISTIC OF ADJECTIVAL COLLOCATIONS IN IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING

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ABSTRACT  
The present study investigated the effect of adjectival collocations on Iranian EFL students’ academic writing. This study would try to determine whether or not using adjectival collocation in writing might enhance Iranian EFL students’ academic writing. The total population of 100 students participated in the study. 60 sample were selected by OPT. The participants were female and male, ranging from 20 to 35 years old. Their data were collected by giving a descriptive writing topic to Islamic Azad university of Rasht, Branch, Iran, English Translation students in fourth semester and then were analyzed to find out about the distribution and frequency of the application of adjectives in their work. Writing test was done to survey a students’ grammatical and lexical knowledge. Writing test defined students’ problems in collocation. Writing test was done as pretest in two groups. T-test was done between pretest scores of two groups. After 10 sessions writing test was done in two groups. The scores of two groups were calculated by Essay Scoring Rubric (pretest-posttest). T-test was done between posttest scores of two groups. Finally, Paired T-test was done between pretest and posttest scores of experimental group because of the survey of treatment effect was efficient or not. Null hypotheses were rejected based on the aforementioned analysis and statistical procedures. As the result of the study indicated that there existed a relationship between learning adjectival collocations and improvement of academic writing ability.

KEYWORDS: Collocation, A Lexical Collocation, A Grammatical Collocation, A Semantic Syntactic Collocation, Compounds, Flexible Word Pairs

1. Introduction  
The subject of this research is collocation which refers to the way words occur together in speech and writing (Leech et al., 2001). Lexical collocations, in contrast to grammatical collocations, normally do not contain prepositions, infinitives, or clauses. Typical lexical collocations consist of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs (Benson, M., Benson, E., Ilson, R., 1997:xxiv). The adjective is a modifier that has the grammatical property of comparison. It is often identified by special derivational endings or by special adverbal modifiers that precede it. As we know knowledge of collocation is vital for competent use of a language. In case of speaking and writing, there are some problems non-native speakers may have with English vocabulary use in particular with the appropriate combinations of words. The problem for the learner of English is that there are no collocation rules that can be learned. The native English speaker intuitively makes the correct collocation, based on a lifetime experience of hearing and reading the words in set combinations. The non-native speaker has more limited experience and may frequently collocates words in a way that sounds odd to the native speaker. This research is important to be carried out because collocation runs through the whole of all languages. No piece of natural spoken or written in English is totally free of collocation. For the student, choosing the right collocation will make his speech and writing much more natural and more native like.
2. Literature Review

Some English language teachers are likely to overemphasize the importance of grammatical structures instead of vocabulary in their lesson plans. According to Lewis (1993, p. 133), this might result from their strong confidence in teaching something that they know best, instead of things of which they are unsure. Nevertheless, though they incorporate vocabulary in lesson plans, only individual words are typically taught rather than collocations (Mallikamas & Pongpairoj, 2005, p. 14). It is a commonly held belief that vocabulary is far more important than grammar. According to Wilkin (1972, p. 111), it is said that “while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. Grammar, however, is acting as a bridge between lexis (Leech, Cruickshank, & Ivanic, 2001, p. 84; Lewis, 1993, vii). General knowledge of individual words is not regarded as sufficient to achieve native-like commands of English; consequently, the knowledge of collocation is of paramount importance to every English learner to produce a group of chunks that makes his/her language sound more natural (Bahns, 1993; Brashi, 2009; Brown, 1974; Carter & McCarthy, 1988; Fontenelle, 1994; Ganji, 2012; Hedge, 2000; Hill, 2000; Hsu & Chiu, 2008; Karoly, 2005; Klerk, 2006; Leech, Cruickshank & Ivanic, 2001; Lewis, 1993; Mallikamas & Pongpairoj, 2005; McCarthy, 1990; Wallace, 1982). Collocations are two or more words which have a strong tendency to co-occur in a language as a prefabricated combination of two or more words in a particular context. (Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens 1968) they are one of the difficulties that second language learners, in particular, adult second language learners, have to deal with in the process of learning English. These difficulties depend on a variety of variables such as students’ native language (L1) background, age, and personality.

Language teaching over the years has been based on the dichotomy of grammar and vocabulary: master the grammar system, learn lots of words and the speaker will be able to talk about any topic. This view of language has meant that students have learned an extensive vocabulary of predominantly nouns, and then struggled to use grammar to talk about those things. This is the reason for so many grammar mistakes (lewis and Gough 1997). During any EFL course in Iran, great emphasis is on grammar not vocabulary, and students and perhaps the teachers themselves are not aware of word combinations. Students learn the words in isolation and memorize the words individually by translating them to their mother tongue. It means they store new vocabulary words individually and not as a chunk. Therefore, when students want to produce collocations they fail to produce them correctly. People are using grammar to do what it was never meant to do. Grammar enables them to construct language when they are unable to find what they want ready-made in their mental lexicons. But so much of the language of the effective language user is already in prefabricated chunks, stored in their mental lexicons just waiting to be recalled for use. Among these combinations, there are words that “co-occur naturally with greater than random frequency” (lewis and Gough 1997, p. 25) and with “mutual expectancy” (zhang 1993, p. 1). Those words are well linked in a native speaker’s memory and retrieved as a chunk (Aghbar, 1990). For example, sour milk and rancid meat are well-established collocations that are remembered in chunks and are used by native speakers as chunks (oxford Collocations dictionary 2009). However, rotten milk is not stored as a unit in a native speaker’s memory and therefore, it is not a collocation. ESL / EFL learners can concoct an awkward expression such as rotten milk when they have no memory or intuition of the correct or acceptable collocation that native speakers use. These chunks of lexis, which include collocations, do more than just name things, they also have a pragmatic element. They enable learners to talk about things - to ‘do’ things. this raises the status of collocation to much more than just words which go together. The majority of Iranian ESL learners have some knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary; however, they seem to have serious problems with the use of collocations. For instance, Iranian learners using the Persian language say “baran-e- shadid” which literally means “hard rain” and when it comes to English they think in their first language and instead of “heavy rain” they write or say “hard rain.” This example is a semantic expansion, in which learners impose a corresponding word meaning into target-language word, reflecting influence from Persian shaded which means “hard” and “heavy”. This inefficiency is most likely due to the lack of knowledge of word combinations among Iranian EFL students, and to a large extent, the inadequate emphasis given to the teaching of collocational patterns in their textbooks, and the type of instruction they receive.

Producing collocations in writing poses particular difficulties. To enhance EFL learners’ writing competence, English teachers have been making significant efforts, spending a great deal of time devoting themselves to correcting students’ writing and attempting to identify the difficult areas in students’ English compositions. Despite this effort, students continue producing unacceptable word combinations over and over. In fact, as Bahns and Eldaw (1993) state, it is usually the case that the majority of EFL learners have different problems in their oral and written production. According to hill, “students with good ideas often lose marks because they do not know
the four or five most important collocations of a key word that is central to what they are writing about” (Hill 2000:5).

Hashemi (2012) in his study concluded that EFL College students (English majors and non English majors), high school students, and professors lack collocational knowledge because collocation had been neglected in EFL classrooms. Brown (1974) showed that knowledge of collocations positively made an impact upon learners listening comprehension, reading speed, and oral communication. He added that teaching collocations made learners capable of being aware of language chunks used by native speakers in speech and writing. Cowie (1988) referred to lexical phrases and collocations as institutionalized units stating how they formed an integral part of communication. The importance of collocations in language, and the lack of knowledge about them by non-native speakers, resulted in poor performance, which was highlighted in research done by Aghbar (1990). Mansoor Ganji (2012) investigated the Iranian EFL learners’ Knowledge of Lexical Collocation at three academic levels: freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. The participants were forty three English majors doing their B.A. in English Translation studied in Chabahar Maritime University. They took a 50-item fill-in-the-blank test of lexical collocations. The test included five types of collocations: verb-noun, adjective-noun, noun-verb, adverb-adjunctive, and verb-adverb. Descriptive statistics, t-test, and One-way ANOVA were employed in the data analysis. According to the results, Iranian English majors were weak in lexical collocations, answering just more than 50% of the questions. A significant difference was found among the performance of the students at three academic levels, but there was no significant difference between boys and girls in their knowledge of lexical collocations. While noun-verb collocation was revealed to be the easiest type of collocation, adverb-adjective collocation proved to be the most difficult type. These findings had immediate implications for language learners, EFL teachers, and material designers. Seesink (2007) investigated whether the teaching of vocabulary and collocations can help improve students’ writing and found that the attention to collocations had a positive impact on the students’ results. The respondents were Arab, Chinese, Japanese and Korean. An online program was used to teach the students collocation. She did not however clarify what type of collocations she used. In her study she did not show what types of collocations are difficult for the learners. Due to the huge number of collocations, it is not possible to teach students all types of collocations, therefore, those collocations which are more problematic to the students should be recognized and taught first (Lewis and Coneaut 2000). Schmitt (2002) conducted a study investigating processing of adjective-noun collocations (social services) among advanced learners of English. Overall, the studies carried out by his suggest that L2 learners are capable of producing a large number of appropriate collocations but that underlying intuitions and the fluency with collocations of even advanced learners do not seem to match those of native speakers. A series of studies conducted by Liu (1999a, 1999b, 2000b) revealed that the same strategies were used by EFL students in producing collocations, either acceptable or unacceptable, in their writings. To begin with, in the study of Chinese college freshmen’s collocation competence, Liu (1999b) found that the EFL students had difficulties in producing acceptable collocation. He further concluded that the causes of producing unacceptable English collocations were mostly attributed to the lack of the concept of collocation and interlingual transfer. Koosha and Jafapour (2006) also confirmed the influence of L1 on acquiring collocation of prepositions by Iranian EFL adult learners. Furthermore, Namvar et al.’s research also analyzed the collocations in the Iranian postgraduate students’ writings and found that negative transfer was a common phenomenon among Iranian language learners. In other words, first language influence appeared to have a strong effect on the learners’ production of collocation errors. Lin (2002) found that students made progress in producing collocations after receiving collocation instruction. Faghih and Sharafi (2006) investigated the role of collocation on Iranian language EFL learners’ interlanguage. They found that most of errors learners made in their productions were rooted in their lack of proficiency in collocations. They, also, concluded that among the different types of collocations adjective plus noun one posed the largest amount of difficulty to Iranian learners. Their study showed a strong correlation between collocation knowledge and language proficiency.

Individuals need to address the issue of collocation in order to become more successful in language learning. Moreover, it is widely acknowledged in the English Language Teaching (ELT) literature that students need to be introduced and encouraged to become aware of collocation in the early stages of learning. In other words, the importance of collocational knowledge to language learning is well established. It has a central role in efficient language acquisition and proficient language production. A language can neither be adequately understood nor fluently produced on a word-by-word or purely grammar-focused basis. Preparing the students to use collocations effectively and appropriately will contribute to efficient communication. The researcher proposes the using of lexical approach to teach collocation in ESL/EFL classrooms. To sum, a greater emphasis on collocation in language teaching and learning is needed if more learners of English are to truly ‘find their feet’ in the language.
3. Methodology

3.1. The Design of the Study

The present study investigated the effect of adjectival collocations on Iranian EFL students' academic writing. This study tried to determine whether or not using adjectival collocation in writing may enhance Iranian EFL students' academic writing. OPT screening test was run. The total population of 100 students participated in the study. The 60 sample were selected. Then the group was divided into two experimental and control groups. Writing test was done as pretest in two groups. Experimental group received 10 sessions of treatments for the control group did not receive treatment. After ten sessions of each group came to the post test (writing test). T-test scores of two groups conducted. Paired t-test was administered between pretest and posttest of experimental group. Adjective collocations were an independent variable and writing was a dependent variable in the study.

3.2. Participants

100 English students participated in Oxford Placement Test (OPT). 60 students were selected based testing. They were male and female, ranging from 20 to 35 years old. They were Intermediate level. They studied English Translation in Azad University in Rasht Branch, Iran. Students were in their fourth semester. Their native language was Persian.

3.3. Materials

English proficiency level was intermediate and above as it is compulsory for students to had a minimum IELTS of 5.5 to be able to enroll at the university. Those students who did not have IELTS were required to take a placement test and they were required to get a score of at least 80%. The university had an intensive English program to accommodate those who score less than 80% in the placement test. The Placement test consisted of speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills. Students remained in this program until they managed to meet the university's admission requirement. The participants of this study had an IELTS or had passed the University placement exam.

The data collection instruments used in this study were a writing task. The quantitative analysis was subjected to SPSS (statistical Package for the Social Sciences) V19 analysis.

Writing task

Students were asked to write two essays on these topics:
1. Write about an unforgettable experience you have had.
2. How did you spend your last Norouz holiday (Iranian New Year holiday)?

In order to make it easier for students to complete the writing task a number of things were considered in the selection of these topics. Writing about an unforgettable experience was a personal matter and therefore it was assumed to be motivating and thought-provoking. In addition, one of the important considerations in choosing the topic was the extent to which the topic induced learners to produce collocations as a result of their cultural background. Therefore, the topic related to friends, family, and culture were familiar to the students. They had 45 minutes to write the essays of not more than 250 words. The subjects’ essays were used as data in order to analyze the production of lexical and grammatical collocations. The use of collocations was measured by the quantity, variety, and accuracy of collocations. Frequencies of occurrence of lexical and grammatical collocations were counted both in quantity and variety by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS software v19). Writing test was done to survey a students' grammatical and lexical knowledge. Writing test defined students' problems in collocation.

3.4. Procedures

100 English students participated in Oxford Placement Test (OPT). English proficiency level was intermediate and above. Two university classes (n=60) were sampled and considered as the control (n=30) and the experimental groups (n=30). Writing test was done to survey a students' grammatical and lexical knowledge. Students were asked to write two essays on these topics:
1. Write about an unforgettable experience you have had.
2. How did you spend your last Norouz holiday (Iranian New Year holiday)?

They had 45 minutes to write the essays of not more than 250 words. The subjects' essays were used as data in order to analyze the production of lexical and grammatical collocations. The use of collocations was measured by the quantity, variety, and accuracy of collocations. Frequencies of occurrence of lexical and grammatical
Collocations were counted both in quantity and variety by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS software v19).

There was a coding procedure after the data collection. All the materials were placed into folders with an identifying number on each. The writings were then separated by topics and the contents were analyzed in order to identify the collocations. For extracting the collocations from the writings ‘content analysis’ was used for this paper. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. This method examines texts for the frequency of identified terms (collocations). To assure participants’ anonymity, numbers were used for every subject, instead of identifying the subjects by their name. So writing test was done to survey a student's grammatical and lexical knowledge.

Writing test was done as pretest in two groups. Writing test defined students' problems in collocation. T-test was done between pretest scores of two groups. Then for ten sessions, adjective collocations were taught in the experimental group. After 10 sessions writing test was done in two groups. The scores of two groups were calculated by Essay Scoring Rubric (pretest-posttest). T-test was done between posttest scores of two groups. Finally, Paired t-test was done between pretest and posttest scores of experimental group because of the survey of treatment effect was efficient or not.

3.5. Method of Analyzing Data

Finally the data was analyzed to determine the effect of instruction of adjectival collocations on Iranian EFL students' academic writing. T-test was administered between the scores of pretest of two groups and posttest of two groups. Paired t-test was administered between pretest and posttest of experimental group because of the effect of treatment in experimental group was suitable or not.

4. Results

In order to statistically analyze the finding of the present study an independent sample t-test was applied. The rationale behind using this test was that in this research parametric statistics was required. The reason for using a parametric statistics were the following assumptions:

- The data obtained from this study was normally distributed and means and standard deviation were appropriate measures of tendency. The raw scores obtained from participants were normally distributed around mean and the graph of their distribution was presented as graph 4.1.
- The data retrieved from the study was an interval data as they are scores of a writing test which were calculated out of 20. The method applied for calculating the scores were described in detail in chapter 3.
- Finally the scores observed from the study were observation independent.

Graph 4.1 The graph of normal distribution of scores

4.1.1. Descriptive Analysis of Data

4.1.1.1. Analysis of Pretest Scores

Descriptive statistics, raw scores, means, and standard deviation were used in order to investigate the findings of the study. The participant of this study had been selected based on administration of an OPT exam which was attached in the appendix. The participants were considered to be homogeneous because their proficiency test...
scores were the in the same range as previously mentioned in chapter 3. There was no pre-existing difference between the participants regarding their general English proficiency. However, the participant were homogeneous in their general English, their writing ability should have also been tested in order to make sure that they had the same level of ability regarding their writing. This was an obligation because in order to guarantee that the treatment was effective it should be made sure that the participants writing ability was at the same level in both groups. Therefore, their pre-test scores had been analyzed via an independent sample t-test. The result obtained from the test were presented as follow in table 4.1.1.1:

Table 4.1.1.1 Group statistics of control and experimental group in pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre score</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.100</td>
<td>1.56139</td>
<td>.28507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.167</td>
<td>1.55549</td>
<td>.28399</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As could be seen in the table above before the start of the study means of two groups were almost the same and standard deviations differed slightly. The small number of SD comparing to the mean, showed that groups were homogeneous. However for further more detailed information table 4.1.1.2 was presented as below so that we did not rely only on obtained means and the score was also analyzed:

Table 4.1.1.2 The independent sample t-test between the scores of control and experimental group in pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Score Equal variances assumed 001</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>-166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed -166</td>
<td>57.999</td>
<td>869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two tailed sig of the test above is “0.86” which was much higher that assumed p value which is “0.05”, so it could be inferred that there was no significant difference between the groups. From another point of view one could refer to mean difference which was obtained “0”. For further clarification of homogeneity of the groups bar 4.1.1.2 was presented as below:
4.1.1.2. Analysis of the Result of Post-test of Experimental and Control Group

In this part the statistical procedure of post-test scores which were obtained from control and experimental group were presented in order to compare and contrast the overall achievement of participants in experimental group with the participants of control group to check if the treatment had been effective. In order to do this comparison which was actually the answer to the question of the study another round of t-test had been applied between the post-test scores of experimental and control group. It meant 30 score obtained from post-test writing of experimental group had been compared with 30 scores of writing post-test of control group. The result were presented in table 4.1.1.3 as below:

Table 4.1.1.3 Group statistics of the post test scores of experimental and control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.1667</td>
<td>1.59921</td>
<td>.29197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.1333</td>
<td>1.56983</td>
<td>.28661</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it could be seen in the table above the mean score obtained from experimental group which received efficient amount of treatment was highly more that the mean of control group with placebo treatment the mean score of experimental group was almost “14” whereas the mean score of control group is “13”. In studies of this kind one score difference in mean score was belied to be truly eye-catching. By observing at the raw scores of the participant it could be inferred that apart from some exceptional participants whose score didn't improve from pre-test to post-test, the others had improved for one or two scores minimum. For more systematic analysis of the result and also discussion on the hypothesis of the study, table 4.1.1.4 was presented as below:

Table 4.1.1.4 The independent sample t-test between the scores of control and experimental group in post test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the table above, as could be observed, the amount of sig two tailed is “0.014” which was significantly less than the predetermined amount of p value which was 0.05. Therefore, it could be inferred that there was a significant difference between the groups. From another point of view the amount of T was “2.5” was higher than critical value so the null hypothesis of the study was rejected. It could be concluded that treatment had been successful. The group which received treatment had achieved higher writing score than the one which hadn't received treatment. In order to present a more graphical view of the result of this research graph 4.1.1.3 was presented as follow:
As could be indicated from the graph above there existed a significant difference between the performances of control and experimental group in which experimental group had done significantly better.

4.1.2. Inferential Analysis of the Data

4.1.2.1. Comparisons of Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Experimental Group

In this section of this chapter a systematic comparison was done between the results of post-test of experimental group with their scores in pre-test. The aim of this analysis was to make sure that within experimental group each participant had improved from before the study to end of the study. In order to do so, the scores obtained from pre-test and post-test of participants in experimental group were analyzed through calculation of a paired sample t-test. The reason to use paired sample t test was having two sets of scores from one group. The results of the test were presented in table 4.1.2.1 as follow:

As indicated in the table above the mean scores obtained from the group at the beginning and end of study differ about 1.8 scores. The mean score of experimental group by the end of study was significantly higher than the ones obtained at the start of study. Table 4.1.2.2 shows more detailed analysis of the t score of the group for further clarification.

As could be seen in the table above the two tailed sig was “0.005” which was obviously less than predetermined value of P (0.05). Therefore, it could be concluded that the result of groups from beginning to the end of study was significantly different. It meant even if control group was not taken into account, the result obtained by
experimental group and the amount of progress participants showed proves that the treatment had been done effective.

4.2. Results of Hypothesis Testing
As mentioned earlier in other chapters frequently, one hypotheses that had been investigated in this study was “instruction on adjectival collocation did not have any impact on Iranian EFL learners’ academic writing skill” .This null hypotheses had been rejected based on the aforementioned analysis and statistical procedures. As the result of the study indicated that there existed a relationship between learning adjectival collocations and improvement of academic writing ability. Furthermore, it was shown that this relationship was of improvement type from the beginning to the end of the study.

5. Discussion and Conclusion
In previous chapter analysis of findings of the study was presented which these analyses were done via statistical procedures using SPSS software. Three different sets of analyses were performed in order to check the research question and hypotheses of the study. Firstly, by comparing the obtained scores in pre-test of participants in both experimental and control group it was made sure that the participants in both groups were homogenous. As their performance in a previously standardized writing test was analyzed through a round of t-test and no significant difference had been observed. Afterward, the results of post-test of the groups were compared in order to check the research question of the study. In order to analyze these two sets of data another round of independent sample t-test was applied. It was observed that the performances of the groups were significantly different with each other. It showed that the treatment of the study had been effective and the improvement in experimental group was observable.

In order to check whether the participants in experimental group had changed after receiving treatment, their score of pretest and post-test had been analyzed and compared through a round of paired sample t-test. The result showed that participants’ writing ability had changed significantly by the end of the study. As their score at the beginning and end of study were significantly different.

According to Palmer (1984), as cited in Nation (2001, p.317), the concept of collocations was first invented as “a string of words that must or should be learned, or is best or most conveniently learnt as an integral whole or independent entity, rather than by the process of piecing together component parts”.

Hashemi (2012) in his study concluded that EFL College students (English majors and non English majors), high school students, and professors lack collocational knowledge because collocation has been neglected in EFL classrooms. Brown (1974) showed that knowledge of collocations positively made an impact upon learners listening comprehension, reading speed, and oral communication. He added that teaching collocations makes learners capable of being aware of language chunks used by native speakers in speech and writing.

Mansoor Ganji (2012) investigated the Iranian EFL learners’ Knowledge of Lexical Collocation at three academic levels: freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. The participants were forty three English majors doing their B.A. in English Translation studied in Chabahar Maritime University. They took a 50-item fill-in-the-blank test of lexical collocations. The test included five types of collocations: verb-noun, adjective-noun, noun-verb, adverb-adjective, and verb-adverb. Descriptive statistics, t-test, and One-way ANOVA were employed in the data analysis. According to the results, Iranian English majors were weak in lexical collocations, answering just more than 50% of the questions. A significant difference was found among the performance of the students at three academic levels, but there was no significant difference between boys and girls in their knowledge of lexical collocations. While noun-verb collocation was revealed to be the easiest type of collocation, adverb-adjective collocation proved to be the most difficult type. These findings had immediate implications for language learners, EFL teachers, and material designers. Collocations were therefore significant and unique, and it was clear that the use of collocations was important in improving a learner’s fluency in language and helped learners approach native fluency.

Seesink (2007) investigated whether the teaching of vocabulary and collocations could help improve students’ writing and found that the attention to collocations had a positive impact on the students’ results. The respondents were Arab, Chinese, Japanese and Korean. An online program was used to teach the students collocation. She did not however clarify what type of collocations she used. In her study she did not show what types of collocations were difficult for the learners. Due to the huge number of collocations, it was not possible to teach students all types of collocations, therefore, those collocations which were more problematic to the students should be recognized and taught first (lewis and Conzett 2000).

Schmitt (2002) conducted a study investigating processing of adjective-noun collocations (social services) among advanced learners of English. Overall, the studies carried out by his suggest that L2 learners were capable
of producing a large number of appropriate collocations but that underlying intuitions and the fluency with collocations of even advanced learners did not seem to match those of native speakers.

Koosha and Jafapour (2006) also confirmed the influence of L1 on acquiring collocation of prepositions by Iranian EFL adult learners. Furthermore, Namvar et al.'s research also analyzed the collocations in the Iranian postgraduate students’ writings and found that negative transfer was a common phenomenon among Iranian language learners. In other words, first language influence appeared to have a strong effect on the learners' production of collocation errors.

The present study was about the effect of adjectival collocation on writing. It was concluded that treatment had a positive transfer namely there was the effect of adjectival collocation on writing. Of course the present study surveyed only adjectival collocation because there wasn't treatment for all of collocation kind. The present study accepted the Brown (1974) research because teaching collocations made learners capable of being aware of language chunks used by native speakers in speech and writing. The study accepted Seesink (2007) research because the teaching of vocabulary and collocations could help improve students’ writing and found that the attention to collocations had a positive impact on the students’ results. The study accepted Schmitt (2002) research conducted a study investigating processing of adjective –noun collocations (social services) among advanced learners of English. The present study accepted that there was a negative transfer among Iranian language learners that it would create collocation errors. These subjects could be observed in Koosha and Jafapour(2006) and Namvar etal.'s research. So, we concluded one hypotheses that has been investigated in this study is “instruction on adjectival collocation does not have any impact on Iranian EFL learners’ academic writing skill”. This null hypotheses has been rejected based on the aforementioned analysis and statistical procedures. As the result of the study indicated that there exist a relationship between learning adjectival collocations and improvement of academic writing ability. Furthermore, it was shown that this relationship is of improvement type from the beginning to the end of the study.

5.2. Limitations of the Study
There were limitations of the study in the research. If the sample were more than 60 students, it could be better. It wasn't time for teaching enough. The research could be done on advanced level of EFL students. The research could be done in two semesters in order to get better results. The aforementioned cases were limitations of the study.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Research
It was better that the researcher could answer to the following question but it wasn't time for teaching and testing enough. This question was the following sentence:

To what extent are adjectives modified by adverbs in Iranian EFL students’ writing?

Suggestion 1: The research was done by descriptive writing. The study could do to the test form. It must be interesting.

Suggestion 2: The research could be done about collocation types.

Suggestion 3: The research could be surveyed on collocation knowledge in reading comprehension.

Suggestion 4: The students could be separated in aspect of sex then the effect of adjective collocation could be surveyed on writing.

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THE IMPACT OF OPEN-ENDED DISCOVERY ACTIVITIES ON EFL LEARNERS’ SPEAKING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT
Since discovery learning is a major feature of the ways in which learners become autonomous and contribute to the development of cognitive skills such as connecting, generalizing, and hypothesizing in different settings, many researchers (Bolitho, 2003; Tomilinson, 1994; Wright, 1993) have conducted researches on the notion of this knowledge from different perspectives. Following such studies, the present study was designed to investigate the impact of Open-Ended Discovery Activities on the Iranian EFL learners’ Speaking ability. To achieve this purpose, advanced 60 EFL learners at Nokhbegan Institute were selected by means of a proficiency test and were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups of the study. The two groups were subjected to exactly the same procedures except that the control group did not receive any treatment which was practicing Discovery Learning alongside Open-Ended Activities. By applying these approaches, the researcher intended to figure out whether Discovery approach had any effect on EFL Speaking ability or not. At the end of the instructions, T Test was run on the obtained means of the experimental and control groups or posttest to determine whether there was any significant difference between the speaking performances of the two groups. The result showed that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of two groups, Experimental and control groups on the posttest meaning that Open-Ended Discovery approach enhances performance of EFL learners’ Speaking ability.

Keywords: Discovery Learning, Open ended activities, speaking ability

Introduction
Recent approaches to foreign language education emphasize the significance of the students’ own contributions to their language learning through initiative-taking and active involvement. Students need to take charge of their learning in order to enhance their autonomy as students and language users. This shift in the research has brought an increased interest the students themselves as learners in general and as language learners in particular. Students need to be facilitated to develop a basic reflective orientation by working on their experiences, beliefs and assumptions of language and learning. (Breen, 2001)

Within the field of education over the last few decades a gradual but significant shift has taken place, resulting in less emphasis on teachers and teaching and greater stress on learners and learning. This change has been reflected in various ways in language education and applied linguistics, ranging from the Northeast Conference (1990) entitled “Shifting the Instructional Focus to the Learner” and annual “Learners’ Conferences” held in conjunction with the TESL Canada convention since 1991, to key works on “the learner-centered curriculum” (Nunan, 1988, 1995) and “learner-centeredness as language education” (Tudor, 1996).

Discovery learning techniques include a rich variety of interactive practices whereby the participants have opportunities to learn from their own and each other’s experiences, being actively and personally engaged in the process. Using Open-Ended discovery approaches to discover how language is used in native-like situation, the main objective of discovery approach is to promote noticing of how language item are used so that learners become aware of the gap between their use of target forms and the typical use of highly proficient speakers(Swain,1994). Contributing to development of such cognitive skills such as connecting, generalizing, and hypothesizing. Helping learners to become better monitors of their own and other peoples output ,Helping learners to become independent and autonomous , Helping learners to develop positive attitudes towards the TL, Equipping the learners with the means to gain more from their language exposure outside of classroom and after language course is of paramount important to discovery learning(Tomilson,1994).
When it comes to discovery learning, deep processing of intake is necessary for effective and durable learning to take place (Craik and Lockhart 1972). Such processing is semantic in that the attention of the learner is primarily on the meaning and significance of the intake and, in particular, on its relevance to learner language drills. Controlled practice and narrowly controlled discovery activates can only achieve shallow processing and can only be an aid to short term learning.

Self-investment is one of the main objectives of discovery learning. It has been repeatedly noted that learners will only learn if they need and want to learn and are willing to invest time and energy in the process (Tomlinson, 2009). They need to be motivated both instrumentally and interactively by the discovery approach (Dorniye, 2001) and this can be achieved if it excites the curiosity of the learner in relation to a language feature.

Discovery approaches can help learners notice features of their input both in the sense of paying attention to features they might otherwise be unaware of and in the sense of being alerted to gaps between their typical interlanguage performance and that of typical proficient users of the language (Tomlinson 1994). Notice these gaps helps learners attend to related features of language use in subsequent input and to allocate to them the salience and relevance which facilitate acquisition (Schmidt and Frota, 1986).

One Language learner’s best acquire language features when they are mentally ready to do so (Duyan, Burt, and Krashen, 1982; Pienemann, 1985). One way of assisting learner to achieve readiness is to use discovery approaches. These approaches create the curiosity, alertness, and positive valuation which are pre-requisite for development of communicative competence (Tomlinson, 1994).

This research set out to investigate the effect of the Open-ended discovery activities on speaking ability of EFL learners. The common thread which tends to run through all these various definitions of discovery learning is the emphasis that the learner must find out or discover for himself what is to be learnt. Open-ended discovery approach was used to figure out the effect of it on EFL learners’ speaking ability. While substantial evidence existed to support the empirical foundations of this approach, very little, if any, systematic research has been conducted on its impact on human learning.

Statement of the Problem

Institutions encourage learning environments that foster deep approaches to learning to enhance students’ academic achievement and cognitive development. The importance of a deep approach to learning has been validated by a growing body of studies designed to measure various academic outcomes, including academic achievement (Biggs, 1987; Diseth, 2002, 2003, 2007b; Diseth, Pallesen, Hovland & Larsen, 2006; Diseth, Pallesen, Brunborg, & Larsen, 2010; Duncan & McTearie, 2005; Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983; Furnham, Monsen, & Ahmetoglu, 2009; Marton & Siljö, 1976a; Prosser & Millar, 1989; Ramsden, 1992; Rowell, Dawson, & Pollard, 1993).

In attempts to promote a higher level of learner autonomy, it is important for the instructor to encourage and organize team activities and homework assignments that will force students to explore realms and means that could ultimately pique a greater interest in autonomous learning. As English instructors, it becomes teacher responsibility to not only teach a language, but also inform and instruct how to study outside the classroom. This will be accomplished by presenting tasks that inspire the learner to take learning into their own hands. Autonomy in learning is a process and not a product that many EFL students seek today (Breen, 1989). Autonomy requires understanding one’s own strengths and weaknesses and accumulating a diverse set of resources that will maximize exposure and improvements in speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Tomlinson, 1998).

Unfortunately, most of the teachers consider students as a jug to be filled with knowledge. Piaget (1973) was the first to show that learners were not “empty vessels” to be filled with knowledge, but active builders of knowledge. In this regard, the present study aimed to find out the effect of Open-Ended Discovery Learning on EFL learners’ speaking ability. Therefore, the following research question and null hypothesis were stated:

RQ: Does Open-Ended Discovery activities have any effect on EFL learners’ speaking ability?

H0: Open-Ended Discovery activities learning doesn’t have any effect on EFL learners’ speaking ability.

Significant of the Study

To understand is to invent. Piaget (1973) maintain that understanding comes from discovery and that without understanding production and creativity are lost and the individual is caught in only repetition. A significant advantage of the discovery learning method is its capacity to motivate students. Discovery learning allows learners to seek information that satisfies their natural curiosity. It
provides the opportunity for students to explore their desires and consequently creates a more engaging learning environment.

Simply put, discovery learning makes learning fun (Schank & Cleary, 1994).

In a study conducted by Hardy (1967), Discovery learning increased student achievement when the students were learning skills rather than facts. Skills developed through a discovery learning process seem to be more in line with the changing economy of today than more traditional, non-contextual, lecture methods of teaching (Paper, 2001).

As McCain maintain that Discovery learning focuses on learning within context and using experiences as a guide which are more closely related to the needs of learners and they are preparing their students to assume careers upon graduation. Therefore, education must find ways to adapt teaching and learning so that students become more independent, active learners (McCain, 2000).

Theoretical principles underlying Open -Ended Discovery approach facilitate experiential learning, deep processing, self-investment, noticing that are beneficial for language learning (Tomilson, 1994).

Review of the Literature

Discovery learning encompasses an instructional model and strategies that focus on active, hands-on learning opportunities for students (Dewey, 1916/1997; Piaget, 1954, 1973). Bicknell-Holmes and Hoffman (2000) describe the three main attributes of discovery learning as:

1. Exploring and problem solving to create, integrate, and generalize knowledge
2. Student driven, interest-based activities in which the student determines the sequence and frequency
3. Activities to encourage integration of new knowledge into the learner’s existing knowledge base

The first attribute of discovery learning is a very important one. Through exploring and problem solving, students take on an active role to create, integrate, and generalize knowledge. Instead of engaging in passively accepting information through lecture or drill and practice, students establish broader applications for skills through activities that encourage risk-taking, problem solving, and an examination of unique experiences (Bicknell-Holmes & Hoffman, 2000). In this attribute, students rather than the teacher drive the learning. Expression of this attribute of discovery learning essentially changes the roles of students and teachers and is a radical change that is difficult for many teachers to accept (Hooks, 1994). A second attribute of discovery learning, according to Bicknell-Holmes and Hoffman, is that it encourages students to learn at their own pace. Through discovery learning, some degree of flexibility in sequencing and frequency with learning activities can be achieved. Learning is not a static progression of lessons and activities. This attribute contributes greatly to student motivation and ownership of their learning. A third major attribute of discovery learning is that it is based on the principle of using existing knowledge as a basis to build new knowledge (Bicknell-Holmes & Hoffman, 2000). Scenarios with which the students are familiar allow the students to build on their existing knowledge by extending what they already know to invent new ideas.

How do these three attributes combine to make discovery learning different from traditional forms of Learning? Some researchers (e.g., Bonwell, 1998; Mosca & Howard, 1997; Papert, 2000; Schank & Cleary, 1994) have stated the most fundamental principles of discovery learning as follows:

1) Learning is active rather than passive
2) Learning is process-oriented rather than content-oriented
3) Failure is important
4) Feedback is necessary
5) Understanding is deeper

First, in discovery learning, students are active. Learning is not defined as simply absorbing what is being said or read, but actively seeking new knowledge. Students are engaged in hands-on activities that are real problems needing solutions. The students have a purpose for finding answers and learning more (Mosca & Howard, 1997).

Second, the focus shifts from the end product, learning content, to the process, how the content is learned. The focus in discovery learning is learning how to analyze and interpret information to understand what is being learned rather than just giving the correct answer from rote memorization. Bonwell (1998) maintain that Process-oriented learning can be applied to many different topics instead of producing one correct answer to match one question that is typically found in content-oriented learning. Discovery learning pushes students to a deeper level of understanding. The emphasis is placed on a mastery and application of overarching skills (Tomilson, 1994).

Third, failure in discovery learning is seen as a positive circumstance (Bonwell, 1998). Discovery learning does not stress getting the right answer. Cognitive psychologists have shown that failure is central to learning (Schank &
Cleary, 1994). The focus is learning and just as much learning can be done through failure as success. In fact, if a student does not fail while learning, the student probably has not learned something new (Schank & Cleary, 1994). Fourth, an essential part of discovery learning is the opportunity for feedback in the learning process (Bonwell, 1998). Student learning is enhanced, deepened, and made more permanent by discussion of the topic with other learners (Schank & Cleary, 1994). Without the opportunity for feedback, learning is left incomplete. Instead of students learning in isolation, as is typical in the traditional classroom where silence is expected, students are encouraged to discuss their ideas to deepen their understanding. Lastly, incorporating all of these differences, discovery learning provides for deeper learning opportunities.

Methodology
This research was conducted in an institute of foreign languages in Isfahan Nokhbegan, Iran. The institute has multiple levels of language proficiency; the upper intermediate level was selected for this study. Two intact classes with 30 female students in each group aged between 16 and 28 were selected and then they were randomly assigned into the control and experimental groups. The participants in the control group received traditional learning syllabus, whereas those in the experimental group received open-ended discovery activities.

3. 2. Instruments and Materials
Proficiency Test of English
In order to homogenize learners regarding language proficiency and to take into account learner’s level of language proficiency, The English language proficiency test is used. In this study, the test is a sample of the TOEFL written by Capel and Ireland (1994), Oxford university press. It consists of 45 multiple choice questions covering listening, reading and, writing skills. The reliability and also item facility of the test were checked in the piloting phase of the study and the test was thus determined to be reliable for the actual purpose of homogenization.

Pretest and posttest
IELTS speaking test is used both as a pretest and posttest. In this research, learners voices are analyzed by interviewers who are familiar with IELTS test. When it comes to learners IELTS speaking ability learners were classified in a scale. Speaking ability band score used in this research consisted of Fluency and Coherence, Pronunciation, Word Choice, and Grammar. Likewise, speed of speech, length of answer, pause correctly, and expand answer played a role in learners IELTS speaking score.

English Texts
The following texts were employed in this study:
Short stores
In this research, in order to conduct seminar sessions, the following text are manipulated Lord of the Flies written by William Golding (1954), Wise Blood written by Flannery O’Connor (1976), Nineteen Eighty-Four written by George Orwell (1994), and The Plague (1964) written by Albert Camus.

Movies
In this research, several movie like Road of revolution directed by Zoe Saldana (1987), Argo directed by Ben Affleck(2012), slumdog Millionaire (2009) directed by Danny Boyle (2006), Avatar directed by Sam Worthington (2006) were analyzed in seminar sessions learners were supposed to watch the movies in advance then participated in seminars conducted in Socratic way.

3.3. Procedure
This study is conducted in 25 sessions and each session is 120 minutes. In order to meet the requirement of discovery learning, the researcher manipulates case based learning, learning by conversing, learning by exploring, learning by reflection, and stimulation based learning in the research. The researcher was the teacher of both groups in Nokhbegan institute. Each session started with Socratic seminar and student were supposed to read the stores, watched the movies beforehand then engaged in discussion while teacher asked the students to discover the language by posing Open ended questions. As an example, the teacher guided the learners to discover the answer by posing challenging questions. The learners interacted with each other and the internet to find the answer either individually or in groups. In some sessions, Likewise, teacher will continue posing Open-ended discovery question. The researcher took advantage of web-quest, Eactivites Wiki program as a kind of learning by discovery through posing some questions. The learners tried to find the answers to the questions by surfign the
internet and by introducing some websites as sources of input and some websites to engage in speaking with other learners. The websites exploited in this research were Babelize, Live Mochal, Voice Thread, and Voxpop.

Over the course of the research, teacher were required to lead a class discussion on an assigned store or the viewing of a play or film. Some guideline used in a seminar session such as carefully reading the material or view the play/film, thinking critically through what points/ideas authors/playwrights/filmmakers were arguing. Thinking about what strikes as the most interesting, provocative, or challenging points made by the author(s) as a way to begin planning how to generate discussion in class.

In this study, the seven metacognitive strategies ('Problem identification', 'Planning content', 'Planning language', 'Evaluation', 'Asking for help', 'Giving help', and 'Positive self-talk') targeted for teaching for the L2 speakers to develop an executive ability to plan for task performance, to assess how well one has completed the task, and to create positive, social and psychological environments conducive to task completion.

In this research, discussion was conducted in the Socratic seminar way, while teacher was responsible for posing Open-ended questions, learners engaged in discussion. Teacher developed open-ended questions about texts and encouraged students to use textual evidence to support their opinions and answers. The teacher used questions to guide discussion around specific learning goals. It was imperative for teacher to “establish guidelines to help students understand their roles and responsibilities” in the Socratic discussion. In seminars time it was a systematic process for examining the ideas, questions, and answers that form the basis of movies, and short stories. Students were encouraged to think out loud and to exchange ideas openly while examining ideas in a rigorous, thoughtful manner. During the Socratic Seminar, teacher divided the class in half and formed two circles (an inner circle and an outer circle). The inner circle was engaged in the stories discussion, and the students in the outer circle were listening to the inner circle discussion. Students in the outer circle take notes and wrote down ideas or comments on what they heard in the inner circle discussion. The circles flipped so that students in the inner circle and outer circle traded places. When the inner and outer circle places, a new Socratic seminar can begin with the second stories, the learners were active, the environment was democratic, the activities were interactive and student-centered the teacher facilitated a process of learning in which students were encouraged to be responsible and autonomous.

Engwiki and Webquest were a kind of internet tools manipulated in this research teacher posed some Open-ended question and student answered this question by discovering answer through internet.

After seminar learners were required to share their discoveries regarding grammatical points with their classmate. This approach had advantage that the learners focus on what was salient for the them. 3.4 Design

The pretest-posttest control group design as one of the quasi-experimental research designs will be employed in this study. The independent variable of this study was Open-ended Discovery learning and the dependent variable is speaking ability. The level of the participants (upper intermediate) and their gender (female) were the control variables of this study.

3.5. Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study comprised two series of calculations: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. For the first part, the data gathered from the proficiency test of homogenization of both groups will be analyzed. In order to standardize the TOEFL tests for the inferential statistics employed to verify the null hypothesis of this study, a T test used in order to estimate the probability that an observed difference between the means of two groups is statistically significant.
Discussion and Result

Table 1, Descriptive Statistics of Paired Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1 before the open-ended discovery effect</td>
<td>14.60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.380</td>
<td>.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after the open-ended discovery effect</td>
<td>17.10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.583</td>
<td>.289</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1 before the open-ended discovery effect - after the open-ended discovery effect</td>
<td>-2.500</td>
<td>1.978</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td>-3.239 -1.761</td>
<td>-6.922</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table above the result of the Leven's test reveals that the two groups had homogeneous variances, hence the second condition for running a t-test is met. Table also shows that the difference between the means of the two groups was significant and by virtue of the mean values shown in table 2 (Experimental= 17.10 control= 14.60), it was concluded that the experimental group outperformed the control group significantly. And this shows the significant effect of the Open-Ended Discovery activities on the Speaking ability of EFL learners.

Based on the results of the data analysis, the null hypothesis of the study which stated that Open-Ended Discovery Activities do not have significant effect on Speaking Ability of EFL learners was rejected and the researcher came up with the result that Open-Ended Discovery Activities has significant effect on the Speaking ability of EFL learners.

Since the learners in both groups were homogenized with respect to their English listening, reading and writing proficiency and then randomly assigned to the two groups prior to the treatment, the final significant difference between their mean scores on the posttest could be attributed to effect of the speaking ability. Therefore, it can be claimed that open Ended Discovery Learning has significant effect on EFL learners’ Speaking ability.

Conclusion

The results of this study shed some light on how foreign language educators can develop students’ awareness of their learning at the upper intermediate level and on how educators in general who want to help their students be more autonomous and independent learners. As the teaching paradigm shifts to a more social constructivist, learner-centered approach, it is important to allow students to be autonomous. Discovery learning fits into the process-approach to learning where how learning occurs is emphasized over what is produced. The process of Discovery learning allows students to become proactive learners, who are in full control of their learning. Open-Ended Discovery activities develop critical Thinking higher order cognitive skills in learners.

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THE EFFECT OF ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS ON THE PARAGRAPH WRITING DEVELOPMENT OF IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
The present study tried to investigate the impact of assessment portfolios on the paragraph writing development of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The researcher used assessment portfolios in the experimental group, for the students to work on the process of writing and revise their drafts as many times as they can and keep everything they write in a folder to choose three of their best writings for final evaluation and assessment. The students had to reflect on their writings and have a journal for each completed paragraph. In the other class, the control group, the same material as the experimental group, a pamphlet introducing the process of writing and seven different genres with model paragraphs, were given, but the traditional mode of teaching writing was used. The final statistic results of this study revealed that applying assessment portfolios reinforced writing ability. They also made clear that the subjects who participated in the portfolio-based class outperformed those who were exposed to the traditional way of writing instruction. The subjects in the experimental group were also given a questionnaire about seven writing strategies at the outset of the study. Their answers were compared with their scores in the post test to see if there is a meaningful correlation between their ability in those writing strategies and their paragraph writing development in this study. No meaningful correlation was observed.

Review of literature
Within the communicative framework of language teaching, the skill of writing enjoys special status – it is via writing that a person can communicate a variety of messages to a close or distant, known or unknown readers. Such communication is extremely important in the modern world, whether the interaction takes the form of traditional paper-and-pencil writing or the most technologically advanced electronic mail. Writing as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged and nurtured during the language learner's course of study, Olshtain (2001).

There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. L2 writers have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on. The difficulty becomes even more pronounced if their language proficiency is weak, Richards & Renandya (2002).

With so many conflicting theories around and so many implementation factors to consider, planning and teaching a course in writing can be a daunting task. Which theoretical strands are we going to adapt? In the mid-1970s, second language teachers discovered "process approaches that were becoming popular in the first language classroom. As the term suggests, the process approach concentrates on the creation of the text, rather than on the end product, Nunan (2001). Those who advocate a process approach to writing, however, pay attention to the various stages that any piece of writing goes through. By spending time with learners on pre-writing phase, editing, redrafting, and finally publishing their work, a process approach aims to get to the heart of the various skills that should be employed when writing, Harmer (2001). Reflecting or self-evaluating is a practice which requires students to look at the process that they used to reach their goals.

Considering all these processes and requirements in writing instruction and assessment, EFL learners and teachers need to explore and attempt innovative practices in which all the process of learning how to write is documented and assessed by both teachers and learners themselves. Most important, teachers are required to weave assessment into instruction and provide chances for students to utilize evaluation skills as a learning task, Yuh-Mei Chen (2006).
Educators and practitioners have always been exploring and attempting new and innovative practices in the classroom. Of all non-traditional approaches to instruction and assessment in ESL and EFL writing, portfolio use aligned with theories of constructivism and multiple intelligences (Chang, 2001; Dai, 2003) seems to show the greatest promise in enhancing diverse dimensions of learning and developing multiple intelligences as well as promoting learner autonomy, Yuh-Mei Chen (2006). Portfolios provide a powerful tool for the enhancement of instruction and assessment, addressing educators’ concerns about authentic assessment, documentation of academic progress, and teacher and student involvement, Valencia & Calfee (1991).

Hamp-Lyons (1994, cited in Thomas, Conn. et al., 2004-2005) labels portfolio an excellent pedagogical tool interweaving assessment with instruction: it provides chances to integrate more forms of evaluation into teaching, such that evaluation will become “a less threatening and more supportive activity” (p.54) to learners.

According to Hill (1989), the writing folder or portfolio is a way of keeping track of the changes in individual student writing, and contains all writing form the beginning of the class scraps, notes, drawings, lists, drafts, revisions, final pieces, etc. One type of portfolios is an assessment portfolio which is defined by O’ Malley & Pierce (1996) as focused reflections of specific learning goals that contain systematic collections of student work, student self-assessment, and teacher assessment.

The writing file or portfolio is meant to be a compilation of all their production plus their own reflection and self-assessment for further reference and future work. The idea behind this meta-communicative task is to encourage the students to monitor their own progress and their linguistic-strategic development over time. Towards the end of the course, the file will contain edited exponents of many different types of writing (descriptions, narrations and so on) and varied formats (letters, diary pages, reports and the like) with comments, memory aids and notes that represent an attractive ‘document’ of academic life. Going through their own material from time to time will allow the students to evaluate their learning process and eradicate errors. In case of doubt about the teacher’s final decision on their performance during the year, they may be asked to submit their portfolio for global assessment of the strategies implemented, Maria Palmira Massi (2001).

According to O’Malley and Pierce (1996) one of the most common types of portfolios is the assessment portfolios defined as: “Focused reflections of specific learning goals that contain systematic collections of student work, student self-assessment, and teacher assessment”.

This study was an attempt to provide rationale for the usefulness and success of assessment portfolios as a highly successful technique in both evaluation and development of paragraph writing ability. It also hoped to find out whether it could help the Iranian EFL students to move beyond the controlled, highly manipulated stage of paragraph writing into a less structured, more expressive and productive stage. Using a questionnaire about seven writing strategies at the outset of the study and comparing the result with the scores in the post test, it was also attempted to see if there is a meaningful correlation between the ability in those writing strategies and their paragraph writing development in this study.

Hypotheses
1. Implementing assessment portfolios does not have any impact on paragraph writing development of Iranian Intermediate EFL learners.
2. There’s is no meaningful correlation between the learner’s ability in writing strategies and their paragraph writing development.

Procedure
In order to come up with a reasonable answer to the research question, the following procedure was gone through:

Subject Selection

It was decided to do the research at the institutes where learners are taking English courses because they are interested in learning English. Two prominent institutes in Torbat-e-Heidarieh, Bayan Language Institute and Ayandesazan Language Center, were chosen because those language institutes are the oldest in town and have high number of language learners. Moreover, the system and the syllabus in both institutes are the same; they use interchange system. After talking about the purpose of this study with the institute administrators, it was agreed on holding a free paragraph writing course for those language learners who take the interchange placement test. This way the institute supervisors could also find out whether they have placed the learners in the appropriate classes or not. So it was advertised for the incoming course and those learners who were taking courses in interchange 2, 3, and passages classes were registered for the test. Because this study was aimed at determining the
effect of assessment portfolios on the writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners, the researcher needed to be sure all the learners were at the intermediate level. Based on the fact that both institutes were using the same system and the institute supervisors had not used the interchange placement test before and therefore no one in town had tried these questions before, it was decided to use the objective placement test A from the interchange/passages placement and evaluation package by Tay Lesley with Christa Hansen & Jean Zukowski/Faust (third edition, Cambridge University Press (2005) as the test of homogeneity. There are 70 items of listening, reading, and language use with 50 minutes time limitation for the participants to complete the test.

This placement test is aimed at placing students at the appropriate level in the interchange system. According to Jack C. Richards, the author of the interchange books, this series of books claims to get the students in the upper-intermediate level and so the researcher decided to select only those test takers who score between 37-49 which places test takers in interchange third edition level 3 ( see appendix 1 -the scoring guideline of the objective placement test). The test takers in Bayan language institute were 75 female language learners who were taking English courses at different levels including interchange 1, 2, 3, and passages. 80 female test takers in Ayandesazan were also given the placement test and they were also currently participating in interchange 1, 2, 3, and passages levels. Only 30 language learners in each of the institutes scored between 37-49 and were qualified for the free 10-session paragraph writing course. The institutes’ supervisors devoted two classes on different days of the week to the paragraph writing classes. The learners were free to choose the day they could come and participate in class according to their schedule and free time. They should have participated in the class once a week. Bayan language institute was chosen as the experimental group by tossing a coin.

**Pretest**

On the first session in all four classes, the writing section B (Appendix 2) of the interchange placement test was administered as the pretest of the learners’ writing ability in order to make sure there’s no statistically significant difference in the paragraph writing ability of the learners in experimental and control groups and also to have a quantitative understanding of the writing ability of the learners at the outset of the study and be able to compare with the result of the posttest and see how much progress each group has made. The paragraphs written by the learners were scored by three raters according to the scoring scale designed by Prentice-Hall, Inc. (Appendix 4 - Form 2) and afterwards the inter-rater reliability of the scores was calculated in order to determine the consistency of ratings. Then the means of the scores of the control and experimental groups were compared through implementing t-test for determining the statistical significance of the difference between the means on the two sets of scores. The result showed the mean performance of the two groups in writing the paragraphs was not significantly different. So the researcher could also consider the two groups as homogeneous regarding the writing ability prior to the treatment.

A questionnaire about seven writing strategies were also given to the learners to see if any correlations are obtained comparing the result with the scores the experimental group subjects get in the post test.

**Treatment**

**Experimental Group:**

On the first day of the course, the teacher introduced the learners to the portfolio project which synthesized the course. He explained that it was crucial that they saved everything they wrote in a folder. The teacher provided students with a portfolio project pamphlet that explained the portfolio project and told them why he was asking them to do it. (Appendix 3)

Toward the end of the term, the students created a portfolio of their work to represent as a writer participating in the course of writing. The portfolio entries in this study included:

**The first entry of the portfolio** was an initial self-assessment form of writing. This form has been designed by Prentice-Hall, Inc. to help the students recall the types of writing they have done and consider their strengths and weaknesses and set goals for themselves. (Appendix 4 - Form 1)

**The second entry** was a portfolio planner designed by Prentice-Hall, Inc. in which the students had to plan how and when they were going to accomplish the project and also record the conferences they had with their teacher the suggestions him. (Appendix 4 - Form 2)

**The third entry** was a portfolio record designed by Prentice-Hall, Inc. This form was used to record and update information about the writing the students placed in their portfolio. They had to write the title of each paragraph
and the date they completed each stage (Prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and finished paper). (Appendix 4 – Form 3)

The next entry was a revision checklist designed by Prentice-Hall, Inc. which was used by the students after writing their draft and revision for each paragraph. (Appendix 4 – Form 4) Students were expected to continue writing on the topics by checking on the quality of their writing through revising their work in constant comparison with the information they got from the handout and this form.

The fifth one was the rubrics for writing – Elementary / Intermediate designed by Prentice-Hall, Inc. Rubrics provide students information about the qualities and dimensions of good writing and feedback about their progress. This form was part of the process of setting goals for the students. The students were told that their paragraphs would be evaluated based on this rubrics (Appendix 4 – Form 5)

The next seven entries were the paragraphs the students were going to write throughout the term. These paragraphs were about one type of writing each time. The followings were the genre for each entry:

- Definition
- Sequence
- Narrative
- Description
- Persuasive
- Compare and Contrast
- Evaluation

Because the portfolio was intended to be consciously and carefully selective, the students chose their favorite topics of the 7 genres of the course.

Throughout the course, the teacher asked them frequently to answer questions about their writing, to reflect on each other’s writing, and to characterize their own writing and writing processes in terms of what they see others doing to learn from each other and contribute to each other. This way, they learned from their mistakes and they benefited from the value of both being a writer and a critic.

The teacher had some conferences with two or three students each session over drafts and revisions with questions designed to assist students in discovering the shape of their thinking and their problems. When the teacher responded to students’ writing, he focused on asking them to explain what they were thinking. The conferences with each student were recorded in the portfolio planner form and suggestions were mentioned.

By creating frequent writing opportunities that build on one another and ask for reflection throughout the term, the teacher attempted to provide students a resource for looking back to learn.

Experimental group
15 min. Instruction
45 min. Writing and helping the students decide on the topics and organization of the contents.
30 min. Self-assessment and revisions.

Control Group
In this group also, the same criteria and goals were discussed and also the same genres were assigned to the students to choose and write a paragraph for each. Each session, then, some of the paragraphs of the students were copied for all and were corrected and discussed by the teacher and students.

Each session, two or three of the paragraphs completed at home were discussed and other paragraphs were collected to be corrected and delivered to the learners the next session. In this group the students didn’t have to revise their first drafts after the teacher gave his comments and made corrections; they didn’t work on the quality of their paragraphs.

Control group
15 min. Instruction
45 min. Writing and helping the students decide on the topics and organization of the contents.
30 min. Discussing and evaluating 2 or 3 students’ paragraphs

Post-test
On the last session in all four classes, the writing section C (Appendix 3) of the interchange placement test was administered as the posttest of the learners' writing ability in order to see how much progress each group has made. The paragraphs written by the learners were scored by the same three raters according to the scoring scale designed by Prentice-Hall, Inc. and afterwards the inter-rater reliability of the scores was calculated in order to determine the consistency of ratings. Then the means of the scores of the control and experimental groups were compared through implementing t-test for determining the statistical significance of the difference between the means on the two sets of scores.

Data analysis
Introduction

In order to test the hypothesis formulated in this study, the researcher made use of the following statistical procedures:

First, a criterion-referenced procedure was implemented to select two homogeneous groups of subjects regarding the general proficiency. A standard objective placement test adopted from Interchange/Passages Placement and Evaluation Package by Tay Lesley with Christa Hanson and Jean Zukowski/ Faust (Third Edition, 2005, Cambridge University Press) was administered to the language learners and those who scored between 37 and 49 (Table 4.1) were chose as the subjects of this study.

| Table 4-1. Scoring Guidelines of the objective placement test |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| **Score**       | **Rating**       | **Placement**    |
| 1-5             | 1                | Interchange third edition - Intro, first half |
| 6-11            | 2                | Interchange third edition - Intro, second half |
| 12-17           | 3                | Interchange third edition – Level 1, first half |
| 18-23           | 4                | Interchange third edition - Level 1, second half |
| 24-30           | 5                | Interchange third edition – Level 2, first half |
| 31-36           | 6                | Interchange third edition – Level 2, second half |
| 37-42           | 7                | Interchange third edition – Level 3, first half |
| 43-49           | 8                | Interchange third edition – Level 3, second half |
| 50-55           | 9                | Interchange third edition – Passages Level 1, first half |
| 56-61           | 10               | Interchange third edition - Passages Level 1, second half |
| 62-68           | 11               | Interchange third edition - Passages Level 2, first half |
| 69-70           | 12               | Interchange third edition - Passages Level 2, second half |

After selecting two intact homogeneous groups of language learners in two different language institutes, the subjects in both groups were pretested for their paragraph writing ability in order to make sure the two groups are also homogeneous regarding their writing ability.
The paragraphs were rated by three raters and the inter-rater reliability of the scores given by them was calculated. After making sure the ratings were consistent, the mean performance of the two groups was compared through t-test and it showed no significant difference.

After the treatment, the same statistical procedure was implemented to indicate the differentiations between the performances of the traditional-based paragraph writing control group and the portfolio-based experimental group.

Descriptive statistics
A descriptive statistics for quantitative variables was represented to investigate the resulting data on minimum and maximum scores, sum, mean, standard deviation, and variance of the scores and the mean performances in pretest and posttest both in control and experimental groups.

As it can be observed, the mean performance of the control and experimental groups in pretest is nearly the same but they are different in post test. The mean of the scores given by each rater were also calculated in order to measure the inter-rater reliability and see if the ratings given by the three raters to the paragraph writing pretest were consistent or not. The data in this table were used for later analysis in the following sections.

Table 4-2. Descriptive statistics for quantitative variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.730</td>
<td>4.662</td>
<td>24.83</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.369</td>
<td>4.730</td>
<td>24.90</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.109</td>
<td>4.807</td>
<td>24.83</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.568</td>
<td>4.644</td>
<td>24.87</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.013</td>
<td>4.797</td>
<td>24.77</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.551</td>
<td>4.642</td>
<td>24.37</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.189</td>
<td>4.493</td>
<td>26.47</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.683</td>
<td>4.656</td>
<td>26.20</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.409</td>
<td>4.734</td>
<td>26.73</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.069</td>
<td>4.698</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.390</td>
<td>4.403</td>
<td>28.30</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.524</td>
<td>4.530</td>
<td>28.40</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.158</td>
<td>4.707281</td>
<td>24.85556</td>
<td>745.667</td>
<td>32.333</td>
<td>15.333</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.295</td>
<td>4.614653</td>
<td>24.66667</td>
<td>740.000</td>
<td>33.000</td>
<td>15.667</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.756</td>
<td>4.555827</td>
<td>26.46667</td>
<td>794.000</td>
<td>35.333</td>
<td>17.000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.212</td>
<td>4.383136</td>
<td>28.23333</td>
<td>847.000</td>
<td>36.000</td>
<td>20.000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Pre-test

A paragraph writing pretest was administered to both control and experimental groups and the paragraphs were rated by three raters. In order to make sure the raters have been consistent in their ratings, the inter-rater reliability was first calculated before comparing the two means obtained from the pretest through t-test and checking whether the two groups have also been homogeneous regarding their paragraph writing ability or not. The consistency of the ratings was tested in two ways both with the pretest and post test results: first, the scores given by the raters were compared and represented visually in the form of histograms and also the mean of the scores given by each rater were compared and represented in the form of tables.

Inter-rater reliability in pretest

The scores given by the raters to the paragraphs written by the subjects in both control and experimental groups in pretest were compared. It was proved based on the data in Table 4-3 that this much difference is not significant.

Table 4-3. The comparison of the mean of the scores given by each rater (Control Group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Univariate Results for Each DV</th>
<th>GENERAL Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigma-restricted parameterization</td>
<td>Effective hypothesis decomposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater-control-pretest P</td>
<td>Rater-control-pretest F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.000000</td>
<td>2481.930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.998018</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-4. The comparison of the mean of the scores given by each rater (Experimental Group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Univariate Results for Each DV</th>
<th>GENERAL Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigma-restricted parameterization</td>
<td>Effective hypothesis decomposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.000000</td>
<td>2484.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.909226</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean of the scores given by each rater in both control and experimental groups in pre-test has been compared to see if there's any statistically significant difference between the scores given by the raters. In control group, the P-Value equals 0.998018 which is more than $\alpha = 0.05$ (Table 4-3). Therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected and it shows there's no significant difference between the mean of the scores given by the three raters in pre-test in control group. In experimental group, the P-Value = 0.909226 which is also more than $\alpha = 0.05$ (table 4-4). Therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected and it shows there's no significant difference between the mean of the scores given by the three raters in pre-test in control group. That means all the raters have scored the same way in pre-test.

The Comparison of the Mean performance of the groups in pretest

After making sure of the inter-rater reliability of the raters, the mean score of the groups were compared through t-test in order to see whether the two groups are also homogeneous regarding their paragraph writing ability or not. But before implementing the t-test, it was required to check if the P-variance of the scores in the two groups was the same or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1 vs. Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 4-5. P-Variance for mean performances of the two groups in pre-test</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-test for Independent Samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Variables were treated as independent samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P Variances</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.915502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretest-experimental vs. pretest-control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-5 shows the P-Value is 0.915502 and it's more than $\alpha = 0.05$. It shows there's no significant difference between the variance of the scores in the two groups, so the null hypothesis is not rejected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1 vs. Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 4-6. T-test for mean performances of the two groups in pre-test</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-test for Independent Samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Variables were treated as independent samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valid N</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 4.7, the mean performance of both control and experimental groups has been compared through implementing t-test. The results show the P-Value equals 0.875831 which is more than $\alpha = 0.05$ and it shows there's no statistically significant difference between mean performances of the two groups in pre-test and it can be concluded that there's have been no significant difference in writing performance of the two groups and they have been homogeneous in this regard, too.
The Post-test

A paragraph writing test was also administered to both control and experimental groups after the ten-session treatment and the paragraphs were rated by the same three raters. In order to make sure the raters have been consistent in their ratings, the inter-rater reliability was also calculated for the scores given by the raters in post test before comparing the two means obtained from the post test through t-test and checking which of the two groups have progressed more in their paragraph writing ability. Here also the consistency of the ratings was tested in two ways: first, the scores given by the raters were compared and represented visually in the form of histograms and also the mean of the scores given by each rater were compared and represented in the form of tables.

Inter-rater reliability in post-test

The scores given by the raters to the paragraphs written by the subjects in both control and experimental groups in post test were compared. Figures 4-3 and 4-4 provide a visual representation for the scores given by the raters for the control and experimental groups respectively. Tables 4-7 and 4-8 are also representing the consistency of the ratings by comparing the mean of the scores given by each rater.

In figure 4-3, no significant difference is observed between the raters and most of the scores are in the score intervals three and four between the scores 24 and 32.

The histogram in Figure 4-4 also shows the comparison of the scores given by the raters to the post test experimental group. Here also no significant difference is observed between the scores given by the raters. As in Figure 4-4, most of the scores are located in the third and fourth intervals, between the scores 25.8 and 32.6.

### Table 4-7. The comparison of the mean of the scores given by each rater (Control Group – post test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Univariate Results for Each DV</th>
<th>GENERAL Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigma-restricted parameterization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective hypothesis decomposition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater-control-post P</td>
<td>Rater-control-post F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.000000</td>
<td>2942.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.905335</td>
<td>0.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4-8. The comparison of the mean of the scores given by each rater (Experimental Group – post test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Univariate Results for Each DV</th>
<th>GENERAL Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigma-restricted parameterization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective hypothesis decomposition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater-experimental-post P</td>
<td>Rater-experimental-post F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.000000</td>
<td>3472.299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean of the scores given by each rater in both control and experimental groups in post-test has been compared to see if there is any statistically significant difference between the scores given by the raters. In control group, the P-Value = 0.905335 which is more than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected and it shows there's no significant difference between the mean of the scores given by the three raters in pre-test in control group. In experimental group, the P-Value = 0.939061 which is also more than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected and it shows there's no significant difference between the mean of the scores given by the three raters in pre-test in control group. That means all the raters have scored the same way in post-test.

The Comparison of the Mean performance of the groups in post test

After making sure of the inter-rater reliability of the raters, the mean score of the groups were compared through t-test in order to see which of the two groups has made more progress in paragraph writing skill. But before implementing the t-test, it was required to check if the P-variance of the scores in the two groups was the same or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P Variances</th>
<th>F-ratio</th>
<th>Std. Dev. Group 2</th>
<th>Std. Dev. Group 1</th>
<th>Group 1 vs. Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.836568</td>
<td>1.080380</td>
<td>4.555827</td>
<td>4.383136</td>
<td>Posttest-experimental vs. posttest-control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-9 shows the P-Value is 0.836568 which is more than $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected and it shows there's no significant difference between the variances of two sets of scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid N Group 2</th>
<th>Valid N Group 1</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Mean Group 2</th>
<th>Mean Group 1</th>
<th>Group 1 vs. Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.000125</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4.365480</td>
<td>26.46667</td>
<td>28.23333</td>
<td>Posttest-experimental vs. posttest-control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 4.10., the result of comparing the mean performance of the two groups in post test has been reported and it shows the P-Value of 0.000125, which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. This shows the mean performance of the two sets of scores in post test are significantly different and the portfolio-based group has outperformed the traditional-
based writing group. The null hypothesis in this study is rejected then and it can be concluded that implementing assessment portfolios can have a significant effect on the paragraph writing ability of Iranian EFL learners.

**Writing strategies analysis**
A writing strategy questionnaire was given to the subjects in the experimental group in the first session to see if each of the subjects will score differently according to the strategies they had been using before they participate in this study. After giving the post test, their answers to the questionnaire were coded and marked and the result was compared to their scores in post test. The seven writing strategies in the questionnaire are as follows:

- **Strategy 1**: Use a journal, brainstorming, or a similar method for deciding on a topic
- **Strategy 2**: Think carefully about the audience for which I am writing
- **Strategy 3**: Write down my purpose for writing before beginning a first draft
- **Strategy 4**: Write a draft without stopping to correct spelling and mechanical problems
- **Strategy 5**: Ask someone else to read my draft before revising
- **Strategy 6**: Proofread and correct mechanical spelling errors after the draft has been revised
- **Strategy 7**: Try to make my final copy neat and attractive

The subjects had to answer to the items as “never”, “occasionally”, “always”. The following results were observed:

| Frequency Table for qualitative variable & Histogram for strategies |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                      | Valid | Missing |                      |                      |                      |
| N                     | 29    | 1       | 29                 | 30                 | 30                 |
| stra1                 | 30    | 0       | 30                 | 30                 | 30                 |
| stra2                 | 30    | 0       | 30                 | 30                 | 30                 |
| stra3                 | 30    | 0       | 30                 | 30                 | 30                 |
| stra4                 | 29    | 1       | 29                 | 30                 | 30                 |
| stra5                 | 30    | 0       | 30                 | 30                 | 30                 |
| stra6                 | 30    | 0       | 30                 | 30                 | 30                 |
| stra7                 | 30    | 0       | 30                 | 30                 | 30                 |

All the subjects answered to the questionnaire items except one subject who didn’t try the strategy 1 & 5.

**Strategy 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy 1</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>72.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In response to the first strategy, “Use a journal, brainstorming, or a similar method for deciding on a topic,” seven of the subjects have chosen alternative 1 (Never), twenty one of them have selected alternative 2 (occasionally), and only one subject has chosen 3 (always). One subject has given no answer to this question.

### Strategy 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the second strategy, “Think carefully about the audience for which I am writing,” four of the subjects have chosen alternative 1 (Never), fifteen of them have selected alternative 2 (occasionally), and eleven subjects have chosen 3 (always).

### Strategy 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the third strategy, “Write down my purpose for writing before beginning a first draft,” three of the subjects have chosen alternative 1 (Never), nine of them have selected alternative 2 (occasionally), and eighteen subjects have chosen 3 (always).

### Strategy 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In response to the fourth strategy, “Write a draft without stopping to correct spelling and mechanical problems,” more than 90 percent of the subjects have claimed they either occasionally or always use this strategy. Five of the subjects have chosen alternative 1 (Never), fourteen of them have selected alternative 2 (occasionally), and eleven subjects have chosen 3 (always).

### Strategy 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the fifth strategy, “Ask someone else to read my draft before revising,” most of the subjects (60 percent) have claimed they never use this strategy. Eighteen of the subjects have chosen alternative 1 (Never), nine of them have selected alternative 2 (occasionally), and two subjects have chosen 3 (always). One subject has given no answer to this question.

### Strategy 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the sixth strategy, “Proofread and correct mechanical spelling errors after the draft has been revised,” only one of the subjects has chosen alternative 1 (never). All the other subjects (about 97 percent) have claimed they either occasionally or always use this strategy. Fifteen of the subjects have chosen alternative 2 (occasionally), and fourteen of them have selected alternative 3 (always).

### Strategy 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>200.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In response to the seventh strategy, “Try to make my final copy neat and attractive,” no one has chosen alternative 1 (never). All the other subjects (80 percent) have claimed they either occasionally or always use this strategy. Six of the subjects have chosen alternative 2 (occasionally), and twenty four of them have selected alternative 3 (always).

The correlation between the mean performance of the experimental group in post test and the questionnaire about 7 strategies in writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marked correlations are significant at p &lt; .05000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 28 (Casewise deletion of missing data)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean – Posttest – experimental group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .489</td>
<td>Strategy 1- Use a journal, brainstorming, or a similar method for deciding on a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P = .805</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .0514</td>
<td>Strategy 2- Think carefully about the audience for which I am writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P = .795</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .2702</td>
<td>Strategy 3- Write down my purpose for writing before beginning a first draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P = .164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .1624</td>
<td>Strategy 4- Write a draft without stopping to correct spelling and mechanical problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P = .409</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .0190</td>
<td>Strategy 5- Ask someone else to read my draft before revising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P = .923</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .1643</td>
<td>Strategy 6- Proofread and correct mechanical spelling errors after the draft has been revised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P = .403</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .0463</td>
<td>Strategy 7- Try to make my final copy neat and attractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P = .815</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows the correlation between the score of each of the subjects in the experimental group in post test and the score of the questionnaire which they have answered about 7 strategies in writing at the outset of this study. The P-Values in all the strategies are more than $\alpha = 0.05$ and it shows there is no significant correlation between the scores they have obtained from the questionnaire and the scores in post test.
Conclusion

The main concern and underlying assumption of this study was to test whether implementing assessment portfolios might have any direct effect on the subjects’ gained writing scores, or this change would be the same with both control and experimental groups. The results indicated that the experimental group enjoyed considerable enhancement on their paragraph writing performance in comparison to the control group.

As the result of this study manifests, the experimental group subjects who were assessed and instructed through implementing assessment portfolios outperformed the traditionally-instructed control group in their post test endeavor. Actually, the performance of experimental group was significantly higher.

On the basis of the results of this study these conclusions are suggested:

1. Teaching the content of paragraph writing tasks through assessment portfolio use can enable the learners (subjects) to make use of writing tasks more actively and efficiently.
2. Assessment portfolios can make learners to revise their first draft several times and work on the quality of their paragraphs and therefore get more sensitive and pay more attention to the mistakes and errors they make and make progress faster and more effectively than usual.
3. When learners know they are going to be assessed based on their portfolio and selected pieces of paragraphs which they have written and revised throughout the term, they will be more motivated in learning and feel more responsible for their learning.
4. Assessment portfolio can stand as a workshop where subjects will subjects will practice what they studied and studied what they learned.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF USING PICTURE-WORD-INDUCTION METHOD (PWIM) ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS’ LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT
The present study investigated the effect of using Picture-Word-Induction Method on Iranian EFL learners’ lexical knowledge. This study tried to determine whether or not using PWIM method might enhance a more acceptable lexical knowledge in Iranian EFL learners at the lower-intermediate level. To answer this question, 60 lower-intermediate language learners in Shokouh Language Institute in Roudsar were randomly selected via administering an OPT to 100 language learners. Then, they were divided into experimental and control groups. A pre-test of Vocabulary including 20 questions was administered to both groups, and the participants were asked to answer them. The experimental group was taught the basic vocabulary interfaced with the picture and the control group had no picture-interfaced teaching. After five sessions of the treatments, the post-test of Vocabulary was administered in which the participants in both groups were asked to answer the post-test questions. The data was analyzed through calculating a t-test and ANCOVA coefficient. The results indicated that the means of the two groups were significantly different.

Key words: OPT, PWIM method, L2 lexical knowledge, L2 teaching Methodology

1. Introduction
Words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning. There is a great necessity to have learners study English vocabulary. PWIM could make words become alive by having students use them inductively and build paragraphs from those words. According to Joyce and Calhoun (1998), the Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) is an effective teaching method to enhance the acquisition of English vocabulary EFL learners.

When students learn a foreign language, many think that learning vocabulary is fundamental, important, but difficult. In an investigation in a specific Chinese context, Cortazzi and Jin (1996, p.153) found that a typical comment from students was that vocabulary was "the most important thing" when learning a foreign language. With the size and complexity of the English native speakers' mental lexicon and its relation to an L2 syllabus target, knowing how to teach vocabulary effectively in classrooms must be desirable, if this crucial aspect of language learning is not to be left to chance.

From the late 1980s, vocabulary was an area that had drawn researchers' interest within the mainstream of L2 acquisition (Nation 1997). Researchers realized that many of learners' difficulties, both receptively and productively, result from an inadequate vocabulary, and even when they are at higher levels of language competence and performance, they still feeling need of learning vocabulary (Laufer 1986; Nation 1990). One of the research implications about the importance of vocabulary is that "lexical competence is at the heart of communicative competence" (Meara 1996, p.35), and can be a "prediction of school success" (Verhallen and Schoonen 1998, p. 452).

1.1. Statement of the Problem
According to Guan (2013), vocabulary is a fundamental component of a language and of critical importance to the EFL learners. However there are still many problems existing in vocabulary teaching. The teaching forms are simple, and the teaching methods are lack of innovation. In traditional vocabulary teaching, the sample sentences are extracted from a dictionary or compiled by teachers, which contain a limited amount of information. Also, the
present English vocabulary teaching still sticks to the teachers and textbooks centered pattern, and the top-down traditional foreign language teaching mode, in which teaching content and methods focus on abstract explaining and simple exercises.

Barzegar (2012) investigated the effect of reading versus translation tasks on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of lexicon. She focused on vocabulary as one of the most difficult aspects of learning a foreign language. In view of this, vocabulary acquisition has been currently receiving attention in second language pedagogy and research. Also, having limited vocabulary knowledge, students are not able to express and communicate well.

1.2. Significance and Purpose of the Study
This study is significant theoretically and pedagogically. Theoretically, this study can, on the one hand, be a contribution to the theory of morphology and word knowledge by focusing on the way of the vocabulary to be thought to EFL learners; and on the other hand, define an interface between the pictographic components (picture) into orthographic component (text) towards more advances in learning L2 vocabulary.

Pedagogically, the findings of this study can be beneficial to L2 teachers in that they can employ a new approach in teaching vocabulary to lower-intermediate learners of English. They can change their traditional methods in teaching English language especially in teaching vocabulary. They can use the new methods to make students enjoy and relax in teaching learning process, and teachers not are confused anymore in choosing the appropriate technique to the students. Further, such learners of English can learn English vocabulary via a newer strategy devised by the teacher. Teaching vocabulary through picture word inductive model can make student relax and fun in teaching learning process, because with this method students can improve their learning vocabulary mastery easily without any difficulties and they can get the fun. Finally, material designers can take advantage of the results of this study to develop materials to teach basic vocabulary via picture-word interface.

1.3. Research Question and Hypothesis of the Study
Based on the problem stated above, the current study tried to answer the following question:
RQ: Does using Picture-Word-Induction Method (PWIM) enhance a higher knowledge of English lexicon among Iranian EFL Learners?
In keeping with the above research question, the following null hypothesis, accordingly, was formulated:
H0: Using Picture-Word-Induction Method (PWIM) does not enhance a higher knowledge of English lexicon among Iranian EFL Learners.

2. Review of the Literature
Given the importance of vocabulary to oral and written language comprehension (NICHD, 2000), it is astounding that in the past 25 years there have been very few quasi experimental or experimental studies focused on English vocabulary teaching among elementary-school language-minority children. This is in contrast to a wealth of research on vocabulary learning among monolingual English speakers, enough to justify the inclusion of vocabulary as a key component of reading instruction in the report of the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000). The National Reading Panel found over 45 experimental intervention studies focused on vocabulary.

Perez (1981) reported a study of the vocabulary learning of 75 language-minority Mexican third-graders. The children received 20-minute daily oral instruction in word meanings, focusing on compound words, synonyms, antonyms, and multiple meanings for about 3 months. One group received instruction in pronunciation of the words and memorization of definitions. A second group used the same list of words and focused on making semantic maps with the words, and making predictions of word meanings. A third group developed a matrix showing the relationships among the words and predicted word meanings. A fourth group completed the same chart as the third group, as well as completing cloze sentences.

The children in all groups were asked to complete written recalls about the social studies chapter on the second and third days of the lessons and again 4 weeks later. They also completed multiple-choice vocabulary tests. The group that constructed relationship maps and completed cloze sentences outperformed the group that worked on pronunciation and memorization of definitions. The former group also outperformed the pronunciation and memorization group on text recall. This study shows that active processing of word meanings leads to greater recall and understanding of word meanings, but it was only a brief learning trial using one list of words, so its long-term implications cannot be assessed.

Carlo et al. (2004) developed, implemented, and evaluated an intervention designed to build breadth and depth of word knowledge and reading comprehension in 254 bilingual and monolingual children from nine fifth-grade classrooms in four schools in California, Virginia, and Massachusetts. The intervention, which consisted of 15
weeks of instruction, was organized around the topic of immigration; the curriculum relied on a variety of text genres including newspaper articles, diaries, firsthand documentation of the immigrant experience, historical accounts, and fiction. Instruction was delivered for 30-45 minutes 4 days a week. Every fifth week was devoted to review of the previous 4 weeks’ target words.

Students’ classroom teachers were trained by the researchers to deliver the instruction. In accordance with research indicating words are best learned from rich semantic contexts, target vocabulary words were selected from brief, engaging reading passages. A relatively small number of vocabulary items were introduced each week (12); the words were those that students at this level were likely to encounter repeatedly across texts in different domains. Although there were relatively few words introduced each week, activities helped children make semantic links to other words and concepts and thus attain a deeper and richer understanding of a word’s meaning as well as learn other words and concepts related to the target word. In keeping with research-based best practice previously cited, the lessons also taught students to infer meanings from context and to use roots, affixes, cognates, morphological relationships, and comprehension monitoring.

Li (2011) conducted a study to assess the efficacy of the Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) in the acquisition of new English vocabulary for Swedish grade-4 pupils of a primary school in southern Sweden. In his study, two aspects of vocabulary acquisition were concerned, namely, the recognition of vocabulary forms (spelling and pronunciation) and general understanding of word meaning in the short term. The pupils were divided into two groups and the methods were tests; questionnaires and the data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. After teaching lessons with the PWIM for one group and with using the word-list for the other close-level group, the results showed that the group taught by the PWIM gained relatively higher test scores and performed more actively and found the lesson more enjoyable in the classroom. Teaching by the PWIM was found to be effective in learning the new English vocabulary of SLA (Second Language Acquisition). Although this efficacy was not prominent, a larger sample size and longer length of the cycles for the teaching of the PWIM would increase precision and would probably provide a different result for the efficacy of the PWIM in further studies.

3. Method
3.1. Participants
The participants of this study were 60 lower-intermediate Iranian EFL learners at Shokuh English institute of Roudsar branch. They were aged range 12-16 and no control of sex, who were selected randomly from among 100 learners based on the results of an OPT administered. The Mean and SD were calculated and eventually 60 learners with the score of 1 SD below and above the mean were selected to participate in this study. They were divided into two groups of 30 and were randomly assigned to the experimental group as well as control group.

3.2. Materials
Four sources of materials were used in the current study: The OPT material for proficiency, the material for the pretest of the study, the material for the treatment of the study and lastly, the material for posttest of the study. The OPT used in this study consisted of 60 multiple-choice items including vocabulary and grammar and one writing section. For each section, participants were asked to answer the question in the specified answers sheet. The answers were then collected and scored by the researcher.

The pretest of the study consisted of 20 multiple-choice items of vocabulary. The source for making the pretest was a lower intermediate book entitled, Intro Interchange (by Jack C. Richards, 2005). The material for posttest of the study consisted of 20 multiple-choice items of vocabulary. Since the study here was aimed at indicating the degree of progress from the pretest to the posttest in the experimental group of the study in which teaching vocabulary by PWIM method being applied, the same test was administered in both the experimental and control groups. The reliability of pretest and posttest were determined through inter-rater reliability of three professors as to be 0.71.

3.3. Procedure
The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of participants’ proficiency was a paper-pencil test. Hence, a hundred participants had to answer the questions in specified answer sheets. The time allowed was 70 minutes as had been determined in the OPT. After that 60 participants among those whose scoring were at least one standard deviation below the mean were selected. Then, they were divided into two groups randomly. They were the experimental and the control groups of the current study.
The pretest of the study consisted of 20 multiple-choice items of vocabulary. The time allocation for the vocabulary pretest was about 30 minutes. This test was administered between two groups of the study. Both groups gave a pretest of basic vocabulary then they were taught basic vocabulary for 5 sessions and every session time duration was 45 minutes, the teacher was the researcher and the experimental group took the 33 basic words interfaced with the picture and the control group had no picture interfaced teaching. In the experimental group, the teacher showed a picture to participants and pointing to words from the picture. Traced the line from the picture to the words; the teacher read each word out loud and spell them one by one. The learners were asked to read them out one by one and spell the words (Repeat reading them aloud); explaining the meaning in English. In the control group the teacher gave out the new word-list that they did not know. The teacher read each word out loud and spell them one by one. Then, the learners were asked to read them out one by one and spell the words (Repeat reading them aloud); explain the meaning in English.

The post-test data were analyzed to discover which group had a better performance in new English vocabulary acquisition after the teaching. The posttest of the study consisted of 20 multiple-choice items of vocabulary. The time allocation for the vocabulary posttest was about 30 minutes. This test was administered between two groups of the study. The criterion for scoring the pretest and the posttest of the study was 20.

4. Results

The data obtained from testing hypothesis of the study were analyzed via calculating a t-test between the posttests lexical knowledge of the experimental and control groups of the study and the one-way ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance) between the pretest and posttest of the experimental and control group of the study.

As table (1) indicates, the number of participants has been 30 in each group. The mean for the +PWIM scores was shown to be 17.0333 as compared to the mean for the -PWIM scores which was 14.4000. As for the standard deviations, there seems to be more variability among the -PWIM scores than the scores in the +PWIM.

Table 2. The t-test results of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-Test Results</th>
<th>Observed t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
<td>4.911</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance not assumed</td>
<td>4.911</td>
<td>55.921</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (2) indicates that the t-value was calculated between the posttests of lexical knowledge in the experimental and the control groups. The observed t value was calculated as to be 4.911 and the degree of freedom was 55.921 while the critical value of t determined on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of 0.05 was 2.000 (t_{crit} = 2.000). Thus, the observed t was higher than the critical t and great enough to reject the null hypothesis of the current study. At last, the level of significance was calculated as to be 0.000.

Table 3. The covariance table for the pretest and the posttest scores of the experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>91.948</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>91.948</td>
<td>285.469</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>85.899</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>85.899</td>
<td>266.689</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PreEXPosEX</td>
<td>91.948</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>91.948</td>
<td>285.469</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>9.019</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the table (3) indicates, the covariance between the two sets of pretest and posttest scores in experimental group is 285.469 which is greater than 1. So, there is significance difference between the pretest scores and posttest scores of experimental group. The level of significance is 0.000 which is lower than 0.05.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>4.765</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.765</td>
<td>4.599</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PreCONPosCON</td>
<td>120.186</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>120.186</td>
<td>115.987</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>29.014</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.036</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6370.000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>149.200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>149.200</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (4) shows that the covariance between the two sets of pretest and posttest scores in the control group is 115.987 which is higher than 1 and level of significance is 0.000. It can be concluded that the control group of the study has little change or low progress as a result of being treated without teaching vocabulary through PWIM method.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The results in tables (2), (3) and (4) indicated that the hypothesis of the study which targeted the effect of using Picture-Word-Induction Method (PWIM) on the knowledge of English lexicon among Iranian EFL Learners was rejected. The rejection of the hypothesis of the study indicated that Using Picture-Word-Induction Method (PWIM) enhanced a higher knowledge of English lexicon among Iranian EFL Learners in the experimental group of the study.

The findings of this study are in line with Joyce and Calhoun (1998) who believed that the Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) is an effective teaching method to enhance the acquisition of English vocabulary both for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) learners and young English-speaking learners. In addition, based on the pupils’ vocabulary level, this model can be adopted by teachers to further the development of children’s reading and writing skills. Moreover, the findings support Steingar and Glock (1979) state that learners can alternatively create their own mental images of a word’s meaning.

The findings of this study can be beneficial to L2 teachers in that they can employ a new approach in teaching vocabulary to lower-intermediate learners of English. They can use the new methods to make students enjoy and relax in teaching learning process, and teachers not are confused anymore in choosing the appropriate technique to the students. Further, such learners of English can learn English vocabulary via a newer strategy devised by the teacher. Teaching vocabulary through picture word inductive model can make student relax and fun in teaching learning process. Finally, material designers can take advantage of the results of this study to develop materials to teach basic vocabulary via PWIM interface.

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HOW CHILDREN ACQUIRE LANGUAGE
A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT
One of the most significant current studies of the past decade in developmental psychology has been the acquisition of language by children. This article aims to review the literature on how children acquire language. The capacity to acquire and use language is a key aspect that distinguishes humans from other beings. Although it is difficult to pin down what aspects of language are uniquely human, there are a few design features that can be found in all known forms of human language, but that are missing from forms of animal communication. The ability to successfully use language requires one to acquire a range of tools including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and an extensive vocabulary. Language can be vocalized as in speech or manual as in sign. The human language capacity is represented in the brain. Even though the human language capacity is finite, one can say and understand an infinite number of sentences, which is based on a syntactic principle called recursion. Evidence suggests that every individual has three recursive mechanisms that allow sentences to go indeterminately. These three mechanisms are: relativization, complementation and coordination (Lightfoot 2010). Furthermore, there are actually two main guiding principles in first-language acquisition, that is, speech perception always precedes speech production and the gradually evolving system by which a child learns a language is built up one step at a time, beginning with the distinction between individual phonemes (Fry 1977).

Key words: Acquisition, Behavior, Children, Development, Iran, language

Introduction
All children acquire language in the same way, regardless of what language they use or the number of languages they use. Acquiring a language is like learning to play a game. Children must learn the rules of the language game, for example how to articulate words and how to put them together in ways that are acceptable to the people around them. In order to understand child language acquisition, we need to keep two very important things in mind: First, children do not use language like adults, because children are not adults. Acquiring language is a gradual, lengthy process, and one that involves a lot of apparent ‘errors’. We see that these ‘errors’ are in fact not errors at all, but a necessary part of the process of language acquisition. That is, they shouldn't be corrected, because they will disappear in time. Second, children will learn to speak the dialect(s) and language(s) that are used around them. Children usually begin by speaking like their parents, but once they start to mix with other children (especially from the age of about 3 years) they start to speak like friends their own age. You cannot control the way your children speak: they will develop their own accents and they will learn the languages they think they need.

Children will come up with the most extraordinary things when they start using language. Cute things, hilarious things and, sometimes, baffling things that may start us wondering whether we should worry about their language development. Like the rest of us, children are individuals. What makes them different from adults, as a whole, is that children are reared in adult worlds according to adult expectations. Children learn to model their behavior on what goes on around them, be it dress codes, body language, table manners or language uses, usually first through their caregivers and later through peers in their family, neighborhood or school. That is, children are learning how to function adequately in their environment, and much of this learning takes place through language itself. We talk to children to tell them about our adult world and they learn about the world from what we tell them. But they also
learn about our language, from how we use it to tell them about other things. This means that language learning is going on whenever language is used around children. Philosophers in ancient societies were interested in how humans acquired the ability to understand and produce language well before empirical methods for testing those theories were developed, but for the most part they seemed to regard language acquisition as a subset of man's ability to acquire knowledge and learn concepts ("Innateness and Language", Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Some early, observation based ideas about language acquisition were proposed by Plato, who felt that word-meaning mapping in some form was innate. Additionally, Sanskrit grammarians debated for over twelve centuries whether humans' ability to recognize the meaning of words was god-given (possibly innate) or passed down by previous generations and learned from already established conventions—e.g. a child learning the word for cow by listening to trusted speakers talking about cows (Matilal 1990).

B. F. Skinner

Proponents of Behaviorism argued that language may be learned through a form of operant conditioning. In B. F. Skinner's *Verbal Behavior* (1957), he suggested that the successful use of a sign, such as a word or lexical unit, given a certain stimulus, reinforces its "momentary" or contextual probability. Since operant conditioning is contingent on reinforcement by rewards, a child would learn that a specific combination of sounds stands for a specific thing through repeated successful associations made between the two. A "successful" use of a sign would be one in which the child is understood (for example, a child saying "up" when he or she wants to be picked up) and rewarded with the desired response from another person, thereby reinforcing the child's understanding of the meaning of that word and making it more likely that he or she will use that word in a similar situation in the future.

Noam Chomsky

Skinner's behaviorist idea was strongly attacked by Noam Chomsky in a review article in 1959, calling it "largely mythology" and a "serious delusion". Chomsky believed Skinner failed to account for the central role of syntactic knowledge in language competence. Chomsky also rejected the term "learning," which Skinner used to claim that children "learn" language through operant conditioning (Harris 1992). Instead, Chomsky argued for a mathematical approach to language acquisition, based on a study of syntax. A major debate in understanding language acquisition is how these capacities are picked up by infants from the linguistic input (Kennison 2013). Input in the linguistic context is defined as "All words, contexts, and other forms of language to which a learner is exposed, relative to acquired proficiency in first or second languages". Nativists such as Noam Chomsky have focused on the hugely complex nature of human grammars, the finiteness and ambiguity of the input that children receive, and the relatively limited cognitive abilities of an infant. From these characteristics, they conclude that the process of language acquisition in infants must be tightly constrained and guided by the biologically given characteristics of the human brain. Otherwise, they argue, it is extremely difficult to explain how children, within the first five years of life, routinely master the complex, largely tacit grammatical rules of their native language (Sakai 2005).

Lev Vygotsky

An explanation of language development emphasizing the role of social interaction between the developing child and linguistically knowledgeable adults is based largely on the socio-cultural theories of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, and made prominent in the Western world by Jerome Bruner. Unlike other approaches, it emphasizes the role of feedback and reinforcement in language acquisition. Specifically, it asserts that much of a child's linguistic growth stems from modeling of and interaction with parents and other adults, who very frequently provide instructive correction (Moerk 1994). It is thus somewhat similar to behaviorist accounts of language, though it differs substantially in that it posits the existence of a social-cognitive model and other mental structures within children (a sharp contrast to the "black box" approach of classical behaviorism). Another key idea within the theory of social interactionism is that of the zone of proximal development. Briefly, this is a theoretical construct denoting the set of tasks a child is capable of performing with guidance, but not alone (Vygotsky 1935). As applied to language, it describes the set of linguistic tasks (proper syntax, suitable vocabulary usage, etc.) a child cannot carry out on their own at a given time, but can learn to carry out if assisted by an able adult.
Hayes, Barnes-Holmes, Roche, 2001
The relational frame theory (RFT) provides a wholly selectionist/learning account of the origin and development of language competence and complexity. Based upon the principles of Skinnerian behaviorism, RFT posits that children acquire language purely through interacting with the environment. RFT theorists introduced the concept of functional contextualism in language learning, which emphasizes the importance of predicting and influencing psychological events, such as thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, by focusing on manipulable variables in their context. RFT distinguishes itself from Skinner's work by identifying and defining a particular type of operant conditioning known as derived relational responding, a learning process that, to date, appears to occur only in humans possessing a capacity for language. Empirical studies supporting the predictions of RFT suggest that children learn language via a system of inherent reinforcements, challenging the view that language acquisition is based upon innate, language-specific cognitive capacities (Hayes, Barnes, Holmes, Roche, ed. 2001).

Brian MacWhinney
MacWhinney's competition model, posits that language acquisition is a cognitive process that emerges from the interaction of biological pressures and the environment. According to these theories, neither nature nor nurture alone is sufficient to trigger language learning; both of these influences must work together in order to allow children to acquire a language. The proponents of these theories argue that general cognitive processes sub serve language acquisition and that the end result of these processes is language-specific phenomena, such as word learning and grammar acquisition. The findings of many empirical studies support the predictions of these theories, suggesting that language acquisition is a more complex process than many believe (MacWhinney, ed. 1999).

Syntax
As syntax began to be studied more closely in the early 20th century, in relation to language learning, it became apparent to linguists, psychologists, and philosophers that knowing a language was not merely a matter of associating words with concepts, but that a critical aspect of language involves knowledge of how to put words together—sentences are usually needed in order to communicate successfully, not just isolated words ("Innateness and Language" Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). In this stage, the child will at first use short expressions such as Bye-bye Mummy or All-gone milk, which actually are combinations of individual nouns and an operator (Fry 1977), before it begins to use gradually more complex sentences. When acquiring a language, it is also often found that the most frequently used verbs, such as those in the English language, are irregular verbs. These verbs do not follow the most regular pattern in order to form the past tense. Young children first begin to learn the past tense of verbs individually; however, when they acquire a "rule", such as adding -ed to form the past tense, they begin to exhibit occasional overgeneralization errors (e.g. "runned", "hitted") alongside correct past-tense forms. One influential proposal is that over-regularization errors occur when the child does not succeed in retrieving an irregular past-tense form quickly enough from long-term memory: In both children and adults, when the speaker does not recall an irregular form, the regular rule applies (Marcus, G., Pinker, S., Ullman, M., Hollander, M., Rosen, T. J. & Xu, F. 1992), and (Carlson, Heth, 2007).

Principles and Parameters
Generative grammar, associated especially with the work of Noam Chomsky, is currently one of the approaches to children's acquisition of syntax (Martin, Crain 1999). The leading idea is that human biology imposing narrow constraints on the child's "hypothesis space" during language acquisition. In the Principles and Parameters Framework, which has dominated generative syntax since Chomsky's (1980) Lectures on Government and Binding: The Pisa Lectures, the acquisition of syntax resembles ordering from a menu: The human brain comes equipped with a limited set of choices, from which the child selects the correct options using her parents' speech, in combination with the context (Baker 2002).
An important argument, which favors the generative approach, is the Poverty of the stimulus argument. The child's input (a finite number of sentences encountered by the child, together with information about the context in which they were uttered) is, in principle, compatible with an infinite number of conceivable grammars. Moreover, few, if any, children can rely on corrective feedback from adults when they make a grammatical error (Brown, Roger, 1970). Yet, barring situations of medical abnormality or extreme privation, all the children in a given speech-community converge on very much the same grammar by the age of about five years. An especially dramatic example is provided by children who, for medical reasons, are unable to produce speech, and, therefore, can never
be corrected for a grammatical error, yet; nonetheless, converge on the same grammar as their typically developing peers, according to comprehension-based tests of grammar (Lenneberg 1967), Stromswold 2009). Considerations such as these have led Chomsky, Jerry Fodor, Eric Lenneberg and others to argue that the types of grammar the child needs to consider must be narrowly constrained by human biology (the nativist position) Chomsky (1975). These innate constraints are sometimes referred to as universal grammar, the human "language faculty", or the "language instinct" (Pinker 2007).

Language Acquisition Device
Although Chomsky’s theory of a generative grammar has been enormously influential in the field of linguistics since the 1950s, many criticisms of the basic assumptions of generative theory have been put forth by cognitive-functional linguists, who argue that language structure is created through language use (Tomasello 2003). These linguists argue that the concept of a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) is unsupported by evolutionary anthropology, which tends to show a gradual adaptation of the human brain and vocal cords to the use of language, rather than a sudden appearance of a complete set of binary parameters delineating the whole spectrum of possible grammars ever to have existed and ever to exist (Mameli, Bateson Feb 2011). On the other hand, cognitive-functional theorists use this anthropological data to show how human beings have evolved the capacity for grammar and syntax to meet our demand for linguistic symbols. (Binary parameters are common to digital computers, but may not be applicable to neurological systems such as the human brain.)

Further, the generative theory has several hypothetical constructs (such as movement, empty categories, complex underlying structures, and strict binary branching) that cannot possibly be acquired from any amount of linguistic input. It is unclear that human language is actually anything like the generative conception of it. Since language, as imagined by nativists, is unlearnably complex, subscribers to this theory argue that it must, therefore, be innate. A different theory of language, however, may yield different conclusions. While all theories of language acquisition posit some degree of innateness, a less convoluted theory might involve less innate structure and more learning. Under such a theory of grammar, the input, combined with both general and language-specific learning capacities, might be sufficient for acquisition.

Since 1980, linguists studying children, such as Melissa Bowerman, and psychologists following Jean Piaget, like Elizabeth Bates and Jean Mandler, came to suspect that there may indeed be many learning processes involved in the acquisition process, and that ignoring the role of learning may have been a mistake. In recent years, the debate surrounding the nativist position has centered on whether the inborn capabilities are language-specific or domain-general, such as those that enable the infant to visually make sense of the world in terms of objects and actions. The anti-nativist view has many strands, but a frequent theme is that language emerges from usage in social contexts, using learning mechanisms that are a part of a general cognitive learning apparatus (which is what is innate). This position has been championed by David Powers, Elizabeth Bates, Catherine Snow, Anat Ninio, Brian MacWhinney, Michael Tomasello, Michael Ramscar, William O'Grady, and others. Philosophers, such as Fiona Cowie and Barbara Scholz with Geoffrey Pullum have also argued against certain nativist claims in support of empiricism.

Statistical learning theory
Some language acquisition researchers, such as Elissa Newport, Richard Aslin, and Jenny Saffran, emphasize the possible roles of general learning mechanisms, especially statistical learning, in language acquisition. The development of connectionist models that are able to successfully learn words and syntactical conventions (Seidenberg, McClelland 1989) supports the predictions of statistical learning theories of language acquisition, as do empirical studies of children's detection of word boundaries (Saffran and Aslin 1996).

Statistical learning theory suggests that, when learning language, a learner would use the natural statistical properties of language to deduce its structure, including sound patterns, words, and the beginnings of grammar (Saffran 2003). That is, language learners are sensitive to how often syllable combinations or words occur in relation to other syllables (Saffran, Aslin, 1996), Graf Estes, Alibali, Saffran 2007), (Lany, Saffran 2010). Infants between 21 months and 23 months old are also able to use statistical learning to develop "lexical categories," such as an animal category, which infants might later map to newly learned words in the same category. These findings suggest that early experience listening to language is critical to vocabulary acquisition (Lany, Saffran 2010). The statistical abilities are effective, but also limited by what qualifies as input, what is done with that input, and by the structure of the resulting output (Saffran, 2003). One should also note that statistical learning (and more broadly, distributional learning) can be accepted as a component of language acquisition by researchers on either
side of the "nature and nurture" debate. From the perspective of that debate, an important question is whether statistical learning can, by itself, serve as an alternative to nativist explanations for the grammatical constraints of human language.

**Chunking theories of language acquisition**

Chunking theories of language acquisition constitute a group of theories related to statistical learning theories, in that they assume the input from the environment plays an essential role; however, they postulate different learning mechanisms. The central idea of these theories is that language development occurs through the incremental acquisition of meaningful chunks of elementary constituents, which can be words, phonemes, or syllables. Recently, this approach has been highly successful in simulating several phenomena in the acquisition of syntactic categories (Freudenthal, Pine 2005), and the acquisition of phonological knowledge (Jones, Pine 2007). The approach has several features that make it unique: the models are implemented as computer programs, which enable clear-cut and quantitative predictions to be made; they learn from naturalistic input, made of actual child-directed utterances; they produce actual utterances, which can be compared with children's utterances; and they have simulated phenomena in several languages, including English, Spanish, and German.

Researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology have developed a computer model analyzing early toddler conversations to predict the structure of later conversations. They showed that toddlers develop their own individual rules for speaking with slots, into which they could put certain kinds of words. A significant outcome of the research was that rules inferred from toddler speech were better predictors of subsequent speech than traditional grammars (Bannard, Lieven 2009).

**Language acquisition in the brain**

Recent advances in functional neuroimaging technology have allowed for a better understanding of how language acquisition is manifested physically in the brain. Language acquisition almost always occurs in children during a period of rapid increase in brain volume. At this point in development, a child has many more neural connections than he or she will have as an adult, allowing for the child to be more able to learn new things than he or she would be as an adult.

**Sensitive period**

Language acquisition has been studied from the perspective of developmental psychology and neuroscience (White, Hutka, 2013), which looks at learning to use and understand language parallel to a child's brain development. It has been determined, through empirical research on developmentally normal children, as well as through some extreme cases of language deprivation, that there is a "sensitive period" of language acquisition in which human infants have the ability to learn any language. Several findings have observed that from birth until the age of six months, infants can discriminate the phonetic contrasts of all languages. Researchers believe that this gives infants the ability to acquire the language spoken around them. After this age the child is only able to perceive the phonemes specific to the language he or she is learning. This reduced phonemic sensitivity enables children to build phonemic categories and recognize stress patterns and sound combinations specific to the language they are acquiring (Kuhl, Stevens, Hayashi, 2006). As Wilder Penfield noted, "Before the child begins to speak and to perceive, the uncommitted cortex is a blank slate on which nothing has been written. In the ensuing years much is written, and the writing is normally never erased. After the age of ten or twelve, the general functional connections have been established and fixed for the speech cortex." According to the sensitive or critical period models, the age at which a child acquires the ability to use language is a predictor of how well he or she is ultimately able to use language. However, there may be an age at which becoming a fluent and natural user of a language is no longer possible. Our brains may be automatically wired to learn languages, but this ability does not last into adulthood in the same way that it exists during development. By the onset of puberty (around age 12), language acquisition has typically been solidified and it becomes more difficult to learn a language in the same way a native speaker would. At this point, it is usually a second language that a person is trying to acquire and not a first (Sakai 2005).

This critical period is almost never missed by cognitively normal children – humans are so well prepared to learn language that it becomes almost impossible not to. Researchers are unable to experimentally test the effects of the sensitive period of development on language acquisition, because it would be unethical to deprive children of language until this period is over. However, case studies on abused, language deprived children show that they were extremely limited in their language skills, even after instruction (Curtiss 1977).
At a very young age, children can already distinguish between different sounds but cannot produce them yet. However, during infancy, children do begin to babble. Deaf babies babble in the same order when hearing sounds as non-deaf babies do, thus showing that babbling is not caused by babies simply imitating certain sounds, but is actually a natural part of the process of language development. However, deaf babies do often babble less than non-deaf babies and they begin to babble later on in infancy (begin babbling at 11 months as compared to 6 months) when compared to non-deaf babies (Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner, Daniel 2009, 2011).

Learning vocabulary
The capacity to acquire the ability to incorporate the pronunciation of new words depends upon many factors. Before anything the learner needs to be able to hear what they are attempting to pronounce. Another is the capacity to engage in speech repetition (Bloom, Hood, Lichtbown 1974), (Miller, 1977), (Masur 1995), (Gathercole, Baddeley 1989). Children with reduced abilities to repeat non-words (a marker of speech repetition abilities) show a slower rate of vocabulary expansion than children for whom this is easy (Gathercole 2006). It has been proposed that the elementary units of speech have been selected to enhance the ease with which sound and visual input can be mapped into motor vocalization (Skoyles, 1998). Several computational models of vocabulary acquisition have been proposed so far (Gupta, MacWhinney 1997), (Regier 2003, 2005), (Hadzibeganovic, Cannas 2009), (Roy, Pentland 2002), (Fazly, Alishahi, Stevenson 2010), (Yu, Ballard 2007). Various studies have shown that the size of a child's vocabulary by the age of 24 months correlates with the child's future development and language skills. A lack of language richness by this age has detrimental and long-term effects on the child's cognitive development, which is why it is so important for parents to engage their infants in language. If a child knows fifty words or less by the age of 24 months, he or she is classified as a late-talker and future language development, like vocabulary expansion and the organization of grammar, is likely to be slower and stunted. Two more crucial elements of vocabulary acquisition are word segmentation and statistical learning (described above). Word segmentation or the segmentation of words and syllables from fluent speech can be accomplished by eight-month-old infants (Safran, Aslin, 1996). By the time infants are 17-months-old, they are able to link meaning to segmented words (Graf, Katharine, Evans, Alibali, Safran 2007).

Learning semantics
Children learn, on average, ten to fifteen new word meanings each day, but only one of these words can be accounted for by direct instruction. The other nine to fourteen word meanings need to be picked up in some other way. It has been proposed that children acquire these meanings with the use of processes modeled by latent semantic analysis; that is, when they meet an unfamiliar word, children can use information in its context to correctly guess its rough area of meaning (Landauer, Dumais, 1997). A child may expand the meaning and use of certain words that are already part of its mental lexicon in order to denote anything that is somehow related but for which it does not know the specific words yet. For instance, a child may broaden the use of mummy and dada in order to indicate anything that belongs to its mother or father, or perhaps every person who resembles its own parents, or say rain while meaning I don't want to go out (Fry 1977). There is also reason to believe that children use various heuristics to properly infer the meaning of words. Markman and others have proposed that children assume words to refer to objects with similar properties (e.g., "cow" and "pig" might both be "animals") rather than to objects that are thematically related (e.g., "cow" and "milk" are probably not both "animals"). Children also seem to adhere to the "whole object assumption" — thinking that a novel label refers to an entire entity rather than one of its parts (Markman, 1990).

Neurocognition
During early infancy, language processing seems to occur over many areas in the brain. However, over time, it gradually becomes concentrated into two areas - Broca's area and Wernicke's area. Broca's area is in the left frontal cortex and is primarily involved in the production of the patterns in vocal and sign language. Wernicke's area is in the left temporal cortex and is primarily involved in language comprehension. The specialization of these language centers is so extensive that damage to them results in a critical condition known as aphasia (Schacter, Daniel, Gilbert, Daniel, Wegner, Daniel 2011).

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SENTENCE CONTEXTUALIZATION Vs. TABULAR TEACHING OF PARTS OF SPEECH: THE EFFECT ON IRANIAN UPPER INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS’ KNOWLEDGE OF GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the effect of sentence contextualization vs. tabular teaching of parts of speech on Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners’ knowledge of grammatical function. To this end, 80 subjects were selected and participated to an OPT test. The purpose of OPT test was to homogenize the participants based on their proficiency level. Then 40 students above and below the mean were selected and assigned in two groups, experimental and control twenty each. Both groups sat to a pre-test of grammar. The purpose of such a test was to measure the initial subject knowledge of the learners in grammar. Afterward, the control group approached regular method (traditional) of teaching grammar. However, the experimental group received treatment based on sentence contextualization. Finally, both groups sat for a post-test of listening comprehension. Then, a paired sample t-test was run to examine the difference between the mean scores of each group in post tests.

Key words: sentence contextualization, parts of speech, grammar

Introduction
Views of grammar have changed over years. As Nunan (2003) mentioned grammar has had a checkered history in the language classroom. In the past thirty years, language teaching and teaching grammar were synonymous in the most language classrooms. The initial goal of teaching was to ensure that learners mastered the grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary of the language. In many perspectives, many foreign language programs and teaching materials are based on a linear model of language acquisition. This model operates on the premise that learners acquire one target language item at a time, in a sequential, step-by-step fashion. However, such a model is inconsistent with what is observed as learners go about the process of acquiring another language.

Celce-Murcia (2001) believes to the integration of grammar and communication. She claimed that grammar is not a discrete set of meaningless, decontextualized, static structures. Grammatical structures not only have form, they are also used to express meaning in context-appropriate use. According to Nunan (1998) in textbooks, grammar is very often presented out of context. Learners are given isolated sentences, which they are expected to internalize through exercises involving repetition, manipulation, and grammatical transformation. These exercises are designed to provide learners with formal, declarative mastery, but unless they provide opportunities for learners to explore grammatical structures in context, they make the task of developing procedural skill being able to use the language for communication more difficult than it needs to be, because learners are denied the opportunity of seeing the systematic relationships that exist between form, meaning, and use. If learners are not given opportunities to explore grammar in context, it will be difficult for them to see how and why alternative forms exist to express different communicative meanings.

Therefore we need an approach through which they learn how to form structures correctly, and also how to use them to communicate meaning. Such a methodology will show learners how to use grammar to get things done, socialize, obtain goods and services, and express their personality through language. In other words, it will show them how to achieve their communicative ends through the appropriate deployment of grammatical resources.

Statement of the Problem
According to Ellis (2006), grammar teaching involves any instructional technique that draws learners’ attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it. According to Moghaddas (2009) contextualization has been corroborated to have tremendous and profound impact on learners’ different language skills.

Learning the grammar of a foreign language is considered to be important in Iran, and grammar is usually taught and assessed with a discrete point approach. In fact, at many institutions in Iran, teachers equate teaching English with teaching grammar; the syllabus they follow is a grammar-based syllabus. Moreover, these teachers are seen as “knowledge imparters” who introduce grammar deductively, and who ask their students to do drill-like exercises after giving the rules and explanations; basically, a shortened version of PPP model in which presentation and practice are provided. However, there are signs that grammar instruction may be changing.

Research Questions
The present study tried to investigate the effect of sentence contextualization tasks on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of English parts of speech. To fulfill the objective of the study, the following research question was proposed:

1. Does using the sentential contextualization task have any effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of English parts of speech?

Research Hypothesis
To fulfill the aim of the study practically through the above mentioned research design, the following null hypothesis has been considered:

HO: Using the sentential contextualization task has no effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of English Parts of Speech.

Methodology
The design of the study was quasi-experimental design, which is a pre-post test design.

Participants
The target population of this study was 80 out of which 40 learners were selected as samples to attend the research and the rest were excluded from the study. The participants were upper-intermediate students who were learning English in a private language institutes in Rasht. They were all native speakers of Farsi and all above 15 years old. All of them were female. In fact, gender was not a matter under investigation. In order to homogenize the participants and make sure they were at the same English proficiency level, an Oxford Placement Test (which is a standardized test and there is no need for the reliability and validity to be tested) was conducted on 80 learners, their papers were scored, the Mean and SD were calculated and eventually 40 learners with the score of 1 SD above and below the mean were selected to participate in the research. Then, they were divided randomly into two groups, i.e. control and experimental groups.

Instruments
Different instrument was used in this study. First, Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to 80 EFL learners in order to select a homogeneous sample. The test comprised different types of items including both the components and skills of the English language. This placement test included three parts. Part one and two consist of 60 multiple-choice question items, and in part three, they were supposed to write writing. Second, Pre-test of parts of speech was administered. The pretest was taken by both groups. It included 40 multiple-choice question items, which the students were supposed to answer by choosing one option among three other options. Finally, the posttest which was of a parallel construct as the pretest was used.

Procedure
In order to collect data for this study several steps was taken. First, to select the main sample, the standardized Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to 80 EFL students. Based on the result of OPT test 40 students above and below the mean were selected. Then, 20 students were assigned to experimental group and 20 to control group.
To find the initial knowledge of the both groups a pre-test of parts of speech was administered. The students answered to 50 multiple choice questions in 45 minutes. Afterward, the treatment was done for the experimental group whereas the control group received no treatment and the traditional procedure of teaching was followed. The experimental group received 6 sessions of treatment. In each session teacher taught the grammar in context by conducting sentence contextualization task. According to Weaver (1996) teaching grammar in isolation does not seem to have much effect on the writing of more than a few students. Therefore, A focus on sentence generating, combining, and manipulating is much more helpful for learners than traditional grammar instruction Hillocks and Smith (1991, pp. 591-603).

The allocated time for treatment was 30 minutes at each session. After treatment sessions, to be sure of the efficiency of the treatment, the researcher administered a post-test, both to the experimental and the control group. The post-test was identical to the pre-test as it had the same type of items, number, and structure.

Data Analysis
Simplified and basic information collected in this study provide the tools in making meaning out of the data. The collected data were coded and entered into the SPSS (a statistics computer program) to analyze the raw data. Pre-test was administered before starting the treatment to measure their grammar knowledge in each group. After presenting the treatment, post test (which was the same as the pre-test) was administered to determine the extent of the progress in two groups and to test the effectiveness of the treatments in experimental group. Also, Pearson Correlation was used to compare the performance of the participants in experimental group on the pre-test and post-test of parts of speech. To compare the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups on parts of speech tests, independent samples t-test was used.

Results
This section focuses on the descriptive analysis of the obtained data in this study. Such analysis was done using the SPSS software. To find out the differences between the experimental and the control groups on the grammar, their posttest scores were compared. The results are presented below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of Speech</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical Function</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Contextualization</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.9750</td>
<td>2.48932</td>
<td>.55663</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.1625</td>
<td>2.65726</td>
<td>.59418</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabular Teaching</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.1625</td>
<td>2.65726</td>
<td>.59418</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is indicated in table1 the mean for the POS grammar (posttest of grammar) scores of experimental group was shown to be 15.9750 ($\bar{X}_{POS} = 15.9750$) as compared to the mean for the POS grammar (posttest of grammar) scores of control group which was 14.1625 ($\bar{X}_{POS} = 14.1625$) and the SD for each experimental and control group is ($SD_{Exp} = 2.48, SD_{Con} = 2.65$).

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (or Pearson correlation coefficient, for short) is a measure of the strength of a linear association between two variables and is denoted by $r$. Basically, Pearson product-moment correlation was used to draw a line of best fit through the data of two variables.

| Table2. Pearson correlation between the pretest and the posttest of the experimental |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| PreEX | PosEX |

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As shown in Table 2, the correlation coefficient in experimental group is \((r=0.4)\) which is lower than 0.5. Therefore, there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental group’s performance in the pretest and posttest. On the other hand, the significant figure is \((\text{Sig}=0.04)\) which is lower than 0.05. This implies that the sentential contextualization task has been effective in helping the language learners in the experimental group to perform better on grammar.

As the correlation coefficient in control group is \((r=0.9)\) and is more than 0.5; therefore, the pre and post test scores in control group are close to each other. This implies that there was no improvement in control group. Respectively, the significance level was calculated between the pretest and the posttest of the control group as to be 0.00 \((\text{Sig}_{\text{2-tailed}}=0.00)\), so no degree of progress in the control group had been predicted.

### Table 3. Pearson correlation between the pretest and the posttest of the control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PreCON</th>
<th>PosCON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.997**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the grammar scores for the experimental and control groups in posttest. The observed \(t\) value calculated by the SPSS was 2.226 \((t_{\text{obs}}=2.226)\) while the critical value of \(t\) determined on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of \((P=0.05)\) was 2.02 \((t_{\text{crit}}=2.02)\). Thus, the observed \(t\) was higher than the critical \(t\) and high enough to reject the null hypothesis of this study.

### Table 4. Independent Sample T-Test result of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical Function</th>
<th>Equal variances assumed</th>
<th>Equal variances not assumed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(t)</td>
<td>2.226</td>
<td>2.226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(df)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37.839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of data analysis for this study demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the participants’ performance on grammar tests. It was found that the sentential contextualization task has effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of English Parts of Speech. As a result, the null hypothesis as using the sentential contextualization task has no effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of English Parts of Speech was rejected.
of considering the 2-tailed significance level of 0.05 (P = 0.05) was 2.02 (t_{crit} = 2.02). Thus, the observed t was higher than the critical t and high enough to reject the null hypothesis of this study.

The second evidence to verify the rejection of the hypothesis was the value of the level of significance calculated by the SPSS to be 0.000 (Significance_{2-tailed} = 0.000). Since this value was lower than 0.05 (based on the SPSS regulations), the difference between the means of the posttests of the study could not be by chance, and thus, the rejection of hypothesis of the study indicated that using sentential contextualization task would enhance the knowledge of English parts of speech of the participants of the experimental group of the study.

The rejection of the hypothesis of the study could also be supported by showing the experimental group participants’ progress from the pretest to the posttest. Similarly, the Pearson Correlation Matrix indicated that the correlation coefficient between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group of the study was much lower than the corresponding coefficient in the control group. Thus, it could be concluded that there was no significant relationship between the pretest and posttest scores in the experimental group. This showed that using sentential contextualization task affected the participants’ knowledge of English parts of speech and made the posttest of grammar higher than the pretest scores in the experimental group.

A further evidence for the rejection of the hypothesis of the study was the control group participants’ lack of progress from the pretest to the posttest. The posttest scores of grammar were significantly close to the pretest scores in the control group and indicated that not using sentence contextualization task did not affect the participants’ knowledge of parts of speech and caused the posttest scores to stand as close as possible.

Similarly, the Pearson Correlation Matrix indicated that the correlation coefficient between the pretest and posttest scores of the control group of the study was much higher than the corresponding coefficient in the experimental group. Thus, it could be concluded that there was a significant relationship between the pretest and posttest scores in the control group. This showed that not using sentence contextualization task did not affect the participants’ knowledge of parts of speech and did not change the posttest of grammar significantly as compared with the pretest scores in the control group.

Discussion
The present research cast light on one of the problematic aspects of EFL teaching/learning, namely grammar. The purpose of the present study was to assess the impact of sentential contextualization task on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of English parts of speech. As it was shown in previous chapter, sentential contextualization has positive effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of parts of speech. So, the findings of this study is in line with Giunchi (1990) who stated, grammar is useful for the acquisition of a foreign language, but a pedagogical model of grammar should be proposed, which has the main aim of the internalization of the language system. Based on Widodo (2006) teaching grammar in isolation is not favorable for learners. Benander & Roach (1995), believed that teaching grammar as an isolated topic is not useful because grammar must be taught in the context to help the learners to create meaning out of context. Larsen-Freeman (2003) says that grammar has to do with rules and that the rules are helpful, and also that it is easier to understand “how” when you understand “why”. Thus, grammar rules should not be learnt in isolation, but rather in a way that is meaningful and helps the pupils understand the language and how it is best used.

The most notable pedagogical implications which can be inferred from this study is that since a good knowledge of grammar has a great effect on the learners’ improvement of other aspects of language such as reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking and writing, more attention should be paid to choosing and implementing appropriate grammar teaching task in language classes. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that sentence-making task as a contextualizing is more useful than rote memorization of grammar rules as a de-contextualizing technique of grammar teaching/learning, and it can play an important role in teaching grammar.

The findings with this research have important implications for task designers as well. In line with the findings, it is suggested that sentential contextualization tasks be designed in accord with grammar. The majority of the books available are not on the basis of the sentential contextualization task; therefore, it is advised for the material and task designer to style materials and tasks on the basis of sentential contextualization which can be used more often in the EFL context.
Another implication with this study pertains to the significance of sentential contextualization task for teachers. In teacher education courses, the findings may be good for training language teachers who are to instruct English as a language in EFL contexts. By thinking about the findings of the current study in regards to the significance of sentential contextualization task, teachers can enhance the learners’ understanding of grammar by conducting this task.

REFERENCES
THE IMPACT OF WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE (WTC) ON IRANIAN UPPER INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNER'S SPEAKING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT
Many Iranian EFL students are eager to acquire English proficiency. Despite their eagerness and hard work, Iranian students seem to have been unsuccessful in achieving their goal. L2 researchers argue that willingness to communicate (WTC) in L2 is one of the best predictors determining success in L2 acquisition, in association with the perspective that the more active L2 students are with L2 use, the greater possibility they have to develop L2 proficiency. It might be important for Iranian students to understand what affects WTC in English to enhance the possibility to acquire English proficiency. In explaining the interrelations among affective variables influencing WTC in L2, MacIntyre et al. (1998) conceptualized a heuristic model in accordance with the perspective that “authentic communication in a L2 can be seen as the result of a complex of interrelated variables” (p. 547). They claimed that their heuristic model can provide pedagogical use for L2 education. The current study examined the reliability of MacIntyre et al.’s model in explaining WTC in English among Iranian students before its application to the Iranian context. It was assumed that the reliability of MacIntyre et al.’s model relies on the determination of whether WTC is more trait-like than situational. WTC can be “a trait-like predisposition…relatively consistent across a variety of communication contexts” (McCroskey et al., 1991, p. 23). WTC can also be situational in that L2 students’ levels of WTC will be different according to communication situations (McCroskey et al., 1998). The current study employed structural equation modeling that enables the examination of interrelated dependence relationships in a single model (Hair et al., 1998), and collected data from 80 Iranian applied and scientific university students. Depending on data analysis, the researcher concluded that implying WTC is more likely to be trait-like than situational, MacIntyre et al.’s model was reliable in the Iranian context, and that Iranian students’ low levels of WTC in English might be responsible for their less successful results in English learning. Based on the findings and the literature review, the current study discusses pedagogical implications for L2 education.

Key Words: WTC (Willingness to Communicate), Trait-like WTC, Situational WTC, English proficiency, The diversity in L2 WTC, Motivation, Self-confidence.

Introduction
The recent world-wide expansion of international trade and electronic communication has generated a renewed focus of attention on the importance of second/foreign language (L2) education. The Iranian government has come to acknowledge the importance of L2 education, and to encourage Iranian people to develop their L2 proficiency, especially English proficiency. The Iranian government believes that as a medium of world-wide communication, the English proficiency of Iranian people can enable Iran to secure greater benefits from diplomacy and trade with other countries by enabling them to communicate more clearly and effectively. In an afford in 2012 the Iranian government modified the national curriculum of English education to motivate Iranian students to focus on developing their communicative competence in English rather than their grammatical and reading skills. Along with the Iranian government’s effort, many, if not most, Iranian people are eager to develop their English communicative competence, or to guide their children to develop English proficiency to become successful in Iran society. Despite their eagerness and hard work, Iranian people seem to have been less than successful in acquiring English proficiency.

Background of the Study
It is supposed that one of the major goals of L2 education is to create WTC in the language learning process, in order to have students who are willing to look for and discover communication opportunities to communicate.
Given the great significance of communication in English, the experiences of the researcher of the present study make known that some Iranian EFL learners are more willing to speak up in language classes and take part in language class discussions and thus are more willing to communicate. In contrast, some other language learners prefer to keep silent during the entire class period, although they enjoy a good command of English and can be as active as others. Yet, they are not willing to communicate and take part in class debates. This has always been a concern among language educators, teachers and planners of language teaching curriculum, since after all, the learners need to practice in order to learn a foreign language successfully. Otherwise, they will not be able to use what they have learned for communication in real situations. Therefore, willingness has a great role in learning and it will promote the rate and process of learning. Thus, the study of willingness to communicate (WTC) seems to be required as in one study carried out by Wang and Yang Wang (2012), in which it was suggested that EFL teachers should provide more opportunities for their students to experience success, create a good and safe learning environment and help learners to improve their WTC ability.

Statement of the Problem
Modern language pedagogy attaches a lot of importance to communication and training language learners who are able to communicate effectively in the target language. In a language classroom following communicative approach, language teachers are eager to have learners who are willing to use the language in class. Over the last two decades, SLA researchers such as MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) have all emphasized the importance of WTC as a crucial component of modern language instruction. So, it can be claimed that the notion of Willingness to Communicate (WTC), which is actually the intention and desire to initiate communication, plays a key role in learning a second/foreign language.

Purpose of the Study
The primary goal of the current study is to examine the reliability of MacIntyre et al.’s heuristic model of WTC in L2 in explaining the interrelations of affective variables influencing WTC in English among Iranian students learning English as a foreign language in Iran. The researcher of the current study assumes that WTC is one of the most important factors determining the success of SLA, and that MacIntyre et al’s heuristic model of WTC is more comprehensive than others currently available in explaining individual differences in WTC in L2. To be specific, this researcher attempts to apply MacIntyre et al.’s heuristic model in explaining the diversity of WTC among Iranian students, in order to help Iranian students acquire English proficiency more successfully by explaining what determines success in the attainment of English proficiency by Iranian students. However, the researcher of the current study believes that it is necessary to examine whether or not MacIntyre et al.’s heuristic model can explain the diversity of WTC among Iranian students learning English in Iran as an EFL context before the pedagogical application of the model to the Iranian context for practical use for English education. The researcher’s belief is grounded in the perspective that the applicability of the model to the Iranian context is dependent on the determination of whether or not WTC is more likely to be consistent across L2 communicative contexts (trait-like) than inconsistent (situational) depending on L2 communicative contexts

Research questions
The questions of the current study are;
1. Does WTC have any impact on Iranian EFL learner’s speaking ability?
2. Does gender have any effect on Willingness to Communicate (WTC)?

Hypotheses of Stuy
Ho1a. There is no impact on Iranian EFL learner’s speaking ability
Ho1b. Gender has no effect on Willingness to Communicate (WTC)?

Participants
Eighty (80) juniors majoring in the English Program at Scientific and Applied university (unit 38) in Tehran, Iran participated in this study with a response rate of 82%. All of the students were native Iranian speakers who were learning English as a foreign language. The reason to choose college students who were majoring in English is that they represented a population, which could receive the maximum amount of instruction in English available in Iran.

English is one of the core subjects in the College Entrance Examination (CEE) for the university candidates to pass in order to receive admission from universities. Specifically, students who intend to major in English Program have to obtain a comparatively higher score in the English exam in CEE compared to their peers to be accepted by the Department of English Language at the university.
Third-year students who were majoring in English were chosen as the participants of the study. Because the data collection was conducted at the end of the fiscal year of study, the third-year students who have studied English in the college for at least two years by then should have had a good understanding about their motivational and attitudinal orientations toward communication in English.

Most of the high schools in Iran did not offer classes for speaking communication in English and English instruction was mainly focused on developing reading and writing skills. Therefore, after one year of English study in the university, the first-year students might not yet have enough awareness of their communication orientations in English communication. During the time of the data collection (sept, 2014), the fourth year students were busy with thesis and job searching and were unlikely to participate in the data collection. As a result, these groups of students were not included in the present study.

Sample Size

Sample size is closely related to sampling error. Generally speaking, results derived within larger samples have less sampling error than within smaller samples. For the first and second research questions, the sample size (N=80) in this study is reasonable for statistical analysis methods employing Pearson correlation coefficient, t-test of mean comparison, and multiple regression (Bachman, 2005). The number of free model parameters of the proposed path model in this study is 24. Therefore, the ratio of the number of sample cases (N=80) to the number of free parameters (N=24).

Instruments

The present study employed a quantitative research method using questionnaires. Perry (2005) stated that there were two advantages of using a questionnaire: 1) they are useful for collecting data from larger numbers of people in a comparatively short amount of time, and 2) they are economical to use. Considering the purpose and scope of the study, questionnaires were utilized as the primary approach so as to collect data from a group of participants in a fairly short amount of time. All of the measures employed were self-report scales. McCroskey (1997) pointed out that self-report measures were the most commonly used ones for measuring matters of affect and/or perception. Because affective and perceptual constructs were directed toward the cognition of individuals, they were well suited to self-report measurement if care was taken to avoid causing respondents to provide false answers. Participants were given ten instruments (see Table 3.1) written in their native language, in this case, Persian. A back translation method was utilized to ensure the validity of the translated version of the measures. A detailed description of the back translation procedure is provided in the validity section at the end of this chapter. The measures employed in this study included the following: 1) Participant Background Information Questionnaire, 2) Willingness to Communicate (WTC).

Result and Discussion

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Participants’ Ability in English Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S. D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English speaking ability</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>1.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English speech comprehension ability</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>1.090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort level in English expression</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>1.138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English speaking Ability</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English speech comprehension ability</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort level in English expression</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students were also asked to select the orientations/reasons for them to learn English. Nine orientations/reasons for learning English were provided for the students to choose from. Table 4.2 shows the orientations and the percentages of the students’ choices. Pragmatic reasons, “Getting a good job” (73/75%) and “Career in the future” (70%) were selected to be the top two orientations of English learning by the students.

### Table 4.2. Orientations of English Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will need English for my career in the future.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will be useful in getting a good job.</td>
<td>73/75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will help me if I travel.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will make me a more knowledgeable person.</td>
<td>13/75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is a required academic course in the school.</td>
<td>1/25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will help me understand the culture related to English-speaking countries.</td>
<td>51/25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to go to study in English-speaking countries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to be friends with some English-speaking people</td>
<td>16/25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will help me please my parents.</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6/25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear that in question one the average is 6.28 Std. Deviation is 0.82. All the students averagely gave 1.62 to this question. In this question, Std. Deviation is 0.83. For example in question no5 Std. Deviation is 1.067. It has the most Std. Deviation, it means that there is the most different desired among all 80 students. The less average belongs to question no5 and it shows that in this question the students are the weakest of all.

### Table 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Male scores</th>
<th>Female scores</th>
<th>Total scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_</td>
<td>2.171</td>
<td>2.644</td>
<td>2.407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>3.742</td>
<td>3.022</td>
<td>3.382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_</td>
<td>2.114</td>
<td>3.044</td>
<td>2.579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>3.857</td>
<td>3.377</td>
<td>3.617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_</td>
<td>2.114</td>
<td>2.711</td>
<td>2.412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>3.714</td>
<td>3.088</td>
<td>3.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_</td>
<td>2.142</td>
<td>2.911</td>
<td>2.526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>3.942</td>
<td>3.044</td>
<td>3.493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>3.885</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_</td>
<td>2.171</td>
<td>2.911</td>
<td>2.541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_</td>
<td>2.142</td>
<td>2.355</td>
<td>2.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>3.914</td>
<td>3.288</td>
<td>3.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_</td>
<td>2.114</td>
<td>2.688</td>
<td>2.401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions about WTC

Students were also asked to select the orientations/reasons for them to learn English. Nine orientations/reasons for learning English were provided for the students to choose from. Table 4.2 shows the orientations and the percentages of the students’ choices. Pragmatic reasons “Getting a good job” (73/75%) and “Career in the future” (70%) were selected to be the top two orientations of English learning by the students.

Language use, to a large degree, refers to using the language to communicate for meaningful purposes. Students who are learning English as a foreign language usually lack authentic language communication environments and opportunities. This drawback is usually identified as the primary reason for foreign language learners’ low communicative competence in the target language. Creating more opportunities for language learners to conduct pragmatic communication in the target language, therefore, are usually advanced as the primary resolution to solve the target language communication problem by many language teachers.

However, it is also the case that students who are given ample chances of doing L2 communication are not willing to participate and initiate communication in the target language. For instance, Oral English class is aimed to provide English majors communication opportunities in English. However, despite the sufficient opportunities provided, many students still demonstrate avoiding tendency toward the communication, in other words, have low willingness to communicate in English.

This study examined (willingness to communicate) which could affect Iranian college students’ willingness to communicate in English based on previous studies on willingness to communicate subject. Eighty (80) juniors majoring in the English Program at a scientific and applied university in Iran participated in this study. A quantitative research method using questionnaires was employed. Statistical data analysis methods of correlation coefficient, multiple regressions, path analysis were utilized in line with three research questions. Iranian EFL educators need to be aware of the relationship between affective variables and their influence on WTC because a higher level of WTC leads to success in achieving proficiency in L2.

L2 researchers have argued that positive attitude toward L2 learning are important for success and quality of L2 use with L2 speaker. L2 students with positive attitude consider L2 learning enjoyable and beneficial, and this leads them to get actively involved in communication and L2 use. Although attitude is important in accomplishing L2 proficiency, many studies reported that the relationship between attitudes and success in SLA is inconsistent. Some L2 researcher reported negative relationship between attitudes and success of SLA. Since relatively little research has been done in this area, it is important to study many variables, linguistic and nonlinguistic, pertaining to early English education in Iran. The students who are encouraged and given more opportunities to speak appear to be more advanced than their counterparts given no or a little chances of speaking. These same affective variables appear to be significantly tied to achievement in English. Nonlinguistic variables

| + I have no fear of speaking up … | 3.828 | 3.044 | 3.436 |
| Ordinarily I am very tense … | 2.2 | 2.955 | 2.577 |
| + Ordinarily I am very calm … | 3.8 | 3.222 | 3.511 |
| + While conversing with a … | 3.77 | 3.222 | 3.496 |
| - I’m afraid to speak up in … | 2.2 | 2.844 | 2.522 |
| + I have no fear of giving a … | 3.971 | 3.288 | 3.630 |
| - Certain parts of my body feel … | 2.228 | 2.844 | 2.536 |
| + I feel relaxed while giving a … | 3.571 | 3.244 | 3.407 |
| - My thoughts become confused … | 2.228 | 2.866 | 2.547 |
| + I face the prospect of giving … | 3.828 | 3.066 | 3.447 |
| - While giving a speech, I get … | 2.142 | 2.888 | 2.515 |
should continue to be studied in Iran in a variety of socio-cultural contexts in order to gain a more thorough understanding of their role in EFL acquisition.

REFERENCES


COLLABORATIVE LEARNING, COLLABORATIVE TEACHING & AUTONOMY: A SURVEY STUDY ON ENGLISH AS A SECOND / FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study is to elaborate Collaborative Learning, Collaborative Teaching and Autonomy. It has been explained Collaborative Learning (Definition and Issues). It has been elaborated Collaborative Teaching (Basic Tenets and Issues) and has been discussed Learner Autonomy (General Consideration) & Incivility and Its Contribution to Iranian Context of L2 teaching and learning.

Key Words: Collaborative Learning, Collaborative Teaching, Learner Autonomy, Incivility

1. Introduction
Research into teacher education has concentrated on the effects of collaborative reflection on individual teaching practice (Freeman, 1989; Davydov, 1995; Seaman et al., 1997; Akyel, 2000; Kraft, 2002). Reflection is defined as an active, intellectual thinking for monitoring one's own learning activity and process, and a continuous internal activity of exploring oneself for new learning. Throughout this internal activity, learners make their thinking more concrete and enriched (Kim & Lee, 2002; Zeicher & Liston, 1996). Reflective activity is a type of process not limited to individual, internal exploration, but includes the social aspect of learner-learner interaction often referred to as ‘collaborative reflection’. Freeman (1989) argues that two individuals must collaborate in order to generate some form of change in the teacher’s decision making based on knowledge, skills, attitude and awareness.

According to Davydov (1995), only through collaboration teachers can identify ways to improve the effectiveness of upbringing and teaching. After collecting a certain amount of experience through collaborative work, teachers should create a strategy for its further development and ways to maintain it for the future.

Seamon et al. (1997) claim that teachers should be given a professional mentoring program which is practical, supportive and safe in which teachers feel willing to experiment and risk making mistakes. Collaborative dialogue with peers, mentors, researchers or supervisors, provides teachers with an opportunity to reflect on their individual practices. One cannot discuss learner autonomy without considering the power relations between teacher and learners. In addition, the concept of power relations is a key concept of critical pedagogy which is a transformative approach and fosters changes in systems where necessary. Education should not prevent students from participating in the daily discourses that construct their educational practices. To put it in Van Lier’s words (2004) teachers can encourage students to develop their own ‘voice’ in the new language by embedding language in meaningful activity.

Therefore learners should not be viewed as passive masses of bodies without capacity for autonomy or critical thinking, as often perceived by their teachers (Murphy et al, 2009).

In a paper written in 2006, Giroux urges teachers to provide conditions that foster the knowledge, skills, and culture of questioning in order to engage students in critical dialogue with the past, question authority and its corresponding impacts, as well as power relations and prepare themselves for what it means to be critical, active citizens not only in interrelated local and national spheres, but also in global spheres. He further argues that public education has always attempted to liberate humanity from the blind obedience to authority; moreover autonomy of individuals takes place under the conditions that guarantee the workings of an autonomous society. Giroux believes that teachers in both public schools and higher education should relate their work to larger social issues; offering students knowledge, debate, and dialogue about processing social problems and help students come to terms with their own power as individual and social agents (Giroux 2006).
2. Collaborative Learning: Definition & Issues

Collaborative learning is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together. Unlike individual learning, people engaged in collaborative learning capitalize on one another’s resources and skills (asking one another for information, evaluating one another’s ideas, monitoring one another’s work, etc.). More specifically, collaborative learning is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences and take on asymmetry roles. Put differently, collaborative learning refers to methodologies and environments in which learners engage in a common task where each individual depends on and is accountable to each other. These include both face-to-face conversations and computer discussions (online forums, chat rooms, etc.). Methods for examining collaborative learning processes include conversation analysis and statistical discourse analysis.

Collaborative learning is heavily rooted in Vygotsky’s views that there exists an inherent social nature of learning which is shown through his theory of zone of proximal development. Often, collaborative learning is used as an umbrella term for a variety of approaches in education that involve joint intellectual effort by students or students and teachers. Thus, collaborative learning is commonly illustrated when groups of students work together to search for understanding, meaning, or solutions or to create an artifact or product of their learning. Further, collaborative learning redefines traditional student-teacher relationship in the classroom which results in controversy over whether this paradigm is more beneficial than harmful. Collaborative learning activities can include collaborative writing, group projects, joint problem solving, debates, study teams, and other activities. The approach is closely related to cooperative learning.

Alternatively, collaborative learning occurs when individuals are actively engaged in a community in which learning takes place through explicit or implicit collaborative efforts. Collaborative learning has often been portrayed as solely a cognitive process by which adults participate as facilitators of knowledge and children as receivers. However, Indigenous communities of the Americas illustrate that collaborative learning occurs because individual participation in learning occurs on a horizontal plane where children and adults are equal. Thus collaborative learning also occurs when children and adults in engage play, work, and other activities together.

- **Collaborative networked learning** – According to Findley (1987) "Collaborative Networked Learning (CNL) is that learning which occurs via electronic dialogue between self-directed co-learners and learners and experts. Learners share a common purpose, depend upon each other and are accountable to each other for their success. CNL occurs in interactive groups in which participants actively communicate and negotiation meaning with one another within a contextual framework which may be facilitated by an online coach, mentor or group leader." Computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) is a relatively new educational paradigm within collaborative learning which uses technology in a learning environment to help mediate and support group interactions in a collaborative learning context. CSCL systems use technology to control and monitor interactions, to regulate tasks, rules, and roles, and to mediate the acquisition of new knowledge.

- **Learning management system in this context**, collaborative learning refers to a collection of tools which learners can use to assist, or be assisted by others. Such tools include Virtual Classrooms (i.e. geographically distributed classrooms linked by audio-visual network connections), chat, discussion threads, application sharing (e.g. a colleague projects spreadsheet on another colleague’s screen across a network link for the purpose of collaboration), among many others.

- **Collaborative learning development** enables developers of learning systems to work as a network. Specifically relevant to e-learning where developers can share and build knowledge into courses in a collaborative environment. Knowledge of a single subject can be pulled together from remote locations using software systems.

3. Collaborative Teaching: Basic Tenets & Issues

3.1. Collaborative teaching or team teaching originally started as an innovative way to enhance deaf students’ sign language, and technical skills. Forman and Spector (1980, cited in Shannon & Meath-Lang, 1992) suggested a teaching team composed of an audiologist, a speech pathologist, and an English instructor to help students improve their productive and receptive communication skills. Moreover, Stewart and Hollifield (1988, cited in Shannon & Meath-Lang, 1992) designed a bilingual curriculum requiring a team teaching approach. Recently, under the influence of socio-constructive or socio-cultural approaches to learning, the team teaching approach has been expanded to other educational fields.
Furthermore, the article tells us that

- Collaborative teaching refers to teaching performed by a group of two or more persons assigned to the same students at the same time for instructional purposes in a particular subject or combination of subjects; the difference between the two, if any, may be that collaborative teaching places more focus on shared power than team teaching.

- Team teaching can be arranged in the following four types:
  - Team Leader Type: The Team Leader Type assumes that one team member has higher status than the others. This type can be found in college language departments where teaching assistants are employed to work under the supervision of a faculty member.
  - Associate Type: In this type, there is no designated leader, and leadership emerges as a result of interaction among team members. It is assumed that team members equally participate in the decision making process.
  - Master Teacher/Beginning Teacher Type: In this arrangement, the purpose of team teaching is to help new teachers adjust to the teaching profession. For example, novice teachers can be paired up with experienced teachers.
  - Coordinated Team Type: In this type, two or more instructors teaching the same curriculum to different groups of students jointly plan instructions. This type is common in university where several faculty members teach different sections of a language course.

Problems - Collaborative Teaching

- can be uncomfortable and even threatening for some teachers.
- requires a great deal of time and effort from teachers can become inefficient due to differing personalities, different cultures, different teaching styles.

Bailey, Dale, and Squire (1992) suggest:

- teachers should focus on goals rather than personalities to minimize power struggles.
- recognizing one another's contributions and setting aside time for planning on a regular basis are two important factors related to the success of collaborative teaching.
- collaborative teaching may be more useful for interactive courses that require dialogues and discussions than for courses that are receptive and discrete-skill based.

3.2. Three Models for Collaborative Teaching

There are three models that the CFT describes here for faculty and student consideration as you contemplate collaborative teaching: traditional team teaching, linked courses for student learning communities, and connected pairs of courses meeting at the same time.

Traditional team teaching involves two or more instructors teaching the same course. The instructors are involved in a collaborative endeavor throughout the entire course. Some team teaching is more like tag-team teaching, in which only one instructor meets the class to cover a segment of the material. Tag-team teaching has its benefits, but it misses out on the benefits of dialogue, give and take engaged by the team of instructors.

Advantages of this model include potential deep student learning because of exposure to the connections across the disciplines of the instructors, the ambiguity of different disciplinary views, and the broad support that a heterogeneous teaching team can provide during the entire course.

Challenges include the misfortunes that could occur if the team is not well organized and connected. One challenge is determining the amount of credit each of the team members receives for teaching the course. Sometimes an instructor receives only a fraction of the credit that he or she would receive for teaching a course.

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solo, while in reality team teaching usually requires each instructor to engage more work than when being the only instructor.

The **linked course approach** involves a cohort of 20 or so students, traditionally but not necessarily first year, together taking two or three courses that are linked by a theme. For example, the theme could be “the environment” with the 3 courses being introductory biology, political science, and English. Once each week the instructors of these linked courses provide a one-hour seminar for the cohort in which the instructors jointly discuss connections, similarities, and differences between the content and objectives of the courses.

**Advantages**, based on the research on student learning communities fostered by linked courses, include increased student retention—particularly for students academically at risk; faster and less disruptive student cognitive intellectual development; and greater civic contributions to the institution.

**Challenges** include finding students for the cohort and aligning the student schedules (this is usually undertaken by the student affairs division and the registrar). Another challenge is sometimes the cliquish behavior when the student cohort is embedded in a larger class.

The third model involves a pair or series of **connected courses** arranged and connected by the instructors to meet at the same scheduled time so that the classes can meet as a whole when the instructors think it is appropriate. The instructors can illustrate and emphasize the interdisciplinary of certain topics or approaches appearing in both courses.

For example, a connected pair could be an introductory political science and an introductory biology course where the role of public policy affects the biological environment. There is no student learning community cohort involved, so the support generated by a learning community is not available. Thus the connected instructors should include some community building in their courses and during joint meetings. Forming small groups in each course and then mixing these across the courses could build the needed community.

**Advantages** of this model include the student encounters with different disciplinary connections and related ambiguity. This model is easier to set up than the student learning community linked course model because there is no cohort to form.
Challenges may include finding a space for the joint class meetings.

4. Learner Autonomy: General Considerations

4.1. Learner Autonomy

It is worth mentioning that a number of educators studied the relation between learner autonomy and language learning style. In a study conducted by Foen (2009), for instance, the analysis revealed that the number of learning styles, perceived learning environment and computer technology experience were statistically predictive of learner autonomy or distance learners’ intention to participate. In another study conducted by Güven and Sünbul (n.d) at Selçuk University, the relation between the learners’ autonomy level and their learning styles was examined. The results revealed that 1. The participants usually preferred the Active Experimentation and Reflective Observation learning styles. 2. The average autonomy level of the participants was quite high. 3. There was no significant difference between the genders in relation to their learning styles and autonomous learning preferences. Participants with reflective observation learning style had less autonomy in learning while the ones with active experimentation had the most. The results of a study performed by Gültekin and Karababa (2010) indicated that students’ level of autonomy was not high and that there was a relationship between language learning styles and the autonomy level of the learners at Ankara University. Based on the research mentioned, it is clearly seen that there are different relationships between learners’ autonomy level and their learning style in different contexts. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the styles employed by Iranian EFL university students in Iranian context. This study aims to see whether there is a relationship between styles employed by learners and their autonomy level. It is hoped that the results will contribute to our understanding of autonomy and help us select the styles that will lead to more autonomy among Iranian EFL learners.

A large literature on autonomy in language learning now exists, with Holec (1981) commonly cited as a seminal contribution to the field. Benson (2011) provides a comprehensive analysis of key issues in learner autonomy, while there have also been a number of edited collections dedicated to the topic (Barfield & Brown, 2007; Benson, 2007b; Benson & Voller, 1997; Lamb & Reinders, 2008; Little, Ridley, & Ushioda, 2003; Palfreyman & Smith, 2003; Pemberton, Li, Or, & Pierson, 1996; Pemberton, Toogood, & Barfield, 2009; Sinclair, McGrath, & Lamb, 2000; Vieira, 2009).

Our analysis of this work highlights a number of key and often interlinked themes:

- The nature of learner autonomy - how to define it and what it involves
- The rationale for promoting learner autonomy in FL learning
- The role of the teacher in learner autonomy
- Institutional and individual constraints on learner autonomy
- The meanings of learner autonomy in diverse cultural contexts
- Individualistic vs. social perspectives on learner autonomy
- The kinds of learning opportunities that foster learner autonomy.

The term "learner autonomy" was first coined in 1981 by Henri Holec, the "father" of learner autonomy. Many definitions have since been given to the term, depending on the writer, the context, and the level of debate educators have come to. It has been considered as a personal human trait, as a political measure, or as an educational move. This is because autonomy is seen either (or both) as a means or as an end in education.

Some of the most well known definitions in present literature are:

- "Autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own learning". (Henri Holec)
- "Autonomy is essentially a matter of the learner's psychological relation to the process and content of learning". (David Little)
- "Autonomy is a situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his [or her] learning and the implementation of those decisions". (Leslie Dickinson)
- "Autonomy is recognition of the rights of learners within educational systems". (Phil Benson)

Taken from Gardner and Miller, Establishing Self-Access from theory to practice. CUP (1999) See also Leni Dam, who has written a seminal work on autonomy. (Dam, L. (1995) Autonomy from Theory to Classroom Practice. Dublin: Authentic.)
One of the key aspects to consider in defining Learner Autonomy is whether we view it as a means to an end (learning a foreign language) or as an end in itself (making people autonomous learners). These two options do not exclude each other, both of them can be part of our views towards language learning or learning in general.

Principles of learner autonomy could be: (Frank Lacey)

- Autonomy means moving the focus from teaching to learning.
- Autonomy affords maximum possible influence to the learners.
- Autonomy encourages and needs peer support and cooperation.
- Autonomy means making use of self/peer assessment.
- Autonomy requires and ensures 100% differentiation.
- Autonomy can only be practiced with student logbooks which are a documentation of learning and a tool of reflection.
- The role of the teacher as supporting scaffolding and creating room for the development of autonomy is very demanding and very important.

Autonomy means empowering students, yet the classroom can be restrictive, so are the rules of chess or tennis, but the use of technology can take students outside of the structures of the classroom, and the students can take the outside world into the classroom.

4.2. Incivility

Although rude and obnoxious classroom behavior is not new on college campuses (Yoakley, 1975), it seems that the type and frequency of misbehavior are increasing and have become a problem for many faculty members in higher education (Schneider, 1998; Trout, 1998). The types of problems range from everyday student annoyances like chewing gum, rolling eyes, and allowing cell phones to ring (Amada, 1997), to behavior that may be characterized as highly disturbing, like stalking or threatening instructors (Hernandez & Fister, 2001). Immediacy is a construct developed primarily in the field of communications and is related to how observers infer attitudes such as warmth and support from implicit cues (Hess, Smythe, & Communication 451, 2001; Smythe & Hess, 2005). Upon suggestion that incivility undermines classroom learning, Boice (1996) conducted a 5-year comprehensive study of large undergraduate classrooms. By conducting an “immediacy” intervention, wherein instructors were coached to express more warmth and approachability, Boice saw decreased student incivility as a result.

However, Boice’s implementation of immediacy was limited to the notion of non-verbal immediacy behaviors and did not include verbal immediacy behaviors. In fact, Gorham(1988) found that both verbal and non-verbal immediacy were critical for student learning, particularly in large classes. Because incivility is largely subjective to an instructor’s interpretation of rude behavior, our measure of incivility was more like an indication of tolerance than whether or not incivility existed. While the immediacy construct has been utilized in communications research in higher education, as psychologists we find a strong theoretical and empirical base for autonomy support. Autonomy support is a more comprehensive way to look at immediacy because it includes strategies like emotional support (which can be non-verbal) as well as offering choices and control for students’ own learning.

5. Conclusion: Contribution to Iranian Context of L2 Teaching and Learning

What was mentioned can have contributions to Iranian situations of teaching:

- Autonomy means moving the focus from teaching to learning in Iranian high school.
- Autonomy affords maximum possible influence to the learners in Iranian high school.
- Autonomy encourages and needs peer support and cooperation in Iranian high school.
- Autonomy means making use of self/peer assessment in Iranian high school.
- Autonomy requires and ensures 100% differentiation in Iranian high school.
- Autonomy can only be practiced with student logbooks which are a documentation of learning and a tool of reflection in Iranian high school.
- The role of the teacher as supporting scaffolding and creating room for the development of autonomy is very demanding and very important in Iranian high school.
Autonomy means empowering students, yet the classroom can be restrictive, so are the rules of chess or tennis, but the use of technology can take students outside of the structures of the classroom, and the students can take the outside world into the classroom and we suggest that teachers who are concerned about incivility in large high school classrooms should use active learning techniques and that these methods engage students with content in ways that develop positive relationships among students. Therefore, if students have positive experiences in their classrooms, we expect they would behave positively towards their instructor.

Collaborative approaches range from brief informal interaction to semester-long formal interaction and collaborative learning has the potential to increase peer interaction, an aspect of the higher education experience that is critical to development. Finally, future research could examine the specific tasks involved in formal and informal collaborative learning to examine any specific pedagogical differences related to incivility.

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A GENRE ANALYSIS OF DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS IN AN IRANIAN DAILY

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ABSTRACT
This study attempted to examine various manifestations of the death announcement genre in Persian to see what generic structures are common in a variety of death announcements, and what communicative functions are articulated by their generic components. A death announcement (DA) is a paid for advertisement of a person’s death. It is normally written by a family member or a close friend, both of whom might not necessarily be experts. Drawing on a corpus of 50 announcements randomly collected from an Iranian daily newspapers called Ettla’at, we identified an obituary announcements which communicates a normal death. We identified nine recurrent components in the death announcements, reflecting the sociocultural norms, practices and beliefs that give rise to this communicative events. The results of this study will be of help in further understanding of sociocultural factors that influence this communicative event and provide greater insight into the relationship between genres as social communicative events.

Key Words: genre analysis, death announcements, sociocultural factors

1. Introduction

Research on genre concerns itself with the analysis of language use in routine settings. The concept of genre has been described differently by various scholars. It has been viewed as a staged, goal-oriented, social process (Martin, 1992), and as a ‘sociopsychological category defined by a structural arrangement of textual features’ (Bazerman, 1988). For Kress (1987), ‘Genre is the term which describes that aspect of the form of texts which is due to the effect of their production in particular social occasions’ (p. 36). However, most approaches to genre analysis identify two areas of knowledge (cf. Swales, 1990) that provide clues to text genres: knowledge of formal schema (i.e. the rhetorical structure of a text type) and content schema (‘what content is appropriate to a particular purpose in a particular situation at a particular time’; Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995: 13).

Studies on genre have focused on a variety of socially constructed academic and professional genres. Important genres that have received little attention from researchers, however, are what Miller (1984) calls ‘homely’ discourses. These are easily recognizable socially constructed text genres of everyday life. The term ‘homely’ discourse subsumes, among others, various kinds of ceremony announcements, particularly birth announcements (cf. Hoberg, 1983), obituaries, wedding invitations and congratulations. The obituary, or obit as it is generally called in the newsroom, is a category of genre texts that forms an important part of the day’s news. Newspaper readers, within a country and throughout the world read obituary announcements. They have the specific communicative function of ‘informing the potential audience about deaths, and in some cases, funeral arrangements and other details’ (Nwoye, 1992: 15).
If we look at obituary announcements, particularly at their more specific realizations in Iranian newspapers, we find one general type of announcement. The normal death notices, usually entitled ‘obituary’, announcing a death resulting from an automobile accident, illness, stroke, etc.

One of the most relevant studies compared English and German death notices in daily newspapers (Fries, 1990a). Fries found that English and German death notices contain information about the name of the deceased, which is the only ‘obligatory’ element, as Fries called it, and ‘optional’ elements including ‘announcing the death’, ‘time and place of death’, ‘age of the deceased’ and ‘the announcer’. Another study investigated the history of English death notices from 1785 to 1985 (cf. Fries, 1990b). Nwoye (1992) analyzed obituary announcements in Nigerian newspapers written in English and compared them with similar announcements in English and German analyzed by Fries (1990a). Obituary notices in Nigeria were found to have what Nwoye (1992) referred to as ‘obligatory features’ including ‘an introduction’, ‘the name of the deceased’, ‘date, place, and manner of death’, ‘burial arrangement’, ‘survivors’ and ‘some identification of the announcer/sender’.

This article attempts to clarify the nature and various manifestations of obituary announcements in Iran as used in an Iranian newspapers (اطلاعات اعلامی) to see what generic structures are common in a variety of death notices, and what sociocultural communicative functions are articulated by these generic patterns. This research is the first of its type to examine the linguistic, rhetorical and organizational structure of Iranian death announcements. We hope that the results will be of help in further understanding genre identification and construction, as well as in the sociocultural interpretation and constraints that give rise to this routine genre in daily newspapers. Moreover, the significance of this study lies in its contribution towards providing greater illumination of the interrelations between social communicative events, which are an intriguing aspect of genre research.

2. Corpus construction and methodology

The following analysis investigates the generic structure of obituary announcements written in Ettela’at newspaper. Before collecting the related types of texts, the researchers checked the different types of death announcements in a number of daily and weekly Iranian newspapers, written in Persian, for similarities and differences in generic patterns. From this preliminary check, we noticed that there is one type of death announcement which communicates normal deaths. After examining a considerable number of death notices, we found that there were no significant differences in genre components of those death notices announced in the different daily and weekly Iranian newspapers.

Thus, for the purpose of this study, 50 obituary announcements were randomly collected from a daily national newspapers, Ettela’at, one of the oldest published Iranian newspapers. The 50 texts in Persian were taken from the daily newspaper for a period of two months, January and February 2014. Extracts were made from these announcements omitting the name of the deceased, the announcer or any element that revealed anything about the identity of the people concerned.

3. The social context of the study

To understand how the death announcement genre organizes and articulates the communicative purpose of this social occasion, a genre analyst needs to take into account the social practices and constraints that give rise to each individual genre. A comprehensive knowledge of the social occasion of which genre texts are part has an important effect on the construction of texts and their interpretation. Kress (1989: 19) has an expressive view in this regard. The characteristic features and structures of those situations, the purposes of the participants, the goals of the participants all have their effects on the form of texts which are constructed in those situations. The situations are always conventionalised. The structures and forms of the conventionalised occasions themselves signify the functions, the purposes of the participants, and the desired goals of that occasion.

In Iran, sociocultural practices, including matters such as death and marriage, influence most aspects of one’s life. Conventionally, ceremony announcements, in general, and obituaries, in particular, have been overtly used in Iranian. These announcements appear to represent related types of genre texts in terms of their generic features and communicative purposes. To illustrate the relationship among ceremony announcement genres in Iranian society is to posit these types of genre at various levels of generality. At a fairly high level of generalization, it is possible to think of ‘ceremony announcements’, which may be thought of as subsuming related genres as they can be identified in terms of having a common communicative purpose of informing potential recipients about something.

If we move further down, we find different types of ceremonies. We can distinguish sad ceremonies, e.g. ‘obituary announcements’ from happy ceremonies, e.g. ‘wedding celebrations’. Each of these genres has a specific
communicative purpose. In the case of sad occasions, exemplified by the ‘obituary’ announcements, the newspapers carry many each day.

4. Theoretical framework
Because the goal of this study was to identify the underlying genre components of death notices in Persian, we adopted the Swalesian genre move analysis approach, which draws insights from the schema-theory model. According to Swales (1990: 58), a genre is ‘a class of communicative events, the members of which share some sets of communicative purposes’. Swales argued that the schematic structure through which the communicative purpose is articulated is the result of social practices and conventions. Prominent in Swales’ definition is the communicative purpose, which shapes the component building blocks of the genre.

Accordingly, minor changes in communicative purpose (cf. Bhatia, 1993) are likely to distinguish sub-genres, whereas a major change in communicative purpose is likely to give a different genre. Martin (1985), Miller (1984), Swales (1990), Ventola (1987, 1989) and others share a common view of genre as a social action, goal-oriented and cultural activity consisting of a sequence of moves. Each move has a minor function in the global communicative goal embedded in the genre. These moves are merely the realization of a particular social interaction.

According to Nwogu (1997: 122), the term move means ‘a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistic features which give the segment a uniform orientation and signal the content of discourse in it’. Therefore, the functional elements of a genre tend to display lexicogrammatical and textual features that facilitate the identification of genres, ‘but these features do not constitute obligatory or definitory criteria for genres’ (Mauranen, 1993: 18).

This approach has been profitably extended to a study of the schematic structure of different types of communicative events which emerge as people communicate with each other. The adoption of genre move structure analysis is motivated by the fact that it ‘is more powerful in interpreting the move structures of texts’ (Kong, 1998: 104), and ‘in illustrating how the logical sequence of ideas is bound up by a set of writing conventions [. . .] and how these ideas are linguistically signalled’ (p. 110).

This theoretical framework also provides a foundation for the investigation and identification of what communicative functions interact to form the genre system of a class of discourses that have the same primary function. Because genre consists of a sequence of moves representing the overall purpose of a sociocultural activity (Martin and Christie, 1984; Ventola, 1989), the death announcements were analyzed in terms of the move structure that constituted the texts. This involved identifying generic component moves in the texts, and observing how such functional components were used strategically.

Identification of the boundaries of the individual rhetorical moves was based mainly on propositional content and linguistic means (i.e. functional, lexical or phrasal), as well as boundary indicators, because it is difficult to base genre analysis on formal linguistic clues only. Moves vary in size; a move may be realized by one sentence or more, or by a unit of analysis below the level of sentence, such as a clause, or a phrase, as noted previously (Al-Ali, 1999; Bhatia, 1993; Dubois, 1997; Kong, 1998; Swales, 1990), but a move normally ‘contains at least one proposition’ (Connor and Mauranen, 1999).

Assigning a function to each chunk of a text is guided by the proposition that each individual chunk serves a rhetorical function in relation to the overall communicative purpose of the death announcement genre; this chunk, in turn, is differentiated from the following contiguous text portion in that the latter has a different major function in relation to the given overall goal. Among the textual indicators observed were the following features:

1. *Formulaic opening and closing verses from the Qur’ān*. Death notice genre texts tend to open with the Qur’anic verse *bismi laahi rir-rahmaani raHlim* (In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful), followed by another verse, which varies according to the type of death as illustrated in the ‘opening’ component of Section 5. Similarly, the closing component move is usually rounded off by the following verse *inna lilahi wa ?inna ildayhi raijcuun* (We are from God and to Him we shall return).

2. *Heading of the texts*. A fairly straightforward source for move recognition was the explicit text heading, which usually reflected the type of death notice, for example, ‘hoval baqi’

3. *Explicit lexical clues reflecting the propositional content of the text*. Most of the ‘Announcing the occasion’ moves are signaled lexically in indicative phrasal expressions, such as آگهی ترحیم (announce the death). Likewise, there is a
strong tendency to initiate the ‘receiving condolences’ moves with the most common lexical clausal signal ‘به اطلاع عموم میرساند’ (condolences are received).

4. Nonlinguistic indicators (usually typographic). It was interesting to note that the names of the deceased contained in the ‘identifying the deceased’ move, and the announcers in the ‘announcing’ or ‘celebrating the occasion’ moves, as well as the ‘headings’ were all printed as separate lines in boldface with a large size font.

5. Generic structural features of death announcements

Analysis of death announcements revealed that there are nine component moves by which these announcements are structured, as shown in Table 1. For our purposes, a component move is defined as a functional segment of a text that has one or more minor rhetorical functions in relation to the overall communicative purpose of the genre text. These moves appeared regularly in the texts. The order of appearance varied to an extent, so that the order in which the moves are presented here was the most common. A typical death announcement from the data, with the functional component moves provided in the margins is given in the Appendix. It shows how these individual component moves combine, and in what order they occur.

We now present the individual components of the death notices found in our samples; our sample comprises 50 instances of death notices. The frequency of each component and the order in which these individual components generally occur are given in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component moves of NDN</th>
<th>No. of moves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opening</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Heading (obituary)</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Announcing the occasion</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Identifying the deceased</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Specifying surviving relatives</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Situating circumstances of death</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Outlining funeral and burial arrange ment</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Outlining arrangements for receiving condolence</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Closing</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1 Opening
The first component move in the announcements examined occurred in a preheading position. Commonly set apart, this component opens with direct quotations from the Holy Qur’an. The ‘opening’ move occurred in 7 percent of the samples. In particular, it contains some Qur’anic verses, the first of which is the formulaic verse *bismi laahi ?ir-raHmaani raHiim* (In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful) or *hoval ba’qi* (He is the everlasting) or *Bazgashte hame be su?ye ust* (To Him we shall all return).

5.2 Heading
The second move in all the announcements examined was the ‘heading’. It is collateral to the genre’s main communicative purpose and by no means negligible, as suggested by its occurrence in every instance sampled. The heading is stressed by being printed as a separate line, in bold and using a different size font. It was an obligatory element in announcements although it was realized differently.

5.3 Announcing the occasion
This move presents the person who places the death notices, usually a member of the deceased’s tribe, the entire community or some official body, and clearly announces the death. The function of this component move is to publicize the occasion so as to include others in it. It is usually printed in bold using a larger font size. The data showed that all the announcements entitled ‘obituary’ were placed by the deceased’s kinship.

Typical examples of this move are usually of the form
5.4. Identifying the deceased

This component always names and identifies the person who died. The names of the deceased and their titles (if any) are printed in bold as a separate line. Usually, the full name of the deceased is given. The data revealed that the names are initiated with all the deceased's titles. Thus, it is usual to see a plethora of academic and occupational titles before the name of the deceased, like doctor, professor doctor, pharmacist, staff colonel, leader, lawyer, judge or university graduate. This is because Iranians love titles.

5.5. Specifying surviving relatives

This component move lists those who have survived the deceased giving their full academic and/or professional titles, particularly if they have prestigious occupations. The high-ranking positions and academic degrees usually reflect the social status of the deceased, and the survivors, as discussed later.

5.6. Situating circumstances of death

This move informs the audience of the circumstances of death in terms of date, age, place and cause. The occurrence of one or more of these variants is obligatory in all death notices. The date of death is the most frequent variant (90%). In some instances the day of the week, often accompanied by a further specification, such as is given. Very often the date, including the month and the year, is added to the day of the week. The date indicators of a person’s death usually appear in the first position although they sometimes move to the second position when the age of the deceased is given. Age is frequently mentioned, especially when announcing the death of relatively young people. In our sample of 50 announcements, age of the deceased was given in 16 percent of cases. The place variant appears to be less important than the other variables. There are fewer references to the place than to the time of death especially when a person dies in his own country. The cause of death is the least frequent variant (15%) and often occurs in the final position, but it may also appear after the date of death. When it is mentioned, most of the instances refer to sudden deaths resulting from automobile accidents or short illnesses, particularly in death notices referring to young people.

5.7. Outlining funeral and burial arrangements

This component contains the plans for funeral prayers and burial so that relatives, friends and people from the deceased’s town are able to participate in the prayers and burial. Readers are informed about the date, time and name of the mosque where the funeral prayers will be offered over the body of the deceased. They are also told where the burial will take place. This component was evident in almost 96 percent of announcements studied. An illustrative example is the following:

Burials take place during the daytime only. Funeral and death rituals are based on Islamic prescriptions for Muslims; non-Muslims follow their own rituals. In line with Islamic traditions, after being washed, dried, purified, wrapped in a white cloth called kafan and placed in a coffin, the body is usually taken to the local mosque so that traditional funeral prayers can be offered. Participants offer the funeral prayers and ask for Allah's forgiveness of the deceased. It is regarded a blessing to the deceased if participants follow the funeral and help carry the coffin. So
providing friends and strangers with such information gives those who wish to attend and participate in the prayers and carrying the coffin the opportunity to do so.

5.8. Outlining arrangements for receiving condolences
This move contains an invitation to those who wish to extend their condolences to the survivors of the deceased. This component gives explicit information about the date, the length of time during which condolences will be received, and the home address of the deceased’s close survivors so that friends and well-wishers of both the deceased and his or her family can participate in the occasion. The announcements analyzed usually include the home addresses of both male and female members of the deceased’s family because they are seated separately. Why this is so is given in Section 6.

6. Sociocultural factors affecting the structure of announcements
In order to determine the way in which a particular text is constructed and interpreted, it is helpful to refer to the cultural background from which the text derives its meaning (Halliday and Hasan, 1989). That is because ‘a society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members’ (Goodeough, 1964: 36). Martin (1985) and Ventola (1987) view culture as a determinant factor of genre as a purposeful social practice, which in turn influences our writing habits. Like other homely genres, death notices are staged products of social interaction in one’s native culture with a rhetorical purpose governing their generic construction. Thus, socialization into a culture is reflected in the communicative purpose of genre and the rhetorical choices available to the writer. However, participation in a communicative event is not only social but, sometimes, also derives from an inner need to satisfy religious beliefs because culture, as viewed by Sapir (1949: 79), is an embodiment of socially inherited material and spiritual elements. In other words, the rhetorical options are constrained by the values and belief systems of the cultural community within which the text is written (Mauranen, 1993).

Thus, in the following two sub-sections we attempt to demonstrate how the social and religious atmospheres are concealed in the genre’s formulaic structure of death announcements. We present the social and religious features of death announcements in Iran, which has a Persian Islam culture, and we compare these features with English and German obituary announcements investigated by Fries (1990a) to find out whether Persian death notices exhibit certain peculiarities.

6.1. Social factors
By social factors we mean the social customs, conventions, practices and interactions, and social status that exert constraints on the content and formal organization of the death announcement, because interpretations of these texts derive their significance from their relation to the culture to which they belong.

In Iran there exists a particular type of society in which the extended family is a very basic cultural unit. Our analysis revealed that social variants exert a lasting influence on all the generic components of the death announcements. These variants are evident in the following component moves: ‘Announcing the occasion’, ‘Identifying the deceased’, ‘Specifying surviving relatives’ and ‘Outlining arrangements for receiving condolences’. The first social practice is related to ‘Announcing the occasion’, which is the main purpose of this genre, as confirmed by the almost invariable presence of this component throughout the corpus. In over 90 percent of cases, this obligatory move is placed by the relatives of the deceased. This finding suggests that the extended family is an important building block in Iranian life and individuals tend to submit to larger kinship groupings.

Another social feature is evident in the ‘Identifying the deceased’ component. Announcements are full of the deceased’s titles. This tendency reflects and emphasizes the importance given to titles in this cultural community. In Iran, as in many other countries, the culture highly evaluates the social status of the individual, even the dead. That is why Iranian death notices include all the academic, professional and social (e.g. Dr.) titles of the deceased if s/he has any. By contrast, the UK and German newspaper announcements of death very rarely give the title of the deceased (cf. Fries, 1990a).

Examination of the obituary announcement data shows that the relatives of deceased persons who occupy high-ranking positions received more condolences, sometimes many times in one newspaper and/or in several newspapers, and often running for many days. ‘The more publicity the obituary announcement is given, the more it reflects the social standing of the deceased or the people (s)he left behind’ (Nwoye, 1992: 17). These conventions
do not apply in UK and German societies; therefore, the titles, occupations or professions of those surviving the deceased are hardly ever given in UK and German death notices. Another sociocultural feature that needs to be highlighted is related to the move ‘Outlining arrangements for receiving condolences or congratulations’. The announcements analyzed usually include a home address for male survivors and another for female survivors, because male and female members of the family receive well-wishers from the community separately. The relatives of the deceased stay at a public place for at least three consecutive days after the burial in order to receive condolences from the community.

6.2. Religious factors
One of the basic features of Islamic faith is that Muslims believe in the existence of a life after death. Once again, they also believe that their God (Allah) judges them in the hereafter. Thus, the language of the death notices is deemed ‘religious’, characterized by relatively traditional and certain unifying features because the kind of language used by a speech community to express a communicative event is usually driven by the communicative purpose. For example, this type of genre makes use of the concept, ‘God’, as a semantic cornerstone. This is evident in most of the generic components adopted and the number of religious phrases that have passed into usage.

7. Conclusion
In this article, we have identified and described the component features of death announcements found in an Iranian newspaper. Based on the notion of genre analysis and the sociocultural norms and beliefs that constrain the construction and interpretation of genre texts, we have identified nine functional component moves in Persian death announcements. The results of the investigation indicated that, in addition to the primary function of publicizing the occasion, these announcements communicate a lot of information about the sociocultural norms and practices encoded in the rhetorical and organizational components of these types of genre. These sociocultural features have been highlighted and compared with those of German and UK death notices examined by Fries (1990a). For example, it was found that obituary announcements in Persian are more elaborate in the information they convey. They are intended to communicate information about the reciprocal relationship between members of the families on social occasions and the prevalent kinship system in Iranian society, which goes rather counter to the individuality seen in the West. The study exhibits certain peculiarities that can be understood only in their sociocultural context, about the social status of the deceased and his/her survivors. Such information is hardly ever given in German and UK death announcements.

REFERENCES


THE EFFICACY OF VARIOUS TYPES OF CORRECTION FEEDBACK FOR IMPROVING GRAMMATICAL FEATURE

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ABSTRACT
Providing feedback on students' grammatical errors was considered ineffective and harmful for ages as a result of Truscott's work (1996). On the contrary, the case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes was proposed by Ferris (2004) who believes the idea of abandoning grammar correction in L2 classes is premature. Spending some years on that controversial issue there is still a debate over its efficacy. Therefore, this research examined the influences of correction of learner's errors on improving grammatical features. In particular, types of corrections which are applied in this study were explicit and implicit corrective feedbacks. This study focused on correction of grammatical points which are concentrated on the past tenses i.e. present perfect and past simple on writing of low intermediate students. Sixty low intermediate EFL Iranian learners from one of the institutes of Tehran, approximately in homogeneous level, were selected. Participants were divided in three groups. First, second, and third groups had received explicit correction feedback, implicit correction feedback and no treatment respectively. During the 12-week research, students were asked to write compositions based on related topics to purpose of the study. They had to write staged at weeks 3, 6, 9, and 12. Expected findings supports the idea that explicit or direct corrective feedback is significantly superior to implicit one and students who received feedback of any kinds outperformed students who received none. Hence, direct correction is the best for producing accuracy, and students prefer it, because it is the fastest and easiest way for them as well as the fastest way for teachers over several drafts.

Introduction
The aim of the study was to discover if there is a differential effect on accuracy for three different direct written corrective feedback options over 12 weeks. The following research question was investigated:
1. Is there any relationship between direct feedback and improving grammatical features?
2. Is direct feedback more effective than indirect in enhance writing ability? Three groups of low intermediate ESL learners took part in the study: group one received direct error correction (the correct form placed above each incorrect use) as well as written; group two received direct error correction and writing; group three received no correction. Despite the call for empirical evidence of the efficacy of written corrective feedback by Truscott (1996, 1999), a number of researchers, assuming the practice is effective in helping ESL learners improve the accuracy of their writing and develop mastery over the use of linguistic features in situations where errors frequently occur (evidenced by improvements in the writing of new texts over time), have proceeded to investigate the relative effectiveness of different types of direct and indirect written corrective feedback. Given the conflicting results to date, it is important that further research be conducted in order to see if some types of feedback are more repeatedly effective than others. A range of studies have investigated whether certain types of written corrective feedback or combinations of different types are more effective than others. These studies have most often categorized feedback as either direct (explicit) or indirect (implicit). Direct corrective feedback may be defined as
the provision of the correct linguistic form or structure by the teacher to the student above the linguistic error (Ferris, 2003). It may include the crossing out of an unnecessary word/phrase/morpheme, the insertion of a missing word/phrase/morpheme, or the provision of the correct form or structure.

On the other hand, indirect corrective feedback is that which indicates that in some way an error has been made without explicit attention drawn (Ferris, 2003). This may be provided in one of four ways:

1. Underlining or circling the error; recording in the margin the number of errors in a given line; or using a code to show where the error has occurred and what type of error it is (Ferris and Roberts, 2001; Robb et al., 1986).

2. Rather than the teacher providing an explicit correction, students are left to resolve and correct the problem that has been drawn to their attention. Those who suggest that indirect feedback is more effective than direct feedback argue that it requires students to engage in guided learning and problem solving and, as a result, promotes the type of reflection, noticing and attention that is more likely to foster long-term acquisition (Ferris and Roberts, 2001). On the other hand, there are three main advantages that have been presented in support of more direct types of feedback (Chandler, 2003).

3. First, it has been suggested that direct feedback is more helpful to students because it reduces the type of confusion that can occur if learners fail to understand or remember what the feedback is saying. For example, in situations where error codes are provided, it is argued that students may not always understand or remember what they refer to. The second advantage in support of direct feedback is that it provides learners with sufficient information to resolve more complex errors (for example, errors in syntactic structure). The third advantage that has been identified concerns the belief that direct feedback provides learners with more immediate feedback on hypotheses that they may have made. Studies that have investigated the relative merits of these approaches can be grouped according to those that have compared direct and indirect types of written corrective feedback, those that have compared different types of indirect feedback, and those that have compared different types of direct feedback. In studies that have compared direct and indirect approaches, two (Ferris and Helt, 2000; Lalande, 1982) have reported an advantage for indirect feedback, two (Robb et al., 1986; Semke, 1984) have reported no difference between the two approaches, and one (Chandler, 2003) has reported positive findings for both direct and indirect feedback.

4. Clearly, firm conclusions cannot be made from these conflicting results. By comparison, it is interesting to note that even though many findings from oral corrective feedback studies in SLA research point to an advantage for direct over indirect corrective feedback (Carroll, 2001; Carroll and Swain, 1993; Ellis et al., 2006; Havranek and Cesnik, 2003; Lyster, 2004; Muranoi, 2000; Nagata, 1993; Rosa and Leow, 2004), there are others (DeKeyser, 1993; Kim and Mathes, 2001; Leeman, 2003) that claim the opposite. As well as comparing direct and indirect approaches, several other studies (Ferris et al., 2000; Ferris and Roberts, 2001; Robb et al., 1986) have investigated the relative effectiveness of different types of indirect feedback (coded and uncoded) but none has found any difference between the two options. Those who suggest that indirect feedback is more effective than direct feedback argue that it requires students to engage in guided learning and problem solving and, as a result, promotes the type of reflection, noticing and attention that is more likely to foster long-term acquisition (Ferris and Roberts, 2001).

Target structures compared with the others studies on the value of written corrective feedback (see Ferris, 2003), this study investigated the effect of targeting two functional uses of the English grammatical system:

Other functional uses of the definite and indefinite articles were not targeted in the study. These structures were targeted because students across English language proficiency levels experience difficulty in the use of the English article and grammatical system (Bitchener et al. 2005; Butler, 2002; Master, 1995). For example, they may experience difficulty deciding whether an article and past tense are required and, if they are required, whether it should be the definite or indefinite article or present or past tense. Accuracy in the use of these functions in the pre-writing thereby indicating that students at a low intermediate level have only a partial mastery of the functions.

**Literature review**

There are studies that did not find error feedback by the teacher to be significantly more effective for developing accuracy in L2 student writing than content-related comments or no feedback (e.g., Kepner, 1991; Polio, Fleck, & Leder, 1998; Semke, 1984; Sheppard, 1992) but they need to be examined closely.

Kepner (1991) did not find that college students who received surface-level error correction made significantly fewer errors in their journals than those who received message-related comments, but the students apparently were not required to do anything with the teacher’s corrections. Semke’s (1984) finding of lack of effect of error correction on accuracy and negative effect on fluency may not have been due entirely to the different treatment methods but also to the differences in the quantity of writing practice. To receive experimental group receiving Content-focused comments had to write twice as much as the groups receiving corrections or corrections and
comments; the group that self-corrected wrote much less new material because of the time it took to make revisions. Similarly, in Polio et al.’s (1998) study, the experimental group receiving error correction were assigned to write half as many journal entries as the control group because of their editing activities. Both groups in this study improved in accuracy, there was significant difference between them.

On the other hand, there are studies demonstrating the efficacy of error feedback from the teacher, these studies, however, measured accuracy only on rewrites or on tests so it remains an open question whether students who got error correction would write more accurately on future assignments. To date, the written CF literature is replete with studies that have attempted to shed light on the key question researchers and ESL writing teachers have asked: ‘Does written CF help ESL writers to improve their written accuracy in writing over time’? The following research will briefly review the literature on this topic in terms of whether the findings of previous written CF studies constitute evidence for or against CF and in so doing, it will identify and raise some key issues that need to be addressed in order to advance in the studies (i.e., revisions of previous texts rather than new pieces of writing) are inadequate. As Sheen (2007) pointed out, “[to] claim that error correction results in learning, one must examine whether the improvement in revisions carries over to a new piece of writing or if the improvement is manifested on a posttest or delayed posttest” (p. 258). In other words, it can be argued that students’ ability to edit marked errors in their papers is not a valid indication of learning.

However, more recently, a few studies have examined the value of written CF by measuring progress in new pieces of writing (e.g., Bitchener et al., 2005; Ellis et al., 2008; Sheen, 2007). Bitchener et al. (2005), for example, investigated the extent to which different types of CF (direct CF with and without oral conferencing) influence the accuracy in new pieces of writing. Bitchener et al. limited the provision of written CF to only errors involving past tense, definite article (‘the’), and prepositions. They found that both types of direct CF had a significant impact on accuracy in new pieces of writing but that this was only evident for the definite article and past tense. The same type of feedback did not have a significant positive effect on accurate use of prepositions. The authors explained their findings by referring to Ferris’s (2002) argument that if a grammatical feature is clearly rule-based (e.g., definite article and past-tense), it is more treatable than when a feature is item-based (as with many prepositions). Consequently, many researcher suggested that direct CF might be effective in treating some but not all errors, and that teachers should be selective with regard to the errors they address in students’ writing. Whereas Bitchener et al. compared two direct types of CF, Chandler (2003) investigated the effects of direct and indirect types of CF. Her participants were asked to write five chapters of an autobiographical text over a period of time. The effect of written CF was measured on the new chapters as well as on their revised texts. My study showed that direct written CF (where all errors were corrected and the type of error described) led to the greatest improvement in students’ accuracy both in first and in subsequent writing. This led us to conclude that direct written CF has the largest impact on the development of students’ accuracy providing that the students incorporate the corrections in their revisions. However, we did not include a control group that did not receive any feedback doesn’t have any progress. The inclusion of a control group that simply wrote the three series of texts without any corrections would have enabled them to see whether writing practice by itself was sufficient to produce improvements in grammatical accuracy over time. This is another design problem that has been pointed out in the past (see Truscott, 2007) Gue´nette’s (2007) insightful and critical review of written CF research identified a number of problematic issues in L2 writing research (e.g., the lack of a control group, the difficulty in controlling various classroom activities that might have an influence on writing development and the incentive factor of student grades).

These problems arose as a result of using intact L2 writing classes where students were expected to receive feedback and get a grade for their written assignments. However, a number of recent studies investigating direct feedback have attempted to overcome these limitations.
Sheen (2007) examined the effects of focused CF (targeting only one linguistic feature) on the development of 91 adult ESL learners’ accuracy in the use of two types of articles ('the' and 'a'). The study included a direct only group (the researcher indicated errors and provided correct forms), a direct met linguistic group (the researcher indicated errors, provided correct forms, and supplied met linguistic explanations), and a control group (the researcher administered tests but provided no CF). The effectiveness of the CF was measured on pretests, posttests, and delayed posttests which involved (a) a narrative task (students read and rewrote a story), (b) a speeded dictation (students wrote down several sentences read by the teacher), (c) a writing test (students wrote a story based on a set of pictures), and (d) an error correction test (students corrected erroneous sentences). Sheen found that both direct CF groups outperformed the control group. She explained this finding by pointing out that the feedback supplied to the students with the correct form was limited to two linguistic forms (i.e., articles ‘the’ and ‘a’), which made the processing load manageable for them.

Nevertheless, teachers of writing may be sceptical of Sheen’s study on the grounds that the approach to written correction that she adopted does not conform to their understanding of the overall purpose for correcting students’ written work. This clearly entails more than correcting a single grammatical error. Written CF is complex. It addresses different aspects of writing – content, organization/rhetoric and mechanics, as well as linguistic accuracy. The question arises, however, whether written CF should deal with all these aspects at the same time or address different aspects selectively when correcting different pieces of writing. In SLA studies (e.g., Ellis et al., 2006; Han, 2002; Lyster, 2004), oral CF has proved effective precisely because it was focused (i.e., it addressed a specific linguistic feature repeatedly). One reason why previous studies of written CF failed to demonstrate any effect on students’ accuracy in subsequent writing may simply be that the linguistic feedback was not sufficiently focused and intensive. This is evident in the fact that a number of recent written CF studies that investigated focused rather than unfocused CF (e.g., Bitchener, 2008; Ellis et al., 2008) have shown CF to be effective.

It is important, then, to distinguish two approaches to correcting students’ written work. The traditional approach is what might be called an unfocused approach. This involves providing correction on a wide range of errors in each piece of students’ written texts. However, as noted in Sheen (2007), this approach runs the risk of overloading students’ attentional capacity. The alternative approach is a focused approach. This can be achieved by selecting a specific grammatical problem that teachers have observed in their students’ writing and directing the CF at just this feature for a limited period of time. The only study to date that has addressed this distinction is Ellis et al. (2008). This study compared the effects of focused and unfocused CF on the accurate use of English definite and indefinite articles and reported that both types of feedback were equally effective in improving accuracy. However, one of the methodological problems with this study, acknowledged by the authors, was that the focused and unfocused CF were not sufficiently distinguished (i.e., article corrections figured strongly in both). Another limitation of this study was that their measure of learning involved just one structure – articles (i.e., they did not examine whether focused CF had any effect, negative or positive, on the accuracy of structures not targeted by the CF). There is an obvious need to investigate what effects the two types of CF have on a broader range of grammatical structures.

The present study sets out to address this issue by taking care to distinguish the implementation of focused and unfocused CF more clearly than in Ellis et al. and also by systematically investigating whether the focused approach benefits ESL learners and whether it proves more effective than an unfocused approach. To that end, this study examines (1) the effects of the focused and unfocused approaches on both a single grammatical target (articles) and on a broader range of grammatical structures (Ashwell, 2000) (i.e., articles, copula ‘be’, regular past tense, irregular past tense and preposition), and (2) the extent to which writing practice without any CF can lead to gains in accuracy over time.

It should be noted that unlike the focused approach, the unfocused approach constitutes a relatively unsystematic way of correcting errors. Given that corrective feedback in the classroom is often provided in an ad-hoc way (i.e., sporadically and often inconsistently on a range of grammatical features) there is an obvious need to investigate unfocused CF. Also, it is important to investigate whether focused CF has an effect not only on the structure targeted by the CF but on other structures as it is possible that such CF might sensitize students to the need to pay attention to grammatical accuracy and, therefore, have a general effect on their writing.

Method
Participant
Participants and instructional context, in this study we have focused on low intermediate learners, this study comprised 60 low-intermediate from an institute in Tehran in homogeneous group. They are divided to three groups, first, second and third. The first group receives direct feedback, the second group receives indirect...
feedback and the third one doesn’t receive any treatment.

**Material**

All the students are asked to write a composition in specific session in weeks 3, 6, 9, and 12. They have to write based on selected topics by the teachers. After any session the teacher gave them conference instruction and in next session returns their paper.

**Design**

The participants were divided into three treatment groups according to whether they had decided to study. Despite different amounts of instruction; the same amount of time was spent teaching grammar in each of the three classes. Because the focus on writing, all three classes received the same amount of attention in this skill area. Attention given to the other skill areas (reading, speaking, and listening) varied according to the classes. Group one, received direct written corrective feedback. Group two, received indirect written corrective feedback only. Group three, received no corrective feedback on the targeted features but, to satisfy ethical requirements, they were given feedback on the quality and organization of their content.

Direct written feedback took the form of full, explicit corrections above the underlined errors. The researcher then referred to other instances of the error in the student’s text and asked him/her to correct them. The researcher drew particular attention to errors that were made in different linguistic environments.

Between the writing tasks, no explicit instruction on the targeted linguistic errors was given by the researchers, but some form of instruction was given by the classroom teachers because they form part of the curriculum at this level. Also, it was not possible to control for any additional input or production practice that may have occurred outside of class time and that was initiated by the students themselves. This study investigated the effect of written CF on three linguistic error categories and found it to be effective for helping L2 writers improve their accuracy in the first two, rule-based, categories, but not in the more idiosyncratic use of prepositions. That study did not examine which particular functional uses of the article system.

Were most effectively targeted with the feedback. Given the range of functional uses of the article system in English, it is important to know whether written CF is more effective in targeting certain uses rather than all uses. In a series of more direct studies on the extent to which written CF can effectively treat specific functional uses of the grammatical feature, and investigated its effect on two particular functional uses of the English article system and found that writers who received written CF outperformed those who did not receive CF.

This study was conducted with low intermediate learners of English, so we do not know the extent to which it can further help advanced learners who demonstrate a reasonably high level of accuracy in their use of articles. Several researchers (Bitchener et al., 2005; Butler, 2002; Ferris, 2002, 2006; Master, 1995) have noted that advanced writers continue to experience difficulty in their use of the English article system, so we designed the present study to investigate the potential of written CF for targeting advanced L2 writers’ ongoing errors in the use of articles.

After 12 weeks of instruction in the genres of narration, description, and argumentation, students were quite comfortable with and familiar with the procedures, pacing, and activities in the course, including writing during class time. Therefore, data were collected from an in-class writing assignment conducted during 12 weeks. Students have to write based on topics that were assigned on them.

Students who were in the experimental group received their direct correction feedback with errors underlined; students in the control group received their drafts without any marks on them. Neither group had grades issued on their drafts. All three writing exercises—including specific topics were collected for further analysis.

Do methods of error correction (direct, explicit and implicit) have any significant effect on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners?

A one-way ANOVA is run to probe the effect of three different methods of error correction; namely, direct, explicit and implicit on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners.

The three groups enjoy homogenous variances, an assumption that must be met for an appropriate one-way ANOVA design. As displayed in Table 1, the Levene’s F of 1.17 has a probability of 0.31. Since the probability associated with the Levene’s F is higher than the significance level of 0.05, it can be concluded that the three groups enjoy homogenous variances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene Statistic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>df1</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.17</td>
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</table>

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**Table 1: Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances**
The F-observed value for the effect of correction methods is 24.08 (Table 2). This amount of F-value is higher than the critical value of 3.15 at 2 and 57 degrees of freedom.

Based on these results it can be concluded that methods of error correction (direct, explicit and implicit) have significant effects on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners. Thus the null-hypothesis as methods of error correction (direct, explicit and implicit) do not have any significant effect on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners is rejected.

The Descriptive Statistics for the three groups are displayed in Table 3. The explicit group students show the highest mean score on the writing test, i.e. 17.79. This is followed by direct (16.45) and implicit (13.89).

Although the significant F-value of 24.08 indicates statistically significant differences between the three methods of error correction, the post-hoc Scheffe's tests should be run to locate the exact places of differences between any two methods. As displayed in Table 4:
A: There is not any significant difference between the direct and explicit methods of error correction mean scores on the writing test.
B: There is a significant difference between the direct and implicit methods of error correction mean scores on the writing test. The direct group with a mean score of 16.45 performed better than the implicit method on the writing test.
C: There is a significant difference between the explicit and implicit methods of error correction mean scores on the writing test. The explicit group with a mean score of 17.79 performed better than the implicit method on the writing test.
Conclusion

In order to contribute to the need for further research on the value of providing corrective feedback to L2 writers, the present study investigated the extent to which different types of feedback on three error categories helped L2 writers improve the accuracy of their use in new pieces of writing. It found that the combination of full, explicit written feedback and enabled them to use the past simple tense and the definite article with significantly greater accuracy in new pieces of writing than was the case with their use of prepositions. This finding adds to a growing body of research that has investigated the effect of different feedback strategies on accuracy performance.

The study find that direct oral feedback in combination with direct written feedback had a greater effect on improved accuracy over time, but it also found that the combined feedback option facilitated improvement in the more ‘treatable’, rule-governed features (the past simple tense and the definite article) than in the less ‘treatable’ feature (prepositions). Consequently, we would suggest that classroom L2 writing teachers provide their learners with feedback as well as written feedback on the more ‘treatable’ types of linguistic error on a regular basis. So that learners buy into this learning process, we would suggest that teachers discuss with their learners which linguistic errors should be focused on. Because current research indicates that indirect feedback options have a greater effect than direct feedback on accuracy performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control group</th>
<th>Explicit group</th>
<th>Implicit group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>195 19 19 19.5</td>
<td>20 20 19.5 20</td>
<td>20 20 20 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>19.75 29.75 19.5 19</td>
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<td>20 20 19 20</td>
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<td>19 20 19.5 20</td>
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<td>18 17.25 17.5 18</td>
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</table>
REFERENCES


ON THE CORRELATION BETWEEN IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS’ SELF ESTEEM AND TEST ANXIETY

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ABSTRACT
The current study aimed at investigating any probable relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ self-esteem and test anxiety. To do so, 120 male and female Iranian language learners from Islamic Azad university of Miyaneh, Iran were administered two questionnaires: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Sarason’ Test Anxiety Scale. Having run the correlations analysis, the results revealed that there was a negatively significant correlation between participants’ foreign test anxiety and their self-esteem. Conducting studies like the present one may contribute effectively on providing better teaching and learning environment to overcome learners’ psychological and affective barriers in EFL situation. Therefore, it is concluded that self-esteem is one of the factors which are responsible for learner’ anxiety during examinations but by appropriate training of students in dealing with factors causing test anxiety there can be some improvements.

Key Terms: Test Anxiety, self-esteem, foreign language anxiety, EFL

1. Introduction
Test anxiety is one of the most widely used concepts in today’s psychology. It is a kind of cognitive, emotional and psychological responses caused by stress during the examination and assessment. It mostly occurs when learners realize that their performance is under investigation and evaluation. Bachman and Palmer (1996) state that test performance is ascribed to test takers’ and test task characteristics. Test taker characteristics consist of language proficiency, topical knowledge, personal characteristics, strategic competence and affective characteristics. Research on the role of test anxiety on the performance of EFL learners has repeatedly revealed that high levels of test anxiety enhance the probability of significant declines in every performance in general and EFL performance in particular. Cassady (2002) investigated the influence of test anxiety on learners’ memory, understanding, and comprehension of text passages. The results indicated that there was a significant impact of cognitive test anxiety on learner’s performance. Although some studies have examined the role of personality factors on the EFL learners’ performance, there is still a lack of research on foreign language situation in which anxiety of college language learners in Iranian EFL context was studied simultaneously. The primary purpose of the present study was, therefore, to investigate the correlation between self-esteem and test anxiety among Iranian EFL college students.

2. Review of Literature
2.1. Self Esteem and Language Learning
Language whether acquisition or learning is one of the most impressive and fascinating aspects of human development. Many believe that learners in EFL classrooms have certain characteristics that will lead to more or less successful language learning. All normal human beings, if they have normal and natural upbringing, are successful in their acquiring their first language. But as for foreign language, their success varies greatly. So there must be such characteristics that make this great difference. One of the factors generally considered to be relevant to language learning is personality characteristics. Personality characteristics within a person contribute in some
way to the success of language learning. Self-esteem is one of the important facets. Coopersmith (1967, p.4-5), defined self-esteem as:

"...a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in attitudes that the individual holds towards himself, ...and indicates the extent to which the individual believes in himself to be capable, significant and worthy".

Self-esteem is probably the most pervasive aspect of any human characteristics. It may be stated that no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem. Malinowski (1923) noted that all human beings have a need for phatic communion - defining oneself and finding acceptance in expressing that self in relation to valued others. Personality development universally involves the growth of a person's concept of himself or herself, acceptance of self, and evaluation of self as seen in the interaction between self and other people.

For foreign language learner researchers, the fact that self-concept is a multidimensional construct may have an important implication. It is possible that learner's self-concept in one language is not necessarily indicative of his/her self-concept in another language. Therefore, research into the construct has to be language specific in order to reflect these possibly distinct self-concepts (Mercer 2011). There are, however, certain general observations concerning the role of self-related constructs in language learning. As one of the most important affective domains, self-esteem certainly has an impact on success or failure in the process. Several important aspects of foreign language learning are, beyond any doubt, related to the issue of learners' self-esteem. James (1890) defined self-esteem as a ratio of achievement measured against aspirations within areas of particular importance. Research has shown that a student who feels good about himself is more likely to succeed. Holly (1987) compiled a summary of many studies and pointed out that most indicated that self-esteem is the result rather than the cause of academic achievement. In addition, Covington, M. (1989) from the University of California carried out an extensive review of the research on the relationship between self-esteem and achievement, concluding that "self-esteem can be modified through direct instruction and that such instruction can lead to achievement gains". As Brown (1994) says, good teachers succeed "because they give optimal attention to linguistic goals and to the personhood of their students."

In a study performed in Iranian context, the role of self-esteem has been investigated by Zarei, Eghbal et al. (2012). They determined the effect of instruction in cognitive and metacognitive strategies on learners' educational self-esteem and academic performance. In another study by Kalanzadeh, G.A et al. (2013) the influence of self-esteem on speaking skill was investigated. They concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between the EFL learners' self-esteem and their verbal performance.

The role of self-esteem in other language skills has been investigated in Iranian context. Self-esteem has been regarded a crucial factor even in writing. Fahim and Khojaste Rad (2012) attempted to understand the relationship between EFL learners' self-esteem and their paragraph writing. They found that if learners feel secure in a class, they will be more encouraged to participate in writing activities. For the role of self-esteem in listening performance, there were some other studies. As an example, Hayati (2008) showed that the students' listening comprehension was significantly affected by their self-esteem; that is, self-esteem as an important psychological factor had a positive significant relationship with students' English language listening comprehension. Therefore, considering the above mentioned studies, the role of learners' self-esteem is of paramount importance.

2.2. Foreign language Anxiety and language learning

Foreign language anxiety is common among foreign language learners (Young, 1991) and it is seen as one of the great obstacles of EFL learning and achievement. MacIntyre (1999) defined foreign language anxiety as 'worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language' (p.27). Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) identified three types of foreign language anxiety: fear from communication, apprehension of negative judgment and test anxiety. They also developed a 33-item questionnaire, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to measure language anxiety. Following this, many studies have been conducted on language anxiety. Although few studies have shown a positive relationship between language anxiety and language achievement (e.g., Liu, 2006; Oxford, 1999), most of them have shown that language anxiety is negatively related to language achievement (e.g., MacIntyre, 1999; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre, Noels, Clement, 1997). In other words, the more proficiency learners gain in the EFL, the less anxiety they experience in learning it. Tseing (2012) has
provided some factors causing anxiety in foreign language classroom in Asian context. These factors include: self-perceptions, social environment and limited exposure to the target language, cultural differences, social status and self-identity, gender, strict and formal classroom environment, fear of making mistakes and apprehension about others' evaluation. In another study, Melouah (2013) has investigated foreign language classroom anxiety among Algerian students, and she has listed some factors contributing to foreign language classroom in EFL setting. She states that foreign language classroom anxiety mostly stems from fear of interaction and communication, error correction, language competence and proficiency, lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem.

In a study in Iranian context, Mahmoodzadeh (2012) has investigated the effect of gender on foreign language anxiety, and he has concluded "mixed-gender classrooms can be considered as an anxiety-provoking teaching context in Iran because the presence of the opposite gender in EFL classrooms was found to cause statistically significant amount of language anxiety among Iranian learners". He has stated that in mixed gender classes the role of the teacher in reducing anxiety is very important.

In another study in Iranian context, Atef-Vahid and Fard Kashani (2011) have investigated the effect of anxiety on Iranian high school students' English language achievement. The results of their study show that English learning anxiety has a significant negative correlation with the achievement of the foreign language students.

There have been some other studies on the relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and other language areas. Mohammadi et.al (2013) have investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety and language learning strategies among Iranian university students. The results of their study have revealed that language learning strategies correlate meaningfully and significantly with foreign language classroom anxiety. In order to reduce second language anxiety, there is a need to identify factors that lead to this anxiety. Young (1991) reviewed the literature and summarized six possible sources of second language anxiety: (1) personal and interpersonal issues, (2) instructor-learner interactions, (3) classroom procedures, (4) language testing, (5) teachers' beliefs about language learning, and (6) learner beliefs about language learning.

2.3. Test Anxiety
Test anxiety is a common problem among learners. Test scores are and have been important in evaluating learners and testees in educational programs. It has appeared as one of the most important concepts in psychology. It is a common phenomenon, with some degree of evaluative anxiety being experienced by most people in modern society. The test anxiety construct has developed within a large area of attention ever since its introduction in the early 1950s, with scholars making important steps toward understanding its nature, components, origins, determinants, effects, and treatments. During the examination, most students have to face different situations of anxiety. In the viewpoint of Sarason and Stoops (1978), anxiety has adverse and negative effects during examination. It does not mean that students, who get lower achievement in the examinations, are less intelligent. Duesek (1980) has defined Test anxiety as "An emotional state that has psychological and behavioral concomitants, and that is experienced in formal testing or other evaluative situations" (p. 88), and Sarason (1984) defines test anxiety as "A widely studied personality variable in part because it provides a measure of the personal salience of one important definable class of threatening situations in which people are evaluated" (p. 292). In a paper, Lieppmann, Marggraf, Felfe, and Hosemann (1992) stated that test anxiety is always developed among students due to results of failure, and it is communicated through early interactions of judgments of parents of those students who are performing in the tests. Test anxiety is described by Spielberger and Vagg (1995) an element of general anxiety. They state that "test anxiety is composed of cognitive attention processes that interfere with performance in academic situations or examinations." An important definition of test anxiety is given by Zeidner (1998), “The set of phenomenological, physiological and behavioral responses that accompany concern about possible negative consequences or failure on the examination or similar evaluative situation” (p. 17). On the other hand, Hong (1998) has given the definition of test anxiety as “complexes multidimensional construct involving cognitive, physiological, and behavioral reactions to evaluative situations” (p. 51).

2.4. Concepts of Test Anxiety
According to Spielberger (1980), there are three different concepts of test anxiety which are personality trait, emotional state and clinical state. If it is considered a personality trait, it is assumed that the tests are perceived as threatening. Zeidner (1998) has explained the emotional state. It is a degree of anxiety immediately faced by students in a particular test situation. Sapp, Durand, and Farrel (1995) have given the concept of test anxiety as...
“…...special case of a general anxiety disorder related to taking examination”. This definition explains the third concept of test anxiety which is clinical state or disorder.

2.5. Causes of Test Anxiety
There can be many reasons for test anxiety. The first one is lack of preparation as indicated by (a) cramming the night before the exam, (b) poor time management, (c) failure to organize text information, and (d) poor study habits. The second one is worrying about (a) past performance on exams, (b) how friends and other students are doing, and (c) the negative consequences of failure. In addition, a student may experience physical signs of test anxiety during an exam like perspiration, sweaty palms, headache, upset stomach, rapid heartbeat, and tense muscles. In addition to above-mentioned reasons, test anxiety can be resulted from personality factors. Therefore, we have tried to find a probable relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem.

3. Methodology
This study was non-experimental in nature, and it was a correlation type since it dealt with the relations among the variables and we did not manipulate or alter the given variables and the level of these relations would be evaluated according to their effects and results.

3.1. Participants
The participants were chosen from Miyaneh Islamic Azad University, Iran. They were 120 university students (60 females and 60 males) studying different fields of studies. Their ages varied from 19 to 34 years old (M = 23.21, SD = 2.61). They were senior college students who were studying English as a general course at Islamic Azad universities of Miyaneh, Iran.

3.2. Instruments
3.2.1. Test anxiety scale
Sarason’s (1975) test anxiety scale (TAS) was used as one of the research instruments to determine the learners’ degree of test anxiety. Sarason’s (1975) TAS is a Likert scale with 37 items which reflect the multi-componential aspects of test anxiety (Zeinder, 1998). Responses range from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). For each item, the highest degree of anxiety receives five points and the lowest, one point. Students’ scores can range from 37 to 185, the greater the number, the stronger the degree of test anxiety. The TAS is a reliable instrument in identifying students’ anxiety experience in language learning. The internal consistency measure of TAS showed an alpha coefficient of 0.90. Sarason reported that the Cronbach’s alpha of this questionnaire in a course of 6 weeks was 0.91. It take 15 minutes to complete the test. The reason for using the Persian translation of the questionnaires was that the students were chosen from general English classes, and they might not have understood all the items in the questionnaires clearly if they read the original questionnaires.

3.2.2. Self-Esteem
To measure self-esteem, the Persian version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Tevakkoli, 1995) was utilized. Items of the RSES were answered on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). This scale is widely used for measuring Global Self-esteem (GSE) and consists of 10 items. Although there are different types of self-esteem such as global, specific, task, academic, etc., this scale measures global and general self-esteem trait which is the focus of this study. To put it in other words, the items of this scale are not concerned with particular characteristics (Rosenberg, Schooler, & Schoenbach, 1989). A number of studies have been carried out to investigate the validity and reliability of the RSES. Positive relationship was found between scores on the RSES and scores on some other scales including the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Demo, 1985 as cited in Tahriri, 2003). For the purpose of determining the reliability of this scale, Cronbach’s alpha was used, and the whole data were subjected to alpha reliability analysis. The RSES achieved an alpha coefficient of .72. This suggests that the items of the RSES are internally consistent based on the data set. Tevakkoli (1995) also has examined the interval reliabilities and validity of Persian version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES).

3.3. Data collection
Data was obtained by two questionnaires: the Persian version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Tevakkoli, 1995). Test Anxiety Scale (FLACS) developed by Sarason (1975). The instruments were administered and...
the participants were asked to choose the case among Likert-scale items that were true for them. The time for answering the questionnaires were 15, and 10 minutes for test anxiety, and self-esteem scales, respectively.

3.4. Statistical analysis

Correlation analysis using SPSS statistical software (version 17) was conducted to test the correlation between self-regulation, foreign language classroom anxiety and self-esteem.

3.5. Research questions

The following question was formulated for the present study: Is there any statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ test anxiety and their self-esteem?

4. Results

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics for Test Anxiety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
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<th>Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>85.5600</td>
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<td>15.01</td>
<td>232.01</td>
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</table>

Table 4.2. Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem

<table>
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<th>Valid</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.5423</td>
<td>14.652</td>
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<td>54.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3. The Relationship between Test Anxiety and EFL Learners’ Self Esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Anxiety</th>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test Anxiety Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self esteem Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.754</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be understood from Table 4.3, the total test anxiety scores has had a significantly negative correlation (r = -.754, p ≤ .01) with EFL learners' Self-Esteem scores. We may conclude that the learners with lower test anxiety
have probably been more self-esteemed, and participants with higher test anxiety are likely less self-esteemed. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there was no significant correlation between test anxiety and self-esteem was rejected.

5. Discussions and Implications

This study was performed to determine whether a correlation exists between Iranian EFL learners' test anxiety and their self-esteem. In this sample of students, the correlation between participants' test anxiety and their self-esteem was negatively significant; the more learners are self-esteemed, the less they are anxious in EFL situation.

On the basis of the analysis we arrived at the following tentative conclusions:

The more learners are self-esteemed, the less they are anxious in EFL examination.

There are very few teacher preparation programs that offer a course or courses that educate teachers in how to affectively teach students to overcome their test anxieties. There should be professional development among educators who should work with EFL learners to consider EFL students anxiety in the examinations. A caring, nurturing environment for ELL students will positively influence and help create opportunities for performance.

Students can be taught to become more self-esteemed learners by acquiring specific strategies that are both successful for them and that enable them to increase their control over their own behavior and environment. Therefore, one of the teacher's responsibilities should be developing some strategies skills in students to overcome test anxiety. Most researchers agree that the best learning occurs when someone carefully observes and considers his/her own behavior. The classroom atmosphere can provide many opportunities for learners to practice self-esteem to overcome the test anxiety, and this is the teachers' responsibility to provide such an environment. It is critical for syllabus designers to include some activities and exercises which support individual children needs and interests to make self-esteem takes place in learners. Test anxiety threatens the students' psychological health and affects their efficiency, emergence of talent, formation of personality and social identity negatively and as an overall phenomenon that creates problems among university and school students could have negative effect on their educational progress and optimal performance, particularly when it comes to assess them. Several factors such as personality characteristics are effective to reduce or create test anxiety. According to the obtained results, it is recommended that the advising professors in cooperation with students' consultation center as well as the group of psychologists try to take the necessary actions to reduce and control the students' test anxiety. Also problemsolving could empower the individuals to adopt effective and settled strategies to confront the daily problems. In other words, problem solving is an important conflicting strategy that could increase the ability, personal and social progress and reduce the chaos and psychological symptoms.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF FSP-BASED TEACHING OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNER’S KNOWLEDGE OF DIRECT/INDIRECT SPEECH

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ABSTRACT
The present study investigated the effect of FSP-Based Teaching of Direct and Indirect speech as a classroom activity on Iranian EFL Learner’s knowledge of Direct/Indirect speech. The question this study tried to answer was whether the knowledge of FSP-Based teaching direct and indirect speech might enhance higher knowledge of direct and indirect speech in Iranian learners of English. To answer this question, 60 intermediate language learners in Shokouh’s English Language Institute in Chalous were randomly selected via administering an OPT to 100 language learners. Then, they were divided into two groups of experimental and control. A pre-test of Direct and Indirect Speech was administered to both groups, then, they were thought direct and indirect speech for 5 sessions but with different methodologies: the experimental group received a treatment of FSP-Based direct/indirect speech while the control group received the existing method. A post-test of Direct and Indirect Speech then administered to both groups. The data was analyzed through calculating an independent sample T-test and one-way ANCOVA coefficient. The results indicate that the mean of two groups were significantly different.

Key Words: FSP, Direct Speech, Indirect Speech, OPT, L2 Grammar

Introduction
Importance of grammar teaching in second language learning is well known. Long ago from the fifteenth century, there had been a long debate on the problems of teaching grammar effectively. For centuries, language has been synonymous with language teaching then the role of the grammar declined with the introduction of communicative language teaching (Thompson 1996).
Teaching grammar has always been a matter of controversy especially in second language acquisition as Thornbury (1999 p.14 as cited in Neupane 2009) says “infact no other issue has preoccupied theorists and practitioners as the grammar debate, and the history of language teaching is essentially the history of claims andcounter claims for and against the teaching of grammar”.
The main difference in grammar teaching methods is due to teachers’ different views about the role of grammar. According to the historic overview of the role of grammar Bygate et al. (1994 as cited in Neupane 2009) says that in the light of the centuries old tradition of language learning dominated by Latin and Greek, the study of language is mainly the study of its grammar. In old times, grammar has the central role in structural linguistics. According to Wilkins (1972 as cited in Bygate et al.1994 as cited in Neupane 2009) the aim of a language teacher is to enable the people to learn it. Some people have a view that grammar teaching is not essential because it doesn’t facilitate second language acquisition.
The present study aims at appraising the effect of FSP-Based Teaching of Direct and Indirect Speech on Iranian EFL Learner’s knowledge of Direct/Indirect Speech. EFL learners have problem in grammar. The teacher guide student to the perception of a pattern, the learning load will be lighter. On the other hand if the student is taught that something is the pattern which in fact is not so, he is likely to be unnecessary confused.

Theoretical framework
According to Chomsky (1995), the theory of particular language is its grammar. Corder (1967) suggests that learners had their own built-in syllabus for learning grammar. In line with this, Krashen (1981) argued that grammar instruction played no role in acquisition, a view based on the conviction that learners (including classroom learners) would automatically proceed along their built-in syllabus as long as they had access to comprehensible input and were sufficiently motivated.
Linguistics affords a broad selection of grammatical models to choose from, including structural grammars, generative grammars (based on a theory of universal grammar), and functional grammars. Traditionally syllabuses have been based on structural or descriptive grammars. Structural syllabuses traditionally emphasized the teaching of form overmeaning (e.g., Lado, 1970). Though the influence of structural grammars is still apparent today, modern syllabuses rightly give more attention to the functions performed by grammatical forms. Thus, for example, less emphasis is placed on such aspects of grammar as sentence patterns or tense paradigms and more on the meanings conveyed by different grammatical forms in communication.

Most research suggests that there is little carry over effect at all and as such would not be of significant value in developing students’ communication skills. There are some who have argued that the teaching of this grammar is at best a fruitless exercise, and at worst detrimental to a student’s understanding of English (Myhill, 2012).

The focus of this paper is on the need for students to understand and be able to use grammatical effectively in order to best support their ability to engage in effective spoken communication.

Statement of the problem

For many years, the goal of language pedagogy was to “find the right method” - a methodological magic formula that would work for all learners at all times (Brown, 2002). The problem of how to explain new language well is perhaps most obvious in the field of grammar. As Chomsky (1995) noted, “the theory of practice language is its grammar”.

In a dictionary of applied linguistics a grammar which describes the speaker’s knowledge of language. It looks at language in relation to how it may be constructed in the speaker’s mind, and which principles and parameters are available to the speaker when producing the language.

Widdowson (1989) observes, for instance, that just as approaches that rely too heavily on achievement of rules of grammar often lead to a lack of necessary grammatical knowledge and of the ability to compose or decompose sentences with reference to it.

Carter and McCarthy (1995) believe that the differences between spoken and written grammar are especially important for pedagogical grammars, since ‘descriptions that rest on the written mode or on restricted genres and registers of spoken language are likely to omit many common features of everyday informal grammar and usage’.

It is important to point out, however, that the practice must be meaningful, what Larsen-Freeman (1997) has called ‘Grammaring. Grammaring may be accomplished by asking students to engage in communicative task where it is necessary to use certain structures to complete it (Loschky and Bley-Vroman, 1993).

Some people believed that indirect speech, which is sometimes referred to as third-person speech, is the best way to communicate through an interpreter (e.g., ask him… she is saying…); but, in fact, the opposite is true. The most effective way to work across language barriers is for all speakers to use direct speech. Even when the communication has to pass through an interpretation process, people should address each other directly.

Most previous studies of reported speech have focused mainly on grammatical devices that differentiate direct and indirect speech. For instance, in English as li (1986) has noted there are five syntactical differences between the two types of quotation: (1) pronominalization; (2) place and time deixie; (3) verb tense; (4) presence of complementizer ‘that’; and (5) intonation.

Another fundamental difference between direct and indirect speech lies in the speaker’s attitude towards reported speech. According to Coulmas (1985), whereas speakers of direct reports commit themselves faithfully to rendering both form and content of what the original speaker said, indirect speech implies a commitment to content but not form. However, recently many researchers have seriously challenged the popular assumption that direct quotes are more exact and more reliable (Haberland, 1986; Tannen, 1986, 1989; Clark and Gerrig, 1990; Mayes, 1990).

Following Bakhtin (1986) and Voloshinov (1986), they contend that there is a dynamic interrelationship between speech reporting and reporting context, and every utterance is dialogic, filled with the echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication’ (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 91). Therefore, as Tannen (1986, 1989) has argued, when speech uttered in one context is repeated in another, it is fundamentally changed even if ‘reported’ accurately, and what presents itself as direct speech is really ‘constructed dialogue’.

Chafe (1982) points out that direct quote express the reporter speaker's involvement in the events she or he is reporting. Thompson’s (1996, p. 507) framework for the analysis of reported speech identifies four elements which form the core of prototypical reports:

1. The voice (who or what is reporting as the source of the language being reported).
2. The message (the way in which the function or content of the “original” language is presented).
3. The signal (the way in which the present reporter indicates that this is a language report).
4. The attitude (the evaluation by the present reporter of the message or the original speaker).

According to Sadeqi-Banis (1997), grammar is an important part of the language, especially when EFL students are being dealt with. Foreign learners in their attempts to learn the foreign language highly benefit from grammar in order to come up with generalization and with answering to creativity and productivity. Varied courses of grammar and principal role of grammar in designing the materials also highlight the fact that grammar plays a dominant role in language learning.

Birjandi et al (2006) maintain that ‘grammar is a systematic analysis of the structure of language’ (Birjandi et al, 2006, p. 220). Many EFL Iranian worry about that they pass different courses like grammar in the institute, however they fail to write sentences correctly. This claim has the evident support of the study done on the group of Iranian junior EFL Learners in which their grammar was tested and traces of failure were proved to exist.

**Review of the literature**

Systemic Functional Grammar was first developed by M.A.K. Halliday (1960). As Bloor and Bloor (2004, p. 2) say, for Systemic Functional Grammar language is “a system of meanings”. By using language people construct meanings, they express their experiences. According to the point of view of SFG, grammar is the study of how meanings are built by choosing certain words and other grammatical resources for their combination. For Halliday, language is meaning potential where the basis is that every grammatical structure involves a choice from a set of options. Since language is used to express meanings and perform various functions in different contexts and situations of our daily lives, Systemic Functional Grammar tries to explain and describe the organization of the ‘meaning-making resources’ (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2006).

For Halliday, language is “a network of systems or interrelated sets of options for making meaning” (Halliday 1994, p. 15), thus language is “systemic”. The term ‘functional’ is used to indicate that the approach is concerned with meaning. Therefore the grammar is “the study of how meanings are built up through the use of words and other linguistic forms such as tone and emphasis” (Bloor, 1995, p.1). This makes up the differences between the two models of grammar. In other words, functional grammar differs from other grammar models in the way it treats the language.

According to Methesis (1983) functional grammar has a psychological (linguistic) background. He starts from the assumption that:

every communicative act of speech involves, before it comes to the real utterance, two fundamental processes, namely a process of naming selected elements of reality by means of the vocabulary, and a process of putting the particular naming units into mutual relations so as to constitute a sentence whole.

According to functional grammarians, language is a social activity which always takes place in a context. Therefore it is not a prescriptive grammar which tells us what we can and we cannot say, or it is not a grammar of etiquette, as Martin (1997, p. 3) puts it. It enables us to see and understand more about language in context, provides us with “a tool for understanding why a text is the way it is” (Martin et al, 1997, p. 3).

**Research Question of the Study**

Based on the problem and the related literature explained above, the current study tried to answer the following question:

**RQ**: Does FSP-based teaching of direct and indirect speech have any effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of direct and indirect speech?

**Hypothesis of the Study**

Based on the mentioned problem and the related literature, the following hypothesis can be formed:

**H0**: FSP-based teaching of direct and indirect speech does not have any effect on Iranian EFL learner’s knowledge of direct and indirect speech.

**Methodology**

The present study followed a quasi-experimental design. The subjects of the study were Iranian EFL learners in Shokouh’s institute in Chalous branch. First an OPT exam were administered between 100 learners. Then 60 learners among those whose scoring were one standard deviation below the mean were selected. Then, they were divided in two groups, experimental group and control group. A pretest of grammar was administered between both groups. The learners answered 20 multiple-choice questions.

In experimental group learners were treated the study FSP-Based teaching of direct and indirect speech and in control group the learners were treated the study using the existing methods of teaching the same direct and indirect speech. After 5 session treatments, a post-test of grammar were given to both experimental and control groups.
Participants
The participants of this research were 60 Iranian EFL learners of intermediate level who had problem in grammar: they were the students with the scores that were at least one standard deviation below the mean score of the class. They learned English in Shokouh’s institute in the Fall Semester of 2014. They were intermediate female trainees, with the age range of 16-20, who were selected randomly from among the trainees based on the results of an OPT administered to 60 subjects. After proficiency test, the researcher divided them in two groups randomly assigned into experimental and control.

Materials
The materials used in the current study were divided into four parts: 1) Materials for proficiency test: an Opt exam was administered between 100 learners. After that 60 learners among those whose standard deviation below the mean was chosen. 2) Materials for pretest: it consisted of a test of sentence of direct and indirect speech. This was a test of direct and indirect speech including 20 questions selected from Internet. The learners’ score were assigned. 3) Materials for treatment: it contained 50 sentences of direct and indirect speech in experimental group of the study. They were selected from “The Good Grammar Book”. 4) Materials for post-test: it consisted of 20 questions. The researcher asked participants to answer the questions in specified answer sheet. The materials for treatment of the study contained 50 sentences of direct and indirect speech in experimental group of the study. Every session the researcher taught direct and indirect speech based on FSP in experimental group of the study. In each session, 10 sentences were given to learners. Learners answer them. The researcher also thought direct and indirect speech based on the existing method in control group of the study.

Procedures
The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of the participants’ proficiency was paper- and pencil test. Hence, the participants were asked to answer the questions in specified answer sheet. Then 60 students among those whose scoring were one standard deviation below the mean were selected. After that, they were divided in two groups randomly. They were experimental and control group. A pretest of grammar was administered between both groups. It was contained 20 Multiple-choice questions for about 15 minutes. Both the experimental and the control group were taught for five sessions study in Shokouh’s English institute of Chalous.

The treatment of the study included 5 sessions of teaching direct and indirect speech in both groups. In experimental group, the teacher used FSP-based teaching of direct and indirect speech. In each session, the teacher prepared 10 direct speech sentences for the students on paper than write them on the whiteboard. The teacher changes the sentences to indirect speech through the examples, and repeats them many times. In control group, the teacher used the common methods of teaching for direct and indirect speech. The teacher explained it by their native language. Finally, the post-test of grammar was given to both groups. Learners answered the pre-test question again. As the result of the experimental group were much better than the control group.

Data Analysis
The data obtained from testing the hypothesis of the study were analyzed via calculating a t-test between the posttest Direct and Indirect speech scores of the experimental and the control groups of the study and the one-way ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance) between the pretest and the posttests of the experimental and the control group of the study.

Data analysis and findings
The Descriptive Analysis of the Data
This section focuses on the descriptive analysis of the obtained data in this research. Such analysis was done using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software. Table (4.1) shows the descriptive analysis for pretest and the posttest of direct and indirect speech in experimental group of the study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreDirect and Indirect Speech</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.5667</td>
<td>2.95580</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As it is indicated in table (4.1), the number of participants has been 30 in each experiment ($N_{PRE}=30; N_{POE}=30$), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value=0.00) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiment of the study. The mean for the PRE$_{D/I}$ Speech (pre-test of direct and indirect speech) scores was indicated to be 9.5667 ($\bar{x}_{PRE}=9.5667$) as compared to the mean of the POS$_{D/I}$ Speech (post-test of direct and indirect speech) scores which was 15.90 ($\bar{x}_{POE}=15.90$). As for the standard deviations obtained for the experimental group, there seems to be more variability among the PRE$_{D/I}$ Speech Scores than the scores in the POS$_{D/I}$ Speech. This may give an image of the participants’ post-test scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (FSP-based Teaching of Direct and Indirect Speech).

Similarly, the descriptive analysis for the pre-test and the post-test of Direct and indirect speech in control group of the study has been indicated in table (4.2) below:

### 4.2) Descriptive analysis of the data of the Control group of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreDirect and Indirect Speech</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.233</td>
<td>3.37008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PostDirect and Indirect Speech</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.6667</td>
<td>3.03239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is indicated in table (4.2), the number of participants has been 30 in each experiment ($N_{PRC}=30; N_{POC}=30$), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value=0) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiment of the study. The mean for the PRE$_{D/I}$ Speech (pre-test of direct and indirect speech) scores was shown to be 5.233 ($\bar{x}_{PRE}=5.233$) as compared to the mean for the POS$_{D/I}$ Speech (post-test of direct and indirect speech) scores which was 9.6667 ($\bar{x}_{POE}=9.6667$). As for the standard deviations obtained for the control group, there seems to be more variability among the PRE$_{D/I}$ Speech Scores than the scores in the POS$_{D/I}$ Speech. This may give an image of the participants’ post-test score being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (existing methods of teaching the same direct and indirect speech).

### The Inferential Analysis of the Data

This section focuses on the inferential analysis of the obtained data of this study. Such analysis was done using the SPSS software. Table (4.3) shows that inferential statistics which include the calculation of the t-test between the post-test of direct and indirect speech of the experimental and the control groups of the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-Test Results</th>
<th>Observed $t$</th>
<th>dfSig(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between the post-test scores of the experimental group and the control group of the study (equal variances not assumed)</td>
<td>8.115</td>
<td>58  .000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is indicated in table (4.3), the $t$ value of the study was calculated between the post-test of direct and indirect speech of the experimental and control groups of the study. The observed $t$ value was calculated to be 8.115 ($t_{obs}=8.115$) and the degree of freedom was 58 ($df=58$). Furthermore the level of significance was calculated to be...
.000 (p=.000) which has been used in interpreting the data for the rejection or support of the hypothesis of the study in the next section.

The next inferential analysis of the data of this study was related to the degree of relationship between the pre-test and post-test of direct and indirect speech in each participant group. This was indicated by calculating the Covariance coefficient between the pre-test and post-test scores of each group of the study. The results have been illustrated in the table (4.4) and (4.5) below:

### 4.4) Analysis of Covariance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>59.807(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59.807</td>
<td>6.212</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PosCON</td>
<td>59.807</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59.807</td>
<td>6.212</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>269.559</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9.627</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1151.000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>329.367</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.5) Analysis of Covariance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>102.090(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>102.090</td>
<td>18.896</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PosEX</td>
<td>102.090</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>102.090</td>
<td>18.896</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>151.276</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.403</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2999.000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>253.367</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table (4.4) and (4.5), the covariance between the two sets of scores in the experimental group is 18.89 (\text{Cov_{PRE POE}}=18.89) and it is 6.212 (\text{Cov_{PRE CON}}=6.212) in the control group of the study. The scores of both groups are higher than “1”. This means that both group has undergone a progress, although not significantly, and the experimental group has not outperformed the control group as a result of receiving a treatment. Thus it can be calculated that the experimental group, compare to the control group, has undergone no significant progress as a result of being treated with direct and indirect speech.

### Results of Hypotheses Testing

In this section, the results of the testing the hypothesis of the study have been presented and elaborated. In order to give a detailed analysis, attempts were made to make advantage of the results of the study (see section 4.1 here) as an evidence to determine the rejection or support of the hypothesis was justified by explaining the consequences of such a rejection or support, i.e. what would happen if the hypothesis of the current study was rejected or supported. Before analyzing the hypothesis, it will be repeated here:
The hypothesis of the study, which targeted the effect of FSP-based teaching of direct and indirect speech on Iranian EFL learners' knowledge of direct and indirect speech, was supported. Evidence from various sources of data could help to verify this support. The results of the t-test of the study (see table 4.4 and 4.5) could be employed to confirm this analysis, accordingly, the observed t value calculated by SPSS was 8.115 \( (t_{\text{obs}}=8.115) \) while the critical value of t determine on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of .000 \( (p=.000) \) was 2.000 \( (t_{\text{crit}}= 2.000) \). Thus, the observed t value was higher than the critical value and high enough to reject the null hypothesis of this study.

The second evidence to verify the rejection of the hypothesis was the value of the level of significance calculated by the SPSS to be .000 \( (\text{Significance}_{2\text{-tailed}} = .000) \). Since this value was lower than 0.05 (based on the SPSS regulations), the difference between the post-test of the study could not be by chance, and thus, the rejection of the hypothesis of the study indicated that using FSP-based teaching enhance the higher knowledge of direct and indirect speech of the participants in the experimental group.

Discussion

General Discussion

The findings of the current study indicated that using FSP-Based teaching of direct and indirect speech in teaching grammar could result in a better performance of language learners in a test of grammatical patterns. The current investigation provided support for the value of grammar as an effective teaching method. The debate over the use of grammar has been always a challenging area of discussion over the years, at least from the advent of communicative language teaching.

Another research of the study with which the finding of current study is compatible is made by methodologists such as Krashen and Terrell (1983) tell us in their Natural Approach not to teach grammar explicitly and not to correct any learner’s errors. Influenced by their viewpoint of grammar, some teachers adamantly insist that teaching formal grammar is useless and even harmful. The anti-grammar tide reached its peak in November 1985, when the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) passed a resolution against the use of isolated grammar and usage exercises not supported by theory and research.

However, this does not mean that grammar instruction is not useful. Rather, what is suggested is that learners must have opportunities to encounter, process, and use instructed forms in their various form-meaning relationships so that the forms can become part of their interlanguage behavior (Larsen-Freeman, 2003).

The result of this study is in line with Radford (2004), within the traditional grammar, the syntax of the language is explained in relation to the taxonomy of various types of syntactic structure found in a language. The central assumptions behind the syntactic analysis is the idea that phrases and sentences are made of a series of constituents or syntactic unites, each of which belongs to the specific Grammatical categories and serves a specific grammatical function.

These findings seem to be compatible with the findings of the research study made by Lightbown (1998) as cited in Saeidi (2004) that traditional approaches to form-based instruction leads to treat language instruction as separate from language use; thus, the results of this study can have contributions towards establishing a relationship between language instruction and language use because of focusing on grammatical patterns instead of pure instruction of rules.

Moreover, the findings of the current study is compatible with the finding of research made by Corder (1988) and Widodo (2004) further, grammar is thought to furnish the basis for a set of language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In listening and speaking, grammar plays a crucial part in grasping and expressing spoken language (e.g. expressions) since learning the grammar of a language is considered necessary to acquire the capability of producing grammatically acceptable utterances in the language.

In other words, Doff (2000) says that by learning grammar students can express meanings in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences. Long and Richards (1987) add that it cannot be ignored that grammar plays a central role in the four language skills and vocabulary to establish communicative tasks.

Suggestions for further Research
Student learning a foreign language will need understanding of the categories and patterns. Teachers will frequently wish to refer to these patterns and will need a shorthand way to do this. Learners have difficulty in grammar; more research is needed in this important area to discover how teachers can teach the grammatical points that can be influential and effective in the process of language acquisition. The fact is that research in general and research in language grammar are not limited fields. Some ideas may be helpful for the improvement of the issue.

1. Further studies may need to include different levels of language learning, not only intermediate level.
2. It can be used in different regions and different institutes. For example, in Tehran, Nowshahr, Royan or other regions.
3. It can be used different language, for example, French, Italy classes in the institutes.
4. The participants were girls in this study, it can be held on male genders.
5. This research done during 3 weeks. The researcher can add the week.
6. The researcher can be done on different ages and level of language learning.
7. The sample size in this research was 60 learners. The result of this study showed that FSP-Based teaching direct and indirect speech increases the learner’s grammar. However, it cannot guarantee that it is also applicable to the big sample of EFL learners.
8. The instructor in this research was a female. You can use a male as an instructor.
9. It can be used in private schools, universities for example, for teaching grammar course to EFL learners.
10. The FSP-Based teaching direct and indirect speech held during 1 hour. The researcher can add the period of the time.

REFERENCES

THE EFFECT OF SELF-ASSESSMENT ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS` READING COMPREHENSION SKILL

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ABSTRACT
Alternative assessments have received many attentions in the last decade and several forms of it have been introduced in higher education. Self-assessments are important forms of alternative assessments that play very important role in the development of lifelong learning and the development into autonomous individuals to evaluate their own learning process. This study was conducted to investigate the effects of the use of self-assessment on Iranian EFL learners` reading comprehension skill. For the purpose of this study, 40 advanced Iranian EFL learners were chosen from among 68 advanced learners from two institutions in Sanandaj based on the results of TOEFL proficiency test. To analyze the data two independent sample t-test were run. The results of the study indicated that there was a significant difference between the control and experimental groups` mean scores on the post test. In addition, the findings revealed that self-assessment had a positive effect on the reading ability of the learners. The results of this study can be useful for learners to become aware of the advantage of the independent learning and can be helpful for teachers to achieve complete information about the learners` strengths and weaknesses.

Key words: self-assessment, reading comprehension, reading strategy

1. Introduction
By the advent of the theories of learner autonomy, self-assessment received much more attention in language teaching and testing and it is playing an important role in language teaching. Language testing has witnessed a dramatic shift of attention and orientation. This significant change has been referred to as a `paradigm shift` (Gipps, 1994). According to Gipps (1994), a paradigm shift towards integrating assessment resulted in continuous assessment which includes recording the learners` regular work and their achievement, portfolios, practical tasks and self-assessment through using feedback which encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning rather than formal examinations or standardized test. As a result of attempts to overcome the limitations of teacher assessments and traditional assessments, alternative assessment, such as self-assessments, has been the focus of increasing interest in the field of education (Hargreaves, Earl, & Schmidt, 2001). Self-assessment can be defined as “procedures by which the learners themselves evaluate their skills and knowledge” (Bailey, 1998, p. 227). It is a main learning strategy for autonomous language learning, enabling learners to monitor their progress and relate learning to their individual needs (Harris, 1997). It is considered as “useful information about students` expectations, needs, their problems and worries, how they feel about their own learning process, their reactions to the materials and methods being used, what they think about the course in general” (Harris and Mccann, 1994, p.36).

According to Oscarson (1997) self-assessment of language proficiency is the awareness of knowing how and under what circumstances second language learners or foreign language learners evaluate their own ability in the language. To learn efficiently, learners need to know about their own learning, their abilities and the progress that they are making and what they can or cannot do about what they have learned (Harris,1997). The primary benefit of self-assessment is that it encourages learners to become more actively involved in the educational process by requiring them to reflect on their own performances and by encouraging them to take greater responsibility for setting goals and making decisions about their own learning (Hughes, & Mylonas, 2002). Kavaliauskiene (2004) mentioned that by using self-assessment, learners can think about their own progress and find ways to change and improve it. Moreover, it is a way to convince learners to focus on their own learning to accept the responsibility for it and to better understand the process of learning (McDonald and Boud, 2003). Furthermore, Dodd (1995) states
that learners who feel ownership for the class or task and believe they can make a difference, become more involved in their own learning process and finally their self-efficacy can be increased.

Chen (2008) argued that teachers should help learners construct their own knowledge by involving them actively in evaluating their own performance in learning and this can help them to gain ownership of their learning and lifelong learning skills. The effect of self-assessment on different learning skills, especially writing, has been examined but it seems there is a lack of studies which examine the effect of self-assessment on reading comprehension skill. The findings of studies on reading strategies demonstrated that learners who are instructed and skilled in metacognitive self-assessment and become aware of their abilities are more strategic and they perform better than those learners who are not instructed or skilled in self-assessment (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002). Baniabdeldelrahman (2010) examined the effect of self-assessment on EFL learners’ reading comprehension. The findings of his study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group who used self-assessment rating-scale sheet including reading strategies before, during, and after reading, compared to the mean scores of the control group who didn’t receive self-assessment rating-scale sheet. He concluded that the self-assessment method was more effective than the traditional method of assessment in improving learners’ reading comprehension and it had positive effects on their performance. In another study conducted by Shahrahpour (2014), the effect of self-assessment on speaking, writing, listening and reading of 120 intermediates and beginner Iranian language learners was investigated. The results of his study showed that self-assessment significantly improved EFL learners’ receptive skills and it was revealed that self-assessment had effect on learners’ reading and listening. However, the effect value of self-assessment on listening skill was less than reading skill.

2. Purpose of the study

Self-assessment has an important role in learning process and it can provide an opportunity for ESL/EFL learners to increase their awareness of metacognitive strategies and therefore reflect on their own learning strategies in reading comprehension skill to monitor their own reading progress. It seems that the educational system in Iran is mostly associated with traditional assessment. Traditional assessment is not authentic and can't demonstrate the actual level of proficiency. On the other hand, it seems that few studies have been done on the effect of self-assessment on reading comprehension skill. Therefore this study was conducted to fill this gap and to investigate the influence of self-assessment on Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension. To this end, the following research question was addressed in this study:

2.1 Research questions

Does self-assessment significantly influence the reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners?

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

The participants of this study were 68 advanced learners of two language institutes in Sanandaj. Based on the results of a TOEFL proficiency test 40 learners were selected from among 68 learners and 20 learners were selected as the experimental group and 20 of them chosen as the control group. All of the learners were female and they were between 17-24 years old.

3.2 Instruments

In treatment section of the study a reading strategy checklist as self-assessment tool was used accompanied by 6 reading comprehension tests which were selected from TOEFL actual test. In addition, two reading comprehension test, as pre and post test of the study were utilized.

3.3 Procedure

At the beginning of the study, a standardized proficiency test (TOEFL TEST) was administered to 68 advanced language learners to ensure the homogeneity of experimental and control groups. Next, 40 learners whose scores were between -1SD below the mean and +1 SD above the mean were selected as the subjects of this study. The
selected subjects were randomly divided into experimental and control group. After that, a reading comprehension test was given to the sample as pretest in order to evaluate their reading comprehension ability to ensure that there isn’t significant difference between both group’s level of reading ability. Then both groups were asked to answer 6 reading comprehension test accompanied by self-assessment checklist of reading strategies during 6 sessions. The experimental group received the treatment (self assessment techniques) but the control group received only the traditional instruction. The experimental group evaluated themselves by the checklist as a self assessment technique. The checklist was utilized as treatment in the experimental group. Each checklist included three sections of reading comprehension strategies involving reading strategies before, during and after reading. By using the checklist by the experimental group, the teacher could recognize their strengths and weaknesses in applying reading strategies during reading comprehension test. Then the teacher commented at the bottom of their checklists about their weaknesses in utilizing strategies before, during and after reading comprehension test and provided the necessary feedback to them. Finally, both groups were asked to answer a reading comprehension test as the post test.

3.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed through SPSS software. Descriptive Statistics was used to determine the mean and standard deviation of each group on the pre and post test. In addition, to determine the difference between the levels of the learners of both groups on pre-test and posttest two independent sample t-test were run.

4. Results

In order to ensure the homogeneity of the subjects in both experimental and control groups in reading comprehension ability a reading comprehension test as pretest was administered. Then, to compare the mean scores of two groups in pre test of the study an independent sample t-test was run. As indicated in Table 1, the mean score of the control group is 9.25 with standard deviation of 3.65. In addition, the mean score of experimental group is 10.15 with standard deviation of 3.11. As the results in Table 2 indicate, the t-value is .83 and sig is .40 which is greater than .05 (.40 > .05). The findings indicate that there is no significant difference between experimental and control groups in reading comprehension ability in pre test of the study. Therefore, it can be concluded that both groups were homogenous at the beginning of the study and before the treatment.

| Table 1 Descriptive statistics of pretest for control and experimental groups |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | Group Statistics         |
| Std. Error Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean | N | group |
| .69                  | 3.11               | 10.15 | 20 | experimental pre |
| .81                  | 3.65               | 9.25  | 20 | control         |

| Table 2. Independent T-test for Control and Experimental Groups on Pre-test |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |
|                          | Std. Error | Mean | Sig. | df | tailed | F |
| 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | Error | Differe | Differe (2-tailed) | df | Sig. | F |
In order to compare the mean scores of the control and experimental groups on the post-test an independent t-test was run. As indicated in Table 3, the results of the study showed differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post-test. As indicated in Table 3, the mean score of the control group is 9.8 with standard deviation of 3.42. In addition, the mean score of experimental group is 13.25 with standard deviation of 2.63. As shown in Table 4, the t-observed is 3.57 and sig is .00 which is smaller than 0.05 (.00<.05). It was revealed that there was a significant difference between the control and experimental groups mean scores on the post-test. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study as self-assessment does not influence the reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners was rejected. It can be concluded that self assessment applied as a treatment to the experimental group had a significant effect on the learners’ performance on reading comprehension skill in the post-test of the study.

Table 3 Descriptive statistics of post-test for control and experimental groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>13.25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>experimental post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Independent sample t-test for control and experimental groups on post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95% Confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interval of the Difference</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Discussion and conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, self-assessment had a significant positive effect on EFL learners' reading comprehension ability and reading strategies. It can be concluded that, administering self-assessment techniques to the experimental group improve their reading comprehension ability significantly. It seems that the regular implementation of the self-assessment checklist have effects on learners’ sense of independency in their reading comprehension activities and awareness of applying useful reading strategies in reading comprehension. It seems that using self-assessment checklist increased the participants’ motivation toward reading comprehension activities. Using self-assessment checklist could also help learners to become autonomous reader to reflect on their own strategies which they used in reading comprehension. The findings are in line with the results of a study conducted by Baniadelrahman (2010) in which he concluded that self-assessment had positive effect on students’ reading comprehension and he concluded that the self-assessment method was more effective than the traditional method of assessment in improving students’ reading comprehension and it had positive effects on their performance. In addition, the results are in line with the findings of Shahrakipour (2014). He found that self-assessment had a significant effect on EFL learners’ reading comprehension skill. McDonald and Boud (2003) believe that when learners assess their own learning, their learning can be improved to a high extent. In addition, Butler and Li (2005) found that self-assessment not only had positive influence on the learners’ English performance but also it had positive effect on their confidence in learning English. According to Dafei (2007) autonomous learning results in high level of language proficiency.

The results of this study can be useful for learners to be aware of the importance role of the independent learning outside the classroom to learn continuous learning. The results of this study can also help learners become autonomous and self-directed learners in monitoring their own progress and finding their own needs and deficiencies in their learning and also take responsibility for their own learning. Furthermore, this study can be helpful for teachers who like to help their learners to find useful strategies for their own learning and also to recognize their strength and weaknesses. Self-assessment checklist can also give teachers complete information about the learners’ deficiencies and their failure in the process of learning and this may help teachers to provide useful guidelines for the learners through giving feedback to them. The findings of this study can also be applied to all educational centers and have implications in developing materials, syllabus design and also test development in all educational settings. This study was conducted only among learners of advanced level. It is suggested that further researches be conducted among other levels of proficiency. In addition, all of the participants were selected from female learners. Further studies can be administered among male learners. Moreover, this study can also be conducted with other types of alternative assessments such as portfolio assessment, peer assessment and etc.

REFERENCE


INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING FLUENCY AND READING COMPREHENSION IN IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
Reading fluency and reading comprehension are identified as components in effectively gaining meaning from text. The purpose of this study was to investigate the reciprocal relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension in a correlational study. This relationship allows one to comprehend more thoroughly as one reads more fluently. Also as one reads more fluently, one’s ability to comprehend improves. When one’s brain is more capable in processing text meaning, one is able to read more fluently. Participants in the study are 100 Iranian English language learners who are studying in a private language Institute. They are randomly selected and grouped based on the book they study (Interchange Series, Inter 2 Intermediate & Inter 3 advanced) their level and group homogeneity. They are divided into two groups of intermediate and advanced. The study intends to investigate the relationship between comprehension and fluency in reading skill of Iranian Intermediate and advanced EFL learners. Candidates answered two reading tests, one timed (reading fluency test) and one untimed (reading comprehension). Students performance on Reading fluency were measured by having students answer a timed–reading test in 8 minutes.

Keywords: Fluency, Comprehension, Reading skill, EFL learners, Relationship

1. Introduction
Language training is often seen in terms of four basic language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Reading is the most important skill in English language from other language skills in acquiring language. If students are good in reading they will be good in other language skills. Some recent changes in teaching English as a Foreign Language has had an unprecedented effect on language learning, specifically on reading instruction. These developments are almost entirely due to the fact that methods and methodologies changed rapidly their way of being used by the teachers and textbooks, as well. Moreover, Reading skills are critical for children’s development, and consecutive studies have shown a link between competency in reading and overall attainment. When a learner enters school it is the teacher’s role and responsibility to provide, plan and teach an effective reading program that will enable the learner to become a skilful reader. At intermediate level instruction begins to shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Arising from the increased demands of twenty-first century workplace, concern over students reading performance is at the forefront of national education. When students reach middle school a reduced amount of time is spent on comprehension strategies and skills, and students are expected to understand what they are reading. As a result, many students struggle with reading comprehension. Research has been done to solve this problem. Different interventions have been developed and there are numerous articles and books written on which strategies and techniques can best teach children to understand what they are reading. The ultimate goal of reading is comprehension and understanding. According to National Reading Panel there are five areas of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension. Comprehension and reading fluency are identified as two of the five building blocks of
1.1 Review of the related literature

As society has made numerous transformations in recent decades, the requirements for proficiency regarding English literacy have dramatically transformed. The ever increasing amount of technology within society has increased the English literacy requirements for being successful (Roman, 2004). Additionally the workplace is increasingly more sophisticated as it becomes more affected by international competition. The more sophisticated workplace requires employees to possess a higher level of communication skills where English illiteracy is completely unacceptable. Instead all workers are being held to a literacy standard of English that is proportionately increasing with the gains in society. The literacy definition is constantly transforming as society continues to develop. The view that literacy is merely the acquisition of skills and abilities is inappropriate as current literacy is viewed as a continuum of skills. Success is school is promoted by a number of factors. Essential to the learning process in school is the ability to read proficiently (Taylor & Short, 1992). The ability to read proficiently is a fundamental skill that affects the learning experiences and school performance of children and adolescents. Educational researchers have found that there is a strong correlation between reading and academic success. In other words, a student who is a good reader is more likely to do well in school and pass exams than a student who is a weak reader. Fluency the ability to read smooth and effortlessly, has been referred to as a critical component of reading ability. Fluency, on the other hand, involves not only automatic word identification but also the application of appropriate prosodic features (rhythm, intonation, and phrasing) at the phrase, sentence, and text levels. Wood, Flowers, and Grigorenko (2001) emphasize that fluency also involves anticipation of what will come next in the text and that speeded practice alone is not sufficient. Anticipation facilitates reaction time and is particularly important for comprehension. Readers who focus more intensely on practicing their reading skills are generally able to become more fluent readers. When a reader lacks fluency the ability to comprehend is impacted.

2. Methodology

2.1 Materials

This study used two instruments: A timed version of reading comprehension test of Interchange series (books 2&3) and an untimed version of reading comprehension test of Interchange series (books 2&3) for intermediate and advanced levels. Although usually DIBELS test (the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), is used to conduct an assessment of students reading fluency in general due to lack of equipment and compatibility, a timed version of reading comprehension test is designed to be given to students at intermediate and advanced levels to test their fluency in terms of rate specifically. Passages were selected from Cambridge University Press quizzes for Interchange series (books 2&3).

2.2 Procedure

The participants used for this research were 50 students at Intermediate and 50 students at Advanced level ranging in age from 15 to 35 years old from Kaviani Academy. The participants were mainly from Kermanshah, Iran and their first language were Farsi. Kaviani academy is CICS Official Affiliate & Examinations Supervisor affiliated to Cambridge, located in Kermanshah. The students represent a wide range of socioeconomic status levels, from lower to upper middle class. Participants in the study are 100 Iranian English language learners who are studying in a private language Institute. They are randomly selected and grouped based on the book they study (Interchange Series, Inter 2 Intermediate & Inter 3 advanced) their level and group homogeneity. They are divided in to, two groups of intermediate and advanced. The reliability and validity of tests were examined through a pilot test. The tests seemed to be useful in the classroom for its intended purpose; however, more information about the discriminant validity with regard to the instructional categories used (at risk, some risk, low risk) would be favored. The untimed reading comprehension test is designed to measure student performance in reading comprehension. Standards, indicators, and objectives are within the Interchange Series curriculum for Reading. The researcher used the comprehension section to assess student’s comprehension level. The comprehension section included a passage with ten questions. Test items were selected from Interchange series own standardized quizzes. The items were selected by p-values. The p-value refers to the test item’s difficulty level. It is calculated as the proportion of a specific group that answers a test item correctly. P-values range in value from 0.0 to 1.0, with
lower values corresponding to more difficult items and higher values corresponding to easier items. The data from this private school was generated by their teachers. The goal of this study is to determine the existence of a correlation between reading fluency and comprehension among the Intermediate and Advanced level students at Kaviani Institute, Kermanshah.

Determining a statistical relationship between reading fluency scores generated from the timed reading comprehension test and reading comprehension from the untimed reading comprehension test can be done using a statistical analysis. The Pearson’s r statistical test will generate a series of tables that will define the statistical relationship between the two factors. Each of the hypotheses will be tested using this format. The relationships between the two independent tests can be determined using this information.

3. Results

The study employed quantitative approach to get information about students’ fluency and comprehension in their reading across two levels (intermediate and advanced). The results of the study are presented in the following sections. The first section scrutinizes the results of the pilot study for the reliability analysis; next it presents the results of the quantitative research questions and tests the two null hypotheses each followed by the related discussion.

3.1 The Results of the Pilot Study (Estimation of the Reliability Indices for the Reading Tests)

The reliability of the reading tests (for both intermediate and advanced groups) was also checked through the pilot study on 15 subjects. Cronbach’s Alpha statistic was computed for the items of the tests to show the internal consistency within the items of the tests. The reliability indices obtained were all higher than the least required value of (0.70). (See Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Untimed Reading comprehension test (intermediate group)</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untimed Reading comprehension test (advanced group)</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timed reading fluency test (intermediate group)</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timed reading fluency test (advanced group)</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possible relationship between reading fluency and comprehension of the intermediate group was evaluated through running Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient after exploratory analyses were done to confirm the normality of the distributions. The results of the descriptive statistics for the fluency and comprehension scores is presented in Table3.2.

Table 3.2: Correlations for the Reading Comprehension and Fluency Scores of the Intermediate Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.449**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The (r= .449) implied that there was statistically significant and medium correlation between the two variables.

The relationship between fluency and comprehension of advanced participants was also investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Initial analyses such as Kolmogorov Smirnov and a scatter plot were employed to ensure that there was no violation of the assumption of normality. First and foremost, the
descriptive statistics was computed for the results of reading fluency and comprehension tests of the advanced group.

After confirming the normality of the distributions of reading fluency and comprehension scores of the advanced group, the parametric Pearson correlation test was computed to evaluate the possible relationship between the two variables. The results are presented in Table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.506**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Based on Cohen's (1988) guidelines (see Table 3.5), there was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables, ($r = .506$, $n = 50$, $p \leq .01$), with high scores of fluency associated with higher scores of reading comprehension for the advanced group.

3.3 Discussion

The purpose of this research study was to determine whether or not a relationship exists between reading fluency and reading comprehension, and, if so, to what degree. The existence of a positive correlation among students at intermediate and advanced levels is synonymous with research expectations (Hintze et al., 1998). Students that read more rapidly can comprehend more thoroughly. This is largely because their mental space is freed in a manner that enables them to devote more cognitive energy toward comprehending the text (Nathan & Stanovich, 1991; Rasinski, 2000). Therefore there is a reciprocal relationship between reading fluency and comprehension in that improvement in one area promotes the other area. The results suggested a significant relationship between students’ reading fluency rates and reading comprehension performance. Based on the analysis of the data using the Pearson correlation, the relationship between the scores on the fluency and comprehension test was statistically significant ($r=0.449$, $r=0.506$, $p<0.01$). This indicated that the strength of association between the variables (fluency and comprehension) was very high and the correlation coefficient was significantly different from zero ($p<0.001$). "$p<0.001$" means that the probability was less than 0.1 that the observed relationship was due to chance alone. In summary a higher score on the fluency was associated with a higher score on the comprehension assessment, and a lower score on fluency was related to a lower score the comprehension assessment. The findings show that it is safe to conclude that there is a strong relationship between fluency and comprehension scores for the intermediate participants. Good readers are fluent readers, since comprehension is a complex process, by focusing some attention on fluency skills during reading instruction, a teacher can help ease this process. It is also important to note that if a student is a fluent reader, less attention could be focused on fluency skills and more to other comprehension skills and strategies, such as vocabulary development. Allington and Johns (1983) (as cited in Allinder et al., 2001) state that, Once children have mastered decoding skills, they can focus on conveying prosodic information using fluency strategies such as text phrasing, verbal expression, and rate (Clark, 1995; as cited in Allinder et al.).

REFERENCES


Appendix A

Reading Fluency (Estimated time: 9 minutes)

Cambridge University Press

Level: Inter 2 (Intermediate)

Name:                                                    Date:                                         Score:

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Read Rosa’s email. Then check True statements.

Hi Paula,

Greetings from Bangkok! Fernando and I are having a really good time! It’s a great city for shopping. Yesterday, we went to a huge weekend market. It was full of really interesting things to buy, especially clothes. And the prices are great! Things here are not nearly as expensive as they are at home. Of course, Fernando tells me I’m spending too much money, but you know him. He never buys anything!

Have you ever eaten Thai food? It’s delicious! We just had a wonderful dinner in one of the restaurants on the river. Fernando ordered green curry and rice, and I had my favorite dish, MeeKrob-crispy noodles with shrimp and chicken. For dessert, we had fried bananas. Everything was so good! It was also fun to watch the boats pass by!

One thing I’ve noticed is that some restaurants make their curries less spicy for foreigners. Yesterday, I told our waiter, “Some foreigners don’t like spicy food.” Then he brought us another curry that was much hotter.

Time to stop. We’re flying home tomorrow, so I’ll see you soon!

Rosa

☐ 1. Bangkok is a good place for shopping.
☐ 2. The market is open every day of the week.
☐ 3. You can buy most things except clothes in the market.
☐ 4. The prices in the market are very reasonable.
☐ 5. Some restaurants in Bangkok are right on the river.
☐ 6. MeeKrob is the Thai name for green curry.
☐ 7. All foreign visitors love Thailand’s hot and spicy food.

B:

1. Rosa’s favorite dish is ………………………………
2. Some restaurants make their curries less spicy because,……………………………..

Appendix B:

Reading Fluency (Estimated Time :     )

Cambridge University Press

Level: Inter 3(Advanced)

Name:                        Date:                          Score:

✓ Read the article. Then check True statements.
Reading is Fun!

Book club members know that sharing and talking about books with others can be very rewarding. For people who feel that they are too busy to read, a book club helps them keep up with a reading schedule. Others have gained self-confidence by participating in or leading a discussion. And most people enjoy the chance to make new friends.

A successful book club should be small enough so the quiet people can be heard, but also big enough for many different opinions. The best arrangement is a mixture of ages and backgrounds. Some book clubs meet in book stores, public libraries, or cafes, but most have their meetings in member’s homes. This setting offers a quiet space and time for longer discussions.

A book club could specialize in one subject or type of book, like mystery, science fiction, or biography. Or the members could read all types of books, as long as the book is recommended by someone who thinks it would be worth discussing.

For the meeting to go smoothly, a leader should be appointed. The leader will usually start the discussion and keep it going when needed. Book club members should never be afraid to offer their opinion, even if they don’t like a book. Different opinions make the discussion livelier!

1. A book club can help people find time to read.
2. Some members have become more self-confident by meeting new friends.
3. The number of members should be limited so everyone can be heard.
4. A successful book club only has members who are the same age.
5. Most book clubs have their meeting at the library.
6. A book club could choose to read many different types of books.
7. It’s OK not to like the book being discussed.

B:

1. A successful book club should be ………………………………………………………
2. For the meeting to go smoothly, …………………………………………………

Appendix C:

Reading Comprehension (Untimed)

Cambridge University Press

Level: Inter 2 (Intermediate)

Name:  Date:  Score:
Read the article. Then check the true statements.

The Mid-Autumn Festival

While Chinese people celebrate a few holidays according to the western calendar, the lunar calendar is used for most others. Important holidays in the lunar calendar which follows the cycles of the moon include Chinese new year and the dragon boat festival. The moon is perhaps the most important however for the Mid-Autumn Festival.

Fall is the season when the moon appears larger and brighter than during the rest of the year. This is because it’s a time when the weather is dry and cool. The Mid-Autumn Festival occurs on the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month.

This is a day when the moon is full. According to Chinese tradition, “when the moon is full, mankind is one.” For this reason, it’s considered a good time for family and friends to get together and celebrate the harvest.

When Chinese people celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival, they often meet in beautiful places. They look at the moon and eat moon cakes, special cakes containing things like bean paste, egg yolk, sesame and lotus seeds, dates, pineapple, walnuts, and almonds. Moon cakes are very rich, so people usually eat them with oolong or jasmine tea.

1. The western calendar is used for most Chinese holidays.
2. The western calendar is used for the mid-autumn festival.
3. The cool dry weather in fall makes the moon seem unusually large and bright.
4. People celebrate the festival in bright sunshine because the weather is so cool.
5. August 15 is the day when people celebrate the festival.
6. The festival is a celebration of togetherness and the harvest.
7. Mooncakes contain beans eggs, seeds, fruit, and nuts.
8. A lot of people like to drink tea with mooncakes.

B:

1. Important holidays in the lunar calendar include _____________________________.
2. According to Chinese tradition when moon is full, _____________________________.

Appendix D:

Reading Comprehension (Untimed)
Making Dreams Come True

Eldrick Woods was born on December 30, 1975, and grew up near Los Angeles. His father is part African American, Native American and Chinese, and his mother is from Thailand. Eldrick quit Stanford University to play sports. He wore glasses until he had laser eye surgery in 1999. He is very famous, and by 2004, he had earned more than $50 million. Who is he, and what has he accomplished?

He is Tiger Woods, and he is the world’s best golfer. His father who gave him his nickname, says, “Tiger knew how to swing a club before he could walk”. He won a major junior tournament six times between the ages of 8 and 15. In 2001, Tiger became the first golfer ever to win four major championships in the same year. Furthermore, every year between 1999 and 2003, he was selected as “Player of the Year” by the Professional Golf Association of America.

Tiger, who believes his parents gave him an excellent start in life, says, “Golf has been good to me, but the lessons I have learned transcended the game.” He has put these words in to practice by establishing Tiger Woods Foundation, which is not about golf but about promoting parental responsibility and reaching out to children. He says that children need to be encouraged to make their dreams come true:

“If they dream big enough, miracles can happen.”

1. True
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. True
6. True
7. True

B: 1. Tiger Wood’s foundation is about, ……………………………………………………………………
   2. Tiger believes if children dream big, ……………………………………………………………
PARADIGM SHIFT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT
This descriptive theoretical paper is a post method-oriented endeavor, which the goal is to analyze the characteristic features of the Iranian educational system through an exploration of the two imperative contextual factors, i.e.; learner and teacher.

Drawing on the work in the fields of World Englishes and English as a lingua franca, this paper will survey some of the issues that have emerged in contemporary conditions. We argue that a more empirically grounded view of English would begin to enable us to enrich our description and analysis for curriculum and pedagogic purposes.

Keywords: Post method pedagogy, contextual factors, learner variable, teacher variable, teacher education

By the end of the twentieth century, language teaching no longer regarded method as the pivotal dynamic in accounting for success or failure in language teaching. The twentieth century has seen the rise and fall of a variety of methods and approaches from the series method (Gouin, 1880) to the audio-lingual method (Fries, 1945), the designer methods (Brown, 2001), and later communicative language teaching (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979; Wilkins, 1976).

In the late 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, L2 researchers came to evaluate the limitations of the concept of method, and critique its validity and acceptability. As a consequence of such critical attitudes towards the profession of language pedagogy, innovative paradigms came to light.

To this end, language teaching has initiated a movement toward a fundamental restructuring in organizing principles for L2 teaching/learning and teacher education. This orientation was a reaction to restricting concept of method which we are hardly aware of the fact that we use the same term, method, to refer to two different elements of language teaching; method as conceptualized by theorists, and methods as carried out by teachers in the classroom The limitations of the concept of method have paved the way for the emergence of the awareness that the term method has ‘diminished rather than enhanced our understanding of language teaching (Pennycook, 1989, p.597). Therefore, a persistent questioning of theory and methods leading to the conclusion that there is no one best methodology for every type of learner, or group of learners, is a view that is widely shared.

Richards & Rodgers (2001) refer to the criticism of methods as a top-down criticism, the role of contextual factors, the need for curriculum development processes, and the classroom practices. Kumaravadivelu (2003) indicates that teacher educators have expressed their dissatisfaction with method in different ways. Even though methodological theorists recommend that practitioners follow a specific path, practicing teachers have been moving in different
directions (Legutke&Thomas, 1991; Nunan, 1989). These pedagogical arguments have made us step into the new realm of what Kumaravadivelu (1994) first coined, and was later referred to by Brown (1997) and Richards &Rodgers (2001) as the “post-method” Era.

The most frequently articulated criticism made about the intrinsic limitations of method is that an evident disconnection exists between method, as conceptualized by theorists, and method as carried out by teachers in the classroom. Since language learning and teaching needs, wants, and situations are numerous (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), no ideal method can address all intervening variables and factors in advance so as to prescribe to teachers how to tackle the challenges they deal with every day of their professional lives. Therefore, the appreciation of this awareness must be actualized in the Iranian educational system. The most important point in the realization of such a crucial understanding will be through the analysis of the salient aspects of the innovative proposals of the postmethod condition. As a primarily essential endeavor, an extensive critical analysis of two important contextual factors, most often referred to by postmethod paradigm as crucial variables, i.e., the learner variable as well as teacher variable, is carried out in this research. The major portion of this research is assigned to the relatively comprehensive analysis of the contextual factors.

Kumaravadivelu’s work (2001) attempts a shift in perspective by identifying limitations associated with CLT methodology and arguing for focus on a postmethod paradigm. Also Bell (2003), for example, has characterized postmethod as a “…. More holistic, redefined communicative language teaching…”

In recent times, the researchers has witnessed critical thoughts on the nature and scope of the method. Kumaravadivelu (2006) indicates that scholars such as Allright (1991), Pennycook (1989), Prabhu (1990), and Stern (1983, 1985) have not only cautioned language-teaching practitioners against the uncritical acceptance of untested methods but they have also counseled them against the very concept of the method itself.

As Kumaravadivelu (2006) points out, the concept of method has little theoretical validity and even less practical utility. Its meaning is ambiguous, and its claim dubious. Given such a checkered history, it has come to be looked on as “a label without substance” (Clarke, 1983, p.109).

The pedagogical arguments and the deep disconnect with the concept of method have finally made us step into the new realm of what Kumaravadivelu (1994) referred to as the emergence of the ‘Post-method Era’. The post-method condition is an affair that compels us to restructure our view of language teaching and teacher education (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

**Statements of the problems**

Access to L2 users is naturally met in ESL-based context where learners have enough opportunities to put into practice the presented formal aspects of language in real world by activities and under real operating conditions.

However, in terms of syllabus design, methods are inclined to move from one theoretical extreme to the other. Before 1970’s the emphasis has been on structural syllabi and teacher’s preoccupation with grammar has been a ubiquitous element in the majority of language instructions. At another, number of scholars such as Krashen (1982) contend that L2 learning occurs more efficiently if learner’s attention is directed to meaning rather than to form. The assumption that learning occurs when language is used as a means of communication rather than as a subject of study in its own right. At one time explicit corrective feedback was regarded as crucial; at another, it was implicit one.

These radical shifts of attention from one method to another didn’t yield the desired outcome, since these different positions in the method era overemphasize certain dimensions of learning and teaching at the expense of other prominent factors. For example teacher’s role is directing and controlling the language behavior of the students and instructional materials are chosen to develop language mastery in the learner. The teacher serves as the language model.

Now that it appears that the pendulum is swinging back towards a task syllabus. Some of the syllabus designs that are presently receiving attention may be destined to fade in the near future.

Therefore, in the interim period between the decline of method and the rise of other syllabi on the horizon, it is an opportune time for language teachers to reconsider the nature of syllabus design for ELT. Also the general goal of
the language teaching/learning, unlike what is perceived in methods, is not to make learners accumulate a pile of knowledge 'about' language but to enable them to make use of it for communication purpose. It is not uncommon, however, to find learners for whom engaging in simple communication are a challenging task even after years of language learning.

**Post method condition**

The gradual emergence of critical thought called the very nature and scope of method into question. Additionally, the appearance of innovative ideas refigured our understanding of method.

In regard to the dissatisfaction with the concept of method, it is clear that some approaches and methods are unlikely to be widely adopted. The reason for this is that they are difficult to understand and use, lack practical application, require special training, and changes in teacher's practice and beliefs (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 247). The Iranian educational system poses no exception. Taking a critical look at existing classroom procedures and activities, one can keep track of ill-utilized and some-how non-labeled methods in a typical classroom. With the format of available textbooks and existing teaching methods and approaches, one can clearly witness that a combination of grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods in large measure plus communicative-loaded tasks prevail in the typical Iranian classroom. Razmjoo (2007) asserts that on the basis of the results of the CLT study, the principles are not utilized in the Iranian textbooks. He further emphasizes that textbooks are consisted of reading and grammar and do not fit EFL communicative teaching and therefore do not meet language learner's communicative needs.

According to Kumaravadivelu (2006), post-method condition urges us to review the content of classroom teaching in all its pedagogical perspective. It drives us to refigure the reified relationship between theory and practice.

The important point in a crucial understanding of this awareness will be through the analysis of the salient aspects of the proposals of the post-method condition. As an extensive critical analysis of contextual factors, most often referred to the learner variable as well as teacher variable and a task is carried out in this research.

Therefore, this study investigates the characteristics of three contextual variables in post method paradigm. Exploration of these factors directs us to opt for the implementation of the most appropriate syllabus design that is most successful and realizable in the educational context.

**The post-method learner**

Postmethod pedagogy allows learners a role in pedagogic decision making by treating them as active and autonomous players (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

According to Kumaravadivelu (2003a), Postmethod pedagogy takes into account two views of learner autonomy, a narrow and a broad view. The narrow view seeks to develop in the learner a capacity to learn to learn whereas the broad view goes beyond that to include a capacity to learn to liberate as well.

Learn to learn involves developing the ability to 'take charge of one's own learning' (Holec, 1981, p. 3). It offers learners insights into what they need to know and can do plan and regulate their learning. As Kumaravadivelu suggests learners learn to use several metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective strategies to achieve their learning objectives.

Whereas the broad view treats learning to learn a language as a means to an end, the end being learning to liberate.

Taken together, what the two types of autonomy promise is the development of overall academic ability, intellectual competence, social consciousness, and mental attitude necessary for learners to attain opportunities, and overcome challenges both in and outside the classroom.

**The post-method teacher**

Kumaravadivelu (2006) suggests that the post method teacher is considered to be an autonomous teacher. Method-based pedagogy "overlooks the fund of experience and tacit knowledge about teaching which the teachers already..."
have by virtue of their lives as students" (Freeman, 1991, p.35). Post method teachers use his prior knowledge as well as their potential to know not only how to teach but also know how to act autonomously (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Post method pedagogy promotes the ability of teachers to develop a reflective approach to their teaching acts, and how to monitor the effects of such changes (Wallace, 1991). It also involves a cognitive dimension that links thought with activity, centering on the context-embedded, interpretive process of knowing what to do (Freeman, 1996, p.99).

**The post-method teacher education**

The task of the post method teacher educator is to create conditions for teachers to acquire necessary authority that will enable them to reflect on their own experiences. Teacher education doesn’t merely pass on a body of knowledge, but rather one that is constructed by participants who think and act critically. In other words, the interaction between the teacher educator and the prospective teacher should become dialogic (Kumaravadivelu, 1996b).

Teacher education is treated not as the interpretation of a predetermined pedagogic practice, but rather as an ongoing entity involving critically reflective participants (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

**Methods**

The aim of this study was to examine practitioner and student attitudes towards CLT and to consider whether the CA paradigm is still the most appropriate. The method was based on a case study of 40 English language teachers and 100 students at the language institute. The case study uses two types of questionnaire, one for teachers and the other for students.

Questionnaire 1 investigates practitioner conceptions of CLT, their previous experience of it and its classroom implementation. The investigation of student learning style, their attitude to the teacher and teaching, including the use of materials, is documented in questionnaire 2.

**Teachers**

In response to question 1, which asked for a definition of CLT, the vast majority of respondents covered language as communication. In response to question 2, every teacher reported that they use CLT in their teaching. These two questions confirm that the CA is the dominant paradigm and most practitioners recognize the defining characteristics of the approach and attempt to implement it. Question 3 explores a number of conceptions and misconceptions about CLT in practice. It is worth mentioning that the space does not permit us to enter a detailed discussion of every question here; however, several issues are highlighting. The problems regarding implementing CLT in classroom was related to the student's proficiency level, to their responsibility and their learning styles, class size, the time of class.

**Learners**

Questionnaire 2 explores learning styles and asks students to indicate whether certain statements are true or false for learners. In contrast to teachers, the majority of students expressed a preference for accuracy over fluency, many reported that the teacher is an important factor and there is an overwhelming preference for a deductive teacher-centered learning style. Such views raise questions about the relevance of CLT's central tenets.

At last, all teachers claim to use the approach and yet have problems with its implementations. Also, many students have indicated a preference for specific learning style, which is not compatible with CLT.

**Conclusion**

Bax (2003) argued that our proposed alternative paradigm focuses on placing context above everything else. It does not negate the view that language is about communication, but it questions the universal validity of the CA. In fact, the educational framework for a context based approach is that learners learn best in environments that are harmonious with their learning styles and expectations that is influenced by culture. This case study suggests that
teachers recognize problems with CLT implementations in relation to learner expectations. The move to no longer view English as a foreign or second language but as a global language provides further support for context based approach.

Implication

The findings of the current study suggest that in order to get the best of two worlds (i.e. meaning-and form-based instruction), language teachers and syllabus designers can make use of task as a unit of activity which caters for fluency and implicit learning. This activity, if it is to be characterized as task, should draw learner’s primary attention to meaning and only peripherally to form. In pursuing this goal task-related activities should be introduced before form instruction. Once learners worked hard to communicate meaning, practiced language in a meaningful context, and realized the existing gap in what they wanted to say and the way they should say it, they would be ready to receive those forms in a more explicit manner.
IRANIAN PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF EXAMS: MULTIPLE CHOICE, ESSAY AND COMPUTERIZED-TYPE TESTING

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ABSTRACT
The major purpose of this study was to compare prospective teachers' attitude, preferences, and perceptions toward teacher-made essay, multiple-choice type versus computerized-type exams. The study was conducted on a sample of 295 prospective teachers (specifically, students from 35 physics education, 38 educational science, 66 physical education, 68 theology, and 68 elementary education departments) at Farhangian faculty of education, in Tabriz, Iran. They were administered a test attitude inventory specifically designed to assess prospective teachers' attitudes toward essay, multiple choice versus computerized type formats on a variety of critical dimensions. The data from study was pointing to more favorable prospective teachers' attitude towards multiple-choice exams compared to essay and computerized-type formats on most dimensions assessed. However, prospective teachers, in general, did not want to choose one type to another; because, they are willing to use some assessment types altogether or combination of at least two types (multiple-choice and essay). Many see the computerized type exam is contemporary type than the others, and many also have a positive attitude toward using it in their further teaching. Nevertheless, somehow some see using computerized-type exam is not convenient and/or comfortable to use it again.

Key terms: Iranian perspective teachers, multiple-choice exam, essay-type exam, and computerized-type exam

Introduction
Assessment is one of the essential aspects of all instruction to maximize opportunities for meaningful learning (Carless, Joughin & Mok, 2006). Evaluation refers to a more formal mode of assessment and is the basis for judging the skills or knowledge of the students as well as the effectiveness of a unit or activity (New Horizons for Learning, 2002). Assessment can take the form of a quiz or examination to test students' learning achievements, or of a questionnaire to investigate students' attitudes and reactions to instructional courseware.

Instructors have to know what and how well students have learned, and so do students themselves. As classroom testing experts (for example, Gronlund, 1976; Thorndike and Hagen, 1969) have pointed out, the choice of a particular item format should normally be determined by theoretical as well as practical considerations, such as: the relative ease with which various test objectives are measured; the degree of difficulty in constructing or scoring items; freedom from irrelevant sources of variation in test results; degree of precision required in reporting results; and so on.

The item formats most often used in the construction of classroom tests may be conveniently classified into two broad categories (Gronlund, 1976): the more objective and structured selection type formats (e.g., multiple choices, true/false, matching, etc.), requiring the examinee to select the correct answer among a number of given alternatives, and the more subjective construction type format (e.g., essay, short answer), permitting the examinee to organize, construct, and present the answer in written form. A distinct difference in learning approaches according to assessment type was observed by Scoullar (1998), Ramsden (1988), and Watkins (1982). These researchers noted that students perceived the essay assignment as assessing high levels of cognitive processing and...
were more inclined to employ both deep strategies and motives when preparing for their essay than when preparing for their multiple-choice examination. Students perceived the multiple-choice examination as assessing ability to recall factual information (lower levels of cognitive processing) and were more inclined to employ surface strategies and motives when preparing for such an examination than when preparing for an essay assignment.

Two types of examination that students commonly encounter in their study are objective (for example, multiple-choice) and essay examinations (Smith and Miller, 2005). Biggs (1993) and Claxton and Murrell (1987) each maintained that in an objective tests students are examined on relatively specific information that is predominantly knowledge-based, where the learner is asked to give a specific answer or to select the correct response from alternatives provided. Biggs argued that in a multiple-choice examination, students are encouraged to adopt a convergent type of strategy whereby factual information and details are focused upon. This form of test, in Biggs' and Entwistle (1996)'s view, encourages students to rote-learn (with minimal emphasis on understanding) in order to maximize accurate recall of the information learned. Multiple-choice, therefore, can be seen to influence the learner to adopt a surface approach in learning.

The traditional perception is that Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) can only be used for testing lower level cognitive skills. This is not true; according to Hibberd (1996) “... they can be implemented to measure deeper understanding if questions are imaginatively constructed.” Students were more likely to employ deep learning approaches when preparing their assignment essays which they perceived as assessing higher levels of cognitive processing. Poorer performance in the assignment essays was associated with the employment of surface strategies (Scoular, 2000).

There are many advantages to multiple-choice testing. Although difficult to create, they are easy to score and therefore are the evaluation method of choice in large classes. The added benefit is that taking a test generally improves students' performance on a later test; this is referred to as the testing effect (Bjork, 1975; Carrier & Pashler, 1992; Glover, 1989; Hogan & Kintsch, 1971; Izawa, 1970; Kuo & Hirshman, 1996; McDaniel & Masson, 1985; Runquist, 1986; Spitzer, 1939; Thompson, Wenger, & Bartling, 1978; Tulving, 1967).

The different thoughts outlined and discussed in the literature for choosing one item format over another in planning a classroom test generally revolve around three major factors of concern in the test endeavor: a) the subject matter domain assessed (for example; adequacy and ease of measuring specific course objectives); b) the test constructor or user (for example; ease of test preparation, ease of scoring tests, etc.); and various extraneous factors (for example; guessing, copying, bluffing) possibly affecting the psychometric properties of the test scores. However, when planning a classroom test, one major factor is the perspective of the student examinee taking the test. Which particular format do students perceive to be more convenient, interesting, motivating, anxiety evoking, eliciting greater success expectancies and so on? These and other questions have not been sufficiently addressed in school-based evaluation research, with classroom testing experts generally paying little attention to the examinees' perspective-one of the most potentially useful sources of information about the subjective qualities of the test or its constituent components.

Given the assumption that examinees, are one of the best sources of information about the subjective qualities of a test (or its constituent components), and that examinees’ test attitudes and dispositions should be taken into consideration by test constructors and users when deciding upon test construction and administration policy (Nevo, 1985, 1986; Zeidner, 1985, 1986, 1987), it is truly surprising that so little research has been devoted towards assessing examinees' attitudes toward varying facets of classroom testing. Furthermore, very little work has been devoted towards the development and implementation of specific feedback systems designed to study examinees' reaction towards various facets of the classroom test.

Computerized-testing

Computer use is shaping the ways tests are constructed, normed, validated, administered, and scored. The reach of this technology on test practices is broad and international. Thus, involvement of organizations that transcend one community, even one nation, is needed to envision, create, promote, regulate, and in other ways assist in forming and reforming test-related services that serve the professions responsible for test development and use as well as the public.

With the advent of the personal computer, the development of computer- administered versions of paper and pencil tests is shown rapidly. These provided some advantages over paper and pencil, in terms of control of administration, and some disadvantages (for example, the need for sufficient hardware to test groups of people). They also raised the question of equivalence with their paper and pencil counterparts. Most research (for examples, Bartram, 2005; Mead & Drasgow, 1993) has tended to show that equivalence was not a key problem so long as the tests were not speeded measures of ability.
Despite the increasing sophistication of computer-based assessment systems, within the field of occupational assessment the tests they contain are, typically, computer implementations of old paper-and-pencil tests. Nevertheless, there has been innovation in the field and the consequences of that innovation are increasingly finding their way into commercial practice. Tests can be pioneering in a number of different ways. The most obvious is where the actual test content is innovative. However, innovation can also occur in less obvious ways. The process used to construct the test may be innovative and rely on computer technology and the nature of the scoring of the items may be innovative. In practice there is an interaction between these different aspects of innovation, in that some of the most interesting developments in test content also involve innovation in how that content is created (Bartram & Hambleton, 2006).

The use of computer-based testing is increasing rapidly. It has been helped not only by the development of better interfaces, but by the spectacular increases in volume of and accessibility to hardware. More than 50 new item types have been reported (Hambleton & Pitoniak, 2002; Zenisky & Sireci, 2002), with many more variations on the way. Drasgow and Mattern (in Bartram and Hambleton, 2006) offer many item type variations: they may involve complex item stems, sorting tasks, interactive graphics, the use of both audio and visual stimuli, job aids (such as access to dictionaries), joy sticks, touch screens, sequential problem solving, pattern scoring, and more.

We are already seeing hundreds of credentialing agencies in the US delivering their tests at a computer, and many more are coming on board. Admissions tests such as the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), the Test of English as a Foreign Language, better known as TOEFL, and the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) are now on-line. Maybe, the biggest change in the next decade will likely be the administration of more tests at a computer (for example, Luecht, 1998; Luecht & Clauser, 2002; Wainer et al., 2000; van der Linden & Glas, 2000).

Obviously, many new item types can be expected in the future since there is little point to assessing examinees at a computer and not taking advantage of all of the valid options that are available with computer-based testing. A consideration of computer-based tests in accounting, architecture, and medicine highlight what is possible if substantial funds and time are available (see, for example, van der Linden & Glas, 2000; Irvine & Kyllonen, 2002; Pitoniak, 2002). However, even without substantial funds, improvements in assessment practices are possible with new item types involving sorting, classifying, and ranking tasks; and with automated scoring software, more frequent use of sentence completion, short answer, and extended answers. A review of the new item types described by Drasgow and Mattern (in their chapter-see Bartran and Hambleton, 2006), and by Zenisky and Sireci (2002), clearly points to new item types that can be implemented relatively easily, with little cost, and with increasing test validity.

Merrell and Tymms (2007) described the development of an adaptive assessment called Interactive Computerized Assessment System (InCAS) that is aimed at children of a wide age and ability range to identify specific reading problems. Rasch measurement has been used to create the equal interval scales that form each part of the assessment. The rationale for the structure and content of InCAS is discussed and then different formats of feedback supplied to teachers are explained. This feedback is accompanied by research-based strategies for remediation, following the principle of assessment for learning on how to improve.

Olsen et al. (1986) compared paper-administered, computer-administered, and computer-adaptive tests by giving third- and sixth-grade students mathematics applications achievement tests. This study found no significant differences between paper-administered and computer-administered tests, and equivalences among the three test administrations in terms of score rank order, means, dispersions, and distribution shapes.

In view of the gaps in the classroom testing and evaluation literature, the major aim of the present study is twofold: a) to systematically compare and contrast the preferences, attitudes, and perceptions of students examinees with respect to test formats currently in use for constructing teacher-made tests, namely, essay, multiple-choice types and computerized type exams; and b) to describe the characteristics, potential use, and application of a test attitude inventory (adapted from Zeidner (1987)'s study), specifically designed to gather data on examinees' attitudes towards varying item formats.

**Methodology**

**Subjects**

The sample consisted of 295 volunteered undergraduate prospective teachers from Tabriz Farhangian University, situated in Iran. The entire sample was distributed almost equally by sex (male, 47.45 % female, 52.54 %). The sample consisted of five different departments; specifically, students from 35 physics education, 38 educational science, 66 physical education, 68 theology, and 88 elementary education departments) at Farhangian Faculty of Education, in Tabriz, Iran. These samples (prospective teachers) volunteered to participate in the study in the educational year of 2014 - 2015.
Instrument and Procedures

A test attitude inventory (was adopted from Zeidner’s (1987) study, added the computerized section—see Table 1) was used for the purpose of gathering data on prospective teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards varying test formats (i.e. multiple-choice, essay vs. computerized type ones). The inventory consisted of two main parts, briefly descriptions of instruments were given below:

First part:
Likert-type rating scale consisted of 10 Likert-type items, on a five point continuum. Examinees were asked to rate each stimuli, “Multiple-choice type Classroom Test”, “Essay Type Classroom Test” and “Computerized Classroom Test,” separately along the following ten different dimensions. a) Perceived facility (5= very easy…1=very difficult); b) perceived complexity (5=not complex at all…1=very complex); c) perceived clarity (5=very clear…1=very unclear); d) perceived interest (5=very interesting…1=not at all interesting); e) judged trickiness (5=not tricky at all…1=too tricky); f) perceived fairness (5= very fair…1=not at all fair); g) perceived value (5=very valuable …1=not at all valuable); h) success expectancy (5=very high…1= very low); i) degree of anxiety evoked (5=minimum degree of anxiety evoked…1=high degree of anxiety evoked); and j) feeling at ease with format (5=feeling very much at ease…1=feeling very ill at ease). The stimuli appeared on the inventory in counterbalanced order.

The alpha reliability estimated from Zeliks (1987)’s study, calculated separately for scale ratings of essay, multiple-choice exam, were about .85 in each case, which was considered to be satisfactory for group comparison purposes.

Before using the instrument in the study, the instrument was translated into Persian language and then it is asked some experts related to understandability and usability of the instruments’ items. After that the first version of the instrument was applied on 92 students from computer education departments. The alpha reliability was calculated as 0.80; 0.83; and 0.81 respectively for each part (essay, multiple choice and computerized essay and multiple choice exam types).

According to students’ responses and opinion about instrument’s some items, the slightly changes made on some items of the instrument and then the final version of the instrument was established.

Second part:
The second part of the inventory consisted of a series of relative rating scales, asking prospective teachers to directly compare essay, multiple choice and computer-based exams along the following relevant dimensions, indicating their preference in each case: a) relative ease of preparing for exams; b) reflection of prospective teachers’ actual knowledge; c) technical ease or convenience of usage; d) perceived expectancy of success; e) perceived degree of fairness; f) degree of anxiety evoked by particular test format, and g) overall preference for format. Also, prospective teachers were asked to explain their choice in each case.

The inventory was administered with no set time limit and responded to anonymously by prospective teachers.

Results

This part consisted of two sections; results devoted to first part of the instrument (Likert type scales), and results devoted to second part of the instrument (relative rating scales).

Results devoted to Likert type scales

Table 1 shows prospective teachers’ preferences about different types of exams (the result is given item by item).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item one</th>
<th>very difficult/ difficult/ Normal/Easy/very easy/no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rate difficulty of essay type exam as</td>
<td>11.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Item Two</td>
<td>very complex/ complex/ normal/ little complex/ not at all complex/ no opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rate complexity of essay type exam as</td>
<td>12.88 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rate complexity of multiple-choice type exam as</td>
<td>2.1 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rate complexity of computerized type exam as</td>
<td>12.04 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item Three</th>
<th>not at all clear/ little clear/ normal/ clear/ very clear/ no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rate clarity of essay type exam as</td>
<td>9.1 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rate clarity of multiple-choice type exam as</td>
<td>3 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rate clarity of computerized type exam as</td>
<td>6.62 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item Four</th>
<th>not at all interesting/ little interesting/ normal/ interesting/ very interesting/ no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I perceived the interest of essay type exam as</td>
<td>28.5 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I perceived the interest of multiple-choice type exam as</td>
<td>11.86 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I perceived the interest of computerized type exam as</td>
<td>9 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item Five</th>
<th>too tricky- tricky - normal- little tricky- not at all tricky- no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I judged trickiness of essay type exam as</td>
<td>3 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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I judged trickiness of multiple-choice type exam as | 10.8 | 32 | 48.1 | 142 | 28.9 | 85 | 7.1 | 21 | 3.7 |
| 11 | 1.4 | 4 |
I judged trickiness of computerized type exam as | 6 | 9 | 16.8 | 28 | 27.1 | 45 | 22.7 | 38 | 16.7 |
| 28 | 10.7 | 18 |

Survey Item Six

| opinion | Not at all fair / little fair / normal / fair / very fair / no opinion |
| % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N |
I perceived fairness of essay type exam as | 25.4 | 75 | 29.8 | 88 | 27.8 | 82 | 10.3 | 30 | 3.7 |
| 11 | 3 | 9 |
I perceived fairness of multiple-choice type exam as | 4.7 | 14 | 16.7 | 49 | 20.6 | 61 | 36.6 | 108 | 17.7 |
| 52 | 3.7 | 11 |
I perceived fairness of computerized type exam as | 10.84 | 18 | 15.66 | 26 | 29.51 | 49 | 31.92 | 53 | 5.42 |
| 22 | 10.7 | 18 |

Survey Item Seven

| / No opinion | Not at all valuable / little valuable / Normal / Valuable / Very valuable |
| % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N |
I perceived value of essay type exam as | 7.1 | 21 | 16.1 | 48 | 46.1 | 136 | 26.3 | 78 | 2.2 |
| 6 | 2.2 | 6 |
I perceived value of multiple-choice type exam as | 2.2 | 6 | 4.7 | 14 | 35.2 | 104 | 41.7 | 123 | 13.2 |
| 39 | 3 | 9 |
I perceived value of computerized type exam as | 1.8 | 3 | 9 | 15 | 41.5 | 69 | 31.6 | 53 | 10.1 |
| 17 | 6 | 9 |

Survey Item Eight

| very low / low / normal / high / very high / no opinion |
| % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N |
I rate success expectancy of essay type exam as | 10.4 | 30 | 18.98 | 56 | 49.4 | 146 | 18.7 | 55 | 1.4 |
| 4 | 1.4 | 4 |
I rate success expectancy of multiple-choice type exam as | 2.2 | 6 | 8.81 | 26 | 49.4 | 146 | 35.2 | 104 | 3 |
| 9 | 1.4 | 4 |
I rate success expectancy of computerized type exam as | 6 | 9 | 23.4 | 39 | 31.6 | 53 | 27 | 47 | 6 |
| 9 | 6 | 9 |

Survey Item Nine

| no opinion | very high / high / normal / low / very low / |
| % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N |
I rate degree of anxiety evoked of essay type exam as | 20.6 | 61 | 46.4 | 137 | 46.4 | 63 | 10.3 | 30 | 1.4 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 |
I rate degree of anxiety evoked of multiple-choice type exam as | 7.1 | 21 | 17.28 | 51 | 35.9 | 106 | 32.5 | 96 | 6.4 |
| 19 | 0.4 | 2 |
I rate degree of anxiety evoked of computerized type exam as       18        30        28.1      47    22.7     38       20.4 34 6 9 4.8 8

Survey Item Ten

very ill / ill / normal / ease / much ease / no opinion

%       N     %       N     %       N     %       N     %       N     %       N

N
I feel at ease with format of essay type of exam as 4.7 14 23.2 68 48.1 142 18.7 55 47 4.7 8 14 0.4 2
I feel at ease with format of multiple - choice type of exam as 2.2 6 17.7 52 39.2 117 28.4 84 10.3 30 2.2 6
I feel at ease with format of computerized type of exam as 4.8 8 31 52 36 60 15.3 26 6 9 6.9 11

Note : About 32 % of all participants did not answer the computerized - type of exam preferences items because they had not experienced with computerized type exam.

Examination of category response distribution for the above scales shows that above 49 percent of the sample perceived computerized type of exams to be complex or very complex, in comparison to only about 31 percent similarly perceiving the multiple-choice type and only about 43 percent choose the essay exam. In addition, whereas about 21 percent of the sample judged the multiple-choice exam as being not at all clear or little clear, only about 38 percent felt similarly about essay items, and only about 32 percent felt similarly about computerized type items. Furthermore, multiple-choice type exams were viewed as difficult or very difficult by about 22 percent, whereas 49 percent felt similarly for computerized type, and 72 percent felt similarly for essay exams.

Inspection of category response distribution for the foregoing scales shows that above 40 percent of the sample perceived computerized type of exams to be interesting or very interesting, in comparison to only about 19 percent similarly perceiving the multiple-choice type and only about 13 percent choose the essay exam. In addition, whereas about 59 percent of the sample judged the multiple-choice exam as being too tricky or tricky, only about 13 percent felt similarly about essay items, and only about 23 percent felt similarly about computerized type items. Furthermore, multiple-choice type exams were viewed as fair or very fair by about 54 percent, 37 percent for computerized type, and 14 percent for essay exams respectively.

The scale response distributions show that about 38 percent of the sample expected to receive high or very high scores on multiple-choice type exams, compared to only about 33 percent on computerize type exams and only about 20 percent on essay exams.

A meaningfully higher percentage of the sample 67 percent reported that essay exams are anxiety evoking, relative to only about 25 percent who felt similarly about multiple-choice exams, and only about 46 percent who felt similarly about computerized-type exams. Similarly, about twice the percentage of the prospective teachers (36 %) reported feeling ill at ease with computerized-type formats compared to multiple-choice type formats (20 %). Table 2 shows the sample means and standard deviations for the composite score and individual ratings of essay, multiple-choices exams versus computer -based exams.

Table 2. Attitude scale Ratings of essay, multiple-choice type versus computer-based type exams for Means and Standard Deviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Essay Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Multiple - choice Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Computerized -type Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the whole, Computerized type exams (mean=3.16) were rated higher, on average, than multiple choice type of exams (mean=3.13) and essay type of exams (mean=2.76). Consistently higher mean ratings were observed for the multiple-choice type exam on 8 out of 10 individual scales appearing on the inventory, respectively for computerized type and essay type formats. Specifically, the multiple-choice type format was viewed as being easier than the essay type and computerized types of tests (3.35, 2.97 and 3.23). Furthermore, multiple-choice exam was judged to be less complex (2.89, 2.79, and 2.78) and clearer (3.19, 3.07 and 2.89) than computerized type exam and essay type exam.

Results devoted to relative rating scales

As mentioned before, prospective teachers were also asked to directly compare and state their preference for one of the three item types with respect to a selected number of criteria, and provide reasons for their choices in each case. Following are some salient results, organized according to the major criteria for comparison among the formats.

Ease of preparation. The majority of sample (55 %) found it easier to prepare for essay exams than for multiple-choice (30 %) and computerized ones (15 %), because preparing for essay exams normally requires somewhat less time and effort for adequate preparation than preparing for multiple-choice type exams or computerized type-exams. Some of prospective teachers who found it easier to prepare essay exams also believed that the latter require a more profound mastery of the subjects matter material relative to other type exams. The minority of prospective teachers focused on different kinds of media that offer computerized type exams that this makes easy to prepare.

Reflection of prospective teachers’ knowledge. About 65 percent of the prospective teachers in the sample believed that grades on essay exams are more reflective indicators of the prospective teachers’ knowledge of the exam material compared to grades on multiple-choice type exams (25 %) and computerized-type exams (10 %). The major reason offered is that essay exams provide prospective teachers the opportunity of accurately and optimally expressing their knowledge and ideas in writing. The remainder of the prospective teachers believed that multiple-choice exam scores are a more sensitive index of prospective teachers’ knowledge, mainly because the latter normally cover a broader range of topics and a sample greater range of facts, concepts, and principles than typically is the case on essay exams. The minority of participants choose the computerized type exams because they believed that the more practice gives the more gain of knowledge.

Convenience of format usage. The majority (79 %) of the prospective teachers in the sample felt that the multiple-choice format is more convenient than the essay format, because there is no need to express answers in written form; it is possible to guess the correct answer with some probability of success; and a minimal amount of preparation is required for success. On the other hand, prospective teachers who found the essay format more convenient attribute this primarily to possibility of freely and accurately expressing ideas in writing(6 %), and 15 % felt that computerized-type format is more convenient, contemporary approach and easy to use.

Success expectancy. About 75 % of the prospective teachers in the sample believed that prospective teachers actually have a better chance of succeeding on multiple-choice relative to essay exams and computerized ones, for the following reason: multiple-choice exams, as a rule, are relatively easier than essay exams; the availability of options on multiple-choice type exams provide examinees with a sense of security and increased confidence while taking
the test; examinee can guess (or copy) the correct answer; multiple choice exams prelude the possibility that examinees' scores will be unfairly lowered by grader on account of prospective teachers' spelling mistakes or poor writing abilities; and multiple-choice exams require less preparation and effort in order to succeed. The remainder of prospective teachers, who believed that they have higher probability of succeeding on essay exams, attributed high expectancies mainly the fact that essay exams allow prospective teachers, in principles, to give expression to their maximum degree of knowledge on the given subjects. They further believed that tendency for teachers' subjective grading of essay papers works to the advantage of prospective teachers, thus increasing their grades and probability of success on the exam.

Perceived fairness. To about more than half (55%) of the sample, multiple-choice exams were perceived to be more fair than essay and computerized type exams, for two main reasons: the nil probability of guessing the correct answer assures the examinees' scores reflect actual knowledge rather than luck of error and also prospective teachers are offered the possibility of accurately expressing and elaborating on ideas in essay exams, but the essay exams is more subjective. The remainder of the sample believed that multiple-choice type exams are fairer than essay exams mainly because of the partial information provided prospective teachers by the availability of options, and the freedom from having to construct and present the answer in written form.

Degree of anxiety evoked. The vast majority (67% and 46%) of the prospective teachers reported that taking an essay and computerized exam (respectively) are more anxiety evoking than taking a multiple-choice exam because additional effort is expended and emotional energy is demanded of prospective teachers having to select, organize, and express ideas in essay form. Further, there is a total absence of information or clues leading to the correct answer as well as marked degree of over-learning required to succeed on essay exams; relatively greater length and complexity of responses are required in construction type items. The minority of prospective teachers who reported that multiple-choice type exams are relatively more anxiety evoking attribute this mainly to the difficulty and stress involved in choosing among given options, the relatively large number of items prospective teachers normally have to respond to on multiple-choice exams, and the increased probability of error.

Overall preference. If had to chose one, about three quarters of the sample (70%) clearly reported an overall preference for multiple-choice over essay exams, for four main reasons: a) the availability of options to choose from, b)the convenient item format, c) the freedom from having to organize and write the answer, and d) the possibility of guessing or copying the correct answer. The minority (24%) of the prospective teachers reported a preference for essay over multiple-choice type exams, attributing their choice mainly to a) the possibility of accurately communicating ideas in written form, b) simplicity of the item format, and c) the possibility of obtaining some credit for a partially correct response. The majority of sample (65%) indicated that they are willing to use combination of two exam types (essay and multiple-choice) in their examinations.

In the last question of the instrument, I asked if they knew alternative types of assessment and will use in their further teaching. The majority of them (92%) gave the names of some new type of assessment (like, portfolios, simulations, case-based evaluation, presentations, etc) however they said they are willing and/or try to use the new type of assessment only 42% of them. 65% said that they will definitely use combination of (essay and multiple-choice type) two exams. In summary, the data presented here pointed to a more positive attitudinal disposition of prospective teachers towards multiple-choice relative to essay type exams with respect to the majority of dimensions assessed; however, they do not want to choose one to another, because they are willing to use many assessment types altogether or combination of at least two of them.

Discussion and Conclusions

The data presented in this study indicated that multiple-choice type of exams are generally perceived more favorably than essay type and computerized type items along most dimension assessed. Many favored of multiple-choice type test, along the dimensions of perceived difficulty, anxiety, success expectancy, complexity, and feeling at ease with the format. Zeidner (1987) and Traub and McRury (1990) found similar results. Nevertheless, Birenbaum and Feldman (1998) discovered on one hand that students with good learning skills, who have high confidence in their academic ability, tend to prefer the essay type of assessment to the multiple-choice of examinations. Conversely, students with poor learning skills, who tend to have low confidence in their academic ability, prefer the choice over the constructed-response type of assessment. Also smallest differences between the formats were evidenced on the dimensions of trickiness, perceived interest, and perceived value in favor of computerized-type exams. Many see the computerized type exam is more contemporary approach and also many
have a positive attitude to use it in their further teaching, but somehow they are not comfortable and convenient to use yet.

The data clearly indicated that perspective teachers perceived multiple-choice items more favorably than essay type items. It is not surprising that over the past two decades, in Iran the multiple-choice type tests have been using in many areas of selecting and evaluating purposes from high schools to universities. Multiple-choice formats, or an emphasis on detailed factual answers, push students towards a surface approach, while open, essay-type questions tend to encourage a deep approach (Entwistle & Entwistle, 1991). This result becomes reinforced by the finding that a change from a multiple-choice to essay-type examinations had shifted the overall tendency of the students from a surface approach towards a deep approach (Thomas & Bain, 1984). However, Students’ perception about evaluation and assessment in higher education the reverse relationship between assessment and the student’s approach to learning is evidenced. Entwistle and Tait (1990) found that students who reported themselves as adopting surface approaches to learning preferred teaching and assessment procedures which supported that approach, whereas students reporting deep approaches preferred courses which were intellectually challenging and assessment procedures which allowed them to demonstrate their understanding (Entwistle & Tait, 1995).

Sambell and McDowell (1998) and Sambell et al. (1997) tried to unveil students’ interpretations, perceptions and behaviors when experiencing different forms of alternative assessment and more in particular its consequential validity or the effects of assessment on learning and teaching. Although most assessment formats are perceived to be fairer than their conventional partners, there were some concerns about the reliability of self and peer assessment, even though students valued the activity. Sambell et al. (1997) stated that from the student perspective the issue of fairness is important, and includes more than only the possibility of cheating. In this respect, students criticize the more conventional evaluation methods. The use of test attitude inventories on large-scale and routine basis in the classroom might serve to fill the needed gap for a judgment approach to the face validity of the classroom test and their constituent components, providing instructors and educational researchers with useful information about key dimensions in the test situations.

It is plausible that prospective teachers’ attitudes and perceptions about the test form is important factors in affecting their test preparation behavior; their cooperation and test motivation during the exam; and possibly influencing the level of their test performance and attainment on the exam. The strong preference of students examines for multiple-choice over computerized and essay type formats evidenced in this research deserved to be given due weight and careful consideration by educational specialists. A study that investigated the influence of assessment type and discipline of study on students’ learning approaches indicated that assessment type had no significant influence on how students approach their learning, while discipline did have significant influence on student learning (Watkins, 1982; Ramsden, 1988; Scoullar, 1998; Smith and Miller, 2005). Furthermore, prospective teachers’ attitudes and perceptions with respect to test forms are important pieces of information for the instructors and measurement specialist alike, since they serve as indicators of a test’s face validity from the point of view of the most affected by the test results. As pointed out in the literature, the concept of face validity implies that a test should not only valid from a content, construct, or perspective validity point of view, but also appear to be valid to a variety of judges—including test takers (Nevo, 1985).

Within the research on students’ perceptions about alternative assessment, contradictory results are found. For example, although it seemed that peer and tutor scores correlated with each other, Orsmond et al. (1997) revealed little agreement between student marks and between the student’s mark and the tutor scores, with poor students tending to over-mark their work, whilst good students tended to under-mark. Although much disagreement was found, students valued this self-assessing (and evaluating others) exercise. They thought that self-assessment made them think more critical and students felt that they learned more and worked in a more structured way. Mires et al. (2001) found significant correlations between student’s scores and the tutor score, but students failed to acknowledge the values of self-assessment in terms of feedback and as a learning opportunity, and expressed uncertainty over their marks. Students perceived many more disadvantages (including being more stressful, uncertainty about capability, not knowing how to mark, anxiety about failure, being accused of cheating or marking too low) than advantages (for example seeing mistakes) in the self-marking exercise (Mires et al., 2001). Challis’ (2001) commented that each assessment method simply needs to be seen in terms that recognize its own strengths and its differences from other methods, rather than as a replacement of any other assessment methods and procedures.

Smith and Miller (2005) indicated that the context and the assessment mode make the student’s approach to learning a very individual approach that changes constantly. In this manner, students’ perceptions of assessment become very arbitrary and their value for educational practices should be called in question. However, most
research data show patterns, tendencies, and relations between students’ perceptions, the different assessment methods and student learning that provide useful insights for student educators, though the web of influence is yet far from clear (Smith and Miller, 2005).

Although the present research has produced some interesting and potentially useful findings, there are limitations in methodology and research design. Further research to extend and explore current findings might include the following:

- It should be held in mind that the study was conducted only among volunteer prospective teachers from five different departments (of physics education, educational science, physical education, theology, and elementary education teacher education). It might very well be that different results would have been obtained for other age groups or students in different educational or cultural settings. Therefore, future study is needed in order to extend the validity of the findings beyond these groups studied and the specific educational and cultural settings.
- Investigating students from other universities to enhance the generalizability of present findings beyond the instructional and assessment policies and practices of one institution, and the student selection policies of a single university.
- Requiring students to report on their actual learning behaviors near the conclusion of their preparation for a particular type of examination, or immediately after completing their examinations. This will give a clearer picture of how different assessment types might influence student learning, and will serve to remove the hypothetical conditions feature of the research reported in this paper.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT of EXPPLICIT TEACHING VS IMPLICIT TEACHING ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE OF MODAL VERBS

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ABSTRACT
The present study aimed at investigating the impact of explicit versus implicit teaching of modal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. In order to measure students' language proficiency an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered. 28 homogenous Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners attending a language institute in Freydonkenar, Iran, were assigned to two groups: Explicit group (control) and Implicit (experimental) group. A pre-test was given to the two groups to measure the participants' ability in modal verbs prior to any treatment. In order to determine whether there is significance difference between two group or not, an independent t-test is used . The instructional treatment for the CG followed by explanation of grammar points and a focus on forms paradigm characterized by explicitness and deduction followed by a variety of drills, while the instruction for the EG involved a form focus paradigm characterized by input enhancement and recast. For finding the effectiveness of explicit and implicit teaching, the researcher used dependent t-test or paired sample. The results of the post-test administered after the treatment, indicated that both explicit and implicit teaching exerted a significant effect on knowledge of modal verbs. Then the researcher used independent t-test. It was also found that there was no statically significant difference between explicit and implicit teaching of modal verbs on Iranian EFL learners.

Key Words: Explicit teaching, implicit teaching, modal verbs, teaching english, EFL learners

1. Introduction
Nowadays, there is a general agreement that English is the international language of many fields of study including science and technology and also humanities. As a result, many people around the world are now experiencing “English fever,” which is a great desire to learn English, especially how to engage in conversation in English. This motivates a good number of researchers and scientists to learn English to communicate with other countries.

According to McWhorter (1998), every language and dialect has its own set of unwritten rules that determine how it is spoken or written. Weaver (cited by Williams, 1999) states that grammar is the name of the prescriptive rules which help to organize the language. Further he says “grammar is concerned primarily with correctness and with the categorical names for the words that make up sentences” (Weaver, 1996, p. 57).

How grammar is best acquired and taught has been a major issue at the center of many controversies in second language acquisition research. It becomes even more controversial when young learners are concerned.

A topic of unending discussion for perhaps half a century now questions about the effectiveness of explicit and implicit. These two terms have been variously defined by psychologists, but their distinction in SLA research may be best capsulized by saying that explicit learning involves conscious awareness and intention, and implicit learning is learning without conscious attention, or, awareness” (Williams 2005, p. 137).

“ Implicit learning occurs without intention to learn and without awareness of what has been learned” ( Williams 2005, p. 50). As noted in William’s definition intentional and incidental learning are synonymous to explicit and implicit learning.

When individuals deliberately use problem-solving strategies such as generating or testing hypotheses to acquire knowledge, the process of learning is considered explicit and is called ‘explicit learning’ (Berry and Dienes, 1993) or s-mode learning (Hayes and Brodbent, 1988). When individuals accumulate knowledge passively and no conscious analytic strategies are used, the learning process is considered implicit and is called ‘implicit learning’(Berry and Dienes, 1993) or u-mode learning (Hayes and Brodbent, 1988).

It seems to be clear, however, that attention – the psychological state of focusing on certain stimuli to the exclusion of others – can occur under both conditions. Bialystok later (1982) equated implicit and explicit with the synonymous terms 'unanalysed' and 'analysed' knowledge. Unanalyzed knowledge is the general form in which we know most things without being aware of the structure of that knowledge.
McLaughlin (1990) used the automatic and nonautomatic terms. Knowledge that can be retrieved easily and quickly is automatic. Knowledge that takes time and effort to be retrieved is nonautomatic.

Researches and discussions on grammar teaching, has recently focused on three options – “focus-on-forms,” “focus-on-meaning,” and “focus-on-form” (Long, 1991). In focus-on-forms instruction, language is separated into isolated linguistic units and taught in a sequential manner through explicit explanations of grammar rules and immediate correction of errors. Classes follow a typical sequence of performance of a grammatical structure, its practice in organized exercises, and the provision of chances for production (Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen, 2002).

Few studies investigated teacher views concerning grammar teaching and found that teachers in general believe that grammar is essential to language learning and students need direct and explicit teaching of grammar rules for accuracy (Burges & Etherington, 2002; Potgieter & Conradie, 2013). The underlying logic of this approach is that the explicit knowledge about grammar rules will turn into implicit knowledge with enough practice (De Keyser, 1998).

Focus-on-meaning, on the other hand, which was informed by Krashen and Terrell’s (1983) Natural Approach to second language (L2) acquisition, completely rejects any direct teaching on grammar, explicit error correction, or even consciousness-raising, as L2 is claimed to be naturally acquired through sufficient exposure to language or “comprehensible input” (Krashen, 1982; Krashen, 1985). According to this view, explicit knowledge about language and error correction is redundant and even harmful as it may hinder with the natural acquisition process in which learners would subconsciously analyze the forms and eventually comprehend the rules from the language input themselves. Thus, this position claims that there is no interaction between explicit and implicit knowledge; therefore, conscious learning is different and could not lead to language acquisition (Krashen, 1982; Larsen-Freeman, 2003).

However, both focus-on-forms and pure focus-on-meaning have been subject to severe criticism. Focus-on-forms has been criticized for being teacher-centered, synthetic, boring, and for not allowing meaningful communication and interaction, which are essential to language acquisition (Long, 2000). Focus-on-meaning also has been called into question based on the empirical evidence that mere exposure to an abundance of language input with no attention to grammar or error correction results in fossilization and poor L2 grammar in language production (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Higgs & Clifford, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 1994; Skehan, 1996; Swain, 1985; Swan & Lapkin, 1995; White, 1987). Furthermore, it was suggested that some grammatical forms, especially those which are in contrast with the students’ first language, that are infrequent in input, and that are irregular cannot be acquired simply through exposure (White, 1987; Larsen-Freeman, 2003; Sheen, 2003).

As a result, scholars attempted to join form with meaning. Thus, “focus-on-form,” which was defined as “any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic forms” (Ellis, 2001) during meaningful communication (Long, 1991) was introduced to the field.

Therefore, to see the effects of implicit vs. explicit teaching in Iranian EFL learners and to have a critical decision for learners to improve their grammar proficiency more effectively, the researcher needed to improve the techniques that were employed in teaching grammar classes and ultimately to improve language use.

1.1. Theoretical framework

There are some discussions whether conscious focal attention is necessary for acquiring language (Doughty & Williams, 1998). Additionally, Doughty and Williams (1998) have mentioned that “the degree of explicitness is claimed to be connected, either positively and negatively, with ultimate attainment in language learning” (Doughty & Williams, 1998, p. 229). Thus, explicitly or implicitly giving learners’ attention is important in language learning.

Doughty and Williams (1998) offer two pedagogical approaches which will be used in this study. These approaches are to guide the learners facilitate Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and to give learner’s attention to the target topics that they need to learn. The two approaches are implicit focus on form and explicit teaching. Implicit focus on form aims “to attract learner attention and to avoid metalinguistic discussion, always minimizing any interruption to the communication of meaning” (Doughty & Williams, 1998, p. 232). Explicit teaching aims “to direct learner attention and to exploit pedagogical grammar in this regard” (Doughty & Williams, 1998, p. 232). In other words, implicit focus on form is to give learners’ unconscious attention to form and explicit teaching is to give learners conscious attention to form. Each approach has its own effectiveness in facilitating language acquisition. In implicit teaching, learners could deal with form, meaning and its function at the same time and create a form-meaning-function mapping incidentally.

Muranoi (2006) mentions the efficiency of explicit teaching. First, by providing linguistic information explicitly, learners may go faster the speed of the development of the interlanguage. Secondly, by teaching forms explicitly,
the learners will pay attention to linguistic forms in the input. Moreover, it helps learners to be sensitive to their grammatical errors and to correct them (Muranoi, 2006). Thus, the explicit and implicit teaching approach is effective in the process of language acquisition and to acquire a target language. In this study; the target topic has been focused on grammar.

1.1. Research Questions of the Study
The purpose of the present study is to answer the following research questions:
RQ1: Does focus on explicit instruction have any effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of modal verbs?
RQ2: Does focus on implicit instruction have any effect on Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of modal verbs?
RQ3: Is focus on explicit instruction more effective than focus on implicit instruction in EFL classes?

2. Review of the Literature
2.1. Theoretical Background
2.1.1. Theories of Learning
various authors have categorized different theories in different ways. Learning theories can grouped into three basic categories:
• Behaviorist learning theories
• Cognitive-information processing learning theories
• Cognitive-constructivist learning theories
Theories about human learning can be grouped into four broad "perspectives". These are:
1. Behaviorism - focus on observable behavior
2. Cognitive - learning as purely a mental/neurological process
3. Humanistic - emotions and affect play a role in learning
4. Social - humans learn best in group activities

2.1.1.1. Behaviorist Learning Theories - focus on observable behavior
The beginnings of these theories may be traced back to the late 1800's and early 1900's with the formulation of "associationistic". Principles of learning inferences were tied closely to observed behavior in "lower organisms" with the belief that the laws of learning were universal and that work with laboratory animals could be generalized to humans.

Like early works by Watson (1924), Skinner (1904-1990) rejected the idea that the purpose of psychology was to study consciousness, rather the aim was to predict and control observable behavior. Learners were seen as coming to learning situations tabula rasa, subject to conditioning by their environment. It was believed that by controlling the environmental antecedents and consequences for behavior, people could predict and control that behavior. In addition, by providing positive consequences for behavior and by controlling the schedule by which these consequences were delivered, behavior could be further controlled and shaped.

Skinner demonstrated that laboratory animals were sensitive to manipulation of both antecedents and consequences of their actions and that simple responses, such as barking, pressing and pecking, could be predicted with high confidence.

Behaviorists like Edward C. Tolman (1886-1959) and Clark Hull (1884-1952) proposed that behavioral learning theories have contributed to instruction and education in several significant ways. The three applications summarized here include:
1. Behavior Modification
2. Classroom Management
3. The Management of Instruction

2.1.1.1.1. Behavioral Modification
Behavior modification is typically used to treat behavior problems in social, personal, or school situations. Some clinical applications include treatments for phobias, obsessions or eating disorders.

Educational applications involve the treatment of school-related problems such as the lack of attention, hyperactivity, temper tantrums, or other behaviors that interfere with the regular workings of a classroom. Special education teachers are typically well trained in behavioral modification. In each of these instances, the S-R-S model and its resulting principles are used to shape, modify and otherwise control behavior.
2.1.1.2. Classroom Management

While behavioral therapists and special education teachers apply behavioral learning principles to address individuals, teachers in regular classrooms may use the same principles to help manage the behavior of twenty to thirty children. For instance, teachers may set up group contingencies (a standard reinforcement given to a group) for following certain rules of conduct. A kindergarten teacher, for example, may take his/her students out to the playground 10-15 minutes early if they all pick up their things. One common means of applying group contingencies that some teachers find useful is the token economy (Ayllon & Azrin, 1968), is that in this system, tokens serve as conditioned reinforcers that can later be exchanged for objects or privileges. Tokens are earned for good conduct whatever behaviors have been selected by the teacher for strengthening. Since tokens operate like money, students may also be fined for breaking the rules or engaging in undesirable behavior.

2.1.1.3. Management of Instruction

Behavioral principles have been proved to be useful, not only for managing student behavior, but also for managing the way instruction is delivered. The most prominent examples of how behavioral learning theories have been applied to the management of instruction include the development of behavioral objectives, contingency contracts, and personalized systems of instruction (PSI).

Behaviorists argue that the only evidence of learning comes from the study of overt behaviors. How can one be sure that a student acquired knowledge or a skill unless we can see them actually do something with that knowledge or skill? Thus, to assess the degree to which a student achieved an objective, it is important to specify desired instructional outcomes in terms of clear, observable behaviors (behavioral, instructional, learning, or performance objectives). An instructional application that often makes use of both behavioral modification and instructional objectives is the contingency contract. Used with individual students, the contract sets out the terminal behavior the student is to achieve, along with the conditions for achievement and the consequences for completion (or non completion) of assigned tasks.

Keller (1968) proposed a whole new approach to college instruction based on behavioral principles known as the personalized system of instruction (PSI). PSI calls for course materials to be broken up into units, each with a set of behavioral objectives. Students tackle course materials on their own, often aided by study guides which provide practice on unit objectives. To proceed, students are required to demonstrate mastery by taking a unit quiz. Students receive feedback immediately and if they pass, they can go on to the next unit. If they fail, they must remediate and take the quiz again, but with no penalty.

2.1.1.2. Cognitive-Information Processing Theories and Cognitive-Constructivist Learning Theories

As psychologists became more and more discouraged with the limitations of behavioral theory and methods, and influential arguments against radical behaviorist theories were being stated by linguists studying language development, the "time was right" for the emergence of cognitivism. As Lesh and Lamon (1992) put it, "Behavioral psychology (based on factual and procedural rules) has given way to cognitive psychology (based on models for making sense of real life experiences.)" In this shift, several fields of learning theory emerged.

Another prominent factor was the development of computers (Baars, 1986), which provided both a credible symbol for human information processing, and a significant tool for modeling and exploring human cognitive processes.

One major group of cognitive theories may be classified as cognitive-information processing learning theories. According to the cognitive information processing (CIP) view, the human learner is conceived to be a processor of information, in much the same way a computer is. When learning occurs, information is input from the environment, processed and kept in memory, and output in the form of a learned capability.

Proponents of the CIP model, like behaviorists, seek to explain how the environment modifies human behavior. However, unlike behaviorists, they assume an intervening variable between the environment and behavior. That variable is the information processing system of the learner.

Most models of information processing can be traced to Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968) who proposed a multistage theory of memory in which information received by the Processing system undertakes a series of transformations before it can be permanently stored in memory. This flow of information, as it is generally conceived, are three basic components of memory (i.e., sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory) along with the processes assumed to be responsible for transferring information from one stage to the
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next. This system provides the basic framework for all learning theories classified under the cognitive- information processing category.

2.1.1.2.1. Sensory Memory

Sensory memory represents the first stage of information processing. Associated with the senses (vision, hearing, etc.), it functions to hold information in memory very briefly, just long enough for the information to be further processed. It is believed that there is a separate Sensory memory corresponding to each of the five senses, but all are assumed to operate in the same way.

2.1.1.2.2. Selection Attention

Selective attention refers to the learners' ability to select and process certain information while simultaneously ignoring other information. The degree to which an individual can spread their attention across two or more tasks (or sources of information) or focus on selected information within a single task depends on four factors:

1. The meaning of the task or information to the individual
2. The similarity between competing tasks or sources of information
3. Task complexity or difficulty
4. The individuals' ability to control attention

2.1.1.2.3. Pattern Recognition

Pattern recognition refers to the process whereby environmental stimuli are recognized as exemplars of concepts and principles already in sensory memory.

2.1.1.2.4. Short-Term Memory

Short-Term Memory (STM) functions as a temporary working memory where further processing is carried out to make information ready for long term storage or a response. At this stage, concepts from long-term memory (LTM) are also activated for making sense of the incoming information. STM or working memory has been related to consciousness. When we actively think about ideas and are therefore conscious of them, they are said to be in working memory. STM, however, only holds a certain amount of information for a limited amount of time.

2.1.1.2.5. Rehearsal & Chunking

Rehearsal and chunking are two processes that may help individuals encode information into long-term memory. When you repeat a phone number to yourself over and over again, you are engaged in rehearsal. Chunking is the grouping of ideas, letters, phrases, etc. into bits of information to facilitate the encoding process. Take for example, the following span of letters: JFKFBIAIDSNASAMIT. As individual letters, they are more than the capacity of working memory. However, as five chunks--JFK, FBI, AIDS, NASA, and MIT--they are easily processed.

2.1.1.2.6. Encoding

Encoding refers to the process of relating incoming information to concepts and ideas already in long-term memory in such a way that the new material is more memorable. Encoding serves to move information from STM to LTM.

There are too many studies and methods for facilitating encoding to review here in any meaningful way. In short, it is believed that individuals impose their own subjective organization to materials in order to learn them. However, techniques such as outlining, hierarchies, concept trees, mnemonics, mediation and imagery have all been shown to aid the encoding process.

2.1.1.2.7. Long-Term Memory

Long-term memory (LTM) represents our permanent storehouse of information. Anything that is to be remembered for a long time must be transferred from STM to LTM. Although forgetting is a phenomenon we have all experienced, it is assumed that once information has been processed into LTM, it is never truly lost. As far as we know, LTM is capable of retaining an unlimited amount and variety of information. It has limitations in our retrieval process, that are believed to constrain our ability to remember. There are a number of different views of how information is stored in LTM including, but not limited to, schemas and mental models.
2.1.1.2.8. Retrieval
The procedure of retrieval from long-term memory is relatively simple to understand. Previously learned information is brought back to mind, either for the purposes of understanding some new input or for making a response. Using previous knowledge to understand and learn new material has already been discussed as encoding. Using previous knowledge to make a response is known as retrieval. Developmentalists believe that learning results from adaptations to the environment which are characterized by increasingly sophisticated methods of representing and organizing information. Developmental scientists also forward the notion that children progress through different levels or stages which allow children to construct novel representations and rules, not necessary adhere to the CIP model as the method used by individuals to process information, or they focus on only one or a few components of the CIP model.

Constructivist approaches to teaching and learning is grounded in several research traditions. The roots of constructivism may be traced back to a little known Latin treatise, De antiquissima Italorum sapientia, suggested that knowledge is knowing what parts something is made of, as well as knowing how they are related. A second, related path to constructivism comes from Gestalt theories of perception. 2.1.1.2.9. Gestalt Learning Theory

Gestalt became one of the main theories of learning. The three main Gestalt theorists Max Wertheimer (1880-1943), and Koffka (1940) were all Germans, and received their training and did their early work in Germany, but all three ended their careers in the US. The term 'Gestalt' was coined by Graf Christian von Ehrenfels. His ideas influenced the trio of theorists. Gestalt was a holistic approach and rejected the mechanistic perspectives of the stimulus - response models. Numerous new concepts and approaches emerged from this different philosophical perspective. The Gestalt theory proposes that learning consists of the grasping of a structural whole and not just a mechanistic response to a stimulus. Other main Contributor to Gestalt learning theory is Leon Festinger (1919 – 1989)

2.1.1.2.10. Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivism is a meta-concept. It is not just another way of knowing, but a way of thinking about knowing. It is a theory of communication and suggests that each listener or reader will potentially use the content and process of the communication in different ways. There are numerous constructivist perspectives, and the common thread that unites them is that learning is an active process, unique to the individual, and consists of constructing conceptual relationships and meaning from information and experiences already in the learner's repertoire. The core ideas were mentioned by John Dewey, so it is not a new idea.

Constructivism claims that each learner constructs knowledge individually and socially. The "glue" that holds the constructs together is meaning. Knowledge is not "out there", as the realist philosophers such as Plato claimed. Knowledge is always an interpretation of reality, not a "true" representation of it Constructivism is a learning theory that attempts to explain how learners learn by constructing understanding for themselves.

Of Main Contributors to Constructivism are David Ausubel (1918-2008), Jerome Bruner (1915), Jean Piaget (1896-1990), Chris Argyris (1923), John Flavell (1971).

In the 1990s, constructivist books abounded. Many people became interested in it. The principles of Constructivism are broadly adopted in many areas of education today. The notions of authentic activities, social negotiation, combination of instructional contents, nurturance of reflexivity, and student-centered instruction inspired many instructors to examine and think about the importance of interactions between teachers and students, students and students, and students and learning materials as well. Therefore, both instructors and students may have opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching and learning.

Constructivism gives teachers another perspective to rethink how students learn and to focus on process and provide ways of documenting change and transformation. It also reminds teachers to look for different ways to engage individual student, develop rich environments for exploration, prepare coherent problem sets and challenges that focus the model building effort, elicit and communicate student perceptions and interpretations.

2.1.1.3. Humanistic Perspective
Abraham H. Maslow (1908-1970) has been considered the Father of Humanistic Psychology. Maslow's theory is based on the notion that experience is the primary phenomenon in the study of human learning and behavior. He placed emphasis on choice, creativity, values, self-realization, all distinctively human qualities, and believed that meaningfulness and subjectivity were more important than objectivity. For Maslow, development of human potential, dignity and worth are ultimate concerns.

Maslow rejected behaviorist views and Freud's theories on the basis of their reductionistic approaches. He felt Freud's view of human nature was negative, and he valued goodness, nobility and reason. Also, Freud concentrated on the mentally ill, and Maslow was interested in healthy human psychology.

Maslow and his colleagues came to refer to their movement as “third force psychology,” the first two being psychoanalysis and behaviorism. The third force is based on philosophies of existentialism and humanism. He is famous for proposing that human motivation is based on a hierarchy of needs. The lowest level of needs are physiological and survival needs such as hunger and thirst. Further levels include belonging and love, self-esteem, and self-actualization.

From Maslow's perspective, the drive to learn is intrinsic. The purpose of learning is to bring about self-actualization, and the goals of educators should include this process. Learning contributes to psychological health. Maslow proposed other goals of learning, including discovery of one's vocation or destiny; knowledge of values; realization of life as precious, acquisition of peak experiences, sense of accomplishment, satisfaction of psychological needs, awareness of beauty and wonder in life, impulse control, developing choice, and grappling with the critical existential problems of life.

Of Main Contributors to humanistic perspective are Carl Rogers 1902-1987.

2.1.1.4. Social Learning Perspective

Vygotsky (1896-1934) has been considered the father of Social Constructivism. He shared many of Piaget's views about child development, but he was more interested in the social aspects of learning. Vygotsky differs from discovery learning, which is also based on Piaget's ideas, in that the teacher and older children play important roles in learning. The classroom is typically active and involved. The classroom should provide variety of learning materials (including electronic) and experiences and the classroom culture provides the child with cognitive tools such as language, cultural history, and social context.

The Zone of Proximal Development is a concept for which Vygotsky is well known. It refers to the observation that children, when learning a particular task or body of information, start out by not being able to do the task. Then they can do it with the assistance of an adult or older child mentor, and finally they can do it without assistance. The ZPD is the stage where they can do it assisted, but not alone. Thus the teacher often serves to guide a child or group of children as they encounter different learning challenges.

Vygotsky's observations led him to propose a complex relationship between language and thought. He observed egocentric speech and child monologues such as Piaget wrote about, as well as internal speech. He proposed that speech (external language) and thought have different origins within the human individual. He described thought as non-verbal, and speech as having a pre-intellectual stage, in which words are not symbols for the objects they denote, but are properties of the objects. Up to about age two, they are independent. After that thought and speech become connected. At this point, speech and thought become interdependent, and thought becomes verbal. Thus, children's monologues become internalized as internal dialog. Vygotsky differed from Piaget in that he considered development after age 2 as, at least partially determined by language. He believed that egocentric speech serves the function of self-guidance, and eventually becomes internalized. It is only spoken aloud because the child has not yet learned how to internalize it. He found that egocentric speech decreased when the child's feeling of being understood diminished, as when there was no listener or the listener was occupied with other matters. These ideas, while intriguing, have never been adequately researched, so it is difficult to evaluate their significance.

2.2. Experimental Background of Implicit and Explicit language Instruction

Karen L and Ziemer Andrews, had an experimental study of the effect of grammar instruction was conducted at a private school on 70 participants in grade seven. They concluded that explicit instruction is significantly better than implicit for the complex rules, that both methods are equally effective for the simple rule.
Many linguistic authors, such as Nunan (1998), Celse Murcia and Hilles (1988) have reported that teaching language through natural exposure, following communicative objectives, exploring authentic materials, helping students to elaborate their own discourse, do not worrying with the mistakes they commit, is the best way to develop communicative competence. Both processes – focus on form and focus on communication and meaning – have been the case of study to many linguists and teachers. Many linguists, such as Doughy & Williams (1998) have advocated in favor of the idea that teaching grammar focusing on communication is more effective than teaching grammar focusing only on structure. Celse Murcia and Hilles (1988), based on the second language acquisition researchers, have testified that adolescents or adults do not acquire the second language in the same way as they acquire their mother language, therefore they need some grammar instruction to develop effective language learning.

2.3. Grammar Practice

Handoyo Pujiwidodo (2006, p. 99) says: "It is generally accepted that practice can facilitate accuracy and fluency". In this regard, accuracy focuses on correct use of language (for example, rules of language). This can be achieved through controlled and semi-controlled activities or practice of grammar. In fluency, after learners master the rules of language, they are required to apply the rules of language in the form of spoken or written language. A number of linguists recommend that at this stage errors or mistakes be tolerated since making mistakes or errors is not disgraceful, but natural and common practice. During fluency-oriented activities, a teacher is required to help learners to self-notice or self-correct. It is important to keep in mind that both accuracy and fluency are interdependent.

According to Ur (1988), “practice may be defined as any kind of engaging with the language on the part of the learner, usually under the teacher supervision, whose primary objectives is to consolidate learning”. Ur predicts that the following six factors contribute to successful practice:

**pre learning**: learners benefit from clear perception and short-term memory of the new language.

**volume and repetition**: the more exposure to or production of language the learners have, the more likely they are to learn.

**success orientation**: practice is most effective when based on successful practice.

**Heterogeniety**: practice should be able to elicit different sentences and generate different levels of answers from different learners.

**teacher assistance**: the teacher should provide suggestion, hints, prompts.

**Interest**: an essential feature that is closely related to concentration.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This research is based on quantitative quasi-experimental design. In this study, there were two groups (control and experimental). In order to determine the level of proficiency of the subjects, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) including 60 multiple-choice items was given to the whole subjects.

3.2. participants

The subjects participating in this study were 50 Iranian EFL learners from Shomal Institute of Freydonkenar. All participants were female. Their first language was Persian. They aged between 13 and 18.

To ensure the homogeneity of the participants, the researcher administered an OPT (Oxford Placement Test) to 50 Iranian pre-intermediate EFL students. From among the learners who took part in the testing session, 28 learners whose score were one standard deviation above and below the mean, were selected as the subjects of the study. They were divided into one experimental and one control group based on their scores. (experimental and control group consisted of 14 and 14 learners respectively). Then the researcher used independent sample t-test to measure the statistical differences between the two groups.

One class out of two classes was considered as control group who received explicit teaching treatment, while the other class, namely experimental group, was subject to the target implicit instruction on modal verbs. The experimental group and the control group received instruction during the 10-session period of course.
3.3. Instrument
To fulfill the purpose of this investigation the researcher used following instruments:

3.3.1. Oxford Placement Test
At the beginning stage of the research before entering the treatment process, the researcher used the OPT (Oxford Placement Test). This test administered as a standardized measure to check the homogeneity of subjects in terms of language proficiency.

In this study, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), version 1.1, was administered among 50 Iranian EFI learners from Shomal Institute in Freydonkenar. OPT comprised 60 questions including fill in the blank, cloze test and multiple choice questions, each question had 1 point, totally 60 points. It took 75 minutes to administer the test. OPT is planned, prepared and validated and enjoys high degrees of reliability, validity and practicality.

3.3.2. Pre-test
A test that consisted of 25 modal auxiliary items as a pre-test was administered by the researcher to assess the participants' knowledge in modal verbs prior to treatment phase of the study. This test was gotten from the Internet TESL Journal Foundation, sponsored by Capital Community College, repaired October 2014.

3.3.3. Post-test
A post-test consisting of 25 modal auxiliary items were administered by the researcher to assess the participants' knowledge of modal verbs after the treatment phase of the study. The post-test items were exactly the pre-test, but scrambled.

3.4. Procedure
Initially, in order to check the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their English language proficiency, an OPT as an English language proficiency test was administered. The subjects participating in this study were 50 pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners of Shomal institute in Freydonkenar, Mazandaran Province. The OPT was used to measure the English language knowledge of the subjects. Content in this test ensured the researcher that test questions assess the subjects’ knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and functions of language. Each question correctly answered was given one point. The questions which had no answer were given zero points. From among the 50 learners who took part in the testing session, subjects whose scores were one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the subjects of the study.

Out of the fifty, 28 students were selected and 22 students were eliminated from the data analysis. Students who attended all the sessions were 28 students participated in the study for 10 sessions of forty minutes in the period of course.

They were randomly divided into one control and one experimental group based on their scores (control and experimental groups consisted of 14 and 14 students respectively). Two groups of EFL students were chosen so as to compare the results of the instruction. First descriptive data are evaluated that were given in Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical indicators</th>
<th>The CON group pre</th>
<th>The CON group post</th>
<th>The EXP group pre</th>
<th>The EXP group post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>5.7500</td>
<td>9.1964</td>
<td>7.4643</td>
<td>10.0893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The maximum errors</td>
<td>.93871</td>
<td>.84523</td>
<td>1.06223</td>
<td>1.09589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>median</td>
<td>6.0000</td>
<td>8.5000</td>
<td>7.2500</td>
<td>10.1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>3.75±</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>7.25±</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.d deviation</td>
<td>3.51234</td>
<td>3.16255</td>
<td>3.97451</td>
<td>4.10043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient of skewness</td>
<td>214.</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>305.</td>
<td>-. 040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient of kurtosis</td>
<td>-. 317</td>
<td>-. 113</td>
<td>-. 139</td>
<td>-. 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data minimum</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum data</td>
<td>12.75</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>16.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For a better analysis of the mean the following Bar Graph is given.

![Figure 3.1. Mean](chart.png)

Then the researcher used the independent sample t-test to measure the statistical differences between the two groups.

In control group, grammar points of modal verbs were chosen, and were taught explicitly. In This method, the researcher taught grammar points and then used different examples. In experimental group, the authentic written sentences consisting of modal verbs presented. The researcher used the perceptual salience of target form(s) such as input enhancement, techniques as highlighting, bolding, underlining, color coding, etc. By using flashcards, movies, pictures and role playing as controlled and uncontrolled, the students were engaged in communication.

The teaching as a whole was targeted at supporting students to improve their grammar base to answer grammar questions. The pretest items was exactly the post-test, but scrambled.

### 3.5. Methods of Analyzing Data

In order to answer the research questions of the present study, the collected data were analyzed by using the statistical package for social science (SPSS), version 19.0, in the following way:

In order to determine whether there is significant differences between the two groups or not, an independent t-test was used. For testing first and second questions, the researcher used dependent t-test. Then the researcher used independent t-test for answering the third hypothesis to determine whether there are significant differences between two groups in posttest or not. All these analyses are presented in detail in chapter 4.

### 4. Result

#### 4.1. Data analysis and Findings

Before examining the hypotheses, it should be determined statistically whether there are significant differences between two groups or not, in order to study this hypothesis, the independent t-test was used.

Statistical hypothesis

\[
\begin{align*}
H_0 &: \mu_1 = \mu_2 \\
H_1 &: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2
\end{align*}
\]
Table 4.1. Independent T-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>S.d</th>
<th>test statistics</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The EG</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6154</td>
<td>3.61798</td>
<td>-1.261</td>
<td>.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The CG</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.4643</td>
<td>3.97451</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the calculated p-value which is bigger than .05, the result is that the null hypothesis is accepted. In other words, there isn't significant difference between two groups, therefore the two groups are homogeneous.

The first hypothesis: Focus on explicit instruction has no effect on Iranian EFL learners' grammar knowledge of modal verbs. To study this hypothesis a dependent t-test was used.

\[
\begin{align*}
H_0 &: \mu_1 = \mu_2 \\
H_1 &: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \\
\end{align*}
\]

Table 4.2. Dependent t-test related to explicit instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>Std deviation</th>
<th>Test statistics</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before treatment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.7500</td>
<td>3.51234</td>
<td>-2.943</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After treatment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.1964</td>
<td>3.16255</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the p-value which is less than 0.05, it is concluded that the difference before direct treatment and after treatment is significant. This difference is 3.45.

The second hypothesis: Focus on implicit instruction has no effect on Iranian EFL learners' grammar knowledge of modal verbs. To study this hypothesis a dependent t-test was used.

\[
\begin{align*}
H_0 &: \mu_1 = \mu_2 \\
H_1 &: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \\
\end{align*}
\]

4.3. Dependent t-test related to implicit instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>The mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Test statistics</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implicit instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before treatment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.4643</td>
<td>3.97451</td>
<td>-2.62500</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After treatment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.0893</td>
<td>4.10043</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the p-value that is less than .05, the result is that the difference before
implicit treatment and after treatment is significant. This difference is 2.625. The third hypothesis: The explicit teaching is not effective than implicit teaching.

\[ H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2 \\
H_1: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \]

To study this hypothesis the independent t-test was used.

### 4.4. Independent t-test related to explicit vs. implicit teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>The mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation of</th>
<th>Test statistics</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above information shows that there was no significant difference between two methods. It should be considered that in the explicit teaching the differences between before and after the treatment is 3.45, but in the implicit teaching is 2.63.

### 4.2. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Based on the result which was attained from the study and by using SPSS software, the hypotheses of the present study were analyzed.

In order to test the first null-hypothesis suggesting that teaching modal verbs explicitly doesn't have any effect on Iranian EFL learners, the dependent t-test indicated a positive significance between grammar proficiency in modal verbs and explicit teaching. (Difference in mean=3.45, p<0.05). Therefore, the first null hypothesis is safely rejected.

In order to test the second null-hypothesis suggesting that teaching modal verbs implicitly doesn't have any effect on Iranian pre intermediate EFL learners proficiency, the dependent t-test indicated a positive significant between them (differences in means=2.625 p<0.05). Therefore, the second null hypothesis is safely rejected.

In order to test the third null hypothesis suggesting that explicit teaching is not more effective than implicit teaching, the independent t-test indicated that there is no significant differences between the two methods (p>0.05). Therefore, the third null hypothesis is accepted.

### 5. Discussion and conclusion

#### 5.1. Discussion

Although we are now theoretically past the method era and have hypothetically entered B.Kumaravadivelu’s (2001) post method era in which teachers are said to be released from the limiting forces of the language teaching methods and are set free to teach autonomously and creativity at the level of practice, we are still very much in the method era and are inspired by the principles of one method or the other. One basic reason why we can not take very big practical steps towards the implementation of the principles of post method pedagogy is the scarcity of teachers who are truly autonomous and reflective and can do away with methods.

Having said this, the researcher would like to argue in favor of the selection of the most useful and most efficient methods of language teaching.

Furthermore, this study showed that in terms of grammaticality, significant improvements were observed in both IT and ET groups. It contribute to the claim that instruction does make a difference (Norris and Ortega, 2000).

As mentioned in chapter 2, in applied linguistics, the differing distinction between implicit acquisition and explicit learning of L2 was made by Krashen (1982). He argued that adult L2 students of grammar translation methods, who can tell more about a language than a native speaker, yet whose technical knowledge of grammar leaves them totally in the lurch in conversation, testify that conscious learning about language and subconscious acquisition of language are different things, and that any notion of a ‘strong-interface between the two must be rejected.

Here in this study the effect of explicit versus implicit teaching of modal verbs on Iranian EFL learners was discovered, as it was reported in chapter 4, findings of dependent t-test for both groups discovered that explicit and implicit teaching affected the knowledge of learners on modal verbs significantly and positively.

This finding supported the study done by Kare L. Ziemer Andrews (2007) that states explicit and implicit methods are equally effective for simple rules.
5.2. Implications of the study
While this study has its own limitation, it is hoped that it can serve as a basis for further studies in language teaching and learning. The results produce valuable information to second/foreign language instructors. Furthermore, this study showed that in terms of grammaticality, significant improvements were observed in both IT and ET groups. Although greater amount of gains were found in the explicit group, the progress from pre- to post-test was significant and observable enough to claim for the efficacy of implicit teaching in this area. These results provide valuable information to second/foreign language instructors and curriculum designers.

REFERENCES


THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERSIAN FEMALES AND MALES' SPEECH PATTERNS WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN LINGUISTIC FEATURES SUCH AS EMPTY ADJECTIVES

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ABSTRACT
This study explored the difference between Persian females and males’ speech patterns with respect to certain linguistic features such as empty adjectives to prove the gender effects on language forms. Two novels which were randomly chosen from the novels of Sadegh Chubak, Tangsir, and Moniroo Ravanipour, The Gipsy by the Fire, were the materials of the current paper. Having marked the empty adjectives in both females and males’ speech in these two novels, the data were put to statistical analysis using frequency as well as Chi-Square tables to answer the following research question. The result of this study provides insight on Iranian writer’s use of gender – marker features and terms. Furthermore, it reveals the reasons of gender imbalance and forms of sexist bias in some story books. The description of these sex-dependent language differences seems important. Because “knowledge of the differences can contribute to awakening. Awakening can contribute to change.” (Brouwer, Gerristen and DE Haan, 1979:34). The study also exerts certain modification on lakoff’s theory. The findings are pedagogically important too. Sociologists, text book writers, and anthropologists can take advantages of the results. It can be also useful for those who are interested in carrying on comparative research within the domain of language.

Introduction
Sometimes, there are very clear differences between the forms of language typically used by women and those typically used by men. The different forms of language are not determined directly by the nature of the reproductive organs of men and women.

In recent years, many people have made a distinction between the terms “sex” and “gender”, although these two terms might easily have been replaced. Roughly in this way of talking, gender is culture and identity but sex is physiology and genetics. Men & women are differentiated both biologically and culturally. It’s important to keep in mind that the systematic differences are in language rather than language production between men and women. So many specific differences can be found in the linguistic behavior of men and women across languages, circumstances and cultures (Uchida, 1992).

Robin lakoff (1975) was one of the first women who published theories on the existence of women’s language. Her book, language and women’s place, is the basis for a lot of research on the subject. In her book, she discussed ten assumptions about women’s speech.
1. Hedges: phrases such as “sort of”, “kind of”, “It seems like”, etc.
2. (Super) polite forms: “would you mind ...”; “I’d appreciate it if ...”; “...if you don’t mind.”
3. Tag questions: “He is going to Paris, isn’t he?”
4. Speaking in italics: intensive use of words “so”, “very”, “quite”.
5. Empty adjectives: divine, lovely, etc. these adjectives contrasting with male adjective (e.g. “terrific”, “great”) are meaningless and they are totally devoid of any connotation of power (thorndike & Barnhart, 1979).
6. Hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation.
7. Sense of humor lacking: women do not tell jokes well.
8. Direct quotation: men often paraphrase.
9. Special lexicon: women use words for things like colors more often but men use words for sports, etc.
10. Question intonation in declarative statements: women raise the pitch of their voice at the end of a statement and make declarative statements questions.

Significance of the Study
Men and women have different rules of conversation. These differences sometimes reveal the inequality between the sexes in society. To be more effective speakers, some women try to learn to speak like men. So there is a great deal of gender-specific terminology that is used especially for jobs and social roles.

After the current women’s movement that raised our consciousness of male dominance and female subordination, some gender-specific terms have been replaced by gender-neutral ones, such as chair or chairperson for chairman, server for waitress or waiter, etc.

Since the elimination of gender marking completely removes sex-role stereotyping, most people agree on it and do their best to minimize sexism particularly in publications. Authors and publishers try to use material that reveals the active roles of women in society.

Review of Literature
Evidence supported by research from various people suggest that there are few significant differences between the language used by women and that used by men. The fact that women and men are different sociolinguistically poses a problem, how these differences are established.

The research done on the differences in men and women’s language has increased since 1970. Research in the area of language dominance is much associated with the work of Robin Lakoff (1975). She identified some linguistic features that are used by women more often. She stated that female register can be found only in women’s speech. She believed “the register isn’t a sex-exclusive differentiation but rather it’s a sex-preferred one” (Crosby and Nyquist, 1977: 315).

A study done by Crosby (1976) confirms that women’s language is more marked than men’s language in respect of specific characteristics of female register such as empty adjectives, hedges, tag questions, and intensive use of the word “so”.

Maltz and Borker (1982) suggested a framework for examining the existing differences in men and women’s speech. They believed remarked that miscommunication occurs from cultural difference and not dominance between men and women.

Deuchar (1989) mentioned that the speaker might have relatively more or less power in interactions. She made the assumption that women are less powerful than men.

Coates and Cameron (1990) proposed two conflicting views about gender effects on language forms within the domain of culture: the difference approach and the dominance approach. According to the difference/cultural approach, men and women inhabit different cultural and linguistic worlds but according to the dominance/power-based approach, men and women inhabit the same cultural and linguistic worlds but they are unequal in society and language use. This inequality, female subordination and male dominance, is because of the low status of women in society. Coates and Cameron (1990) defined two functions for tag questions: affective and modal. Affective tags show solidarity and modal tags indicate uncertainty. They stated women use more affective tags while men use more modal tags.

Many studies such as Woods (1990) and West (1984) stated that a dominance model is required to explain certain features in women’s speech. Other researchers, however, believe that the above claim is not true because language is not context free and different features have different meanings depending on the context in which they occur (Cameron, et al, 1990).

Tannen (1990) described women and men’s different communicative styles. She believed that women and men are equal although they are different. Her book tries to pacify the readers by suggesting that women and men can solve their communication problems by their cooperation and awareness.

Uchida (1992) argued that the separation of two approaches, dominance and difference, is not possible and a theory of sex difference is not satisfactory without considering the power issue. Researcher’s awareness and interest in the topic of language and gender has grown extremely over the past decade. A more recent work by John Gray (1992), mostly focused on the topic, is truly a tool for life. He mentioned significant differences in men and women’s language styles and behaviors.

Kunsmann (1998) stated that the differences may be related to gender or status and power. He attempted to describe the linguistic variables such as tag questions and interruptions which have been studied in the relevant literature. He concluded that men use more modal tags. They also have a larger tendency to interrupt cross-sex conversations.
Methodology

Materials

Since it was not an experimental study, the participants were actually the materials in two novels which were randomly selected from the novels of Sadeg Chubak, *Tangsir*, and Moniroo Ravanipour, *The Gipsy by the Fire*.

Materials Selection Procedures

In order to gather the most natural-like data which could represent the linguistic performance of ordinary people in natural situation, two novels with a social and family theme were carefully scrutinized and examined.

The novel of Sadeg Chubak, *Tangsir*, and the novel of Moniroo Ravanipour, *The Gipsy by the Fire*, were randomly chosen from all available novels of the authors. The authors were selected since they have not been chosen yet by other researchers. They are from one city and they have the same setting.

Data Analysis

Having marked the empty adjectives in both females and males’ speech, the data were put to statistical analysis using frequency as well as Chi-Square tables. First the frequency of empty adjectives will be given in two groups of males and females. Then, by using Chi-square it will be possible to find whether the difference, if any, between males and females’speech is significant.

Reporting and Discussion of the Results

The total number of empty adjective used by two genders in two novels, *Tangsir* and *The Gipsy by the Fire*, were counted.

Table one shows the frequency of empty adjectives produced by males and females in *Tangsir*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empty Adjective</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table one, the total number of empty adjectives produced by females and males in *Tangsir* were 30. Out of 30 utterances, one (3.33%) empty adjective was produced by females and twenty nine (96.66%) were produced by males. So in *Tangsir*, the novel of Sadeg Chubak, males used empty adjectives more frequently than females.

In table 2 the frequency of empty adjectives produced by females and males in *The Gipsy by the Fire*, the novel of Moniroo Ravanipour has been presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empty Adjective</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in the above table, out of the total number of empty adjectives produced by two genders in *The Gipsy by the Fire*, 19 (61.29%) were produced by females and 12 (38.71%) were produced by males. So in *The Gipsy by the Fire*, females used empty adjectives more than males.

The total number of empty adjective in both novels were 61. Out of 61 utterances, 20 (32.79%) were produced by females and 41 (67.21%) were produced by males. Although there are some differences between the frequencies, it is not clear whether the differences are significant.

The results of the Chi-Square calculated for tables one and two have been presented in table 3 as below:

**Table 3. The result of Chi-square for tables one and two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \chi^2 ) = 7.230</td>
<td>32.79</td>
<td>67.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 tests whether gender is a contributing factor in the use of empty adjective among the participants.
In table 4 the result of the Chi-Square, the degrees of freedom for two groups and the value of $\chi^2$ critical were presented.

Table 4. The result of Chi-square for two groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VAR 00001</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square</td>
<td>7.230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical value</td>
<td>3.84146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp.sig.</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring to table 4, the critical value of $\chi^2$ with 1.d.f. is 3.84 for the.05 level. The calculated Chi-square is 7.230 which is greater than 3.84 ($7.230 > 3.84$).

So the data can support the claim that there is a significant relationship between gender and the frequency of empty adjectives produced by females and males. And the difference between males and females with respect to the use of empty adjectives is significant and meaningful.

Conclusion

This study has been conducted to investigate the use of empty adjectives by females and males. To perform this research, 2 novels done by two authors with the same settings, *Tangsir* written by Sadeg Chubak (1977) and *The Gipsy by the Fire* written by Moniroo Ravanipour (1999), were randomly selected and carefully scrutinized. The findings reveal that there is a meaningful and significant difference between females and males’ speech with respect to the use of empty adjectives ($\chi^2 = 7.230$), moreover, in *The Gipsy by the Fire* written by a female author, the total number of empty adjectives used by females are much higher than ones used by males. But in *Tangsir* which was written by a male author, females used empty adjectives less frequently than males. The frequency of used empty adjectives by two genders reveals that the sex of the author affects the character’s linguistic performance. The gender of both characters & authors can highly influence the character’s speech.

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EVALUATION OF THE NEW IRANIAN HIGH SCHOOL SERIES BOOKS BASED ON BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY: PROSPECT ONE IN FOCUS

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed at investigating the extent to which the contents and activities of the English for Schools, Prospect one are in line with the learning objectives designed in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. The study tried to find out how the six levels of thinking (remembering, understanding, analyzing, evaluating and creating) are maintained in this course book. This study also aimed at specifying which elements of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy are more prevalent in this course book. This study was mainly a content analysis type, hence a qualitative one. However, some quantitative analysis was done for computing the frequency of each level of learning objectives. To collect the data, all the lessons from this course book were selected. It should be noted that since many of the activities and exercises in English for Schools, Prospect one are included in the work book, this book was also selected as well as the main book which is known as the student book. The activities and exercises of each lesson were codified, analyzed, and classified based on the coding schemes mentioned above. After codifying the activities and exercises, evaluation was done to find out what learning objectives were included in the content of the book. The results of the study showed that the very low learning objectives (Remembering, Understanding, and Applying) received more attention in this course book while little heed was given to higher learning objectives (Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating) at all.

Key words: Course book, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, English for Schools Prospect one

1. Introduction:
One of the most important tasks of any educational system is making decision about coursebooks. According to Sheldon (1988, p. 237), "selection of a coursebook signals an executive educational decision in which there is considerable professional, financial, and even political investment". Choosing a coursebook is the main job of curriculum administrators. Teachers and students expect a coursebook to be complete and tell them everything. Coursebook designers should know that the students want to have colorful and interesting books. In addition, coursebooks can be considered as an influential factor in shaping the students' world views. Therefore, every word, picture, and topic in books should follow certain policies and purposes. Correspondingly, appropriate coursebooks are considered as the main concern of many of language teachers as Sheldon (1988, p. 237) states, "Course books represent the visible heart of any ELT program".

Evaluation of course books in the education system is an important issue. In order to improve the quality of education and coursebooks, many scholars and researches focus on this important task. Some of them design a checklist based on generalizable criteria to obtain reliable results. The book evaluation requires a professional judgment and this process needs some criteria and complete checklist. Cunningsworth (1995) provides a checklist to help teachers to evaluate coursebook and select the best and the most suitable book, so he proposes some evaluation criteria in separate sections. He believes that asking appropriate questions and interpreting answers can follow a complete and effective evaluation. Also Hutchinson and Waters (1987) designed a checklist which consisted of some criteria to analyze textbooks both subjectively and objectively. According to them (1987, p.97), there are four steps to coursebook evaluation process; 1. defining criteria 2. subjective analysis 3. objective analysis 4. matching.

There are some factors in course books which can affect the process of language leaning. For this reason, course book designers should regard all factors such as age, gender, social class, culture, religion, and etc. Cunningsworth (1995) designed a checklist together with some criteria for teachers of foreign or second languages to evaluate their
coursebooks which can also be useful for course designers and the educational system to adopt a suitable coursebook. He conducted a case study about the subject content and values in the coursebooks. He took six general coursebooks at elementary and pre-intermediate levels and, he evaluated them based on his checklist. Some criteria which he used to evaluate those coursebooks consist of range of topic, inclusion of sensitive social/cultural topics, and character depiction (like representation of women, portrayal of the gender role, age and social class).

This study aimed at investigating to what extent the contents and activities of the English for Schools, Prospect 1 are in line with the learning objectives designed in Bloom's revised taxonomy. The study tries to find out how the six levels of (thinking, remembering, understanding, analyzing, evaluating and creating) are maintained in this coursebook. This study also aimed at specifying which elements of Bloom's revised taxonomy are more prevalent in these course books.

2. Review of literature

There are a number of studies conducted on course book evaluation all over the world. They highlight the great significance of course books in language teaching and learning. Tomlinson (2008, p.3) claimed that Many ELT materials (especially global course books) currently make a significant contribution to the failure of many learners of English as a second, foreign or other language to even acquire basic competence in English and to the failure of most of them to develop the ability to use it successfully. They do so by focusing on the teaching of linguistic items rather than on the provision of opportunities for acquisition and development. And they do this because that's what teachers are expected and required to do by administrators, by parents, by publishers, and by learners too.

Selection of a course book is an important decision for EFL classrooms. Mukundan (2010) explained that educators should have a certain goal and should be systematic in their access, also their approach to selection a course book should be obvious, answerable, and benefit for learners.

Some scholars like Richards (2001) believe that course books in addition of its advantages have some limitations, depending on how they are used and the contexts of their use. He outlines the advantages and disadvantages of course books. The advantages of course books include: they provide structure and a syllabus for a program, they help standardize instruction, they maintain quality, they provide a variety of learning resources, the course books are efficient, they can provide effective language models and input, they can train teachers, and also they are visually appealing. But there are some negative effects of use of course books; they may contain inauthentic language, they may distort content, some course books may not reflect students' needs, they can deskill teachers and some of them are expensive.

Tsiplakides (2011) believes that course book lies at the heart of any English language teaching situation. The course books are useful recourse for both teachers and learners and can offer advantages for teachers and language students. Amin (2004) investigated the learning objectives of general Persian and general English language courses with reference to Bloom's taxonomy. She examined the course books, exams, and instructor's views at Shiraz University. She found higher levels of thinking in general Persian courses while general English courses emphasized lower levels of thinking. Gordani (2010), using Bloom's taxonomy, investigated different types of learning objectives of English course books in Iranian guidance school. The results showed that all of the items were focused on the first three levels of Bloom's taxonomy which are known as the lower levels of cognitive skills.

Riazi and Mossalanejad (2010) evaluated the types of learning objectives represented in Iranian senior high school and pre-university English course books. They used Bloom's taxonomy as the framework of their study. After doing the data analysis, the researcher concluded that lower order cognitive skills were more prevalent than higher order ones in these course books. Furthermore, the difference between the senior high school and the pre-university course books in regarding the levels of the taxonomy was significant, as the pre-university course book used some degrees of higher-order learning objectives. Razmjoo and Kazempourfard (2012) evaluated Interchange course books in terms of learning objectives in Bloom's revised taxonomy. They also developed a coding scheme based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy to investigate the course books. This coding scheme was used to codify, classify, and analyze the content of the course books. The results of the study revealed that lower order thinking skills, the three low levels in Bloom's revised taxonomy, were the most prevalent learning levels in these books. Moreover, a significant difference was also found among the course books in their inclusion of different levels of learning objectives. The other result of this study was that metacognitive knowledge was completely absent in these course books. The researcher concluded that Interchange series cannot make learners critical thinkers.
Saricoban and Can (2013) evaluated 9th grade local and international English course books used in Turkish high schools in terms of language skills and language components. In order to evaluate the specified course books, the researchers designed a comprehensive checklist in terms of language skills and components with reference to some available checklists. Teachers who were the main users of the course books were asked to fill in the checklist. Teachers evaluated foreign English course books to be better and more sufficient in all the language skills and components. The researchers emphasized the need to improve local course books regarding language skills and components.

3. Method
3.1. Coding schemes
To conduct the evaluation, a coding scheme was used. It was Bloom's Revised Taxonomy (2001) which was modified by Razmjoo and Kazempourfard (2012) in their evaluation of materials in Interchange series. It consists of two dimensions: cognitive and knowledge. The cognitive dimension consists of six levels from the simplest ones, that is, remembering, understanding, and applying facts, as the lowest levels, to increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels of analyzing, evaluating and creating, as the highest levels. The categories are labeled: A) Remember B) Understand C) Apply D) Analyze E) Evaluate F) Create. The knowledge dimension is comprised of four types of knowledge: 1) Factual knowledge 2) Conceptual knowledge 3) Procedural knowledge and 4) Metacognitive knowledge. The following table shows this coding scheme clearly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Cognitive Process Dimension</th>
<th>The Knowledge Dimension</th>
<th>A: Remember</th>
<th>B: Understand</th>
<th>C: Apply</th>
<th>D: Analyze</th>
<th>E: Evaluate</th>
<th>F: Create</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Factual Knowledge</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conceptual Knowledge</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>D2</td>
<td>E2</td>
<td>F2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Procedural Knowledge</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>B3</td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>D4</td>
<td>E4</td>
<td>F4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Metacognitive Knowledge</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>B4</td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>D4</td>
<td>E4</td>
<td>F4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. Reliability of the coding schemes
In order to determine the reliability of codifications, two kinds of reliability analysis were carried out in this research, namely inter-coder and intra-coder reliability. To estimate the inter-coder reliability, MA students of TEFL at Esfahan University codified two lessons of the course book. First, the MA coder was informed in detail about the BRT through a two hour training session. The coders were then given copies of the coding schemes and the lessons which were supposed to be codified by them. They were asked to read the coding schemes separately and carefully and codify the exercises accordingly. The agreement between the average of their codifications and that of the researcher for BRT was found to be 91% and 97.5% respectively which were considered as the inter-coder reliability.
To estimate the intra-coder reliability, two lessons of the course book were selected randomly. They were then codified twice by the researcher in a two-week time span and the reliability of the codifications for the coding scheme (BRT) was found to be 100% each which was used as intra-coder reliability. The statistical procedure used to determine the reliability was correlational analysis in the SPSS, version 20.

3.3. Data collection and analysis procedures
This study was mainly a document or content analysis type, hence a qualitative one. However some quantitative analysis was done for computing the frequency of each level of learning objectives. To collect the data all the lessons from this course book were selected. It should be noted that since many of the activities and exercises in
English for Schools, Prospect 1 are included in the work book, this book was also selected as well as the main book which is known as the student book. The activities and exercises of each lesson were codified, analyzed, and classified based on the coding schemes mentioned above. After codifying the activities and exercises, evaluation was done to find out what learning objectives were included in the content of the book. Moreover, the frequency of each learning objective was calculated for the book. Chi-square test, using SPSS software, was applied to determine whether there is a significant difference in the occurrence of different levels of cognitive skills in the course book.

4. Results and Discussion
As it is shown in table 4.1 English for Schools, Prospect 1, consists of eight lessons. Each lesson consists of five parts: conversation, which usually contains a dialogue and two practices, sounds and letters, listening and reading, speaking and writing, and finally your conversation. This book begins with a welcome unit and includes four reviews, too. The book is also supplemented with a workbook which was used in the evaluation as well.

4.1. Representation of learning objectives in English for Schools, Prospect 1
Table 4.1 shows the frequencies and percentages of the occurrence of the learning objectives of RBT in the course book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning objectives Prospect 1</th>
<th>Book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In English for Schools, Prospect 1, there are three learning objectives. A1 (Remember Factual Knowledge) is the most prevalent objective with the frequency of 50.9, C1 (Apply Factual Knowledge) with the frequency of 28.37 is the second most frequent objective. B1 (Understand Factual knowledge) with the frequency of 20.72 is the third frequent objective. Other learning objectives have no frequencies.

If we regard the first three levels (Remember, Understand, and Apply) as the Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and the last three levels (Analyze, Evaluate, and Create) as the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), the result can be shown in another way as in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3. The representation of RBT learning objectives in Prospect 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning objectives</th>
<th>Book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prospect 1</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOTS</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOTS</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is evident in this table, all the attention was paid to LOTS and no attention was paid to HOTS in this course book. Remembering, Understanding, and Applying were the main focus of this course book. HOTS were not included in this course book at all. A chi-square test was run to compare the distribution of six levels of RBT learning objectives in this course book.

Table 4.4. Chi-square test for the representation of six levels of RBT learning objectives in Prospect 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course book</th>
<th>Prospect 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square</td>
<td>32.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp.Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is clear from this table the distribution of six levels of RBT in English for Schools, Prospect 1 was found to be significantly different ($X^2 = 32.784$, df = 2, sig = .000) and these levels were distributed randomly and had no special pattern.

4.2. How are the learning objectives designed in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy represented in English for Schools, Prospect 1?

As the results in table 2 shows, Lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) outnumber the Higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in English for Schools, Prospect 1. HOTS were totally absent in this course book.

Regarding English for Schools, Prospect 1, the most frequent learning objective among the LOTS was found to be A1 (Remember Factual Knowledge) with the frequency of 50.9%. The next most frequent code was C1 (Apply Factual Knowledge) with the frequency of 28.37%, B1 (Understand Factual Knowledge) with the frequency of 20.72% was the third common code in this course book.

The interesting point is that all these learning objectives occurred at Factual Knowledge level. No activity was found to occur at other levels of Knowledge Dimension i.e. Conceptual Knowledge, Procedural Knowledge, and Metacognitive Knowledge. However posing tasks or activities at the level of Metacognitive Knowledge seems very unlikely. Metacognitive knowledge has been defined as knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one’s own cognition. It deals with strategic knowledge, knowledge about cognitive tasks, including appropriate contextual and conditional knowledge and self-knowledge. The way a student answers a specific question or does a specific activity is an internal cognitive activity and might not have overt manifestation in the course book (Razmjoo & Kazempourfard, 2012).

The obtained result from this study suggests that the very low learning objectives (Remember, Understand, and Apply) have been paid all the attention in this course book and no heed was given to higher learning objectives (Analyze, Evaluate, and Create) at all. It might be due to the proficiency level of students, since these students are thought to be beginner learners of English in educational system in Iran. They are supposed to have no prior experience in learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, this low proficiency level prevents them from reaching higher level of learning objectives and they might only be able to do activities and tasks that require them simple acts of remembering and applying not complex acts of analyzing, evaluating or creating.
This result is in line with the results of Amin's (2004) study in which LOTS were found to be more frequent than HOTS in the General English course book taught in Shiraz University, and also Mosallanejad’s (2008) study whose result showed dominance of lower-order cognitive skills over higher order ones in Iranian senior high school and pre-university English course books. Gordani(2008) came to the same finding in his research and found that lower levels of cognitive skills were more dominant in guidance school English course books. This finding is also consistent with the study done by Jafari (2012) whose result revealed that only LOTS were attended to in three ESP course books taught to Iranian students of Engineering, Humanities, and Medicine and that HOTS were totally absent in these course books. Razmjoo and Kazempourfard (2012) analyzed Interchange series based on the learning objectives in BRT. The result of their study revealed that LOTS were more dominant than HOTS. Ghanbari (2014) also found that lower order thinking skills were more privileged than higher order skills in Topnotch course books.

4.3. Which levels of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy are more prevalent in English for Schools, Prospect 1?
The result of codification indicates that in the course book Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) were predominant and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) had no frequency at all. In English for Schools, Prospect 1 Remembering, Applying, and Understanding had the highest frequency respectively.

As it is shown in table 1, English for Schools, Prospect 1, consists of eight lessons. Each lesson consists of five parts: conversation, which usually contains a dialogue and two practices; sounds and letters, listening and reading, speaking and writing, and finally your conversation. This book begins with a welcome unit and includes four reviews, too. The book is also supplemented with a workbook which was used in the evaluation as well.

As it shown in table 2, in English for Schools, Prospect 1, there are three learning objectives. A1 (Remember Factual Knowledge) is the most prevalent objective with the frequency of 50.9. C1 (Apply Factual Knowledge) with the frequency of 28.37 is the second most frequent objective. B1 (Understand Factual knowledge) with the frequency of 20.72 is the third frequent objective. Other learning objectives have no frequencies.

As it shown in table 3, all the attention was paid to LOTS and no attention was paid to HOTS in this course book. Remembering, Understanding, and Applying were the main focus of this course book. HOTS were not included in this course book at all. A chi-square test was run to compare the distribution of six levels of RBT learning objectives in this course book.

As it was shown in table 4, the distribution of six levels of RBT in English for Schools, Prospect 1 was found to be significantly different (X² = 32.784, df =2, sig = .000) and these levels were distributed randomly and had no special pattern.

The results of this study revealed that only Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) which consist of Remembering, Understanding, and Applying were attended to in this course book and HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) which consist of Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating were totally absent in this course book.

Based on the findings of this study we can conclude that this course book mainly develop Lower Order Thinking Skills of the students and pay a lot of attention to linguistic structures and a little attention to communicative activities. The reason behind this may be the proficiency level of students. These students are supposed to be the beginner learners of English and have no previous experience in learning a foreign language. As such LOTS and Language-Focused Instruction had the highest frequencies in this course book.

5. Conclusion
This study aimed at investigating to what extent the contents and activities of the English for Schools, Prospect 1 are in line with the learning objectives designed in Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy. The study tried to show how the six levels of thinking (remembering, understanding, analyzing, evaluating and creating) were maintained in this course book. This study also aimed at specifying which elements of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy were more prevalent in these course books.

As it was said, course books are the basic elements in every language teaching program. They are usually considered as the main input for the learners after the teacher. Therefore, the results of this study showed that evaluating course books to see to what extent they represent instructional objectives and distribution of activities in terms of Bloom’s Taxonomy could be of paramount importance. This study also proved to be useful for teacher development and professional growth. As such, this study was significant in that it tried to investigate the distribution of different levels of thinking and the distributions of the activities based on Bloom’s Taxonomy in Prospect 1. In the first year of the junior secondary program, Iranian students are offered their first English course. Due to the fact that for most students this is their first experience with learning a foreign language, this study showed that much attention should be paid in setting the objectives and designing activities which offer higher
levels of thinking. Therefore, investigating the learning objectives and distribution of activities included in English for Schools, Prospect 1 seems worthwhile. The results of the study are of great interest to the authors of English for Schools, Prospect 1, materials developers, researchers, curriculum designers and teachers who are interested in improving the quality of the content of course books. The study also provided some recommendations for improving the quality of course books.

The obtained results from this study suggest that the very low learning objectives (Remembering, Understanding, and Applying) have been paid all the attention in this course book, and no heed was given to higher learning objectives (Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating) at all. It might be due to the proficiency level of students, since these students are thought to be beginner learners of English in educational system in Iran. They are supposed to have no prior experience in learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, this low proficiency level prevents them from reaching higher level of learning objectives and they might only be able to do activities and tasks that require simple acts of remembering and applying not complex acts of analyzing, evaluating or creating.

And finally, the result of codification indicated that in the course book Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) were predominant and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) had no frequency at all. In English for Schools, Prospect 1 Remembering, Applying, and Understanding had the highest frequency respectively.

REFERENCES
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND TEACHERS’ DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES IN EFL CLASSES

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ABSTRACT
One of the fundamental problems among educational systems of many countries is related to classroom discipline and students’ misbehavior which negatively affect academic performance of students. The important factor that influences behavior management in the classroom is the teachers’ level of emotional intelligence. The present study intended to investigate the discipline strategies that teachers mostly use in language classes and it also intends to see if there is relationship between discipline strategies and teachers’ level of emotional intelligence in EFL classes. For this purpose, 80 professors were chosen randomly from among 100 ones who were teaching English courses including pre-university English, General English and ESP. First, Romi’s (2009) questionnaire for classroom discipline strategies was given to teachers in order to consider the discipline strategies which are used by language teachers. Secondly, Bar-on Emotional Intelligent Inventory (1997) was given to teachers for the purpose of determining the level of their emotional intelligence. Finally, the degree of correlation between teachers’ level of emotional intelligence and the discipline strategies used by teachers was found. It became evident that the teachers’ discipline strategies in language classes based on their frequency of use included: discussion, recognition and reward, involvement, hinting, aggression and punishment. Also, significant relationship was found between teachers’ emotional intelligence and five strategies of classroom discipline (discussion, aggression, recognition or reward, involvement and hinting) and no significant relationship was found with one strategy (punishment) of classroom discipline. Therefore, considering emotional factors for behavior management in language classes seems to be really important and must be taken into account in academic settings.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, teachers’ discipline strategies, academic performance

Introduction
Building a successful classroom community takes effort, focus, planning, and a consistent and systematic approach to the process. It does not occur automatically in most classrooms. For example, one of the fundamental problems among educational systems of many countries is related to classroom discipline and students’ misbehavior. Not only does students’ misbehavior interrupt the learning process in classroom, it also prevents them from pursuing their studies. Classroom discipline management strategies play an effective role in building positive teacher-student relationships. According to Goleman (1995), Bar-On (1997) and Mayer et al. (1999), one of the factors that influence behavior management in the classroom is emotional intelligence. This is related to how teachers’ emotional intelligence may influence creating a discipline-based classroom environment for improving academic and emotional performance of students. This study intended to investigate teachers’ emotional intelligence and its effects on discipline strategies in EFL classes for the purpose of increasing emotional and academic performance of students. It is conjectured that teachers who have perceived themselves as being less emotionally intelligent might also perceived themselves as having low classroom discipline strategies and vice versa. Therefore, teachers may need assist in identifying their strengths and develop their emotional intelligence and classroom discipline strategies.
Classroom Discipline Strategies and Teachers Emotional Intelligence

Student misbehavior in schools continues to dominate as an educational issue in Western countries and in the developing world. Disciplinary problems have long been recognized as a major issue in schools (Edwards 2008). Classroom discipline management refers to control of time and behavior of students as well as of teachers in a classroom setting (Fredrick et al. 2000). It also refers to teachers' actions that contribute to achieving an optimal teaching and learning environment (Edwards & Watts, 2008). Classroom management includes establishing order (Emmer & Stough, 2001), building positive relationships with students (Burden, 2003), and acknowledges the relationship between good teaching practice and behavior management, through an active and engaging curriculum (Charles & Senter, 2008). There has been great focus from media and much concern from the public about students' misbehavior toward classmates and school teachers (Elam & Rose 1995). A considerable body of evidence demonstrates that student misbehavior impedes students' learning, achievement and development, and impacts on teacher wellbeing and stress in classroom settings (Cornell & Mayer, 2010; Hastings & Bham, 2003; Ormrod, 2003). Not only does students’ misbehavior interrupt the learning process in classroom, it also prevents them from pursuing their studies. Classroom culture, such as teacher and student relationship, is also affected by students’ misbehavior (Kronberg 1999). In numerous classes, it interferes with teaching, stifles learning, produces great stress, and leads to poor class morale. It upsets both teachers and students and ruins many classes. It causes more teachers to fail than does any other factor (Charles, 2008). Classroom discipline management strategies play an effective role in building positive teacher-student relationships. This in turn could improve students' academic achievement and their emotional and behavioral operations (Wang et al. 1993).

There are a minimum of three major points of view about classroom discipline, each supporting special tactics (Burden 2003; Lewis 1997; Wolfgang 1995). At first, some psychologists discuss that for encouraging responsibility in children, teachers should establish obvious expectations for their students’ behavior and then fairly use a range of rewards and encouragement for good behavior as well as punishments for misbehavior (Canter and Canter 2002; Swinson and Melling 1995). According to this point of view, children are viewed as being formed by the impacts received from the environment. Other researchers discuss that this objective can only be achieved by less stress on students’ obedience and teacher’s force, and more on the students’ self-regulation. The teacher has the responsibility to structure the classroom environment in order to ease the students and have control over their own behavior (Burden 2003). The third approach supports group participation and decision making, in which the group will be in charge to make sure about the suitability of the behavior for all its members (Edwards and Mullis 2003; Johnson and Johnson 2006). According to this point of view, the control of the students’ behavior is a shared responsibility for both the students and the teacher. Medium control teachers advocate the student oriented psychology which is manifested in the low control philosophy, but they also realize that learning occurs in a group environment (Burden 2003).

It is important to study how teachers promote classroom discipline and limit or reduce disruptive behavior of students. The methods used by teachers to control students’ behavior are referred to as discipline or behavior management (Charles 2008). Violence, aggression, defiance, and fighting are most of classroom disruptions teachers regularly face (Elam et al. 1996).

According to Goleman (1995), Bar-On (1997) and Mayer et al. (1999), one of the factors that influence behavior management in the classroom is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence in teachers could assist in creating a classroom environment for improving academic and emotional performance of students. Bar-On thought of emotional intelligence as representing a set of social and emotional abilities that help individuals cope with the demands of social life. Bar-On’s model of emotional intelligence relates to the potential for performance and success and is considered process-oriented than outcome-oriented (Bar-On, 2002). It focuses on an array of emotional and social abilities, including the ability to be aware of, understand, and express oneself, the ability to be aware of, understand, and relate to others, the ability to deal with strong emotions, and the ability to adapt to change and solve problems of a social and personal nature (Bar-On, 1997). Bar-On (2002) Hypothesize that those individuals with higher than average E.Q. are in general more successful in meeting environmental demands and pressures. He also noted that deficiency in emotional intelligence can mean a lack of success and the existence of emotional problems.

Weisinger (2004) stated emotional intelligence as the intelligent application of emotions, you deliberately force your feelings to work for you through applying them in order to help to guide your behavior and thought in the ways that promote your consequences. Emotional intelligence is the ability to motivate one-self and insist in the face of hopelessness; also emotional intelligence is twice as important as technical skills and more important than IQ for success at all levels (Goleman 1995). Goleman (1998) also stated that there are no perceptible gender
differences in emotional intelligence. However, some variations between men and women could be observed in certain aspects of emotional intelligence (Goleman 1998).

Singh (2006) believes that, emotional intelligence contributes towards an increased sense of creativity, promotes innovative thinking, reduces stress and improves relationships. It enables an individual to fulfill his/her desires at the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels and relate effectively with others. Psychologists point out that emotional intelligence differs from other types of intelligence, as emotions play a much greater role in thought and individual achievement than it is usually known (Sharp, 2001).

Quebbeman and Rozell (2002) stated that it seems there is a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and aggression in workplace. In this regard, it can be claimed that teachers’ emotional intelligence has a significant relationship to aggression as school can be considered a workplace for teachers. Some findings show that, there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and recognitions. Resnicow et al. (2004) suggest that, people who have high emotional intelligence their recognition in the different task were significantly correlated ($r = .54$).

Therefore, emotional intelligence levels of teachers are important in improving classroom discipline strategies and achieving positive work in relationship between teachers and students. In this study, the researchers used Bar-On (1997) theory of emotional intelligence. In this model, Bar-On outlines 5 components of Emotional intelligence: intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. Within these components are sub-components, represented in the following table. Bar-On posits that emotional intelligence develops over time and that it can be improved through training, programming, and therapy (Bar-On, 2002).

Vaidhyanathan (2010) states that the various elements of emotional intelligence like, self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill form the basic emotional and social competencies which are widely important in classroom environment. These should eliminate the emotion of fear. Self-awareness gives us self-confidence. Motivation guides us towards goals and removes frustrations to quicken the progress. Self-regulation facilitates in pursuing goals. Empathy makes us understand others feelings and cultivates rapport with a broad diversity of people. Social skills can be used to persuade others, negotiate and settle disputes, for cooperation and teamwork. Therefore, it is vivid and clear that emotional intelligence is the crucial factor in language settings.

**Table1: Bar-On’s Model of Emotional Intelligence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
<th>Self Regard</th>
<th>Emotional Self-Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Actualization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal Relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>Reality Testing</td>
<td>Flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress Management</td>
<td>Stress Tolerance</td>
<td>Impulse Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Mood Components</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>Happiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purpose of the study

Investigating the role of discipline strategies in academic settings has been an important aspect of research and education. Up to now, a few studies have focused on this issue. For example, Reupert (2011) investigated different discipline strategies that different teachers use in their classrooms and how these strategies can manage students’ misbehavior which can result in better academic achievements. Ramon, Shlomo, Yaacov, and Xing, (2008) also found out that some discipline strategies are useful and have positive impact on students’ attitudes toward their classroom work and their teacher.
Due to little research done on the relationship between emotional intelligence and discipline strategies, this study is intended to investigate the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and its relation to their discipline strategies. For this purpose, the following research questions are developed to process the issue:

1. What classroom discipline strategies teachers use based on their own perceptions?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' perceived emotional intelligence and their classroom discipline strategies?

Method

Participants

This study was conducted in Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch. The participants were 80 professors who were chosen randomly from among 100 professors teaching in this university. These professors were teaching English courses including pre-university English, General English and ESP. Because as Goleman (1998) stated there are no perceptible gender differences in emotional intelligence, gender differences were not taken into consideration in this study.

Instrumentation

This study made use of these instruments for data collection:

Bar-on: mixed model of emotional intelligence (EQ-i)

Reuven Bar-On's measure of emotional intelligence, the Bar-On Emotion Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), is a self-report measure of emotional intelligence for individuals sixteen years of age and over. It was developed as a measure of emotionally and socially competent behavior that provides an estimate of one's emotional and social intelligence. According to Dawda and Hart (2000), the Emotion Quotient Inventory doesn't measure personality traits or cognitive capacity, but rather measures one's ability to be successful in dealing with environmental demands and pressure. One hundred and thirty three items are used to obtain a Total EQ (Total Emotion Quotient) and to produce five composite scales corresponding to the 5 main components of the Bar-On model: Intrapersonal EQ, Interpersonal EQ, Adaptability EQ, Stress Management EQ, and General Mood EQ. Items are measured on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 (very seldom/not true of me) to 5 (very often/often true of me).

In this research study the revised version of Bar-on Emotion Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) was used in order to increase its face validity and reliability and correlation among items. For this end, the questioner was translated into Persian by Sina Research Center in Tehran. Then the correlation among items and also the correlation between every question and the total test score were calculated. The items which showed a low correlation with the total test score were eliminated or changed. In this way, this test was reduced to 90 questions. Then the reliability of test was estimated to be 0.88.

Classroom Discipline Strategies Based on Teachers’ Perceptions

In 2009, Shlomo Romi developed this questionnaire. The questionnaire for classroom discipline strategies for teachers’ perception comprised 25 items and six strategies. The strategies measured include punishment, reward or recognition, involvement in decision-making, hinting, discussion and aggression, all of which are based on teachers’ perceptions. This questionnaire is basically derived from Lewis et al. (2005) classroom discipline strategies focusing on student’s perceptions. The scale has a Cronbach alpha of .86.

Data Analysis and Results

Based on the guidelines provided by Bar-On (1998), EQ questionnaires were first scored. Analyzing data by means of the software SPSS revealed that 80% of respondents’ emotional intelligence scores were high and 20% reported to have moderate emotional intelligence score, while no respondent scored in the low level of emotional intelligence. Based on the five point scale used in this questionnaire, the mean score result for emotional intelligence was 5.78 implying that the level of emotional intelligence score was high.

By considering the questionnaire for classroom discipline strategies, it became evident that the strategy of discussion is the mostly used strategy in the classroom. The mean score for this strategy was high (M=15.63). The strategy of recognition and reward was the second strategy mostly used by teachers (M= 14.5). The third and fourth mostly used strategies after discussion and recognition were involvement and hinting. The mean score for the strategy of involvement was (M=14.25) and the mean score for the strategy of hinting was (M= 13.87). The last
two strategies, aggression and punishment, were the less frequent strategies used by teachers. The mean score for the strategy of aggression was \( M = 7.87 \) and the mean score for the strategy of punishment was \( M = 5.11 \) which were really low.

Table 1 displays the results of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between teachers’ emotional intelligence and their classroom discipline strategies. It was found that the relationship between emotional intelligence and teachers’ five classroom discipline strategies is significant at the level of \( p < 0.05 \). The findings of the study also revealed that there is a positive relationship between four strategies of teachers’ classroom discipline (discussion, recognition, involvement, hinting) and emotional intelligence at the significance level of \( p < 0.05 \). Emotional intelligence has also negative correlation with one of the classroom discipline strategies, aggression, at the significance level of \( p < 0.05 \). Moreover, the relationship between emotional intelligence and punishment strategy was not found to be significant. The magnitude of the correlation coefficients showed a range of \(-.236\) to \(.852\). The strongest, moderate and linear relationship was seen for discussion (\( r = .852 \)). The strength of the relationship is followed by recognition or reward (\( r = .702 \)), hinting (\( r = .654 \)), involvement (\( r = .550 \)). The relationship between classroom discipline strategies (aggression) and teachers’ emotional intelligence is negative (\( r = -.236 \)). For punishment, the relationship is low and not significant (\( r = -.081 \)).

**Table 1: the degree of correlation between teachers’ emotional intelligence and classroom discipline strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom discipline strategies</th>
<th>Emotional Intelligence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>( r = .852 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition and Reward</td>
<td>( r = .702 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinting</td>
<td>( r = .654 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>( r = .550 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>( r = -.236 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punishment</td>
<td>( r = -.081 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

The findings of this study revealed that there was significant relationship between teachers’ emotional intelligence and their classroom discipline strategies. Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation was used. Statistically significant relationships were found between the five strategies of classroom discipline and teachers’ emotional intelligence. Positive relationships were found between teachers’ emotional intelligence and discussion, recognition or reward, and hinting, followed by involvement, and negative relationships were established for aggression and no statistically significant relationship was established between punishment and teachers’ emotional intelligence. This is what actually seen in classrooms, especially in the universities. Discussion is the most efficient discipline strategy that teachers use in the classrooms. Our students can be easily affected by the influential speech of their teachers. The teachers respectful discussions cause them carefully listen to their teachers. Among discipline strategies, punishment seems not to be an effective strategy in the classrooms. But some researchers stated that punishment to a small extent is necessary for school. The SUHAKAM journal in Malaysian Education (2008) stated that majority of the teachers and administrators agreed that class teachers should be given the authority to cane students with serious disciplinary problems. However, Curwin and Mendler (1997) believed that teachers should punish students in private to allow students to maintain their dignity. In addition, McLeod et al. (2003) stated that the purpose of negative reinforcement or punishment is to change misbehaviors, and not to torture students. In actual settings also it can be seen that sometimes other discipline strategies do not work and punishment can be the most efficient discipline strategy because psychologically speaking, some students can only be positively affected by punishment rather than other strategies.

The findings of the current research agreed with the study done by Goleman (1998), who concluded that emotional intelligence significantly contributes to the teachers’ achievement and teachers’ behavior management. The findings of the current research also emphasizes the results of other studies; such as Goldman (1995), Bar-On (1997) and Mayer et al. (1999) when they stated that emotional intelligence is related to the ability in behavior management. They contended that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to improving behavior. This study is also in accord with Brownhill (2009) who found that high emotional intelligence scores indicate that the...
emotional intelligence skills are functioning efficiently in classroom and school environment; while low scores suggest a deficiency and lack of skills in meeting environmental demands (Bar-On 2004). On the role of emotional intelligence, the findings of this study were also found similar to the findings of Moriaty and Buckley (2003) who believed that it is possible to learn emotional intelligence techniques and improve emotional intelligence ability which will increase the chance of success in classroom. Furthermore, the results of this study are also supported by Singh (2006) who stated that emotional intelligence can help individuals to stimulate to discussion; Resnicow et al. (2004) who suggest that, people who have high emotional intelligence their recognition in the different task were significantly correlated (r = .54 and finally, Quebbeman and Rozell (2002) who showed that aggression is seen to have a significantly negative relationship with emotional intelligence.

Conclusion

English is considered as a foreign language in Iran and if we take the nature of English classes in EFL settings into account, it becomes evident that learning English language is really a demanding task in itself because learners only study English at school without having a chance to use it. Therefore, if other negative factors are not omitted from classroom environment, academic achievement can be changed into an unsolvable problem. Among negative factors, students’ misbehaviors are the most important ones. So, developing a better academic discipline strategies seem to be really demanding and important. Effective discipline strategies can only be achieved when teachers can know themselves and students better. For this purpose, they should enhance their own emotional competencies. Consequently, it seems to be natural that emotional factors can be of great help in academic contexts.

The findings of this research suggest several implications for Language Teaching Profession. If we believe that emotional intelligence is important in academic settings and if we believe that high emotional intelligence can result in better behavior management and better class control, there should be programs to raise the emotional intelligence of teachers.

Moreover, teachers are not only expected to increase their own emotional intelligence, they should try to enhance the emotional competencies of their learners, too. Material developers are required to include techniques which pay more attention to emotional factors. Some important techniques which can be used to increase not only the emotional intelligence of students but also the teachers include: discussion, giving opinions on different subjects, designing questionnaires and reading texts which motivate them to be familiar with themselves especially their emotional aspect.

In the present research the ethnic backgrounds of teachers and their age were not taken into consideration. A more detailed study is needed to explore the relationship between these variables and classroom discipline strategies and teachers emotional intelligence.

Moreover, further studies are needed to investigate the role of punishment, the least used discipline strategy in this research, in class in order to see if it is better to remove this strategy or keep it as an effective strategy.

REFERENCES


THE EFFECT OF PRE-WRITING ACTIVITIES ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' PARAGRAPH COHERENCE

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ABSTRACT
The present study has made an attempt to investigate the effect of pre-writing activities on Iranian EFL learners' paragraph coherence. For showing this effect, 60 out of 120 Iranian intermediate EFL learners from Kish Air institute of Tonekabon, Iran were selected after administering an Oxford Placement Test (OPT). Then they were divided into two groups of 30 and were randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group. A pretest of paragraph writing was administered to both groups, and then the experimental group received the treatments on pre-writing activities alternatively (discussions, outlining, teaching coherence techniques), and the control group received no treatment and approached the traditional way of teaching paragraph writing. A posttest of paragraph writing was then administered to both groups. The paragraphs were corrected by three experienced raters. The raters' scores were analyzed through SPSS by applying an independent sample t-test to indicate the posttests mean difference of both groups and the progress from pretest to posttest scores of both groups were determined by calculating two ANCOVAs. The results indicated that the Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group got higher coherence scores after being treated with pre-writing activities in 5 successive sessions.

Key Words: Writing skill, Process writing, Writing strategies, Pre-writing activities, Paragraph coherence

1. Introduction
Nowadays, there is an increasing awareness of the significance and the role of English writing skill in second and foreign language education. Writing is regarded as an integral part of English language learning. Since today English language has become an international language and a necessity all over the world, having writing skill is useful for human being to create a communication channel with other people. Despite the strong desire to write well in English quite a number of students still remain incompetent in English writing. Both students and teachers face certain problems in teaching and learning writing. They increasingly feel frustrated and complain about the quality of the learning outcome. The reason is that the learning of writing is considered the most complex skill for L2 learners to master. As many teachers of English have noted, acquiring the writing skill seems to be more laborious and demanding than acquiring the other language skills (Zheng, 1999). It is a well known fact that writing is not an ability or potential capacity or aptitude which is innately given to human beings; rather, it is considered a technology and a developmental capacity that can be nurtured in similar ways as other cognitive and psychomotor skills can be developed (Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996), so explicit instructions are required for learning this skill.

In the history of language teaching, there have been numerous approaches to the writing instruction. Traditionally, the writing classes focused on the final product of writing and the cognitive processes through which the writers construct their ideas and their texts were totally neglected. In other words, writing was viewed mainly as a tool for the practice and reinforcement of certain grammatical or lexical patterns, a rather one-dimensional activity in which accuracy was all important and content and self-expression were trivial. With the shift of attention from product to process in writing instruction, increasing attention has been focused on learners' creativity, content, and intrinsic motivation. Swales (1990, cited in Djujsik, 2008) states that the process approach emphasizes "the cognitive relationship between the writer and the writer's internal world". Writing in the process approach can thus be seen as a dynamic and unpredictable process (Tribble, 1990, cited in Tangerpromptoon, 2008) while writers try to reformulate their ideas and approximate the meaning of what they want to express in their work. During the writing process, teachers enable learners to explore their thoughts and develop their own writing through different stages, i.e., prewriting, writing and post-writing to reach their final products. Among the stages of the writing process, pre-writing has been the most important and influential stage. This initial step of the
writing process is defined as work done before the first draft that stimulates thinking about the topic and its various aspects and encourages connections between concepts and increased organization. The purpose of the present study is, therefore, to explore the effect of pre-writing activities on Iranian EFL learners' paragraph coherence. This research expands upon prior studies on the pre-writing stage and its different strategies and techniques to improve student's writing. But, unlike previous studies which have focused on the process approach, this study aims to integrate the process and product approaches to enable learners to produce their writing tasks more efficiently, since dependence only on process approach result in unbalanced L2 writing performance. Therefore, the aim of this study is to engage EFL learners in a kind of process-product approach to writing in which they will be presented with two activities done in process approach and one activity done in product approach in order to have a much better writing performance. Different strategies and techniques have evolved as pre-writing activities to improve learners' writing ability. But, this study has focused mainly on discussions and outlining as process-based activities and teaching coherence techniques as product-based activity.

1.2. Statement of the Problem
It is undeniable that we live in a global village and that English is a means of unifying, communicating and sharing ideas and information (Crystal, 1997). In spite of these facts, several studies have suggested that Iranian students have problems with writing in English. Although the interests and concerns about English education have been a priority in Iran, teaching writing has been neglected in English classrooms. Unfortunately, writing has turned to a Cinderella skill in current EFL classes since most of the attention is paid to speaking and listening activities (Morady & Malekzadeh, 2011) and writing has been only practiced as a wrap-up activity used to reinforce the learning of vocabulary and language structures at the sentence level. Apart from having problems with constructing linguistic structures, ESL learners also have difficulties in putting ideas together in their compositions. More often than not students feel that they need to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge when asked to write composition, so they place sole importance on "what to present" (the content), but overlook "how to present" (the overall organization). Therefore, it is likely that students who have this belief will always produce lengthy texts with a disorganized presentation of the content. However, according to Celce-Murcia (2001), the writing process necessary for being a successful writer in a second or foreign language is the ability to express ideas with reasonable coherence and accuracy.

1.3. Significance and Purpose of the Study
In spite of the fact that English writing skill has become an integral part of communication, many studies have suggested that Iranian students have problems with writing in English. One of these problems in writing arises from weakness in coherence, which is an area deserving great attention. According to Bamberg (1983) and Abushihab (2008), if writing lacks coherence, it will almost certainly fail to communicate its intended message to readers. Thus, helping students improve the coherence of their writing is a significant aspect of L2 writing instruction. The purpose of the present study is, therefore, to explore the effect of pre-writing activities on Iranian EFL learners' paragraph coherence. Having a good pre-writing activity is important to an English language lesson. Prewriting is a promising strategy for improving content and coherence in student writing (Schuyler, 2006). Therefore, the researcher has undertaken the present study because of the need for Iranian EFL students to be made aware of and to understand what coherence is and how they should achieve coherence in their paragraph writing in English. The present study contributes to the field of second language writing as it relates to writing strategies both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study adds much needed information to the body of literature relative to training of ESL prewriting strategies. Practically, the findings of this study may help administrators, lesson planners, and ESL teachers to make informed decisions in selecting writing strategies that can facilitate ESL students' writing process and a theoretically based training module to train their students. It may also help to inform ESL students of some successful pre-writing strategies that can enhance their paragraph coherence in writing.

1.4. Research Question of the Study
Based on the problem, the following research question is proposed:
RQ: Do pre-writing activities affect Iranian EFL learners' paragraph coherence?
1.5 Hypothesis of the Study
The above mentioned research question subsequently lead to the formulation of the related hypothesis:
H0: Pre-writing activities do not affect Iranian EFL learners’ paragraph coherence.

2. Review of the Related Literature
According to Dujsik (2008), pre-writing strategies are conscious thoughts, actions, or behaviors used by writers when they plan before writing. Research in second language writing suggests that specific writing strategies related to writing purposes, audience, brainstorming, and organizing ideas are teachable and have a potential to improve the quantity and quality of writing produced by English as second language (ESL) learners (Dujsik, 2008). Many researchers began urging that students to use various methods to explore a topic prior to writing a draft; making use of meditation, journals, analogies, brainstorming, clustering, grouping and free writing. (Barnett, 1989; Ashwell, 2000; Muncie, 2002; Davis, 2005; Crawford & Smolkowski, 2008 cited in Zaid, 2011). Along with the aforementioned pre-writing activities, speaking, reading, concept mapping, using graphic organizers, drawing pictures and so on are widely used as pre-writing activities. Literature reports on the benefits of applying these pre-writing strategies in process writing classroom. Zaid (2011) states that pre-writing techniques make students feel more responsible for the production of ideas for their essays. He believes that by teaching pre-writing strategies, students are able to recognize where to begin brainstorming for new ideas for the suggested topics, collecting data for their essays, and organizing this data in usable schemes for their outlines; as such, they can recognize what ideas to include and what to exclude, and whether they are on the right track without digressing from what the teacher requires, or not. According to Mahnam and Nejadansari (2012) focusing on alternative inclusion of relevant texts, concept map, and negotiation of topics has significant effect on the Iranian EFL students’ overall writing achievement. As reported by Hofer et al. (1998, cited in Mahnam and Nejadansari, 2012) organizational strategies, such as outlining content or relating concepts within content, are among the cognitive learning strategies that individuals use to write better. One explanation might be that, as Barnhardt (1997) stated, there is a relationship between strategy use and improvement in language learning. For students who had long have difficulties in writing a foreign language, a positive change in learning due to their success in the application of the prewriting strategies might be the initial step toward improved essay writing. It meant that when the students had a better idea of how to go about a writing task, they were more positive about the task. In other words, pre-writing strategies helped students attend to writing tasks, and control their learning more effectively (Mahnam and Nejadansari, 2012).

As the pre-writing stage is usually executed in advance of the drafting stage, ESL writers, particularly inexperienced or less experienced writers, may benefit from reducing the information-processing burden of mental resources, which in turn allowing them to focus their attention on other competing demands such as rhetorical features, text organization, text coherence, and etc. (Ojima, 2006; Skehan, 1996; Yuan, 2001, cited in Dujsik, 2008).

Mokhtari, Norris, and Reichard (1998, cited in Schuyler, 2006) conducted a study with third graders to determine if drawing pictures before writing narratives would improve their compositions. They found that the students who drew before composing “tended to produce more words, more sentences, and more idea units, and their overall writing performance was higher” than those who did not draw before composing12. Therefore, the pre-writing stage is one of the most essential writing processes because it affects all of the writing stages. According to Schuyler (2006) prewriting is defined as work done before the first draft that stimulates thinking about the topic and its various aspects and encourages connections between concepts and increased organization. In other words, pre-writing is a promising strategy for improving content and coherence in student writing.

3. Methodology
3.1. Design
The current study followed a quasi-experimental design applying pretest-treatment-posttest format to achieve the set goal of the study. In order to conduct this study, 60 out of 120 intermediate students were selected as the participants of the study through Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The test was intended to homogenize the research population. Then, the selected participants were divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. Both groups were asked to write one paragraph of about 150 words as their pretests in order to help the researcher to identify their current level of writing. On the treatment stage, the experimental group received pre-writing activities as their treatment for 5 sessions. The control group, on the other hand, did not receive any treatment on pre-writing activities. Instead, they took the traditional writing instruction. After 5 sessions, both the
experimental group and the control group took a posttest to measure the effects of the treatment. They were given a topic which was used in the pretest. The paragraphs were scored by three experienced raters.

3.2. Participants
For the purpose of this research study, 120 participants were selected. They were studying English at the intermediate level in Kish Air institute of Tonekabon, Iran. All of the participants were female with the age range of 16 to 30. In order to determine their level of English proficiency, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered. Having calculated the mean and the standard deviation, 60 participants with the scores of 1 SD below the mean score were selected to conduct the study. The reason behind it was that those students who were weak on the writing, especially paragraph writing, could be the representatives of the weak trainees. The selected participants were then randomly assigned into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. Each group was equal and contained 30 students.

3.3. Materials
- Oxford placement Test (OPT)
To homogenize the proficiency level of the participants, an Oxford Placement Test was administered to 120 female language learners.
- The material for the pretest and the posttest of the study
In order to find the participants' current level of paragraph writing, especially paragraph coherence, a pretest of writing was conducted prior to the course. Both the experimental group and the control group were asked to write a paragraph of about 150 words on a topic which was selected from the book "Paragraph Development" edited by Arnaudet & Barrett (1990).

3.4. Procedure
To achieve the objectives of this study the following procedure were adopted. First of all, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to 120 female language learners of Kish Air Institute of Tonekabon to make sure of the homogeneity of the participants. Having calculated the mean and the standard deviation, 60 participants with the score of 1 SD below the mean were selected to conduct the study, since only those students who were weak on the writing could be the representative of the weak trainees. Next, the selected participants were randomly divided into two groups; the control group and the experimental group. Each group was equal and comprised 15 participants.

In the next step, in order to find the participants' current level of paragraph writing, a pretest was administered to both the experimental group and the control group. On this test, the participants were asked to write a paragraph of about 150 words on a specific topic which was selected from the book "Paragraph Development" edited by Arnaudet & Barrett (1990). After the pretest, the treatment stage began. This stage took 5 sessions. During 5 sessions of treatment, the groups had different procedures. The experimental group was treated via the determined pre-writing activities (discussions, outlining, teaching coherence techniques) in each session. To start, in the first session, the participants were provided with handout that included an instruction to paragraph writing; paragraph structure, its characteristics, paragraph coherence and techniques to achieve it, outlining, and examples of outlining, coherent and incoherent paragraphs. They were taught how to outline before writing and how to achieve coherence. Then, students practiced paragraph writing using these strategies and techniques. In the next sessions, as a starting point, the researcher introduced a topic and wrote it on the board. Then, the researcher asked students' viewpoints and invited them to discuss the topic. Some of the students had problems in comprehending and speaking English in the classroom, so the researcher tried to encourage them to take part in class discussions. While students were talking, the researcher wrote their ideas on the board in keywords. Then the researcher discussed how their ideas could be outlined and sequenced into sentences, and sentences within paragraphs. After outlining, the students were taught how to use techniques and strategies presented in the handout to achieve coherence. The control group, on the other hand, received no treatment on pre-writing activities during the treatment period. They started writing about the given topic each 5 session without any treatment. After 5 sessions of treatment, both the
experimental group and the control group took a posttest of paragraph writing ability. The posttest of the study consisted of the test used in the pretest of the study.

4. Data Analysis
To measure the level of coherence, the participants' pretest and posttest were rated following a 5-point holistic coherence scoring scale developed by Abeywickrama (2007). This rating scale was designed based on criteria that have been found significant in previous studies in assessing coherence (Abeywickrama, 2007). The scales ranged from 0-4 with 0 being No evidence of the ability, with 4 being Complete evidence of the ability. To avoid scoring bias, inter-rater reliability was applied for scoring the participants' writing. All 120 paragraphs (60 paragraphs for pretests, and 60 paragraphs for posttests), were scored by three experienced writing instructors. The mean of these scores was taken as the coherence score of the text and was used in the data analysis.

4.1. Descriptive analysis of the data
This section concentrates on the descriptive analysis of the obtained data of this research. Such analysis was done applying SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software. Table (1) indicates the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of the experimental group of this study:

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of the data of the experimental group of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE EXP</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.3747</td>
<td>0.31062</td>
<td>0.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POS EXP</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.0083</td>
<td>0.29689</td>
<td>0.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(listwise)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (1) illustrates, the total number of participants (N) was 30 in the pretest and posttest of the experimental group. The minimum score for the pretest was 1.00 but while this value was 1.66 for the posttest. The maximum score for the pretest of the experimental group was 2.00 and for the posttest, 2.66. The mean score for the pretest and posttest of the experimental group has been shown as 1.3747 and 2.0083 respectively. The standard deviation has been calculated as 0.31062 for the pretest and 0.29689 for the posttest. As it is shown, there seems to be more variability among the pretest scores than the scores in the posttest. This may present that the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (treating with pre-writing activities). The variance for the pretest scores was 0.096 but for the posttest scores, 0.088. The valid N has been shown as 30 which refer to the number of non-missing values of the experimental group; that is, all the participants in the experimental group participated in the experiment.

By the same token, the descriptive analysis of the pretest and the posttest of the control group has been shown in table (2):

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of the data of the control group of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE CON</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.3857</td>
<td>0.31480</td>
<td>0.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POS CON</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.3963</td>
<td>0.25199</td>
<td>0.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(listwise)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (2) shows, the total number of participants (N) has been 30 in the pretest and posttest of the control group. The minimum score for the pretest and posttest of the control group was 1.00 and the maximum score for the pretest and posttest of the control group was 2.00. The mean score for the pretest of the control group was indicate...
to be 1.3857 but for the posttest was shown to be 1.3963. The standard deviation has been calculated as 0.31480 for the pretest scores and 0.25199 for the posttest scores. The variance for the pretest and posttest scores was 0.099 but for the posttest scores, 0.063. The valid N has been shown as 30 which referred to the number of non-missing values of the control group; that is, all the participants in the control group participated in the experiment.

4.2. Inferential Analysis of the Data
This section focuses on the inferential analysis of the obtained data of this study. This analysis was done through applying SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software from which the "Independent Sample t-test" and also the "Analysis of Covariance" (ANCOVA) were calculated and indicated in tables (3), (4), and (5) respectively. Table (3) illustrates the inferential statistics which contains the calculation of the t-test between the posttest scores of the experimental and the control groups of the study.

Table 3. The t-test results of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-Test result</th>
<th>Observed t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between the posttest scores of the experimental &amp; the control group (Equal variances not assume)</td>
<td>8.608</td>
<td>56.507</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.61200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is evident in table (3), the observed t value was calculated to be 8.608 ($t_{obs}=8.608$) and the degree of freedom was 56.507 (df = 56.507). The level of significance (Sig. 2-tailed) was calculated as to be 0.000. The mean difference (that is, the difference between the mean scores of the posttests of the control group and the experimental group of this study) was calculated as 0.61200.

Table 4. The covariance table for the pretest and the posttest scores of the experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected model</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>7.155</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2.828</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.828</td>
<td>38.888</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp * Pretest</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>7.1550</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>2.036</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>123.558</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>2.556</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be seen in table (4), the covariance value between the two sets of pretest and posttest scores in the experimental group was 7.155 ($\text{ Cov}_{\text{PRE POST EXP}={7.155}}$) and the level of significance was 0.012 (p=0.012). This table reveals that the progress in experimental group has occurred while table (3) indicated that the control group has not any progress.

Table 5. The covariance table for the pretest and the posttest scores of the control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected model</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>0.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2.116</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.116</td>
<td>30.402</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con* Pretest</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>0.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>1.949</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59.565</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>1.991</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As it is presented in table (5), the covariance value between the two sets of pretest and posttest scores in the control group was 0.600 (\text{COV}_\text{PRE POS CON} = 0.600) and the level of significance was 0.445. According to the table (4) and the table (5), the degree of statistical distance between the pretest and posttest scores in the experimental group was greater than the control group which is representative of the closeness of the scores in the pretest and posttest scores of the control group. Consequently, it can be concluded that the control group of the study has no significant change or progress as a result of being treated without teaching pre-writing activities.

5. Results
According to the collected findings, the hypothesis as "Pre-writing activities do not affect Iranian EFL learners' paragraph coherence" was rejected.

The results of the t-test of the study (see table 3) revealed that the observed t value calculated by the SPSS software was 8.608 while the critical t determined on the basis of considering df (56.507) and based upon the significance level of 0.05 was 2.021. Thus, the observed t value was higher than the critical t value and led to reject of null hypothesis of the study.

The rejection of the hypothesis of the study could be supported by showing the experimental group participants' progress from the pretest to the posttest. According to table (4), the covariance value between the pretest and the posttest scores of the experimental group was 7.155. As it was evident, this value was greater than 1. It means that the closeness of the scores of the experimental group was low. On the other hand, the sig. (2-tailed) value for this group was 0.012. This value was less than 0.05. Because of these two reasons, it could be concluded that there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and the posttest scores of the experimental group and caused the posttest scores to stand higher. In other words, the experimental group of the current study has undergone a significant change by being treated with pre-writing activities.

6. Discussion
As it was demonstrated, the findings of the current study indicated that teaching pre-writing activities could result in a better performance of language learners in a test of paragraph coherence. These findings seemed to be consistent with the findings of many studies which reported on the benefits of applying the pre-writing strategies in process writing classroom. Several studies suggested that the pre-writing stage is one of the most essential writing processes since it has significant effect on the participants' writing achievement. Schuyler (2006), for instance, found that prewriting is a valuable tool for improving student writing. According to her prewriting is a promising strategy for improving content and coherence in student writing. The results of her research showed some improvement in posttest scores after prewriting instruction, with the most significant increase for students with the lowest scores.

In the research conducted by Schwartz et al. (1994), it has been demonstrated that among the stages of the writing process, growing attention has been focused on pre-writing stage, i.e., what students do before writing a draft, and on the discovery of what to say – often called “invention writing”, which "increases a student's ability to do intellectual work". In addition, many researchers in second language writing stressed that specific writing strategies related to writing purposes, audience, brainstorming, and organizing ideas are teachable and have a potential to improve the quantity and quality of writing produced by English as second language (ESL) learners (Dujsik, 2008).

The findings of this study is also compatible with the findings of the research made by Mahnam and Nejadansari (2012) which revealed that students wrote better compositions as a result of applying pre-writing strategies. According to them, students maximized their learning by using concept mapping, reading relevant text, and negotiation of the topic in their essay writing; hence they felt more independent and felt more responsibility for their own learning.

Moreover, this study similarly exhibits results parallel to the one conducted by Hofer et al. (1998), which reported that organizational strategies, such as outlining content or relating concepts within content, are among the cognitive learning strategies that individuals use to write better.

By the same token, Zaid (2011) in his study which investigated the effect of web-based pre-writing activities on students' writing performance and their writing apprehension revealed that new pre-writing techniques have made the students feel more responsible for the production of ideas for their essays. Such results demonstrate that by teaching these pre-writing strategies, students are able to recognize where to begin brainstorming for new ideas for the suggested topics, collecting data for their essays, and organizing this data in usable schemes for their outlines; as such, they can recognize what ideas to include and what to exclude, and whether they are on the right track without digressing from what the teacher requires, or not.
7. Suggestions for further Research
Based on the major findings of the present study, the researcher recommends the following beneficial suggestions for further research.

First, this study was conducted in an English institute, so the future researchers can conduct the current study in other situations such as universities, schools, and so on. Second, in terms of writing strategies, this study was limited to the three pre-writing activities. It will be fruitful for future research to conduct studies about the effect of different pre-writing activities on the development of students' organizational skills in writing. Third, due to the time constraints and restrictions in conducting the research in an institution it was not possible to have more sessions for treatment. Future researchers can carry out this research in more than 5 sessions to get a better result. Fourth, it would be wise to include several levels of L2 proficiency in future research. This study was restricted to only intermediate EFL learners. Fifth, the participants of the current study were all female language learners. It is recommended that further studies to conduct this study by selecting male subjects.

8. Conclusion
The present study aimed to investigate the effect of pre-writing activities on Iranian EFL learners' paragraph coherence. It was found that learners in the experimental group got higher coherence scores after being treated with pre-writing activities. Unfortunately, in an EFL situation like Iran tackling EFL writing is still one of the most challenging areas for teachers and students. Writing has been only practiced as a wrap-up activity used to reinforce the learning of vocabulary and language structures at the sentence level but it has been neglected beyond the sentence level, so many EFL learners have difficulties in putting ideas together in their compositions. As reported by Enkvist (1990), the majority of ESL students feel that the only tool they can use in writing English essays is grammar and this causes them to have difficulty in making their writing coherent. Given the situation, it is important that the students be taught alternative strategies to improve coherence in their writing. Focus on coherence can shift students' attention from sentence-level grammar to discourse features such as textual structuring and unity, which are crucial to creating meaning in texts. It is hoped that the results of this study would increase the sensitivity of the involved administrators and language teachers to the needs and concerns of Iranian students studying English language.

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THE EFFECT OF SELF-REGULATED STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT (SRSD) ON ACADEMIC WRITING SKILL OF EFL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
The present study examined the effect of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD), an instructional model to teach writing, on academic writing performance of EFL undergraduate learners. To achieve this goal, 30 advanced EFL writers received a two-months self-regulatory strategy development instruction on academic (persuasive) writing with specific focus on POW+TREE and STOP&DARE strategies. As instruments, two timed-writing Essays (Two 45-minute essays) as the pre-test and post-test of the current study were utilized to collect data. The analyzing of pretest and posttest scores on different measures showed that SRSD instructional model resulted in improved academic writing performance of EFL undergraduate learners.

Keywords: Self-regulated Strategy, Academic Writing, EFL

1. Introduction
Perhaps our most important quality as humans is our capability to self-regulate. It has provided us with an adaptive edge that enabled our ancestors to survive and even flourish when changing conditions led other species to extinction. Our regulatory skill or lack thereof is the source of our perception of personal agency that lies at the core of our sense of self. Understanding how this capability develops, its various subcomponents, and its functions has been a major thrust of social cognitive theory and research. Of equal importance is the explanation for common dysfunctions in self-regulatory functioning, such as biased self-monitoring, self-blaming judgments, and defensive self-reactions. This chapter will define self-regulation and will discuss the structure of self-regulatory systems, social and physical environmental context influences on self-regulation, dysfunctions in self-regulation, and self-regulatory development.

A social cognitive perspective is distinctive in viewing self-regulation as an interaction of personal, behavioral, and environmental triadic processes (Bandura, 1986). More specifically, it entails not only behavioral skill in self-managing environmental contingencies, but also the knowledge and the sense of personal agency to enact this skill in relevant contexts. Self-regulation refers to self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals. This definition, in terms of actions and covert processes whose presence and quality depends on one’s beliefs and motives, differs from definitions emphasizing a singular trait, ability, or stage of competence. A process definition can explain why a person may self-regulate one type of performance but not another. This personal agency formulation also differs from meta-cognitive views of self-regulation that emphasize only knowledge states and deductive reasoning when, for example, choosing cognitive strategies. Although meta-cognition plays an important role, self-regulation also depends on self-beliefs and affective reactions, such as doubts and fears, about specific performance contexts (Zimmerman, 1995). Aspiring chess players may try to emulate a well known defense strategy but often abandon it when their confidence falters during a competitive match. Contextually related self-processes, such as perceived efficacy, have been shown to be well suited to explaining variations in personal motivation to self-regulate one’s performance (Bandura, 1997; Pajares & Miller, 1994; Zimmerman, 1995). Self-efficacy refers to beliefs about one’s capabilities to organize and implement actions necessary to attain designated performance of skill for specific tasks. (Boekaerts, Pintrich & Zeidner, 2000)

Self-regulation is described as cyclical because the feedback from prior performance is used to make adjustments during current efforts. Such adjustments are necessary because personal, behavioral, and environmental factors are
constantly changing during the course of learning and performance, and must be observed or monitored using three self-oriented feedback loops. Behavioral self-regulation involves self-observing and strategically adjusting performance processes, such as one’s method of learning, whereas environmental self-regulation refers to observing and adjusting environmental conditions or outcomes. Covert self-regulation involves monitoring and adjusting cognitive and affective states, such as imagery for remembering or relaxing. The accuracy and constancy of learners’ self-monitoring of these triadic sources of self-control directly influence the effectiveness of their strategic adjustments and the nature of their self-beliefs. These triadic feedback loops are assumed to be open. Unlike closed-loop views, which limit self-regulation to reducing performance discrepancies reactively against an unchanging standard (Locke, 1991), open-loop perspectives include proactively increasing performance discrepancies by raising goals and seeking more challenging tasks. For example, when chess players decide to move up to a new level of competition, they make success more difficult to achieve but use the outcome discrepancies as a way to motivate themselves to attain higher levels of skill. Thus, self-regulation involves triadic processes that are proactively as well as reactively adapted for the attainment of personal goals. (Boekaerts, Pintrich & Zeidner, 2000)

The majority of SRSD studies (e.g., De La Paz, 2005; Graham & Harris, 2005; Graham & Perin, 2007; Mason & Cramer, 2008) have investigated the effectiveness of this strategy with the students that have learning disabilities or low-achieving adolescent students struggling with writing. A few studies on SRSD have also been conducted with students in the elementary grades, middle schools and high schools (Lane, Harris, Graham, Weisenbach, Brindle, & Morphy 2008). Thus, the results from investigating a strategy-based instruction such as SRSD in an advanced English writing course can shed some light on helping L2 learners write more effectively, given that strategies for developing writing skills, such as generating ideas, monitoring or evaluating one’s text are seldom mentioned in their textbooks. The above issue motivated the present researchers to explore a process-oriented strategy-based instruction (i.e., SRSD) with regard to the persuasive writing among Iranian undergraduate students who study English as a foreign language (EFL) (Roohani & Amini Baghbadorani, 2012). Therefore the purpose of this study is to investigate the following question:

1. Does using SRSD significantly contribute to academic writing skill development of EFL undergraduate learners?
   a) Does POW strategy increases the academic writing performance?
   b) Does STOP&DARE strategy increases the academic writing performance?

2. Methodology

The design of this study was a quasi-experimental design in which the purpose was to compare the two intact groups of participants. The main objective of this research was to examine the effect of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) on academic writing skill of EFL undergraduate students. Therefore, a pretest of academic writing and a posttest of academic writing were used and administered to achieve the purpose of the study. In the following sections the details of participants, data collection and data analysis have been elaborated.

2.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 30 Iranian EFL undergraduates who enrolled in an advanced English writing course at English institute in Sanandaj, Iran. Their age range was from 20 to 25. The participants divided into two comparison groups, each comprising 15 students. All the participants, who were taught by the same instructor, were at advanced level of language proficiency according to the placement test administered by the institute. According to Mackey and Gass (2005) they have been chosen as intact classes. Having learned English as a foreign language for about six years in high school and pre-university school, the participants were able to write English sentences, therefore, they could attend the advanced English writing course which provides practice in academic (persuasive) writing among other types of writing.

2.2. Instruments

In this study to gather the data, the researcher has used two timed-writing Essays (Two 45-minute essays) as the pretest and posttest of the current study. The timed-writing essays included two topics which did not require the students to have any special background knowledge on the topics.

2.3. Procedure...
This study was a quasi-experimental design and two classes of undergraduate EFL students (n = 30) who enrolled in an advanced English writing course were investigated. First, they were asked to take a timed essay serving as the pretest; topic of writing for the pretest essay was: What if there were mixed classrooms for boys and girls? Would that be more suitable for education or not? Then, the first group received POW+TREE writing strategy (self-regulated strategy-based instruction) while the second group received STOP&DARE writing strategy (self-regulated strategy-based instruction) instruction. Instructions in both groups were given in eight weeks (Two months), for two hours each week, by the same teacher. The both group received the instruction about the spelling, mechanics of writing, grammar and the characteristics of writing, such as, structural features of persuasive essays (according to both strategies). The participants of both groups were asked to write essays, which were corrected by the teacher. Then, they received feedback from teachers on features such the organization of paragraphs in their essays, sentence grammar, word spelling, and punctuation, so the writing course in the both comparison groups was process-oriented. According Graham and Harris (2005) and (Santangelo, Harris & Graham, 2008), the SRSD instruction of the study included six stages, i.e., Develop Background Knowledge, Discuss Strategy, Model It, Memorize It, Support It, and Independent Performance, which allowed the students to learn a writing strategy.

For the first group of participants the structure of planning strategy included three steps, represented by the mnemonic POW: Pick my ideas, Organize my notes, and Write and say more. The participants in the first group were taught to use POW to write persuasive essays. As a means of helping the participants to pass the second step of POW (organizing notes), they were also taught a genre-specific strategy that helped them to produce ideas for each of the basic parts of a persuasive writing. This strategy, illustrated by the mnemonic TREE reminded the students to do the following: Tell what they believe (state their Topic Sentence), Provide three or more reasons (Why do they believe this?), End it (wrap it up right), and Examine (look closely at all parts of their writing). During Developing Background Knowledge stage, POW was only reviewed, and the instruction focused on the characteristics and parts of persuasive essays (i.e., TREE). For the second stage of instruction, Discuss It, the students were first assessed to determine if they remembered what POW and the essay part reminder mnemonic stood for. They practiced to search different parts in essays as the instructor read out a persuasive essay loud, but this time they used a graphic organizer which they wrote notes for each part of the essay. Up to here, self-monitoring and graphing were introduced. Then the instructor introduced the idea of goal setting, indicating that students’ goal in writing persuasive essays was to include all parts, as well as to be sure that each was completely worked. During the third stage of instruction, Model It, they were shown how to apply POW and the persuasive essay part reminder. In the fourth stage of instruction, Memorize It, they memorized the steps, the mnemonic, and their self-statements. The next stage, Support It, started with a collaborative writing experience. The instructor and students determine a goal to include all factors in their persuasive essay and began planning and writing persuasive essays together using POW, the persuasive essay part reminder, the graphic organizer, and their self-instructions. This time, they ran the process, and the instructor provided support when needed. They were asked to read their persuasive essays to each other and discuss how the strategies help them write better. Scaffolding included instructor or peer support in carrying out the strategies. Students came to the final stage, Independent Performance, in which each student could use POW and the persuasive essay part reminder to write a persuasive essay without receiving help from the instructor or peers.

Similarly, the second group of participants received the full instruction based on STOP&DARE strategy. During the first stage, students stopped and waited before doing any writing and delayed forming an opinion in order to consider both sides fully and brainstorm the pros and cons of the topic. The students used a STOP planning sheet to assist with generating and recording ideas for and against the writing topic. During the second step, students determined which side of the topic to support on the basis of which was the strongest: in a persuasive writing essay, the goal is to write a paper to persuade the reader to agree with the students. Students reviewed the STOP planning sheet to assist in judging which side of the issue was the strongest. During the third step, students identified which ideas to use to support their side of the issue as well as at least one opposing argument to discredit. Here the students put a star next to the ideas and opposing argument they planned to use in the persuasive writing essay. Then students placed them in logical order by assigning a number to each. During the fourth step, students continued to plan the persuasive writing while adding and editing the text. After this step, teacher presented the DARE steps: During the first step students determined whether they are pro or con. Students wrote a topic sentence stating their opinions, and this was the main argument of the essay. During the second step, students included the supporting ideas, i.e., the writer’s reasons for the main argument or premise of the paper. Students also included examples that elaborated upon their reasons. During the third step, students wrote counterarguments and distinguished why the premise of the persuasive essay or paper was sound.
During the fourth step, students wrote a conclusion restating the premise or side the writer took or summarizing the writer’s position. After this step, teacher asked students to practice the strategy stating what were the purpose and process of the strategy as well as described each step. Next teacher led the students in a rapid oral recitation practicing the steps to assist the students in memorizing them. Finally, Teacher asked the students to memorize the strategy that reminded them to work on learning it throughout the day/week.

The teacher as instructor of strategy made students work with partners or members of small groups quizzing each other and responding chorally to himself and also made them use STOP&DARE flashcards individually, with a partner, or in small groups. Additionally, teacher provided opportunities for students to perform the STOP and DARE strategy independently while providing help if needed as well as immediate feedback and assisted students in generalizing the use of STOP&DARE by first leading a discussion with the students to identify and plan to use the strategy in other settings.

Afterwards, after giving the instructions completely, the both comparison groups participated in the posttests taking a timed essay; the topic of the posttest essay was: Should people who download music and movies illegally be punished? For measuring the quality of the participants’ writing performance in the pretests and posttests, an analytic scoring rubric developed by Hyland (2003) was used. The scale includes format and content (40 marks), organization and coherence (20 marks), and sentence construction and vocabulary (40 marks). To increase the dependability of the data and guarantee the inter-rater reliability, both pretest and the posttest essays were graded by two raters.

2.4. Data Analysis
Regarding the pretest-posttest design of study, in order to answer the research questions of the study, two paired samples T-tests (first and second RQs) and two one-way ANCOVAs (third and fourth RQs) were run as statistical tools for data analysis. According to Larson-Hall (2010, p. 357), “such a technique is useful when you assume that there is some external factor, such as pre-test which will affect how your students will perform on the response variable”. To increase the inter-rater reliability of the essay ratings, an independent rater's blind ratings were also taken into account. Therefore, the final score for each participant was the mean score obtained by the ratings of the researcher himself and the other independent rater.

3. Result and Discussion
The present study sought to investigate the effect of self-regulated strategy development on academic writing skill of EFL undergraduate students. Simply, the present study was an attempt to empirically examine the potential of the above-mentioned implementations of SRSD for academic writing, which formed the foundation of the research question. In this chapter, findings of different statistical tests employed in the study have been shown in details one after another. First, the information regarding the descriptive statistics of the variables and the normality of the data distribution is presented. Then the results used to answer the research question are presented. First of all, before addressing the research question, the normality of distribution for the scores was checked. In order to check this normality assumption, one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was conducted on both pre-test and post-test scores for writing and self-efficacy tests. As the below Table indicates, the results of one-sample K-S test showed that the data was normally distributed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Parameters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Extreme Differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The present study sought to investigate the effect of self-regulated strategy development on academic writing skill of EFL undergraduate students. Simply, the present study was an attempt to empirically examine the potential of the above-mentioned implementations of SRSD for academic writing, which formed the foundation of the research question. In this chapter, findings of different statistical tests employed in the study have been shown in details one after another. First, the information regarding the descriptive statistics of the variables and the normality of the data distribution is presented. Then the results used to answer the research question are presented.

Mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum of students scores of the first group (POW+TREE) on each of the variables are presented in Table 2. The mean score of the posttest of academic writing indicates that the participants’ level of academic writing (Mean = 56.6) were higher than their levels of academic writing before interventions, as it is shown in the Table the mean score of pretest of academic writing (Mean = 33.0) is lower. Also, as the Table indicates the minimum score of pretest of academic writing was (Min = 25.0) and the minimum score of posttest of academic writing was (Min = 48.0).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the First Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prewriting</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>45.00</td>
<td>33.0333</td>
<td>5.66779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postwriting</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>56.6333</td>
<td>6.09586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum of students scores of the second group (STOP&DARE) on each of the variables are presented in Table 3. The mean of the posttest of academic writing indicates that the participants’ level of academic writing (Mean = 66.3) was higher than their levels of academic writing before interventions, as it is shown in the Table the mean of pretest of academic writing (Mean = 46.2) is lower. Moreover, as the Table shows the minimum score of pretest of academic writing was (Min = 29.5) and the minimum score of posttest of academic writing was (Min = 40.0).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Second Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prewriting</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29.50</td>
<td>61.00</td>
<td>46.2667</td>
<td>9.35580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postwriting</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>66.3667</td>
<td>10.89637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. Addressing Research Questions

1(a). The research question addressed the effectiveness of POW+TREE self-regulated strategy in the writing course in improving the writing performance of Iranian EFL students, to answer this question according to Table 4 and Table 5, a paired-samples T-test was conducted for the pre-test and post-test scores of the first group (who received POW+TREE instruction), this analysis aimed to evaluate the impact of POW+TREE on scores on the writing post-
test. The result showed that there was a statistically significant increase in POW group scores from pretest (M = 33.03, SD = 5.6) to posttest (M = 56.46, SD = 6.09), t(14) = -29.47, p < .05 (two-tailed).

Table 4. Paired Samples Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair 1</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prewriting</td>
<td>33.0333</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.66779</td>
<td>1.46342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postwriting</td>
<td>56.6333</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.09586</td>
<td>1.57394</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. group = POW

Table 5. Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prewriting - postwriting</td>
<td>-23.60000</td>
<td>3.10069</td>
<td>-29.478</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. group = POW

1(b). This part of the first research question addressed the effectiveness of STOP&DARE self-regulated strategy in the writing course in improving the writing performance of Iranian EFL student, to answer this question according to Table 6 and Table 7, another paired-samples T-test was conducted for the pre-test and post-test scores of the STOP&DARE group, this analysis aimed to evaluate the impact of STOP&DARE on timed-writing essays as post-test. The result of data analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant increase in STOP&DARE scores from pretest (M = 46.26, SD = 9.35) to posttest (M = 66.36, SD = 10.89), t(14) = -10.94 , p < .05 (two-tailed).

Table 6. Paired Samples Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair 1</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prewriting</td>
<td>46.2667</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.35580</td>
<td>2.41566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postwriting</td>
<td>66.3667</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.89637</td>
<td>2.81343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. group = Stop&Dare

Table 7. Paired Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prewriting - postwriting</td>
<td>-20.10000</td>
<td>7.11437</td>
<td>-10.942</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. group = Stop&Dare

According to data analysis of this study, both groups improved in terms of academic writing performance after their particular intervention. Further investigation of the both groups’ mean scores on the writing performance on the posttest also proved that first group got the higher scores on the posttest indicating that the POW+TREE strategy was an effective procedure in increasing the writing performance and level of writing self-efficacy of the participants, similarly, the second group got the better scores on the posttest showing that the STOP&DARE strategy was an effective procedure in increasing the writing performance. Therefore, this result again supported the findings of research done by Hacker et al. (2015) which states that “The self-regulated strategy
development students scored significantly higher than students in the control school (non self-regulated instruction)".

4. Conclusion
As the title of this study reads, the current research was an attempt to investigate the effect of Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) on academic writing skill of EFL undergraduate students. The results of this study as explained in previous chapter indicated that the SRSD implementations are useful and effective ways of improving academic writing students. It is hoped that future researchers in the field of ELT pay more attention to the possible links between this interesting construct of SRSD and different foreign language related variables (Listening, reading and speaking). Sufficient attention and value given to SRSD in foreign language teaching and learning will definitely clean many stained windows of English language teaching and learning.

EFL students academically digest persuasive writing as a fundamental social interaction skill and a tool for analytical thinking (Newell, Beach, Smith & Van Der Heide, 2011). Moreover, recent psychology of education focuses on intrinsic motivation and the development of autonomous learning in the process of teaching (Lesgold & Welch-Ross, 2012). Instructions in writing essay courses spontaneously should improve students’ learning desire by strengthening them and increasing their ability to perform effectively in writing. This study examined process-oriented strategy-based (SRSD) instructions by two EFL students group. Results indicated that even advanced-level students, who were making academic progress, benefited from explicit teacher directed instructions. By employing the SRSD, the EFL student writers had a better performance on academic essays, because they were able to set a goal to work quickly when writing and better control and manage the writing process.

Based on longitudinal study of Ning and Downing (2010), students’ self-regulation foresees their subsequent motivation. Aksan, in his study (2009) also recognized that debility in self-regulation further skills causes lower motivation and impedes learning. Paris and Oka (1986) point out that student should know various kinds do of efficient strategies for the learning and the essential success and those who are efficacious and motivated for learning then strategies will become more successful.

Moreover the results of the research of Perry, N. E., Hutchinson, L., & Thauberger, C. (2008), represent that applying reinforcing exercises and tasks which increase the self-regulation learning have a significant effect on the development of elementary students’ academic function. The meta-analysis, which was done by comparing the results of forty-eight studies in the field of the effect of self-regulation learning on students, represents that the program of teaching self-regulation is efficient for students’ success. (Dignath, Buettner, & Langfeldt 2008).

Beside the results stated earlier, the findings of the present study have several pedagogical implications for foreign language writing pedagogy. The researcher used the SRSD model of instruction to teach academic writing to the advanced EFL students without any specific problem in that, the six stages of the model are so clearly stated that even inexperienced teachers can work based on them. Additionally, the SRSD model can be implemented in the foreign language writing curriculum to feed learners general and specific strategies to help them self-regulate the writing process. Another point is that, the route found in this study can be effectively implemented by writing teachers to support and scaffold the writing processes that struggling and less proficient writers have to pass.

To make the results of this study clear, it can be claimed that self-regulated learners are more active participants in the process of learning. In order to achieve their learning purposes, these students employ various learning strategies (setting goal, taking side,…) and eagerly manage their own progress. Self-regulated learners are persistent on their attempts for learning and change their strategies if necessary, in order to learn better. These students start the learning process by determining their goals, then choose the appropriate side and continually control their own plan in order to write their thoughts. Students who employ self-regulation strategies more, tend to make the information meaningful or make a logical association with the previous information (background knowledge) and also control this process and making a suitable learning environment in order to learn the skill and develop their own academic efficiency.

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TEACHER STRATEGIES IN IMPROVING SPEAKING ABILITY FOR EFL LEARNERS IN IRAN (COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO ENGLISH INSTITUTES)

Gohar Darvishi
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ABSTRACT
The present study aimed to investigate teacher strategies in improving speaking ability for EFL learners in Iran (comparison between two English institutes). This study followed a qualitative non-parametric design. The main question this study tried to answer were whether any relationship between teacher strategies and improving speaking ability among Iranian intermediate learners of English at institutes level. To answer the questions, 60 Iranian EFL learners participated in the experiment of the study. They were randomly selected via administering an OPT among 120 learners with at least one standard deviation below and above mean in both English institutes. They were then divided into two groups of 30 and were randomly. A strategy questionnaire with 30 yes-no items designed and distributed to the learners. A posttest of speaking (oral interview) was then administered to both groups. The data of the study were analysed using the postest to indicate the groups mean difference, and the degree of progress from the posttest of the study was indicated by calculating. The results indicated that the Iranian EFL learners in institute 1 received higher scores in comparison of teacher strategies in improving speaking ability.

Key Words: Teacher, strategy, speaking, ability, cognition

Introduction
As the knowledge of second language acquisition increased during the 1970s, teachers and researchers concluded that no single method of language teaching and research findings would mark the start of universal success in teaching a second language (Brown, 2007). It was realized that certain learners seemed to be successful regardless of methods or teaching techniques. And second section refers to the significance of the study that in this regard, language instructors need to incorporate language learning strategies into their teaching methods and approaches, train the students to apply the appropriate strategy for a specific purpose or a specific skill area, and encourage them to use the strategies as frequently as possible. Students can learn to use language learning strategies to improve their language skills. The third section refers the statement of the problem that explain as O’Malley and Chamot (1990, p.1) define learning strategies as “special language learners are continuously looking for ways of applying strategies to deal with situations in which they face new input and tasks proposed by their instructors. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning which is comprised of producing and receiving information. Among the four language skills speaking is viewed to be at the heart of second language learning. The second session of this chapter refers to research strategy and hypotheses that hypotheses is There is no relationship between teacher strategies and improving speaking ability among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners at Institute level. And forth section of this chapter refers to the research question of the study that is there any relationship between teacher strategies and improving speaking ability among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners at Institute level? And fifth section refers to the Hypotheses of the study that is H0: There is no relationship between teacher strategies and improving speaking ability among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners. And sixth section of the study refers the definitions of key terms included in the title of the study will be defined in simple and clear term.

Theoritica framework
Many of the primary studies on language learning strategies were intended at defining the language learner who are successful in learning a language. As the knowledge of second language acquisition increased during the 1970s, teachers and researchers concluded that no single method of language teaching and research findings would mark the start of universal success in teaching a second language (Brown, 2007). It was realized that certain learners seemed to be successful regardless of methods or teaching techniques. “Certain people appeared to be endowed with abilities to succeed; others lacked those abilities. Observations and research studies led researchers (Rubin, 1975) to describe successful language learners in terms of personal characteristics, styles, and strategies. They Learn different styles of speech and writing and learn to vary their language regarding the formality of the situation. While the results of the studies on defining the good language learner (are not based on empirical findings, they create characteristics of good language learners as students who are actively involved in language learning and are able to solve problems regarding their own learning. These studies provide a basis for our understanding of what good language learners do to acquire the target language. Once the strategies of successful language learners are identified, these strategies can be taught to less successful learners. It has been consistently reported (Wenden and Rubin, 1987) that all language learners report or have been observed using some type of strategies in learning a foreign or second language. However, they insist that successful language learners have reported to use wider range of learning strategies. On the contrary, the methods and criteria of determining a excellent language learner is unclear and under question. Although it is easy to classify a language learner as a good one, if she/he has developed the four basic skills and can use them successfully, it remains difficult to determine whether someone who has only learned one or two of these skills is also a good language learner. Speed of acquisition, learner’s previous exposure to English, learner’s goal, and student’s level of proficiency should be taken into account in determining the successful language learner. However, being aware of the characteristics, techniques, and strategies of a good language learner facilitate students’ language learning and help them enhance learning efficiency.

Statement of the problem
As O’Malley and Chamot (1990, p.1), describe learning strategies as "special language learners are constantly seeming for manners of concerning strategies to deal with situations in which they expression new input and tasks proposed by their instructors. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning which is included of producing and receiving information. The problem in teaching a foreign language or a second language is to position the students to use the language. Indeed, it is a demanding task for language teachers to provide sufficient inputs for students to be able speakers of English. Among the four language skills speaking is viewed to be at the heart of second language learning. A common comment dealt with among English Language Learners in Turkish context is that they can understand what they read and write despite the possibility of making mistakes in writing and understanding the texts incorrectly; yet, they criticize about not being capable of transferring their feelings, and ideas through oral language. As Brown (2000) states successful oral communication in the target language with other speakers serves as a display of successful language acquisition. This statement brings forth the significance of developing speaking skill, indicating competent language learners. Thus, the need to develop students’ speaking skills has been intriguing researchers’ interest. Researchers have shifted their focus from teaching to learning. Change in favor of learning and learner placed a considerable importance on learner-centered approach rather than the teacher-centered one. In conjunction with the increasing popularity of learner-centered approach, a number of studies were conducted with the view of detecting the traits of good language learners, which can be exemplified with the good quality Language Learner. Concentrating upon the attributes of good language learners, that good quality language learners are competent at making accurate guesses, and possess strong attempts to make use of the chances for communication. Some Scholars expand the features shared by good language learners via adding the features of finding their own way, being creative, making their own opportunities for practice, (O’Malley & Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990), Rubin (1987) are also among the researchers conducting research to bring out the characteristics of good language learners. The features of language learners who are good touched upon in the preceding lines draw the attention to language learning strategies in that these features cater for progression in language learning process. Language learning strategies, as one of the important criteria in language learning, have received an increasing thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, amount of attention not only in terms of their definition (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990; Rubin, 1987; Stern, 1992; Wenden& Rubin, 1987), but also in terms of the factors affecting language learning strategies, Riazi&Khodadadi, 2007; Rahimi, Riazi & Seif, 2005). Applied research on language learning strategies investigates effective language learning strategies in order to pave the way for the learners to learn as well as for the teachers to teach them how to apply those strategies by scrutinizing good language learners’ behaviors (O’Malley & Chamot,
1990). To this end, this research will intend, first, to develop a speaking strategy model which is one key aspect of LLS for EFL learners, and second, to investigate the comparison between Student of two English students regarding their use of speaking strategies as well as differences due to their proficiency levels. In this research that conducted to find out whether learning strategies can affect language learners speaking ability and to investigate the plausible relationship between learners use of learning strategies and improvement in their speaking proficiency within the framework two English institutes. For this research, researcher considered 60 students from two institutions that each institution 30 students. For check their awareness of the strategies, researcher designed a questionnaire.

Research question of the study
Based on the problem and the related literature explained above, the current study tried to answer the following question:
Is there any relationship between teacher strategies and improving speaking ability among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners at Institute level?

Hypothesis of the study
In keeping with the above research question, the following null hypothesis, accordingly, was formulated:
H0: There is no relationship between teacher strategies and improving speaking ability among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners.

Review of the literature
In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a numeral of studies were conducted to verify whether contact to and communicative interaction in the L2 facilitates learners to reach L2 speaking usefulness that focus to fluency and accuracy in language production. Research outcomes show that, without explicit and form-focused instruction, extensive exposure to meaning-based input does not lead to the developmental of syntactic and lexical accuracy in an L2. Recently, in the teaching of the four skills, curriculum and instruction endeavor to achieve a balance between the linguistic and the schematic features of learner language development. presently, practically all teacher education textbooks on the vitals of language instruction comprise material on how to address both bottom-up and top-down abilities.

Students progress their formal speech when teachers offer insights on how to organize their ideas for presentation. Students can give better speeches when they can classify their presentation in a variety of different ways, with sequentially, chronologically and thematically. They need apply in organizing their speech around problems and solutions, causes and results, and similarities and differences. After deciding about the best means of organization, they can practice speeches in a systematic way. Teachers can also help students adapt their speeches and informal talks so as to correspond to the intended audience, the information to be communicated, and the circumstances of the occasion at which they will speak. The teachers can illustrate how well-known speakers have adapted their presentations in ways to suit these different circumstances. Teachers can enable learners to present ideas to individual peers, peer groups and entire classes of students. They can learn to speak on a subject of their own choosing or on teacher assigned topics. Preparing for debates and participating in them help students to see both sides of various issues. Students also benefit from interviewing others and from participation in dramatic presentations. Students may enjoy speaking about their personal experiences. When given this opportunity, they can benefit from instruction in the elements of good story-telling. Both teachers and students can provide suggestions for students’ speeches. In constructively criticizing others, learners can learn to apply criteria for good speech and employ tactful social skills. In doing so, they can increase and improve their own speaking skills. Students can also learn speaking and social skills by suggesting possible improvements to one another’s practice speeches. Productive experiences in speaking can lead to greater skills and confidence in speaking in front of bigger groups.

Learners require to know how speakers vary from one another and how particular circumstances call for different forms of speech. They can learn how speaking styles influence listeners. Thus, the rate at which they speak, the volume and the precision of pronunciation may differ substantially from one situation to another. It is useful for students to know that speech should differ in formality, such as when speaking to a judge, a teacher, a parent or a playmate. They may also benefit from learning about the differences among various dialects. The subjects in the curriculum and examples from the media may offer occasions for different forms of speech. Oral presentations can be derived from poems, stories, newspaper and magazine articles, as well as scientific reports. Dramatic acting and watching skits and plays may provide the richest opportunity to see how character and conditions influence speech.
Acknowledgment of the vital roles of the teacher and the learner and of the need for situationally shared language pedagogy has brought about the decreasing of methods, with their specific philosophies and recommend situates of classroom procedures. As early as the mid-1980s, a small figure of researchers and methodologists began to say rising hesitation about the universal applicability of any particular method to the massive diversity of learners and learning needs. Since that time, many L2 experts have come to observe specific teaching methods as excessively prescriptive and inapplicable in divergent learning contexts (e.g., Brown, 2001). For example, although communicative skills can take possession of a high precedence for ESL students who need to interact in their L2, for EFL learners, communicating in English may have a reduced value relative to preparing for entrance exams or tests for securing employment. The past two decades have seen a change in the responsibility for curricular and 1 The 25th centenary issues of TESOL Quarterly returned the general trend of treating the basically language skills separately. A wide indication such as this one may well represent an innovation in itself to show the maturation of L2 teaching as a discipline as well the influential expansion of integrated instructional models (discussed in the section Integrated and Multiple Skills Taught in Context). Instructional decisions from the prevailing teaching methods to classroom teachers and learners, who are best suited to implement appropriate, relevant, and efficient instruction (e.g., Breen & Littlejohn, 2000). for instance, Larsen-Freeman (2000) proposes that teachers practice “principled eclecticism” and make their own teaching methods “by merger aspects of others in a principled manner” (p. 183). The centrality of key learner variables, such as learning needs and goals, as well as cognitive processing and resources has been widely recognized in research and pedagogy (e.g., see Bialystok, 2002). Investigations into the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts of L2 learning have offered much awareness into populations of learners and their specific learning goals. While some may need to speak and write in L2 academic and professional settings, others set out to develop L2 conversational or reading skills for different purposes. Such fundamental factors as who given L2 learners are, why and where these individuals undertake to learn an L2, and what their available resources are (e.g., time, cognitive, financial) should and often do determine how particular L2 skills are taught and learned (e.g., Breen, 2001; Breen & Littlejohn, 2000).

Learning Strategies
As observed previous, L2 learning strategies are specific behaviors or thought processes that students use to improve their own L2 learning. The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word strategy, which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war. The warlike meaning of strategies has fortunately fallen away, but the control and goal directedness remain in the modern version of the word (Oxford, 1990). A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is basically neutral until the context of its use is systematically considered.

Definitions of Language Learning Strategies
There has been an rising interest toward language learning and language learners since 1970s with the manifestation of cognitive revolution, and since then great attention has been paid to language learning strategies. The pattern shifted from behaviorism to cognitive science in psychology and education. Research led to efforts to explain the cognitive processes in all aspects of learning, including language learning. Initial studies of language learning focused on describing externally observable behaviors of language learners, followed by efforts to label strategic behaviors and crucially to categorize those strategic behaviors and link them to language proficiency.

Classifications of Language Learning Strategies
Research on language learning strategies started at the 1970s. For the most part, the improvement in cognitive psychology had a great cause on the research studies on language learning strategies (Williams and Burden, 1997). In most of the research studies done on language learning strategies, identifying what good learners do to learn a second or foreign language has been the main issue. In 1971 Rubin conducted a study in which the main focus was on the strategies of successful language learners. In her study she argues that, once identified, such strategies could be offered to less successful learners. Rubin (1975) classifies learning strategies according to processes which contribute either directly or indirectly to language learning. It is believed (Wenden, 1986) that reading and discussing the strategies of good language learners is a constructive preliminary activity which can help students to get aware of the concept of learner’s strategies. Learning strategies that language learners employ in the process of learning a new language have been identified and described by the researchers. Consequently, these strategies have been classified by many professional experts in the area of language learning (Oxford, 1990; Bialystok, 1981; O’Malley, 1985; Willing, 1988; Stern, 1992; Ellis, 1994). This progress not only helped categorize strategies and link them to a variety of cognitive processing phases during language learning, but also assisted in creating instructional frameworks. Nonetheless, most of these attempts to categorize language learning strategies reflect
relatively the same categorizations of language learning strategies without any fundamental changes. They developed their own taxonomies of strategies according to their research findings by applying different methods of data collection. For that reason, it might not be appropriate to compare them and assess their influence on teaching and learning process. But, studying them possibly will help both language teachers and language learners to understand language learning strategies and different methods which are engaged in strategy use. In what follows, taxonomies of language learning strategies will be demonstrated:

O’Malley’s (1985) Classifications of Language Learning Strategies


Meta cognitive Strategies

O’Malley et al. (1985) state that meta cognitive is an expression to point to an executive function, strategies which engage planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, observing of one’s production or comprehension, correcting your own mistakes, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Based on O’Malley’s classification, advance organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, functional planning, self-monitoring, delayed production, and self-evaluation are included among the major meta cognitive strategies.

Cognitive Strategies

It has been stated (Brown, 2007) that “Cognitive strategies are more bounded to particular learning tasks and they engage more direct manipulation of the learning material itself” (p.134). Repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, and inferencing are among the most important cognitive strategies.

Socio affective Strategies

Socio affective strategies have close link with social-mediating activity and interacting with others. The major socio affective strategies include cooperation and question for clarification (Brown, 2007).

Rubin’s (1987) Classification of Language Learning Strategies

Rubin, who assigned a great deal of effort in the field of language learning strategies, made a distinction between strategies contributing directly to learning and those contributing indirectly to learning.

Oxford’s (1990) classification of Language Learning Strategies

By referring to the literature, it seems that the most inclusive taxonomy of language learning strategies is provided by Oxford’s (1990). Oxford divided language learning strategies into two main categories, direct and indirect strategies which are also subdivided into six classes. Direct strategies, which involve the new language directly, are divided into Memory, cognitive and compensation strategies. As Oxford’s (1990) says, “all direct strategies require mental processing of the language” (p.37). Memory strategies entail the mental processes for storing new information in the memory and for retrieving them when needed. These strategies consist of four sets that include: A. Creating mental linkages, B. Applying images and sounds, C. Reviewing well, and D. Employing action. Cognitive strategies entail conscious ways of handling the target language and fall into four sets which include: A. Practicing, B. Receiving and sending messages, C. Analyzing and reasoning, and D. Creating structure for input and output. Compensation strategies enable learners to use the language either in speaking or writing despite knowledge gaps. These strategies are divided into two sets: A. Guessing intelligently and B. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing. According to Oxford’s (1990), compensation strategies are employed by learners when facing a temporary breakdown in speaking or writing. Indirect strategies include metacognitive, affective and social strategies. Indirect strategies provide indirect support for language learning by employing different strategies such as focusing, arranging, evaluating, seeking opportunities, and lowering anxiety Oxford’s (1990). Metacognitive strategies enable learners to control their own cognition. They are strategies which entail overviewing and linking with material already known, paying attention, delaying speech production, organizing, setting goals and objectives, planning for a language task, looking for practice opportunities, self-monitoring and self evaluating. Affective strategies assist students to manage their emotions, motivation, and attitudes associated with learning. They can be achieved through lowering anxiety, encouraging oneself, and taking emotional temperature.
Stern's (1992) Classification of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies have been classified into five groups by Stern's (1992). They are as follows: Management and Planning Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, Communicative - Experiential Strategies, Interpersonal Strategies, Affective Strategies.

Management and Planning Strategies

These strategies are actually connected with the learner's purpose to control his own learning. A learner has the capability to take responsibility for the improvement of his own planning when the language instructor supports him only as an adviser or a resource person. In other words the learner must:
1. Decide what dedications to make to language learning, 2. Set reasonable objectives, 3. Decide on a suitable methodology, select proper resources, monitor progress, and 4. Evaluate his success based on previously determined objectives and expectations.

Cognitive Strategies

These strategies refer to procedures and activities which learners apply to improve their ability to learn or remember the materials, and solve the problems, especially those actions which learners use with specific classroom tasks. According to Stern (1992) the cognitive strategies include, Clarification / Verification, Guessing / Inductive Inferencing, Deductive Reasoning, Practice, Memorization.

Communicative - Experiential Strategies

Communication strategies, such as gesturing, paraphrasing, or asking for repetition and justification are methods employed by learners to keep the conversation going. In other words, communication strategies involve the use of verbal or nonverbal instruments for the useful transfer of knowledge. The reason is to stay away from interrupting the course of communication.

Interpersonal Strategies

According to Stern (1992), interpersonal strategies examine the learners' progress and evaluate their performance. Learners need to have communication with native speakers and cooperate with them. Learners need to get familiar with the culture of the target language.

Affective Strategies

Evidently, in the progression of language learning, good language learners employ a range of of affective strategies. Sometimes, it can be frustrating to learn another language. It can arouse feeling of unfamiliarity and confusion. In some other cases, learners might not have a positive perspective towards native speakers. On the other hand, good language learners are relatively aware of these emotions, and they try to build positive feelings towards the foreign language and its speakers as well as the learning activities. To a great deal, training can be of assistance to the students to face these controversial feelings and to overcome them by drawing attention to the potential frustrations or mentioning them as they come up (Stern, 1992).

METHODOLOGY

The Design of the Study

This research evaluate a model of describing teachers strategies for improving speaking ability EFL learners in Iran. In this research, Ofoooghynoor Institute and Darefkonoon Institute were chosen from Rahimabad City through convenient sampling. The summary of the method is illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 3.1. Summary of method
Participants or (subject)
This study followed a qualitative non-parametric design. 60 Iranian EFL Learners were selected via administering an OPT among 120 student with at least one standard deviation below and above the mean in a both English institutes. A strategies questionnaire with 30 yes-no items designed and distributed to the students as well as 10 institute teachers. The analysis of the questionnaire will indicate the strategies used in the participant institutes and the student speaking score (post test of speaking) indicated which group strategies had led to a better performance in improving the speaking ability.

Materials
The materials used in the current study were of three sorts: the OPT material for pre-intermediate placement test, the material for making a speaking strategy questionnaire, and finally, the material for the posttest of the study. The OPT used in this study consisted of several sections including fill gaps with the word, vocabulary, grammar and sentence recognition. For each section, the participants were asked to answer the questions in the specified answer sheet. The answers were then collected and scored by the researcher. The material for the posttest of the study consisted of questions for oral interview.

Procedures
The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of the participants’ proficiency was a pre-intermediate placement test. Hence, the participants had to answer the questions in specified answer sheets. The time allowed was 60 minutes as had been determined in the OPT. The speaking strategy questionnaire included 30 yes-no items for both groups for comparison. During that the participants were asked to specify the which strategy used by teachers during their class. Finally, the posttest of speaking consisted of questions for oral interview.
Methods of Analyzing Data
The researcher used Chi-Square for analyzing speaking strategy questionnaire and Pearson Correlation used for data analysis of posttest of speaking the study.

Data analysis and findings
This section referred to descriptive analysis of post test of speaking between learners of two groups. Then indicated to correlations of speaking t between learners of two groups, Test Statistics of speaking strategy questionnaire with 30 yes-no items for both groups, descriptive Statistics of administering speaking Strategy questionnaire for intermediate level and inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes).

Descriptive Analysis of the Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking SB</td>
<td>13.900</td>
<td>2.05695</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking SA</td>
<td>16.200</td>
<td>1.90100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As resulting of administering speaking test for intermediate level in two institutes with 60 participants, every institute with 30 participants. Speaking SB participants in Darelphonoon Institute with mean 13.9000 and Speaking SA refers to participants in NoorlMahdi institute with mean 16.2000. this obtained result show that speaking A is more successful than Speaking B. Mean of speaking A (participants in OfoghyNoor institute were 16/2, And mean of speaking B (participants in Darelphonoon) were 13/9.

Mean of speaking A (participants in OfoghyNoor institute were 16/2, And mean of speaking B (participants in Darelphonoon) were 13/9. On the base of obtained result. Learners of institutes A (Ofoghhay nor) were successful than learners in institutes B (Darelfonoon).

Table 4.1.2. Correlations of speaking t between learners of two groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Speaking SB</th>
<th>Speaking SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig(2- tailed)</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.2. result of administered speaking test for intermediate level in two institutes with 60 participants, every institute with 30 participants. Speaking SB participants in Darelphonoon Institute with Pearson Correlation 1 and Speaking SA refers to participants in NoorlMahdi institute with Pearson Correlation 0.109, the level of significance was calculated as to be .005 which has been used in interpreting the data for the rejection or support of the hypothesis of the study. This obtained result show that speaking A is more successful than Speaking B.

Table 4.1.3. Test Statistics of speaking strategy questionnaire with 30 yes-no items for both groups
As indicated table 4.1.3, this table showed the resulting of 30 items about teachers strategies in improving speaking ability for EFL learners estimated with Chi-square, presented Df and Asymp.sg.

**Inferential Analysis of the Data**

The below tables shown the analyzed data for speaking strategy questionnaire that estimated by Chi square. Q in each table refer to question.

### Table 4.1.5. Inferential Analysis of Data of Institute Student View on Teachers Strategies in Improving Speaking Ability (Comparison Between Two Institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.5, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer to with observed N 46 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 16.0 and 14 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -16.0.so resulted that this items appropriated as to student of this study.

### Table 4.1.6. Inferential Analysis of Data of Institute Student View on Teachers Strategies in Improving Speaking Ability (Comparison Between Two Institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.6, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer to with observed N 38 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 8.0 and 22 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -8.0.so resulted that this items appropriated as to student of this study.

### Table 4.1.7. Inferential Analysis of Data of Institute Student View on Teachers Strategies in Improving Speaking Ability (Comparison Between Two Institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As indicated in Table 4.1.7, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 52 items with expected N 30.0 and residual -22 and 8 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -22 so resulted that this items appropriated as to student of this study.

### Table 4.1.8: Inferential Analysis of Data of Institute Student View on Teachers Strategies in Improving Speaking Ability (Comparison between Two Institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>-18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.1.8, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 48 items with expected N 30.0 and residual -18 and 12 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -18 so resulted that this items appropriated as to student of this study.

### Table 4.1.9: Inferential Analysis of Data of Institute Student View on Teachers Strategies in Improving Speaking Ability (Comparison between Two Institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Observed</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>-5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.1.9, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 35 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 5.0 and 25 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -5 so resulted that this items appropriated as to student of this study.

### Table 4.1.10: Inferential Analysis of Data of Institute Student View on Teachers Strategies in Improving Speaking Ability (Comparison between Two Institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>-9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.1.10, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 39 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 9.0 and 21 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -9 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

### Table 4.1.11: Inferential Analysis of Data of Institute Student View on Teachers Strategies in Improving Speaking Ability (Comparison between Two Institutes)
As indicated in table 4.1.11, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 51 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 21.0 and 9 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -21.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.12. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y  Yes</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N  No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.12, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 55 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 25.0 and 5 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -25.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.13. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y  Yes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N  No</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.13, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 60 items with expected N 60.0 and no residual and items with no negative answered with expected N and no residual so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.14. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y  Yes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N  No</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.14, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 60 items with expected N 60.0 and no residual and items with no negative answered with expected N and no residual so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.
Table 4.1.15. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>60a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.15, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes- no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 60 items with expected N 60.0 and residual 0 and 60a items with negative answered with no expected N and no residual so resulted that these items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.16. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.16, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes- no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 59 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 29.0 and 1 items with negative answered with no expected N and no residual so resulted that these items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.17. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.17, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes- no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 36 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 6.0 and 24 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -6 so resulted that these items appropriated as to students of this study.
improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.19, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 13 items with expected N 30.0 and residual -17.0 and 47 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -17 so resulted that this items not appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.20. inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.20, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 52 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 22.0 and 8 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -22 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.21. inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.21, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 43 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 13.0 and 17 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -13 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.22. inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.22, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 44 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 14.0 and 16 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -14 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.23. inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)
Improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y  Yes</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N  No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.1.23, with a total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability, the students who participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positively with observed N 45 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 15.0, and 15 items with negative answers with expected N 30.0 and residual -15.0, so it resulted that these items were appropriate as to the students of this study.

Table 4.1.24. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y  Yes</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N  No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.1.24, with a total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability, the students who participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positively with observed N 59 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 29.0, and 1 item with negative answers with expected N 30.0 and residual -29.0, so it resulted that these items were appropriate as to the students of this study.

Table 4.1.25. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y  Yes</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N  No</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.1.25, with a total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability, the students who participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positively with observed N 24 items with expected N 30.0 and residual -6.0, and 36 items with negative answers with expected N 30.0 and residual 6.0, so it resulted that these items were not appropriate as to the students of this study.

Table 4.1.26. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y  Yes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N  No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.1.26, with a total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability, the students who participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positively with observed N 44 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 24.0, and 15 items with negative answers with expected N 30.0 and residual -5.0, so it resulted that these items were appropriate as to the students of this study.
Table 4.1.27. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.27, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 44 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 26.0 and 14 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -16.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.28. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.28, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 50 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 20.0 and 10 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -20.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.29. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.29, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 52 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 22.0 and 8 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -22.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.30. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.30, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 58 items with
expected N 30.0 and residual -28.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.31. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.31, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 38 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 8.0 and 22 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -8.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.32. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.32, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 33 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 3.0 and 27 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -3.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.33. Inferential analysis of data of Institute student view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.33, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 44 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 14.0 and 16 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -14.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.

Table 4.1.34. Inferential analysis of data of Institute learner’s view on teachers strategies in improving speaking ability (comparison between two institutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y Yes</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 4.1.34, with total of 60 items about teacher strategies in improving speaking ability the student that participated received 60 yes-no response items that responded positive answer with observed N 56 items with expected N 30.0 and residual 26.0 and 4 items with negative answered with expected N 30.0 and residual -26.0 so resulted that this items appropriated as to students of this study.
Discussion
General Discussion

On the base of obtained score from administering of speaking test the researcher can say the teacher strategies that applied in the class were helpful. Because those teachers used of these strategies given in questionnaire their learners got high score in Group A than Group B. thus, teachers play most important role in improving speaking ability. In this regard, language instructors need to integrate language learning strategies into their teaching methods and approaches, teach the students to use the appropriate strategy for a specific purpose or a specific skill area, and encourage them to use the strategies as regularly as possible. Students can learn to use language learning strategies to improve their language skills.

Language teachers, as the instructors of LLS, should be aware of their indispensible role in the learning process. The teacher can learn what language learning strategies students already appear to be using, observing their behavior in class. , by conducting numerous studies, researchers have discovered that there is an association between the use and choice of learning strategies and different variables like learning contexts, learner characteristics and learning experiences, language proficiency, or cultural and educational backgrounds. The findings have concluded that the employment of language learning strategies facilitate and improve language learning and assist language learner in different ways. It is also found that a direct correlation exists between language proficiency and language learning achievement. Learning strategies are oriented towards the main goal of communicative competence, allow learners to get more self-directed, and support learning (Oxford, 1990). In this regard, language instructors need to incorporate language learning strategies into their teaching methods and approaches, train the students to apply the appropriate strategy for a specific purpose or a specific skill area, and encourage them to use the strategies as frequently as possible. Students can learn to use language learning strategies to improve their language ability special speaking ability.

5.2. Suggesting the model for Improving Speaking Ability

Whereas goal of acquiring a language is communication, thus speaking is very important. And language learning strategy plays an important role in learning a second or foreign language. Teachers not only use their strategies in the classroom, but they should strategies used by learners. And a teacher should ready for every students reflection.

Based on the results of the study which confirmed the positive effect of teacher’s strategies on Iranian EFL learners’ improving speaking ability. It is now possible to introduce and present a model to teach speaking ability to Iranian foreign language learners. The rationale behind the attempt to suggest a model here lies in the fact that the suggestion can be taken into account as the researcher main contribution.

5.5. Suggestions for further Research

Some ideas may be helpful for the improvement of the issue as future attempts in using teacher’s strategies teaching speaking ability. The fact is that research in general and research in teacher’s strategies are not limited fields. There are numerous topics to be worked on at least in terms of the variables discussed in this thesis. On the base of researcher idea both teachers and learners need to more instruction about how acquire the language and how use it in environment. In Iran whereas Learners have no enough situation for communication in society, thus researches focus on how can provide condition that learners use language in environment and have more communication with other people outside of educational system.

REFERENCE


