

THE COMPARATIVE IMPACT OF SONG AND NONSONG VOCABULARY INSTRUCTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of teaching English vocabulary through song and nonsong methods to elementary Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. To answer the question of the study, the researcher adopted a quasi-experimental design. The participants were randomly assigned into two experimental groups and two control groups within the age range of 9-12. The experimental groups, which consisted of 25 male and 25 female learners, and control groups, which consisted of 25 male and 25 female learners, received different treatments by the same teacher. The experimental groups were instructed through song and the control groups were instructed through nonsong methods. The length of time spent on vocabulary instruction for each group was approximately 12 sessions. Before starting the treatment, a 40-item vocabulary test, consisted of multiple-choice, matching type items, and true or false items was developed, validated and used as the pretest and posttest. The statistical technique of analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) utilized to analyze the collected data. The ANCOVA results revealed that both song and nonsong instructions had a similar positive impact on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary gains and there was not a statistically significant difference between the two types of vocabulary instructions.

KEYWORDS: Song and nonsong Instructions; EFL learners; Vocabulary learning

INTRODUCTION

One aspect of language learning that has been disregarded in the past, is vocabulary (Prince, 1996). It has been treated as the “Cinderella of foreign language learning” (Beheydt, 1987, p. 55). Vocabulary teaching or learning has never received the same degree of attention as have the other aspects as reading, writing, or grammar (Hedge, 2008; Richards & Renandya, 2002), but now it has become a candidate for much research and attention (Amiryousefi & Vahid, 2010). According to Folse (2004), this is a myth that “vocabulary is sufficiently covered enough in our curricula and courses” (p. 1). Careful scrutiny of English as second language (ESL) textbooks will show the fact that the order of presenting materials in the books is according to grammar points. Also, the most parts of the books are allotted to grammar boxes, pair work activities, and pronunciation activities. Vocabulary lists are either consigned to the back of the book or confined to a few questions about their meanings in a reading passage. ESL learners, even those who have passed an English course, have expressed, in an exit survey by James (1996), their needs to more vocabulary practice and instruction (Folse, 2004).

In addition to the scarcity of specific, sufficient, and systematic attention to vocabulary, this important aspect of second language learning (SLL) has suffered from the scarcity of interesting methods of vocabulary instruction in most curricula. The necessity of more vocabulary practice seems to be obvious for ESL learners. However, it appears that second language (L2) vocabulary learning is not welcomed by many students because they have problems not only in memorizing the meaning, pronunciation, and spelling of English words but also in recalling and remembering them (Thornbury, 2002). Thus, it is necessary to improve the techniques of teaching L2 vocabulary to students and to break the routine that has made the students bored and discouraged them from vocabulary learning.

One of the techniques that L2 teachers can use to promote students' interests and motivations in learning L2 vocabulary is using song (Medina, 1993; Murphey, 1992). "Songs are ubiquitous" (Schon, Boyer, Moreno, Besson, Peretz, & Kolinsky, 2007, p. 2). The most popular function of song/music, is their affective attractions (Trainor, Austin, & Desjardins, 2000). Apart from the emotional appeal of song/music, though, a number of cognitive and linguistic functions have also been identified in favor of their use (Schoepp, 2001). Thus, the current study was conducted to investigate the effect of using song as an alternate instructional method of teaching and learning L2 vocabulary (i.e., English words) at the elementary level in language schools in Iran and compare it with the traditional method (i.e., using pictures, flashcards) which does not use song to teach English vocabulary to young L2 learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The enterprise of learning a second language has been a theme of many studies. In learning a second language "your whole person is affected as you struggle to reach beyond the confines of your first language into a new language, a new culture, a new way of thinking, feeling, and acting" (Brown, 2000, p. 1). Theories about how people learn second language are various. Each of these theories can illuminate one aspect of the language learning process. The theories which are most directly related to song/music and second language learning, which support the basis of this study, come from theories such as Krashen's second language acquisition (SLA) hypotheses and Gardner's multiple intelligences (MI). Of Krashen's five hypotheses, affective filter hypotheses have received the most attention (Medina, 2002).

Some researchers (e.g., Anton, 1990; Ayotte, 2004; Hsu, 2009; Wilcox, 1995) have claimed that the affective filter hypothesis is the best known in research that focus on music for teaching purposes, though, all of Krashen's hypotheses are widely-known in the literature of L2 research. According to this hypothesis, song/music may be able to assist in lowering high levels of stress and increase motivation and competence of L2 learners. In addition, song/music can be a great source of making optimal attitude and positive atmosphere in the classroom, enhancing total use of the linguistic input from environment. Because the melodious music and patterned lyrics in songs may be able to create a happy and low pressure environment that help lower the affective filter and bring about effective language acquisition (Butzlaff, 2000; Johnson & Memmott, 2006; Shen, 2009). Also, Jackson and Joyce (2003) state that "Group singing can lower the walls between people, decrease competitive instincts and build cooperation in its place" (p. 7).

Medina (2002) also states that applying music as a useful tool for L2 learning is compatible with Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. It can be used in various ways for teaching second language to learners. For example, students can listen to instrumental background music while writing an essay. To elicit verbal responses, they may be asked to listen to classical or jazz music. To acquire new vocabulary, when the teacher points to pictures and illustrations of key words, they may listen to a story song or sing songs within which there are key target language structures. Obviously, there are many ways for using music in L2 teaching, therefore, musical intelligence will be cultivated in this way. Thus, those students with higher musical intelligence will experience more joyful and prosperous instruction.

In addition, music inherently creates a cooperative and task sharing environment and involve the use of all other intelligences, thus giving it the potential to reinforce the effect of the instruction for the students (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004). While singing a song, L2 learners use their linguistic intelligence to keep the flow of the going language, while clapping or dancing to the rhythm, they use kinesthetic intelligence; while chanting as a whole group, they use interpersonal intelligence. This process contributes to L2 learning/acquisition because the playful characteristic of songs increases the children's interest in linguistic features of the target language through singing (Christison, 1995; Wiggins, 2007), and instructing students explicitly during singing assists students to be conscious about target sentence forms and meanings, hence, enhancing their vocabulary acquisition and retention.

The relationship between language and song/music was also investigated by Murphey. He introduced song-stuck-in-my-head (SSIMH) phenomenon in 1990. Murphey (1990) claimed that song can be an important tool for activating the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Murphey also found a similarity between SSIMH phenomenon and Krashen's Din, which is the involuntary rehearsal of a foreign language in one's mind. The characteristics of popular songs were examined by Murphey (1992) to reinforce the opinion that music can facilitate the stimulation of the LAD into the Din mode of involuntary language rehearsal. Krashen (1983) hypothesized that the LAD put the Din in action when the conditions of "comprehensible input" and "i + 1 structure" are met.

The majority of the existing studies have identified positive effects of using song/music on learning and retention of vocabulary in L2 classroom. One of the major studies that examined the effects of music upon the acquisition of English vocabulary was that of Medina (1990). She used three sources of instruction: stories, song stories and illustrations for 48 second grade Spanish speaking children with limited English proficiency. Her reason for selecting these sources of instruction was that children learned a large portion of their first language orally before they attended school, had formal instruction, and were able to read. In fact, she concluded that stories, song stories and illustrations seemed to be among the most common sources of incidental vocabulary learning for children.

Medina conducted the research for four groups of 20 Spanish children. She divided the children into four groups of twenty: the no-music group who listened to a the story spoken; the music group who listened to the same story in its song version; the illustration group listened to the

story song using illustrations of the story; and the no-illustration group who listened to the story spoken without pictures. Prior to the treatment, a vocabulary pretest was administered. After the four-day treatment period, students were given the first vocabulary posttest and one and one-half weeks after the last treatment the second posttest was administered. Results of computing scores of the four groups on two achievement vocabulary posttest, and comparing them with the vocabulary pretest scores indicated no statistical significant difference between the four groups. When the results were examined, vocabulary gained scores for the music group were considerably higher than for no music group.

Also, Medina (1990) concluded that listening to song stories was more enjoyable than listening to oral stories for all of the participants. This shed light on the value of the story-songs which were recognized as different from standard speech and on the value of using illustrations which were identified as an aid in making the words of stories more comprehensible. The interaction between music and illustration groups was not statistically significant, but vocabulary gained scores showed that the highest average gains were in the group music and illustration were used together. The conclusions for the use of music in the L2 classroom clearly indicate that “music can be as a viable vehicle for second language acquisition as stories, so songs should not be treated as extra-curricular entities without any instructional value” (p. 18).

Despite the above positive effects, some researchers (e.g., Winter, 2010) report that the use of song neither improve significantly nor hinder vocabulary learning. Winter (2010) investigated the relationship between using song and productive vocabulary gains of second grade English language learners. The study was conducted in one elementary school in a rural public school district in the upper Midwest. The ESL students were pulled out from the four regular second grade classrooms that the school had. Placement of the ESL (English as a second language) students was based on the school regular schedule, not their language proficiency. Seven ESL learners made up the control group and eight ESL students made up the experimental group. The control group had the traditional vocabulary instruction and the experimental group was instructed by listening to song. Three sets of vocabulary were presented through three stories. The researcher administered pretests (self-assessment and cloze tests), end-of-story oral assessments, and posttests (a replica of pretests). The results showed that students in the song group performed slightly better than the students in the traditional group which were not exposed to songs. However, Winter believed that the findings were not conclusive. Also, she found that songs raised students' confidence in producing vocabulary.

To the researcher's best knowledge, there are few experimental studies investigating how the use of song influences Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning, especially in the area of their fundamental linguistic functions such as English word recognition and vocabulary recall. Furthermore, most of the existing studies (e.g., Mori, 2011; Winter, 2010) in this area predominantly have focused on college level students. Therefore, there was a need to conduct research on EFL children in this regard. The paucity of research in this field, indicated that further studies would be needed in order to draw conclusions regarding the use of song in enhancing vocabulary at the elementary levels.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Does the song method improve elementary learners' English vocabulary learning more than the nonsong method?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were 100 Iranian EFL learners. The participants who were selected from four intact classes were at elementary level within the age range of 9-12. They were randomly assigned to four groups: two experimental groups and two control groups (in two language institute in Isfahan). The first experimental group included 25 male EFL learners; the second experimental group included 25 female EFL learners; the first control group included 25 male EFL learners; and the second control group included 25 female EFL learners. The sampling was an accessible random sampling type. Having learned English alphabets and practiced reading and writing some English vocabulary in these institutes, the participants were able to read the words which were used in vocabulary pretest and posttest of this study.

Instrumentation

As to the instruments, the present researchers designed a vocabulary test for the pretest and the posttest. The test was an achievement test which included 40 items. In order to score this test objectively, true or false, multiple-choice, and matching type items were developed. The items were developed based on the content vocabulary which were included in the textbooks (*Song Time Starter*, *Song Time 2* (Shahsavari & Yeganeh, 2010) and *Song Time 1* (Holisaz & Yeganeh, 2010). The test was classified into four sections. Each section, which formed one type of items, consisted of ten items. In the first section, the EFL learners should look at the words and write the number of a word under the corresponding picture. In the second section (i.e., true or false type items), they should look at the picture and choose true or false. In the third section (i.e., multiple-choice type items), they should look at the picture and choose the correct answer. In the fourth section (i.e., matching type items) they should match number of a word with the corresponding pictures. The weight for each item was one mark.

To establish internal consistency for this study, Cronbach's alpha was computed. The Cronbach's alpha for the vocabulary pretest was .70 which is considered an acceptable reliability for the constructed vocabulary test. The validity of the test was investigated through content and construct validity. The content validity of the test was represented through the development and use of an elaborate specifications for items as the blueprint, content experts' advice, and pilot testing to ensure that the test is a representative sample of the content the test was designed to measure, that is, English vocabulary of L2 learners. The 40-item vocabulary test, which was administered to 100 students, was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS.

Procedures

This research adopted a quasi-experimental design since the participants were selected from four intact classes and randomly assigned to four groups: two experimental groups and two control groups. The first experimental group included male EFL learners; the second experimental group

included female EFL learners; the first control group included male EFL learners; and the second control group included female EFL learners. When the students registered in the institutes they were interviewed in order to be placed in their appropriate level of L2 language proficiency; hence having a more homogenous sample before the study. Besides, the selected students were at elementary levels within the age range of 9-12.

The researcher followed several stages for the study. First, the previous vocabulary knowledge of both the experimental and control groups were examined through an activity. In this activity, the students had to circle the words they do not know or the words they had doubts about their meanings. The words were selected from the textbooks of *Song Time Starter*, *Song Time 2* (Shahsavari & Yeganeh, 2010), and *Song Time 1* (Holisaz & Yeganeh, 2010); the students in the control group did not have access to the song books. The selected words of the song books were presented to the control group through flashcards. Second, a 40-item test was developed. Care was taken to include item formats which suit their level of language and cognition. The students' already-known vocabulary was crossed out from the test. Third, the test was piloted on similar subjects to see if there were any problems with the test items for the main study. Fourth, content validity and construct validity were checked. It was given to the three experts in the field of testing in order to examine its content validity and check the content and table of specification. The factor analysis was also employed. Fifth, the reliability of the test was obtained through Cronbach's alpha method.

Sixth, the revised test was administered to both experimental and control groups as a pretest to assess what the subjects already know. Forty-eight sessions were held to teach the whole vocabulary in both experimental and control groups. The length of time spent on vocabulary instruction for each group was approximately 12 sessions. After 12 sessions, the posttest of English vocabulary in this study was administered to both control and experimental groups to find out the participants' acquisition of the target vocabulary after the instructional intervention was completed.

Data obtained from the pretest and posttest was analyzed using an SPSS package. The technique of ANCOVA was run to investigate the significant differences in mean scores of vocabulary test between the experimental and control groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics of pretest and posttest vocabulary scores in both groups (song and nonsong) were obtained and summarized in Table 1. As Table 1 indicates, the minimum pretest scores were 0 and 2 in song and nonsong groups respectively, which were below the possible median score (20) and the maximum pretest scores were 25 in song group and 26 in nonsong group, which were above the median score (20) on a 40-point scale. Also, Table 1 demonstrates, the minimum posttest scores were 10 and 9 in song and nonsong groups respectively, which were below the possible median score (20) and the maximum posttest scores was 37 in both groups, which was above the median score (20) on a 40-point scale.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Scores in Both Groups

Group	Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness Statistics	Kurtosis
Non Song	Pretest Vocabulary	50	2	26	10.38	6.06	.544	-.389
	Posttest Vocabulary	50	9	37	23	7.32	.015	-.706
Song	Pretest Vocabulary	50	0	25	10.26	5.28	.502	.765
	Posttest Vocabulary	50	10	37	23.34	7.09	.122	-.929

According to Table 1, the pretest mean score in nonsong group (10.38) was a little larger than the pretest mean score in song group (10.26). But it seems that the difference was small. This supported the homogeneity of pretest scores. The posttest mean scores in the nonsong and song groups were 23 and 23.34, respectively. That is, the difference was not great. Besides, both groups showed, to some extent, an increase from the pretests to posttests.

The research question intended to see if using songs was more effective than the traditional method (which did not use songs) in teaching L2 vocabulary. To address the research question of the study, covariate analysis was conducted. However, before running the covariate analysis, several assumptions were checked to make sure that vocabulary scores had similar variances across both groups, and there was no interaction between the treatment and the pretest scores; Levene's test of equality of variance showed that there was no significant difference between both groups in terms of vocabulary scores ($p = 1.66$). Also, the treatment for the pretest scores was not statistically significant, $F = .935, p = .336$.

The results of analysis of variance for the impact of the treatment on the posttest vocabulary scores are reported in Table 2. The results in Table 2 revealed that the treatment of the study had no significant effect on the students' posttest vocabulary scores because the p value was greater than .05, $F = .137, p = .712$. The corresponding effect size was found to be .001, which was very small. Obtaining estimating marginal means, which identifies the adjusted means on the dependent variable for each of the groups, indicated that the song group ($M = 23.385$) performed slightly better than the nonsong group ($M = 22.955$) on the posttests (see Table 3), but the difference was very small. Thus, results in Table 2 and 3 show that the song and nonsong instruction did have statistically different impacts on L2 vocabulary learning among Iranian EFL learners. The results also suggests that the mean scores improved from the pretests to posttests in both groups.

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance for the Treatment Effect on Posttest Scores

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta
Corrected Model	1821.147 ^a	2	910.574	26.937	.000	.357	
Intercept	5406.155	1	5406.155	159.928	.000	.622	
Pretest	1818.257	1	1818.257	53.789	.000	.357	
Group	4.641	1	4.641	.137	.712	.001	
Error	3278.963	97	33.804				
Total	58785.000	100					
Corrected Total	5100.110	99					

a. R Squared = .357 (Adjusted R Squared = .344)

Table 3: Estimate Margin Means for Groups

Group	Mean	Std. Error	99% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	23.385	.822	21.753	25.017
2	22.955	.822	21.323	24.587

Group 1= Song; Group 2 = Nonsong

Discussion

The descriptive statistics showed that the song groups appeared to perform better the nonsong groups. However, the ANCOVA analysis revealed no significant difference between the two groups on the posttests, indicating that song method was not statistically more effective in improving the students' vocabulary learning as compared with the nonsong method. The results were contradictory to El-Nahhal's (2011) findings which revealed a statistically significant difference in mean scores of vocabulary test in favor of the experimental group who learned English vocabulary through listening to children song. But the above finding is consistent with the previous studies by Ayotte (2004), Medina (1990), Mori (2011), and Winter (2010), who found that using song fail to assist learners gain large amount of second language vocabulary.

Several plausible reasons may explain why no significant differences were observed. First, it may be related to the length of the instruction. That is, a short-term instruction (about a month) for each of the song group with 30 minutes a day might be insufficient for the EFL beginners to learn English vocabulary. If the length of time for instructing vocabulary through song had been increased, the learners might have improved their word knowledge in English. In order to facilitate the learning and internalization of vocabulary especially for EFL learners, repeated exposures and manipulation of the vocabulary might be needed (Belisle, 1997; Swain & Lapkin, 1991). Thus, as discussed above, the length of treatment and consequently inadequate reinforcement of the English vocabulary might have affected the performance on the posttest and the non-significant result of the study.

The second reason is probably related to the function of song/music for Iranian EFL learners. That is, they may use song/music as an outlet (outburst) for energy. For them listening to song is a source of entertainment rather than an educational tool. It seems that they are so attracted to the elements of music such as rhythm, melody, and harmony that the meanings of target vocabulary in the lyrics are undermined (subordinated). In fact, due to the limitation in incorporating English song in curriculum and lack of trained teachers for this purpose, students are not probably familiar with the features of song/music and their educational value.

The third reason may be related to the matter of rote memorization of song. Music was found to benefit rote memorization when the information and music were presented simultaneously (Gfeller, 1983; Schuster & Mouzon, 1982). Also, the rhythmic presentation of meaningful verbal information was found to benefit memorization (Glazner, 1976; Shepard & Ascher, 1973; Weener, 1971). Salcedo (2002) found that the use of song in the foreign language classroom was considered to be helping memory of text. Although using song is one of the quick, easy, and enjoyable techniques of memorization for children, reciting the whole text does not mean that learners have learned all the words or even the majority of content words of a song. Stated differently, they may know the plot of the song story and know it from memory word for word, but they pay little attention to the meaning of each word. As Murphey (1992) states, no matter how enjoyable or memorable, singing songs fail to teach anyone to use the language and transfer the words into use.

The above results of the present study can lead to drawing two conclusions. First, the use of song might be generally beneficial in facilitating vocabulary learning. This finding also confirmed the general benefits of song in foreign language context by previous studies (Medina, 1990; Mori, 2011; Schunk, 1999; Winter, 2010). As Ayotte (2004) states, presenting authentic language into the classroom through song might arise the EFL students' interests and help them to learn L2 vocabulary. Second, using pictures (e.g., flashcards), like using song, might be generally effective in learning vocabulary. The beneficial effect of picture in recalling information is based on Paivio's dual-coding theory. In proposing this theory, Paivio (1971) assumed that both visual and verbal codes could aid in representing or recalling information (Sternberg, 2003). This theory was also psychologically supported. Many researchers have agreed that only words and images are used in mental representation (Pylyshyn, 1973). Further evidence indicates that recalling learned materials will be facilitated if verbal information and the corresponding visual image are presented together (Doff, 1988; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Shapiro & Waters, 2005). In addition, using pictures in teaching vocabulary aids EFL learners to notice the words consciously. In fact, it is a way for young L2 learners to learn target words quickly and easily.

CONCLUSION

The above findings of the present study showed that both song and nonsong instructions had a similar positive impact on Iranian learners' English vocabulary learning at the elementary level, the difference between the two methods (types of instructions) was not statistically significant. The main conclusion that can be drawn is that using song as a method of instruction is beneficial for L2 vocabulary learning, but "the extent of its value in comparison to more traditional

vocabulary instruction is still in question. More research needs to be done in this area to allow for a more definite conclusion” (Winter, 2010, p. 71). According to Salcedo (2002), using song/music in English should not be “a panacea, replacing all other methods as the only viable teaching tool”, instead, they should be employed as an acceptable material for classroom instruction (p. 127). Similarly, as Ayotte (2004, p. 87) states, using song can be served as “an alternative approach to presenting and teaching foreign language material”, but it should not be considered as the most successful and innovative method of teaching L2 vocabulary to young L2 learners.

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13 VIKINGS VS 1000 ROMANS; THE EFFECT OF USING WIKIS ON IMPROVEMENT OF READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY AMONG IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

Wiki is a major component of Web 2.0, the emergent generation of web tools and applications. Wikis are newcomers to the Internet and have recently been recognized as viable tools for teaching and learning. The present study tried to investigate the effect of using Wikis on improving Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' reading comprehension. To achieve this purpose, a reading comprehension test was administered to 60 language learners and ultimately 36 pre-intermediate language learners were selected and randomly assigned to two groups. The same pre-test was administered for two groups before any treatment. During the experiment, group one participants had exposure to using Wikis as an interactive teaching tool for specifying assignment texts in-and out-side the classroom and practicing reading comprehension through wikis for one and a half months. The participants in group two had not used wikis in-and out-side the classroom. At the end of the experiment, two groups took a post-test which was absolutely the same as pre-test to see whether or not any changes happened regarding their reading proficiency. The results of the posttest showed that the two groups performed differently on the posttest which was indicative of the fact that greater exposure to specific wikis-oriented language reading material promotes the Iranian EFL learners' reading proficiency. The comparison of the participants' gain scores indicated that though group one could improve their reading comprehension, wikis were more effective Web2.0 tools in enhancing Iranian EFL students' reading comprehension. New technologies in teaching have never been greater and with the recent addition of the Wiki Assisted Language Learning (WALL), teachers are able to integrate this tool into their lessons. The WALL is not only an innovative tool which meets cognitive and learning styles, but also different intelligences in a group class. This recent

technology has inspired many teachers to further their expertise in teaching and facilitate learning.

KEYWORDS: wiki, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Since 1990s, language classes have been open to different tools available to teachers through multimedia technology. A great change has taken place in the use of computers in language learning: computers function as tools that enhance foreign language learning. The rapid growth of technology on the one hand, and learners' interests in fostering their language learning autonomously on the other hand, have led researchers to try new ways to use modern technology and the Web in language learning. With the advent of Web intervals, Web 1.0, 2.0, and the newly developed one, Web 3.0, investigators are focusing on the tools available through the net so that every individual can work on his language skills autonomously. A large number of studies have so far been done on the effectiveness of these tools in language learning in general and reading comprehension in particular (Polleti & Freitag 2011).

Wiki is characterized by ease of use and rapidity of deployment, making possible powerful information sharing and supporting collaborative writing activities and improving student interaction (Boulos, 2006). Arreguin (2004) stated that “Wikis could provide unique collaborative opportunities for education combining freely accessible information, rapid feedback, simplified HTML, and access by multiple editors, wikis are being rapidly adopted as an innovative way of constructing knowledge” (p.1). Moreover, a wiki could accumulate users' opinions, and cultivate active on-line communities on the web (Wang & Lu, 2005).

Studies that investigated the direct effect of foreign / second web-based language learning on learners are still not numerous. Some previous studies revealed that web-based writing improved learner attitude and decreased their writing apprehension (Alia & Hussin, 2002). Besides, some previous studies revealed that web-based language instruction could help learners produce better writing quality and more writing quantity than traditional classroom instruction (Braine, 1997). However, some other studies showed that web-based language writing had no significantly effect on learners' performance and on reducing their writing apprehension (Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasenforth, 2001).

What are wikis?

Wikis are socially oriented; software based web pages that enable free cross platform editing and redistribution of original content (Buffa & Gandon, 2006). Choy and Ng (2007) provide a good overview of the processes available in wikis and their potential uses in educational institutions. While wikis have been around since approximately 1995 (Leuf & Cunningham, 2001), they are part of the so called 'Web 2.0 phenomena' –the read/write web, the natural successor to web 1.0 – the read only web. The read/write web is a hypertextual system for editing and sharing information (Schwall, 2003), more commonly identified as the interactive web.

O'Neill (2005) states that wikis are a collaborative medium designed to promote content sharing. Wikis allow collaborative editing of pages by participants as well as many other features, depending on the wiki software used. Wikis often allow a history of editing undertaken by members showing an evolving process of page development with a concurrent evolution of participant knowledge and engagement. All wiki page edits are open for debate and critique from any angle by any member of the community. Augar, Raitman and Zhou (2004) highlight that a wiki environment is perfect for what they call computer supported collaborative learning, as they are student centered, giving students shared authority and responsibility for their own knowledge. Sharing of authority is central to a wiki epistemology, as is empowering participants. Any user can participate in the creation of shared documents, which evolve through shared community goals. The empowerment of users tends to be ignored in wiki research. There are clear definitions of what the technology can do through collaborative endeavors, but little evidence pointing to what values are required to facilitate the successful achievements in one.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research into 'wikis for learning' is in its infancy, although unlike the parallel early Internet learning research, it seems much more focused on pedagogical requirements. This is because the very nature of a wiki provides access to the developmental aspects, which are often hidden from the teacher's view. For this reason, the majority of wiki research has focused on the technical aspects of the wiki (Tazzoli et al., 2004), or the development of a special use 'technical' wiki, instead of attempting to understand the underpinning epistemology required to build content and community. Lanier's (2005) thought provoking article on "hive" mentality and the thoughtful response from Tumlin et al (2007) shows how these issues are now coming up for debate.

Technology has introduced new tasks and activities learners can use for their reading comprehension. Studies have shown that Internet access motivates many students to read extensively (Yang, 2009). Izquierdo and Reyes (2009) pointed out the Internet has rapidly become a basic medium not only for information and communications, but also reading comprehension in the twenty-first century. A typical Internet-based reading practice requires students to move to a higher level of comprehension tasks such as summarizing and paraphrasing, making inferences and respond with online communication tools such as an e-mail message or blog post. The Internet gives the opportunity to learners to get familiar with search engines and Websites besides using conventional knowledge of vocabulary and informational text structures (Coiro & Dobler, 2007).

Computers and the Internet technology have introduced what is known as hypertexts or online texts through which one can have more access to other reading materials just by clicking on a certain word being underlined in the text. Cumley (2009) mentioned several characteristics for all online reading sources. They include being standard and authentic, having books adapted for access, requiring low-tech modifications to text, accompanying pictures/symbols with texts, being supplemented with text reader with study skill support.

Rahimi and Behjat (in press) did an empirical research on online and offline reading comprehension for Iranian EFL learners and concluded that the learners' reading is fostered to a higher degree when they are exposed to online texts which have links to other sites providing more reading materials. Comprehending hypertexts can sometimes be difficult as they require readers utilize different skills and strategies to overcome comprehension problems. The great advantage of reading hypertexts on the net is that learners can have access to authentic texts.

Verezub and Wang (2008) showed how using the net hypertexts empower language learners' comprehension of texts. As the media is equipped with images, videos and audios, comprehension would be facilitated, and it is easier to remember and later to retrieve it (Brown, 2000).

Murphy (2007) explored the role of online reading and feedback in comprehension and showed how designers should cater for different levels of language proficiency in supplying the Web with hypertexts by providing an online feedback that promoted both reading comprehension and interaction. Szymańska and Kaczmarek (2011) argued that in order for learners to become proficient readers in a foreign language, they need to have access to online texts which can help them to respond in an authentic way to what they have read.

Polleti, and Freitag (2011) posted authentic texts in a website and a number of exercises, and stated that implementing this web site, learners were prompted to actively apply a wide range of different reading skills and strategies to increase their comprehension of written texts. Yet, another advantage of reading on the net is that it can help learners be able to analyze the texts by themselves, reflect on them and try to comprehend them independent of asking for help from a teacher. Krajka (2007) claimed that "Learners autonomy is essential in the Internet-based classroom, where the learner is frequently in charge of the choice of materials, evaluation of their own progress, selection of learning strategies" (p. 194).

In the technology-oriented era, as the Web 2.0 came to the fore, it brought a couple of tools with itself. The distinctive feature of all these tools is that they are interactive not just between two but among a large number of people to share their knowledge and interests. In other words, while Web 1.0 tools such as e-mails were initially exchanged between only two people, Web 2.0 tools are those by which the emitted information can be used by all who like to have access to. That's why they are known as social networks. Among all Web 2.0 tools, wikis and blogs have shown having a positive impact on learning a language (Sharma and Barrett, 2008). Coiro (2009) mentioned that social networking sites well meet learning standards for reading comprehension as they demand online readers are personally productive, socially responsible, and able to collaborate with a diverse team.

There are some pieces of evidence in the literature to support the positive impact of wikis and weblogs in the improvement of reading comprehension. Izquierdo and Reyes (2009), for example, explored the effectiveness of blogs to promote reading comprehension and concluded that for freshman EFL students, weblogs, though difficult to understand at the beginning, can

play a vital role in the improvement of their reading comprehension. Kear and Woodthorpe (2009) confirmed that students' use of wikis in a distance learning course plays a role in their communication skills specially their comprehension of the texts appearing on the screen. Though research has shown that both wikis and blogs can enhance reading comprehension, the question which can be raised is which of them can help language learners foster their reading comprehension more.

There is still a lack of research that investigates the pedagogical potentials of Wiki for collaborative learning (Elgort, Smith & Toland, 2008). Some research also indicates that collaborative reading and writing is more the exception than the norm (Lin & Kelsey, 2009). There is thus a challenging idealistic hypothesis that Wiki is natural beneficial. Empirical studies usual focus on how Wikis work (Hoisl, Aigner & Miksch, 2007).

The limited research that has been done is also mainly prescriptive (Staley, 2009). With all these studies done, the literature on Wiki and language pedagogy seems to be in its infancy. On one hand, the application of Wikis in general and Wiki in particular needs to be justified at the theoretical level and on the other hand, there is no inclusive report of how such a tool can be used in EFL contexts with complex net of learning and teaching variables. Accordingly, the present study attempted to show the feasible ways in which this tool can improve the learners' reading skill in Iranian context.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To begin with, the following question is posed for the researcher to answer:

Does the application of Wikis effect on the improvement of reading comprehension ability among Iranian pre-intermediate EFL Learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The present study tried to investigate the effect of using Wikis on improving Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. To achieve this purpose, a reading comprehension test was administered to 60 language learners in language schools of Andimeshk, Khuzestan, Iran and ultimately 36 pre-intermediate language learners were selected and randomly assigned to two groups.

Instruments

Initially, the subjects in two groups took the reading comprehension section of a sample proficiency test. The test contained 25 multiple-choice items. The reliability of the test was .732 based on KR-21 method. The test was extracted from How to prepare for the TOEFL Test: Test of English as a Foreign Language (Sharpe, 2010). The second instrument was the materials which were selected from Internet reliable sites (such as, *Wikipedia.com*, *bbc.com* and *cnn.com*) and other authentic sources such as *New interchange series* (Richards, 2005). In order to account for the influence of Wiki on reading comprehension, two types of materials were proposed: materials

that were delivered on Wiki space and materials that were assigned offline in written form which were provided for the two groups throughout the whole treatment. The difficulty level of these materials as determined by systematic functional grammar criteria (Shokrpour 2004:pp.5-25) was calculated to make them appropriate for pre-intermediate EFL learners.

Procedure

The same pre-test was administered for two groups before any treatment lesson. During the experiment, group one participants had exposure to using Wikis as an interactive teaching tool for specifying assignment texts in-and out-side the classroom and practicing reading comprehension through wikis for one and a half months. The participants in group two had not used wikis in-and out-side the classroom. At the end of the experiment, two groups took a post-test which was absolutely the same as pre-test to see whether or not any changes happened regarding their reading proficiency. The English proficiency level of most of these learners is pre-intermediate. At language school, the medium of instruction is English. Therefore, they get a lot of exposure to the English language.

To select the homogeneous subjects, the researcher administered a sample reading comprehension proficiency test to sixty English language learners in private language institutions selected based on their availability, including both males and females. The thirty six participants were selected out of sixty. Having administered the necessary statistical calculations, these one hundred students who had scored between 5.5 and 47.5 out of 100, two standard deviation above and below the mean, in the proficiency tests were selected as pre-intermediate language learners. For the purpose of this research, the selected subjects were both male and female and were randomly divided into two groups of 16.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research question was put forward regarding the efficiency of applying Wiki as an aid in improving reading comprehension of Iranian EFL students. In what follows, first the results of the two main groups i.e. the Wiki and the traditional classes are represented and then the comparison of both groups participating in the study would be demonstrated followed by the results obtained from statistical analysis.

The present study was based on a hypothesis which claimed that the application of the main software tool offered by ICT, namely Wiki in EFL reading comprehension classes leads to better acquisition and performance of students in comparison with the traditional methods of reading textbooks. In order to confirm this claim, the final grades of the participants in both traditional and experimental classes were compared. Table 1 illustrates the results descriptively.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for final grades

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Traditional	18	11.9444	2.34451	.55261
Wikipedia	18	16.1111	2.19997	.51854

As the results in table 1 show, there seems to be a difference in the final performance of the two traditional and experimental classes. In order to check the significance of the observed differences between the final grades of the two classes, the obtained data were subjected to a paired t-test using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 18. Table 2 represents the t-test results.

Table 2: Independent t-test results for the level of participation

	T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Differences	Std. Error Differences
Grades (Equal variances not assumed)	2.001	21.272	.050*	5.41667	2.70650

= statistically significant ($p < .05$)*

The statistically significant difference between the final grades of the participants in two experimental and traditional classes suggests that students in Class B (Wiki Class) have performed much better on their final exam in comparison with Class A (Traditional Class). Hence, the superiority of the application of ICT tool, Wiki, in Iranian EFL classes is confirmed. The results of the post-test are also illustrated in figure 1.

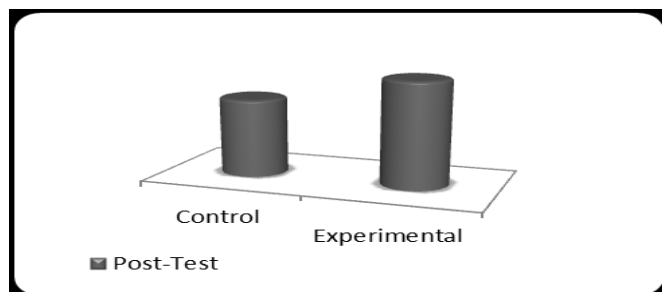


Figure 1: The mean difference of post-test between control and experimental group

The existing literature shows that the application of ICT tools such as Wiki offers numerous potentials for both teachers and learners. The present quasi-experimental study sought to present a comparative overview of one of the most practical tools offered by ICT, namely Wiki. As the research findings depict the participants who took part in Wiki classrooms collaboratively surpassed those who had participated in traditional classrooms. In addition to a higher level of participation, they exceeded them in final performance. The affective data gathered in this study portrayed the impression of students participating in the study. The participants in Class B (Wiki Class) reported their higher motivation, sense of community, collaboration, and pleasure and less confusion than the participants in Class A (Traditional Class).

The history of the application of technology to teach in general and English language teaching in specific has proved to be an area of contention meaning that in some studies there has been supportive evidence whereas in other investigations pitfalls of the implementation of the technology have been highlighted.

Some experts active in the field of computer assisted language learning have dealt with the issue of normalization stage in the use of technology and its probable effects on the learning of English as an EFL. One recently carried out study is by Salehmahdi (2013) in that he dealt with the issues of computer assisted language learning normalization in EFL contexts.

According to him the use of computers in language learning is increased widely in most countries. Many educational institutions all over the world have integrated computer technology into language instruction. However, this integration is not successful in many institutions. There are many issues that hinder the integration of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) into language learning. His paper reported on the literature associated with issues of CALL normalization. It highlighted the issues of CALL normalization in English as foreign language (EFL) contexts and explores the most important factors to be considered to improve the use of CALL in these contexts. The study also added some issues that were not mentioned in the previous studies. It was suggested that for CALL normalization to be occurred, five major issues should be addressed (i.e., personal, technical, pedagogical, socio-cultural, and institutional). Some suggestions were presented to help CALL to be normalized in EFL contexts. The findings of the present investigation are in line with the research carried out by Salehmahdi (2013).

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study well support the positive role of using Web 2.0 tools like wikis and weblogs in language classrooms to foster the learners' reading comprehension. The results of this study also indicate that compared to weblogs, wikis are better tools in enhancing reading comprehension. This might be due to the distinguishing feature of wikis which enjoy a high level of exposure to other Websites as the texts have links and they are available to the users only through clicking the underlined word in a hypertext. The editability of wiki pages helps the users add, delete, or change some parts of the hypertext and this increases the wiki attraction. Language teachers can search through the net and design their own weblogs and find suitable wiki pages to use them in their reading comprehension classes. Language classes will be more interesting if technology enters them as it has already stepped into all aspects of human life.

Limitation of the study

This study is conducted in a senior high school in Andimeshk city, Iran. Thus, the place was limited and more research is needed in similar context to find more about the effect of Wikis on improvement of reading comprehension ability. Therefore, the results may not be generalized to all language school learners and all other areas. Eight sessions were run to see the effects of the treatment which is a limited time. Moreover, this study was conducted on a small size of the learners enrolled in the program due to the availability of the participants. Moreover, the students were pre-intermediate EFL Learners and other levels were not considered.

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PRAGMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NEWLY DEVELOPED IRANIAN EFL ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating pragmatic knowledge contained in newly published Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) textbook, Prospect 1 (2013), and Prospect 2 (2014) which is taught at first and second grade of junior high school in Iran. For this purpose, content analysis of the dialogues was performed to examine speech act information. Speech act information in this study consists of types, frequency and distribution provided for each speech act. Searle's (1979) model of classifying speech acts was applied in order to investigate different speech acts. Using descriptive and inferential statistics it was revealed that the conversations in the newly published Prospect series (1&2) have a number of significant shortcomings, such as the lack of declaration speech act. The results of chi-square analysis also reflected the inequality and variation in the distribution of speech acts within and between these books. To be regarded as pragmatically competent, the conversations in these two textbooks must include all types of speech acts which are all used in the real-life communications. Even though linguistic contents would naturally be of primary concern, the pragmatic content of the EFL textbooks cannot be overlooked. By sharing the results of analyses of other EFL textbooks, curriculum developers can further provide more pragmatic sensitive materials suitable for language learning.

KEYTERMS: Speech act, communicative competence, pragmatic competence, text-book analysis

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks play a fundamental role in English as a foreign language because through textbooks learners get familiar with target culture, social norms and values. Kemp (1977) states that EFL textbooks are vital parts of an appropriate and balanced curriculum. The content of every textbook contains the most fundamental executive guidelines for achieving the aims of any educational system. Learning a foreign language is regarded nowadays as an essential component in the curricula at different educational levels. However, in order to make learners communicatively competent in English, there is a shift from previous theoretical frameworks, which considered language as a formal system based on grammatical rules, towards a more communicative perspective.

Pragmatic Competence

Accordingly, different approaches analyzing communicative competence have considered pragmatic competence as the basic component, on the other hand, within pragmatic competence increasing attention has been drawn to interlanguage pragmatic (ILP) studies most of which have been carried out on production of different speech acts. Following Kasper (1997), pragmatic competence can be defined as the knowledge of communicative action and the way to carry it out, and the ability to use language appropriately according to the context. In addition to the language user's ability in using the language, termed as linguistic competence, it is a requisite that s/he possesses pragmatic competence, an aspect of communicative competence indispensable for communicating successfully in the target language (Ji, 2007; Kim & Hall, 2002; Saville-Troike, 2006).

Pragmatic competence is so vital that lacking it may lead to communication breakdown. It can cause misunderstandings, serious miscommunication, and even distort the communication goals when learners understand only the literal meaning of words but do not know the rules for interpreting them (Kasper, 1997; Lin, 2008). Many studies on pragmatic competence have shown that there is a difference between the pragmatic of native speakers and learners of the target language for certain reasons (Yuka, 2008). First, although there is considerable amount of universal pragmatic knowledge which can be transferred for free from the learners' L1 if there is a corresponding form-function mapping between L1 and L2, learners always fail to use what they know (Kasper, 1997). Second, classroom instruction may be a cause of pragmatic failure. Finally, learners may not realize the existence of different ways or many linguistic forms to be used in conveying their intention.

Speech acts and its classifications

Since this study was based on speech act theory different definitions and classification of speech acts were provided in the following lines. The concepts of speech act was coined by Austin (1962) and expanded by Searle (1979). Austin defines speech acts as “acts performed in saying something”. Further, he distinguishes three different levels of action beyond the act of utterance. Austin distinguishes the act *of* saying something, what a person does *in* saying it, and what he or she does *by* saying it, and dubs these a *locutionary*, an *illocutionary*, and a *perlocutionary* act.

Searle (2005) starts with the notion that when a person speaks, he/she performs three different acts, including utterance acts, propositional acts, and illocutionary acts. Utterance acts consist simply of uttering strings of words. Meanwhile, propositional acts and illocutionary acts consist characteristically of uttering words in sentences in certain context, under certain condition, and with certain intention. Searle categorizes the illocutionary acts based on varied criteria as the following: i) Assertive or Representative, ii) Directive, iii) Commissive, iv) Expressive, and v) Declaration. For the purpose of this research, we have decided to use Searle's classification because it is actually a modification of Austin's general theory of speech acts. Searle's classification is based on what the speaker wants to imply in his/her utterances. In addition, this classification is more specific and detail than other classifications.

Thus, the study of speech acts appears to be necessary to the understanding of intercultural studies. The main contribution of speech act theory is to explanation of communicative competence. Pragmatic speech acts such as invitations, refusals, suggestions, and apologies are significant components of communicative competence.

Within the last few years, great deal of studies have been carried out with regard to different speech acts, such as: request (e.g. Jalilifar, 2009; Taguchi, 2006), apology (e.g. Eslami-Rasekh & Mardani, 2010; Harris, Grainger & Mullany, 2006), compliment (e.g. Sharifian, 2008; Wolfson, 1981) and refusals (e.g. Allami & Naeimi, 2010; Tanck, 2002) among which speech act of suggestion has absorbed scant attention. In order for students to learn how language really works, they need authentic materials of authentic communication situations. The demand for pragmatic input is particularly relevant when upper secondary school teaching materials are concerned, because at this level, students are expected to be quite proficient language users. Kasper (1997) suggests the inclusion of activities such as role-play, simulation, and drama to engage students in different social roles and speech events.

The Role of Textbooks in TEFL

Richards (2001) states that textbooks can serve as a tool to train the EFL teachers. Considering the advantages, Richards (2001) states that without textbooks a program may have no path, therefore they provide structure and a syllabus. In addition to the use of a textbook in a program, it can guarantee that students in different classes will receive a similar content and therefore can be evaluated in the same way. He concludes that textbooks are efficient in that they allow much time for the teacher to focus on teaching rather than material's development.

Some scholars support this perspective. Elliott and Woodward (1990) state that textbooks form a part of schooling that is enduring and very influential; and such textbooks also describe what is mostly learnt by students and their instructors. Also it is deemed that textbooks form the core of attention of learning materials in modern schooling (Westbury, 1990). Finally, Sheldon (1988) states that textbooks depict the heart of an ELT program that can be visualized.

In 2013, Iran's Ministry of education has introduced the new series of EFL textbooks entitled *Prospect* to be taught in junior high schools. Therefore, the present study intended to investigate the pragmatic content of newly developed English textbooks, *Prospect 1* and *Prospect 2* to examine the types and frequency of speech acts used in the dialogues of the above mentioned books published by Iran's ministry of education. The newly developed and published Iranian EFL textbooks (*Prospect 1* and *2*) are claimed by the authors to follow the principles of communicative language teaching. However, the books have not been investigated in terms of speech act use; therefore, this research aimed to scrutinize the newly developed Iranian EFL textbooks (*prospect 1* and *prospect 2*) in terms of speech act. The textbooks are recently introduced and being taught nationwide.

In order to use the textbooks effectively, it is essential for the practitioners to evaluate the materials since evaluation plays a key role in education and can provide valuable information. In other words, if we accept the value of textbooks in ELT, we must be sure of usefulness of the

textbooks, and their appropriateness for the context and people with whom they are being used. Sheldon (1988) has offered several reasons for textbook evaluation. He suggests that the selection of an ELT textbook often signals an important administrative and educational decision in which there is considerable professional, financial, or even political investment. A thorough evaluation, therefore, would enable the teaching staff of a specific institution to discriminate between all of the available textbooks on the market. Moreover, it would provide a sense of familiarity with a book's content thus assisting educators in identifying the particular strengths and shortcomings in textbooks already in use.

Although there have been studies about the content of EFL textbooks, the investigation on pragmatic information in newly developed English textbooks, Prospect 1 and Prospect 2, has not yet been conducted. There is paucity of pragmatic contents and their presentations are marginalized as compared to other language items. There are no courses offered to pre-service language teachers in the area of pragmatics as a result of which teachers do not complement textbooks with inputs to help learners acquire pragmatic competence. This study hence intended to examine the pragmatic aspect of the students' textbook to find the availability of opportunities to teach pragmatic competence to EFL learners. More specifically, an attempt was made to answer the following research questions.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Hamiloglu and Karlova (2009) examined and evaluated five selected English language course books from the viewpoint of vocabulary selection and teaching techniques they employ. As an evaluation method, content-analysis was preferred in this study. Regarding the national studies on textbook evaluation, no study can be found on newly developed and published Prospect series (prospect one and two), particularly with regard to the pragmatic dimension applying Searle's (1979) models.

Another study was performed by Vellenga (2004) who compared EFL and ESL textbooks. She argues that learners hardly acquire pragmatic competence due to the lack of information in textbooks. She concluded that EFL/ESL textbooks did not provide enough metalinguistic and explicit metapragmatics information. In spite of this shortage, the comparison shows that most of EFL textbooks enjoy pragmatic information.

Matsumra (2001) conducted a valuable study on the utilization of advice and suggestion speech acts by Japanese ESL learners. He found that the participants, quite different from their common habits in their own culture, used direct speech acts, e.g. you must, you should ... for advice and suggestions when answering teacher's question, "Please tell me what I could do in order to make this class more interesting to you all" (p. 637). However, this style was considered inappropriate and rude.

Another research was conducted by Cohen and Olshtain (1993) in search of describing ways in which non-native speakers use speech acts. They scrutinized three speech acts of apology, complaint, and request, which measured through role-playing. After they videotaped each speech

act context, they applied retrospective verbal report in order to analyze processing strategies in speech act formulation. The results show that most students do not use specific language strategies and think mostly in two languages or three. They ignore grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation and only conduct general assessment.

With respect to Iranian EFL context, Ansary and Babaie (2002) investigated a corpus of 10 EFL/ESL textbook reviews plus 10 EFL/ESL textbook evaluation checklists conveniently sampled while presenting a summary of common-core characteristics of standard EFL/ESL textbooks in their studies, too. They aimed at looking for some universal, theory-neutral, and broad consensus-reached features of EFL or ESL books, and draw up some guidelines for the generation as well as systematic evaluation of EFL or ESL books. They revealed that however perfect a book is, it is merely a simple tool in the hands of teachers and what is more important than a textbook is what we, as teachers, can do with it. For the area of task-based and pragmatics, Iraj (2007) performed a research and made a careful analysis on New Interchange series based on the principles of communicative and task-based approach to investigate to what extent the principles of CLT and TBLT approaches have been considered. In this perspective, she used Ellis's model (2003). Iraj (2007) criticizes *New Interchange* since the series do not follow the principles of communicative and task-based approaches as the author claimed. The book also has no frequency of meta-pragmatic information.

Razmjoo (2007) employed the Hymes' (1972) scheme to investigate the extent to which the Iranian high school and private institute textbooks represent the CLT principles. For that purpose, the textbooks of the Iranian high schools and private institutes were analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The results indicated that while high school textbooks are not conducive to CLT implementation, the textbooks in private institute represent the CLT foundations to a greater extent.

In another story, Riazi and Aryasholouh (2007) studied the four high school and pre-university English textbooks focusing on the consciousness-raising aspect of vocabulary exercises. They concluded that of all exercises in the four books, only one percent of exercises may be categorized as consciousness-raising. They also showed that the exercises mainly concentrated on individual words (approximately 26%) with no emphasis on fixed expressions, lexical collocations (approximately 15%) and grammatical collocations (approximately 2%). They found that students are mainly dealing with meanings of individual words and not with how words are used with other words or in what combinations. Zare Moayed (2007) performed an evaluation on a series of ELT materials namely, Interchange third edition. For their purpose, Littlejohn's (1998) detailed framework was used in this attempt. Results revealed that the Interchange series are not completely in line with the objectives intended for it. These series do not use learners or even the teachers as a source for its content. In addition, supra sentential level has been ignored for both the expected output and input of the learners. What is more, these are not the learners who initiate the tasks. On the other hand, Interchange series focus mainly on pair works and meaning. These series also encourage learners to use the language and more importantly, they more often require them to express themselves than to be a listener.

In Iranian context where English is taught as a foreign language, most studies have been contrastive in a way that native speakers of Persian and English were investigated for their pragmatic production of a specific speech act and the strategy they employed to fulfill that aspect in their native language (Shariati & Chamani, 2010; Shams, 2015; Soozandefar & Sahragard, 2011). No doubt these kinds of studies shed some light on specific linguistic cases, but what seems to play a crucial role in foreign language learning is to equip the learners with the practical knowledge of language which is demanded by immediate conversational instances. It can be concluded from the studies on pragmatic information in different ESL and EFL context reviewed above that most course materials failed to provide adequate amount of pragmatic knowledge for students to develop their pragmatic competence. The newly developed and published Iranian EFL textbooks (Prospect 1 and 2) are claimed by the authors to stick to the principles of CLT. However, the books have not been investigated in terms of speech act analysis ; therefore, this research is going to scrutinize the newly developed Iranian EFL textbooks (prospect 1 and prospect 2) which were published by the publishing company of Iran. The textbooks are recently introduced and being taught nationwide.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

There were four research questions that this study aimed to answer which were as follows:

- 1-What are the types and frequencies of speech acts used in the dialogues of Prospect 1 (2013) published by Iran's ministry of education?
- 2-Is there a significant difference in distribution of speech acts in Prospect 1?
- 3-What are the types and frequencies of speech acts used in the dialogues of Prospect 2 (2014) published by Iran's ministry of education?
- 4-Is there a significant difference in distribution of speech acts in Prospect 2?

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

Textbooks as the major source of teaching and learning process in Iranian EFL context should contain the adequate number of speech acts to promote teachers and learners' pragmatic competence. To develop textbooks with sufficient number of speech acts suitable to the norms followed by native speakers of the language, EFL textbook authors should be linguistically and pragmatically competent in the target language to be able to incorporate the right numbers of speech acts in EFL textbooks. To put it another way, the speech acts deserve further attention when designing material and textbooks for Iranian learners of English. This study was performed using a mixed method. According to Creswell (2001), qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in process, meaning and understanding through words or illustrations. For this purpose, we attempted to determine the type and the number of speech acts used in dialogue section of two textbooks (Prospect 1 and Prospect 2) Searle's (1979). Previous research proved that speech acts categories are considered as one of the universals of all languages and these categories are said to be found in all languages nearly with the same range or frequencies. On the quantitative stages inferential statistics were applied to make within book comparison of the speech acts.

Materials

The materials used in this study were the dialogue and conversation sections included in the two series of EFL course books. "Prospect 1" and "Prospect 2" are newly developed textbook series for national purposes taught in Iranian junior high school. Prospect 1 is one of the series English textbooks for school children is designed to help the children in the first year of secondary school to learn English for communication. "Prospect 1" authored by Alavi, Ananisarab, Forozandeh Shahraki, Ghorani, Khadir Sharabian and Kheirabadi was published in 2013. "Prospect 1" has 8 main units and 4 reviewing units followed by a photo dictionary. Each main unit is divided into three parts: the first part is listening and speaking that starts with a dialogue and continues with pair/group practices; the second part is writing skill. In this part alphabet letters and the relationship between the sounds of the letters and their forms and different allophones of one sound are taught to the learners; the third part is role play/your conversation.

"Prospect 2" authored by Alavi, Forozandeh Shahraki, Nikoopoor, Khadir Sharabian and Kheirabadi was published in 2014. The book includes work book, student book, audio CD and teacher's guide. It consists of 7 main units and 4 reviewing units followed by a photo dictionary. These series are based on all language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). They assign a different role to teacher and learner in contrast with traditional books. The role of teacher in these textbooks is designed based on the communicative approaches and therefore; the role of the teacher is considered as a co-worker and an assistant in language learning process and the role of learner changes from implementation of instructor's instruction to an active role in every aspect of language learning process.

Instruments

The instrument used in this study to analyze the materials was Searle's (1979) model of classifying speech acts: Commissives, Expressives, Assertives, Directives, and Declarations. Each of these categories consists of some subcategories. As it can be seen in the Table 1, the category of directives includes several sub-categories like inviting, suggesting, daring, defying, ordering, requesting, commanding, advising, recommending, and challenging.

Table 1: Searle's (1979) Classification of Speech Acts

Category	Sub-categories
Assertives	stating, boasting, complaining, claiming, reporting, asserting, describing, announcing, insisting, guessing, forecasting, predicting, introducing, calling, complimenting concluding, reasoning, hypothesizing, telling, insisting, or swearing
Directives	requesting, warning, inviting, questioning, ordering, commanding, advising, reassuring, summoning, entreating, asking, directing, bidding, forbidding, instructing, begging, recommending, suggesting, daring, defying, and challenging.
Expressives	Greeting, thanking, apologizing, regretting, commiserating, congratulating, condoling, deploring, welcoming, surprising, blaming, praising.
Commissives	Promising, vowing, offering, threatening, refusing, pledging, intending, vowing to do or to refrain from doing something
Declarations	Declaring, christening, firing from employment, resigning, dismissing, naming, excommunicating, appointing, sentencing, blessing, firing, baptizing, and bidding.

Data Collection Procedure

No one can deny the role of dialogues and conversations IN providing situations for speakers to make use of different speech acts in their speech. Guerin (2004, p. 6) stated that “to have an appropriate sample size in Conversation Analysis, we need to analyze samples of “natural” conversations based on the topics, or recall of such conversations if necessary, and find out how the topics are being used in those conversations: are they jokes; are they serious of issues in which the speakers try to persuade each other; are they to entertain the group listening; are they gossiping devices?” Therefore, in order to obtain a measure regarding speech acts, the conversation parts in both textbooks of *Prospect 1* and *Prospect 2* were examined. Though in qualitative research, analyzing 10% of the whole population is considered enough, the researchers decided to analyze all the conversation available in both textbooks. The conversations were different both in length and in number. Prospect 1 and 2 consists of various conversations, some lengthy and some short dialogues. Nevertheless, all conversations and dialogues were investigated in search of speech acts based on Searle's (1979) classification of speech acts.

Data analysis procedure

For the qualitative section of the study, the main statistical analysis used is frequency to indicate the distribution level of speech acts. No special statistical analyses have been required there due to its qualitative nature. Thus, the entire analysis was carried out by careful inspection of the conversations included in the two books of Prospect 1 and prospect 2 on the basis of Searle's (1979) speech acts. The purpose of this observation was to find out the types of speech acts involved in the contents of the dialogues. Fundamentally, some simple statistical analyses like counting the frequencies of the occurrence of each sub-category of Searle's (1979) speech act taxonomy as well as their percentages presented in different tables were done.

Furthermore, the chi-square test was reported in order to better illustrate the distribution levels of these pragmatic variables. Therefore, a chi-square test has been applied to manifest whether the distribution level of speech acts is equivalent or not. The frequency of each speech act each textbook was counted and calculated. The main focus of the researchers was on the content analysis of the textbook through which they examined the contexts of using speech acts in these textbooks.

As it is mentioned, after the types of speech acts in the two groups were all determined, the frequency of occurrence and the percentage for each category were determined to answer the first two questions raised in this research. Finally, the reliability of the results was checked by two independent raters, and inter rater reliability was calculated.

On the quantitative part of the study Chi-square formula was applied to make a comparison between the distribution rate of the speech act types within each book and answer the third and fourth research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Speech acts in Prospect one

In this section, all the dialogues of the abovementioned textbooks were scrutinized in terms of Searle's (1979) speech act category. The results which revealed some significant findings are presented in this section. The codification of the dialogue in the first lesson is presented here as an example.

Lesson one (sample)

1. Shayan: Mr. Chaychi, this is my cousin Sam. (*Assertives: introducing*) He speaks French, English, and a little Persian. (*Assertives: informing*).
2. Teacher: Oh, (*Expressives: praising*) nice to meet you, Sam. (*Expressive: greetings*)
3. Sam: Nice to meet you, too. (*Expressive: greetings*)
4. Teacher: Are you from Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
5. Sam: Yes, I'm originally Iranian, (*Assetrives: admitting*) but I live in France. (*Assertives: informing*)
6. Teacher: Welcome to our class. (*Expressives: welcoming*). How do you like it in Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
7. Sam: Iran is great! (*Assertives: describing*). I love it. (*Assertives: stating*) It's a beautiful country. (*Assertives: claiming*)

The frequency, mean and percentages related to the speech act use in Iranian EFL textbooks prospect one are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of speech act categories in Prospect One

Speech act Category	Frequency	mean	percentage
Assertive	33	6.4	40.5%
Directive	30	6	37.97%
Expressive	14	2.8	17.72%
Commissive	3	0.6	3.79%
Declarative	0	0	0%
Total	80		

According to Table 2, assertive speech act (mean= 6.4; percentage =40.5) was found as the most frequently used speech act in *Prospect one* followed by directive speech act (mean=6; percentage=37.97), Expressive (mean=2.8; percentage =17.72), and Commissive speech acts (mean= 0.6; percentage= 3.79), respectively. Furthermore, it was found that that declaration speech acts were never used in the dialogues of *Prospect one* with mean score of 0. Analyzing all speech acts based on Searle's (1979) classification revealed the most and the least frequently used speech acts in more details.

Assertive as the most frequent category comprised 40.5 percent of the whole data, while both categories of directive and expressive occurred 37.97 and 17.72 percent (see table 4.1). The main body of speech acts performed in both textbook series belonged to the three categories of

assertive, directive, and expressive. The frequency of occurrence of these categories is 77, altogether. This number equals 96.19 percent of the total 80 speech acts.

Results of analysis of Speech acts in Prospect Two

The dialogues of the second book were also codified according to Searle's (1979) speech act category. The results of which revealed are presented in this section. The codification of the dialogue in the first lesson is presented here as an example.

Lesson 1 (sample)

1. Shayan: Mr. Chaychi, this is my cousin Sam. (*Assertives: introducing*) He speaks French, English, and a little Persian. (*Assertives: informing*).
2. Teacher: Oh, (*Expressives: praising*) nice to meet you, Sam. (*Expressive: greetings*)
3. Sam: Nice to meet you, too. (*Expressive: greetings*)
4. Teacher: Are you from Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
5. Sam: Yes, I'm originally Iranian, (*Assetrives: admitting*) but I live in France. (*Assertives: informing*)
6. Teacher: Welcome to our class. (*Expressives: welcoming*). How do you like it in Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
7. Sam: Iran is great! (*Assertives: describing*). I love it. (*Assertives: stating*) It's a beautiful country. (*Assertives: claiming*)

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of speech act categories in Prospect Two

Speech act Category	Frequency	mean	percentage
Assertive	37	7.2	41.37%
Directive	33	6	37.93%
Expressive	16	3.2	18.39%
Commissive	2	1.2	2.29%
Declaration	0	0	0%
Total	88		

As shown in Table 3 regarding speech act use in conversation sections of *Prospect Two*, assertive with the mean of 7.2 and percentages of 41.37 was found to be the most frequently used speech act. Directive (mean=6 and Percentage=37.93) was the next speech act use in the conversations. The third rank of speech act use belong to expressive (mean=3.2 and Percentage=18.39) followed by commissive speech act (mean=1.2 and Percentage=2.29) with the least frequency and percentage. Similar to the other book declarative speech acts were not found in the dialogues of Prospect Two.

Comparison of speech act within Prospect 1 and 2

To answer the second and fourth research questions of whether there are any significant differences in the distribution of each speech act in the in the dialogues of Prospect 1 and Prospect 2, two chi-square test was performed. The results of analysis for Prospect One and Two are presented in Tables 4 and 5 respectively.

Table 4: Chi-Square for Goodness of Fit of Speech Acts in Prospect One

Speech Act	Observed	Expected	Difference	Difference Sq.	Diff. Sq. / ExpFr
Assertive	33	20	13.00	169.00	8.45
Directive	30	20	10	100.00	5.00
Expressive	14	20	-6.00	36.00	1.80
Commissive	3	20	-17.00	289.00	14.45
Total					29.700

The Chi² value is: 29.7 The P-Value is < 0.001. The result is significant at $p \leq 0.05$. Table 4 shows the chi-square test of distribution of each speech act in the conversation section of the *Prospect One*. As the results reveal the chi-square value is: 29.7, and the P-Value is < 0.001. Therefore, the result is significant at $p \leq 0.05$. so as the results of chi-square test reveals the distribution of speech acts in prospect one were not equally preferred $X^2 = (3, N=80) = 29.70$, $p \geq 0.05$. According to the statistical conventions, the use of the chi-square tests is inappropriate if any expected frequency is below 1 or if the expected frequency is less than 5 in more than 20% of your cells. Therefore, declaration speech act whose frequency is zero is not included in chi-square test.

Table 5: Chi-Square for Goodness of Fit of Speech Acts in Prospect Two

Speech Act	Observed	Expected	Difference	Difference Sq.	Diff. Sq. / ExpFr
Assertive	37	22	15.00	225.00	10.23
Directive	33	22	11.00	121.00	5.50
Expressive	16	22	-6.00	36.00	1.64
Commissive	2	22	-20.00	400.00	18.18
Total					35.545

Based on the data in Table 5, the chi-square test of distribution of each speech act in the conversation section of the *Prospect two* reveals some interesting information. The results show that there is a significant difference among subcomponents of speech acts in prospect two $X^2 = (3, N=88) = 35.54$, $p \geq 0.05$. Again, according to the statistical conventions, the use of the chi-square tests is inappropriate if any expected frequency is below 1 or if the expected frequency is less than 5 in more than 20% of your cells. Therefore, declaration speech act whose frequency is zero is not included in chi-square test.

According to the points discussed in the previous research questions with regard to the types and the frequency of speech acts in the conversations, it is revealed that the conversations in the newly published Prospect series (1 & 2) have a number of significant shortcomings, such as the lack of declaration speech act, and the inequality and variation in the distribution of speech acts. To be regarded as pragmatically competent, the conversations in these two textbooks must include all types of speech acts which are all used in the real-life communications. Besides, these speech acts must be used and distributed among the conversations in such a systematic way that when being read, studied, and practiced, all types of them can be recognized by learners' and applied in their speaking performance. In other words, not only must all types of Searle's (1979)

speech acts be present in the conversations of the books, but also they must be distributed equally and at the same frequency or percentage among all of the conversations.

Furthermore, with regard to what Guerin (2004) states in terms of the type of sampling and the criterion for this sample to be analyzed, this equality in the distribution of speech acts must be on the basis of topical or thematic contexts. These contexts in these textbooks are, actually, in the same line with different units or chapters of the books, each of which deals with a particular and real-life topics or themes. One suggestion is that teachers can select the materials in the classrooms that model the real language situations. To familiarize learners with different components of communicative competence especially in the use of speech acts, some activities such as tape recordings, role-playing activities, video films, and TV shows are suggested by the researchers. Textbooks as the major source of teaching and learning process in Iranian EFL teaching settings should contain the adequate number of speech acts to promote learners' pragmatic competence. To design textbooks with sufficient number of speech acts conforming to the norms followed by native speakers of the language, EFL textbook writers should be linguistically and pragmatically competent in the target language in order to be able to incorporate the right number of speech acts in EFL textbooks. To recap, the speech acts deserve further attention when designing material and textbooks for Iranian learners of English. Therefore, these pragmatic variables, i.e. speech acts, must be distributed equally not only all over the entire conversations of these two books, but also in each one of the units, which focuses on a particular and natural theme in everyday life.

Therefore, according to what has been said up to this point, the *Prospect One* and *Two* which are claimed to have significant improvements in terms of communicative language teaching principles comparing with the previous series (*Path to English*) have serious problems with regard to the pragmatic dimension. In other words, the results of the present study revealed that the conversations in *Prospect One* and *Two* are not pragmatically competent and learners are strongly recommended to be more careful of these two beginner-level textbooks if they choose them to start improving their speaking performance through their conversations. In fact, taking a quick look at the results, one can easily recognize the above-mentioned pitfalls.

Unlike the common belief and considering the problems in syllabus design, being newly published does not guarantee the appropriateness of textbooks for language teaching programs. Similarly, this study proved that the two newly published textbooks *Prospect 1* and *Prospect 2* are not pragmatically competent and suitable for learners who now feel the need to gain communicative competence more than ever. Furthermore, the researchers thoroughly examined all conversations in the *Prospect* series and it was revealed that the series fell short of supporting the communicative competence. Owing to inequality of speech acts' distribution, the learners exposed to these textbooks might be competent in using one speech acts but unable to produce another.

This study can be of great consideration to those who claim responsibility for EFL/ESL courses and syllabus designers. In choosing or developing textbooks and other kinds of teaching materials, textbook writers need to be aware of the research findings in order to select materials

that are authentic and motivating for learners. Conversation has recently become a focus of interest for speech act theory and several proposals have been formulated concerning the possible extension of speech act theory to the analysis of conversation. There is a common sense argument shared by philosophers and linguists in favor of the possible extension of speech act theory to textbook evaluation. Speech acts are not isolated moves in communication. They appear in more global units of communication, defined as conversations or discourses. Therefore, a course book must meet a number of criteria, in order to legitimately claim the title of Communicative Language Teaching.

First and foremost, it should correspond to the learners' communicative needs. In this context, it is crucial for the syllabus designers to include a wide variety of speech acts. It seems that syllabus designers should consider the recent classification of speech acts such as requesting, inviting, complaining, apologizing, etc. in designing textbooks because it appears that these categories are universal in all languages and they deserve more attention. One possible solution would be the using of successful dialogues reflecting the sociocultural norms of the target language to increase learners' understanding of linguistic behavior of the Iranian EFL learners. The second suggestion is modifying textbook dialogues authored by the Iranian textbook writers. This study can also provide material developers and textbook writers with the necessary information regarding the pragmatic dimension of the conversation sections of these beginner-level textbooks. Textbook developers can take the pragmatic pitfalls of the conversations of Prospect 1 and Prospect 2 into consideration as a useful source to modify and revise other developing textbooks. This study recommends the developers and the editors of Prospect 1 and Prospect 2 to take the reported pragmatic shortcomings under the rigorous scrutiny so as to consider and use all types of language functions and speech acts, and to balance them to the same range or level.

CONCLUSION

This study was partly descriptive and partly comparative. In the descriptive part, it first attempted to determine the type and the number of speech acts used in two textbooks. In the comparative part, it tried to investigate if there was an equal distribution in the number and type of speech acts categories performed in the two series. Previous research proved that speech acts categories are considered as one of the universals of all languages and these categories are said to be found in all languages nearly with the same range or frequencies. The results showed discrepancies in the use of speech acts between the two series. The frequencies of speech act categories in the above mentioned textbooks were different. In this section, we have presented concluding remarks regarding the hypotheses with respect to the results. This study intended to examine the pragmatic aspect of the students' textbooks to find the availability of opportunities to teach pragmatic competence to EFL learners. The pragmatic content of newly developed English textbooks, Prospect 1 and Prospect 2 was investigated to examine the types and frequencies of speech acts used in the dialogues. According to the points discussed in the previous research questions with regard to the types and the frequencies of speech acts in the conversations, it is revealed that the conversations in the newly published Prospect series (1 &2) have a number of significant shortcomings, such as the lack of declaration speech act, and the inequality and variation in the distribution of speech acts. To be regarded as pragmatically competent, the

conversations in these two textbooks must include all types of speech acts which are all used in the real-life communications. Besides, these speech acts must be used and distributed among the conversations in such a systematic way that when being read, studied, and practiced, all types of them can be recognized in learners' speaking performance. In other words, not only should all types of Searle's (1979) speech acts be present in the conversations of the books, but also they should be distributed equally and at the same frequency or percentage among all the conversations.

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GOOD LANGUAGE LEARNERS' PREFERENCES FOR MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES: A FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate and explore the motivational strategies employed by good language learners and examine students' differences in using the most-highly used motivational strategies with respect to the gender of the participants. The procedures were done with participation of twenty male and female (10 male and 10 female) students majoring Teaching English Foreign Language at Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj, Iran. The researcher, having divided the students into two groups, used focus group interview. The researcher acting as a facilitator guided the groups based on a predetermined set of topics. The result of quantitative and qualitative investigations and calculations showed that the learners mentioned 158 cases of motivational strategies categorized into 17 factors. These factors were both integrative, such as engaging in problem-solving activities, enjoying success, positive attitudes towards L2 speakers as well as increasing self-esteem and instrumental, like finding job, getting higher degrees, and promoting in current work. Also, the most commonly cited factors from the most to the least included pursuing studies (12.7%), finding good job (11.4 %), spending more time (10.1 %), engaging in problem-solving activities (10.1 %), and getting higher marks (9.5 %). The difference between the five most frequently-used motivational strategies with respect to the gender of the participants who were good language learners showed that: a) female students were more motivated in learning English, b) as for finding good job, male students were more motivated to learn English, c) as for spending more time, engaging in problem-solving activities and getting high grades, the difference between male and female students was not significant.

KEYWORDS: Motivational Strategies, Good Language Learner

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, research on L2 motivation has focused on the social-psychological perspectives that create interest in learning and facilitate in sustaining it among which factors such as “integrative motivation” and “intrinsic motivation” (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 132) were more prominent. Later on, the impact of motivation was examined from cognitive psychology

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perspectives and motivation was regarded as “intrinsic motivation” (i.e., doing something as an end in itself) and “extrinsic motivation” (i.e., doing something as a means to some separable outcome) (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.41).

Nevertheless, motivation, itself, has not been sufficient since there is also another aspect to motivation that every learner most likely has encountered at some point: Motivational strategies. Similar to research carried out on learning strategies, Dörnyei (2001) underscored the use of discussion and joint experience in raising learners’ awareness of the strategies. As a matter of fact, it is rather difficult to theorize the motivational strategies. It can be taken as a driving force that energizes human behavior and orients it for better performance.

It has already been documented that motivation performs an effective role in second language acquisition. A sheer number of research explored L2 motivation, examining its complex nature and the way in which it influences the L2 learning process (Clément, 1980; Gardner, 1979; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Ushioda, 2009, to name but a few). So there is a benefit to such sorts of research works because of linking theory to practice by transferring motivational theories into techniques and strategies that can be applied by EFL teachers in the classrooms. The present study set out to explore and examine motivational strategies from the perspectives of EFL student in the context of Iran.

During the last five decades, much research has been conducted in the field of L2 motivation and its relevance to the success in L2 learning (e.g., Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 1985). The primary studies of L2 motivation are influenced by the work of Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972), focusing on the social psychological approach. A key issue to this perspective is the view of L2 motivation as a determining factor which leads to L2 achievement. A noteworthy development in L2 motivation research occurred in the 1990s during which research in the field expanded to incorporate cognitive and educational views of L2 motivation (e.g., Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Ushioda, 1996a). During this time, research into L2 motivation emphasized the teacher’s role in motivating students as well as the importance of the learning environment.

Since the current study is to focus on the contribution of motivational strategies to good language learners, it should be mentioned that research in the area of characteristics of good language learners has been the home of choice for SLA researchers since mid-1970. According to Griffiths (2008), in conducting such research, both learning and learner variables should be taken into account. However, one topic that has not been touched in this domain is the relationship between the characteristics of good language learner and the use of motivational strategies. It is evident that good language learners are motivated students.

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

One of the key factors to determine success in learning a foreign language is Learner’s motivation. Motivation researchers suggested that motivational strategies that learners’ motivation toward learning a foreign language can be effectively influenced by using teachers

(e.g., Banya & Cheng, 1997; Dörnyei, 1994a; Fives & Manning, 2005; Stipek, 1996). In 2001, Dörnyei demonstrated the motivational strategies in his text, *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*. Creating the basic motivational conditions, generating initial motivation, maintaining, and protecting motivation and rounding off the learning experience (encouraging positive self-evaluation) are the groups of motivational strategies. Based on this idea, the concept of all these strategies is teacher behavior and beliefs significantly affect students' motivation for learning a foreign language. For this reason, an important aspect of motivation toward learning a foreign language is strategies in motivating language learners.

Therefore, motivational techniques have been constructed and summarized in several research studies for teachers in classroom application (e.g., Alison & Halliwell, 2002; Brown, 2001; Chambers, 1999; Williams & Burden, 1997). Moreover, several relevant motivational components into a multilevel are integrated by Dörnyei (1994a), motivational construct in second-language is based on understanding the second language motivation from an educational view. He made a practical motivational strategy list based on these components comprised of thirty strategies for helping language teachers better understand what motivates their students in the second language classroom. The result shows that not only motivational strategies can influence learners' motivation, but also that teachers play significant roles to help learners establish self-confidence and achieve successes that can crucially influence motivation (Fives & Manning, 2005; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant & Mihic, 2004).

Accordingly there is a severe lack of research on the determining role of L2 learner's motivational strategies in terms of the new perspectives of motivation including the social and cultural context of motivation in promoting good language learners. The problem lies in the fact that most of the students just focus on cognitive aspects and strategies to improve their English, and they underrate the role of emotional factors in their success. Likewise, research on L2 motivation deals with what makes a person want to learn a second language and what maintains him or her interested in learning. However, motivation to learn a second language is a complex construct, taking into account that language is always socially and culturally bound and hence, quite different from other school subjects (Dörnyei, 2001). Particularly, to gain mastery over a L2 is also a social event that is unavoidably accompanied by some elements of the L2 culture.

The current study, as an initial attempt, tries to identify the motivational strategies that learners employ to function well in English language, and in so doing, focus group interview is the focus of this study to figure out the relevant data. Having identified the motivational strategies, the researcher explores the most influential strategies used by good language learners. What mainly prompted this study was the novelty of this particular area of research, that is, the relationship between motivational strategies and good language learner. Based on Vygotskyian Sociocultural theory of mind (1978), higher order cognitive functions are internalized from social interaction with more competent others. Therefore, using group discussion and interaction, finding out the strategies employed by learners who are successful in learning a second language would lead to better understanding of the strategies that play significant roles in learning. L2 motivation is needed to help learners expend and persist in their effort in an L2 learning process which might extend over a long period of time.

Therefore, this study investigates the motivational strategies which EFL learners use to promote their learning process in Iranian context. In particular, it considers the perceptions of EFL students about different motivational strategies. This definition assumes that teachers can apply some motivational strategies in order to raise learners' motivation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to examine the application of motivational strategies by successful L2 learners, the current study set out to provide answers for the following questions:

1. What factors do determine the motivational strategies employed by good language learners?
2. What is the frequency and order of importance of the motivational strategies employed by good language learners?
3. Are there any significant differences between motivational strategies and good language learners with respect to the gender of the participants?

The first research question of the present study mentioned above is a qualitative question; therefore, no research hypothesis is formulated for it. However, the following null hypotheses were formulated for the two quantitative questions (i.e., the second and third research questions) of the current study:

H02: There are no significant differences between motivational strategies and good language learners with respect to the gender of the participants.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study follows two theoretical frameworks to explore and examine the association between the motivational strategies and good language learners: 1) "Motivational strategies" proposed by Dornyei (2005) and "characteristics of good language learners" suggested by Rubin and Thomson (1983, cited in Nunan, 1999). The guidelines suggested by Dornyei (2005) are factors based on which the individual's goal-related behavior are promoted. The present study followed the guidelines proposed by Dornyei (2005) regarding the L2 Motivational Self System, including the following three components:

(1) Ideal L2 Self, which is the L2-specific facet of one's 'ideal self': if the person we would like to become speaks an L2, the 'ideal L2 self' is a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves. Traditional integrative and internalized instrumental motives would typically belong to this component. (2) Ought-to L2 Self, which concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes. This dimension corresponds to Higgins's ought self and thus to the more extrinsic (i.e. less internalized) types of instrumental motives.

(3) L2 Learning Experience, which concerns situated, 'executive' motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success). This component is conceptualized at a different level

from the two self-guides and future research will hopefully elaborate on the self-aspects of this bottom-up process.

Since the dependent variable in this study is good language learner, the present study also pays attention to the perceptions of good language learners regarding the reasons that they offer for their successes and their attributions for their successes. The theoretical framework that frames the characteristics of good language learners for the present study refers to Rubin and Thomson's (1983, cited in Nunan, 1999, p. 57) theory of efficient including the following features: 1) finding their own way, 2) organizing information about language, 3) being creative and experiment with language, 4) making their own opportunities, 5) finding strategies for getting practice in using the language inside and outside the classroom, 6) living with uncertainty and develop strategies for making sense of the target language without wanting to understand every word, 7) using linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language in mastering a second language, 8) letting the context (extra-linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world) helps them in comprehension, 9) learning production techniques (e.g., techniques for keeping conversation going), and 10) learning different styles of speech and writing and learn to vary their language according to the formality of the situation.

Therefore, The aims of the study were to 1) identify, analyze and categorize the motivational strategies employed by good language learners at Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj, 2) tabulate the frequency and order of the most highly used motivational strategies, and 3) investigate the association between motivational strategies and good language learners in terms of the most frequently-cited factors emerged from L2 learners' responses. The researcher tried to collect the relevant data regarding the major variables including good language learner characteristics as dependent variable, and motivational strategies as independent variable, and used relevant statistical procedures to carry out his research work. To conduct the interview, the researcher followed Semi-structured focus group interview.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were 20 male and female EFL students majoring in TEFL at Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj. To select the students, first, the researcher chose those students who were between 6th and 8th (junior & senior) semester since they have had enough experience of engaging with learning English language. Then, he went for those students whose average points met certain criteria, that is, they had the required mean score that was 16+ to confirm the sample homogeneity. Following this, the researcher distributed Nelson Test of Proficiency to them and, finally, 20 students were selected based on their higher scores on the test. The students were willing to take part in the study and they were divided into two groups including 10 male and 10 female students. The number of students in each group was small enough to give everyone the opportunity to express an opinion and simultaneously, large enough to provide diversity of opinions. The researcher named the two groups as Group A (including male students) and Group B (including female students).

Instrumentation

The major instrument used in this study was “focus group interview” to collect data from multiple individuals simultaneously.

The researcher used “semi-structured type of focus group” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 144) to conduct the research which is the most common format because it included three major questions (See appendix A) posed by the researcher rather than giving the participants freedom to discuss some broad topics.

Procedures

To collect data for the study concerning the extent to which students employ the motivational strategies introduced by Dornyei (2001), the researcher, having divided the students in two groups, used focus group interview since a focus group is a group interview of approximately six to twelve people who share similar characteristics or common interests. The researcher acting as a facilitator guided the group based on a predetermined set of topics. She created an environment that encouraged participants to share their perceptions and points of view.

The researcher held four sessions for each group separately in a quiet classroom and each session and since focus groups typically last about 60 minutes, she tried to pose the questions and leading hints in a way that the session did not last more than around 60 minutes. The researcher guided the group through the discussion and kept the group focused on the topics for discussion. She also asked one of her friends to act as the note-taker and recorder during the sessions. The note-taker was just an observer and did not interact with the group. The notes included a sense of what each person said; identifying how comments were said; and recording when transitions occurred from one topic to the next. She was also responsible for recording the focus group discussion. The recordings were then transcribed by the researcher to figure out and categorize the common themes elicited from students' responses.

To collect the data from students' response three alternatives were possible. Indeed, Focus group data can arise from one of the following three types: individual data, group data, and/or group interaction data (Duggleby, 2005). Focus group theorists disagree as to the most appropriate unit of analysis for focus group data to analyze (i.e., individual, group, or interaction). Some theorists believe that the individual or the group should be the focus of the analysis instead of the unit of analysis (Kidd & Marshall, 2000). However, most focus group researchers use the group as the unit of analysis (Morgan, 1997). The researcher of the present study also used the group as the unit of analysis since it also included the interaction between group members. The researcher believed that out of interaction themes arose that was more than the individual data. By doing so, the researcher coded the data and presented emergent themes.

The researcher provided a focus group guide for herself which included a series of questions and prompts to use during the interview sessions. She asked the relevant questions of the group and allowed time for participants to respond to each other's comments. The focus group guide served as a “road map” and memory aid for the facilitator. The same focus group guide was used for each focus group.

To analyze the data gathered from students' responses and interactions, the researcher first explored different techniques used to analyze the data. Indeed, the frameworks of Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) suggest several qualitative analysis techniques that can be used to analyze focus group data. Specifically, the analytical techniques that lend themselves to focus group data are constant comparison analysis, classical content analysis, keywords-in-context, and discourse analysis (for a review of analytical techniques, see, for example, Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

The researcher of the present study made use of both constant comparison analysis and classical content analysis to analyze data. With reference to constant comparison analysis, she followed the three major stages of the constant comparison analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During the first stage (i.e., open coding), the data were chunked into small units. The researcher attached a descriptor, or code, to each of the units. Then, during the second stage (i.e., axial coding), these codes were grouped into categories. Finally, in the third stage (i.e., selective coding), the researcher developed one or more themes expressing the content of each of the groups.

With regard to classical content analysis, the researcher created smaller chunks of the data, placing a code with each chunk. However, instead of creating a theme from the codes (as with constant comparison analysis), with classical content analysis, these codes then were placed into similar groupings and counted. The researcher, first, identified whether each participant used a given code, then, she assesses whether each group used a given code, and finally, she identified all instances of a given code. The researchers not only provided information regarding the frequency of each code (i.e., quantitative information) but supplemented these data with a rich description of each code (i.e., qualitative information), which would create a mixed methods content analysis.

RESULT AND FINDING

Results from Focus Group Interview with Good Language Learners

To explore the first research question, the researcher employed Focus Group Interview, following the guidelines proposed by Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) through which initially the researcher acting as a facilitator posed open-ended questions and closed-ended questions in English language and let students express their ideas while her friend acting as note-taker, wrote down the verbal and non-verbal communication data and she also recorded their voices using audio-tape recorder. The researcher finally came up with common themes employing the techniques of open-coding, axial-coding and selective coding to analyze data.

The researcher started the interview with demographic question as follows: Would you please introduce yourself one-by-one in brief to the group, and immediately asked the questions already constructed to follow a semi-structured focus group interview. Here are the questions and some common statements elicited from the two groups including Group A (10 male students) and Group B (10 female students).

Question 1:

1. Could you talk about the characteristics of a good language learner?

The group interviews obtained from transcribing the responses out of group analysis revealed the following findings:

Group A:

Good language learners have self-esteem and they are confident. They practice as much as possible. They try their best to learn in the classroom and concentrate on whatever they study. A good language learner participates actively in class discussion. Students should rely on themselves not the teacher and a good language learner should be competent in listening skills more than anything else. Moreover, good language learners attribute their success to themselves not significant others, and their success is the result of their effort not their intelligence.

Group B:

Good language learners are willing to attend the classes. They pay attention to details more. They think that a good language learner should speak fluently and has good accent. They write their homework well. They should memorize vocabulary and grammatical points. They are more reflective than impulsive, reflecting on what they have learned and on their lectures. They like to be checked by the teachers and they attribute their success to significant others, not their own effort. They have good marks.

Question 2:

2. To what extent does motivation determine your success in learning English?

Group A:

Motivation is a key factor in successful language learning because if we have possessed motivation, we could put away the obstacles and always tries to learn more. When we are motivated, we spend more time to learn. A good language learner has a driving force and will not leave his studies if he finds the task difficult. When we see that we are developing, we expect ourselves to progress more and this is a good indication of having motivation. We not only study our lessons but also learn from outside textbooks and films.

Group B:

To a great extent, learning depends on our motivation. Motivation increases our desire to learn English and become successful learners. Sometimes, some students say that if I fail to pass the final test in this or that course, I will give up my studies. Or, there are students who say that what is the difference between getting 12 or 20? We believe that they have not enough motivation and they think about how much they get at the end of the term, but, we think about both how much we get at the end of the term and how much we learned from the course at the end of the term. We like to learn more vocabulary because we are interested in learning them. Motivation helps us enjoy our learning. Indeed, when the teacher or our family praises us, we feel happy and when we see our good course grades, we become excited.

Question 3:

3. What motivational factors do help you sustain in learning English?

Group A:

We like to promote in works (teaching in private institutes) in English language. Learning English language increases our self-confidence and we feel satisfaction, say, when we see that we are watching an original film and can understand the films. We like to find the answer to the questions ourselves when listening to a track and we like to have teacher but as a mediator who provides hints for us not giving the answer at once. Indeed, we like to engage in problem-solving activities. We do not need to have forces from outside to study; we are worried if we find a good textbook about English language skills or components unread. We also learn English language to continue our studies and find a good job. We like to go abroad and communicate well with other people through English language. Motivation increases self-esteem and self –efficacy. When we are motivated, we participate actively without worrying about our mistakes.

Group B:

We like to pursue our studies. We are studying with together and we have a calm environment and we support each other in our lessons and our homework. We learn better in classes where the teacher does not cause stress for us. When we speak in English like native speakers or we write an E-mail in English language, we feel happy. We have a positive attitude towards English culture and try to learn the good points from their cultures; for example, to be honest, to be frank, and to be lively. We like to learn both linguistically and non-linguistically, such as performing well on the tests and paying attention to cultural values. Moreover, educated people are expected to know English language.

Frequency and order of motivational strategies

To find an answer for the second research question, the researcher, first, made use of three stages of coding. He chunked the data into small units during the stage of open coding. Then, he attached a code to each of the units, and these codes were grouped into categories during the stage of axial coding. Finally, the researcher developed one or more themes expressing the content of each of the groups in the stage of selective coding. In the last stage, these codes then were placed into similar groupings and counted. The number and frequency of the categories that motivated the students to learn English were tabulated by the researcher using Descriptive Statistics. Therefore, the first research hypothesis with regard to the frequency of motivational categories was rejected.

Altogether, 158 cases were elicited from focus group interview and they were categorized into 17 factors. The results from the SPSS Software for Windows version 21: 00 yielded interesting frequency. The most commonly cited factors included pursuing our studies (12.7%), finding good job (11.4 %), spending more time (10.1 %), engaging in problem-solving activities (10.1 %), and getting higher marks (9.5 %).

The relationship between the most frequently cited motivational strategies and good language learners with respect to gender

Pursuing studies

Table 1: The number of cases pursuing their studies

		pursuing studies		Total
		Mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	Male	6	14	20
	Female	14	6	20
Total		20	20	40

As displayed by Table 1, the number of cases for pursuing studies mentioned by males was 6 and by female were 14.

Table 2: Chi-square test for pursuing studies

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.40a	1	.01		
Continuity Correctionb	4.90	1	.02		
Likelihood Ratio	6.58	1	.01		
Fisher's Exact Test				.02	.01
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.24	1	.01		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

To see if the difference between the two categorical variables is significant, we refer to the next table. The main value that should be checked in from the output is the first chi-square value which is presented in Table 3, headed Pearson Chi-Square. In the table, the value is 6.40, with an associated significance level of .00 (this is presented in the column labeled Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)). To be significant the Sig. value needs to be .05 or smaller, and in this case, the value of .01 is less than the alpha value of .05; thus, it is concluded that that the result is significant. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to pursuing studies is significant; female students are more motivated to learn English language in order to pursue their studies.

Finding good job

Table 3: The number of cases for finding good job

		finding good job		Total
		Mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	Male	12	6	18
	Female	6	12	18
Total		18	18	36

The number of cases discussed by the good language learners for finding good job with reference to male students was 12 and the number of cases for female students was 6. Out of 20 students, 18 students mentioned it in their talks (See Table 3).

Table 4: Chi-square test for finding good job

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.0a	1	.04		
Continuity Correctionb	2.7	1	.09		
Likelihood Ratio	4.0	1	.04		
Fisher's Exact Test				.09	.04
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.8	1	.04		
N of Valid Cases	36				

- a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.00.
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

With reference to Table 5, the results demonstrated that the difference between the two categorical variables for finding good job is significant. The main value obtained from the chi-square is 4.00, with an associated significance level of .04. The significant value is .04 which is less than the alpha value of .05, so that it is concluded that the result is significant. This means the difference between male and female students with reference to finding good job is significant; male students are more motivated to learn English language in order to finding good job.

Spending more time

Table 5: The number of cases for spending more time

		spending more time		Total
		Mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	Male	9	7	16
	Female	7	9	16
Total		16	16	32

As shown in Table 5, the number of cases discussed by the good language learners for spending more time with reference to male students was 7 and the number of cases for female students was 9.

Table 6: Chi-square test for spending more time

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.50a	1	.48		
Continuity Correctionb	.12	1	.72		
Likelihood Ratio	.51	1	.47		
Fisher's Exact Test				.72	.36
Linear-by-Linear Association	.48	1	.48		
N of Valid Cases	32				

- a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.00.
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

As for spending more time, the results demonstrated that the difference between the male and female students is not significant. Indeed, this time, the main value obtained from the chi-square is .50. The significant value is .48 which is larger than the alpha value of .05; thus, the result is not significant. This shows that both male and female students spend more time for studying

appropriately in the same amount. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to spending more time is not significant. This shows that both male and female students spend time for studying appropriately in the same amount (See Table 6).

Engaging in problem-solving activities

Table 7: The number of cases for engaging in problem-solving activities

		engaging in problem-solving activities		Total
		mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	male	8	8	16
	female	8	8	16
Total		16	16	32

As displayed by Table 7, the number of cases engaging in problem-solving activities mentioned by males and females was the same, that is, male students mentioned it 8 times and female students mentioned it 8 times.

Table 8: Chi-square test for engaging in problem-solving activities

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.00a	1	1.00		
Continuity Correction ^b	.00	1	1.00		
Likelihood Ratio	.00	1	1.00		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.00	.63
Linear-by-Linear Association	.00	1	1.00		
N of Valid Cases	32				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Regarding engaging in problem-solving activities, the results showed that the difference between the male and female students is not significant. Indeed, this time, the main value obtained from the chi-square is .00. The significant value is 1.00 which is larger than the alpha value of .05; thus, the result is not significant. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to engaging in problem-solving activities is not significant (See Table 8).

Getting good grades

Table 9: The number of cases for getting high grades

		getting high grades		Total
		mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	male	6	9	15
	female	9	6	15
Total		15	15	30

The number of cases discussed by the good language learners for getting high grades with reference to male students was 6 and the number of cases for female students was 9.

Table 10: Chi-square test for getting high grades
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.20a	1	.27		
Continuity Correction ^b	.53	1	.46		
Likelihood Ratio	1.20	1	.27		
Fisher's Exact Test				.46	.23
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.16	1	.28		
N of Valid Cases	30				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.50.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Regarding getting high grades, the results showed that the difference between the male and female students is not significant. Indeed, this time, the main value obtained from the chi-square is 1.20. The significant value is .27 which is larger than the alpha value of .05; thus, the result is not significant. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to getting high grades is not significant (See Table 10).

Discussion

The results of the present study are mostly in line with previous research conducted in Iran (e.g., Dastgheib, 1996). Iranian people usually learn English in order to enter prestigious universities and thereby proceed to the highest levels of education and strata in their society (Sadeghi & Maghsudi, 2000). They also have a tendency to study English in order to live and study abroad and get access to rich resource as well as get familiar with cultural aspects of western societies (Tagughi, Magid & Papi, 2009). On the contrary, the results of the present study was not in line with what Matin (2007) found in the context of Iran. Matin (2007) examined the motivational characteristics of university students in Tehran. The results of the study indicated that the participants did not differ in terms of their general orientation to learn English. Indeed, the students were motivated instrumentally and had integrative forces. The knowledge promotion and employment were the highest and lowest factors on the instrumental scale, and interest in the English language ranked the highest and interest in English culture ranked the lowest on the integrative scale.

In sum, based on the findings of the present study and similar findings with regard to motivational forces in the context of Iran, it is obvious that good language learners tend to have prestigious social status in the classroom and in the society. Norton (2000, p. 10) refers to "investment" according to which learners invest in learning a new language so that they can improve their cultural perspectives, their conceptions of themselves and their desires for the future. Indeed, they want to improve their professional identity in the educational communities of practice.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, major conclusions can be drawn from the present study. Firstly, the line research on motivational strategies in the past two decades is not country-specific because similar pattern has been found in some other countries like Hungary and Japan (Dornyie, 2005). This confirms the fact that motivational research has external validity. Secondly, the findings highlight the fact that both integrativeness and instrumentality are important to become good language learners in the context of Iran. Instrumentality can be classified into three major constructs including continuing studies and employment, and integrativeness can be classified into two major constructs entailing spending more time and problem-solving strategies.

The kind of data elicitation in this study was focus group interview based on which interaction and discussion between good language learners confirmed the content validity of the categories emerged and cultural differences were taken into consideration. Although the two groups selected for this study were homogeneous based on their proficiency, the findings revealed interesting facts regarding the gender of the participants. As an example, female students have greater tendency than male students to continue their studies. It is evident today in our universities that female students at MA and PhD levels outnumber male students; however, male students are worried about finding job because of socio-economic factors to be able to afford their future lives and for this reason, the male students outnumber female students in this respect. There are some shared discourses among the individuals, that is, everyone likes to spend more time and learn English better or have a good job. Motivation is the gate for expectancy of success for them, that is to say, those who see their progress, promote in learning since success increases motivation and self-esteem. A critical principle to the maintenance of motivational strategies is that motivation should emerge from the within, that is, from the learner rather than controlled by the teacher.

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THE EFFECT OF VISUAL SCAFFOLDING ON READING COMPREHENSION OF IMPULSIVE VS. REFLECTIVE EFL YOUNG LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of visual scaffolding on reading comprehension of impulsive and reflective young learners. A group of 110 was chosen randomly out of 200 elementary 11-13 year-old students from Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Shiraz, Iran. They were given a KET-for-schools test to choose a homogenous group of 80 elementary students. Then a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barratt's Impulsiveness Questionnaire (BIS-11) was given to students to divide the participants into two groups of Impulsive and Reflective. A KET-for-school test (reading part) was given to all participants as pre-test. Students, then, were assigned to three groups of 25, 25, 30, two experimental groups of 25, one impulsive and other reflective students and a control group of 30. Impulsive and reflective groups were taught using visual instructional scaffolding during 12 sessions. Every session, students were given instructions and were exposed to modeling in order to retell a story, to discuss, to find a solution for a proposed problem, to illustrate data which is driven from a video on a diagram, flowchart or map, to do puzzle while control group received no treatments. A KET-for-school test (Reading part) was set up as post-test to see whether or not teacher's visual instructional scaffolding makes significant impacts on reading comprehension of impulsive and reflective students. It was obviously observed that utilizing the techniques of visual scaffolding has an effect on students' reading comprehension. Moreover the effect of it on reflective students was more than impulsive ones. The analyses of this study indicates that the importance of modeling and teachers' awareness of students' learning style are clearly recognized in young learners classes.

KEYWORDS: Impulsivity, Reading Comprehension, Reflectivity, Visual Scaffolding

INTRODUCTION

As students themselves bring a certain wide range of learning styles, teachers, either consciously or unconsciously, select methods that offer ways of approaching desired language learning. Kneefe (1979, p.4) defined a learning style as "Cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment" while Oxford, Holloway and Horton define it as a whole range of social and affective factors, too. Students' learning styles is influenced by their previous learning experiences, their culture and the society they live in.

To answer why teachers should be aware of students' different learning styles, Sue Davidoff and Owen van den Berg (1990) suggest four important steps: plan, teach / act, observe and reflect.

- Students learn better and more quickly if the teaching methods used match their preferred learning styles.
- As learning improves, so too does self-esteem. This has a further positive effect on learning.
- Students who have become bored with learning may become interested once again.
- The student-teacher relationship can improve because the student is more successful and is more interested in learning.

On the other hand, one of the techniques that could be used to enhance language learning is called scaffolding.

Visual scaffolding is a strategy for teaching English language learners (ELLs) that utilizes drawings, photographs and other visuals in order to help students to better understand the language used in each lesson (Herrell, 26). This strategy encourages active involvement from all students in each lesson. Using methods and resources that add context to the language that a student is learning, such as props, gestures and pictures, contributes to that child's language acquisition and ultimately to the production of new language. Diaz-Rico and Weed (220), and Ovando, Collier, and Combs (2003), believe that teachers who constantly use scaffolding strategies, including visuals and graphics, to assist English learners in multiple areas of learning, are supporting their students in making significant achievements in comprehension of both academic English and curriculum content. The teacher only attempts to help the student with tasks that are just beyond his current capability. "Scaffolding is actually a bridge used to build upon what students already know to arrive at something they do not know. If scaffolding is properly administered, it will act as an enabler, not as a disabler" (Benson, 1997).

Until students can demonstrate task mastery of new or difficult tasks, they are given more assistance or support from a teacher or a more knowledgeable other (MKO). Zhao and Orey (1999) summarize, "scaffolding is a metaphor to characterize a special type of instructional process which works in a task-sharing situation between the teacher and the learner." The authors further delineate this basic idea into two key aspects (or rules): "(a) help the learner with those aspects of the task that the learner cannot manage yet; and (b) allow the learner to do as much as he or she can without help" (p. 6).

Scaffolding benefits:

- Provides individualized instruction
- Greater assurance of the learner acquiring the desired skill, knowledge or ability
- Provides differentiated instruction
- Creates momentum—Through the structure provided by scaffolding, students spend less time searching and more time on learning and discovering resulting in quicker learning
- Engages the learner
- Motivates the learner to learn

- Minimizes the level of frustration for the learner
- Another major benefit of scaffolding is that it supports the five principles of effective teaching highlighted in Ellis, Worthington and Larkin's Executive Summary of the Research Synthesis on Effective Teaching Principles and the Design of Quality Tools for Educators.
These five principles are:
 - *Principle 1:* Students learn more when they are engaged actively during an instructional task.
 - *Principle 2:* High and moderate success rates are correlated positively with student learning outcomes, and low success rates are correlated negatively with student learning outcomes.
 - *Principle 3:* Increased opportunity to learn content is correlated positively with increased student achievement. Therefore, the more content covered, the greater the potential for student learning.
 - *Principle 4:* Students achieve more in classes in which they spend much of their time being directly taught or supervised by their teacher.
 - *Principle 5:* Students can become independent, self-regulated learners through instruction that is deliberately and carefully scaffolded.

Purpose and significance of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine and analyze the impacts of the nonverbal support for language comprehension provided by teachers' use of visual scaffolding, including pointing, representational gestures, diagrams, and other methods of highlighting visual information on reading comprehension of impulsive and reflective young EFL learners and to determine the consistency of these effects through this descriptive pedagogical tool.

Previous studies have shown that visual scaffolding may facilitate listeners' comprehension of speech, particularly when the verbal message is ambiguous or highly complex. These findings suggest that visual scaffolding may be particularly important in instructional settings, in which students' comprehension is often challenged by new concepts and unfamiliar terms. However, little is known about how teachers actually use visual scaffolding in instructional communication or about whether such gestures influence impulsive or reflective students' reading comprehension. Regarding previous studies in this field, some believe in the positive role of effectiveness of visual scaffolding, some others argue this kind of instruction has little or no effect on students' reading comprehension. This study had two aims: (1) to investigate whether visual scaffolding promotes students' reading comprehension, and therefore their learning; and (2) to compare the effects of visual scaffolding on impulsive vs. reflective young learners, by facilitating students' encoding of visual information.

This study examined the effect of teacher's visual scaffolding on reading comprehension of impulsive vs. reflective young EFL learners and is significant in the sense that:

1) ESL/EFL students come to our classrooms with assumptions, usually unconscious, about how learning occurs. As teachers, we also come to our classrooms with assumptions, which are also

usually unconscious, about how learning occurs. When these two sets of assumptions are different, both students and teachers become frustrated. As an ESL/EFL teacher, one needs to address this variation in learning. When teachers want to take decisions about whether or not, for instance, to use visual techniques for impulsive learners, they should consider the aim for using visuals. If the purpose can be achieved in another way, it may be better not to use visuals. Another implication, relates to the dimension of impulsivity versus reflectivity as two learning styles. By using the data on language learning styles, teachers are better able to spot any style conflicts in the language classroom. Teachers can also vary their instructional techniques to meet the needs of students with contrasting styles of learning, to give reflective learners, for instant, more time to think about the new items in a given text.

2) Visual scaffolding data with regard to learning style can help the teacher prepare a language learning environment that accommodates different learners, here reflective and impulsive, alike. The learning environment can establish the class as inclusive, welcoming everyone.

3) Teachers often desire to take incremental steps checking for comprehension and attainment of the desired skills. This study could help teachers to do their best in this controversial issue by initially setting a high goal for students to attain, then, recognizing the skills the students have, building up their skills to meet that goal,.

4) The bulk of the studies conducted on the effectiveness of scaffolding have been done with adult L2 learners. Few of the studies on the effects of teacher visual scaffolding have been conducted on younger learners. The results of this study would provide learners and language teachers with evidence concerning the effectiveness of visual scaffolding by teacher in L2 writing classes.

5) It is important to study this approach at the level of young learners. If the reading curriculum adopts teacher's scaffolding in early classes, students would internalize the techniques of utilizing the hierarchical learning at early ages, and consequently it might take less effort in the most challenging skill in learning English.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Scaffolding is based on the socio-cultural theory popularized by Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky believes that success in gaining knowledge can only be achieved through scaffolding from a knowledgeable person to a novice. This view is shared by other researchers such as Franklin (1996), Mayer (2003) and Mercer (2000). Thus scaffolding can be defined as a metaphor which is derived from the work of Wood et al., (1976) and it is based on Vygotsy's concept of the zone of proximal difference (ZPD) to capture the nature of support and guidance in learning.

The ultimate goal for learning is to gain knowledge. Knowledge is gained when meanings or attributes are attached to information and the learner has clearly defined and stored that information (Tokoro & Steels 2003). Many scholars within the socio-cultural tradition have

shown that language learning is not an individual cognitive process because ELLs are more likely to succeed in learning English as a second language (ESL) when they have teachers, peers, and community members who affirm their cognitive and linguistic capacities and provide support (August & Hakuta, 1997).

Drawing upon pioneering research conducted by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) and other scholars (Maloch, 2002; Rogoff, 1990, 1997) who studied the role of knowledgeable others (e.g., tutor or teacher) in scaffolding, Rodgers (2005) revealed the interactive nature of scaffolding through empirical research that documented the growing control of reading words and independence in the reading process among struggling readers in one-on-one instructional settings. To provide scaffolding that leads to students' successful reading, teachers begin with careful observation of individual learners, respond thoughtfully to learners' needs, and use appropriate instructional materials (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2004). Specific types of teacher questions as a scaffolding technique can promote ESL students' disposition for learning and language development (Cazden, 1988). Kao, Lehman, and Cennamo (1996) postulated that scaffolds could be embedded in hypermedia or multimedia software to provide students with support while using the software. They realized that soft scaffolds are dynamic, situation-specific aids provided by a teacher or peer while hard scaffolds are static and specific.

A series of investigations of reflectivity –impulsivity in children has demonstrated impressive stability over both time and tasks. In addition, the construct has produced meaningful findings concerning IQ (Bryant & Gettinger, 1981; Camara & Fox, 1983) , modifiability (Butter, 1979; Laval, 1980), fluid ability (Cronbach & Snow, 1977) , and a variety of problem solving and decision- quality exercises(Kagan, 1966; Mann, 1973) . Impulsive subjects, in contrast to reflective subjects of similar age and verbal skills, make more errors in reading prose when in the primary grades, make more errors of commission on serial recall tasks, and are more likely to offer incorrect solutions on inductive reasoning problems and visual discrimination tasks (Stahl, Erickson & Rayman, 1986).

The research findings on reflective subjects are commonly the opposite of those obtained with impulsive s. in general reports describe the reflective child as one who pauses before beginning a task or making a decision and as one who spends time evaluating the differential validity of alternatives (Kagan, 1965 a,c). The reflective subject tends to make fewer errors in word recognition tests, serial learning and inductive reasoning(Zelniker & Oppenheimer, 1973). researchers have also found that a number of personality factors tend to contribute to the impulsive cognitive style–specially minimal anxiety over committing errors, an orientation toward quick success rather than avoiding failure, low performance standards , low motivation to master tasks, and less careful attention to and monitoring of stimuli (Kagan, 1966; Messer, 1970).

Kagan's theory falls under the realm of intellectual development, and specifically measures cognitive “tempo” or pace. Through observation and testing, Kagan made several conclusions. First, reflection increases with age. Second, impulsiveness or reflectiveness is relatively stable for the first 20 years, regardless of repeated attempts to alter it. Third, impulsiveness or reflectiveness

shows up in the performance of many tasks. Finally, impulsiveness or reflectiveness appears to be linked to personality. The first application of Kagan's theory was to "a child's ability to learn to read". The reflective child took their time to sound out words and read accurately. The impulsive child tended to slide over unfamiliar words and passages, decreasing levels of comprehension.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Q1: Does visual scaffolding have any effect on reading comprehension of EFL young learners?

Q2: Does visual scaffolding have any effect on reading comprehension of impulsive EFL young learners?

Q3: Does visual scaffolding have any effect on reading comprehension of reflective EFL young learners?

Q4: Does visual scaffolding have more effect on reading comprehension of reflective than impulsive learners?

Regarding the questions proposed above, following hypotheses were projected:

H01: Visual scaffolding has no effects on reading comprehension of EFL young learners.

H02: Visual scaffolding has no effects on reading comprehension of impulsive EFL young learners.

H03: Visual scaffolding has no effects on reading comprehension of reflective EFL young learners.

H04: Visual scaffolding has more effect on reading comprehension of impulsive than reflective learners.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the present study were 80 Iranian EFL 11-13 year old students chosen out of 110 students based on their scores of KET-for-school test. The students were from Kish Language Institute of Science and Technology Shiraz, Iran. By applying a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barrett's (1995) Impulsiveness Questionnaire the students were assigned to three groups: impulsive group (25 students), reflective group (25 students) and control group (30 students). The students in experimental groups benefited from visual scaffolding techniques and 30 students in control group received no treatments.

Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study:

The first instrument was KET-for-schools as proficiency test. Key English test for schools is a proficiency test which consists of 35 reading questions including 13 multiple-choice, 10 matching, 7 true-false questions and 5 gap-filling questions, 21 writing questions including 20 gap-filling and 1 small writing, 25 listening questions including 10 multiple-choice and 15 matching questions and finally a 2-part speaking test. The reading part, was used as post-test.

The second instrument was a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barrett's (1995) Impulsiveness Questionnaire to divide the participants into two groups of Impulsive and Reflective. *The Barratt Impulsiveness Scale, Version 11 (BIS-11)* is a 30-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess general impulsiveness taking into account the multi-factorial nature of the construct. The structure of the instrument allows for the assessment of six first-order factors (attention, motor, self-control, cognitive complexity, perseverance, cognitive instability) and three second-order factors (attentional impulsiveness [attention and cognitive instability], motor impulsiveness [motor and perseverance], non-planning impulsiveness [self-control and cognitive complexity]). A total score is obtained by summing the first or second-order factors. The items are scored on a four-point scale (Rarely/Never [1], Occasionally [2], Often [3], Almost Always/Always [4])

Procedure

First, 110 students were selected randomly out of 200 students of Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Shiraz, Iran. Second, a proficiency test, KET-for schools, was conducted to select 80 elementary 10-12 year-old students. A KET-for-school test (reading part) was given to all participants as pre-test. Then they were given a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barrett's (1995) Impulsiveness Questionnaire to divide the participants into two groups of impulsive and reflective, each containing 25 students as experimental groups and a group of 30 as the control group. Students in experimental groups were taught using different techniques of visual scaffolding during 12 sessions. At the end, a KET-for-school test (Reading part) was given to both experimental and control groups as post-test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In order to answer the research questions raised for the purpose of this study, the data were analyzed in both control and experimental groups.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of post-test scores for control and experimental groups

Group	Mean	Std .deviation
Control group	44.12	5.75
Impulsive group	45.48	4.64
Reflective group	48.40	3.92
Total	46	5.09

To investigate the data normal distribution, Kolmogrove-Smirnov test was used . The result is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Results of Kolmogrove-Smirnov test

Group	Z	Sig.
Control group	1.010	0.251
Impulsive students	1.048	0.222
Reflective students	0.567	0.905
Total	11.49	0.143

As seen in table 2, sig. for all tests is bigger than α ($\alpha = 0.05$), therefore data is normally distributed. Hence, data is parametric and can be used for the purpose of t-test.

Q1: Does teacher's visual scaffolding have any effects on reading comprehension of EFL young learners?

To answer the third question, as shown in table 3, regarding the results of independent t-test, p is smaller than alpha level ($\alpha = 0.05$), therefore there is a significant difference between post-test scores of experimental group and control group. It is concluded that utilizing visual scaffolding techniques has an effect on students' reading comprehension.

Table 3: Results of independent t-test of post-test scores of experimental and control groups

Group	Mean Difference	DF	t-value	p-value
Reflective	46.32	48	-2.67	0.002
Control	44.12			

Q2: Does teacher's visual scaffolding have any effects on reading comprehension of impulsive EFL young learners?

To answer the second question, as shown in table 4, regarding the results of independent t-test, it is observed that there isn't a significant difference between post-test scores of impulsive group and control group ($p > 0.05$), it is concluded that utilizing visual scaffolding techniques has no effect on impulsive students' reading comprehension.

Table 4: Results of independent t-test of post-test scores of impulsive and control groups

Group	Mean Difference	DF	t-value	p-value(sig)
Impulsive	45.48	48	-0.919	0.362
Control	44.12			

Q3: Does teacher's visual scaffolding have any effects on reading comprehension of reflective EFL young learners?

To answer the third question, as shown in table 5, regarding the results of independent t-test, p is smaller than alpha level ($\alpha = 0.05$), therefore there is a significant difference between post-test scores of reflective group and control group. It is concluded that utilizing visual scaffolding techniques has an effect on reflective students' reading comprehension.

Table 5: Results of independent t-test of post-test scores of reflective and control groups

Group	Mean Difference	DF	t-value	p-value
Reflective	48.40	48	-3.07	0.003
Control	44.12			

Q4: Which one is more influenced by utilizing visual scaffolding, impulsive young learners or reflective ones?

To answer the fourth question ,as seen in table 6 and regarding the results of the independent t-test , it is observed that there is a significant difference between impulsive and reflective groups ($p < 0.05$). In other words, the effect of utilizing visual scaffolding on reflective group is more than impulsive group. So, all null hypotheses were rejected.

Table 6: Results of t-test for mean of post-test scores of impulsive and reflective groups

Group	Mean	DF	t-value	p-value
Impulsive	45.48	48	-2.40	0.020
Reflective	48.40			

By rejecting the first hypothesis, it was concluded that visual scaffolding has a positive effect on learners' reading comprehension. This is, to a great extent, in line with Hogan and Pressley (1997) study in which the researchers found a significant positive relationship between scaffolded instruction and answering the follow-up questions after reading a text.

The three next hypotheses were related to students' learning style. The findings of this part of study seeking the effect of impulsivity and reflectivity on responding to scaffolding techniques are consistent with those carried out by Morgan (1997). In mentioned study, results indicate that reflective students are more affected by visual techniques. Concerning the effect of visual scaffolding on reflective learners, the finding is consistent with some researchers' view (Clarck & Roof, 1988; Salmani, 2006) that reflective learners perform better than impulsive ones in learning tasks that require analysis and attention to details, like reading .

On the whole, the findings of the present study supported the findings of Sudzina(1993), Abu Romman (2005) researches. They reported that the overall language learning can be enhanced when students' cognitive style is matched with the teaching methods. They are also consistent with Daoud's (2008) claim that the only factor affecting individuals' language learning is matching instruction with learners' cognitive style. How ever the findings of the present study is not in line with El-Koumy's (2001) study which showed that students' achievement in reading comprehension increases when there is a mismatch between learners' cognitive style and teaching method. Furthermore, it should be born in mind that the contradictory findings of some studies regarding the effectiveness of utilizing scaffolding techniques can be due to the fact that learners' other individual differences have been neglected in most of these studies.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the present study was supposed to answer four questions about the effect of utilizing visual scaffolding on impulsive and reflective young EFL learners' reading comprehension. Before the outset of the study, four null hypotheses were developed. The results of the study revealed that using visual scaffolding has a positive effect on reading comprehension of young students in general, then judging by students' learning style it was observed that reflective students' reading comprehension is more influenced by utilizing visual scaffolding than impulsive ones, which is in line with the study done by Collier and Combs (2003) on adult learners. The findings seem to have important implications for L2 teachers. If they know and learn more about different kinds of scaffolding, visual in particular, as well as different learning styles, they can change and adapt their teaching procedures to the needs of the learners more effectively.

Limitations of the study

The technique requires the teacher to give up control as fading occurs, but as this research is taking place in kid's classes, giving up control is not fully implementable. Scaffolding is time-consuming. Teachers might encounter lack of sufficient time due to institutional restrictions. Teachers may be occupied by daily teaching activities - has to teach a course book, therefore she will devote only a part of class time to scaffolding programme. As a result, the face-to-face teacher scaffolding to weaker students might not be possible every session.

Topic selection can not be broad, due to learners' low level of general knowledge. Although this study aims at studying the impact of teacher's visual scaffolding and its effects on students' subsequent drafts, the results of this study cannot be generalized because of the small number of the participants. Only 55 males and females 10-12 year-old students, will be enrolled from a private English institute, the sample might not be representative of the target population of L2 elementary students.

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ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN METADISCOURSE MARKERS AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

By increasing people who speak and learn English, it is necessary to do research in different skills of this language. Although extensive studies have been done in reading and writing; the share of listening is tiny. This poor share would be clear enough when our focus goes to metadiscourse markers and their impact on listening comprehension, so this study's aim was investigating the impact of these markers on listening comprehension. To do so, 240 English as a foreign language (EFL) learners through administering a proficiency test (TOEFL) were selected and divided into two levels of low and high language proficiency. Sixteen listening tasks-eight for each level-were selected based on the number of metadiscourse markers and also their readability values. So as to test the impact of metadiscourse markers on listening comprehension Independent Samples T-test was utilized. The results showed that metadiscourse markers had a positive impact on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners at both levels. In fact, not only learners but also teachers can benefit from metadisocurse markers as failitative devices to ease the process of understanding of English, a language which learning it is a must in today's world.

KEYWORDS: Metadiscourse, Metadiscourse markers, Listening comprehension, Language proficiency

INTRODUCTION

Discourse is the communication that happens in a specific context. For example, we can talk about the discourse of science, legal discourse, and so on (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 7); however, it is not the whole story. Crismore (1985) believes that discourse has two levels: *primary and metadiscourse*. Primary discourse transfers just the information about subject matters to the audiences and it does not have any comments by the author, whereas another level of discourse which is called metadiscourse annexes another proposition to the message, in fact, despite prepositional meaning, an author tries to convey his thoughts, personalities and attitudes by this level of discourse. An example of primary discourse is: *The test is so difficult* and an example of metadiscourse is the underlined parts of this sentence: *My idea is that this test is so difficult.*

Metadiscourse has been broadly defined as "discourse about discourse" (Vande Kopple, 1985, p. 83) or narrowly as "the language used to express the author's explicit awareness and management of the discourse as process; which includes awareness and of the organization of the text, of the participants of the discourse process: the reader and the self, and of the author's attitude toward the discourse process" (Burneikaite, 2008, p. 39).

Furthermore, Vande kopple (1985) gives the broad definition to metadiscourse and mentions that metadiscourse transfers *interpersonal* and *textual* meaning. Interpersonal metadiscourse assists authors to show their attitudes, personalities and thoughts toward what is being transferred by them, whereas textual ones "helps writers relate and connect bits of ideational material within a text and helps the text makes sense in a particular situation for readers" (Crismore & Abdollehzadeh, 2010, p. 196).

On the other hand, Crismore (1985) has divided metadiscourse into two types: *informational* and *attitudinal*. Informational metadiscourse is "explicit rhetorical devices that signal the presence of an author" (p. 12). In fact, informational metadiscourse makes the statements clear to the readers and helps them know more about the author's personality, attitude and so on. An example of this kind of metadiscourse is the underlined parts of this sentence: "I am arguing that it is not progress to produce more and more goods". However, attitudinal metadiscourse is "rhetorical means that signal the author's attitude about the subject matter" (p. 12). As a matter of fact, these devices tell us about the attitude of the author toward the content. An example of this kind of metadiscourse is the underlined parts of this sentence: "It is possible that it is not progress to be the biggest or go the fastest" (p. 12). In fact, the purpose of communication is not just transferring information. The speaker/writer not only wants to send the message but also tries to facilitate his ideas and purposes toward what is being transferred, so metadiscourse can help speaker/writer shape messages to make them clear enough for his recipients.

An investigation into metadiscourse brings us to old Roman written texts, poetry and old Greek as well (e. g., Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, & Aristotle). This means that from the past, writers have been fond of using metadiscourse in order to facilitate the process of understanding for their audiences. Besides, the importance of using metadiscourse has been discussed by many scholars in different cultures, genres, and disciplines because they have believed in using metadiscourse as facilitative tools for better understanding of author's intention (Crismore & Hill, 1988).

Vande Kopple (1985) believes that it is obligatory to us to write on two levels of discourse. He says: "On one level we supply information about the subject of our text and on the level of metadiscourse, we help our readers organize, interpret, evaluate, and react to such material" (p. 8). To Hyland (2005) metadiscourse is important in teaching and learning language and students should be familiarized with metadiscourse because learning metadiscourse helps them know that language has different functions and there are different possible interactions in different situations. They would know that a text is not simply a text but it has addresser, addressee and a text itself, in fact, all these elements should be taken into account for communication. Turning to listening, it has been claimed that metadiscourse markers help students understand better (Chaudron & Richards, 1986; Jung, 2003; Smit, 2006; Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007; Hashemi

et al. 2012; Tajabadi & Taghizadeh, 2014). In the field of reading and writing, many studies have been done to test the impact of metadiscourse markers but the share of studies on listening comprehension in this case is poor. The impact of discourse markers on listening, first of all, tested by Hron et al. (1985, cited in Jung, 2003). They tested the impact of discourse signaling cues in L1 and concluded that these cues result in better understanding. Bearing this finding in mind, the researchers hypothesized that these cues can also help the L2 listeners.

To test this hypothesis, Chaudron and Richards (1986) were the pioneers. They classified discourse markers into two parts of macro and micromarkers. To them, macromarkers “signal the macro-structure of a lecture through highlighting major information and the sequencing or importance of that information” and micromarkers “indicate links between sentences within the lecture, or which function as fillers” (p. 116). They concluded that macromarkers help listeners more than micromarkers.

Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995) also investigated the role of micromarkers on listening comprehension and claimed that they can help the listeners too. The lack of support for the results of previous studies, forced Jung (1999) to test the impact of discourse cues more empirically. His study demonstrated that these cues help listeners because a group that listened to a lecture with discourse markers recalled more information than a group without facing discourse cues.

Four years later, Jung (2003) again conducted a study aimed at investigating the impact of discourse markers on L2 listening comprehension. Through the use of language proficiency test 80 Korean learners were selected and divided into two groups of signaled and nonsignaled. Two lectures, one with discourse markers and the other one in which these markers had been deleted were given to both groups. Signaled group received a lecture with discourse markers and nonsignaled group received the next version. In comparison with nonsignaled group, the signaled group recalled more information.

Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2007) also studied the role of discourse markers. To do their study, they selected three texts from textbooks and asked an educated native speaker to give a lecture on them (some discourse markers were included in this lecture), this version was used as an original lecture and in the next one, those discourse markers were deleted. Two other experienced native speakers were asked to check these two lectures to confirm their authenticity. 72 intermediate students were selected by using of TOEFL proficiency test and randomly divided into two groups. One group received the original lecture and the next one received the modified lecture. The result showed that a group which listened to a lecture with discourse markers had better comprehension.

Hashemi et al. (2012) also tested the influence of metadiscourse markers on listening comprehension of EFL learners. By a derived form of a proficiency test of TOEFL, 120 students at intermediate and advance levels were selected and divided into 4 groups, each with 30 members. Using a native-like voice to record, five monologues from section four of IELTS were got and assumed as original listening texts and deleting their metadiscourses provided other five

monologues. At each level control groups received modified monologues and experimental groups listened to the original ones. Although no noticeable difference was seen at the intermediate level; the performance of high proficient learners on listening tasks with metadiscourse markers was better than those in a control group.

In a recent study, Tajabadi and Taghizadeh (2014) attempted to study the impact of discourse cues on listening comprehension as well. Like Chaudron and Richards' study, they examined the impact of micro, macro and a combination of micro and macro-markers. The difference of their study from Chaudron and Richards's comes back to their focus on the function of markers for selecting micro and macro markers not the length of them. 105 upper-intermediate adult L2 learners through a test of proficiency were selected and made the final participants. 3 expository reading texts from upper-intermediate level were selected and three sets of tests for each, with micro, the next with macro and the last with a combination of both were prepared and then a native speaker was asked to record them. In contrast to Chaurdon and Richards (1986) they found that micro markers had more facilitative roles rather than macro markers.

What was explained as studies in the realm of discourse markers and listening comprehension suffer from fundamental problems. Generally, the faults of discussed studies can be categorized into four areas. The first one comes back to detemining the level of language proficiency. Except Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995), Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2007), and Hashemi et al. (2012), other studies such as Smith (2006) and Tajabadi and Taghizadeh (2014) did not utilise standardized tests of language proficiency and some like Chaudron and Richards (1986) and Jung (2003) just relied on listening section of a standardized proficiency test to put the participants at correct level. Neither the first and second group nor the third were not successful in detemining the correct level of participants because the first group just paid attention to the language proficinecy level and neglected the level of listening comprehension and the third group determined the participants' litsening comprehension ability without detemining their lanaguge proficiency level. Needless to say, calculating both is a need to listening comprehension studies.

The second category which can be discussed is using authentic materials. Except Jung (2003) who used lectures in which because of deleting discourse markers they are also unnatural non of the other studies used authentic materials. What were used were read-aloud texts which were got from reading books.

The third category which can put the findings of above mentioned studies aside is definitely related to implementing and deleting discourse markers. All mentioned studies suffer from this point and it is clear that this policy removes naturalness, so it can be clamied that all studies which have been done so far suffer from unnaturalness. The last but not certainley the least, calculating text difficulty (readability) is another major fault of discussed studies. Non of them except Tajabadi and Taghizadeh (2014), which is somehow vague, considered this important point and it is not clear that utilised texts in other studies were appropriate for the aprticiapants or not. The concept of metadiscourse and offering it to the world of English language teaching and also Applied Linguistics has been an attempt to say that communication and also language is not just exchanging of information but it gets involved in the personality, ideas, and thoughts of those

people who do the act of communication (Hyland, 2005). In sum, using of metadiscourse differs, based on rhetorical context, and as Crismore (1985) says; these means can be utilized on the level of word, phrase, or clause and can signal the covert or overt presence of an author. What is clear is that metadiscourse markers play an important role in language because they facilitate and help our understanding.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on above mentioned studies and also their inconsistencies this study addressed the following question:

1. Do metadiscourse markers have any significant impact on the listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students?

And the null hypothesis was:

1. Metadiscourse markers have no important impact on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The total number of participants who took part in this study was 300 Iranian EFL students at both BA and MA levels from three universities in Sanandaj (the capital city of Kurdistan province in the west of Iran) namely: Kurdistan, Payame Noor, and Islamic Azad University. Utilising a proficiency test of TOEFL, participants' levels of language proficiency were specified and 240 students selected to both levels. To determine the listening tasks' reliability and validity, 120 out of 240 students were used and to answer the research question, the next 120 students made the final participants. What's more, in order to be sure about participants' listening comprehension level, the **researchers** used one-way ANOVA for the scores got from listening section of the used TOEFL. The results showed no great difference among selected students for the study.

Materials

The first instrument which was used in this study was a proficiency test of TOEFL (2003) consisting of 140 items: Listening: 50 items; structure: 40 items; and reading comprehension passages: 30 items. This test was utilized to determine the levels of language proficiency of the participants.

The second instrument which was utilized was sixteen listening tasks, eight for each level. These were taken from different editions of TOEFL tests including PBT and IBT editions. The first criterion for selecting these listening tasks was the number of metadiscourse markers and the second criterion was their readability values.

Procedure

So as to do this study, 240 students out of 300 were needed. To gain this aim, a language proficiency test, i.e., TOEFL (2003) was given to the total participants. The criteria for assigning the participants to high and low level was the Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of scores

obtained from the administration of aforementioned TOEFL test. Those who scored +1SD above the Mean were assigned to high level group and those who scored -1SD below the Mean were assigned to low level group. After analyzing the data more than 40 students were discarded because they fell between -1SD and +1SD. The total number of participants who met the criteria at this phase of research was 240. Then participants were divided into two 120-member groups. The first group included the participants of high level of language proficiency and the second group included the participants of low level of language proficiency. 120 out of 240 students were selected for the main phase of the study in which the participants of high level of language proficiency were randomly divided into two 30-member groups, and the participants of low level of language proficiency were also randomly divided into two 30-member groups. Furthermore, 120 students out of the above population (240) were selected for the purpose of establishing reliability and validity of the tests.

In the next step, sixteen listening tasks-eight for each level- were taken from different editions of TOEFL tests including PBT and IBT editions. The first criterion for selecting these listening tasks was the number of metadiscourse markers. Over 50 listening tasks were meticulously investigated and their metadiscourse markers were identified. The number of their metadiscourse markers was between 0 to 14 so that those listening tasks containing less than 7 metadiscourse markers were considered as listening tasks with low metadiscourse markers and those listening tasks which had 7 or more than 7 metadiscourse markers were considered as listening tasks with high metadiscourse markers. It is noteworthy to say that the selected taxonomy of metadiscourse for this study was Crismore's because of its being explicit and comprehensive.

The second criterion for selecting these listening tasks was their readability. Using Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level their readability was calculated. Then the Mean value and the Standard Deviation were also calculated. Those listening tasks which had readability values over +1SD were considered suitable for the students of high level and those listening tasks which had readability values less than -1SD were considered appropriate for the students of low level of language proficiency.

Since these listening tasks were taken from different editions of TOEFL, calculating the validity and reliability of them was a must. For this purpose, 120 out of 240 students were selected based on the criterion used to select the main participant for the main phase of the study, and were given these listening tasks. To estimate the reliability of the test, Cronbach Alpha method of estimating reliability was used. Cronbach's Alpha estimated the reliability of the whole items as 0.823, as displayed by table 1. The reliability of each of tests was also examined as follows: Test 1 (14 items): 0.749, Test 2 (15 items): 0.752. Test 3 (14 items): 0.781, Test 4 (11 items): 0.723.

Table 1: Reliability of the test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.823	54

To estimate the concurrent validity of the test, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used between the test of pilot study and the final test. The concurrent validity of the test is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: The correlation between the test of pilot study and the final test

		the test of pilot study	the final test
The test of pilot study	Pearson Correlation	1	.869**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
The final test	Pearson Correlation	.869**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

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

As Farhady et al. (2003) suggested, “validity and reliability coefficients below .50 are considered low, .50 to .75 are considered moderate, and .75 to .90 or above are considered high” (p. 154). Therefore, the test used in this study had high reliability ($r = 0.82$) and high validity (0.86). Finally, after establishing the validity and reliability of the tests, they were given to the main participants of the study in the following way:

HH: participants of high level with high metadiscourse markers listening tasks

HL: participants of high level with low metadiscourse markers listening tasks

LH: participants of low level with high metadiscourse markers listening tasks

LL: participants of low level with low metadiscourse markers listening tasks

Design of the Study

Indeed selecting the groups at both levels of this study was done randomly, however, the factors aside from language proficiency and also metadiscourse markers which might have affected the results were not controlled. In this case, participants got no treatment, so a controlled design named Ex Post Facto Design was utilized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To testify the truth or falsity of the research hypothesis, the relevant data were analyzed. Table 3 shows Mean and Standard Deviation of two types of metadiscourse.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of the two types of metadiscourse

	metadiscourse	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Listening comprehension scores	high	60	11.23	1.442	.186
	low	60	8.47	1.535	.198

Table 3 represents the Mean and Standard Deviation for high metadiscourses ($M=11.23$, $SD=1.44$) and low metadiscourses ($M=8.47$, $SD=1.53$). The total number of students participated in the study was 120. On the other hand, the results obtained from the Independent Sample T-test revealed the significant difference between metadiscourse markers and listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners.

Table 4: Independent samples T-test for metadiscourse markers and listening comprehension

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
listening comprehension scores	Equal variances assumed	.90	.342	10.1	118	.000	2.767	.272	2.228	3.305
	Equal variances not assumed			10.1	117	.000	2.767	.272	2.228	3.305

Independent Sample T-test offers two lines as displayed by Table 4. With reference to the Table, the Sig. value is larger than .05, therefore, the first line should be followed which refers to Equal variances assumed. That is to say, since in this table, the significant value is .342 which is larger than .05; the first line is used to report findings. To discover if there is a significant difference between metadiscourse markers and listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students, the researcher checked column labeled Sig. (2-tailed). Since the Sig. (2-tailed) value is *less* than .05 which is .000, then there is a significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the metadiscourses. Thus, the research question of the study was rejected.

To determine the effect size between the groups, the researcher used eta squared, as the most commonly used formula. Eta squared can range from 0 to 1 and represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent (group) variable. SPSS does not provide eta squared values for t-tests. Therefore, the researcher calculated it manually. The procedure for calculating eta squared is provided below.

The formula for eta squared = $t^2 / t^2 + (N1 + N2 - 2)$

As the table shows, in this study, $t=2.21$. Therefore:

$$(10.1)^2 / (10.1)^2 + (60+58) = 102.01/220.01 = \mathbf{0.463}$$

The guidelines (proposed by Cohen, 1992) for interpreting this value are:

.01=small effect,

.06=moderate effect,

.14=large effect.

Therefore, the effect size of .463 is *large*.

CONCLUSION

Bearing the results in mind, we concluded that the participants at high and low levels of language proficiency benefited from the presence of metadiscourse markers in the listening tasks which were given to them. This is in line with Crismore and Abdollehzadeh (2010) who believe

“learners at different language proficiency levels benefit from effective metadiscourse instruction and awareness-raising in their comprehension and written production” (p. 214). So, the null hypothesis which states that metadiscourse markers have no important impact on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students was rejected. Findings of this study confirm (Crismore, 1985; Crismore & Hill, 1988; Rubin, 1994; Dastgoshadeh, 2001; Jung 2003; Smit, 2006; Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007; Parvaresh, 2007; Crismore & Abdollezadeh, 2010) who unanimously believe that metadiscourse markers facilitate the process of comprehension and assist students to get the intended meaning easier.

Giving a further explanation, the presence of metadiscourse markers in listening tasks makes them more understandable and helps the listeners understand the propositional content of the listening tasks without expanding the propositions. As Rubin (1994) asserts, discourse signaling cues are one of those effectual factors which influences on listening comprehension and must be taken into account. This statement is also confirmed by Dastgoshadeh (2001) and Parvaresh (2007) who say, knowledge of metadiscourse can compensate learner’s inadequate pragmalinguistic competence and elevate their comprehension.

Additionally, the benefits of metadiscourse markers are not just limited to the students and learners. By teaching metadiscourse markers and their functions to students, teachers help the students grasp the intended meanings. Teaching metadiscourse can be a primary teaching activity in class due to the significant roles of these elements in breaking the rigid blocks formed by propositions and moving beyond what is written in surface structure. As Smit (2006) says, teaching metadiscourse help students understand and communicate better.

Furthermore, material developers while preparing listening tasks, writing textbooks, and also preparing class materials can benefit from metadiscourse markers too. In fact, they can consider the crucial roles of metadiscourse markers by providing the students with opportunities to make them aware of metadiscourse, different functions of metadiscourse, and the way they are employed by lecturers/writers to convey specific intentions. Lastly, as Mauranen (2010) says, metadiscourse “is a distinctive characteristics of language, ubiquitous in our speech, and it deserves close attention from linguists.” (p. 18). So, accentuating on this important facet of our speech is a must because it is definitely helpful to facilitate the process of understanding of English which is a wish to everyone.

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THE EFFECT OF EXPLICIT TEACHING OF COMMON ERRORS ON EFL LEARNERS' WRITING ACCURACY

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid expansion of technology, globalization and cyber-communication, the focus on writing accuracy in English as the lingua franca has recently been emphasized. The explicit teaching of grammar to enhance students' writing skills has been revived to tackle the issue. The present study, as an initial attempt in the context of Iran, examines the role of explicit teaching of common grammatical errors in improving writing accuracy. In so doing, a pool of 30 students who are studying English at Kimia English Institute participated in an experimental study. The study aimed at: 1) examining the effect of explicit teaching of common grammatical errors on the EFL learners' writing accuracy studying at an English Institute in Sannandaj, 2) investigating the significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules including 'used to for habitual actions', 'adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns', 'evaluations and comparisons with adjectives', and 'simple past vs. present perfect', and 3) exploring the learners' reactions towards the implementation of explicit teaching of common errors in improving writing accuracy. The results obtained from the study, using Independent Sample T-test, One-way ANOVA and Semi-structured Interview rejected the null hypotheses of the study, and therefore, teaching explicitly common errors proved to be effective in students' development and among four grammatical rules, students had a better performance on tenses of English following the treatment phase of the study. A further implication of the study is for language teachers to raise student' awareness regarding the common errors and help them notice the common errors in order not commit the common errors but apply the grammatical rules correctly in their writing.

KEYWORDS: Explicit Teaching, Accuracy, Common Errors

INTRODUCTION

Explicit teaching is a kind of instructional approach to language teaching in which the focus is on form. It is intended to give students explicit instruction about the forms and raise their

awareness. It moves systematically from extensive teacher input and little student responsibility to total student responsibility and minimal teacher involvement. So the last and most important aim of the study is to help students to reach self-dependency and self-correction stage. This study intended to shed light on the efficiency of explicit teaching especially when the focus was on the EFL learners' most occurring grammatical errors in writing.

Those who are concerned with language teaching and learning have always tried to find alternative methods and approaches to increase quality second language acquisition (SLA). In order to fulfill the above-mentioned goals many linguists and researchers interested in topics like EFL, raised awareness and consciousness and introduced explicit instructions and feedback in order to increase students' accuracy and fluency in language skills. Writing has been one of the most different skills for learners to develop being a recursive process. It takes several times for learners to revise their writings before submitting their final drafts (White & MacGovern, 1994).

Received feedback and critical comments from teachers help language learners breakthrough in the process of composing an essay with the least errors as well as the maximum accuracy and clarity. Therefore, the necessity of teachers' support and frequent monitoring regarding how to fulfill different writing assignments correctly is of importance from educational point of view (Cremes Lea, 1997; Ennis, 1996; Ferris, 2002; Harmer, 2001; Krashen, 1987; Krol, 2001).

Noting that grammar teaching is usually treated separate from the teaching of writing, this study presents one of the first attempts to use explicit focus on forms instruction to increase Iranian EFL learners writing accuracy. The study's focus is on students most common writing errors and its aim is to help students overcome these problematic forms and also concerns the extended use of explicit feedback and awareness raising activities in order to fulfill this aim.

Theoretical background

Continuing in the tradition of more than 2000 years of debate regarding whether grammar should be a primary focus of language instructions, should be eliminated entirely or should be subordinated to meaning-focused use of target language, the need for grammar instruction is once again attracting the attention of second language acquisition researchers and teachers. This focus has been motivated in part by debates in the field of cognitive psychology over the role of explicit vs. Implicit language learning and whether such learning occurs through conscious manipulation of information or primarily through unconscious process when people are exposed to language input (Bialystok, 1990, 1994; N. Ellis, 1994; Rober, 1967, 1989, 1993). Theoretically the debate was represented by Krashen's (1981) distinction between conscious learning and unconscious acquisition of teaching approaches where the focus is primarily on meaning-focused communication and grammar is not addressed so there is reconsideration of grammar teaching in L2 classes as the result of the evidence of the positive effects of grammar instruction. This evidence comes from a large number of laboratory classrooms based studies as well as extensive reviews of studies on the effects of instruction over the past 20 years (R. Ellis, 1985, 1990, 1994, 2001, 2002a, Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991; Long, 1983, 1988, 1991). As

the result from focused instruction (FFI) is taken as an alternative that has been received much attention recently.

The term Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) is defined by Ellis (2001, p. 2) as any planned or incidental instruction activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form. It served as a generic term for analyzing teaching on form, focus on forms, correction feedback/error correction, and negotiation of form. Research shows that traditional instruction on isolated grammar forms are insufficient to promote learners' acquisition (Long, 1991; Long & Robinson 1998), yet purely communicative approaches have been found inadequate for developing high levels of TL accuracy (Harley & Swain, 1984; Swain 1985, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Two general solutions have been proposed in the research literature: one is to encourage the students to attend to target forms by noticing them in input (Schmidt, 1990, 1993; Doughty and Williams 1998a; Ellis 1994a, 2001a), thus assisting in their processing. The other is to provide learners with opportunities to produce output containing target forms, again enabling learners to notice the gap between their current TL ability and the correct use of the target form (Swain, 1985, 2005).

One of the first classifications that has been widely cited and has had a considerable impact on our understanding of the concept of FFI, is the distinction that Long (1991) made between focus on form and focus on forms. FoFs according to Long (1991;2000; Long & Robinson, 1998) is based on traditional structure and synthetic approaches to language teaching (Wilkins, 1976) in which language is segmented into discrete items and is then presented to the learners in an isolated and de-contextualized manner. FoRs on the other hand involves drawing the learners' attention to linguistic forms, as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning and or communication (Long, 1991, p. 46).

Error correction is a response either to the content of what a student has produced or to the form of the utterance (Richards & Lockhart, 1996, p. 188). As Truscot (1996, cited in Ferris, 2003, p. 42) states, 'the correction of grammatical errors can help students improve their ability to write accurately'. In addition, numerous researches indicate the importance of correction feedback which impacts learners' writing accuracy. (Lalande, 1982; Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Robber, 2001).

In terms of output as FFI, Swain (1985,1995, 2005) emphasized that importance of production to develop learners' awareness of the gap between current TL production ability and the TL. Input enhancement has also been used to develop learners' awareness of target forms. Structures have been made salient through high-lighting, underlining or other treatments (Folos, 1993, 1994; Williams & Evans, 1998; Nassaji Press). The term consciousness raising has been widely used in SLA research; in formal instruction it was frequently used to refer to any attempt to focus learners' attention on a specific target structure. Several recent literature reviews provide an overview concerning the role of a number of related concepts such as conscious, awareness, attention, noticing and focus on form in second language learning (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998; Norris & Ortega, 2000, Spada, 1997). As this literature show, a considerable amount of work suggests there is a positive role for some kind of attention to form

that is either through explicit teaching of grammar and explicit error correction, or at least through indirect means such as input enhancement.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to find appropriate answers to the following questions:

- 1) Do teaching grammatical errors have any significant effect on EFL learners' writing accuracy?
- 2) Is there any significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules including 'used to' for habitual actions', 'adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns', 'evaluations and comparisons with adjectives', and 'simple past vs. present perfect'?
- 3) How do the learners react towards the implementation of explicit teaching of common errors in improving writing accuracy?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A pool of 30 female students participated in the study at Kimia English Institute in Sannandaj, Kordestan province. They were EFL learners, and all of them had studied English Conversation Courses for three years in the institute. They had two sessions of English per week, with an English instructor. In order to make sure about the homogeneity of the subjects in terms of their language proficiency, the teacher included those students who had already passed Interchange Series (Intro & 1) by Richards, Hull and Proctor (2005). Moreover, they were asked to participate in Nelson Proficiency test which includes 50 items consisting of vocabulary, structure, and close passages in multiple choice format. Students whose score were one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected for the study. The mean of the scores was 30.80 and the standard deviation was 12.53. Therefore, students whose scores were between 18 and 42 were selected to participate in the study. Out of 36 students, 30 students had scores between 18 and 42. The learners were randomly assigned to one condition: Experimental group and control group and each group had 15 students.

Instrumentation

The first major instrument used in the study was Nelson English Language Proficiency Test developed by Fowler and Coe (1978) (Appendix A) for the purpose of making the sample homogeneous in terms of language proficiency level. This multiple-choice test contained cloze passages, vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation. The reliability coefficient of this proficiency test was high, Cronbach Alpha = 0.82 (Hashemian, Roohani&Fadaei, 2012). The researcher also determined the reliability of the test using Cronbach Alpha as 0.81 that is acceptable. As Farhadi, Jafarpur and Birjandi (1994) suggested, "validity and reliability coefficients below .50 are considered low, .50 to .75 are considered moderate, and .75 to .90 or above are considered high" (p. 154). Therefore, the test used in this study had high reliability ($r = 0.81$).

The second major instrument distributed to the participants to assess their grammatical knowledge was from the Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test, version A and version B developed by Lesley, Hanson and Zyukowski/ Faust (2005). Version A was used as the pre-test and Version B was used as the post-test. This placement test contains three main sections including listening, reading, and language use. The section used here was language use and from this section, the questions that referred to Interchange intro, 1 and 2 (units 1 -4) were taken out from Version A by the researcher and distributed to the students to measure their grammatical knowledge. As for the post-test, questions referred to interchange 2 (unit 1-4) were taken out from Version B. The reliability and validity of the test were already measured by the authors of the test and were reported high including 0.87 and 0.81, respectively. Moreover, the researcher calculated the reliability of tests as 0.83 and 0.78. For ease of calculation, students' scores on pre-test and post-test were calculated from 50.

Procedure

Before Mediation Phase

Since the study was experimental research, the researcher, first, divided the learners into two equal groups and each group included 15 female EFL learners. The learners were required to take the conversation course, and the researcher, as the teacher of both classes, introduced Interchange 2, written by Richards, Hull and Proctor (2005). The course included 15 sessions to teach the first four units of the textbook. The textbook contained 16 units, and each 4 units was worked during a single term with the learners. The class started in December, 2013 during which the learners were required to attend the class two sessions per week and each session lasted 1:30 minutes.

One week prior to the beginning of the treatment phase, during the first session, the pretest was administered to the two groups during regular class time in order to determine their grammatical knowledge. The test consisted of 60 question items in multiple-choice format taken from the grammar section of Interchange Objective Placement Test, Version A. Some of these items were taken from interchange 2 (Unit One to Unit Four) which the researcher intended to use in the experiment. The pre-test condition was identical in the two groups. This activity took about 40 minutes.

During Mediation Phase

The treatment phase lasted for 12 sessions during which the teacher in the two classes allocated 20 minutes of his classes to teaching writing. Each group received a different treatment, in accordance with the experimental condition it was assigned to. As for the control group, the teacher followed the regular method of teaching writing accuracy during which the learners were exposed to the grammatical rules and the grammatical rules were explained and exemplified by the teacher, and then, the students were required to complete the exercise, and finally, they were asked to write sentences and short paragraphs. The teachers corrected their writings and provided them with direct corrective feedback.

However, as for the students in experimental group, the teacher, first, presented the grammatical rules and exemplified them, and then, she taught the common errors committed by the EFL learners with respect to the grammatical item. The teacher used her previous experience regarding the common errors pertinent to the grammatical rule under study and he also already consulted with three experts who have had more than 10 years experience in teaching grammar at university and private institutes. Moreover, during the first presentation of the rules, the teachers asked the learners to write their own sentences and short paragraphs and, in this way, he collected their mistakes and errors and worked on them several times during the next session. There were four units and the teachers worked on the grammatical rule of each unit during the class hour and he finished each unit in 4 sessions. For example, as for the grammatical rule presented by the teacher regarding the use of *used to* for habitual actions, common errors by the learners were as follows:

- 1) Learners' mistake in distinguishing between *use* and *used to*: For example, the use of "Mike *use to play* hide and seek" instead of "Mike *used to play* hide and seek".
- 2) Learners' mistake in differentiating between *used to* for past actions and *be used to* for present actions: *Used to* is followed by infinitive, but *be used to* is followed by gerund. For example, "Mike *used to study* late at nights" and "Mike *is used to studying* late at nights".
- 3) Learners' mistake in using infinitive not bare infinitive after *used to*. For example, "Mike *used to read loudly*" instead of "Mike *used read loudly*".

In experimental group, the students were bombarded with the common errors practices and exercises, and they were asked to attend to the mistakes in order not to repeat the same error in their own writings. The teacher tried to help students raise their consciousness and followed the focus on error strategy. She brought some examples for the students that contained mistakes writing by students at previous term. Interchange textbooks include writing tasks apart from grammatical exercises; therefore, the teacher used the writing tasks in each unit asking students' to apply what they have learned during the class time. In control group, the teacher did not expose the students to common errors and the students were asked to learn the grammatical rules and apply them in writing tasks.

Students' mistakes mainly resulted from:

- 1) Interference from their native language, here Persian language. They made mistake in distinguishing count nouns from non-count nouns resulting from negative transfer. For example, some of the students thought that transportation is countable so that they used the sentence *few transportation* instead of *little transportation*. Therefore, the teacher paid attention to interference as teaching common errors to the students.
- 2) Insufficient application of rules in their production. They were accustomed to memorize the grammatical rules and when asked to do the writing task, they were unable to use the structure they memorized in practice accurately. Thus, the teacher engaged students in writing exercises and tasks and asked them to write as much as they could. In so doing, he assigned some assignments for them to do at home, too.

3) Lack or inadequate knowledge of collocations. They did not know the precise word combination and because of this, they made mistakes. For example, some students while doing the writing task of unit 2 (section 6) regarding the traffic problems, made collocational errors. For example, there were instances of the sentence: “The problem is that the traffic is not quick” instead of writing “The problem is that the traffic is not fast”.

The word traffic collocates with fast but not with quick. The teacher also tried to help student’s focus and notice such errors resulting from lack of collocational knowledge in her explicit teaching of common errors.

After Mediation Phase

Having finished the treatment phase, the researcher distributed the post-test containing questions regarding the first four units. The questions were in multiple-choice format and students were required to choose the correct answer from the four alternatives. The test was taken from Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test, version B. The students were asked to participate in the test in session 14, when the teacher completed the teaching of the first four units.

Following this step, to gather data for the second research question regarding the significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules, the teacher distributed for writing tasks to the students in session 15, and asked them to write a short paragraph for each of the topic. The researcher chose the topics so as to elicit students’ grammatical knowledge with respect to the four aspects of grammatical use that she taught during the mediation phase to the experimental group.

Finally, during the last step of the study, the teacher interviewed with four students to find out their reactions towards the application of explicit teaching of common errors and its influence on their writing accuracy. In so doing, these learners were interviewed in face-to-face interaction with the researcher. They were selected based on purposive sampling so that qualitative data were collected through interviews from these four students who were in experimental group. A semi-structured interview has a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as suggested questions while, at the same time; there is openness to changes of sequences and forms of questions in order to follow up the answers given (Dörnyei, 2007).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Homogeneity of the Participants

To homogenize students with respect to their language proficiency, the researcher just included those students whose scores on Nelson Proficiency Test were one standard deviation below and above the mean.

Table 1: Nelson Proficiency Test

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		30.8056
Std. Deviation		12.53753

The mean of the scores is 30 and standard deviation is 12. Therefore, given one standard deviation above and below the mean, students whose scores obtained from Nelson Proficiency Test are between 18 and 42 are selected to take part in the study. Therefore, out of 36 students, 30 students were remained to participate in the study.

Explicit Teaching of Common Errors and Students' Performance on Writing Accuracy
Pre-test between Two Groups:

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the two groups before treatment

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Pre-test scores	Control	15	20.33	4.337	1.120
	Experimental	15	22.07	3.731	.963

Table 2 represents the mean and standard deviation for control group (M=20.33, SD=4.33) and experimental group (M=22.07, SD=3.73). The total number of students participated in the study was 30.

Table 3: Independent samples T-test for the two groups before treatment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	(2-Mean Difference)	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pre-test scores	Equal variances assumed	.67	.41	-1.17	28	.251	-1.733	1.47	-4.75	1.29
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.17	27.3	.251	-1.733	1.47	-4.76	1.29

Independent Sample T-test offers two lines as displayed by Table 3. With reference to the Table, the Sig. value is larger than .05, therefore, the first line should be followed which refers to Equal variances assumed. That is to say, since in this table, the significant value is .41 which is larger than .05; the first line is used to report findings.

To figure out if there is a significant difference between the control and experimental groups, having checked the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed), the researcher discovered there is a significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the two groups. Because the value in the Sig. (2-tailed) column is more than .05 (which is .25), there is *no* significant difference between the two groups before the treatment phase.

Post-test between Two Groups

Table 4: Mean and standard deviation of the two groups after treatment

Group Statistics		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
post-test scores	Control	15	23.33	4.624	1.194
	experimental	15	27.33	3.331	.860

As displayed by Table 4, the mean and standard deviation for each of the groups differ from those of pre-test. The results obtained showed that students at experimental class (m=27.33) performed better than the students at controlled class (m=23.33).

Table 5: Independent samples T-test of the two groups after treatment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
post-test scores	Equal variances assumed	2.85	.102	-2.71	28	.011	-4.00	1.47	-7.01	-.986
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.71	25.44	.012	-4.00	1.47	-7.02	-.972

Since the Sig. value in Table 5 is larger than .05 so that the first line is used to report the data, which refers to Equal variances assumed. To discover if there is a significant difference between the two groups, we refer to the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed).

Since the Sig. (2-tailed) value is *less* than .05 which is .01, then there is a significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the two groups.

In Table 5, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is .01. As this value is *less than* the required cut-off of .05, we conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores for the two classes. Thus, the first research hypothesis of the study was rejected.

Calculating the Effect Size for Independent-samples t-test

To determine the effect size between your groups, the researcher used eta squared, as the most commonly used formula. Eta squared can range from 0 to 1 and represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent (group) variable. SPSS does not provide eta squared values for t-tests. Therefore, the researcher calculated it manually. The procedure for calculating eta squared is provided below:

The formula for eta squared = $t^2 / t^2 + (N1 + N2 - 2)$

As the table shows, in this study, $t=2.71$. Therefore:
 $(2.71)^2 / (2.71)^2 + (15 + 13) = 7.34/35.34 = 0.20$

The guidelines (proposed by Cohen, 1988) for interpreting this value are:

- .01=small effect,
- .06=moderate effect,
- .14=large effect.

Therefore, the effect size of .20 is large. It means that experimental class performed better than control class, the effect size was considerable.

Students' Performance on Writing Accuracy with Respect to Aspects of Grammatical Rules

Table 6: Mean and standard deviation of students' scores on aspects of grammatical rules

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
used to for habitual actions	15	15.80	1.320	.341
adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	15	14.73	1.387	.58
evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	15	15.80	1.146	.296
simple past vs. present perfect	15	13.27	1.387	.358
Total	60	14.90	1.654	.214

Table 6 represents the mean and standard deviation for students' scores on grammatical rules under study. The mean score of the students on *used to for habitual actions* is 15.80, that of *adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns* is 14.73, that of *evaluations and comparisons with adjectives* is 15.80 and that of *simple past vs. present perfect* is 13.27. The table also gives the number of people in each group which is 20.

Table 7: Test of Homogeneity of Variances for scores on grammatical rules

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.537	3	56	.659

Checking the significance value (Sig.) for Levene's test, since this number is *greater* than .05, the assumption of homogeneity of variance has not been violated. As Table 7 shows, the Sig. value is .659 and as this is greater than .05, the homogeneity of variance assumption is not violated.

Table 8: On-way ANOVA for scores on grammatical rules

Scores					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	64.733	3	21.578	12.500	.000
Within Groups	96.667	56	1.726		
Total	161.400	59			

Using the statistical formula of one-way between-groups ANOVA, the researcher examined the significant difference between the students' scores on grammatical rules, as measured by the Grammar Post-test. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three age groups [$F(3, 57) = 12.50, p = .01$] (See Table 8). Therefore, the second research hypothesis was rejected.

Table 9: Post-hoc test for grammatical rules

Scores

Tukey HSD

(I) levels	(J) levels	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
used to for habitual actions	adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	1.067	.480	.129
	evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	.000	.480	1.000
	simple past vs. present perfect	2.533*	.480	.000
adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	used to for habitual actions	-1.067	.480	.129
	evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	-1.067	.480	.129
	simple past vs. present perfect	1.467*	.480	.017
evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	used to for habitual actions	.000	.480	1.000
	adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	1.067	.480	.129
	simple past vs. present perfect	2.533*	.480	.000
simple past vs. present perfect	used to for habitual actions	-2.533*	.480	.000
	adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	-1.467*	.480	.017
	evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	-2.533*	.480	.000

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Post-hoc comparisons are used to conduct a whole set of comparisons, exploring the differences between each of the groups or conditions in the study. Having calculated the overall F ratio and finding the significant differences among aspects of grammar, the researcher went on and performed additional test to identify where these differences occur. The post-hoc test is used to exactly determine where the differences among aspects of grammar occur. Look down the column labeled **Mean Difference**, we look for any asterisks (*) next to the values listed. If an asterisk is found, this means that the groups being compared are significantly different from one another at the $p < .05$ level. The exact significance value is given in the column labeled **Sig.** As displayed by Table 4.9, Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for grammatical rule, *simple past vs. present perfect* was significantly different from other grammatical rules.

Calculating the Effect Size for Grammatical Rules

Since SPSS does not generate the effect size formula, the effect size can be calculated using eta squared, as one of the most common effect size statistics. The formula is:

Eta squared = Sum of squares between-groups / Total sum of squares

In this study, the researcher divided the Sum of squares for between groups (64.73) by the Total sum of squares (161.40). The resulting eta squared value is .40, which in Cohen's (1988) terms would be considered a *great* effect size. It means that the effect size between the three groups is great.

Cohen classifies .01 as a small effect, .06 as a medium effect and .14 as a large effect.

Results from Interview

As for the last research question, the researcher employed Semi-structured Interview, following the guidelines proposed by Dornyei (2007) through which initially the researcher acting as a facilitator posed open-ended questions in English language and let students express their ideas while taking notes, and using audio-tape recorder. The researcher finally came up with common themes employing the techniques of open-coding, axial-coding and selective coding to analyze data. Here are the questions and some common statements elicited from the responses by the students:

Question 1: What are the major problems in writing skills?

The results from the interview revealed that students mostly complain about their grammatical mistakes and they do not know how to write accurately. They believed that structural issues are important in arranging the sentence correctly and making the sentence well-formed and vocabulary is important in writing fluently. They like to gain mastery over grammatical rules and apply what they learn to other context and written communication.

Question 2: What do think of exposing to common errors before starting writing?

The students interviewed mentioned that the technique was useful because when we learn the rules and mostly we memorize them, we cannot apply the rules and we indeed forget the correct rule when we start writing in practice. Being exposed to the common errors regarding the issue under question, help us much because we do not need to just memorize the rules. In this way, we become aware of the mistakes we may commit. So while engaging in doing writing tasks, we review the common errors in our mind and avoid committing those mistakes.

Restatement of the Problems

In this study, the major problem addressed was to examine the relationship between explicit teaching of common errors and students' performance on writing accuracy with regard to 30 students studying at Kimia English Institute in Sannandaj, Kordestan province. The difference between students' performance on writing accuracy with respect to the aspects of grammatical rules was also investigated. The results from semi-structured interview were also reported by the researcher. The first and second questions in this study were quantitative and the last question was qualitative. Therefore, this study is seeking to answer the following three major questions:

- 1) Is there any relationship between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and EFL learners' writing accuracy?
- 2) Is there any significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules including 'used to for habitual actions', 'adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns', 'evaluations and comparisons with adjectives', and

‘simple past vs. present perfect’?

3) How do the learners react towards the implementation of explicit teaching of common errors in improving writing accuracy?

These are the main topics addressed in the study and readers are asked to reflect on them.

Summary of the Findings

In the previous chapters, a complete report of the findings of the study has been presented with respect to the three questions posed in the first chapter. In this section, the findings of the study are summarized briefly as follows:

To answer the first research question of the study, 30 female students in two groups (15 in control group and 15 in experimental group) were asked to participate in the study. Following the treatment phase, the results obtained from Descriptive Statistics revealed that students in experimental group ($M=27.33$, $SD=3.33$) outperformed students in control group ($M=22.33$, $SD=4.62$). Moreover, the results from Independent Sample T-test showed that there was a significant difference in scores obtained from the post-test of explicit teaching of common errors in writing accuracy [$t_{(28)} = -2.71$, $p < 0.05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was large (eta squared = .20). Thus, the effect size of .20 was large.

The current study is in line with the earlier studies on explicit teaching of errors. A more common finding among these earlier studies is that teachers' error correction occurs frequently, irrespective of pedagogical focus and classroom setting and that explicit error treatment is desired by most L2 learners (Leeman, 2003; Leki, 1991). These studies, however, also reveal that teachers' provision of explicit feedback is often arbitrary, idiosyncratic, ambiguous and unsystematic, which in turn invites the question as to whether error correction in the classroom is of any value (Loewen, 2002). More current investigation undertaking the role of negative feedback and the relative effects of different types of explicit feedback in the context of language teaching (e.g., Doughty, 1994; Han, 2001) has sometimes been more explanatory and experimental. The results from Han (2001) findings showed that explicit teaching of grammar contribute more to the success of the students in writing performance. Classroom-based studies mainly center on correction provided by the teacher; for example, whether the feedback is immediate or delayed.

As for the second research question of the study, the researcher, first, checked homogeneity of variance, using Levene's test, and found that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated. Then, she generated one-way between-groups ANOVA to examine the significant difference between the students' scores on grammatical rules, as measured by the Grammar Post-test. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three age groups [$F(3, 57) = 12.50$, $p = .05$]. The significant F test indicated that the null hypothesis could be rejected; however, since it did not indicate which of the levels differ, post-hoc test was conducted. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test demonstrated that the mean score for grammatical rule, *simple past vs. present perfect* was significantly different from other grammatical rules.

As for the last research question regarding students' reactions towards the use of explicit teaching of common grammatical errors, the researcher explored the issue using semi-structured interview containing two open-ended questions. The results reported that the students were mostly eager to work on explicit teaching of common errors since although they learn grammatical rules, they learn them by heart. They are not able to apply the rules accurately in writing; however, through working on the common errors, they practically try to avoid grammatical mistakes and write well-form sentences. They believed that while engaging in the process of writing, they have in their mind common error regarding the issue and this helps them much not to do the same mistakes.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, major conclusions can be drawn from the present study. The results of this experimental study revealed that, when second language learners receive explicit teaching which enhances their awareness and draws their attention to the common errors committed by L2 learners, and when they are provided with the opportunity to interact, and discuss these common errors with their peers and the teacher, in the revised and redrafted version, they move progressively towards greater accuracy in producing the target-like forms. As a result of following explicit teaching of common errors, the students not only could improve their written accuracy in the short term but also develop their internalized grammatical system and improve their level of proficiency in general.

Comparing the performance of the experimental group with that of the control group, it can be concluded that raising students' consciousness of different types of errors performs a more effective role than just raising students' awareness by explicit teaching. Traditionally, among language skills, writing has been regarded as the most difficult in second language acquisition, and today it is the most practical language skill that can be used by learners to interact internationally, especially with the rapid expansion of globalization and cyber-communication. Therefore, using writing accurately is influential in this regard. Prominent researchers in second language writing mention that form-focused feedback can be effective, especially when accompanied by classroom explicit instruction (White, Spada, Lightbown & Ranta, 1991). According to Ferris (2002), learners who are provided with explicit teaching over a period of time can improve their language accuracy. A case in point is the study conducted by Chandler (2003) who tracked students' writing over one semester and found that both underlining and direct teaching of errors reduced grammatical and lexical errors in subsequent writing.

Since recent findings on SLA, focusing on form-focused instruction (Long, 1991; Ellis, 2001) and noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), put emphasis on instructed SLA, explicit teaching of grammatical errors is in line with such perspectives, and learners can promote in writing accurately by means of direct instruction presented by the teacher. In this way, students' awareness is activated while listening to the teacher and reactivated while engaging in writing tasks assigned by the teacher. Students can comprehend the rules more deeply and apply them more precisely. It can be concluded that explicit teaching has a significant effect on improvement

of writing accuracy of the experimental group and the current study confirms the positive effect of direct teaching of common errors on students' writing skills. Point taken, the scholarly literature on the effectiveness of explicit grammar instruction in writing accuracy, especially in L2 settings, should be well investigated to reveal more in-depth information. Although in English language classrooms, grammar has been the topic of hot debate and controversy in public and academic arenas for more than 50 years, it has not been examined widely to be more confident in generalization issues. For example, in a current study undertaken by Penn, Park and Lim (2013), the content analysis of 238 empirical research studies involving Korean participants was found that not even a single study with respect to Korean participants was published in the previous 20 years exploring this relationship between explicit grammar instruction and writing (Penn, Park & Lim, 2013). Unfortunately, with reference to the short list of articles in this regard, unlike much interest in the role of corrective feedback in L2 writing, it seems that there has almost been no interest in investigating the role of explicit grammar instruction in second or foreign language writing (Andrews et al., 2006). Therefore, it can be concluded that more valid and reliable evidence is wanting in this area of investigation (Tomlinson, 1994; Wyse, 2001).

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“PASSAGES” IN PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

It is beyond doubt that English language has become the platform of communication all over the world. In fact, it is one of the main reasons why English is taught as a foreign language in many countries. Moreover, it has already become a medium of communication in many educational settings such as public schools. Among the teaching and learning materials, textbooks or course books play a crucial role. A textbook should aim to provide as much as possible in one book and should be adequate to meet the needs of the students during the course. The English as foreign language (EFL) instructors then face the challenging task of opting a textbook not just based on fads and fashions. Another feature that blurs the instructors' judgement may be the publisher's reputation. In order to select an effective and appropriate textbook, they are bound to implement material evaluation following certain guidelines and criteria. This article tries to evaluate an English textbook series, namely Passages (Richards & Schmidt, 2002), based on Tomlinson (2003)'s criteria. The textbook was examined according to two broad criteria (reliability and validity) by which one can have a bird view of most of all its vices and virtues. Based on the data collected through the checklist, the English textbook series, Passages, do not enable the students so much to operate effectively in their future academic or professional life. That is, they are not based on learner needs. However, the textbooks encourage independent language learning. It is hoped that this textbook evaluation provides the necessary insight for all language teachers to conduct such a procedure in their own practice of textbook selection. Both teachers and material developers should notice that a variety of factors should be taken into account in designing and selecting a book. Moreover, the needs of the students as well as the course objectives need to be considered in the very beginning stages of evaluating a textbook.

KEYWORDS: English Language Teaching (ELT); English text books; Material Evaluation; Checklist

INTRODUCTION

English language instruction has many important components but the essential constituents of many ESL/EFL classrooms and programs are the textbooks and instruction materials that are often used by language instructors. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) suggest:

"The textbook is an almost universal element of English language teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in various countries...No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook."
(p.315).

The choice of language teaching materials can determine the quality of learning-teaching procedure. As a part of the materials used in the language classroom, the textbook can often play

a crucial role in students' success or failure. Therefore, particular attention must be paid to evaluate such materials based on valid and reliable instruments. One of the common methods to evaluate English Language Teaching (ELT) materials is the checklist. An evaluation checklist is an instrument that provides the evaluator with a list of features of successful learning-teaching materials. According to these criteria, evaluators like teachers, researchers as well as students can rate the quality of the material. (Mukundan, Nimehchisalem & Hajimohammadi, 2011)

Evaluation is a process of inquiry in which data are gathered through different instruments and from different sources. This information is interpreted to make important decisions based on the research results. These decisions might require a change and effect a drastic alteration in the outline and process of a language program instruction. All these efforts are made to the betterment of a course of study and bringing about satisfactory results. Rea-Dickens and Germaine (1994) defined Evaluation as a dynamic process which investigates the suitability and appropriateness of an existing practice.

To do this appropriately, books have to bear certain characteristics in their every aspect including physical and thematic considerations. With this respect, in last decades a movement known as "textbook evaluation" began to emerge whose goal was to construct checklists based on which a book could be analyzed in detail in order to assure its usefulness and practicality with such factors as proficiency level of students, learners' needs, course objectives, gender, and other contextual factors. All these factors have to be properly met through textbook's content. So textbooks greatly influence how content is delivered. (Sarem, Hamidi & Mahmoudie, 2013)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Role of Textbooks in English Language Teaching

A textbook has always been the most preferred instructional material in ELT. They are best seen as a resource in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set concerning learner needs (Cunnings worth, 1995). Textbooks play a prominent role in the teaching /learning process and they are the primary agents of conveying the knowledge to the learners. Besides, one of the basic functions of textbooks is to make the existence knowledge available and apparent to the learner in a selected easy and organized way.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) argued that the textbook has a very important and a positive part to play in teaching and learning English. They state that textbooks provide the necessary input into classroom lessons through different activities, readings and explanations. Thus, they will always survive on the grounds that they meet certain needs. Allwright (1981) added a further dimension to the role of the textbook by characterizing the lesson as an interaction between the three elements of teacher, learners and materials. This interaction enhances the opportunities to learn.

Regarding the multiple roles of textbooks in ELT, Cunnings worth (1995) identified textbook as a resource in presenting the material, a source for learners to practice and the activities. They also provide the learners with a reference source on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. What is

more, textbooks serve as a syllabus and a self-study source for learners. They also serve as a support for the beginning teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.

Richards (2001) stated that textbooks act as a key component in most language programs. They provide the learners with the necessary input that the learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the class. They also serve as the basis for the language content and skills to be taught and other kinds of language practice that the learners take part in. Regarding the advantages, Richards (2001) stated that without textbooks a program may have no path, therefore they provide structure and a syllabus.

Besides, the use of a textbook in a program can guarantee that students in different classes will receive a similar content and therefore can be evaluated in the same way. In other words textbooks provide the standards in instruction. Moreover, they include a variety of learning resources such as workbooks, CDs and cassettes, videos, etc., which makes the learning environment interesting and enjoyable for the learners. As for inexperienced teachers, Richards (2001) stated that textbooks can serve as a tool to train them.

Similarly, Grant (1987) presented the opinions of teachers about the textbook in his book. Most teachers state that a textbook shows the order what is to be taught and learned and in which order it is to be taught and learned. They guide the teachers as to what methods to be used and as Richards (2001) stated above, a textbook saves the teacher an extraordinary amount of time.

Despite the impact of new technologies, textbooks will doubtless continue to play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful resource for both teachers and learners. What is more it has significant impact on the learners' meeting their language learning objectives. The role of the textbook in the language classroom is undeniable. Both teachers and students need a framework on which to build and textbooks definitely provide this.

Approaches to Materials Evaluation in English Language Teaching

Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1994) stated that 'evaluation is an intrinsic part of teaching and learning' (p.4) Evaluation plays a key role in education and it is important for the teacher since it can provide valuable information for the future going of classroom practice, for the planning of courses, for the management of learning tasks and students. Finally, evaluation is essential for the use of instructional materials such as textbooks.

Jones (1985) emphasized that "evaluation in LL (language learning) and LT (Language Teaching), evaluation generally refers to the theoretical or empirical assessment of the curriculum itself and its components from various perspectives: assessment of teacher performance, learner achievement, materials and so on" (p.21). As mentioned, evaluation is quite an important part of the educational process. It is as the means by which we can gain a better understanding of what's effective, what's less effective and what appears to be no use at all.

Ellis (1997) distinguished two types of materials evaluation, namely, predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation. A predictive evaluation is designed to make a decision regarding what

materials to use. Teachers who are required to carry out a predictive evaluation determine which materials are best suited to their purposes.

Ellis (1997) indicated that there are two principles ways in which teachers can carry out predictive evaluation. One is to rely on evaluations carried out by expert reviewers who identify specific criteria for evaluating materials. However, in reviews of individual course books the criteria can be inexact or implicit. The other way is that teachers can carry out their own predictive evaluations by making use of various checklists and guidelines available in the literature. The idea behind using such guides is to assist teachers carry out a predictive evaluation systematically, yet the author points out that ‘there are limits to how scientific such an evaluation can be’ (p.37).

It is for the reason mentioned above that there is a need to evaluate materials retrospectively because such an evaluation provides the teacher with feedback so as to determine whether it is worth using the material again. Thus, Ellis (1997) stated that ‘a retrospective evaluation serves as a means of testing the validity of a predictive evaluation and what is more, it may point to ways in which the predictive instruments can be improved for future use (p.37). As can be understood from the above definitions, both predictive and retrospective evaluations aim at making the teaching/-learning environment more effective. They both help teachers to make appropriate judging concerning the effectiveness of their teaching.

Moreover, as Hutchinson (1987) pointed out materials evaluation not only serves the immediate practical aim of selecting teaching materials but also plays a critical role in developing teacher’s awareness in a number of ways which are providing teachers to analyze their own presuppositions about the nature of language and learning, forcing teachers to set their prerequisites and helping them to see materials as an essential part of the whole teaching/learning situation.

There are two main approaches that have an important role for the purpose of selecting, improving and modifying materials to suit the needs of learners and teachers in a particular teaching/learning context. These are called as macro and micro approach to evaluation of materials. A macro evaluation focus on an overall assessment of whether an entire set of materials has worked in relation to the needs identified. In a micro evaluation, however, the focus is on the evaluation of effectiveness of the tasks. A micro evaluation of a task can both show to what extent a task is appropriate for the particular group of learners and reveal certain weaknesses in the design of a task for future. (Ellis, 1997)

Empirical Studies on Textbook and Materials Evaluation

There are some empirical studies carried out on the evaluation of textbook and materials evaluation. Ayman (1997) conducted a materials evaluation study which involved a macro level evaluation of an in-house textbook in relation to the perceptions of the instructors and students on the overall effectiveness of the textbook after the implementation of it. The purpose of the study was to find out how the students and the instructors evaluate a textbook which was based on English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

The results of the study revealed that both the students and instructors were generally positive about textbook. However, there were some aspects that they felt negative about the textbook. These were insufficiency of some activities, inappropriateness of content/topics and ineffectiveness of the teacher's book. The results obtained from the study indicated that the instructors were more positive about the textbook than the students. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher suggested that those aspects of the textbook that both the students and teachers viewed negatively should be improved. Ayman (1997) made some further recommendations about the instructors that they should be well trained in how to use the textbook effectively in their classes and they should also find ways to raise students' awareness in using the textbook.

Yumuk (1998) also conducted an evaluation study and investigated the effectiveness of English Language Support (ELS) 210 Course Materials for Bureau Management and Secretarial Studies (BMS) at Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL). This case study was conducted through both macro and micro level evaluations on the basis of five criteria developed. These were content, organisation of content, consideration of perceptual learning style differences, integration of learning training elements to develop autonomy, and physical appearance to enhance learning.

Data were collected through questionnaires administered to 41 students and interviews carried out with two curriculum level coordinators, two instructors and nine students. Also, content description of the materials was provided to obtain information about the materials in relation to the criteria developed.

The data collected from the curriculum level coordinator, instructors and student interviews and the observations were also analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study revealed that the materials were effective to some extent in relation to content, organisation of content and Physical appearance of the materials. However, to a large extent the materials were not effective due to the fact that they did not consider perceptual learning style differences in general and failed to integrate learning training elements to develop learner autonomy.

Yakhontova (2001) conducted an evaluation study on an EAP textbook called Academic Writing for Graduate Students by Swales and Feak in the Ukrainian University classroom. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the intellectual and emotional reactions of the students toward a new kind of textbook. The subjects of the study were 12 students whose reactions and opinions were based on three sources. First of all, the students were asked to express their opinions of the textbook by providing the answers to a short questionnaire at the end of the course.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1-What are the pedagogic values of the 2nd edition of Passages series?
- 2- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the 2nd edition of Passages series?
- 3-Is the English textbook, Passages based on learner needs?

- 4-Does the textbook encourage independent language learning exploit learner's prior knowledge and experience and provide opportunities for further developments to some extent?
5-Does the textbook offer opportunities for cooperative learning?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In this study, only the researcher and two other teachers played the role of the participants. They have taught *Passages* for some years and accordingly they are familiar with it. One of the researchers teaches passages private for students ages 20 to 25.

Instruments

This study employed a checklist (Appendix A) to collect data on the points of view of the researchers about the mentioned textbook. The checklist was developed by the researchers according to Tomlinson (2003)'s criteria and it was used to obtain quantitative data. It is composed of two dimensions: reliability and validity of the aforementioned textbook. It is also consisted of 106 items related to five criteria to conduct a macro level material evaluation.

Procedure

The participants were asked to complete the textbook evaluation checklist by checking a point on the Likert scale which best shows their perception. Also they were asked to write a number between 0 to 4 which shows what they exactly feel about the textbook. The checklist was expected to take approximately 30 minutes for the participant to complete. The closed questions required respondents to choose from a five-point Likert scale indicating varying degrees of agreement or disagreement (4 = complete agreement, 0 = No agreement). 0 indicates learners' disagreement, 1 indicates learners' agreement as limited, 2 indicates learners' agreement moderately, 3 learners' agreement extensively, and 4 indicates learners' agreement completely. Seven open-ended questions tapped into subjects' conceptions of learning and their interpretations of a specific learning context.

Data Analysis

The checklist evaluates the English textbook *Passages* from two aspects: reliability and validity. Each of these dimensions consists of items grading the textbook on a scale of 0_4, representing the criterion strongly available (level 4) to strongly unavailable (level 0). These items relates to five criteria, namely Psychological Validity, Pedagogical Validity, Process and content validity, Educational validity and Reliability, through which the researcher conducts a macro level material evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the evaluations are presented in the tables.

Tables 1 to 4 evaluate the aforementioned textbook series regarding their validity.

Table 1: Psychological Validity

Psychological Validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Rationale/learner needs		Yes			
Independence and autonomy			Yes		
Self-development				Yes	
Creativity			Yes		
Cooperation			Yes		

Based on the data collected through the appended checklist, the textbook Passages has moderately process and content validity.

Table 2: Pedagogical Validity

Pedagogical Validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Guidance					Yes
Choice	Yes				
Reflection/innovation			Yes		

Regarding pedagogical validity, the textbook has proved to be complete in this respect.

Table 3: Process and content validity

Process and content validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Methodology				Yes	
Content	Yes				
Appropriacy				Yes	
Authenticity	Yes				
Cultural sensitivity	Yes				
Layout-graphics					Yes
Accessibility	Yes				
Linkage					Yes
Selection/grading					Yes
Sufficiency		Yes			
Balance/integration/challenge			Yes		
Stimulus/practice/revision			Yes		
Flexibility		Yes			

Table 4 indicates that the mentioned textbook series have extensive educational validity.

Table 4: Educational validity

Educational validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Educational validity	Yes				

Table 5 evaluates the aforementioned textbook series regarding their reliability.

Reliability

Table 5: Reliability

Reliability	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
	Yes				

The data collection related to reliability indicates that the mentioned textbook series are completely reliable.

Discussion

Based on the data collected through the checklist, the English textbook series, Passages, do not enable the students so much to operate effectively in their future academic or professional life. That is, they are not based on learner needs. However, the textbooks encourage independent language learning, exploit learner's prior knowledge and experience and provide opportunities for further developments to some extent. Not only the mentioned textbooks offer opportunities for cooperative learning, through pair and group work activities and information exchange tasks; they also involve the learners as human beings rather than just as language learners.

In these text books, there is enough guidance for teachers and students. Also they encourage teacher creativity, imagination and exploration and foster him to add, delete, change and improvise the content of the material. Although the level and the intended audience are clearly spelt out, the text generates limited 'real-life' communication processes. That is, the material does not provide extensive exposure to authentic English through purposeful reading and/or listening activities.

The units and exercises are well linked in terms of theme, situation, topic, pattern of skill development or grammatical/lexical progression. The selection and grading of tasks and activities are based on a clearly discernible system. But the books are complete enough to stand on its own to be workable. Therefore, the teacher should use other supplementary material to expose students to real-life situations.

The activities in these textbooks allow the learner to go beyond a merely superficial understanding of the text/discourse. However, the materials do not allow for flexible use of tasks/texts/activities, permitting them to be exploited or modified as required by local circumstances.

The textbooks also accord with broader educational concerns extensively (e.g., the nature and role of learning skills, concept development in younger learners, the function of ‘knowledge of the world’, etc.), and they have the same effect with different groups of target learners. So, they are completely reliable.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, according to Wang (2011), the case study of one particular EFL course book gives us more insights into the understanding of our teaching materials. Through the process of evaluation some important issues have appeared. By evaluating the teaching material teachers can understand more about language learning and this leads to new concepts and ideas, which in turn contribute to the adjustment, modification and eventually improvement of their own teaching. Furthermore, we should have the right attitudes towards textbooks. The underlying message being that we should not regard a textbook as an absolute authority and depend on it too much, but rather take whatever is beneficial to teaching and learning and adapt, complement or modify what’s not satisfactory. In this way we are making use of the textbooks to achieve our own purposes. As we have seen from the analysis and discussion, our textbooks may have problems of various kinds. Much therefore needs to be done on the part of the teacher is to apply creativity and imagination in bringing out the most effective results of teaching and learning.

Finally, I conclude with Cunningsworth’s remark,

No course book will be totally suited to a particular teaching situation. The teacher will have to find his own way of using it and adapting it if necessary. So we should not be looking for the perfect course book which meets all our requirement, but rather for the best possible fit between what the course book offers and what we as teachers and students need.(1984:89)

Limitations of the study

Like the other survey studies, the present had some limitations. The first limitation is that due to the time limitation, only the English textbook series, namely Passages were selected. Therefore, the results are context dependent and they should be generalized with great care. The second limitation is about the number of the participants. The number of teachers who participated in the study is limited and this may have affected the results of the study.

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APPENDIX A: CHECKLIST

A.1. Validity

A.1.1. Psychological Validity

Rationale/Learner Needs

1. Have the aims and objectives of the materials been clearly spelt out? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Are the materials appropriate and are they likely to be effective in helping learners to acquire English?
0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials make a positive contribution to heightening and sustaining learner motivation?
0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the materials give the learner confidence to initiate communicative events and persist with the attempted communication despite difficulties? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the materials cater for the development of language skills that would enable them to operate effectively in their future academic or professional life? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.1. Independence and Autonomy

1. Is the learner a decision-maker or just a receiver of information? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials encourage independent language learning? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials encourage learner to guess, predict, discover, take risks, or try out several alternatives?
0 1 2 3 4
4. Do they give learners plenty of opportunities to make choices which suit their linguistic level, their preferred learning styles, their level of involvement in the text and the time available to them?
0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the materials involve the learner in thinking about the learning process and in experiencing a variety of different types of learning activities? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do they allow sufficient time to think and reflect on their learning? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Do the materials help individual learners discover their learning styles and preferences, study habits and learning strategies? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Do the materials provide explicit instruction on various language learning strategies and suggest ways of using and developing them? 0 1 2 3 4
9. Is a sufficient range of strategies provided? 0 1 2 3 4
10. Do they encourage learners to evaluate the strategies or the learning activities or its content?
0 1 2 3 4
11. Do the materials allow self-monitoring and feedback? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.2. Self-Development

1. Do the materials/texts engage the learners both cognitively and effectively? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials credit learners with a capacity for rational thought and problem-solving? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do they also involve the learner's emotions in the learning process? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the materials allow for the development of creative and critical thinking skills? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the materials allow scope for the development of a desirable set of attitudes? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do the materials allow the individual to develop his or her talents as fully as possible? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Do the materials involve the learners as human beings rather than just as language learners? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Do the materials help build personality and learner voice and give learners an understanding about themselves?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.3. Creativity

1. Do the materials exploit the learner's prior knowledge and experience and provide opportunities for further developments? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials allow sufficient opportunities for student inventiveness and energy and encourage their participation in resource generation? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials provide additional challenging activities for highly motivated learners? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Have opportunities been built into the materials for learners to contribute? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.4. Cooperation

1. Do the materials offer opportunities for cooperative learning, through pair and group work activities and information exchange tasks? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Are students encouraged to learn from and help one another and, more importantly, able to work in a less stressful atmosphere in the classroom? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do they encourage positive interdependence by giving each individual a specific role to play in the activity allowing him/her to contribute actively to the group interaction?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.2. Pedagogical Validity

A.1.2.1 Guidance

1. Are the teacher's notes useful and explicit? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is there enough guidance for teachers and students? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Are the transcripts, answer keys, vocabulary lists, structural/functional inventories and lesson summaries provided in the teacher's book? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is allowance made for the perspectives, expectations, and preferences of non-native teachers of English?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.2.2 Choice

1. Are teachers encouraged to present the lessons in different ways? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials offer the teacher scope for adaptation and localization? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do they encourage the teacher to add, delete, change and improvise? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do they foster in teachers a sense of choice and control in exploiting the content? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.2.3 Reflection/Exploration/Innovation

1. Do they foster teacher receptivity to innovation and experimentation? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do they encourage teacher creativity, imagination and exploration? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do they help to raise the teacher's critical consciousness by facilitating reflection about the materials themselves and the methods implicated in them? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is the teacher encouraged to evaluate each lesson? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3. Process and Content Validity

A.1.3.1. Methodology

1. Does the course book reflect the insights and findings from current theory and research on second language acquisition? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do learners need to know what the sentences/texts mean or simply to manipulate forms? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials make use of what we know about the value of permitting a silent period at the beginning stages or in the learning of a new feature? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the materials help develop both the declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge of the learners as well as contribute to broader educational goals? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Is there a sufficient balance between analytical and experiential modes of learning? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Is there an explicit and conscious focus on rules and explanations or are there opportunities for the learners to discover the patterns in the first place? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Is there existing knowledge which learners expected to bring to the materials? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Is learner's knowledge of communication exploited? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.2. Content

1. Do the materials provide a rich, varied and comprehensible input in order to facilitate informal acquisition as well as conscious attention to linguistic and pragmatic features of the texts? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Are the topics/texts current and cognitively challenging? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the topics/texts help enrich the learners' personal knowledge and experience and foster a positive personality?
0 1 2 3 4

4. Are there varied activities at different levels of task difficulty? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Are the materials well contextualized? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do the materials call for a sufficiently good mix of closed and open-ended responses? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Are the grammatical explanations adequate? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Do the materials use complex metalanguage? 0 1 2 3 4
9. Do they suffer from terminological looseness? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.3. Appropriacy

1. Are the level and the intended audience clearly spelt out? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is it pitched at the right level of maturity and language and at the right conceptual level? 0 1 2 3 4
- Is the material interesting, varied and topical enough to hold the attention of learners? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is the author's sense of humour or philosophy obvious or appropriate? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Is the authorial voice friendly and supportive or patronizing? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.4. Authenticity

1. Do the materials provide extensive exposure to authentic English through purposeful reading and/or listening activities? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is the content realistic, reflecting topics and events and texts from real-world situations? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the activities relate to pupils' interests and 'real-life' tasks? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the tasks exploit language in a communicative or 'real-world' way? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the texts generate 'real-life' communication processes? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.5. Cultural sensitivity

1. Are the materials relevant/suitable/appropriate to the learners' cultural context and sensitive to their values and beliefs? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials reflect awareness of and sensitivity to sociocultural variation? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Does the book show parallels and contrasts between the learners' culture and others? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is this done in a non-patronizing way? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Does the coursebook enshrine stereotyped, inaccurate, condescending or offensive images of gender, race, social class or nationality? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Are accurate views of the USA or Britain presented; e.g., are uncomfortable social realities (for instance, unemployment, poverty, family, breakdowns, and racism) left out? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.6. Layout-Graphics

1. Is there clarity of design and layout? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is there an optimum density and mix of text and graphical material on each page? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Are the artwork and typefaces functional and colourful? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is there enough white space on each page? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.7. Accessibility

1. Are there indexes, vocabulary lists, section headings and other methods of signposting the content that allow the student to use the material easily, especially for revision or self-study purposes?
0 1 2 3 4
2. Is the learner given clear advice about how the book and its contents could be most effectively exploited?
0 1 2 3 4
3. Are the instructions for carrying out activities clearly and concisely but adequately articulated?
0 1 2 3 4
4. Can learners navigate with ease their way through the material in order to have a clear view of the progress made?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.8. Linkage

1. Are the units and exercises well linked in terms of theme, situation, topic, pattern of skill development or grammatical/lexical progression? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Does the textbook cohere both internally and externally (e.g. with other books in a series)?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.9.Selection/Grading

1. Is the linguistic inventory presented appropriate for the students' purposes, bearing in mind their L1 background?
0 1 2 3 4
2. Is the selection and grading of tasks and activities based on a clearly discernible system (e.g., frequency counts for vocabulary, cognitive load for tasks)? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the introduction, practice and recycling of new linguistic items seem to be shallow/steep enough for the intended students? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.10.Sufficiency

1. Is the book complete enough to stand on its own to be workable? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Can the course be taught using only the student's books? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.11.Balance/ Integration/Challenge

1. Do the activities allow the learner to go beyond a merely superficial understanding of the text/discourse?
0 1 2 3 4
2. Is there a good balance between receptive and productive knowledge, skills and abilities? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Is focus on the process of learning/product or both? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.12.Stimulus/Practice/Revision

1. Are there sufficient opportunities for students to use and practice their conversational strategies and skills?
0 1 2 3 4
2. Is there sufficiently rich exposure to language data through opportunities for extensive reading?
0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials provide for recycling of content, of vocabulary and structures? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Are self-checks provided? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.13.Flexibility

1. Do the materials allow for flexible use of tasks/texts/activities, permitting them to be exploited or modified as required by local circumstances? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is it too rigid format, structure and approach? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do they allow for alternative sequences/routes/paths? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is the order of activities in the curriculum and the pace at which they must be done quite fixed? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the materials make too many demands on teachers' preparation time? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do the materials expect students to spend too much time on their homework? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Is there a wide range of supplementary materials and teaching aids available? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.14.Educational Validity

1. Does the textbook accord with broader educational concerns (e.g., the nature and role of learning skills, concept development in younger learners, the function of 'knowledge of the world', etc.)? 0 1 2 3 4

A.2. Reliability

1. Would they have the same effect with different groups of target learners? 0 1 2 3 4

THE EFFECT OF TEACHERS' INDIVIDUAL VERBAL FEEDBACK AND PRAISE ON EFL LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Teachers use different methods to enhance students' motivation and hence their achievements. One method is giving individual verbal feedback and praise which is used to encourage students and provide remediation. This study aimed to explore the effects of teachers' verbal feedback and praise on students' achievements. A pre-post test was used as the research tool and two groups of female students participated in this study (N=30) under two conditions: no feedback, feedback and praise provided by the instructor. The findings showed that teachers' verbal feedback and praise had a significant positive impact on the learners' motivation and hence their achievements. As a result of giving feedback and praise to the students and their effects on motivation and achievements, it can be argued that the more motivated students are, the more and the better they will learn. This study has implications for instructors, learners and researchers especially in Iran both to do more serious researches on the teachers' perceptions as the most involved actors of Foreign Language Teaching regarding various aspects of feedback, motivation and their roles in language teaching and to make changes in the manner of feedback giving and even the method of teaching English.

KEYWORDS: individual verbal feedback – motivation – praise - achievement

INTRODUCTION

Background

The enhancement of student motivation and interest is an issue of major concern and focus to most teachers and education researchers. Educators are often concerned about the low motivation level of students in learning a second language. As reviewed by Dörnyei (1994a, 1994b, 2001a, 2001b), there are motivation strategies teachers can adopt in a language classroom. One of the effective motivational teaching strategies is the provision of motivational feedback and praise by teachers.

The present study arises from our own experiences in working with English teachers in secondary schools and English Institutes in Jahrom, Iran. Over teaching career, the researchers had an ideal opportunity to work in different schools and English Institutes with students of different backgrounds and levels, but most teachers from these different schools and institutes indicated that they faced similar problems with learners having low level of motivation and interest. Teachers were concerned that their students had little interest and motivation in class, failed to remember completely or partially what their teachers had taught, performed poorly academically and had little or no desire to improve. From our teaching experiences and observations of other teachers' practices, the researchers felt that motivation was a wide area of concern that had considerable impact on the students' learning outcomes. A comprehensive understanding of learners' motivation could make a significant contribution to the educational field. This study was designed to investigate how teachers can improve students' motivation and hence their achievements in learning English through more effective verbal individual feedback and praise. Since class assessment and class participation are carried out each session regularly and continuously, the researchers saw them suitable vehicles for exploring teacher feedback in Navid English Institute.

Statement of the problem

In the realm of education, many variables can affect learning and determine whether instruction will be effective or not. Many of these effective factors are related or intertwined with one another. One of the most critical pieces of the educational puzzle is motivation. If students are not motivated enough to learn, they are unlikely to learn, and there is little chance that instruction will be effective.

Verbal individual motivational feedback as an immediate and direct response to student academic performance is one of the most powerful classroom interventions that teachers can use to foster learning and improve student motivation and achievements. Effective feedback plays an important role in motivating further learning as it informs learners about the degree of their learning or their needs for improvement (Hyland & Hyland, 2006b). Effective feedback is essential for improving both teaching and learning. It enables the students to close the gap between the actual and the desired performance. (Carless, Joughin & Lui, 2006 as cited in Lee, 2007).

Praise is also considered to have beneficial effects on learners' motivation and performance. One group of researchers and teachers claim that normally a feedback message of praise increases motivation and leads to improvement in learners' performance (Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Dev, 1997; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Some researchers state that feedback which contains praise can be more effective since it causes a positive affective reaction, which is often linked to increased motivation and higher goals (Delin & Baumeister, 1994; Ilies & Judge, 2005).

The researcher hopes the results of this study would provide educators and language teachers in Iran with evidence concerning the effectiveness of teachers' motivational verbal feedback and praise in L2 classes.

Significance of the study

The concept of motivation within educational systems has been studied for many years. The domain of educational motivation is a continually evolving area of thought; therefore, the viewpoints regarding the significance of motivational factors within the educational realm are continually changing. To be able to provide the most suitable and best suited instruction for learners in each of the domains to be explored in this study, instructors, curriculum designers, and student advisors must understand the motivations of the students they teach. In addition, these professionals should be provided with contemporary, research-based and reliable information about relationships among motivators and specific academic ability domains. Effective individual verbal feedback and praise as two important motivational factors can take a great part in this regard.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Based on Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is conceptualized as information provided by an agent with regard to aspects of one's performance or understanding. The present study focuses just on teacher feedback. According to Black, and Wiliam (1998) having a desired aim is one of the three essential elements in feedback: 'When a learner is trying to learn, feedback about the effort has three main elements: recognition of the final goal, evidence about the present position, and clear understanding of a way to close the gap between the two situations' (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p.141). To close this gap, students need to improve their knowledge and receiving enough constructive feedback is the means to this goal. They strongly stress the significance of feedback to students to improve their current performance.

The following discusses two kinds of feedback and their effectiveness. They include 'traditional' feedback and dialogic feedback.

'Traditional' teacher feedback-giving practice

'Traditional' refers to a summative method of feedback delivery by teachers where feedback is from time to time and only given at the end of a summative assessment, in a written form on the report card.

In 'traditional' feedback-giving, teachers often perceive feedback as a simple acquisition process. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) state that, feedback is often conceptualized by teachers as a transmission process where 'they 'transmit' feedback messages to learners about what is right or wrong in their academic work, about its weaknesses and strengths, and learners use this information to make improvements' (p.200). As a result, feedback delivery is mainly controlled by and seen as the responsibility of teachers, so undermining the active engagement of students.

These basic arguments against the sole use of point scale without appropriate descriptors can pave the way for a detailed discussion of the use of other sorts of feedback in the next section. They include constructive feedback – feedback with suggestions, and evaluative feedback, which are discussed more in the section that follows.

The process of conducting dialogic feedback

Most criticisms of the 'traditional' way of feedback-giving have given teachers deep insight into what makes educator feedback more 'constructive' and effective. As proposed in the previous section, the two-way dialogic feedback is always more effective and motivating than the 'traditional' way of feedback-giving practice. The sections that follow first explore the ways to conduct dialogic feedback properly, then its content and tone. Below are three different methods to deliver dialogic feedback: verbal, written and non-verbal non-written feedback:

Verbal feedback

In the conduct of verbal feedback, an effective motivational feedback strategy is 'prompting an exchange of comments between educator and student. In this process, a two-way direct interaction between students and teacher is facilitated while at the same time helping educator-assessors check to what extent learners understand their learning goals. This can inform both teaching and learning regularly.

As stated by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), to conceptualize feedback as a mutual dialogue rather than as information transmission can enhance the effectiveness of feedback because learners can play a more effective and active role and use the feedback to develop and regulate their performance. What is important is to generate a formal or informal discussion between learners and educators so that learners can develop a clear understanding of standards and expectations.

Written feedback

Educators can have verbal interaction with learners in the form of a real dialogue; they can also deliver their feedback in written form. It can be done in a structured manner with success criteria and rubrics; with open positive comments embedded with praise, suggestion and criticism.

When examining the role of written feedback, Hyland and Hyland (2001) came upon the point that feedback can function well as praise, criticism and/or suggestion. They recognized in their research that praise was generally used to soften suggestion and criticism. Their survey also shows that learners vary significantly in what they want from educators in the form of feedback, so that there is a great need for teachers to change their feedback to fit specific learners and their personalities and needs. This gives importance to the issue of the need to deliver 'individualized feedback'.

Non-verbal and non-written feedback

This section investigates feedback that is neither written nor verbal. It takes the form of gestures, facial expression, rewards, etc. Tunstall and Gipps (1996) propose that there are four types of evaluative feedback - rewarding, punishing, approving and disapproving. Rewarding as a type of evaluative feedback can be provided in the form of symbols (e.g. stickers). Approving is a positive type of feedback, joined with the normative in relation to social and educational values. Non-verbal means of approving feedback embraces physical touch like holding learners' arms and a tap on the shoulder. Disapproval can be demonstrated in using physical gestures and a firm tone like pointing while speaking.

Content of dialogic feedback

Constructive feedback – feedback with suggestions

As mentioned above, knowing about one's weaknesses and strengths is not enough. Konold, Miller and Konold (2004) stress that learners need to be helped to progress suitable strategies to gradually improve their performance. One of the suggested ways is to give constructive feedback. This means students should be given as much help and guide as they need to employ their knowledge.

In sum, constructive feedback assists learners to find their weaknesses and provide them with the strategies and skills in making improvement.

Evaluative feedback

As stated by Tunstall and Gipps (1996), evaluative feedback is judgmental which is opposite if just being descriptive. It is either positive or negative and the judgments are made based on implicit and explicit norms. Moreover, evaluative feedback relates more to affective aspects of learning than do descriptive kinds.

Below is a brief discussion of the tone of two-way dialogic feedback which includes positive and negative feedback:

Positive feedback

One prevalent way to classify feedback is whether it is positive or negative. 'Positive feedback is seen as pleasing, complimentary, and consistent with the learner's self-image' (Nicols, 1995, p.289). While receiving positive feedback, students are more likely to feel supported since it improves the students' self-esteem.

A popular type of positive feedback is 'praise'. Salili (2001) maintains that praise is a positive feedback stating teacher's approval of learners' behavior or academic work. It is also claimed that praise is more than just a simple feedback on performance as it shows educators' positive affect and provides information about the value of the learner's behavior. This explanation emphasizes that praise is a type of positive feedback which is embedded with the teachers' positive affection and it is rich enough in information. A more significant aspect of praise is that it also consists of information telling students the positive value of their performance.

Moreover, it is discussed that positive feedback in the form of praise has a motivating function in maintaining students' learning. Nonetheless, it is vital to mention that praise can have negative effects on learners' motivation if it is misused or overused. Brophy (1981) proposes that 'praise delivered to the wrong student, or in the wrong way, or under the wrong circumstances may be not only ineffective but counterproductive' (p.21).

Negative feedback

Negative feedback refers to feedback that is 'critical that may be rejected if not delivered skillfully' (Nicols, 1995, p.289). This section examines the facets and functions of criticism in addition to its relationship with learners' motivation to learn.

Criticism is a type of negative feedback. As stated by Salili (2001): ‘Criticism is described as showing disapproval of learners’ academic work or behavior’. (p.81). With regard to the application of criticism by educators, Brophy (1981) proposes that criticism and praise would better be used together. Teachers do so to reinforce learners systematically.

As reviewed above, positive feedback does not necessarily motivate learners. If it is used inappropriately, it can have negative effects on learners' motivation to learn. In the same way, negative feedback such as criticism does not necessarily bring harmful effects to learners' motivation.

The above has examined the tone of feedback – positive feedback and negative feedback, including praise and criticism respectively.

Motivation

The significance of motivation in improving foreign/ second language learning is undeniable. Lifrieri (2005, p. 4) reports that “most people would defiantly mention motivation among the factors which affect individual levels of success in any activity – like language learning –”. In the same way, Gardner (2006, p. 241) reports that “learners with stronger motivation will do better and more successful than learners with lower levels”. He also claims that “if a learner is motivated, he/she has enough reasons (motives) for being involved in the same activities, puts more effort, persists in the activities, pays attention to the tasks, has more desire to reach the goal, enjoys the activities more and more, etc.” (Gardner, 2006, p. 243).

Research Studies concerning individual variables in L2 learning also show the close relationship between motivation and achievement. In one research study, Gardner et al (1997) claim that language learning causes motivation, and this motivation in turn affects attainment.

A large number of research studies have demonstrated that motivation is vital for L2 learning since it directly influences how much effort learners make, their level of proficiency and how long they maintain and persevere in L2 skills after completing their language study (Cheng & Dornyei, 1998; Trang & Baldauf, 2007). Cognitive skills in learning the target language are not a guarantee that a student can successfully master that language. In fact, in many cases, learners with greater L2 learning motivation get better grades and achieve better language proficiency (Wu & Wu, 2009).

Praise

Praise has been considered as “favorable interpersonal feedback” (Baumeister, Hutton, & Cairns, 1990, p. 131) or “positive evaluations made by an individual of another’s products, performances, or attributes” (Kanouse, Gumpert, & Canavan-Gumpert, 1981, p. 98). In general, praise is considered to have beneficial effects on learners’ self-esteem, motivation, and performance. Therefore, educators are encouraged to use praise effectively as a reinforcer of a desired behavior (Dev, 1997).

Feedback which contains praise can be more effective since it causes a positive affective reaction, which is often linked to increased motivation and higher goals (Delin & Baumeister, 1994; Ilies & Judge, 2005).

Evidence of a direct or mediated positive effect of praise on performance and motivation is abundant but not without flaws. There are also instances of the negative effect of praise on individuals' learning. An early study by Baumeister's et al. (1990) presented evidence that praise can both facilitate and impede students' performance. The analyses demonstrated that although positive feedback improved learners' performance on effort tasks, it led to impairment in skilled performance.

Studies on Feedback, Praise, Motivation and achievement

In an action research case study, Magilow (1999) suggests that once positive affect is enacted—by use of humor, etc.—the teacher will be able to correct learners' errors without damaging their self-perception. The survey conclusion is that the issue of feedback may be inseparable from that of rapport. When a teacher-student rapport is created, explicit error correction may be completely effective.

Kubota (1994) (as cited in Burrell's literature review, 2000, p.26) finds that an experimental group receiving explicit linguistic and metalinguistic feedback performs better on language learning tasks than a group receiving no feedback. In this survey both implicit and explicit feedback are found to facilitate SLA.

Imai's (1989) thesis aim is to find whether praise or correction is more likely to improve oral L2 proficiency. In brief, Imai hypothesizes that Japanese EFL university students' grammar and pronunciation improve by error correction, but fluency would improve by praise.

Moskowitz (1976) reports teacher techniques related to feedback giving practices. Moskowitz (1976) claims that effective feedback should be immediate and direct. This kind of feedback is best given in a warm, accepting classroom climate. He also stresses that effective praise for learners' behavior is frequent, varied, and often nonverbal.

Some researchers (Fadzil et al., 2011) conducted a research to examine the relationship between various socio-psychological variables like motivation, attitude, anxiety and instrumental orientation on performance in English as L2. The findings demonstrated that these variables were significantly correlated with students' performance. Furthermore, the regression analysis indicated that all the variables except for personal motivation had significant effects on performance with attitude and instrumental orientation having positive effects while anxiety having a negative effect.

Based on Gardner and Lambert (1972), in acquiring a foreign language, motivation is affected by attitude. Evidence for positive correlation of English proficiency with positive attitude and being highly motivated towards learning English as a second language has been accumulating, for both

integrative (Nida, 1956; LoCastro, 2001) and instrumental motivation (Gardner, 1960; Brown, 2000).

Liu's (2007) survey on Chinese university students' motivation and attitude to learn English and the correlation of both variables with the learners' English proficiency also indicated similar findings. Moreover, correlation analysis indicated that learners who had more positive attitudes towards learning English tended to score better in the proficiency test. Accordingly, Liu proposed that higher instrumental and travel orientations and more positive attitudes might also be the result of students' higher English proficiency.

According to Haitema (2002) and Saracaloğlu (2000), there is a positive relationship between foreign language achievement and affective characteristics. In her survey, Saracaloğlu (2000) refers to the learners' attitudes that they differ in.

Bartley (1970) reported that his studies have indicated that there was a direct relationship between high achievement and positive attitudes as well as low achievement and negative attitudes. That positive attitudes enhance achievement has been insisted on and explained by Lambert et al. (1963), and Spolsky (1969).

Gardner (1985) maintained that motivation has close relationship with students' achievement. He analyzed the role of motivation and attitude in second language acquisition through his previous survey. The findings revealed that the attitudinal-motivational factors were significantly related to learners' achievement.

RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to explore the effects of individual motivational verbal feedback and praise on Iranian EFL learners' achievements, the study addressed the following research question:

- 1) Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effects on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?

Hypothesis

H₀: Teachers' verbal feedback and praise have no effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements.

METHODOLOGY

Setting

This study was conducted at Navid English Institute in Jahrom. The Institute contains a student population of 1400 students in total. Classes in this institute ranges from KIDS 1 (age 7) to FCE (advanced level). 25 English teachers are teaching English in this Institute (10 MA, 14 BA and 1 PHD students).

Participants

The participants of the study were all EFL learners of Navid English Institute in Jahrom. The researcher randomly selected two female classes. The number of the participants was 15 in each class. All the participants were native speakers of Persian and their age ranged from 17 to 24. The participant students were all at a high intermediate proficiency level. Some of them were High school students and some others had completed 12 years of schooling while a few of them had graduated from different universities in Iran at BA level and some were following their education at the university. The teacher participant was an English-major holder and had a master degree in education. Mr. Jafarian, the teacher participant, has been teaching in this Institute for 10 years. He is one of the most successful instructors in this institute.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to collect the data required for the fulfillment of the objectives of this study, one of the teachers agreed to participate in the study. Two classes were selected randomly. Both classes were the same in terms of their level of English proficiency and gender and also they had the same English teacher. One class was considered as the control group (class A) and the other one was the experimental group (class B). The students' achievements were measured twice by the prepared pre and posttest. The teacher was provided with a list of positive sentences and praise which had to be used as motivational tools during the semester while giving feedback to the learners. All the participants in class A received motivational supportive feedback and praise along with required help and guidance individually and regularly. The teacher helped the learners know where they were going, how they were going and what to do next. In this way they would feel confident enough to follow the teacher's guidance closely.

Research Design

The research design for this study was an analytical (quantitative) survey which provided a numerical description of the variables.

In the process of the study, teacher motivational feedback and praise were considered as the independent variable that was expected to bring about changes in students' motivation, and hence their achievements which would be the dependent variable. The change in students' motivation and hence their achievements depended on the positive motivational feedback and praise they received.

Instrument

In order to meet the objectives of this study, the following instrument was used:

- Pre and posttests: The tests were prepared by a group of experts and university professors in Central Navid Institute in Shiraz and then they piloted the tests in some classes and calculated their reliability. When they were sure of their reliability and validity, they passed them to other branches and classes to be used regularly. Each test was composed of 50 items in reading, listening and writing based on the students' course book, the second edition of Top Notch, in Navid Institute.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data in the present study is quantitative. The quantitative data of the pre and posttest was analyzed in terms of means, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To report, describe, and summarize the important general characteristics of the sets of the obtained data, descriptive statistics were used.

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the pretest and posttest before and after the treatment and to check whether the teacher's individual verbal feedback and praise had improved the participants' achievements or not, both the paired samples *t*-test and the independent samples *t*-test were run.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Preliminaries

The purpose of this section is to provide the analysis of the data collected for the study designed to address the research question, "Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?" The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of praise and feedback on changing motivation toward the English language and hence their achievements.

Descriptive Statistics

To report, describe and summarize the important general characteristics of the sets of the obtained data, descriptive statistics were used.

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics for the achievements of the experimental group. The mean scores and standard deviations are illustrated as well.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for achievements of Experimental Group

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest	75.9333	8.81935	62.00	94.00
Posttest	90.8667	3.54293	86.00	98.00

As Table 1 shows the mean score of the achievements of the experimental group is 75.93 in the pretest and 90.86 in the posttest. The participants in the experimental group have the standard deviation of 8.81 in the pretest whereas that of the participants in the posttest is 3.54. Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics for the achievements of the control group. The mean scores and standard deviations are illustrated as well.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Achievements of Control Group

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
pretest	82.6000	5.90157	74.00	94.00
Posttest	84.2667	5.48331	76.00	96.00

As Table 2 shows the mean score of the achievements in the control group is 82.60 in the pretest and 84.26 in the posttest. The participants in the control group have the standard deviation of 5.90 in the pretest whereas that of the participants in the posttest is 5.48.

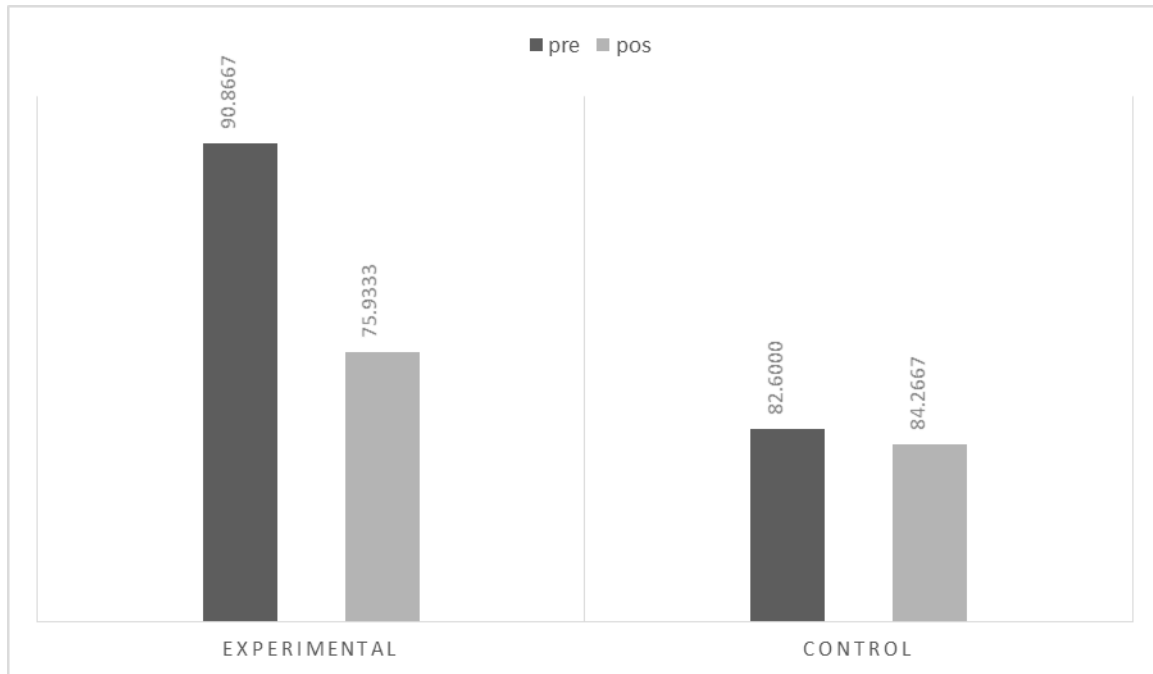


Figure 1: Mean differences of achievements between pretest and posttest of experimental and control Group

Inferential Statistics

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the pretest and posttest before and after the treatment and to check whether the teacher's individual verbal feedback and praise improved the participants' achievements or not, the paired and independent samples *t*-test were run.

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group in pre and posttest, a paired samples *t*-test was run.

Table 3: Paired samples statistics for the effect of verbal feedback on the achievements of the experimental group

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre and posttest	-14.93333	7.27488	1.87836	-18.96202	-10.90464	-7.950	14	.000

According to Table 3, there was a significant difference in the scores for no verbal feedback in pretest (M=75.9333, SD=8.81935) and verbal feedback in posttest (M=90.8667, SD=3.54293), $t(-7.950) = p < .05$

Table 4: Paired Samples Statistics for the effect of verbal feedback on achievement of the control group

	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
precon – postcont	-1.66667	4.62395	1.19390	-4.22733	.89399	-1.396	14	.184

According to Table 4 there was not a significant difference in the scores for lack of verbal feedback in the pretest (M=82.6000, SD=5.48331) and posttest (M=84.2667 SD=5.90157), $t(-1.396)$, $p > .05$. In order to find out if there was a statistically significant difference between the treatment and control groups in pretest, an independent samples t -test was run.

Table 5: Independent Samples t -Test for Difference between Treatment and Control Group in Pretest

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	1.852241	0.1843	2.4331	28	.0816	-6.60000	2.739946	1.054143	12.279191
	Equal variances not assumed			2.4331	23.9	.0826	-6.60000	2.739946	1.017125	12.316209

An independent-sample t -test was run to see if there was a significant difference in achievement scores of control group (M=82.6000, SD=.75.9333) and experimental group (M=75.9333, SD=8.81935), $t(23) = 2.4331$, $p = 0.08$. The results suggest that there is no significant difference between the experimental and control group in pretest. In order to find out if there is a statistically significant difference between the treatment and control group in post-test, an independent samples t -test was run.

Table 6: Independent Samples t -Test for Difference between Treatment and Control Group in post-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	2.667	.114	-3.916	28	.001	-6.60000	1.68561	-10.05281	-3.14719
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.916	23.955	.001	-6.60000	1.68561	-10.07927	-3.12073

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the difference in achievement scores in oral feedback and no oral feedback conditions. There was a significant difference in the scores for oral feedback ($M=90.8667$, $SD=.91478$) and no oral feedback ($M=84.2667$, $SD=1.41578$), $t(23) = -3.916$, $p < 0.05$. As Tables 5 and 6 show, the results suggest that giving verbal feedback really does have an effect on students' achievements. Specifically, our results suggest that when the participants receive feedback, their achievements in tests increase.

Discussion on Research Question

In discussing the findings, this part answers the research question raised in this study:

1) Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?

Research Question

This section addresses the research question: Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?

The research question asked whether teachers' verbal feedback and praise affect Iranian EFL learners' achievements. To this end, a paired and an independent samples *t*-test were performed. The result of the paired samples *t*-test revealed that the difference between the experimental group in the pretest and posttest, when the experimental group received teacher's verbal feedback and praise, was significant. There were also changes in their achievements. The control and experimental groups were equal in all conditions, so the difference between them was due to the teacher's verbal feedback and praise. The learners' achievements in the experimental group were significantly improved in learning English. After the treatment many participants got better scores in the posttest.

The above findings support Latif, et al., (2011) research findings. The results indicated that socio-psychological variables like attitude and motivation were significantly correlated with learners' performance in the English course conducted at Open University of Malaysia.

The findings echoes clearly what researchers previously found. It was found that evidence for positive correlation of English proficiency with positive attitude and being highly motivated towards learning English has been accumulating, for both instrumental (Brown, 2000) and integrative motivation (LoCastro, 2001). Liu's (2007) study on Chinese university students' attitudes and motivation to learn English and the correlations of both variables with the students' English proficiency also revealed similar findings. In addition, correlation analysis showed that students who had more positive attitudes towards learning English tended to score higher in the proficiency test.

In line with the findings of this study Bartley (1970) stated that his studies showed that there was a direct relationship between positive attitudes and high achievement as well as negative attitudes and low achievement. That positive attitudes enhance achievement has been confirmed and described by Lambert et al. (1963), and Spolsky (1969).

The findings of the study are also in line with the results of previous studies by Haitema (2002) and Saracaloğlu (2000). They revealed that there is a positive relationship between affective characteristics and foreign language achievement.

Finally, the findings supports Catano, 1975, 1976 who states that praise improve adults' performance greatly at skilled tasks, comparing the performance of a control group. In another study by Henderlong and Lepper (2002), in line with the findings of the present study, they report the positive effect of praise on students' performance. Although the findings of the present study seem contradictory to what was reported by Baumeister's et al. (1990). They presented evidence that praise can both facilitate and impede students' performance. A possible explanation for such a result may be over-use or under-use of praise or using praise for a wrong person.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is information provided by an agent (e.g., parent, teacher, peer, book, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. It occurs typically after instruction that seeks to provide knowledge and skills or to develop particular attitudes. Feedback is among the most critical influences on student learning.

On the other side, feedback can have negative effects on the learners if the teachers do not pay enough attention to the students' emotional feelings. As a solution to this threat, this study followed a new strategy to overcome this danger to the students' motivation and feelings. Therefore, the writer took the benefit of the positive effects of praise and positive feedback in order to sugar the pill and enhance the positive effects of feedback on the students' motivation and achievements.

The second strategy which the writer took in conducting this research study was giving the feedback verbally and individually. Accordingly, the verbal feedback which is given individually can help the students to speak about all aspects of teaching and learning face to face with the teacher and this can help both the teacher and the learner to have a real comprehension. Moreover, learners can play a more proactive role in the learning process by participating in feedback-giving practice, building up the habit of self-evaluation, communicating with the teachers and making open dialogue with them. Teachers can also offer support to students in this respect to enhance their self-regulating skills and guide them step by step. Finally, when the feedback is given verbally and individually, teachers can improve their communication strategies, enrich and polish the content of feedback and build rapport with their students.

To respond to the research question, the learners' achievements in the experimental group were significantly improved in learning English. After the treatment, many participants got better scores in the posttest. The control and experimental groups were equal in all aspects, so the difference between them was due to the teacher's verbal feedback and praise.

The instructors, student advisors, curriculum designers, and all other educators involved in the teaching, instructing, and, consequently, motivating of students, must understand the motivation of the students they teach. These professionals should be provided with contemporary, research-based information about the relationships among the motivational factors within specific academic ability domains.

The findings in this research began to dissect the motivational factors of students in the hope that educators will be able to design teaching strategies and curricula more effectively to help their students achieve success. This finding can be used by educators in the development of their instruction.

Implications

This research study has its practical implications for various aspects of language teaching profession. These implications can encourage the relatives of the related field, especially in Iran, both to do more serious researches on the teachers' perceptions as the most involved actors of foreign language teaching stage regarding various aspects of feedback, motivation and their roles in language teaching and to make changes in the manner of feedback giving and even the method of teaching English.

Teacher training programs must pay more attention to the elements of motivation, praise and feedback. A course in the role and method of effective feedback-giving skills and motivation can enhance foreign language teachers' awareness and competence.

In order for the teachers to be aware of the more new beliefs, attitudes, and studies about the role of these elements, teacher training programs must be continued to appear as in-service trainings, and it is better to be a lifelong program for the teachers. The last but not the least important group that this study has a lot of words with is the group of language teachers. Iranian foreign language teachers should be aware of the importance of motivation and feedback in the language classroom, and they should try to improve their knowledge of feedback-giving techniques and motivation. This section presents in detail some implications of this study.

Implications for teaching practice

As for pedagogy, this study has revealed the importance of teacher feedback which can motivate students to learn and hence improve their achievements. This section discusses some implications for teaching practice.

This study implies that teachers need to gain some feedback delivery skills to motivate learners. The relationship between teachers and students, and how students perceive their teachers, can also determine how students interpret the corresponding feedback. This study also implies that teachers should acquire some strategies to deliver feedback that is motivating to students. Hence, communication strategies are one of the important areas teachers can focus on.

Feedback strategy is prompting an exchange of comments between teacher and pupil. As a result, it is important for teachers to build up a positive relationship with the students as it is a major facilitating factor for enhancing students' motivation to learn.

The findings of this study also imply that teachers have to be better equipped theoretically in order to make effective use of teacher feedback as a motivating tool. To support teachers' professional growth in this regard, it is suggested that teacher education providers should cover theoretical background knowledge such as motivation theories with different motivation constructs, so that teachers can tailor their feedback to these ends. Training offered to in-service and pre-service teachers should also include feedback-giving techniques as one of the core elements in pedagogy.

Limitations of the study

There were a number of limitations to the present study which should be highlighted so as to avoid any overgeneralizations and misinterpretations of the results. Although this study aimed at studying the impact of teacher feedback and praise on motivation and hence on achievement, the results of this study cannot be generalized because of the small number of the participants. Only 30 students in the two groups (experimental and control group) were involved in the study; the sample might not be representative of the target population of EFL students. To determine its broader application, other populations would need to be examined.

Moreover, the study was mostly conducted during the third semester of the academic year; a thorough study should be done to reveal the effects on the long term. Sufficient time and practice were needed to reveal successful results. Finally, various instruments such as teachers' interviews, learners' interviews, class observations etc. should be used to triangulate and validate the results as much as possible.

Recommendations for further research

This study investigated the role of teacher's individual verbal feedback and praise in enhancing student motivation and hence their achievements. Despite the pedagogical significance of this study, I propose several areas for further investigation in the future:

It would be insightful to explore if the results of this study can be replicated in settings such as other schools and institutes of a different background in Iran or even other places outside Iran, where the context and cultural backgrounds are different.

This study did not plan to, and thus had not done any follow-up work in regard to how students put teachers' feedback into action. In any future longitudinal research, this can be done through lesson observations, study of student works, and follow-up interviews, so that student responsibility can be studied. For lesson observation, if teachers find it intimidating or if students find it uncomfortable for a research observer to be present, researchers can use a video-camera instead.

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IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' LOGICAL INTELLIGENCE AND THEIR USE OF SPEAKING STRATEGIES IN COMMUNICATION: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Improving language learning process has been the main concern of educational authorities during the past decades and many researchers have been looking for the effective methods and techniques which may lead to the improvement of this process. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between Iranian intermediate English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication. To this end three hundred and sixty undergraduate EFL learners from several universities in Iran were provided with McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences Inventory and oral communication strategy inventory (OCSI). A semi-structured interview was also conducted to collect qualitative data and twenty-five participants were randomly selected to participate in this section. Results of data analysis indicated significant relationship between logical intelligence and accuracy-oriented and attempt to think in English strategies. Qualitative data analysis revealed that message reduction strategies are the most frequently mentioned strategies among both male and female learners. This study has encouraging implications for EFL teachers, EFL learners and syllabus designers. EFL teachers and syllabus designers are recommended to have a special attention to the instruction of different strategies.

KEYWORDS: Language Learning Strategies; Speaking Strategies; Logical Intelligence; Gender

INTRODUCTION

Individual differences have been one of the most important research topics in language learning area. According to Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory, all individuals are genius but in different ways. Howard Gardner introduced theory of Multiple Intelligences in early 1980s and defined intelligence as a composite of different abilities or aptitudes and proposed that intelligence is not a single universal unchangeable entity; rather, it is made up of seven subcategories that every individual possesses to different extents and can be nurtured and developed through education (as cited from Hashemian & Adibpour, 2012, p.26).

Gardner introduced seven intelligences in 1983 (i.e. logical-mathematical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical and spatial intelligences). Then in 1999 he added naturalist intelligence and existential intelligence as the eighth and ninth intelligences to this list. Different studies were conducted in order to investigate the relationship between Multiple Intelligences and other learning variables for instance Motallebzadeh & Manouchehri, (2009), in their study investigated the relationship between EFL learners' Multiple Intelligences and their scores on the reading section of IELTS and found a positive relation between logical-mathematical intelligence and reading score of EFL learners. The issue of learning strategies plays a crucial role in language learning area. According to Oxford (1990), "learning strategies are behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable" (Cited from Davar Asl Bandarabbasi & Karbalaei, 2013, p. 144). Speaking strategies are important parts of language learning strategies. Speaking as a specific language skill is very important especially in communication, but many [English as a Foreign Language (EFL)] learners believe that it is more difficult than other skills. Using some strategies can help students to overcome linguistic difficulties.

Although there are variety of studies which have investigated the relationship between individual variations and other variables such as use of language learning strategies but a limited number of researches have focused on speaking strategies especially in the context of Iran, consequently this study aims to investigate the existence of any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical and their use of speaking strategies in communication.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

During the last few decades, a large body of research in language learning area has been devoted to individual differences. It seems that the learners' performances are different based on their multiple intelligences.

Multiple Intelligences

Introducing multiple intelligences theory challenged the traditional view about intelligence. Traditional intelligence view, considered intelligence as a single, fixed ability and focused on verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences, leaving the other types of intelligence disregarded. Early IQ tests just measured individuals' ability on these two intelligences, so students who were better logically or verbally were considered as intelligent.

Language Learning Strategies

Studies about second language learning strategies were prominent in 1970s when the researchers were very interested to know why some learners were more successful in their learning. Then the researchers tried to discover the characteristics of "good" learners and subsequently strategies which were used by these learners. According to Stern (1992), language learning strategies are broadly conceived intentional directions and learning techniques employed by learners when they consciously engage in activities to achieve certain goals. In this section some related studies on multiple intelligences and speaking strategies will be reviewed.

Related Studies on Multiple Intelligences

Spirovska (2013) in a study reviewed Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and definition of different types of intelligences. He exemplified some activities and tasks which are appropriate for different students based on different intelligences. Spirovska (2013) further mentioned that implementation of multiple intelligences theory is important because students can use their strengths to foster learning. She concluded that there are not enough tests in order to measure different types of intelligences. Furthermore, before implementation of MI theory practically, there is need for trainings and workshops in order to raise instructors' awareness of multiple intelligences. Preparation for choosing enough activities and tasks which cater different types of intelligences is another issue; however, benefits of implementation of MI theory should not be ignored. Enhancing learner centeredness in class, using diversity of activities which are appropriate for different intelligences, and raising teachers' awareness about diversity of potentials in the classroom are beneficial issues in implementation of MI theory in the classroom (Spirovska, 2013).

Koura and Al-Hebaishi (2014) conducted a study with the purpose of investigating the relationship between multiple intelligences, self efficacy, and students' academic achievement. Total participants in this study were 85 Saudi female third intermediate students including 43 gifted and 42 regular students. Instruments which were used in this study consisted of Multiple Intelligences Inventory, Self-efficacy Scale and Language Achievement Test. Findings revealed that interpersonal intelligence was the leading intelligence among both gifted and regular groups. Also it was found that gifted students had higher level of self efficacy in comparison with regular students. Among gifted students, significant positive correlations were found between logical intelligence and their grammar scores, interpersonal intelligence and their speaking scores, but negative significant correlations were found between bodily intelligence and their listening scores, intrapersonal and their listening scores and musical intelligence and their reading scores. Furthermore, for regular students there was not significant correlation between MIs and their achievement in different language skills. There wasn't any significant relationship between self efficacy and EFL achievement.

Related Studies on Language Learning Strategy

A study was conducted by Roohani and Rabiei (2013) in order to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' LLS on one hand and their multiple intelligences, L2 proficiency on the other hand. Participants in this study were ninety undergraduate EFL learners (males and females), who were presented by Strategy Inventory, Multiple Intelligences Scales, and Test of English as a Foreign Language. Data analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between learners' LLS and their MI and a positive but not significant relationship between L2 proficiency and LLS. The result of further analysis indicated significant correlations between some strategy types and several individual intelligences. The highest correlation was found between intrapersonal intelligence and cognitive strategies and the lowest one was found between naturalist intelligence and affective strategies. Shangarffam and Zand (2012) in their study investigated the relationship between Communicative Strategies (CS) and three of the Multiple Intelligences. To this end participants of this study, who were senior English language students majoring in English Literature or English Translation at Islamic Azad University in Iran

were presented with two questionnaires including MIDAS as Multiple Intelligences inventory and OCSI as the inventory for Communicative Strategies. Findings revealed a significant correlation between using oral communication strategies and these three types of intelligences. Moreover, a significant correlation was found between interpersonal intelligence and OCSI speaking strategies while interpersonal intelligence had the lowest correlation with listening strategies.

In sum, review of the literature indicated that individuals with different characteristics have different performances in EFL context. It seems that students' performance is different based on their multiple intelligences. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of different speaking strategies?

Q2. Are there any significant differences between Iranian male and female EFL learners regarding their use of speaking strategies?

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Setting

The sample for the current study consisted of three hundred and sixty intermediate undergraduate EFL learners including 188 females and 172 males from several universities in Iran (Tehran, Mashhad, Esfahan, Birjand, and Gorgan). According to Morgan's table, (Morgan, 1970 "Determining Sample Size for Research Activities", Educational and Psychological Measurement) this study's sample size should be three hundred and sixty four (Considering the 95% of the level of confidence and 0.05 degree of accuracy). The questionnaire was distributed in both forms of paper and via the internet among more than 1000 Iranian EFL learners at these universities (Tehran, Mashhad, Esfahan, Birjand, and Gorgan) but three hundred and sixty intermediate EFL learners answered the questionnaire completely. All of the participants were native speakers of Farsi, whose age varied from 18-25 years old. They had already studied English as a part of their curricula in their secondary school or high school. These students were from different subfields of the study within English Language field and all of them were studying in public universities. Twenty five participants (14 females and 11 males) participated in post-survey interview.

Instrumentation

Following instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present study.

McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences Inventory

To determine the participants' MI scores, McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences (MI) Inventory (1999) was administered. The questionnaire includes nine sections measuring nine types of intelligences including natural, musical, logical/mathematical, intrapersonal, interpersonal,

bodily/kinesthetic, linguistic, existential, and spatial/visual intelligences and each section consists of 10 items. Overall internal consistency of 0.85 to 0.90 was reported for this questionnaire (Al-Balhan, 2006; Hajhashemi & Wong, 2010; Razmjoo, 2008; Razmjoo, Sahragard, & Sadri, 2009) (cited from Khosravi & Saidi, 2014). The items were five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (completely disagreed) to 5 (completely agreed). To avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the participants, Persian version of this questionnaire was used. Validity of the Persian version of this questionnaire has been checked in the study of Hajhashemi and Bee Eng (Hajhashemi & Bee Eng, 2010). Hajhashemi and Bee Eng (2010), have reported, a high reliability for the Persian version of this questionnaire. In this study the researcher had a special focus on logical intelligence. The reason for choosing this intelligence was that although study about using language learning strategies and other variables like multiple intelligences has received much attention in recent decades, but it seems that there are not enough studies with a special focus on different types of intelligences. Furthermore the researcher is interested to investigate the existence of possible relationship between this intelligence and EFL learners' use of speaking strategies.

Speaking Strategy Questionnaire

Nakatani (2006) has developed Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI). This questionnaire includes two sections, strategies for coping with speaking problems (32 items) and strategies for coping with listening problems (26 items). Shangarffam and Zand (2012) in their study used Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) and they reported the reliability index of 0.96 for this questionnaire. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication, for this reason speaking strategy section was taken from OCSI. The reliability of speaking section of this questionnaire was calculated via Cronbach's alpha, and it was 0.83. Speaking strategy section consists of eight categories: social affective strategies, negotiation for meaning while speaking, fluency-oriented strategies, accuracy-oriented strategies, message reduction and alteration strategies, message abandonment strategies, nonverbal strategies while speaking, attempt to think in English strategies. This is a Likert scale type questionnaire and students should choose their answer based on the frequency which they use speaking strategies ranging from "never" to "always". It should be mentioned that participants were asked to provide some demographic information, such as age, gender, and level of language proficiency.

Semi-Structured Interview

In order to elicit in-depth and open-ended responses, three interview questions concerning speaking strategies were developed. The interview questions were about problems which EFL learners encounter when speak with others, participants' idea about usefulness of speaking strategies and particular useful speaking strategies. Twenty five participants (14 females and 11 males) were selected randomly to participate in post-survey interview. Interview from each individual lasted about 15 minutes. Qualitative data were used as supplement to the quantitative data. The interview questions were:

- What problems do you encounter when you speak English?
- Why speaking strategies are useful?
- What helpful speaking strategies do you use when you speak English?

Procedure

Participants for the current study were three hundred and sixty intermediate undergraduate EFL learners including 188 females and 172 males from several universities in Iran (Tehran, Mashhad, Esfahan, Birjand, and Gorgan). These students were from different subfields of study within English Language field and their age varied from 18 to 25 years old. As instruments, McKenzie's MI Inventory (1999) and speaking strategy inventory (Nakatani, 2006) were used to collect the data. In order to be easier on the part of participants, the researcher integrated the two questionnaires in form of one test.

Furthermore, the test included some demographic information, such as age, gender, and level of language proficiency. The reliability coefficient of McKenzie's MI Inventory was calculated via Cronbach's alpha, which was 0.73. Similarly, the reliability of speaking strategy questionnaire was measured with the use of Cronbach's alpha and it was 0.83. To collect the required data the questionnaire was distributed in both forms of paper and via internet among more than 1000 EFL learners, and from all EFL learners who received questionnaire; three hundred and sixty intermediate EFL learners answered the questionnaire completely. The researcher analyzed questionnaires which their participants' levels of language proficiency were intermediate. Participants' level of language proficiency was determined by themselves based on the courses they had passed in language institutes. At the beginning, participants were informed about the purpose of study, also they were assured that their information would be kept confidential. Then they were asked to fill out the questionnaire. The data collection procedure lasted about one month during the academic year of 2014-2015. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS software 20.0.

Twenty-five of the participants (14 females and 11 males) were selected randomly to take part in the interview section of the data collection procedure in order to collect qualitative data. Participants were informed that their answers would be tape recorded. Interview from each individual lasted about 15 minutes. Participants' responses on interview questions were transcribed and then coded for further data analyses. To elicit more valid information from the participants, the interview questions were asked and answered in Farsi.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants' Demographic Information

Before presenting the results related to the questions, in this section, participants' demographic information including their number and gender is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Female	188	52.2	52.2	52.2
	Male	172	47.8	47.8	100.0
	Total	360	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 1, 360 language learners participated in this study out of which 188 participants are females and the rest (N=172) are males.

Reliability Index of the Instruments

In order to ensure the questionnaires' reliability indexes, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for both of the questionnaires using SPSS 20.0 (Table 2).

Table 2: Results of Reliability

Speaking Strategies	32	.83
Multiple intelligences	30	.735

Table 2 shows that both instruments, Speaking Strategies ($\alpha=.83$) and logical Intelligence ($\alpha=.735$) enjoyed relatively high reliability indexes.

Logical Intelligence

In order to investigate participants' logical intelligence, descriptive statistics including mean, minimum, maximum and standard deviation were calculated. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Logical Intelligence

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Logical	360	22.00	42.00	34.07	3.60123
Valid N (listwise)	360				

Speaking Strategies

Similarly, descriptive statistics related to speaking strategies, e.g. social affective, fluency-oriented, negotiating for meaning, accuracy-oriented, message reduction, nonverbal strategy, message abandonment, and attempt to think in English are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Speaking Strategy

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SA	360	2.17	4.83	3.6542	.49047
FL	360	2.33	5.00	3.8657	.61237
NFM	360	2.25	5.00	3.9368	.69318
AC	360	2.00	5.00	3.8467	.60879
MES	360	3.00	5.00	3.8646	.53301
NVS	360	1.00	5.00	3.9861	.84845
MA	360	1.25	4.25	2.5243	.71562
ATE	360	1.00	5.00	3.2500	.93000
Valid N (listwise)	360				

According to Table 4, nonverbal strategy (NVS) ranks first (M=3.98). Then comes negotiation for meaning (NFM, M=3.93). Fluency-oriented (FL, M=3.8657), Message reduction (MES, M=3.8646), Accuracy-oriented (AC, M=3.84), Social affective (SA, M=3.65), Attempt to think in English (ATE, M=3.25), Message abandonment (MA, M=2.52) hold third to eighth places respectively. According to these data, it can be concluded that nonverbal strategy was the most preferred strategy among these participants. Accordingly, message abandonment gained the lowest mean among the speaking strategies.

Relationship between Logical Intelligence and Speaking Strategies

Correlation between logical intelligence and each component of speaking strategies was investigated. Data are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Results of Correlation between Logical Intelligence and Speaking Strategies

Correlations		logical	SA	FL	NFM	AC	MES	NVS	MA	ATE
logical	Pearson Correlation	1	.068	.098	-.032	.133*	-.009	.046	-.021	.170**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.195	.064	.550	.011	.869	.384	.685	.001
	N	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Note: SA stands for social affective; FL stands for fluency oriented; NFM negotiation for meaning; AC stands for accuracy-oriented; MES stands for message reduction; NVS stands for non-verbal strategy; MA stands for message abandonment; ATE stands for attempt to think in English.

As table 5 displays, there is a statistically significant correlation between logical intelligence and accuracy-oriented strategies [$r=.133$, sig (two-tailed) $=.011<.05$], and attempts to think in English strategies [$r=.17$, sig (two-tailed) $=.001<.05$]. Other speaking strategies are not significantly correlated with logical intelligence (sig $>.05$). It can be concluded that participants who are more logically intelligent make more frequent use of strategies which are in accuracy-oriented and attempt to think in English categories.

Results of Semi-Structured Interview

Twenty-five participants (11 males, 14 females) were selected randomly to participate in post-survey interview in order to gather qualitative data about students' speaking difficulties, helpful speaking strategies and the usefulness of speaking strategies. With regard to the first interview question, "What problems do you encounter when you speak English?" most of the males (63%) and females (64%) believed that lack of vocabulary knowledge is their most important speaking difficulty. For example, one interviewee said "I don't have enough vocabulary knowledge,

sometimes I can't find an appropriate word to express what I mean." Lack of grammatical knowledge (males, 54%, females, 50%) and fear of making speaking mistakes (males, 36%, females, 42%) were reported as other important speaking difficulties. Pronunciation and intonation ranked as the two last speaking difficulties.

Table 6: Speaking Difficulties for both Male and Female Interviewees

Speaking difficulty	Frequency (Female)	Percentage	Frequency (Male)	Percentage
Vocabulary	9	64%	7	63%
Grammar	7	50%	6	54%
Fear of making speaking mistake	6	42%	4	36%
Pronunciation	4	28%	3	27%
Intonation	1	7.14%	1	9.09%

As far as helpful speaking strategies are concerned, the analysis of interview data revealed that message reduction strategies are the most frequently mentioned strategy among interviewees. The majority of interviewees referred to using familiar words and short utterances as the most helpful strategies. For example one of the females said that "I try to use words which are familiar to me to reduce my anxiety." None of the participants referred to strategies of attempt to think in English or message abandonment. Repeating utterances, using gestures, paying attention to rhythm and intonation while speaking were reported as other speaking strategies. Message reduction strategies were the most frequently mentioned strategy among males and females. Females reported message reduction strategies and negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies with a higher frequency in compare with males.

Table 7: Helpful Speaking Strategies for both Male and Female Interviewees

Strategies	Frequency (Females=14)	Percentage	Frequency (Males =11)	Percentage
MES	9	64%	6	54%
FL	5	35%	4	36%
AC	3	21%	3	27%
NFM	7	50%	3	27%
NVS	6	42%	5	45%
SA	1	7.14%	1	9.09%
ATE	—	—	—	—
MA	—	—	—	—

Discussion of the Results

The present study was conducted in order to investigate the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication.

According to the results of this study a positive significant correlation was found between logical intelligence and accuracy-oriented and attempt to think in English strategies. It is similar to the

findings of Koura and Al-Hebaishi (2014) who found positive relationship between logical intelligence and students' grammar scores. Since accuracy-oriented strategies concern about grammar and rule and attempt to think in English strategies deal with construction of sentences, it can be concluded that the results of the current study confirm what was found by Koura and Al-Hebaishi (2014).

Results of the interview in the case of helpful speaking strategies indicated that message reduction and alteration strategies were reported as the most helpful speaking strategies, which is in line with what was found by Nakatani (2006), Li Lin (2013), and Metcalfe and Noom- Ura (n.d) on oral communication research. It seems that using familiar words and simple expressions are very effective and by using these strategies the speaker will be able to decrease the probability of making errors. Furthermore, it was found that message reduction strategies and negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies are mentioned more frequently by females. According to Færch and Kasper (1980), using message reduction strategies helps students to avoid making speaking errors. It seems that females are more worried about making speaking errors and prefer to use familiar words and short utterances instead of taking risk. Negotiation for meaning which happens in the situation of misunderstanding makes the input more comprehensible for the people who are involved in the interaction. Higher frequency of reporting of this strategy by females may be explained in this way that women's main purpose of using the language is to create and maintain social cohesiveness and their activities are generally cooperative rather than competitive, therefore, they feel more comfortable to negotiate with others. On the whole, females are more interested to participate in interactions and are more able to maintain negotiation.

According to the results of the interview regarding speaking difficulties, lack of vocabulary knowledge was reported as the most frequently mentioned speaking difficulty. This finding supports what was found by Li Lin (2013) who referred to insufficient vocabulary knowledge as one of the main communication difficulties. Lack of grammatical knowledge, fear of making speaking mistakes and having problem with pronunciation and intonation were detected as other speaking difficulties respectively among both males and females. Li Lin (2013) explained that negative psychological reactions such as anxiety and fear affect oral communication of college students. No significant difference was observed between males and females with regard to their reported speaking difficulties.

CONCLUSIONS

Current study aimed to explore the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication. In order to serve the purpose of the study, a null hypothesis was proposed. The null hypothesis which claimed that there is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of different speaking strategies was rejected. Results of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies. It is similar to the findings of Shangarffam and Zand (2012)

which revealed significant correlation between learners' three types of multiple intelligences and their use of oral communication strategies.

Qualitative data analysis in the case of helpful speaking strategies revealed that message reduction strategies are the most frequently mentioned strategies among the participants. Besides, it was found that message reduction and negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies were reported with higher frequencies by females. Most of the participants believed that using speaking strategies is very helpful for them in order to overcome speaking difficulties, also by using such strategies they can equip themselves in case of any speaking deficiencies. Lack of vocabulary knowledge was detected as the main speaking difficulty among these participants which is in agreement with the finding of Lin (2013) who found insufficient vocabulary knowledge as one of the common oral communication difficulties.

Pedagogical Implications

This study has promising implications for EFL teachers, EFL learners and syllabus designers. Since many EFL learners are not familiar with some speaking strategies and the effectiveness of applying such strategies, EFL teachers and syllabus designers are recommended to have a special attention to the instruction of different strategies.

With regards to speaking difficulties, it is suggested that teachers use different techniques of learning vocabulary, encourage language learners to improve their vocabulary knowledge and create a friendly atmosphere in the class so that every individual is able to speak without any fear of making mistakes in order to improve learners' speaking skill. EFL learners are recommended to use different speaking strategies. Using speaking strategies help learners to overcome speaking difficulties and speak more fluently. Learners should be aware of their strengths and weaknesses in applying different strategies. Syllabus designers can use the results of the current study in order to add strategy training to EFL materials.

Suggestions for Further Research

Results of the present study can be a guideline for conducting numerous valuable studies on speaking strategies. Although investigating language learning strategies has been one of the main research topics during the past decades, it seems more studies with a focus on specific strategies are needed. In addition, the current study attempted to focus on speaking strategies, while investigating other strategies including reading, writing and listening may provide more in-depth and rewarding information for EFL contexts. Other studies can also be conducted on the possible relationship between learners' variables such as their field of study, social class and cultural background and their use of speaking strategies.

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FROM LACK OF HUMANITY TO SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND VISION IN *LORD OF THE FLIES* AND *BLINDNESS*

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ABSTRACT

Civilization and industrialization are two important factors that make people believe they are just depriving of savagery and brutality. But practical studies show exactly something different. How groups of people behave, when they are put in extreme situations is the very unpleasant truth about human being in general. Both Blindness and Lord of the Flies deal with fragility of human society, no matter the people who are playing role are children or grown-ups, who by definition should know better. Both novels have got beautiful plots in which no one enforces rules and laws on the characters, so they begin to show their true nature. The present study is undertaken to investigate the process of a journey from lack of humanity to a sort of self-consciousness which happens at the end of both Blindness by Saramago and Lord of the Flies by Golding. In order to get the best result the two novels have been studied precisely and lots of different articles and critical essays have been analyzed, which shows people drift into cruelty and savagery easily but can also drift out of it. In Blindness losing sight, and being a part from society in a deserted tropical island in Lord of the Flies causes limitation. Limitation in any form makes people to rebel. Although in the process of both novels, any kind of savagery, brutality, filth and social collapse can be observable and both writers believe that human being has the potential of being animal images, but they both also want to show that the very nature of human being is divine. Children's weeping at the end of Lord of the Flies and Doctor's remark at the end of Blindness "I don't think we did go blind, I think we are blind, blind but seeing, blind people who can see but do not see", show exactly the matter of insight at the end of both novels. The fact that divinity exists in the very nature of human being is the indubitable aim that makes this research truly valuable.

KEYTERMS: savagery, animal images, divinity.

INTRODUCTION

Humanity is the most unsolved crucial problem of today's world. Many experts are now wandering to find a reasonable answer to the question of divinity of human nature. Whether human being is essentially divine and is always connected to a powerful source of divinity, or he has been left alone in the world, is the very essential problem human being is trying to answer. Many psychologists, sociologists, writers and humanist experts have long been interested to know, as Gioia (1985) states "how groups of people behave when put in extreme situations". They wanted to reveal an unpleasant truth about society. Many story tellers have asserted their point of views regarding this issue of humanity and human nature through their writings. Some have an optimistic view regarding the very nature of human beings, some have got pessimistic

view. The present paper is intended to investigate a different view regarding human nature in a parallel study on Saramago's *Blindness* and Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Both novels represent people who are left alone to deal with themselves, grown-ups in *Blindness* and young boys in *Lord of the Flies*. In such a situation Chase (2009) believes "without sight, there is an awful disrobing of human nature, a nakedness of the worst kind". Their difference with the boys in *Lord of the Flies* is that "they don't, hoarding food, attacking others, raping and killing." The process from lack of humanity to self-consciousness and vision is going to be discussed step by step and surely with a positive point of view. Although it seems Saramago is much more positive than Golding, due to the fact that characters in *Blindness* are not as wild and cruel as the boys in *Lord of the Flies*, the formers are grown-ups having some experiences and the later are young boys who love power and insurrection. From the publication of both novels lots of different critical essays tried to prove that human being is essentially savage. And will come back to its essence whenever it is appropriate. But the present paper is aimed at proving the fact that man is capable of savagery, but he is also capable of peace and order. How at the end of both novels a sort of vision and self-consciousness takes place is a matter of consideration. What both authors are going to show is a sort of struggle between right and wrong. The very negative view point that "human nature has a wicked side and without punishment to keep it in check, society would degenerate into a barbaric anarchy" would be referred to, investigated, criticized and at last will be rejected to some extent, in the present paper. Both novels have got some common images which lead the characters toward self-consciousness. Images of fire, loneliness, lack of interaction, food are the most important images in both novels. These images portray the gradual decline of morals and a gradual return toward pure humanity in general.

A PASSAGE FROM DEPRAVITY TO HUMANITY

The very essence or nature of human being and his capability of indecency and brutality is a very challenging point which creates an unconscious pessimism regarding human being in general. In both *Blindness* and *Lord of the Flies* the authors want to focus on the fact that there is a fundamental potential in every person to commit evil acts. Chase (2009) states that "people slowly deal with their lack of seeing and lack of insight towards one another.....without sight, life and history fade in favor of death and disease." A gradual decay and shift toward animality is observable during the process of both novels. Losing sight is the very prime image, which lead people to lose their humanity gradually. Pointer (1995) believes that "the blind prisoners, as well as the blind residents of the city depicted after the mental hospital burns to the ground.... Have forgotten how to use toilet, and they defected in the streets which run for filth." What happens that people move toward collapse and while they are at the edge of despair, they can have the power to come back to their pure nature? Basic human needs are the most important points which lead the society toward a so called jungle.

IMAGES WHICH LEAD TO BRUTALITY AND ANIMALITY

Need for food and Love of Power

The first and almost the most important need of a human being is need for food. People need food to be alive and lack of food makes them rebel against one another and against society. As

the story-*Blindness*- goes on the condition and situation of the people is getting worse and worse. At the beginning parts of the novel they share food, but after a while they came to fact that in order to survive, any savagery is acceptable. In such an environment, even the basic necessities of life- food, medicine, and clear water- are often lacking. Snedeker mentions that “they find themselves in a society that no longer functions. Blind people roam the streets looking for food and shelter”. The blind are placed in quarantine without any leader or any rule, so they have to deal with themselves. Their first and most important need is food. So the blinds drifted apart from society are drifting apart from humanity towards animality; self-serving and ultimately geared toward survival.

That is what exactly happened in *Lord of the Flies*, finding food and keeping oneself against wild animals are two important factors which forced the children to gradually disrupt their childhood innocence. Hunting a pig and putting it as a sign of power shows that children are becoming cruel even toward each other. When the children were divided into two groups, the risk of cruelty becomes more and more. Although despite all these movements toward animality, both authors, at the bottom of their hearts believe that human nature is divine and is connected to a source of divinity. Cioia believes “for this author [Saramago], people under extreme conditions are neither unabashedly evil nor purely benevolent. Rather they are unnerving combination of both. In terms of crisis, our response to circumstances are intensified and transformed, but rarely simplified.” Struggle over power is the most crucial issue which made the boys to become almost enemies.

Love of power also made the situation worse and worse for the blinds in *Blindness*. Conditions degenerate, as an armed clique gains control over food deliveries, “subjugating their fellow internees and exposing them to rape and deprivation.” Faced with starvation, internees do battle and burn down the quarantine. And this is the turning point of the story which helps the prisoners to escape that unpleasant condition to a civilized world.

Sexual Desire

Another natural need which treats human society is sex. Although as Chase (2009) mentioned “sex in the novel [*Blindness*] isn’t erotic if anything approaches salacious, it is the cruelty men reap on people they cannot see.” Human being is capable of treating like an animal whenever he understands that no one can see him. Thus he is going to transgress social norms. The blinds acquiesce to send their wives to another ward and instead they can have food. Fortunately sexual desire is not observable in *Lord of the Flies* because they are all boys and they might not experience it before.

Inability to Interact

Human being is to some extent similar to animals. The only power which makes them different is the power of mind and logic. People are able to interact with each other. They can sympathy. They need empathy when they are in need. Losing sight gradually made the blind to lose insight and not having any logic or so they are just by definition human beings. They act exactly like animals due to inability to interact. Conventional rules of behavior no longer apply and a social and behavioral collapse is rapidly spreading. Pointer (1995) believes that “Saramago’s goal was to demonstrate the fragility of human society, using allegory, to show that basic human decency

is, in his view at least, an illusion and that it too would largely vanish, if society collapsed.” What helps the blind to escape quarantine is the murder of hoodlums. After escape something new happens for the prisoners. A new horizon, exactly like what happened in *Lord of the Flies*.

Lord of the Flies starts with a group of innocent boys around fourteen or so, who are left alone on a deserted tropical island and gradually their innocence fade and savagery, replaced it. Both Golding and Saramago have got a dual perspective toward human nature. In *Lord of the Flies*, at the beginning the boys pay more attention to playing than other things and just enjoyed their life. Without grown-ups and without any rules to be controlled by, life was really enjoyable. But after a while finding food and being responsible for one’s own life and survival, changed the innocents to a savage one. As it was mentioned in the previous part, food was the basic need of the boys.

The time when Simon was killed by the other boys is the climax of savagery, brutality, and animality. Hunting Ralph as an animal with other boys, or jacks action to ignite the forest all were symptom of savagery and brutality in *Lord of the Flies*. But the question is why those innocence creatures changed so much and is there any hope they regain their innocence and childhood purity. To some extent Golding believes that people are innately savage or evil, and only the constraints of society of society keep people from exhibiting full savagery. As the novel progresses Golding very professionally and acutely shows how well-behaved, orderly children are longing toward barbarity and cruelty he shows how destructive human being can be. Children in chapter twelve are completely different from the one in chapter three.

Images which lead to humanity

In both novels some images are very important clues which lead the characters and even the readers to a source of divinity and purity.

Fire

In both novels fire became a bridge to let the characters escape the prison like situation. So symbolically they get rid of their inside beasts and enter the civilized world. The signal fire functions as a kind of measurement for the desire of the boys to get rid of that deserted island. At the beginning of *Lord of the Flies* they are all eager to maintain the fire to be rescued as quickly as possible. But in the middle of the novel the boys lost their interest to be rescued and return to a rule based society. But, at the end of the novel, igniting fire everywhere in the forest, symbolically shows their inner wish to get out the present evil centered position. Steinbach (2013) mentions “One of the most vivid and haunting uses of imagery can be found in the description of the patch of island which the boys burn what they intended to be a "small fire." In *Blindness* when internees battled and burnt down the asylum, they could escape and make some basic changes in their condition.

Blindness and loneliness

Blindness as a disease and being on an island both are images for loneliness and demonstrate a sort of internal conflict for the characters. In *Blindness*, the characters do some actions for gaining food and responding to their natural needs which might be against their will and at the end they come to a sort consciousness that being blind is just an excuse for acting against

morality. That's what exactly happens in *Lord of the Flies* where both internal and external conflict can be seen. Ralph as the leader of the civilized group is in conflict with Jack who is the leader of savage group. Literary analysis essay assets "Golding reveals the growing tension between civilization and savagery in three key moments...he uses the setting, characters, and symbolism in *Lord of the Flies* to give reader a detailed description of these two faces of man." There are also sentences which exactly show how some of the boys suffer from being on that unpleasant island. "...Ralf wept for the end of the innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of a true, wise friend called Piggy (202).

Symbolic Characters in Lord of the Flies and Blindness

Piggy, Jack, Simon, and Ralph can all be seen as symbolic characters in William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*. Jack's role in *Lord of the Flies* is to show the desire of power. The change from good to evil is shown in *Lord of the Flies* by the shift from Ralph to Jack as the boys' choice of leaders. Piggy is a very good representation of intellectual aspect of civilization. Simon represents natural human goodness and unfortunately the boys who are getting savage day after day being on that devil island murdered him. They actually sacrifice their own natural goodness for the sake of brutality and animality. Therefore, it is easy to see that the four main characters in *Lord of the Flies* are used by William Golding to symbolize different aspects of the inevitable change from civilization and happiness to primitivism.

In *Blindness* all the people went blind unless the wife of the ophthalmologist who is, like Simon, natural representation of human goodness. It might be the fact that she didn't go blind; to help the blinds survive their bad situation. Fragility of society can be seen in both *Blindness* and *Lord of the Flies*, but the condition of grown-ups seems to some extent better than the situation of the young boys.

Both Golding and Saramago try to design a journey from humanity to brutality and again to humanity. The difference is, Golding uses the children who seem to be more innocent than adults but Saramago uses typical grown-ups, actually without nameless, with generic labels to emphasize the fact that anybody might be the traveler of the so-called journey. At the end of both novels the characters come to a sort of vision. When the boys cry at the time of survival, looking back to the island, and when almost at the end of *Blindness* one of the characters remarks "I don't think we did go blind, I think we are blind, blind but seeing, blind people can see, but do not see." A shift in the people's view point toward humanity and the fact that they regain their sight suddenly and without any reason are all some other images which make a bridge to humanity. Chase (2009) states "the novel's final fading of cruelty makes you suddenly aware of beauty as reprieve. The city may be horrifying, but somehow, it is not hopeless. People drift into cruelty easily, but they can drift out of it. It is as easy as waking up."

CONCLUSION

The present paper aimed at proving the fact that although human being is capable of being evil and committing some devil actions but the very essence of human being is divine and man is connected to a powerful source of divinity. With the use of character, conflict, as well as

symbolism, Golding and Saramago slowly lead up to their theme that, man is born with evil tendencies. Through the boys, Golding attempts to show the true nature of humankind, the good, the evil, and the in between. Saramago's nameless characters are also representation of typical human being in a society, ready to collapse. Through the novel some images and signs like finding food, inability to interact, sexual desire, will of power and loneliness lead the characters toward brutality and filth. While at the same time some other images help them to come to a sort of vision and consciousness. Fire, blindness and loneliness, are all images which show characters in both novels are getting tired of being in a wild life like society. Through the use of symbolic characters both authors signify the path from humanity to brutality and getting back to humanity again. In *Lord of the Flies*, at First, most of the boys were followers of Ralph because of their innocence but after a while when savagery became dominant, they decided to obey Jack who is the real representation of love of power and evil actions- lose of innocence. Simon as a truly representation of goodness was killed by the boys in the middle of the story. Doctor's wife like Simon represents pure nature. She helped the prisoners to wash themselves, finds food for them and protects them from dangers. The hoodlums, one of them possesses a gun, treat exactly like Jack. They abuse the other people and their love of power at the end annihilates them.

The central themes of *Lord of the Flies* and *Blindness* are the conflict between two challenging impulses that exist within all human beings: the instinct to live by rules, act peacefully, follow commands, value the good of the many over the instinct to fulfill one's immediate desires, act violently to gain supremacy over others, and enforce one's will. *Lord of the Flies* and *Blindness* are two novels that exhibit both, the good-hearted nature of humans, along with man's evil flaws. What is really most important is that both novels end with a sort of self-consciousness and getting back to pure natural essence of human being.

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MOTIVATION ON LONG TERM MEMORY: A PATH TO INTERACTION ACHIEVING ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRACT

Today, motivation and learning are joined to each other like music and cooking. Many teachers recognize this and are diligent to better their students' motivation to maintain data on their long-term memory for a long period of time. Because a motivated student practice and practice the learned material more often, which leads to keep in his/her long term memory for a long duration. The present study intended to investigate the effect of motivation on long-term memory of Iranian EFL advanced learners. The participants were 30 female EFL advanced learners at an English Language Institute. To meet the aim of the study, a 40-point Michigan test was administered to the participants as a pretest in the first session and the same test as a posttest at the end of the semester. The results revealed differences in pretest and posttest. Additionally, a motivated strategy for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) instrument was utilized to measure their motivation in English after posttest. The findings of the study affirmed that motivation is a useful and facilitating factor for improving and increasing long-term memory. This research affirmed that motivation can help learners improve their learning and retrieve learned topics in their long term memory. It shows that motivation can affect long-term memory and ZPD increases when the learning environment is stress free.

KEYWORDS: motivation, long-term memory, interaction, achieving activities.

INTRODUCTION

Long-term memory can be defined as maintaining memory of data for a long cycle of time. It is usually divided into two types: conscious (explicit) memory or unconscious (implicit) memory (Baddeley, & Hitch, 1974). We recognize explicit memory for facts, notions and events also known as declarative or conscious memory.

Explicit memory can be subdivided into semantic and episodic memory (Baddeley, 1991). In other words, semantic and episodic memories are two types of long-term memories. In semantic memory, we understand the meaning of different things such as words, the names of colors, the sounds of letters also knowing facts about the world.

The idea of semantic memory was presented in 1972 as the result of cooperation between Endel Tulving of the University of Toronto and Wayne Donaldson of the University of New Brunswick on the impact of organization in human memory.

Tulving, in his book, "Elements of Episodic memory" paid attention to differences between semantic and episodic in how they function and kinds of information for processing. Episodic memory is special events in time in our memory, so it can be different from someone else's memories of the same experience. In other words, in episodic memory we experience personally. In comparison to explicit (conscious) memory, a memory that is repeated for the development of procedures of doing actions over time is implicit (unconscious) memory also known as procedural memory (Tulving, 1985).

For example: exercising skills are one type of implicit memory. You learn the skills and practice them more often, and then unconsciously you are authoritative during a game. Playing a kind of music or practicing for learning are another examples of implicit memory. Doing everyday tasks like cooking, driving a car, riding a bicycle happen automatically and rendered to actions without us realizing it.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Up to lately, researchers did not investigate straightly the approachability and accessibility of information stored in working memory during assembled cognitive processes. Instead, they made deductions about working memory from studies of general memory capacity. The modulus procedure has been to present a list of irrelevant items and to entail reproduction with either urgent free recall or free recall after some interpolated activity. In the common model of human memory (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968), immediate free remind yields items nearly retrieved from an interim short-term memory (STM) and items recovered by retrieval cues from a more durable storage in long-term memory (LTM). STM is supposed to have a finite span of around seven chunks (G. A. Miller, 1956), a chunk corresponding to an intimate pattern formerly stored in LTM. Storage in STM is interim, and when attention is diverted to another requesting task, information originally stored in STM becomes unavailable in a matter of seconds (Brown, 1958). In contrast, the storage span of LTM is supposed to be broad and much more durable than that of STM. The time required for storage of a new retrievable memory trace in LTM has been guessed to be respectively long--about ten seconds (Simon, 1973).

The main pinch for retrieval from LTM is the infrequency of retrieval cues that are connected by association to the desired item, stored in LTM. During free reminding materials are asked to retrieve a list they studied earlier. If some of the cues in the context for recall were still available in the context for study of the list, they should be part of the retention trace and thus serve as retrieval cues for points in the list to be reminded. Once some items have been reminded, they can serve as extra retrieval cues. Constant with this proposed mechanism, free remind in most list-learning experiments is relatively poor and reduces as a function of the number of lists the subjects have previously studied and thus related to the same contextual cues.

In most of the tremendous research on memory, scholars have tried to separate different memory systems and to determine their storage and retrieval characteristics with general measures that are independent of materials and of subjects' specific history knowledge. Researchers have concentrated on estimating maximal capacities by studying memory performance in simple tasks

that examine only memory. It is generally supposed that the same distinctions and capacity limitations observed for simple tasks enforced to working memory in complex cognitive activities.

In criterion theories of memory (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968) data can be stored in LTM just after it has been stored in STM, and even then, storage in LTM is a probable event. Originally, Atkinson and Shiffrin supposed that the likely of storage in LTM is a subordinate of the time an item was preserved in STM. Recently, Anderson (1983) suggested that the probability of storage is a function of the number of times an item enters STM. Subjects' control of the tank of data appears to be limited. Furthermore, in more meaningful tasks subjects' remind of presented information is not progressed when they are instructed to study that information for later recall (Craik& Lockhart, 1972). This discovery mentions that subjects cannot achieve reliable storage of information in many of the standard memory tasks. Anderson (1983) goes even so far as to discuss that subjects' inability to control storage in LTM is beneficial since they cannot predict what information will be useful later on.

In the end, last research has demonstrated that working memory does not consist of a single general span, but rather contains of various subsystems that can be depended on to complete various types of tasks (Baddeley, 1991).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were proposed to manage and control this study:

Is motivation a useful way to increase long-term memory?

Is motivation a facilitating factor to improve long-term memory?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The study addressed the following research hypotheses:

Motivation to EFL learners is a facilitating factor to improve long-term memory.

Motivation is a useful way to increase long-term memory.

MEHODOLOGY

Participants

Thirty (N =30) students took part in this study. They were female EFL learners at an English language Institute. The average age of students was about 18, ranging from 14 to 25. All of them were at the same proficiency level according to the syllabus of English language Institute. The level of students was advanced.

Instruments

In order to have a more homogeneous sample, a pretest was administered to participants to determine their level of their proficiency. Participants took 40 points of Michigan Test of English language proficiency in order to measure their proficiency level.

Procedure

At the beginning of the session of semester, the teacher started with introduction, explanation and motivation. During these sessions, the teacher controlled motivation in all classroom activities particularly in discussions and role-plays. Summit 2A English book, the main book for advanced level was taught.

At the end of the semester, the same test was administered as a posttest to discover that motivation in the foreign language learners is a useful and facilitating factor for improving long-term memory. In order to test the effect of motivation on long term memory, the motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ) instrument was distributed among the participants after the posttest (A 7 point Likert Scale Questionnaire). The MSLQ is based on a general cognitive view of motivation. Mckeachie, Pintrich, Line and Smit (1986) present the general theoretical framework that underlies the MSLQ. The questionnaire included 31 questions for gathering data about changes in learner's long-term memory. The collected data was analyzed by SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the pretest and posttest show that learners performed are better than on posttest to pretest. The mean in pretest was 80/0 and in posttest was 81/8.

Table 1: The results of the pretest and posttest

	Pretest	Posttest
N	30	30
Mean	80.0	81.8
SD	13	12.8
t	2.8	2.8

This study shows that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest, $t\text{-test}=2.8$ and $P<0/05$. This table shows that the means are different and difference between the pretest and posttest is significant. The present study was an attempt to survey the effect of motivation on long-term memory of Iranian EFL learners.

The important duty of EFL/ ESL teachers is to motivate learners to learn in-depth understanding to preserve information for a long period of time in their long-term memory.

The scores of the posttest were higher than the pretest. Within motivation and low anxiety in students, we can achieve more chance to hold information in our long-term memory. Several studies indicate the influence of motivation in reminding or producing personal memories. Specifically, motivation can affect the level of emotional severity experienced when recalling autobiographical¹ memories, and the selection, content, and process of autobiographical memories (Brunot & Sanitioso, 2004). Level of emotional intensity is higher with remembered

memories related to current long-term goals than memories irrelevant to long-term goals (Singer, 1990).

According to the results of the questionnaire which studied the effect of motivation in learners' long term memory, participants selected the options of 47% very true of me (option7), 32% more true (options4,5,6), 12% less true (options2,3), and 9% not at all true of me (option1).

The results show that motivation can affect long-term memory. The prime learning on long-term memory happens when there is no difficult and afraid situation, and there is a feeling of comfortable and pleasure of the class activities.

CONCLUSION

For measuring the effect of motivation on long-term memory, the instrument used for data collection was a 40-point Michigan test as a pretest at the beginning of the semester to the participants and the same test as a posttest at the end of the semester after motivating them. A 40-point Michigan test was administered to 30 female EFL learners at an English Language Institute.

As shown, the mean scores of the two tests are different, and the result of t-test indicates 2.8. The difference between the means is approximately significant. Therefore, with a 95 percent probability, it may be claimed that there is a statistically significant difference between the two tests (pretest and posttest) on the performance of our language learners in their learning before and after motivating them.

In end, a 7-point Likert scale questionnaire, the motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ) instrument, was also utilized to measure their motivation level after the end of the semester. The findings of the study confirmed that motivation is a useful and facilitating factor for improving and increasing long-term memory. The present study noticed motivation and its impression on learners' long-term memory of Iranian EFL learners. It is clear that people will learn when they want to learn. Even in the face of bad textbooks, bad schools, bad teachers, whatever, motivated students will learn.

With respect to the research hypotheses, it was perceived that motivation to EFL learners is a facilitating factor to improve long-term memory and motivation is a useful way to increase long-term memory.

Motivation is one of the powerful actions of agent among students. This, in turn causes the information stored in long term memory that leads to a better remembering. Teacher in this study controlled motivation and caused the students acted the classes better. By comparison pretest and posttest, the students were in a better understanding of topics in posttest. Through using motivation and challenging students can improve their learning and retrieving the learned topics in their long-term memory.

Researchers generally believe in two major types of motivation: Intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is the desire to do something because one really wants to and takes pleasure or sees value in doing so. Extrinsic motivation is the desire to do something not for the fun of the things itself, but because doing so leads to a certain result (Pintrich, 2003). It is often difficult to divide motivation as merely Intrinsic or extrinsic.

The major findings of this study show that motivation can affect long-term memory. ZPD increases when there is no difficult and afraid situation, and there is a feeling of comfort, pleasure, and fun in the class activities.

The questions related to the intrinsic motivation in the survey are:

In a class like this, I prefer course material that really challenges me so I can learn new things.

In a class like this, I prefer course material that arouses my curiosity, even if it is difficult to learn.

The most satisfying thing for me in this course is trying to understand the content as thoroughly as possible.

When I have the opportunity in this class, I choose course assignments that I can learn from, even if they don't guarantee a good grade.

And the questions related to the extrinsic motivation, the items:

Getting a good grade in this class is the most satisfying thing for me right now.

The most important thing for me right now is improving my overall grade point average, so my main concern in this class is getting a good grade.

If I can, I want to get better grades in this class than most of the other students.

I want to do well in this class because it is important to show my ability to my family, friends, employer, or others.

For being successful, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is very necessary.

This study was limited to female learners and it can be repeated by male students too.

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THE EFFECT OF TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH TRANSLATION APPROACHES VS. USE OF VISUAL AIDS ON VOCABULARY LEARNING OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to investigate the effect of teaching vocabulary through translation approaches vs. the use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners. To this end, the performance of participants in retention of vocabulary through translation approaches and visual aids was studied. To conduct the study, two types of tests in the form of multiple choice and production test including fill in the blanks, and wh-questions were used as the instruments for both the pre and post-tests to measure the participants' retention of new vocabularies. The participants were 30 Iranian female EFL learners between ages of 13 to 15 studying LET'S GO 4 (3rd edition) at a language institute in Shiraz. Paired samples t-test and independent samples t-test were utilized. The results of the study indicated that both approaches (visual aids and translation) were effective regarding vocabulary retention of new vocabularies. The results also showed that students learned vocabulary better through translation approaches. Therefore, translation approaches were more effective than visual aids in retention of new vocabulary items.

KEYWORDS: Vocabulary, Translation, Visual Aids, EFL Learners

INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language needs some skills and components to be mastered. Among those skills and components, vocabulary is one of the most crucial ones in language learning without which communication is not possible. Translation approaches and visual aids are effective techniques that teachers can use to teach vocabulary to their students that can cause long-term retention of newly- learned vocabulary.

According to Kim (1996, p. 3), "teaching vocabulary is an important factor in language teaching." Because through words we can express our feelings, emotions, and ideas to others, language teachers should use the most effective ways to teach vocabulary in their classes. Vocabulary is an important element in every language because without sufficient vocabulary students can't understand each other or express their opinions. Teaching vocabulary helps

students understand and communicate with others in English. Wilkins (1972, p.111) mentioned that “while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” Lewis (1993, p. 89) said that “lexis is the core or heart of language”. Swan and Walter (1984) stated that acquisition of vocabulary is the largest and the most essential task facing the language learner.

There are many studies that show translation has a positive effect on acquisition of second language. There is much agreement on the benefits of using translation in learning L2. Ellis (1985) for example, stated that learners can use their first language to overcome their limitations while learning a second language. Auerbach (1993) argued that using translation in L2 classroom will have a positive impact on learner’s second language learning especially in vocabulary area.

Using visual aids should be an important part of the learning process. Teachers should use visual aids in their classes to motivate their students, to help them understand and recall the materials better. As Harmer (2001) maintains, visual aids make the learning process easier. English teachers feel that if they use visual aids such as pictures, charts, realia, etc. in their classes the learning process can be enjoyable and memorable. Most of the time it becomes difficult for students to remember the meaning of some words; therefore, the teachers investigated to increase student’s learning through visual aids. Nelson (1979) argued that visual aids such as pictures and charts are very effective for learners memory as they are various.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning vocabularies of a foreign language has long been emphasized in language teaching. There are many different techniques to teach vocabulary. However, the important issue is which techniques learners should use in order to learn vocabulary effectively so that they can recall them easily. Wilkins (1972, p. 111) states that “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” So if learners do not have a strong base of vocabulary knowledge they cannot communicate their thoughts and ideas successfully.

Henning (1973) stated that from the beginning stage vocabulary should be recognized as a central element in language instruction. Meara (1980, p. 192) stated that “Vocabulary is one of the important parts of language learning which has been neglected for several decades”. According to Allen (1983), “for many years teachers were sometimes told that they ought not to teach many words before their students have mastered the grammar and sound system of the language”(p. 1). He continues that, “pronunciation and grammar were emphasized, but there was little or no emphasis on vocabulary” (p. 1).

Vocabulary is defined by Hubbard (1983) as a powerful carrier of meaning. Hatch and Brown (1995, p. 468) defined vocabulary as “the list of words that speakers of particular language use.” Ur (1999) stated that vocabulary is the words that are taught in a foreign language. Furthermore, Henriksen (1999, p. 303) defined vocabulary knowledge as “ precise comprehension which is

operationalized as the ability to translate the lexical items in to L1, the ability to find the right definition in a multiple-choice task, or the ability to give a target language paraphrase". Allen (1983) stated that knowledge of vocabulary is necessary for communication. Thus, communication breaks down if people do not use the exact words. Moreover, vocabulary plays an important role in the success of foreign language learners (Kasper, 1993; Krashen & Terrell 1983).

Fortunately, most teachers and students agree that knowledge of vocabulary is essential for acquiring other skills of language. According to Thornbury (2002), if learners spend most of their time studying grammar, their English will not improve very much. They will see most improvement if they learn more words and expressions. Thornbury (2002, p. 13) stated that "You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words."

Nowadays, using translation as a way of teaching vocabulary is a controversial issue. Using L1 in L2 classroom for teaching vocabulary might be seen as a negative and unfashionable way. Nevertheless, research has found clear advantages in using L1 to teach vocabulary more significantly at the initial stages of the learning process (Cook, 2003; Jiang, 2002; Liu, 2009; Schmitt, 2008). Vocabulary expert Nation (1982) concludes that if teachers give the meaning of the words through L1 translation first, learning vocabulary becomes easier and faster for many learners. Nation (1982) concludes that if teachers use translation to teach new vocabulary in their classes learning vocabulary becomes faster for many learners. Butzkamm (2003) believes that successful learners usually rely on their mother tongue when they want to learn a second language.

Nowadays it is common for EFL teachers to use the students' mother tongue as a tool to teach both in English language institutes and in the classroom. Research shows that it is not appropriate to delete L1 in L2 classroom. (Butzkamm, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003; Schweers, 1999). If teachers use translation appropriately, it can be very beneficial. Schweers (1999) encourages teachers to use the native language in their classes to influence the classroom dynamic, and suggests, "starting with L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learners' lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves" (p. 7). Brown (2000, p. 68) claims, "first language can be a facilitating factor and not just an interfering factor".

Research shows that translation is a good way to teach and learn new vocabulary. As Nation (2002) maintains, translation is a technique for teaching vocabulary. If teachers use L1 in EFL classes, they can save their class time. Sometimes using translation of vocabulary items or explanation of a grammar point would be much easier and also more efficient. According to Morahan (2007), whether to use translation in the second language classroom or not has been debated for many years.

Recently, the taboo against using translation in the classroom has shattered, and the attitude and feeling to L1 and translation in language classes has witnessed a positive change due to the fact

that some learners use L1 as a communicative strategy to learn and use the foreign or second language (Cook, 2001; Gill, 2003; James, 1998; Odlin, 1989). In fact, translation is a new teaching method, which can be used in second language classes and can help both teachers and learners. Faltis (1990) cited that translation is the new technique, which requires both teachers and learners to balance the use of the L1 and foreign language.

In language learning situation, a knowledgeable learner is assumed the one who is proficient in all four language skills and also sub-skills. As research findings reveal, L1 use is important in both teaching and learning aspects of these skills. For example, Nuttall (1996) by addressing the reading skill emphasizes the importance and value of translation in training reading-based library skills, for the discussion of students' worksheets and in reading summary test. In relation to the concept of language response, he adds, "inability to express themselves (students) in the target language necessarily limits both the kind and the quality of the responses students give. It is quite possible that students who are permitted to use their L1 in responding will explore the text more accurately and thoroughly than those who are restricted to target language responses" (p. 187).

Visual learners learn primarily through the visual channel and learn best by seeing. They usually think in pictures and prefer to learn materials, diagrams, images, pictures, colors, videos, flipcharts and handouts. They can simply visualize objects and plan in their mind. This type of learners prefer to see an activity rather than just explain about an activity verbally. In general when reading, the visual learner will remember images and pictures in order to understand the text they are reading. They will often remember faces rather than names.

Teaching vocabulary through the use of visual materials is very useful. Goodman (1987) suggested that usually, visual materials were more easily understood by learners of all ages because a picture seemed worth a thousand words and avoided lengthy, difficult and complex word definitions. Harmer (2001) stated that visual aids can help students to learn the materials easier. Abebe and Davidson (2012) point out that students like to learn vocabulary with the help of visual aids, and that the use of visual aids increases the students' ability and opportunity to use language to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Moreover, Hill (1990) states that using different types of visual materials in teaching vocabulary in classroom can increase the intrinsic motivation of the students. When students show interest towards what they learn, they can engage themselves in the activities. In this way, they can learn language meaningfully. Koren (1996) points out that the learning of foreign vocabularies with pictures can be easier and more memorable than vocabularies without pictures. In the same vein, Armstrong (2001) believed that learning vocabulary through the use of visual aids is more helpful and effective than learning vocabulary without perception of visual aids. Horn (1998) stated that visual aids such as pictures and charts can solve many learning problems.

Harmer (2001) also reported that real objects, some books, newspapers or magazines can help students to make the learning process easier. Therefore, teachers use them for better teaching and

learning. Anderson and Shiffrin (1980) cited that using pictures, charts and images for children can be very helpful because in this way they can learn vocabulary items better. Porter and Margaret (1992) assert that visual materials can help teachers to teach more comprehensively to their students. They can make learning process more interesting as well. Allen (1983) adds that children have a strange ability for learning language. In contrast to verbal instruction, teaching vocabulary through visual aids helps teachers to save their class time. So, they can allocate their time for necessary classroom activities such as drills and other exercises. Mayer and Sims (1994) indicate that an increasing body of research evidence supports that presenting words and illustrations or pictures together, affects students' learning in a positive way.

Among all types of visuals, pictures are perhaps the simplest and commonly used. Yet pictures are also very effective and useful. In the language learning of young children. Pictures are often used as to provide associations for the learning of new vocabularies. We cannot use pictures for every unknown word because some words are abstract and cannot be illustrated easily. If a word is concrete then it is easier to find and use a picture for its illustration (Anderson & Shiffrin, 1980).

Using pictures in teaching learning process is an enjoyable activity because pictures keep the students from getting bored. The use of pictures makes the vocabulary material more meaningful, and also helps learners to memorize the new words easily and to represent the real object or things. Furthermore, the use of picture is a fantastic educational tool and makes learning more fun than usual.

There has been much research on pictures in learning generally, and a little also in the area of second language learning. For example, Koren (1999) points out that learning foreign vocabulary with association of pictures can be easier than words without these associations. Indeed many teachers of young children in the English language classrooms use photo dictionaries in order to improve the vocabulary and speaking skills of students.

According to Bush (2007), using picture is a simple way for simultaneous attention to the building blocks of second language learning. Using picture for teaching new vocabulary has been a fundamental principle in many methods in TEFL or TESL (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). For example, in direct method, it is supposed that there should be a direct relationship between form and meaning. According to Doff (1988), demonstration is direct, interesting, and has a great impact in the class. As Shapiro and Waters (2005), hold, "it is well documented within the cognitive literature that visual stimuli create very strong memories" (p. 131).

Flash cards have also been used as an important tool in teaching English as second language (Hart, 1982). They are used not only for teaching vocabulary but also for teaching many different things such as propositions, articles, tenses, sentence structures, and phrasal verbs (Palka, 1988). In addition to teaching vocabulary, flash cards have been used to improve both reading speed and comprehension of learners. (Tan & Nicholson, 1997). As Wright (1990) pointed out, word

flash cards are very useful in teaching reading and writing. Nevertheless, they will find their use in teaching vocabulary too, offering valuable help mainly in teaching the spelling of newly learnt words, which definitely should not be neglected as it often is.

According to Nunan (1999), realia is defined as objects and teaching props which are outside the classroom and are used for teaching and learning. Under this statement, realia is considered as real objects, which are used to help students learn a new language, as a way to present meaningful examples from the real world. Along with this idea, the British Council site states that “realia refers to any real objects we use in the classroom to bring the class to life”.

Richards and Platt (1992, p. 289) regard realia as “real objects and things which are brought in to a classroom as examples or as aids to be talked or written about and used in language teaching such as articles of clothing, kitchen utensils, items of food, etc”. Zukowsky and Faust (1997) defined realia as concrete objects and the apparatus of everyday life. Hunt and Beglar (1998) state that realia can help learners a lot because they can hear the word and also receive visual reinforcement. French (1983) states that whenever we have real objects in the classroom, it is better to use them instead of pictures.

Charts, maps and diagrams are other common visual tools that can be used for learning purposes. Kleinman and Dwyer (1999) examined the effects of specific visual skills in facilitating learning. Their findings indicate that the use of color graphic as opposed to black and white graphics promotes better achievement in the learning of concepts. An earlier study by Myatt and Carter (1979 as cited in Heinich et al., 1999) suggests that most learners prefer color visuals to black and white visuals, but usually there is no significant difference between them in the amount of learning except when color is related to the subject to be learned.

As Cable (1977) mentions drawing on board has an important role in teaching and learning vocabulary. Teachers can draw stick figures to represent people and in this way, they can teach a dialogue or a new word. According to Doff (1988), it is not necessary for teachers and learners to be wonderful artists to draw a picture in order to teach vocabulary, the most important thing is to communicate the message.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Q1.** Is there any statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches versus use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners?
- Q2.** Does translation based approach have any effect on teaching vocabulary?
- Q3.** Does teaching vocabulary through visual aids have any effect on teaching vocabulary?

METHODOLOGY

Design

This research was done within a pretest, treatment, post-test, quasi-experimental design in which the collected data were analyzed quantitatively. There was one independent variable with two levels of translation and visual aids.

Participants

The participants were 30 Iranian female EFL learners (N=30) between ages of 13 to 15 studying LET'S GO 4 (3rd edition) at a language institute in Shiraz. The participants were all native speakers of Persian who had learnt English for about two years.

The participants were selected based on convenience sampling and from among two different intact classes. Their scores in the pretest and posttest would not affect their final class activity scores but these tests had a positive effect on students midterm and final scores. However, a bonus was considered for all the participants as a sign of encouragement.

Instruments

Two types of tests in the form of multiple choice, and production test including fill in the blanks, and WH-questions were used as the instrument for both the pre-test and the post-test to measure the participants' retention of new vocabularies. The total number of items was 30 and the number of items of each part is as follows: twenty multiple-choice tests in which students had to find the correct answer to each sentence, five fill- in- the- blank sentences in which students had to write only one word according to the meaning of the sentences, and five WH-questions. Students had to answer these five questions according to the pictures.

Data collection

In order to conduct this study, LET'S GO 4 (3rd edition) was used. This book has eight units each with a title such as Birthdays, The Great Outdoors, Hopes and Dreams, Schools, Indoors and Outdoors, People, Future Plans, and Work and Play. Each unit starts with a conversation, some new vocabularies, grammar points and a reading at the end of each chapter.

First, the teacher divided the book in to two parts. In order to teach vocabulary all the new vocabularies were chosen. For ten sessions, the teacher used visual aids in order to teach them. During these ten sessions, she taught four lessons to the learners, which contain 64 new vocabularies by the use of posters, flashcards, board drawings, charts and realia. For the other ten sessions, again the teacher taught four lessons, which contain 66 vocabularies by the use of translation approaches such as teacher translation, student translation, and some translation exercises and activities as their homework to teach new vocabularies. At the beginning of the term, the teacher applied a pretest and after teaching new vocabularies by the use of visual aids, she used the same test as a posttest. In order to determine the effectiveness of translation approaches, the same procedure was employed both for the pretest and for the posttest.

Scoring rubrics

Each learner's paper was corrected. For each multiple-choice test, half mark and for each production question one mark was assigned. The total scores were calculated out of twenty.

Data analysis

After collecting the data, correcting their papers, and giving scores, the SPSS software (version 16) was used and descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, etc were calculated. Moreover, inferential statistics such as paired samples t-tests and independent samples t-test were employed to analyze the data and to find out which approach (translation approaches or visual aids) is more effective in retention of new vocabularies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

Is there any statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches versus use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners?

To answer the first research question, an independent samples *t*-test was run.

Table 1: Independent Samples *t*-test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Difference	Error Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	0.653	0.422	-3.36	58	.001	-3.11667	0.92631	-4.9708	-1.2624
Equal variances not assumed			-3.36	57.7	.001	-3.11667	0.92631	-4.9710	-1.2622

With reference to Table 1, it is obvious that there was a statistically significant difference between these two groups. The sig (.001) was less than 0.05.

Research Question 2

Does translation based approach have any effect on learning vocabulary?

Table 2: Paired Samples t-test for translation condition

	Paired Differences						T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Pre & post translation	-8.550	3.35885	0.61324	-9.80422	-7.29578	-13.942	29	.000	

*= p< 0.05

As Table 2 shows, the results of the paired samples *t*-test for translation are statistically significant due to *p* value which is smaller than .05. The sig was (.000) which is smaller than *p* value .05.

Research Question3

Does teaching vocabulary through visual aids have any effect on learning vocabulary?

Table 3: Paired Samples t-test for visual aids condition

	Paired Differences						T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
visual aids pre and posttest	-5.00	3.57674	0.65302	-6.33558	-3.66442	-7.657	29	.000	

As Table 3 shows, the result of the paired samples *t*-test for visual aids was statistically significant due to the *p* value which is smaller than .05. The sig is (.000) which is smaller than *p* value .05.

Research question 1 was whether there was any statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches vs. use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners? The results of independent sample *t*-test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches vs. use of visual aids on vocabulary learning. Research question 2 was does translation based approach have any effect on teaching vocabulary? The results of paired sample *t*-test revealed that the results for translation is statistically significant. Research question 3 was does teaching vocabulary through visual aids have any effect on teaching vocabulary? The results of paired sample *t*-test revealed that the results for visual aids was statistically significant. In general results showed that students learn vocabulary better through translation approaches.

CONCLUSION

According to the grades of participants in the posttest, it is concluded that both visual aids and translation approaches were effective in retention of new vocabularies. So, one may come up with the conclusion that visual aids and translation approaches are essential and helpful for learning new vocabularies.

The final word about these two approaches (translation, visual aids), is that translation is more effective than visual aids in retention of new vocabularies.

Implication of the study

This study shows that it is necessary for teachers to use different strategies to teach new vocabularies in a second language. For example, translation method can be used at the initial stages of learning. Translation strategy is a helpful strategy especially for learning vocabulary for EFL learners who are at the elementary levels of English proficiency. Ellis (1985) states that learners' L1 works as a resource that learners can use for translation to overcome their limitation in learning a second language. Sridhar (1981) believes that the use of L1 in the learning of L2 does not interfere with the learning of the second language in any way as some people thought. Using visual aids is another method that teachers can use in classroom to teach new vocabularies. When students learn new words by visual teaching, it helps them to learn and remember them easily.

This study has a positive effect on teaching and learning process. From this study, teachers may gain insights in to the role of both translation and visual aids in learner's learning process and integrate these two methods in their teaching process. The findings of this study may also encourage teachers to use appropriate techniques for teaching vocabulary. The findings of this study are also useful for students. They can identify the best ways through which they can learn a new vocabulary.

Materials developers can also use the findings of this study. They can design sections of vocabulary in which the learners have to translate sentences, which contain newly learned vocabularies. Therefore, it is recommended that materials developers include exercises in their materials, which require learners to translate some parts that contain new vocabularies.

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POSSIBLE SELVES DEVELOPMENT OF EFFICACIOUS ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate the possible selves of efficacious language teachers to know to what extent their ideal, ought-to, actual, and feared selves affect their attitudes towards their effective teaching. In order to achieve the objective of the study, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) administered to 50 English language teachers of state schools and institutes to measure their self-efficacy beliefs. The data were analyzed using chi-square test. It should be noted that the efficacious teachers were selected based on the median score of 176.5. Then they were asked to answer The Possible Selves (PSs) questionnaire developed by Dastgoshadeh (2013) which measured four main domains of ideal-self, ought-to-self, actual-self, and feared-self, each of which in turn measured some subdomains. The first research question was analyzed for these 16 subdomains. An analysis of chi-square was run to compare the four domains of ideal, ought-to, actual and feared selves in order to probe the second research question. Based on the results it can be claimed that majority of the respondents indicated that the teachers significantly believed that ideal-self shaped possible selves. Teachers' sense of job satisfaction, teaching efficacy, career identity, and language identity are the most dominant selves of efficacious teachers.

KEYWORDS: Efficacy, Efficacious Teachers, Possible Selves

INTRODUCTION

Teachers always have the most important effect on learning process as the leaders of education path and also their way of thinking and their beliefs pave the way for their students to be successful in their education. Learning a new language is one of the most challenging fields of study that students face at school. Teachers have a very crucial role in the success or failure of each educational system. In fact as Galluzzo (2005) states "one of the most often-expressed statements about teaching is that nothing is more central to student learning than the quality of teacher".

Teachers' sense of efficacy has been related to positive teaching behaviors and student outcomes (Henson, Kogan & Vacha-Haase, 2001), and teachers with high teacher efficacy beliefs tend to implement new teaching ideas and techniques (Ross, 1992). As Bandura (1995) points out 'the task of creating environments conducive to learning rests heavily on the talents and self-efficacy of teachers.' Since teachers' efficacy may lead to students' efficacy and the improvement of educational practices, it is considered salient in the teaching and learning process.

Possible selves are the future-oriented aspect of self-concept; that is, the positive and negative selves one fully believes and expects to become or wants to avoid becoming (Markus & Nurius, 1986). By providing concrete positive expected and negative to-be-avoided future images, possible selves personalize goals and connect current behaviors to future states. In this way, possible selves improve self-regulatory capacity (Cross & Markus, 1994; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002) and make one's current situation seem meaningful (Cross & Markus, 1991). The present study is an attempt to explore the possible selves' development of teachers who feel success in their job and known as efficacious teachers.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Self-efficacy

The idea of self-efficacy was first proposed by Bandura (1977) within his social cognitive theory and refers to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (Bandura, 1995). According to Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2007) Self-efficacy beliefs do not necessarily reflect people's actual ability, but show their perception of it. Therefore, they may underestimate or overestimate their real abilities. Self-efficacy is a social-psychological construct and refers to 'people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances' (Bandura, 1986). These judgments, which are affected by a person's previous successes and failures, messages that other people communicate, successes and failures of others and successes and failures of a group as a whole, are central and pervasive to human action since they have the power to determine people's choices, goals, effort, and persistence (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 1995; Ormrod, 2006).

Teacher Efficacy

The construct of teacher efficacy was derived from Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (1977). Applied to the context of education teacher efficacy has been defined as "the extent to which teachers believe they can affect student learning" (Dembo & Gibson, 1985). Teacher efficacy is seen as a multidimensional construct with Ashton and Webb (1982), for example, identifying two dimensions as "teaching efficacy" and "personal efficacy". The first factor represents a teacher's sense of teaching efficacy or belief that teachers can overcome factors external to the teacher such as the background of students. The second dimension, personal efficacy, is the belief of an individual teacher in their own personal capacity to deliver the necessary teaching behaviors to influence student learning.

Possible Selves Theory

As Lee and Oyserman (2006) mentioned “Self-concept is one's theory about oneself, the person one was in the past, is now, and can become in the future, including social roles and group memberships. A well-functioning self-concept helps make sense of one's present, preserves positive self-feelings, makes predictions about the future, and guides motivation”. The contents of the future-oriented component of self-concept have been termed *possible selves* (Markus & Nurius, 1986). As observed by Higgins (1994), three possible selves are seen as particularly significant in motivating and directing behavior: the *ideal self*, the *ought self*, and the *feared self*. Possible selves are shaped by a given individual's hopes and fears, but they are also reconciled with the individual's social, socio-cultural, and historical context (Norman and Aron, 2003); an individual may, thus, possess a combination of these three for any future domain. Following is a brief description of each self from this model.

Implications of possible self theory for teachers

Oyserman and Lee (2009) noted that “Teachers, parents, and students all have possible selves—images of how things might be in the near and more distal future. These images illustrate that change is possible. Possible selves can undergird self-improvement by showing a path toward the future and by highlighting where one might end up if effort is not maintained. Intervention to help teachers, parents, and students focus on what they want to become and avoid becoming, what they value, and how they expect to engage in becoming like their desired selves and avoiding becoming like their undesired selves can be highly effective. Indeed, the theory of possible selves has been used to understand progress and life transitions for both youth learners and adults in continuing education and other settings. Perhaps the most important message that educators can take from the research on possible selves is that possible selves are malleable and can be influenced by intervention to enhance the content of possible selves”. Changing possible selves through intervention can lead to positive changes in academic behavior, in better academic performance and lower risk of depression (Oyserman et al., 2002; 2006).

Common to all this early research is recognition of the importance of an understanding of self to beliefs, attitudes and actions, and thus the kinds and effects of such actions. In teacher education also, much research literature demonstrates that knowledge of the self is a crucial element in the way teachers construe and construct the nature of their work (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994) and that events and experiences in the personal lives of teachers are intimately linked to the performance of their professional roles (Ball & Goodson, 1985; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996; Acker, 1999).

Several researchers (Nias, 1989, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994; Sumsion, 2002) have noted that teacher identities are not only constructed from technical and emotional aspects of teaching (i.e. classroom management, subject knowledge and pupil test results) and their personal lives, but also 'as the result of an interaction between the personal experiences of teachers and the social, cultural, and institutional environment in which they function on a daily basis' (Slegers & Kelchtermans, 1999).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What shapes the possible selves of efficacious language teachers?
2. Which sense of possible selves is the most dominant one in making efficacious language teachers?

METODOLOGY

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 50 (male and female) junior and senior high school English language teachers of Kurdistan, Iran and also English language teachers who work in institutes of this state. The teachers in the sample had 3 to 15 years of teaching experience and ranged in age from 20 to 50. Based on the total score of efficacy and its median score of 176.5, the participants were divided into two groups of efficacious and non-efficacious groups (each having 25 participants). The analyses were run on the 25 efficacious participants, i.e. the other 25 were omitted.

Instruments

Two kinds of questionnaires were used to find answers to the questions raised by this study. One of them was *The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was used to measure teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. The other scale which was used in this study was *Possible Selves Questionnaire* prepared by Dastgoshadeh (2013) to better understand what has actually shaped the different L2 selves of EFL teachers. The Cronbach's alpha reliability indices for the efficacy questionnaire and ideal, ought-to actual, feared and total possible selves were 0.94, 0.91, 0.80, 0.58, 0.63 and 0.92 (Table 1)

Table 1: Reliability Statistics for efficacy and possible selves development

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Efficacy	.948	24
Ideal-Self	.916	28
Ought-to-Self	.803	10
Actual-Self	.584	13
Feared-Self	.631	3
Possible Selves	.922	54

Procedure

In the first step 50 English teachers were selected randomly. They were asked to answer Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scales in person. Next, out of 50, 25 were selected as efficacious teachers since they scored above 168. They were requested to answer the second questionnaire which was on teachers' possible selves development. These questionnaires submitted to them in person. Participants were asked to answer each question by choosing one of the six possible answers ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Time was not considered as an important factor in completing the questionnaires. The researcher herself was also available to provide them with guidance and answers if they came across any ambiguities.

Data collection and analysis

In order to investigate the research questions of the study, some statistical analyses were conducted. SPSS program was used to analyze the data gathered from the questionnaires. Chi Square test was used for analyzing the data. Based on the total score of efficacy and its median score of 176.5, the participants were divided into two groups of efficacious and non-efficacious groups (each having 25 participants). The analyses were run on the 25 efficacious participants, i.e. the other 25 were omitted.

Sixteen chi-square plus frequency and percentages were used to probe to what extent efficacious teachers have each of the 16 subdomains. This probed the first research question. The subdomains under each domain were compared through chi-square in order to probe the second research question to find which one is more dominant. For example the three subdomains of personal-self, teaching efficacy and career identity were compared for ought-to-self.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

First Research Question

What shapes the possible selves of efficacious language teachers?

The possible-self questionnaire measures four main domains of ideal-self, ought-to-self, actual-self, and feared-self; each of which in turn measures some subdomains. The first research question was analyzed for these 16 subdomains.

Ideal-Self

A chi-square test was run to probe any significant differences between the teachers' perception towards the subdomains of Ideal self. Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 89, Residual = 59) strongly agreed with the idea that career identity was an aspect of ideal-self. The other 46 responses (Residual = 16) agreed with this idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -29) disagreed with the idea that career identity shaped ideal-self. Two responses (Residual = -28) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally 12 responses (Residual = -18) slightly agreed with the idea that career identity was part of ideal-self. Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 36, Residual = 21) strongly agreed with the idea that person self was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 27 responses (Residual = 12) had the same idea.

On the other hand only one response (Residual = -14) disagreed with the idea that person-self shaped ideal-self. Two responses (Residual = -13) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally nine responses (Residual = -6) slightly agreed with the idea that person self was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 44, Residual = 29) strongly agreed with the idea that language identity was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 17 responses (Residual = 2) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -14) disagreed with the idea that language identity shaped ideal-self. Six responses (Residual = 9) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally seven responses (Residual = -8) slightly agreed with the idea that language identity was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 41, Residual = 26) strongly agreed with the idea that teaching efficacy was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 23 responses (Residual = -2) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -24) disagreed with the idea that teaching efficacy shaped ideal-self.

Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 28, Residual = 15.5) agreed with the idea that cultural identity was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 26 responses (Residual = 13.5) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -11.5) disagreed and another one response (Residual = -1.5) strongly disagreed with the idea that cultural identity shaped ideal-self. Five responses (Residual = -7.5) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally 14 responses (Residual = 1.5) slightly agreed with the idea that cultural identity was part of ideal-self.

Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 39, Residual = 26.5) strongly agreed with the idea that language efficacy was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 22 responses (Residual = 9.5) agreed with this idea. On the other hand only two responses (Residual = -10.5) strongly disagreed and another one response (Residual = -11.5) disagreed with the idea that language efficacy shaped ideal-self. Three responses (Residual = -9.5) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally eight responses (Residual = -4.5) slightly agreed with the idea that language efficacy was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 45, Residual = 25) strongly agreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 38 responses (Residual = 18) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -19) strongly disagreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity shaped ideal-self. Three responses (Residual = -17) disagreed with this idea. And finally 13 responses (Residual = -4) slightly agreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 54, Residual = 35.3) strongly agreed with the idea that job satisfaction was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 16 responses (Residual = -2.8) had the same idea. On the other hand only two responses (Residual = -16.8) strongly disagreed with the idea that job satisfaction shaped ideal-self. Three responses (Residual = -15.8) slightly agreed with this idea

Table 2: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; Ideal Self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	
Ideal self	Career identity	Observed N		1	2	12	46	89	150	
		Expected N		30	30	30	30	30		
		Residual		-29	-28	-18	16	59		
	Personal self	Observed N		1	2	9	27	36	75	
		Expected N		15	15	15	15	15		
		Residual		-14	-13	-6	12	21		
	Language identity	Observed N		1	6	7	17	44	75	
		Expected N		15	15	15	15	15		
		Residual		-14	-9	-8	2	29		
	Teaching efficacy	Observed N					1	23	51	75
		Expected N					25	25	25	
		Residual					-24	-2	26	
	Cultural identity	Observed N	1	1	5	14	28	26	75	
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5		
		Residual	-11.5	-11.5	-7.5	1.5	15.5	13.5		
	Language efficacy	Observed N	2	1	3	8	22	39	75	
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5		
		Residual	-10.5	-11.5	-9.5	-4.5	9.5	26.5		
	Sociopolitical identity	Observed N	1		3	13	38	45	100	
		Expected N	20		20	20	20	20		
		Residual	-19		-17	-7	18	25		
Job satisfaction	Observed N	2			3	16	54	75		
	Expected N	18.8			18.8	18.8	18.8			
	Residual	-16.8			-15.8	-2.8	35.3			

Note1. The frequencies refer to the responses not number of cases.

Note2. Positive residuals indicate that the option was selected more than expectation.

The results of chi-square (Table 3) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards each sub domains as main factors of ideal-self. The teachers significantly believed that career identity, personal self, language identity, teaching efficacy, cultural identity, language efficacy, sociopolitical identity, and job satisfaction shaped ideal-self.

Table 3: Chi-Square; Ideal Self

domain	Sub domain		Choices
Ideal self	Career identity	Chi-Square	189.533 ^a
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Personal self	Chi-Square	65.733 ^b
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Language identity	Chi-Square	79.067 ^b
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Teaching efficacy	Chi-Square	50.240 ^c
		Df	2
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Cultural identity	Chi-Square	59.640 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Language efficacy	Chi-Square	91.640 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Sociopolitical identity	Chi-Square	82.400 ^e
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Job satisfaction	Chi-Square	94.867 ^f
		Df	3
		Asymp. Sig.	.000

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency for career identity is 30.0., for personal self and language identity is 15.0., for teaching efficacy is 25.0., for cultural identity and language efficacy is 12.5., for sociopolitical identity is 20.0., and for job satisfaction is 18.8.

Ought-to-Self

The results of chi-square (Table 4) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 56, Residual = 31) strongly agreed with the idea that personal-self was an aspect of ought-to-self. Another 18 responses (Residual = -7) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -24) slightly disagreed with the idea that personal-self shaped ought-to-self.

The results also indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 32, Residual = 19.5) strongly agreed with the idea that teaching efficacy was an aspect of ought-to-self. Another 31 responses (Residual = 18.5) had the same idea. On the other hand three separate one responses (Residual = -11.5) strongly disagreed, disagreed and slightly disagreed with the idea that teaching efficacy shaped ought-to-self. Nine responses (-3.5) slightly agreed with this idea. Based on the results displayed in Table 4 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 44, Residual = 24) strongly agreed with the idea that career identity was an aspect of ought-to-self. Another 41 responses (Residual = 21) agreed with this idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -19) strongly disagreed with the idea that career identity shaped ought-to-self. Four responses

(Residual = -16) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally ten responses (Residual = -10) slightly agreed with the idea that career identity was part of ought-to-self.

Table 4: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; ought-to self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree	total
Ought-to self	Personal self	Observed N			1		18	56	75
		Expected N			25		25	25	
		Residual			-24		-7	31	
	Teaching efficacy	Observed N	1	1	1	9	31	32	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-11.5	-11.5	-11.5	-3.5	18.5	19.5	
	Career identity	Observed N	1		4	10	41	44	100
		Expected N	20		20	20	20	20	
		Residual	-19		-16	-10	21	24	

The results of chi-square (Table 5) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards personal-self, teaching efficacy and career identity as main factor of ought-to--self. The teachers significantly believed that personal self, teaching efficacy, and career identity shaped out-to-self.

Table 5: Chi-Square; ought-to self

domain	Sub domain	Choices	
Ought-to self	Personal self	Chi-Square	63.440 ^c
		Df	2
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Teaching efficacy	Chi-Square	90.520 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Career identity	Chi-Square	86.700 ^e
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency for personal self is 25.0., for teaching efficacy is 12.5., and for career identity is 20.0.

Actual-Self

The results of chi-square (Table 6) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 41, Residual = 22.3) strongly agreed with the idea that teaching efficacy was an aspect of actual-self. Another 23 responses (Residual = 4.3) had the same idea. On the other hand two responses (Residual = -16.8) slightly disagreed and another nine responses (Residual = -9.8) slightly agreed with this idea. It is also indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 25, Residual = 8.3) agreed and slightly agreed with the idea that career identity was an aspect of actual-self. Another 17 responses (Residual = .3) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand 15 responses (Residual = -1.7) slightly disagreed, 11 responses (Residual = -5.7) disagreed and finally seven responses (Residual = -9.7) strongly disagreed with this idea. The results of chi-square (Table 6) indicated that majority of

the teachers (N = 28, Residual = 15.5) agreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity was an aspect of actual-self. Another 22 responses (Residual = 9.5) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand 14 responses (Residual = 1.5) slightly agreed, two responses (Residual = -10.5) strongly disagreed, three (-9.5) disagreed and finally six responses (Residual = - 6.5) slightly disagreed with this idea. The results of chi-square (Table 6) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 32, Residual = 19.5) agreed with the idea that personal self was an aspect of actual-self. Another 18 responses (Residual = 5.5) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand 18 responses (Residual = 5.5) slightly agreed, two responses (Residual = -10.5) strongly disagreed, four (-8.5) disagreed and finally one response (Residual = - 11.5) slightly disagreed with this idea.

Table 6: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; Actual self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree	total
Actual self	Teaching efficacy	Observed N			2	9	23	41	75
		Expected N			18.8	18.8	18.8	18.8	
		Residual			-16.8	-9.8	4.3	22.3	
	Career identity	Observed N	7	11	15	25	25	17	100
		Expected N	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	
		Residual	-9.7	-5.7	-1.7	8.3	8.3	3	
	Sociopolitical identity	Observed N	2	3	6	14	28	22	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-10.5	-9.5	-6.5	1.5	15.5	9.5	
	Personal self	Observed N	2	4	1	18	32	18	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-10.5	-8.5	-11.5	5.5	19.5	5.5	

The results of chi-square (Table 7) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards teaching efficacy, career identity, sociopolitical identity, and personal self as main factors of actual-self. The teachers significantly believed that teaching efficacy, career identity, sociopolitical identity, and personal self shaped actual-self.

Table 7: Chi-Square; Actual Self

domain	Sub domain	Choices	
Actual self	Teaching efficacy	Chi-Square	47.400 ^T
		Df	3
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Career identity	Chi-Square	16.040 ^S
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.007
	Sociopolitical identity	Chi-Square	46.040 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Personal self	Chi-Square	60.440 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency for teaching efficacy is 18.8., for career identity is 16.7., for sociopolitical identity is 12.5., and for personal self is 12.5.

Feared-Self

The results of chi-square (Table 8) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 17, Residual = 4.5) strongly disagreed with the idea that feared-self was an aspect of possible-self. On the other hand, 15 responses (Residual = 2.5) agreed and slightly agreed with this idea. Seven responses (Residual = -5.5) strongly agreed, nine responses (Residual = -3.5) slightly disagreed and 12 responses (-.5) disagreed with this idea.

Table 8: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; Feared-Self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree	total
Feared self	Personal self	Observed N	17	12	9	15	15	7	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	4.5	-.5	-3.5	2.5	2.5	-5.5	

The results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (5) = 6.04$, $p = .302$, $r = .28$ representing a weak to moderate effect size) indicated that there were not any significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards feared-self.

Table 9: Chi-Square; Feared Self

domain	Sub domain	Choices	
Feared self	Personal self	Chi-Square	6.040 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.302

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.7.

Second Research Question

Which sense of possible selves are the most dominant in making efficacious language teachers?

An analysis of chi-square (crosstabs) was run to compare the four domains of ideal, ought-to, actual and feared selves in order to probe the second research question. Each cell (Table 10) contain three pieces of information; frequency, percentage and standardized residual (Std. Residual). The former two are descriptive indices based on which no statistical inferences can be reached; however, the latter is a standardized index based on which the frequencies of vertical cells can be compared for detecting significant differences. Any Std. Residual higher than +/- 1.96 denote that the frequency was significantly beyond expectation (+) or significantly lower than expectation (-). Based on these results it can be claimed that;

Majority of the respondents (N = 384, 54.9 %, Std. Residual = 3.5 > 1.96) indicated that the teachers significantly believed that ideal-self shaped possible selves. The Std. Residual for actual-self (-4.2) and feared-self (-4.7) was significantly lower than what was expected.

Table 10: Frequencies, Percentages and Std. Residuals; Domains of Possible Selves

		Choices					Total	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree		
Ideal	Count	6	5	21	67	217	384	700
	% within Domain	0.9%	0.7%	3.0%	9.6%	31.0%	54.9%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-2.9	-3.2	-1.8	-2.1	-.4	3.5	
Ought-to	Count	2	1	6	19	90	132	250
	% within Domain	0.8%	0.4%	2.4%	7.6%	36.0%	52.8%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.8	-2.2	-1.5	-2.1	1.2	1.6	
Actual	Count	11	18	24	66	108	98	325
	% within Domain	3.4%	5.5%	7.4%	20.3%	33.2%	30.2%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.8	3.2	2.5	4.1	.4	-4.2	
Feared	Count	17	12	9	15	15	7	75
	% within Domain	22.7%	16.0%	12.0%	20.0%	20.0%	9.3%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	10.6	7.1	3.1	1.9	-1.8	-4.7	
Total	Count	36	36	60	167	430	621	1350
	% within Domain	2.7%	2.7%	4.4%	12.4%	31.9%	46.0%	100.0%

T

he Std. Residuals for the selection of the “agreed” choice were all within the ranges of +/- 1.96, i.e. they did not show any significant differences.

On the other side of the table, the feared-self (N = 17, 22.7, Std. Residual = 10.6 > 1.96) indicated that the respondents significant disagreed with the idea that feared-self shaped possible selves. This was coupled with (Std. Residual = 7.1) for the selection of disagree, and (Std. Residual = 3.1) for the selection of slightly disagree. These results indicated that the respondents significantly disagreed with the idea that feared-self shaped possible selves.

Of interesting results was that respondents significant disagreed (Std. Residual = 3.2) and slightly disagreed (Std. Residual = 2.5) with the idea that actual-self shaped possible selves, while (Std. Residual = 4.1) slightly agreed with the idea that actual-self contributed to possible selves.

Thus it can be concluded that; a) ideal-self was considered as the best factor in shaping possible selves, b) feared-self was the weakest factor, c) actual-self seemed to have a weak contribution and finally, d) the attitude towards the contribution of ought-to-self did not seem unanimous.

The results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (15) = 309.69, p = .000, r = .47$ representing an almost large to moderate effect size) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards domains of possible selves.

Table 11: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	309.693 ^a	15	.000
Likelihood Ratio	229.219	15	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	193.758	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1350		

a. 3 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.

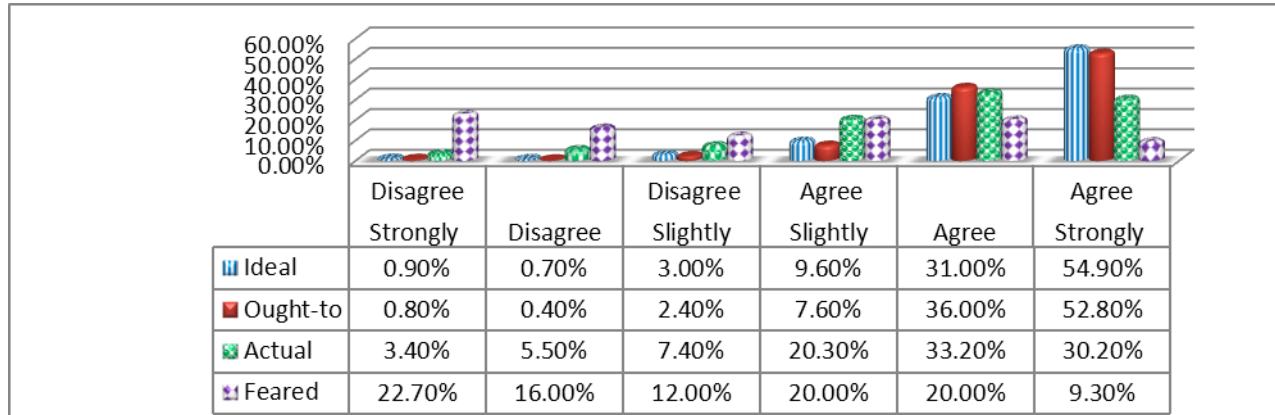


Figure 1: Percentages; Domains of Possible Selves

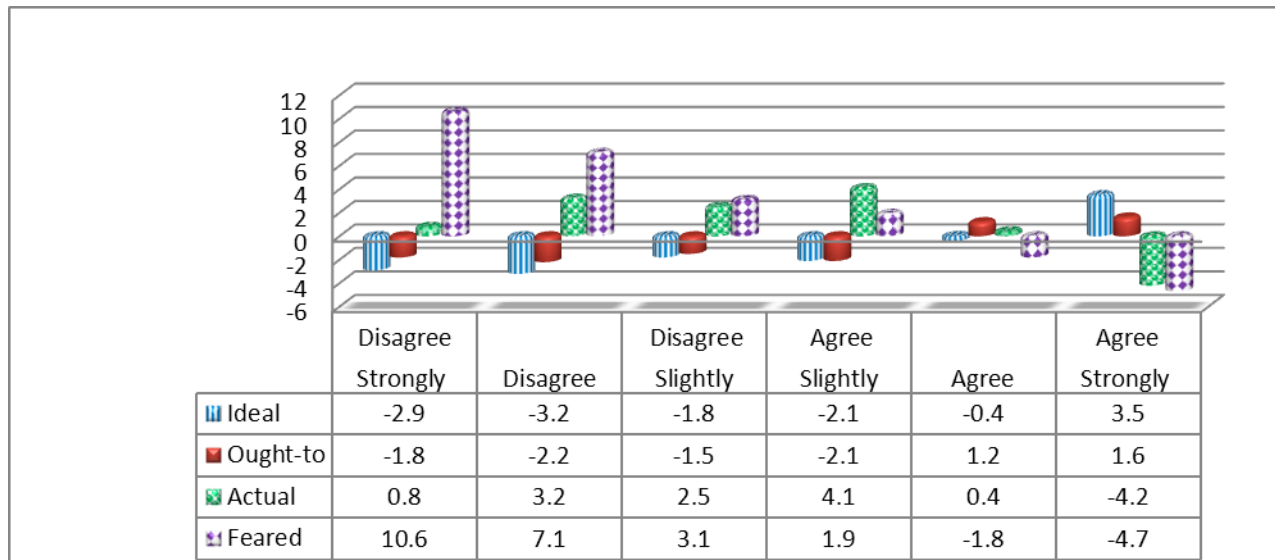


Figure 2: Std. Residual; Domains of Possible Selves

Are there any significant differences between the sub-domains of the ideal self?

Table 12 displays the frequencies, percentages and Std. Residuals for the eight sub-domains of the ideal self.

Table 12: Frequencies, percentages and Std. Residual; Sub-Domains of Ideal Self

		Choices						Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Career Identity	Count	0	1	2	12	46	89	150
	%	0.0%	0.7%	1.3%	8.0%	30.7%	59.3%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.1	-.1	-1.2	-.6	-.1	.7	
Personal Self	Count	0	1	2	9	27	36	75
	%	0.0%	1.3%	2.7%	12.0%	36.0%	48.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	.6	-.2	.7	.8	-.8	
Language Identity	Count	0	1	6	7	17	44	75
	%	0.0%	1.3%	8.0%	9.3%	22.7%	58.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	.6	2.5	-.1	-1.3	.4	
Teaching Efficacy	Count	0	0	0	1	23	51	75
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	30.7%	68.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	-.7	-1.5	-2.3	-.1	1.5	
Cultural Identity	Count	1	1	5	14	28	26	75
	%	1.3%	1.3%	6.7%	18.7%	37.3%	34.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.4	.6	1.8	2.5	1.0	-2.4	
Language Efficacy	Count	2	1	3	8	22	39	75
	%	2.7%	1.3%	4.0%	10.7%	29.3%	52.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.7	.6	.5	.3	-.3	-.3	
Sociopolitical Identity	Count	1	0	3	13	38	45	100
	%	1.0%	0.0%	3.0%	13.0%	38.0%	45.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.2	-.8	.0	1.1	.3	-1.3	
Job Satisfaction	Count	2	0	0	3	16	54	75
	%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	21.3%	72.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.7	-.7	-1.5	-1.6	-1.5	2.0	
Total	Count	6	5	21	67	217	384	700
	%	0.9%	0.7%	3.0%	9.6%	31.0%	54.9%	100.0%

Based on these results it can be claimed that the following Std. Residuals were significant;

- 1) the subjects slightly disagreed with language identity (Std. Residual = 2.5 > 1.96) more than what was expected.
- 2) The subjects slightly agreed with teaching efficacy (Std. Residual = -2.3 > -1.96) less than what was expected.
- 3) The subjects slightly agreed with cultural identity (Std. Residual = 2.5 > 1.96) more than what was expected.
- 4) The subjects strongly agreed with cultural identity (Std. Residual = -2.4 > -1.96) less than what was expected.
- 5) The subjects strongly agreed with job satisfaction (Std. Residual = 2 > 1.96) more than what was expected. The other values were lower than +/- 1.96.

The results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (35) = 67.14, p = .001, r = .30$ representing a moderate effect size) indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ideal self. The results should be interpreted cautiously due to the

moderate effect size value of .30 and also due to the fact that 50 percent of cells had expected frequencies less than 5 (refer to footnote of Table 12).

Table 13: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	67.149 ^a	35	.001
Likelihood Ratio	74.625	35	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.066	1	.302
N of Valid Cases	700		

a. 24 cells (50%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .54.

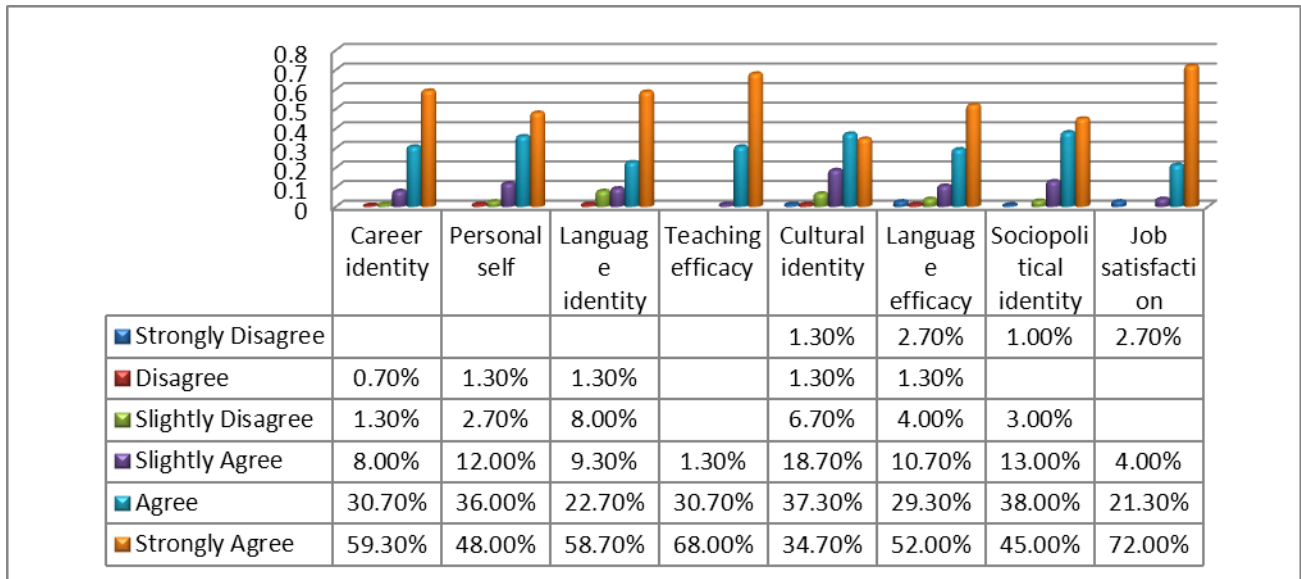


Figure 3: Percentages; Domains of Ideal Self

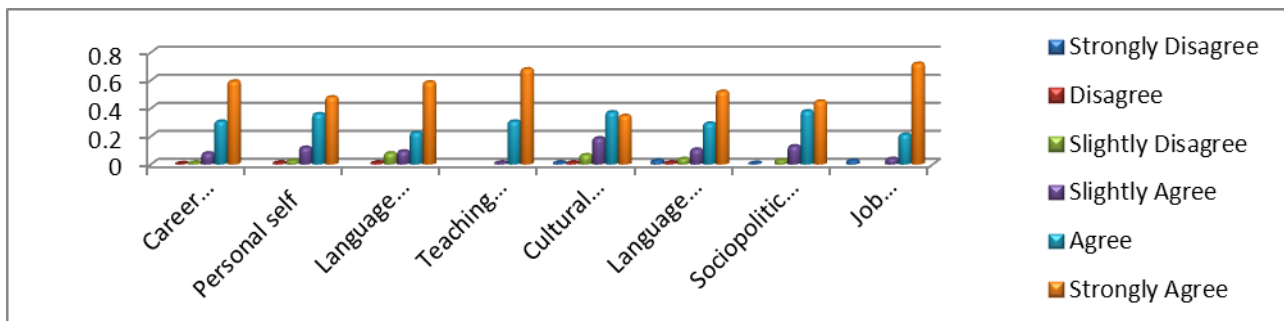


Figure 4: Percentages; Sub-Domains of Ideal Self

Are there any significant differences between the sub-domains of the ought-to-self?

Table 14 displays the frequencies, percentages and Std. Residuals for the three sub-domains of the ought-to-self. Based on these results it can be claimed that only two Std. Residuals were significant; 1) the subjects slightly agreed with personal self (Std. Residual = -2.4 > -1.96) less than what was expected. And 2) their strongly agreed with personal self (Std. Residual = 2.6 > 1.96) more than what was expected.

Table 14: Frequencies, percentages and Std. Residual; Sub-Domains of Ought-to-self

		Choices						Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Personal Self	Count	0	0	1	0	18	56	75
	%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	24.0%	74.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	-.5	-.6	-.24	-1.7	2.6	
Teaching Efficacy	Count	1	1	1	9	31	32	75
	%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	12.0%	41.3%	42.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.5	1.3	-.6	1.4	.8	-1.2	
Career Identity	Count	1	0	4	10	41	44	100
	%	1.0%	0.0%	4.0%	10.0%	41.0%	44.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.2	-.6	1.0	.9	.8	-1.2	
Total	Count	2	1	6	19	90	132	250
	%	0.8%	0.4%	2.4%	7.6%	36.0%	52.8%	100.0%

The results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (10) = 27.40, p = .002, r = .33$ representing a moderate effect size) indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ought-to-self. The results should be interpreted cautiously due to the moderate effect size value of .33 and also due to the fact that 50 percent of cells had expected frequencies less than 5 (refer to footnote of Table 14).

Table 15: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.400 ^a	10	.002
Likelihood Ratio	33.083	10	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.216	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	250		

a. 24 cells (50%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .54.

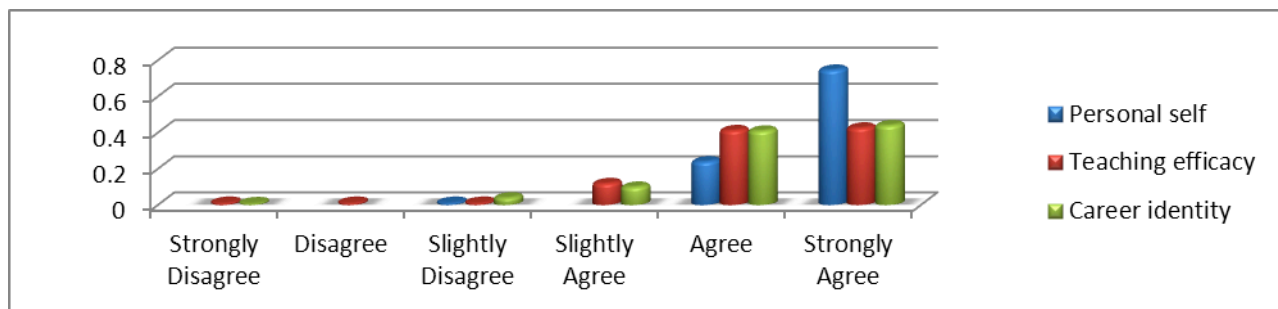


Figure 5: Percentages; Domains of Ought-to-self

Are there any significant differences between the sub-domains of the actual-self?

Table 15 displays the frequencies, percentages and Std. Residuals for the four sub-domains of the actual-self. Based on these results it can be claimed that six Std. Residuals were significant; 1) the subjects strongly agreed with teaching efficacy (Std. Residual = 3 > 1.96) more than what was expected. 2) They disagreed with teaching efficacy (Std. Residual = -2 > -1.96) less than what

was expected. 3) They strongly agreed with career identity (Std. Residual = -2.4 > -1.96) less than what was expected. 4) They slightly disagreed with career identity (Std. Residual = 2.8 > 1.96) more than what was expected. 5) They disagreed with career identity (Std. Residual = 2.3 > 1.96) more than what was expected. 6) They strongly disagreed with career identity (Std. Residual = 2.4 > 1.96) more than what was expected.

Table 16: Frequencies, percentages and Std. Residual; Sub-Domains of Actual-Self

		Choices						Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Teaching Efficacy	Count	0	0	2	9	23	41	75
	%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	12.0%	30.7%	54.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.6	-2.0	-1.5	-1.6	-.4	3.9	
Career Identity	Count	7	11	15	25	25	17	100
	%	7.0%	11.0%	15.0%	25.0%	25.0%	17.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	2.0	2.3	2.8	1.0	-1.4	-2.4	
Sociopolitical Identity	Count	2	3	6	14	28	22	75
	%	2.7%	4.0%	8.0%	18.7%	37.3%	29.3%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.3	-.6	.2	-.3	.6	-.1	
Personal Self	Count	2	4	1	18	32	18	75
	%	2.7%	5.3%	1.3%	24.0%	42.7%	24.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.3	-.1	-1.9	.7	1.4	-1.0	
Total	Count	11	18	24	66	108	98	325
	%	3.4%	5.5%	7.4%	20.3%	33.2%	30.2%	100.0%

The results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (15) = 60.82, p = .000, r = .43$ representing a moderate to large effect size) indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of actual self. The results should be interpreted cautiously due to the fact that 29 percent of cells had expected frequencies less than 5 (refer to footnote of Table 16).

Table 17: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	60.821 ^a	15	.000
Likelihood Ratio	64.869	15	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.487	1	.115
N of Valid Cases	325		

a. 7 cells (29%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.54.

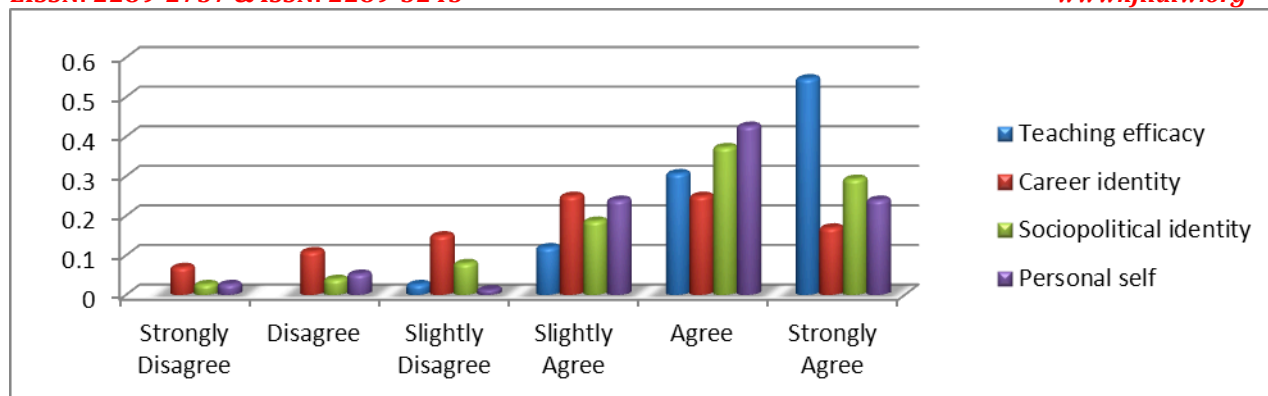


Figure 6: Percentages; Domains of Actual-self

The last one has one sub-domain. That is to say the domain and sub-domain are the same.

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the factors that shape the possible selves of efficacious language teachers and also exploring the most dominant of those factors.

The results of chi-square indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards domains of possible selves. It showed that; a) ideal-self was considered as the best factor in shaping possible selves, b) feared-self was the weakest factor, c) actual-self seemed to have a weak contribution and finally, d) the attitude towards the contribution of ought-to-self did not seem unanimous. It can be claimed that majority of the respondents indicated that the teachers significantly believed that ideal-self shaped possible selves. Teachers' sense of job satisfaction, teaching efficacy, career identity, and language identity are the most dominant selves of efficacious teachers.

For the next question four domains were explored separately to know which sub-domain is the most dominant in shaping possible selves of efficacious teachers. The results of chi-square indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ideal self. It means that almost all efficacious teachers have the same degree of ideal self development. This shows that they think job satisfaction is a dominant sense of self to be developed. They have developed this sense to a great extent.

There were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ought-to-self. It showed that they were not extremely concern about the different sub domains of ought-to self including personal self, teaching efficacy, and career identity. They have developed the sense of ought-to self to a limited extent.

There were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of actual self. In other word, they were concern about their teaching efficacy more than career identity and personal self. Their actual sense of teaching efficacy has developed to a great extent.

The feared self has one sub-domain. That is to say the domain and sub-domain are the same. Considering the findings of the current study, there were no dominant sub- domains among each of the four domains. In other word, each of the teachers' selves is as important as the others. For example; teachers' sense of language efficacy is as important to them as their sense of teaching efficacy.

Limitations of the study

Similar to other studies, there were particular limitations while conducting the present study. The summary of limitations which were identified in this study is as follow:

1. The study is confined to developing language teachers' sense of efficacy.
2. This study is restricted to efficacious language teachers.
3. The participants are junior and senior high school language teachers of Sanandaj.
4. Teachers in the sample have 3 to 15 years of teaching experience.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRITICAL THINKING AND IMPULSIVE AND REFLECTIVE LEARNING STYLES AMONG IRANIAN FEMALE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between female English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' critical thinking and the learning styles of impulsivity and reflectivity. To this end, a total of 75 Iranian female EFL English learners took part in the study. This study was conducted in one of the famous institutes called Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urmia, West Azarbayjan, Iran. By means of NELSON Test, 75 learners out of the pool of 200 were selected for the study. The participants were within the age range of 15-20 having at least a 2 year-experience of learning English at the institute. The instruments utilized for data collection procedures were: 1) Impulsivity Subscale of Eysenck's Impulsiveness Questionnaire (I7) (IVE), 2) Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (QRT) (Kember et al., 2000), and 3) Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT). Before embarking on the study, the researcher made sure that all the participants were homogeneous through NELSON in intermediate level. The data was collected in 3 sessions during the term. The researcher administered Cornell critical thinking test to the population to find out about the participants' critical thinking. Then, the learners were asked to fill out the questionnaires on reflectivity and impulsivity learning styles in two sessions. The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated as well. Having collected all the data, the researcher coded and scored the data in order to get interval data for the purpose of data analysis. Pearson Product correlation coefficient was used for data analysis. The findings indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between critical thinking and reflectivity, however, a weak negative one between critical thinking and impulsivity.. The results appear to have some valuable practical implications for teachers to pay special attention to learners' critical thinking ability if they want to encourage reflective learning style among their students.

KEYWORDS: Learning styles, impulsivity, reflectivity, critical thinking

INTRODUCTION

In an effective educational setting, the concept of critical thinking should be taken into account. This concept is not newly developed and everybody should be encouraged to be a critical thinker. It also became one of the major responsibilities of teachers and material developers to provide the opportunities for learners to practice critical thinking (Mohammadi Forood & Khomeiniani Farahani, 2013).

Critical thinking which is a major concern among educators and psychologists is one of the most important thinking abilities that should be acquired by learners in school and university. There are many contradictory opinions about whether critical thinking should be taught in education.

Various types of approaches and models to teaching, measuring and assessing critical thinking skills and abilities have been proposed. Although there are many conflicts on teaching critical thinking skills, everyone believes that thinking critically is the crucial goal of education (Reed, 1998).

The concept of critical thinking has developed throughout centuries and various definitions have been proposed, therefore, "there is no consensus on a definition of critical thinking" (Fasko, 2003, p. 8), and a single definition is not widely accepted (Halonen, 1995). Norris and Ennis (1989) terms critical thinking as "reasonable and reflective thinking that is focused upon deciding what to believe and do" (p.3). Similarly, Halpern (1993) calls it as "the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increases the probability of a desirable outcome, thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal oriented" (p. 6). According to Ennis (1985), critical thinking is a logical and reflective thinking which needs various proficiencies, tendencies, and abilities that result in reasonable reflective thinking. Nickerson, Perkin and Smith (1985, p. 58) defined the term as "understanding what to trust in various contexts reasonably and requires the ability to judge the truth value of some assertions, to measure the proof available, to evaluate the dependability of inferences, to build arguments and alternative hypothesis".

There is a general lack of agreement on how critical thinking is best defined, what critical thinking skills should be taught, and determining a framework for this teaching. As a whole, educational reformers have not even agreed on terminology (Mohammadi Forood & Khomeinjani Farahani, 2013). Other areas of disagreement and concern include the extent to which critical thinking is subject specific, the extent to which novice thinkers can learn to think more critically like experts, the difficulties in separating higher order and lower order thinking skills for instructional purposes, and whether critical thinking should be considered a process or a set of skills (Beyer, 1985; Facione, 1986; Perkins, Farady, & Bushey, 1991; Resnick, 1987).

Taking people's learning styles into consideration is a prerequisite for developing critical thinking. "Everyone has a learning style. Our style of learning, if accommodated, can result in improved attitudes toward learning and an increase in productivity, academic achievement, and creativity." (Griggs, 1991, p. 85). Getting to know the different learning styles is important in educational progress and academic success. Students can easily keep up with the syllabus and find their own weak points so that they can excel in the course only if they recognize their own learning style.

Research studies have investigated learners' learning styles since they are influential in the process and outcomes of learning. "Learning styles refer to an individuals' characteristics and preferred way of gathering, interpreting, organizing and thinking about information" (Wang, 2008, p. 30). Moreover, cognitive styles are a crucial part of learning styles. According to research studies, individuals use different methods and have their own preferences and methods to receive and process information (Kumar, Kumar & Smart, 2004). Two of the cognitive styles which are mostly related to problem solving behaviors and has been identified by Kagan (1966) and some other researchers sequentially, are impulsivity and reflectivity.

Impulsivity (I) and Reflectivity (R) are two characteristics of human beings in cognitive domain. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2006) defines impulsive people or their behavior as "marked by sudden action that is undertaken without careful thought" and gives the synonym of "thoughtful" for reflective (pp. 653-1067). Kagan, Rosman, Day, Albert, & Philips (1964), as cited in Duckworth (1974, p. 59), define the notion of conceptual tempo as "a behavioral dimension which may be described as the degree to which an individual reflects upon the differential validity of alternative solutions in problem situations where several possible responses exist simultaneously". Kagan (1965), as stated in Duckworth et al. (1974), classifies reflective person as "the individual who takes relatively longer respond and make fewer errors" (p. 59).

Kagan et al. (as quoted in Kagan et al., 1966), believe that "impulsive attitude begins its growth during the preschool years and may be a deeply entrenched habit" (p. 359). According to Block et al. (1974), reflectives are "slow deciders in uncertain situations" while impulsives are "quick deciders in uncertain circumstances" (p. 611). Kagan (1965), Kagan, Pearson, & Welch (1966), and Selinker et al. (1976) believe that "in general, reflective children have been found to perform better on visual discrimination tasks, serial recall, inductive reasoning, and reading in the primary grades, than do those identified as impulsive" (p. 322).

Kagan (as cited in Jamieson, 1992) stated that "the impulsives reach decision and report them very quickly with little concern for accuracy" (p. 492). However, some students are slow and accurate learners and take longer to respond and make fewer errors. Such learners are referred to as reflectives. They weigh all the possibilities in answering a question. Then, after reflection, they give a response to a question, a solution to a problem, or make a decision in a situation. Messer (1976) believes that "reflectivity/impulsivity is the extent to which a person reflects on a solution to a problem for which several alternatives are possible" (p. 532). Kagan, Rosman, Day, Albert, and Philips (as cited in Jamieson, 1992) added to this definition "the high uncertainty over which is correct." (p. 492).

Human beings are critical thinkers, but they are different from each other in their level of critical thinking which can be increased through practice. Some factors can affect critical thinking ability including learning styles. Young (as cited in Karamloo, 2014) believed that if teachers utilize effective and appropriate instructional methods and materials, they can enhance the students' critical thinking ability.

Given what was said above regarding the growing salience of critical thinking and its observable ignorance by EFL teachers, there is a lack of research on nurturing critical thinking in EFL contexts and its association with learning styles. Thus, the purpose of this study was to find out if there is a relationship between critical thinking and the female learners' learning styles, of course with the focus on impulsivity and reflectivity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were put forward to examine the results from a practical point of view with the aim of searching for the previously claimed concepts to achieve the goals of study.

- 1) Is there any relationship between critical thinking abilities and impulsive learning style of Iranian female EFL learners?
- 2) Is there any relationship between critical thinking abilities and reflective learning style of Iranian female EFL learners?

Correspondingly, in order to investigate this research question and to take the safe side, the following null hypotheses were proposed:

- 1) There is no relationship between critical thinking abilities and impulsive learning style of Iranian female EFL learners.
- 2) There is no relationship between critical thinking abilities and reflective learning style of Iranian female EFL learners.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of 75 females were considered to take part in the study in order to yield more significant and at the same time trustable results. This study was conducted in one of the famous institutes called Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urmia, West Azarbayjan, Iran. By means of NELSON test, 3 intermediate intact female classes (25 students in each class) were selected. The participants were within the age range of 15-20 having at least a 2 year-experience of learning English at the institute and speaking Azari and Farsi as their native languages. The classes were held twice a week.

Instruments

Embarking on any study entails utilization of a number of instruments which help it to smoothly run toward achieving its intended goals.

Nelson Proficiency Test

To select the participants, the researcher administered the validated NELSON proficiency test to homogenize the prospective students for the study. This test included 20 vocabulary items and 15 reading items in multiple-choice format. 75 female participants out of 150 whose scores were within the one SD above the mean and one SD below it were selected. The researcher calculated the reliability of the test which was 0.82.

Impulsivity Subscale of Eysenck's Impulsiveness Questionnaire (I7) (Ive)

Eysenck's (1990) Impulsiveness Questionnaire contains 54 items. A Farsi version of this questionnaire was prepared by Salimi (2001), and its Impulsiveness subscale was also validated with 1820 subjects. The reliability of the Persian Impulsiveness subscale was tested using

Cronbach's alpha and Spearman-Brown's unusual-length split half reliability. Alpha reliability was found to be 0.86 and split half reliability was found to be 0.86, which are acceptable indicators of reliability. The same Farsi version of impulsivity subscale served the Impulsivity scale of the present research. Moreover, the researcher herself calculated the reliability of the Farsi version of the questionnaire which equaled 84%.

Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (Qrt) (Kember Et Al., 2000)

The Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (QRT) comprises four constructs that span a range of thinking. Within the Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (QRT), Kember, Leung, Jones, and Loke (2000) have identified four constructs that cover a broad spectrum of reflective thinking. These comprise habitual action, understanding, reflection and critical reflection. The questionnaire was translated into Farsi. The researcher calculated the reliability of the questionnaire which was 79%.

Cornell Critical Thinking Test

The Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT), inspired by the Cornell/Illinois model of CT and developed in 1985 by Robert Ennis of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Jason Millman of Cornell University, develops a clear picture of the students' critical thinking abilities (Ennis, Millman, & Tomko, 2005). The Cornell Critical Thinking Test series offers two levels of testing: level X for grades five through twelve and level Z for grades ten through twelve and at the college level as well. It can be used to teach critical thinking skills, to predict students' performance on proficiency exam, critical thinking courses, college admissions, careers, and employment. It aims at measuring five aspects of CT: deduction; semantics; observation and credibility of sources; induction; definition and assumption identification. Each aspect is measured in a separate section in the test, but induction is split into two sections, namely, on the use of induction in hypothesis testing and in planning experiments. The test contains 52 items, all of which are in a forced-choice format. The CCTT uses multiple-choice questions.

Procedure

Before embarking on the study, the researcher made sure that all the participants were homogeneous by NELSON test. During the study, through NELSON test, 75 female students including 25 students in each class were selected out of the pool of 200 randomly in intermediate level. The data was collected in 3 sessions during the term. The researcher administered Cornell critical thinking test to the population to find out about the participants' critical thinking. Then, the learners were asked to fill out the questionnaires on reflectivity and impulsivity learning styles in two sessions. The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated, too. Having collected all the data, the researcher coded and scored the data in order to get interval data for the purpose of data analysis.

Data Analysis

In this study, after coding and scoring the items in the questionnaires and obtaining interval data, Pearson Product correlation coefficient was used to discover the relationship between critical thinking abilities and impulsive learning style of Iranian female EFL learners and also between critical thinking abilities and reflective learning style of Iranian female EFL learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to analyze the relevant data, the researcher used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 16. In order to test the first and second hypotheses, the researcher conducted

At first, having administered NELSON test, the researcher, out of the pool of 200 learners, selected 75 females. To ensure that the subjects were at the same level of proficiency, that is, to ensure the homogeneity of the subjects, the researcher checked the normality of the sample using Kolmogorove-Smirnov which indicated that the sample was normally distributed (i.e., $p=.19 > .05$).

Then, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to explore the correlation between critical thinking and reflectivity/impulsivity among females (Table 1).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Relationship between Critical Thinking and Reflectivity/Impulsivity among Females

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Critical	60.56	6.014	75
Impulsive	87.54	4.156	75
Reflective	58.26	5.551	75

The results of Pearson product-moment correlation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient for the Relationship between Critical Thinking and Reflectivity/Impulsivity among Females

		Critical	Impulsive	Reflective
Critical	Pearson Correlation	1	-.265*	.856**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021	.000
	N	75	75	75
Impulsive	Pearson Correlation	-.265*	1	-.225
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021		.052
	N	75	75	75
Reflective	Pearson Correlation	.856**	-.225	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.052	
	N	75	75	75

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Table 2 shows that there was a significant strong and positive association between critical thinking and reflectivity [$r = .85$, $n=75$, $Sig= 0.00 < 0.01$]. However, There was a weak and negative significant association between critical thinking and impulsivity [$r= -.26$, $n=75$, $Sig= 0.02 < 0.05$].

Discussion

Improving critical thinking skills in higher education has remained a topic of discussion and a focus of varying importance for many years. Even in an educational climate that focuses its funding and attention to learners' success, it is a general consensus among higher education faculties that research relating to the development of critical thinking skills is of paramount importance (Paul, 1993). Thus, the overarching aim of the research reported here was to investigate the relationship between female EFL learners' critical thinking and reflectivity as well as critical thinking and impulsivity. The results of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between critical thinking and reflectivity; however, the relationship between critical thinking and impulsivity was weak and negative.

The findings of the present study are in line with Borkowski, Peck, Reid, and Kurtz (1983), Heidari and Bahrami (2012), Meichenbaum and Goodman (1969), and Palladino, Poli, Masi, and Marcheschi (1997) who investigated the relationship between learning styles and critical thinking ability. Their results revealed that children with reflective cognitive style utilized metacognition more than those with impulsive style. Consistent with the results of this study, Cano and Martinez (1991) reported a positive relationship between student cognitive ability and students' critical thinking ability. It can be due to the fact that reflective learners perform better when learning calls for inductive reasoning (Kagan, Pearson, & Welch, 1966). Brodzinsky (1985) stated that reflective students can learn more since they can use their knowledge related to academic problems better than impulsive learners. In the case of simple tasks, impulsive children benefit more, while in analytical purposeful problem-solving tasks, the reflective learners perform better than impulsive learners.

In most educational settings, the effect of these learning styles is taken for granted and educators mostly do not take it into account as an influential variable in the process of learning. Even researchers in the field sometimes ignore the effect of this variable as an influential variable, which may change the acquired results (Rezaei, Boroghani, & Rahimi, 2013). By considering the difference between reflective and impulsive people, the result of study by Rezaei (2010) emphasized the effectiveness of the awareness raising activities. It seems that learners with different learning styles (i.e., reflective/impulsive) take advantage of the awareness raising activities to varying degrees. It seems that even after raising learners' awareness about different aspects of language, this factor has an important role in the learners' success because reflective learners are more analytical and more sensitive about the information and pay more attention to the awareness raising. Thus, they notice the activities more than the impulsive learners.

The development of critical thinking skills is dependent upon instruction. Teachers should encourage the development of critical thinking by arranging the learning environment, demonstrating critical thinking, and implementing techniques that encourage active student engagement. The most prevalent mode of instruction in higher education classrooms unfortunately continues to be the traditional approach of content delivery in the form of teacher lecture designed to promote the memorization of isolated facts and serves to reduce student interest. Among the best educated faculties it is the general consensus that the development of

students' critical thinking skills is necessary to prepare individuals to perform optimally in an ever-changing world.

Evidently, higher education doesn't have any strong effect in the promotion of critical thinking skills of students. Lack of attention to critical thinking skills in Iranian schools and universities

may be regarded as an important factor in unawareness of students. According to Hashemi and Zabihi (2012), Iranian education system's emphasis on knowledge transmission and learning is limited to memorizing materials and the main problem that Iranian education system encounters is the goal-centered being instead of being process-centered. Perhaps, if schools and universities apply critical thinking as one of their goals, students would become better critical thinkers. According to Lundy et al. (2002), critical thinking can be enhanced during one semester if the class is designed to enhance critical thinking skills.

CONCLUSION

When it comes to language learning, particularly learning English as a second or foreign language, where a combination of historical, social, cultural, and political issues is involved, the necessity of working on critical thinking among ESL/EFL learners is more severely felt, and needs to be equally highlighted by lesson planners, materials developers, teacher educators, and teachers (Hashemi & Zabihi, 2012). However, it is unfortunate that only a few studies (e.g., Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010; Fahim et al., 2010; Ghaemi & Taherian, 2011) had been conducted so far to throw some light on the importance of critical thinking in English language classes. Moreover, impulsivity has rarely been seen on the lists of learner factors and worked on.

Thus, the present study aimed at exploring the relationship between female EFL learners' critical thinking and reflectivity as well as critical thinking and impulsivity. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers arrived at the following conclusions, that is, there is a strong positive association between critical thinking and reflectivity. However, the relationship between critical thinking and impulsivity was negative and weak.

The results appear to have some valuable practical implications for teachers. Teachers need to pay special attention to critical thinking ability if they want to encourage reflective learning style among their students. It is important to note, however, that the enhancement of critical thinking ability depends on the nature of the curriculum. Thus, educational settings should provide a very wide range of choice and options for both teachers and learners to increase critical thinking in learners.

Furthermore, teachers should provide any chance for the students to think about learning second/foreign language and boost a sense of problem solving to develop their ability to select the best and easiest way to get their goals. In fact, instructors can increase the logic of selecting the most appropriate strategies for language learning by promoting and emphasizing the ability of

critical thinking skill. Also, teachers should try to make learners conscious of their behavior and learning styles.

Another implication is for the wider world of national policymakers and curriculum developers of teacher education programs. Those programs should increase novice teachers' awareness of how to enhance learners' critical thinking and reflectivity through learner-centered tasks. Therefore, pre-service language teacher education programs should incorporate the methods of enhancing critical thinking ability in their schedules.

As any human production, this study has some limitations. A serious limitation of this study was that it failed to incorporate the proficiency level. The researcher addressed just one proficiency level, that is, intermediate. In this regard, the findings may not be generalizable to other proficiency levels such as elementary, pre-intermediate and advanced. Moreover, this study focused on a number of EFL learners from one educational context. In other words, the researcher delimited the subjects to institutions students. In addition, the used tool in this study was the questionnaire, and the other useful tools such as interviews and observations were not used.

Despite some studies conducted on learners' critical thinking, there are still some problems that need to be tackled and some gaps can be seen in the literature which gives avenue for further research in the area. Researchers should triangulate the findings both qualitatively and quantitatively in order to get reliable data to generalize. It is also necessary to conduct a research to investigate the relationship between critical thinking and reflectivity as well as critical thinking and impulsivity across various proficiency levels, gender, and in different contexts. This study can be replicated in a larger scale to make it more generalizable.

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THE EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES ON PROMOTING READING COMPREHENSION AMONG EFL LEARNERS IN GACHSARAN

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating the impact that Cooperative Learning techniques may have on reading comprehension among EFL learners in Gachsaran, Iran. The EFL population for this study was Iranian EFL learners from Talieye-Danesh Institute in. 60 out of the hundred students who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean based on the reading comprehension pre-test were qualified to attend the research. An experimental-control group method was followed. The participants were then randomly divided into three groups, namely A, B and C. Groups A and B were considered as experimental groups and group C as the control group. Each of the three groups received different trainings namely STAD, GI, and CI techniques respectively. The instruments utilized in this study included a reading comprehension pre-test and a reading comprehension post-test based on the students' textbook (Top Notch1A). Several paired samples t-tests, and a one way ANOVA were used to determine whether there were significant inter and intra-group differences. Results of the analyses were indicative of the fact that as a means to teaching reading comprehension, CL is better than traditional method since the groups that received CL techniques outperformed the other group that received conventional instruction. The second findings confirmed the superiority of STAD over GI method. Based upon the findings of the study, STAD is thus recommended to be integrated into the English reading course.

KEYWORDS: cooperative learning, STAD, GI, CI, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps reading skill can be regarded as the foundation and as one of the fundamental skills in second and foreign language learning. Due to the rapid explosion of science and technology in the world, as Farhady (1998) argues, the ability to read in English has received priority over other objectives of English language teaching. As a result, the main goal of English instruction in most countries, especially within the educational programs, is to improve the reading ability of the students in order to enable them to grasp new information from the original sources in their field.

Many researchers and psychologists in the field have attempted to develop a conceptual view about the notion of reading. Reading is defined as a “complex activity that involves both perception and thought” (Pang et al, 2003, p. 6). According to Beck and Margaret (2005), reading is a complex process composed of a number of interacting sub-processes and abilities. Reading is also defined as a process of problem solving, which involves working to build up a sense from a text. Not only this process involves making sense from the words and sentences written on the page, but it also goes to ideas, memories and knowledge evoked by those words and sentences (Schoenbach et al. 1999). Therefore, we can conclude that reading refers to the active process of extracting and interpreting information and messages from different written materials.

The importance of reading comprehension has urged many researchers to find an efficient way or method which can facilitate English learning and help learners comprehend better. Some new studies in this regard have proposed Cooperative Learning (CL) as a beneficial method to augment learners’ reading comprehension. Hollingsworth, Sherman, and Zaugra (2007), for instance, claim that CL as a method of teaching is a valuable tool in helping students learn comprehension strategies while encouraging positive interactions among peers. They further proposed that students can achieve academic success, and their enthusiasm and motivation towards reading will be increased through increasing their reading levels and knowledge of comprehension skills.

Among a myriad of models and activities which have emerged and currently applied in the field of cooperative learning, Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD), and Group Instruction (GI) have attracted much attention. According to Slavin (1987), STAD has been used in a variety of subject areas including math, language arts, social studies, and science. The STAD technique was chosen in this study because, as Ghaith and Yaghi (1998) believe, it has consistently been shown to be among the most simple and effective CL methods in enhancing students’ achievement of well defined objectives in various subjects. In addition to STAD, GI is the next issue of interest in this research which according to Kagan (1995) is a student-directed technique and that in GI technique cooperation and learning are complimentary.

Reading comprehension is also very important in educational system in Iran and nearly all objectives of formal English instructions in schools and universities are reading comprehension and techniques used to develop this skill. Despite the growing importance and interest in learning English as a foreign language in Iran, students at the pre-university level, as Faramarzy (2003) believes, are rarely proficient enough to read and comprehend foreign language texts.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Even though CL methods are mostly similar in that students work in groups to achieve a common goal, they are different from one another in particular. While some methods like STAD, and TGT are structured with well specific group tasks and rewards, GI and Learning Together are structured with fewer well specific group rewards (Slavin, 1990). Due to the shortage of time and space, only STAD and GI which were the foci in this study are presented in brief in the next section.

Student team -achievement divisions (STAD)

According to Slavin (as cited in Hardegree, jr, 2012), STAD is a “peer tutoring format” which includes such principal elements like biracial heterogeneous student teams and achievement divisions. He suggested that achievement division is a tool applied to ensure an equal and considerable possibility of success for each student provided that he/she utilizes maximum effort. It is further used as a reference group for student scores. Students in this activity are assigned to 4-5 members, in heterogeneous learning teams. Each team is comprised of high, average, and low performing students, boys and girls of different ethnic backgrounds, so as for the team to be representative of the class as a whole.

After assigning the students to the small groups in this method, the teacher presents a lesson and students are then required to work within their teams to make sure that all team members have mastered the lesson. In each group, students tutor each other on the material in the course and prepare each other for weekly quizzes. Students then take individual quizzes. Success is based on improvement, that is, quiz scores are compared to past averages and points are awarded based on the degree to which they exceed those past performances. Scores of the teams are obtained through summing those points.

STAD technique, therefore, operates on the principle which involves students work together to learn and be responsible for their own learning as well as their teammates. This method also necessitates having team goals and success teams that are dependent on the learning of all group members. Three central concepts of STAD outlined by Slavin (1990) are namely team rewards, individual accountability, and equal opportunities for success.

Group investigation

GI, as Slavin (cited in Hardegree, jr, 2012) argues, is a powerful structure used to encourage learners to learn group organizational skills and to think creatively. Slavin further referred to GI as an organizational approach in which students work in small groups while using cooperative inquiry, group discussion, and cooperative planning and projects. He adds that in GI, students are assigned into 2-6 member groups and they can choose the topics based on their interest. After dividing the investigation into smaller parts, the groups further break their subtopics into individual tasks, and they should be responsible for synthesizing the information to prepare group reports. Each group member then participates in the class presentation. Jacobs (1994, p. 4), in this regard, emphasized the “philosophy of Dewey and humanistic psychology” as the theoretical basis for GI approach. According to him, GI comprise the first five ideas of Dewey which are listed below:

- Students should be active in learning by doing an act,
- They should be intrinsically motivated,
- Knowledge is not fixed, but changing,
- Learning occur based on students’ needs and interest,
- Education should include learning to work with, respect, and understand others,
- Learning should be related to the world beyond the classroom and should help to improve the world (p. 4).

Previous studies regarding the effectiveness of using cooperative learning in reading class

One of the most widely researched peer learning models is cooperative learning which has been investigated in a variety of academic disciplines including reading comprehension. According to Fielding and Pearson (1994), CL can serve as the most effective technique if the students clearly understand the teacher's goals, and when goals are group-oriented and the criterion of success is satisfactory learned by each group member, when students are expected and taught to describe things to one another instead of just providing answers, and when group activities supplement rather than supplant teacher-directed instruction.

As one of the earliest studies Bejarano (1987), studied the effects of two cooperative small-group learning techniques (STAD and GI) and of the traditional whole- class method on the general achievement of junior high school EFL learners and on their acquisition of specific language skills. This study lasted five sessions a week for 4½ months involving 33 seventh-grade classes in Israel. The results showed that STAD had no significant and positive effect on the achievement of the reading comprehension skill. The results also revealed that GI technique had no significant effect on the achievement of the reading comprehension skill.

In a more recent time frame, and in their study Hollingsworth, Sherman, and Zaugra (2007) pointed out that CL is an effective tool, which helps students learn comprehension strategies while encouraging positive interactions among peers. The students achieved academic success by enhancing their reading levels and knowledge of comprehension skills, and there was also an increase in enthusiasm and motivation towards reading.

In another recent study Kassim (2006) examined the effectiveness of CL model and the whole class instruction in improving learners reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and motivation to read. Forty-four grade five EFL learners participated in the study. The results indicated no statistically significant differences between the control and the experimental groups on the dependent variables of reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. However the results revealed statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group on the dependent variable of motivation to read and its dimensions, the value of reading, and reading self concept.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the above mentioned, this study investigated the effects of two methods of CL namely STAD and GL in improvement of students' reading comprehension ability.

1. To what extent does implementing STAD affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?
2. To what extent does implementing GI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?
3. To what extent does implementing CI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of 60 Iranian EFL learners from Talieye-Danesh Institute in Gachsaran, one of the towns in Kohkiloye and Boyerahmad province participated in this study. In order to select the participants, first, a sample of 100 students who were at same age (17-18) were asked to take a reading comprehension pre-test to ensure homogeneity of the participants regarding their proficiency at reading skill. 60 out of the hundred students who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean based on the reading comprehension pre-test were qualified to attend the research. They included both female and male students. When the reading proficiency homogeneity was assured, the participants were randomly divided into three groups, namely A, B and C. Groups A and B were considered as experimental groups and group C as the control group. There were 20 students in each group under consideration. Each of the three groups received different trainings namely STAD, GI, and CI techniques. The following table demonstrates the population and the related treatment.

Table 1: The Population of the Study and the Related Treatment

N	Group	Treatment
20	A	STAD
20	B	GI
20	C	CI

Materials and instruments

The materials and instruments which were utilized in the study were students' textbook (Top Notch1A), reading comprehension pre-test, and reading comprehension post-test. The reliability of the tests was gained, through a pilot study on the EFL learners ($n=20$) who were similar to the learners of the main study in terms of age, sex, and proficiency level. The results of Cronbach's alpha analysis showed that the tests were reliable (pre-test $r = 0.81$, post-test $r=0.79$). It should be mentioned that after interpreting the collected data, some weak, malfunctioning and non-functioning items were removed from the whole test, and some were modified. The content validity of the tests was then evaluated, and accepted, by three experts who were PhD holders of applied linguistics with more than five years of teaching and testing experience at different universities. Finally, the researcher decided to include the tests as the pre and post-tests for the study.

Procedures

In order to collect the required data, a reading proficiency test was first selected from the students' textbook by the researchers and administered to all the participants of the study, once as a reading comprehension pre-test before embarking on the study and another time as a post-test at the end of the study. Furthermore, the scores of the reading pre-test were used to divide the students into three groups. After homogenizing the participants of the study with respect to their reading proficiency based on the reading comprehension pre-test, each group received the assigned treatment. All the three groups were taught by the same teacher (researcher). All sessions took place in the students' classrooms about 45-minutes reading period. The treatment lasted for two months (sixteen sessions) and covered five instructional units (reading comprehension parts of the students' textbook).

Procedures for the first experimental group

After assigning the participants of STAD group to the small teams including 4-5 members, the teacher presented the first reading lesson. Teaching, team study, individual quizzes, and team recognition are the four important stages for implementing STAD in the classroom (Ghaith, 2004). As such, the teacher first presented the explanation of material for the participants of the group A. Doing so the teacher followed the usual practices of reading activities included in reading comprehension texts such as reading warm-up, while reading activity, and post reading activity. Then, the participants worked within their teams to ensure that all team members mastered the lesson. Students in this group then tutored each other while they were utilizing different reading strategies (predicting, skimming, scanning, inferencing, guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words, and self monitoring). The participants then tried to complete activities or worksheets, took individual quizzes, and finally recognized their team achievements. This required the students to help their team mates and they were not in competition with each other since all or none of the teams could achieve rewards depending on how they scored. Team rewards took the form of certificates or other rewards (like giving the opportunity to present the answers first) which were given to the team provided that the team achieved above a required criterion.

Procedures for the second experimental group

Following Sharan and Sharan (1999), four key components in the implementation of GI in the classroom were applied which were namely, investigation, interaction, interpretation, and intrinsic motivation. At investigation stage the topic was first assigned and subtopics were determined. As the next step, the groups of students were formed according to their interest with respect to the subtopics. Then the students carried out the learning plan with assistance from the teacher. Afterwards, the students planned their group investigations through interaction. Group discussion and exchanging ideas were also done in this stage. The students were then given opportunity for intellectual as well as social interaction.

As the third stage, the GI group carried out their investigations by interpreting and integrating their findings. Each participant contributed his or her own perspective on the topic. The last component of GI technique according to Sharan and Sharan (1999) is intrinsic motivation. They believe that motivation becomes intrinsic when students determine what and how they will learn, besides the ability of students to control their own learning. In order to promote the intrinsic motivation, it was tried to let the participants of this group have their control over the materials to be learned. Doing so, during the treatment, besides their freedom to choose their interest group they were given power to choose about what and how to learn the reading comprehension materials.

Procedures for the control group

The control group (group C) was also taught the same content by the same teacher, but according to a Conventional Instruction technique (CI). As the conventional practice of teaching technique, before presenting the reading comprehension passage, the teacher first asked some warm-up questions in order to tap the students' background knowledge. As the next step, the teacher asked one of the students to read out the page loud and explained the points in which they had

problems. The process was mostly in a way that the teacher translated new vocabulary and explained the general points of the reading. As the final step the students were required to answer their textbook post reading exercises.

After the treatment period was over for the three groups, all of the participants were asked to take the reading comprehension post-test. The obtained results were then gathered and coded into SPSS version 20 to be analyzed based on the purposes of the study.

RESULTS

Results of the reading comprehension pretest

In order to ensure about the homogeneity of the three groups in terms of the reading comprehension prior to the administration of the treatments, a one-way ANOVA was run to compare the three groups' means on the reading comprehension pretest. As displayed in Table 2, the first experimental ($M = 9.38$, $SD = 2.44$), second experimental ($M = 9.68$, $SD = 2.62$) and control ($M = 9.84$, $SD = 2.59$) groups gained close means on reading comprehension pretest.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics; Pretest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
EG1	20	9.38	2.446	.499	8.34	10.41	4	14
EG2	20	9.68	2.626	.525	8.60	10.76	4	15
CG	20	9.84	2.593	.519	8.77	10.91	5	15
Total	60	9.64	2.530	.294	9.05	10.22	4	15

EG1=Experimental Group 1 (STAD), EG2=Experimental Group 2 (GI), CG= Control Group (CI)

The results of one-way ANOVA ($F(2, 57) = .20$, $p = .813 > .05$ representing a weak effect size), depicted through Table 3, indicated that there were not any significant difference between the three groups' means on the pretest of reading comprehension. Thus, it can be concluded that they enjoyed the same levels of reading comprehension ability before the main study.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA; Pretest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.724	2	1.362	.208	.813
Within Groups	464.425	57	6.541		
Total	467.149	59			

Investigating the effectiveness of the three different methods

After ensuring about the homogeneity of the participants regarding their prior proficiency in reading ability, to detect the group which benefited the most regarding the treatments applied,

another one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run on the post test results of the three groups. As displayed in Table 4, the first experimental ($M = 16.28$, $SD = 2.407$) showed the best group of the three, and the second experimental ($M = 13.29$, $SD = 3.014$) and control ($M = 11.28$, $SD = 2.665$) followed this group and ranked second and third respectively. Even though the descriptive statistics demonstrated better results for the first experimental group or STAD group, we should continue the analysis to be sure about these findings.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics; Prost-test of Reading Comprehension by Groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
EG1	20	16.28	2.407	.481	4.046	7.154	7	18
EG2	20	13.29	3.014	.615	2.423	5.410	4	16
CG	20	11.28	2.574	.515	.102	2.778	6	17
Total	60	13.61	2.665	.537	2.190	5.114	4	18

EG1=Experimental Group 1 (STAD), EG2=Experimental Group 2 (GI), CG= Control Group (CI)

The results of one-way ANOVA ($F(2, 57) = 14$, $p = .000 < .05$ representing a large effect size) (Table 5) indicated that there were significant difference between the three groups' means on the posttest of reading comprehension. Thus, it was confirmed that the three groups were not the same and the predicted results seems to be true, but we could not make early conclusions on these results.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA; Posttest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	200.002	2	100.001	14.003	.000
Within Groups	507.038	57	7.141		
Total	707.041	59			

In order to detect the group that benefited the most from the assigned treatments and made the difference in the results, taking the results of post-hoc tests in to account could be of utmost importance.

Table 6: Post-Hoc Scheffe's Tests; Posttest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

(I) Proficiency	(J) Proficiency	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental 1	Control	5.0*	.764	.000	.10	3.92
	Experimental 1	3.01*	.764	.039	.08	3.90
Experimental 2	Control	2.01	.756	.069	2.11	5.89

The initial findings of the study, based on the results of Post-Hoc test were proved to be significant. According to Table 6, the first experimental group which experienced STAD with the purpose of improving their reading comprehension successfully did the best of the three and

outperformed GI (Mean Difference = 3.01, $p < .05$) as well as CI (Mean Difference = 5.0, $p < .05$) groups. Even though the GI group did better on the post test compared to that of control group, since their difference was not very significant (Mean Difference = 2.01, $.069 > .05$), we could not draw effective conclusions on these results. We could then conclude that GI did not have a meaningful impact on reading comprehension of EFL learners compared to CI technique.

After being ensured about the final results of the three groups and detecting the group which stood out as the best group, we could now continue the analysis to test the within group effectiveness of these methods. The quantitative content analyses were statistically tested by conducting several paired-samples t-tests. The purpose of these tests was to study the effect of the type of training (STAD, GI, or CI) on the participants of the three groups, in order to answer the three questions of the study. This way, we could gain a clear picture of these methods and their impact within their groups. To this end, three paired-samples t-tests were computed on the pre and post test scores of all three groups to investigate any statistically significant differences in reading comprehension before and after the training period. The results are discussed below.

Answering the first research question

1. To what extent does implementing STAD affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

According to the descriptive statistics displayed in Table 7, the first experimental group (STAD) showed a higher mean on the posttest of reading comprehension ($M = 16.28$, $SD = 2.40$) than pretest ($M = 9.68$, $SD = 2.62$).

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (STAD Group)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	16.28	20	2.407	.481
Pretest	9.68	20	2.626	.525

As the next step, a paired-samples t-test was run on these results. According to Table 8, the findings of this test ($t(19) = 7.43$, $p < .05$, $r = .83$ representing a large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between the STAD group's mean scores on the pretest and posttest of reading comprehension.

Table 8: Paired-Samples t-test, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (STAD Group)

Paired Differences								
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		df	Sig. (2-tailed)		
			Lower	Upper				
6.600	3.764	.753	4.046	7.154	7.439	19	.000	

Based on these results, it was concluded that the training method namely STAD was an effective method in enhancing Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Answering the second research question

2. To what extent does implementing GI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

Another paired-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the GI groups' means on the pretest and posttest of reading comprehension. As displayed in Table 9, the GI group also showed a higher mean on the posttest ($M = 13.29, SD = 3.01$) than pretest ($M = 9.38, SD = 2.44$).

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (GI Group)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	13.29	20	3.014	.615
Pretest	9.38	20	2.446	.499

The results of the paired-samples t-test ($t(19) = 5.42, p < .05, r = .74$ representing a large effect size) (Table 10) further indicated that there was a significant difference between the second experimental group's mean scores on the pretest and posttest.

Table 10: Paired-Samples t-test, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (Second Experimental Group)

Paired Differences							
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Lower	Upper			
3.917	3.538	.722	2.423	5.410	5.424	19	.000

These results were the bases to conclude that the training method namely GI, standing as second in effectiveness after STAD, was an effective method in enhancing Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Answering the third research question

3. To what extent does implementing CI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

A paired-samples t-test was run to compare the control group's means on the pretest and posttest of reading comprehension. As displayed in Table 11, even the control group showed a higher mean on the posttest ($M = 11.28, SD = 2.57$) than pretest ($M = 9.83, SD = 2.59$).

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (Control Group)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	11.28	20	2.574	.515
Pretest	9.84	20	2.593	.519

The results of the paired-samples t-test ($t(19) = 1.22, p > .05, r = .21$ representing small effect size) (Table 12) indicated that there was not a significant difference between the control group's mean scores on the pretest and posttest.

Table 12: Paired-Samples t-test, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (CI Group)

Paired Differences		Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Mean	Std. Deviation						Lower
1.440	3.241	.648	.102	2.778	1.221	19	.066

Based on these results, it was confirmed that the training method namely CI was not an effective method in enhancing Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, it is obviously clear that STAD has a significant effect on the reading comprehension of the Iranian EFL learners. Given its many benefits and advantages, STAD can be regarded as the best techniques of CL. Previous studies also reported similar results with regard to the positive effects of CL and STAD in augmenting reading comprehension of the learners. The findings are congruent with previous studies such as Fielding and Pearson (1994), Bejarano (1987), Sherman, and Zaugra (2007), and Kassim (2006), which proved the CL techniques to be positive in developing the participants' language learning and reading comprehension. What seems to make the present study significant is the superiority of STAD as one technique of cooperative learning among other techniques.

It is therefore reasonable to assert that positive interdependence, as the basic key components of CL, encouraged all group-mates in helping each other and applying more effort to achieve group success. On the contrary, in the conventional classroom negative interdependence, as Jalilifar (2009) also confirms, is discouraging since the success of some students, especially high achievers, may result in decreasing the opportunities for their low achieving counterparts.

As a result of positive interdependence, students in STAD group received support and help from their more proficient group mates which in turn resulted in the success of the whole group. This was because they believed that their cooperation is expected and valued in their learning process. Thus when they encountered a problem they could rely on their partners and they were available to help them when they needed a solution to a problem.

The domination of STAD, according to Johnson et al. (1998), can be explained from the perspective of behavioral learning theory which proposes that students will work harder on tasks that provide a reward, whereas they will fail to work effectively on those tasks which provide no reward or punishment. Thus, it could be claimed that the rewards assigned to the STAD groups with the best performance during the treatment reinforced the expansion of group process skills.

The study was in fact an attempt to shed more light on the point whether cooperative learning could bear any influence on the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. The final purpose of the study was to study and find the most effective method of CL to be applied in order to get the most preferred results concerning reading comprehension. It was confirmed that learning reading comprehension through STAD would lead to better learning than GI or traditional method for some important reasons. First, in STAD students would be able to experience a friendly learning environment which seems appealing to them. STAD facilitates students' involvement in both class and home activities by encouraging them to take part in answering the questions or solving the problems through cooperation and active group work. Second, positive interdependence, interaction, and team rewards were the factors which helped the STAD group outperform the other groups since these activities ultimately resulted in higher interactional potentials of the learners and led to the understanding of problematic areas. In fact, the students can come to feel that they are positive contributors, not only to their teams, but to the class as a whole.

These findings suggest EFL teachers, educators, course designers as well as researchers to integrate CL techniques, and especially STAD, in EFL setting with all learning levels so that EFL learners become able to achieve comprehension in reading texts at the early stages of learning English as a Foreign Language.

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METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES AND READING COMPREHENSION SKILL

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the role of inferencing, analyzing and memorizing as metacognitive strategies on promoting language learners' reading comprehension skill. Some articles were studied and the results of the related literature showed that students who used inferencing analyzing and memorizing as a metacognitive strategy had good results comparing to other students that did not use the strategies. And the use of learning strategies in this way can be of help in promoting reading comprehension among students.

KEYWORDS: motivation, reading comprehension, inferencing, metacognitive strategies

INTRODUCTION

English has gained importance all over the globe due to political, economical, and technological reasons. It is generally believed that English as a foreign language (EFL) plays a crucial role in Iranian educational system in which reading comprehension has its own dominance among other teaching skills. Reading comprehension is a very complex process, the importance of which has been mentioned in many of the studies. Kirby (2007, p.1) states that a process by which we understand the texts we read is called reading comprehension. This process is the purpose of reading and also reinforces meaningful learning from text. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 443), reading for comprehension happens when we perceive a written text to understand the contents. This perceiving can be done silently. According to Richard and Schmidt (2002, 249), metacognition is referred to as reading awareness and monitoring processes. These processes are parts of the readers' cognition about reading and the self-control that readers apply in monitoring and regulating text comprehension. It is the teachers' task to use the metacognitive reading strategies for which they have gained knowledge.

Reading comprehension is a complex process in itself, but it also depends upon other important lower-level processes. It is a critical foundation for later academic learning, many employment skills, and life satisfaction. It is an important skill to target, but we should not forget about the skills on which it depends. To improve the reading comprehension skills of poor performers, we need to understand that there is no "magic wand", and no secret weapon that will quickly improve reading competencies for all poor readers. Careful assessment is required to determine individuals' strengths and weaknesses, and programs need to be tailored accordingly; most poor readers will need continued support in many areas. Generally speaking, reading comprehension is always a grand task for the students who want to learn a foreign language. Cohen (1998, p.1) states that strategies are different in nature, they can be metacognitive, cognitive, performance, and affective. When we plan the organization of our learning, it is called metacognitive strategy.

When we apply mnemonic devices for learning vocabulary, it is called cognitive. When we practice what we want to say, and affective strategy is when we booster self-confidence for a language task by means of self-talk it is performance. It is important to teach students reading techniques to facilitate their reading comprehension. Students might be unaware of reading strategies that can be of help to them. The role of metacognitive strategies in reading comprehension needs to be clarified until students become independent in reading for meaning. One metacognitive strategy is inferencing which is used in many reading and teaching texts. In this regard, Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 255) define inferencing as the "process of arriving at a hypothesis, idea, or judgment on the basis of other knowledge, ideas, or judgments"(p. 255). So from the above definition, inferencing can be defined as extraction of implied meaning from the texts using the world knowledge and background information with the aid of textual characteristics

The use of proper strategies by learners with the aid of teachers in developing reading comprehension is of considerable importance. The role of inferencing, memorizing, and analyzing are important in improving reading are important. It is necessary to help learners to use proper strategies in developing their reading comprehension in a way that they can monitor and evaluate their own ability in processing the different texts . This study is a review to improve out knowledge about reading comprehension in general and is about reviewing the use of three metacognitive strategies of inferencing, memorizing, and analyzing on reading comprehension in reading comprehension.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reading comprehension has always been of paramount importance in all educational system, and comprehension of both general and academic texts has been the aim of many educational centers. There are many people wishing to understand what the texts of both academic and non-academic wants to say so that they can follow their aims according to their profession and their motivation. Therefore, in many language centers and institutes much attempt has to be made by teachers to teach students the appropriate strategies for understanding the texts of the target language they learn.

Yin and Cheong conducted a study, with the aim to examine the metacognitive knowledge and use of metacognitive strategies by good and poor readers of the English language in Singapore. The subjects in the study came from general and academic courses. The awareness and knowledge of metacognition were measured with the Index of Reading Awareness, while the Reading Strategy Use scale measured the readers' use of metacognition. Thirty students, consisting of 14 good and 16 poor readers, participated in the study. Participant recruitment first involved the administration of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test for identifying the students who are good or poor in reading comprehension. To investigate the students' use of metacognitive strategies during the reading of the science text, the pupils were requested to read a passage extracted from a science textbook, and then to respond to questions that checked on their understanding of the text. Following that, the students were asked to respond to an adapted version of the Reading Strategy Use scale to determine their use of metacognitive strategies when

reading a text in this different domain. The data were computed through t-tests. The t-test computed on the Index of Reading Awareness scores demonstrated that the good readers attained higher scores than the poor readers.

The t-test computed on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test comprehension scores showed that the Express Course students attained higher scores than the Normal (Academic) Course students. The t-test computed on the (Index of Reading Awareness) scores demonstrated that the Express Course students selected more strategic responses than the Normal (Academic) Course students. Computation of the t-test on the scores of the Reading Strategy Use scale showed that the Express and Normal (Academic) Course students, however, did not differ in their use of metacognitive strategies.

Feryal (2008, pp. 83- 91) conducted a study of the teacher trainees in the English department who had received instruction in metacognitive awareness for reading comprehension. Students were taught metacognitive strategies for reading in a five- week program they had joined voluntarily. The students used the reading logs to reflect on their own thinking processes as they were engaged in reading tasks. The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of systematic direct instruction of multiple metacognitive strategies designed to assist students in comprehending text. Specifically, the reading comprehension and vocabulary achievement of 130 third-year university students were investigated to determine whether instruction that incorporated metacognitive strategies led to an increase in the reading comprehension of expository texts. The students received 45 minutes of reading comprehension instruction a week for five weeks. In each class hour they were taught two metacognitive strategies and they applied them to the passages. The strategies were using strengths, inferencing, background information, evaluating, searching according to the goals, distinguishing, revising, and guessing the later topics. The experimental group received explicit instruction on metacognitive strategies based on cognitive academic language learning approach model of teaching learning strategy. At the end of the course, both the control group and the experimental group were given the vocabulary and reading comprehension tests and the results of the tests were compared to find the effects of the training. The results of the study confirmed that reading comprehension could be developed through systematic instruction in metacognitive language learning strategies. Systematic explicit instruction about the concept of metacognition and learning strategies helped students of the experimental group to better comprehend this new approach and how to apply it to different learning tasks on reading.

Zhang (2007, p. 4) states that metacognition is of much importance in reading comprehension; so, those who are metacognitively aware of the nature of reading and types of appropriate strategies are different from those who are not in terms of success in reading comprehension. Zhang (2007, pp. 5-7) conducted a study which was set up to explore the types of metacognitive knowledge of reading strategy EFL learners of different proficiency levels have while learning to read EFL. In doing so, ten EFL readers were selected from a sample of 312 participants. For the purpose of comparison, an orthogonal design was adopted. In both the high-scorer and the low-scorer groups, five students were sampled. Results from a subjects' background questionnaire showed that they started their formal education in Chinese when they were in kindergarten or

primary school. The data also showed that they began to learn English as a foreign language at the age of 13, as required by the ministry of education. They had a total of about seven years of classroom EFL learning. Their average EFL proficiency was estimated to be equivalent to about 450 on the TOEFL. Their Chinese reading abilities ranged from good to excellent. Their average age was around 19 on the basis of ordinal scale.

The subjects were divided into high scorers and low scorers according to their performance. A score of 60 out of 100 was regarded as a cut-off point. A scheme for coding the verbal data from the interviews was developed on the basis of the results obtained from the pilot stage for this study. All the audio-recordings of the subjects were browsed and randomly chosen to transcribe and analyze five subjects' transcripts. Then another judge, whose native language was Chinese and who had extensive training in applied linguistics both in her home country and overseas, independently analyzed the same transcripts. Thereafter, the data were classified into different categories with reference to the coding scheme. Results showed that the subjects' metacognitive knowledge of which strategies they used independently of EFL reading tasks varied across EFL proficiency levels, with high scorers predominantly showing clearer awareness of strategy use. In contrast, the low scorers did not realize that reading EFL required them to adopt different reading strategies to solve the problems they might encounter. They said that most often they had to handle reading tasks by chunking, detailing every linguistic element in print. In addition, they reported that they were reluctant to stop using dictionaries or translating into Chinese to make meanings clear.

Yang (2002) conducted a study to analyze how readers monitor their comprehension processes and how teacher intervention provides facilitation. The participants of the study were recruited from the freshmen English classes at the department of business management and the department of space design in national Yunlin University of science and technology; the numbers of freshmen in each class were 54 and 42 respectively. The top 14% of the students in the referential criteria of each class were considered to be proficient readers, and the lowest 14% percent of the students of each class to be less proficient readers. The texts for selection were from the commonly used college-level textbooks in Taiwan. The teachers of each class were asked to choose texts that their students had never read before. The study included two consecutive stages: a think-aloud procedure, and a diagnostic and remedial procedure. All participants were met individually by their experimenter in each of the two stages, in a small classroom. After the subjects understood the think-aloud procedure, they were given a text for training. Five days after the think-aloud training task for all subjects, the formal experimental session began, and the new text began for the first time. In the first experimental think-aloud procedure, the subject was asked to think aloud when reading the assigned text. If the experimenter's intervention succeeded in helping the subject to describe his or her thoughts, he/she was allowed to go directly to the succeeding sentences. If not, the experimenter tried different ways to invoke a verbal report. One fact that cannot be ignored is that even the less-proficient readers had some competence in comprehension monitoring since they were able to access the appropriate meaning of certain words or sentences. The most significant difference between the two groups in the comprehension process was the fact that the proficient readers seemed to monitor their on-going reading process retrospectively, while the less proficient readers seemed to be mostly limited to the lexical level of the word.

To motivate students to become involved in the learning process and to have more participation in their reading class, Shen and Huang (2007) conducted a study in Taiwan. They found that during reading classes, the students of the second semester of academic year who were generally considered to be relatively inadequate in terms of vocabulary size, grammar knowledge, and strategy use, looked up every difficult word in the dictionary and were unable to draw inferences or to guess the meaning of unknown words. So they designed their project on the basis of the key concept of collaborative action research. An understanding of the learner's backgrounds and needs formed the prerequisite for their follow-up teaching. Moreover, a diagnostic reading assessment was used to identify student's strengths and weaknesses in reading. The students also became aware of the results in the use of reading strategies. Therefore, the lesson plans were carefully designed according to the results and were developed through collaborative discussions between the teacher-researcher and her assistant. Then, the teacher self-evaluated the teaching process. Towards the end of the semester the teacher achieved more success in making her students aware of the reading processes as well as the reading strategies taught.

Erten and Karakas (2007, p. 114) conducted another study to understand possible divergent influences that reading activities could exert on the comprehension of short stories. The study was carried out at MartUniversity in Turkey with a number of forty-seven third year students. Eight of the students were male while thirty-nine were female, reflecting the natural demographic gender distribution. The participants had an advanced level of English language proficiency. A Rose for Emily by William Faulkner was the story which was chosen with an appropriate level of linguistic ability. The theme of the story was relevant to students' lives in that the participants were able to make comments and express their own experiences, which could activate their prior knowledge. A post-test was prepared to measure two types of comprehension of the story: literal and evaluation. The activities which were given to the experimental group, mostly involved procedures directed towards literal comprehension while those given to the control group tended to involve more than literal comprehension and required some reflection on the textual information. Neither group was given a pre-test before reading a short story. At the pre-reading stage, both groups were given two activities. The control group received brainstorming and surveying while the experimental group received previewing and key words. Both groups were asked to do a predicting activity as a transition activity into the story. The analysis revealed that the experimental groups' performance was considerably higher on literal comprehension than evaluation. However, there was no significant difference between the performances of control group students on different parts of the post-test. According to Erten and Karakas (2007, p. 116), those who make use of the strategy of inferencing reach at the meaning of the text which has not been explicitly stated

Saricoban (2002, p. 2) aimed to see if any differences would exist in terms of the strategies employed by the successful and the less successful readers during their reading activities in language classrooms that could lead them to better comprehension. The subjects were 110 preparatory students for language studies in English department at HacettepeUniversity. Following a homogeneity test, to determine the sort of reading strategies of both successful and less successful readers at proficiency level, the researcher designed and administered a reading

strategy inventory to the subjects. The inventory included strategy types for the three reading stages of pre-reading, reading, and post-reading during instruction. Finally, an achievement test was given to distinguish the successful readers from the less successful readers. The results showed that the three-phase approach has not to be carried out mechanically on every occasion. Sometimes, the teacher may wish to cut out the pre-reading stage and get the learners to work on the texts directly. Sometimes, the post-reading work may not be suitable. Therefore, the three-phase approach leads to the integration of the skills in a coherent manner so that the reading session is not simply isolated.

Mckown and Barnett (2007, p.1) conducted a study on reading comprehension of second grade and third grade students. The teacher researchers intended to improve reading comprehension by using higher-order thinking skills such as predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferencing, questioning, and summarizing. In their classrooms, the teacher researchers modeled these strategies through the think-aloud process and graphic organizers. This was followed by students using these strategies through the whole class, small group, and independent practice. The teacher researchers gathered information prior to implementing the reading strategy interventions. The metacomprehension strategy index indicated a lack of student knowledge of strategies to use before, during, and after reading. The state snapshot of early literacy given to the second grade students identified nine of the sixteen students below target level and others were at risk for reading comprehension failure. They mentioned that effective learners are able to cope with the difficulties of unfamiliar language and missing information. They are able to think critically which is of their characteristics. Teachers can help students to deal with the problems by teaching them the proper strategies such as inferencing, which is meant to make educated guesses. They explained inferencing as guessing the meaning of words in unfamiliar language structures based on the topic being discussed, content, background knowledge, knowledge of language structures, contextual clues and world knowledge.

They believe that students need to be independent and cope with challenges of language in problem-solving situations. Inferencing is of much use in the two skills of listening and reading and is considered as one of the fastest and most effective ways in acquiring additional vocabulary. It would be very easy for the learners to remember the words when they are actively involved in constructing meaning. They suggested that inferencing as a metacognitive strategy falls within problem-solving strategy that teachers should use so that students can be put to challenge for trying to understand the missing information in texts. And this practice must be encouraged by teachers. According to Barnhardt, the strategy of inferencing is used by many students. However, there is difference between more and less effective learners in that effective learners use all types of knowledge to make inferences. And less effective ones rely more on contextual clues such as pictures. Effective learners have been observed to be more active in construction of meaning and less effective learners normally lack confidence enough to make guess at the meaning.

CONCLUSION

Results of the study showed that using metacognitive reading strategies of inferencing, memorizing and analyzing for reading comprehension skill result in successful learning among EFL learners. Language learners who are successful in their reading comprehension skill might use these strategies more frequently in their reading comprehension skill. The study indicated that when students used inferencing analyzing and memorizing as a metacognitive strategy, they had good results comparing to other students that did not use the strategies. It is suggested that EFL learners use learning strategies to be able to improve their reading comprehension in the process of EFL learning.

Implication of the study

Reading comprehension is a very important factor in the process of language learning. The study reviewed using different reading strategies for EFL learning and reading comprehension. Zhang's (2007) believes that metacognition has an important role to play in the reading process; hence, readers who have clearer metacognitive awareness of the nature of the reading task and of their own strategies for text processing will differ from those who do not. Therefore, the use of metacognitive strategies should get more attention.

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THE EFFECTS OF USING INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATION METHOD ON SPEAKING SKILL OF IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The ability of employing the language as a communicational tool often judges one's successfulness in speaking class in language learning. This study sought to investigate the impact of instructional conversations on speaking ability of Iranian English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Forty-nine Iranian intermediate EFL learners from three language institutes in Sarakhs, Khorasan Razavi, Iran were selected as the participants of the study based on their scores in Nelson Proficiency Test. Administering Nelson General Proficiency Test, participants were measured to make sure they are homogeneous. These participants were randomly assigned into to control and experimental groups. Participants in both groups sat for IELTS speaking test. Results of independent samples t-test indicated lack of any significant difference between the two groups in speaking ability at the outset of the study. Throughout the study lasting for 12 sessions participants in experimental group received the treatment, instructional conversations, as a means for instructing speaking materials. Participants in the control group were taught the same materials as those practiced in the former group through other techniques such as role playing, peer dialogues. Finally participants in both groups sat for the posttests being the same as those administered as pretests. Results of t-test indicated the experimental group performed significantly better than the control one in IELTS. The present findings provide pedagogical implications for employing instructional conversation in EFL speaking classrooms. Students' use of instructional conversation not only develops their understanding of the language via interaction, but also it increases their speaking abilities by interaction.

KEYWORDS: Instructional conversations, speaking ability

INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

The ability to speak English as foreign language (EFL) appears to be the primary purpose of EFL students. Speaking can be improved through a variety of techniques introduced by EFL teachers to their students. According to Brown and Yule (1983) many language learners view speaking as the criteria for knowing a language and one's progress is assessed in terms of his/her achievement

in spoken communication. Speaking a foreign language seems to differ from speaking a native one due to different structures, vocabularies, cultural factors, and so on. The process of learning to speak a foreign language is, therefore, complex. Richards and Renandya (2002) view the ability to speak a second language well as a very complex task.

Overall, it can be concluded that speaking skill is worthy to bring up the newly developed issue, instructional conversation method, which might significantly affect the development of speaking ability. Before dealing with the issue it is worth presenting a background of it.

Communicative competence, according to Boyd and Miller (2000), involves the ability to interpret and enact suitable social behaviors and requires the learner to actively participate in producing the target language. Thus the learner needs to do more than one-word answers in the target language or memorize separated sentences (Pinkevičienė, 2011). The learner needs to be actively engaged in building and clarifying meaning. EFL teachers, on the other hand, need to provide opportunities in the classroom to engage students in talking.

Wells and Haneda (2005) view learners as active agents who, along with their teachers, participate in a form of conversational discourse aims at improving understanding rather than the one-way transmission of teacher-directed instructional talk. In this case the target language becomes the vehicle for communicating ideas rather than an instructional tool (Pinkevičienė, 2011). According to Wells and Haneda (2005), Tharp and Galimore (1988) coined the term "Instructional Conversation" (IC: Talk about text). Instructional Conversation: contains a paradox: 'Instruction' and 'Conversation' appear contrary, the one implying authority and planning, the other equality and responsiveness (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988 as cited in Wells & Haneda, 2005, p.151).

Reveles (2004) describes IC as a teaching strategy in which conversation takes place among small groups of students. These conversations are not random rather they are academically goal-oriented. In such classrooms, Reveles (2004) explains, the students speak more than the teacher; the teacher therefore becomes a listener and facilitator. "IC protocol is a way to transform a classroom into a more productive learning community through dialogic teaching" (Reveles, 2004, p.1).

IC is most often enacted in a small group through employment of familiar forms of conversation to improve learners' language production and understanding. Teachers who employ IC take the advantage of ordinary conversation about an interesting stimulus or activity to tempt their students to employ social and academic language and to share prior knowledge (Dalton & Sison, 1995). In the interaction, teachers determine levels of students' independence and necessary assistance (Gallimore, Dalton, & Tharp, 1986, as cited in Dalton & Sison, 1995). In IC, teachers investigate to gather information about students' Zones of Proximal Development (ZPD). Therefore, the format of an IC, from the beginning, is neither exactly prescribed nor pre-scripted; however, it mirrors a plan composed of anticipated options and some unanticipated ones to gain selected outcomes. Outcomes are proximal in collecting information of students' prior knowledge

and their ZPDs, and distal for facilitating students' understanding and knowledge construction (Dalton & Sison, 1995).

Evidence shows that IC is effective in improving reading comprehension scores of limited English proficient students (Teaching Transformed, Tharp et al., 2000, as cited in Reveles, 2004). ICs (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, 1989, 1991; Saunders & Goldenberg, 1992, as cited in Shen, 2005) include small-group discussions where teachers and students discuss the themes of the unit, students' written responses to reading, and related personal experiences. Shen (2005) considers five instructional elements for this model of literacy pedagogy which include thematic focus, activation and use of background and relevant schema, direct teaching, promotion of more complex language and expression, and elicitation of bases for statements or positions. The five conversational elements of this pedagogy include fewer known-answer questions, responsiveness to student contributions, connected discourse, a challenging but not-threatening atmosphere, and general participation, including self-selected turns (Saunders, Patthey-Chavez, & Goldenberg 1997, as cited in Shen, 2005). These dimensions can be helpful for students since through attending peer discussion, student can enhance their own comprehension, knowledge, and experiences. Teachers, according to Shen (2005) can also take advantage from taking part in discussion with students in terms of improving their teaching practices since they can "(a) hear students articulate their understanding of the story, theme(s), and related personal experiences; and (b) in the process of facilitating the discussion, challenge but also help students to enrich and deepen their understandings" (Saunders & Goldenberg, 1999, p.297, as cited in Shen, 2005).

Curenton and Zucker (2013) view instructional conversations as planned discussions with small groups of children where teachers improve students' collaborative reasoning by using challenging questions which necessitate students to use complex language to talk about their experiences, knowledge, and opinions.

IC method with the aim of improving learning through conversation (AssadiAidinlou, & Tabeei, 2012), was implemented as the treatment in order to address the following research question:

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Speaking and Instructional Conversation

Speaking is one of the four main skills required for actual communication in any language, chiefly when presenters are not employing their mother tongue. As English is commonly used as a way of communication, particularly in the internet domain, English speaking skills should be advanced along with the other capabilities so that these unified skills will augment communication accomplishment both with native speakers of English and other associates of the global community. Owing to the important role of speaking in action, Bailey (2005) and Goh (2007) explained how to increase the expansion of speaking by means of syllabus scheme, principles of instruction, sorts of tasks and materials, and speaking evaluation. Though reading and listening are taken to be the two receptive abilities in language education and use, writing and speaking are two productive abilities essential to be combined in the expansion of effective communication. Among all the four macro English abilities, speaking appears to be the most vital

skill obligatory for communication (Zaremba, 2006). Real communication through speaking frequently generates a number of profits for both speakers and business organizations.

There are some issues linking to speaking abilities to be measured for actual English speaking performance. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and collocations are pulled out as central influences to be highlighted in constructing fluency for EFL speakers. Giving students a diversity of circumstances and regular speaking tasks plays a noteworthy role in the development of students' eloquence when speaking (Tam, 1997).

Self-assurance and capability usually bring about strong point of English speaking abilities. Patil (2008) declared that strengthening the learner's self-confidence to abolish fear of making errors was a significance that the instructor should contemplate in order to make the student feel relaxed with their language usage. Self-confidence and capability in speaking could be established from suitable syllabus design, methods of instruction, and adequate tasks and materials (Bailey, 2005; Songsiri, 2007). For efficiency of speaking, Shumin (1997) argued a number of elements, counting listening abilities, socio-cultural elements, affective influences, and other linguistic and sociolinguistic capability such as grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic skill. So as to carry meaning, EFL learners must have a comprehension of words and sentences; that is, they must comprehend how words are put into different sounds, and how sentences are stressed in specific ways.

Dalton and Sison (1995) described four ICs taught by a novice teacher. The ICs aimed at fostering interaction about math concepts in small groups of seventh grade students who were ordinarily excluded from classroom participation by their regular teacher. Results indicated that all the students participated comfortably in academic conversation using math lexicon with increasing appropriacy and focus. Intersubjectivity emerged in the conversations and was apparently built on the students' and teacher's similar and shared experience in constructive social interaction about math. Students' participation in IC increased dramatically and stabilized across the four ICs which indicated the effectiveness of this pedagogy to include often excluded language minority students in classroom interaction (ibid).

Concerning the effects of IC in EFL contexts several studies have been already conducted. For example Aidinlou and Tabeei (2012) in their study on the effects of using instructional conversation method on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners indicated advantages of instructional conversation in English students' reading comprehension. It was found that the participants in the IC groups performed better than those in control group in reading comprehension post-test. Moreover, significant differences were found between performances of two experimental groups. These findings showed that a combination of instructional conversation method and traditional method was more effective than instructional conversation alone (Aidinlou, & Tabeei, 2012).

Miller (2010) in her article under the title of "Instructional Conversations: Improving Reading Comprehension in English for English Language Learners" concentrated on improving teaching of reading comprehension skills via instructional conversations. She believes that an

instructional conversation engages students in a structured discussion to activate background knowledge before reading a text, to help them think of a text while reading, and to analyze and ponder on a text after reading. Finally, the findings indicated positive effects of using instructional conversations (Miller, 2010).

Meskill and Sadykova (2011) in their article entitled “Introducing EFL faculty to online instructional conversations” state that while the availability of teaching models was until recently limited to face to face observations, videotaped classes and transcriptions of classroom interaction, language educator professional development can now use online discussions between language educators and their students as instructional models for language faculty in training. Such technology-based models, like those of traditional classrooms, are those that make optimal use of the affordances of the given instructional context. Concerning online asynchronous language coursework, according to Meskill and Sadykova (2011), “exemplary teaching sequences can be examined as both representing effective teaching overall and effective teaching given the specific affordances of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)” (p.201). Online instructional conversations between language educators and students as effective training tools can help educators conceptualize effective online instructional processes as well as effective instructional processes overall (Meskill & Sadykova, 2011).

RESEARCH QUESTION

The following research question was posed by the researcher:

Q: Does the use of Instructional Conversation have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability?

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Setting

Forty-nine Iranian intermediate EFL learners studying English as their foreign language in three language institutes in Sarakhs, Khorasan Razavi, Iran were selected as the participants of the study. Sample selection was carried out by administering Nelson Test developed by Fowler and Coe (1976). All of them were female and their age ranged from 18 to 24.

Instrumentations

The following instrumentations were employed by the author.

Nelson Proficiency Test

To assure the homogeneity of the participants, a Nelson proficiency test series 200A (developed by Fowler and Coe, 1976) was administered to 110 EFL learners in Sarakhs. The test contained 50 multiple-choice items and participants were allowed to respond in 40 minutes. The test mainly assessed the participants' vocabulary knowledge and grammar.

After analyzing the results of this test, 49 participants who could obtain at least 70% of the total score were selected as the participants of this study (Appendix A).

IELTS Speaking Test

Composed of three parts, speaking test assessed the participants' speaking ability. The questions included personal information (family members, description of an influential teacher, and discussion topics, e.g. different styles/methods of teaching and learning, a national education system). The speaking test took 11-14 minutes and consisted of an interview with an examiner (Appendix B).

Procedure

Forty-nine Iranian intermediate EFL learners from language institutes in Sarakhs were selected as the participants based on a Nelson Test. These participants were randomly assigned to control (n=24) and experimental (n=25) groups. IELTS Speaking module was administered at the beginning of the study.

During the course which lasted for 12 sessions, instructional conversation was employed in the experimental class. Every session the teacher brought 20 copies of a reading text into this class. These students were allowed to work together as a whole class, in small groups, or even in pairs to maximize their own language learning. These participants were provided with a time (25 minutes) to analyze and talk about the text. The teacher managed the process of discussion to correct the mistakes committed by the students. The text details were discussed by the students through oral discussions. Sometimes the teacher, herself, attended the discussions to explain more and clarify the issues.

Students in experimental class were provided with opportunities for conceptual and linguistic development through making connections between academic content, students' previous knowledge and cultural experiences.

Role playing and peer dialogues were used in the control group. To do so, they were given a topic (e.g. holidays in Iran, music, hobby) to practice in groups or pairs before the class. The groups or pairs were asked to perform the task in the class. Finally participants in both groups sat for the posttest which was the same as the pretest. Finally data were analyzed using SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Having gathered the required data, the researcher analyzed them by SPSS to test the formulated null-hypothesis

Results of Normality of Data

To make sure that the data are normal, a normalizing test, Smirnov-Kolmogrov Test, was conducted. Results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Nelson	speakpre	speakpost
N		49	49	49
Normal	Mean	37.7347	4.8571	5.2449
Parametersa	Std. Deviation	2.12892	1.91485	1.93144
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.160	.144	.121
	Positive	.160	.144	.108
	Negative	-.112	-.093	-.121
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.118	1.006	.850
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.164	.263	.465

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Note: speakpre stands for speaking pretest; speakpost stands for speaking posttest

Table 1 summarizes the data related to normalizing test. Null-hypothesis of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test indicates that the data are normal. Since P-values obtained in the test for the instruments administered are greater than .05, (p-value for Nelson=.164>.05; p-value for speakpre=.263>.05; p-value for speakpost=.465>.05) the null-hypothesis is supported.

Results of Independent Samples t-test for Nelson

Table 2 shows results obtained from independent samples t-test for Nelson proficiency test.

Table 2: Results of independent samples t-test for Nelson

Group	N	M	SD	Df	T	Sig (2-tailed)
Control	24	37.66	2.21	47	.21	.82
experimental	25	37.80	2.08			

As Table 2 shows there is not any significant difference [df=47, t=.21, sig (2-tailed)=.82>.05] between control (N=24, M=37.66, SD=2.21) and experimental (N=25, M=37.80, SD=2.08) groups in Nelson. Therefore, the homogeneity of the participants was confirmed at the outset of the study.

Results of Independent Samples t-test for Speaking (pretest)

Table 3 summarizes the performance of the two groups in speaking at the beginning of the study.

Table 3: Results of independent samples t-test for Speaking (pretest)

Group	N	M	SD	Df	T	sig(2-tailed)
Control	24	4.58	1.83	47	.98	.33
experimental	25	5.12	1.98			

Table 3 indicates lack of any statistically significant [df=47, t=.98, sig (2-tailed) =.33>.05] difference between control (N=24, M=4.58, SD=1.83) and experimental (N=25, M=5.12, SD=1.98) groups in speaking pretest. Therefore, the participants were shown to be homogeneous with respect to speaking ability.

Results of Independent Samples t-test for Speaking (posttest)

Table 6 shows results obtained from independent samples t-test for speaking test which was administered after the treatment.

Table 4: Results of independent samples t-test for Speaking (posttest)

Group	N	M	SD	Df	T	sig(2-tailed)
Control	24	4.33	1.90	47	3.62	.001
experimental	25	6.12	1.53			

As Table 4 shows, participants in the experimental group (N=25, M=6.12, SD=1.53) significantly [df=47, t= 3.62, sig (2-tailed=.001<.05)] outperformed those in control (N=24, M= 4.33, SD=1.90) in the speaking posttest. Accordingly, the first null-hypothesis "Use of Instructional Conversation does not have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability" was rejected. It can be deduced that the treatment was significantly effective in improving speaking ability of intermediate EFL learners in Iran.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to explore the effects of instructional conversations on EFL learners' speaking ability. Concerning the research question "Does use of Instructional Conversation have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability?" data analysis showed that use of instructional conversation has significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability. Significant effects of instructional conversation on speaking ability may be due to the involvement of students in further talk. According to Goldenberg and Patthey-Chavez (1994, as cited in Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007, p.?) during ICs teachers talk significantly less, students talk significantly more, and the actual content of lessons is more likely to be mutually shaped and defined by student and teacher understandings. Aidinlou and Tabeii (2012) found out advantages of instructional conversation on improvement of reading comprehension of second language learners.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the impact of instructional conversations on speaking ability of Iranian English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The findings of this study indicated that the experimental group, which studied and practiced instructional conversations, performed significantly better than the control group in IELTS. The findings of this study illuminate the way for the teachers whose major purpose is to develop students' speaking abilities. Applying instructional conversations in a speaking classroom can enhance their understanding, speaking abilities and motivate them to participate in conversations with more self-confidence. The participants were only female intermediate EFL learners from Sarakhs, Iran. The major focus of the present study was on instructional conversation as independent variable and other techniques were not considered. Finally, the researcher explored the effects of the treatment on speaking ability and other skills such as writing, reading, listening were excluded.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Nelson English Language Test (Book, Intermediate, 050A) by Fowler, and Coe, (1976)

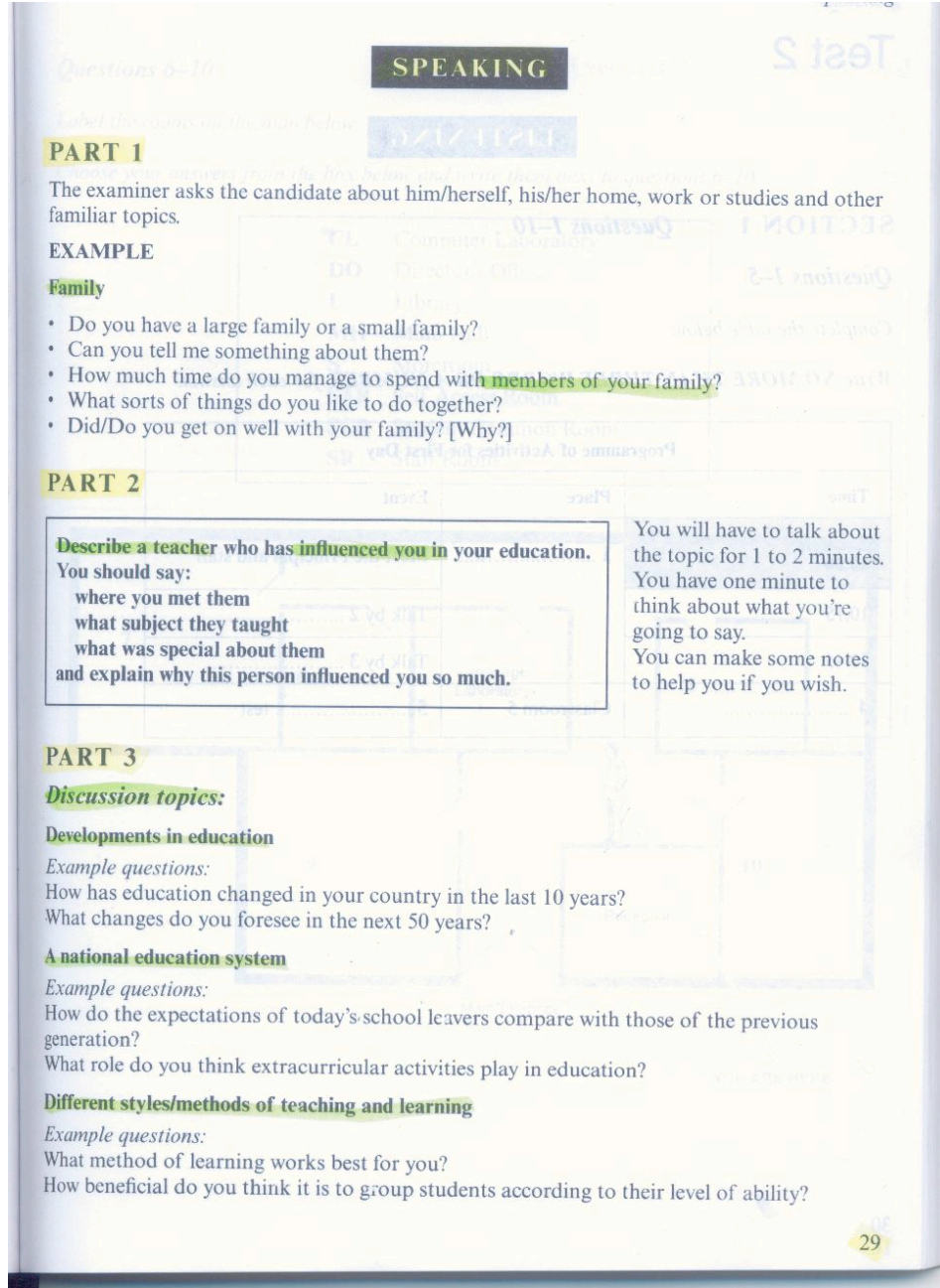
Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.

1. A) The sun is in a sky B) The sun is in the sky
C) Sun is in a sky D) A sun is in a sky
2. What John doing?
A) Are B)do C)does D)is
3. John and Mary the radio.
A) are listening on B)are listening to C)is listening on D)is listening to
4. Bill and I here.
A) We're B)we C)we are D)are
5. Sarah, what doing?
A) She is B)are you C)are D)is
6. Mary's the garden.
A) In B)at C)on D)into
7. Are there six books on the table?
A) No, are five B)No, there are three C)No, there's one D)No, there are any
8. Tom often sings, but
A) Sings Sarah? B) Sarah sings? C) Sarah does? D) does Sarah?
9. Tony is looking at
A) She B) he C)her D)here
10. Who's that boy?
A) Is Bill B) It's Tom C)It's a boy D) Peter's that
11. Where's the book?
A) There's it B)He's under the chair C) It's he D) There's on a chair
12. Are you happy?
A) Yes, I'm B) No, I aren't C) Yes, I am D)No, I not
13. What's his name?
A) It's name Jack B) It's a Jack C) It's Jack's name D) It's Jack
14. Do you dance or draw?
A) I'm dance but I'm not draw B) I dance but I don't draw

- C) I'm dancing but I not drawing D) I dance but I'm not drawing
15. Is that a book?
A) Yes, there is B) Yes, it is C) Yes, that's D) Yes, is a book
16. Is that horse big?
A) No, that's a little B) No, that's little horse
C) No, It's little horse D) No, It isn't
17. What's her brother doing?
A) Playing football B) Is playing football
C) He playing football D) She's playing football
18. How many chairs are there in the room?
A) Are four B) Are five chairs there C) There's one D) there's a chair
19. A) Is that table big brown? B) Is that big brown table?
C) Is that big table brown? D) Is brown that big table?
20. A) Mary can dance tomorrow B) Mary cans dance tomorrow
C) Mary she can dance tomorrow D) Mary can tomorrow dance
21. The lamp is the television.
A) at B) next to C)near of D) between
22. The tree is the door.
A) between B) in front C) beside D) next
23. What's that girl?
A) It's a student B) She's student C) She's a student D) She's a student girl
24. Do the girls know Tom?
A) Yes, they knows her B) No, they isn't
C) Yes, they know D) No, they don't
25. A) John's looking at I and you B) Your looking at John and
C) I'm looking at you and John D) John and I am looking at you
26. A) That girl is some of my friends B) This girl is one of my friends
C) That girl is me friend D) This girl's are friends
27. A) This is Mr. Smith there B) That is the Mr. Smith there
C) This is the Mr. Smith here D) That is Mr. Smith there
28. My brother is writing
- A) by a pencil B) with pen C) in a paper D)in a book
29. A) Who now in London lives?
B) Who in London now live?
C) Who lives in London now? D) Who live now in London?
30. Monday is the first day.
A) Tuesday is the second. B) The second is Thursday.
C) Tuesday is the fourth. D) The fourth is Thursday.
31. Jane is in front of Tom. Tom is Jane.
A) beside B) behind C) before D) between
32. Tom is Mrs. Smith' son.
A) She is his son. B) She is her son. C) He is her son. D) He is his son.
33. A) Come here to us! B) Go here to we!
C) Go there to us! D) Come here to my
34. A) Don't look at us! B) Don't looking at us!
C) No looking at we! D) Not look at us
35. A) Some girl are listening to the old men B) An old man is listening to the girl
C) An old men are listening the girl D) The old man are listening to a girl
36. A) Listen to he and he's brother! B) Listen to he and his brother!
C) Listen to him and his brother! D) Listen to him and he's brother!
37. Whose hats are those? They are Hats.
A) he's B)Mr. Black's C) Mrs. Black's D) she's
38. A) Where are you going to put the cups? B) Where are you going put the cups?

- C) Where you're going put the cups? D) Where you are going to put the cups?
39. Jane's tall and
A) John's, too B) Tom is, too C) Tom is to D) Tom are two
40. Does Brain play football?
A) Yes, and Sam doesn't, too B) No, but Sam doesn't
C) Yes, but Sam doesn't D) No, and Sam does, too
41. James is talking to
A) they B) them C) she D) your
42. These pens are
A) Pats B) of Pat C) Pat's D) to Pat
43. Sarah cat.
A) has a B) has some C) has some D) has a
44. This is
A) second lesson B) the lesson two C) lesson the second D) lesson two
45. A) Lena cans have Mikes' radio B) Lena can has Mikes' radio
C) Lena can have Mikes' radio D) Lena can has Mikes' radio
46. It's 21.00.
A) Yes, it's nine in the evening B) Yes, it's nine clocks
C) Yes, it's nine in the afternoon D) yes, it's nine hours
47. 164 is
A) hundred sixty four B) a hundred sixty four
C) hundred sixty and four D) a hundred and sixty four
48. A) The girls don't do the homework B) The girls don't the homework
C) The girls doesn't do the homework D) The girls don't does the homework
49. Do Mr. and Mrs. Smith speak English?
A) He does but she doesn't B) He speak but she doesn't
C) He do but she don't D) He speak but she don't
50. Who are those boys? One is my brother and
A) the big boy is Peter B) a big boy is Peter
C) the big boy is a Peter D) a big boy is a Peter

Appendix B
IELTS Speaking



IMPACT OF BLENDED LEARNING ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' ACQUISITION AND RETENTION OF PASSIVE SENTENCES

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ABSTRACT

The present study was intended to investigate the Impact of Blended learning on Iranian EFL learners' acquisition and long term retention of passive sentences .In order to this end, a group of 44 EFL learners were randomly placed in three groups, after conducting the placement test. The participants were placed in two experimental groups, namely Blended Learning (N=15), Web-based (N=15), and one Control (N=14).The participants of the Blended Learning received traditional teaching methods of grammar (passive structure) plus learning via the web. In the second group, the Web-based, the participants received materials and instructions merely through the web. Participants of the control group, however, were taught based on the traditional teaching methods of grammar and received the materials, instructions, and feedback through traditional methods. In order to collect the data, first a pre-test, then posttest and the last one delayed posttest consists of 30 multiple -choice items was given to the participants. The results of the one way analysis of variance and repeated measure tests showed that the participants of the Tradition group outperformed of two other experimental groups in their acquisition and long term retention of passive structures. Having a more meticulous look at the results, it was observed that participants of the Web-based group although had a lower performance in the post-test and delayed posttest, too. It did not significantly outperform those of the Tradition and Blended group. In conclusion, the results of the study revealed that employing a Blended Learning method cannot create a desirable condition to enhance the EFL learners 'acquisition and long term retention of passive sentences. This is because participants are not completely familiar with the benefits the method can have for EFL learners. Therefore, an important implication of the study is that EFL learners need to be familiarized with such techniques and try to benefit from their positive effects, as shown by the literature in the field.

KEYWORDS: Blended Learning; Passive Structure; Web- based Learning; CALL

INTRODUCTION

Technology has made a huge change in learning a second language. It can improve teaching and learning processes. Technology lies in providing a learning environment that helps learners succeed in improving understanding where other methods have failed. Digital technologies have led to more integration between computer-mediated instructional elements and traditional face-to-face learning practices. The most important result of combining technology and education is the emergence of e-learning. Nowadays, e-learning has grown and expanded in exponential ways at the expense of traditional face-to-face learning that has been around for centuries.

Research over the last several years has indicated that students learn as successfully in online environments as in traditional face-to-face classroom settings (Brew, 2008). Electronic learning has become popular and has had a huge impact on language education. Learning English as a foreign language in recent years has been accompanied with the revolution of changes in the field of technologies. One of these changes is the use of computers in learning English or technically speaking, it is Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

Undoubtedly, CALL is one of the most important technologies used to contribute to language learning. It should be pointed out that the computer has caused significant variation to every aspect of education. Numerous English as a foreign language research studies (Blake, 2000), suggest that integration of technology can improve academic performance, enhance motivation, and promote learning. Learning English as a foreign language has a lot of changes due to the field of technologies.

CALL programs provide interactive computer activities for language learning which helps learners to interact in a communicative way. Traditionally, computers have been considered a good fit to teach grammar (Hubbard & Siskin, 2004). When we use the computer for presentation, explanation, and application of grammatical structures, more classroom time can be saved for real communication in order to focus on expressing meaning and using appropriate grammatical structures to express that meaning. Additionally, this makes the process of language teaching and learning more fun for the learner as well.

Not only EFL grammar course instructor feel frustrated in teaching grammar, but also learners usually face greater challenges. Proponents of online learning have seen that it can be effective in potentially eliminating barriers while providing increased convenience, flexibility, currency of material, customized learning, and feedback over a traditional face-to-face experience (Hackbarth, 1996; Harasim, 1990). Opponents, however, are concerned that students in an online environment may feel isolated (Brown, 1996), confused, and frustrated (Hara & Kling, 2000) and that a student's interest in the subject and learning effectiveness may be reduced (Maki, Patterson, & Whittaker, 2000).

In the learning process, a large number of comparative studies of traditional and on-line learning education have concluded that on-line learning can be as effective as traditional learning. On-line learning provides students a convenient and efficient way for learning. On-line methods or

merely traditional might not lead to desirable results. In order to facilitate learning and communication theories suggest that a third alternative, i.e., blended learning.

Blended learning is “integrating the online and face-to-face formats to create a more effective learning experience” (Brew, 2008, p. 98). With blended learning, teachers can use online resources in their daily classroom activities to engage students and help them become more active and more effective learners. The study was intended to investigate the effects of blended learning on grammar instruction with a particular focus on passive structures.

In learning a second or foreign language, grammar has always been an important component and is something both language learners and teachers are concerned about, especially in traditional grammar classes. They get bored easily due to traditional methods of teaching. Language learners may not have sufficient metalinguistic knowledge (i.e., grammar terminology) to understand the topics and explanations of grammatical points (Hasselgard, 2001). Traditional methods of teaching grammar are time-consuming. It seems that because of the inefficiency of grammar teaching methods, new approaches and techniques are needed to assist language teachers and learners.

In order to help students find language classes, especially grammar lessons more interesting and to achieve the best quality of learning, in addition to traditional methods, on-line instruction can lead to new potential in learning. It is believed that a combination of traditional instruction and on-line instruction, called blended learning, can be employed in language classrooms. Blended learning can be a practical and effective way to make students attracted and motivated to learn grammar better.

Therefore, regarding limitation and problems in traditional classes (time-consuming, lack of interest and motivation), the need for the integration of modern technology into traditional classrooms, to improve their grammar skills. Although, the use of the computer and the internet has been introduced in language classrooms, studies are needed to examine the effectiveness and impact of blended learning on Iranian EFL learners.

The main objective of the study is intended to examine and compare the impact of blended learning, web-based learning and traditional classroom learning on the acquisition and retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners. In addition, the study is intended to scrutinize the role these teaching methods play in long-term retention of the target structure in question and which one results in better learning among Iranian EFL learners. Therefore, based on what mentioned above the following research question can be posed:

LITERATURE REVIEW

Computer serves as a language-learning tool and as an instrument to help researchers. According to Chappelle in (2001), the first needs of CALL were planted during the 1950s. In effect, CALL was considered as an instructional help instrument during the 1960s. In the 1960s and 1970s, the application of CALL in second language contexts was considered; and CALL was firstly applied

in small scale personal projects called Computer Applications in Second Language Acquisition (CASLA) Chapelle (2001).

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) was the expression agreed upon at the 1983 TESOL convention in a meeting of all interested participants. This term is widely used to refer to the area of technology and second language teaching and learning despite the fact that revisions for the term are suggested regularly (Chapelle, 2001, p.3). Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) may be defined as the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning (Levy, 1997, p.1). Given the breadth of what may go on in computer-assisted language learning (CALL), a definition of CALL that accommodates its changing nature is any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language (Beatty, 2003, p. 7).

There are a variety of approaches used by CALL researchers, like the other areas of second language learning. Although quantitative studies probably dominated in the early literature, qualitative and mixed-method studies are now common, especially in the area of computer mediated communication (CMC). An edited volume by Egbert and Petrie (2005) did a credible job of covering the more dominant research approaches along with some less common ones, presenting criticisms and offering suggestions for improving the overall quality of CALL research. Levy and Stockwell (2006) illustrated that quite clearly in their chapter on research by contrasting two articles in computer mediated communication that has looked at a similar phenomenon but through very different lenses, one interactionist (Fernandez-Garcia & Martinez-Rabelais, 2002) and the other sociocultural (Drawer, 2002).

By understanding the development of CALL, we can understand the innovative applications of CALL. Development of CALL Moras (2001) has divided CALL into three distinct phases: behaviorist, communicative and integrative: Behaviorist CALL was implemented when the Audio-lingual Method was popular (around the 1960's and '70) and it viewed the computer as a tutor which presented drills and non-judgmental feedback to practices. The "programs were designed to provide immediate positive or negative feedback to learners on the formal accuracy of their responses" (Warschauer & Kern, 2005, p. 8). In language learning, grammar plays a significant role and thus, many language educators have made an effort to inculcate technology in the learning process, in the hope that technology helps to improve students' knowledge in grammar. Some researchers have tried to get some insights on the effects of web-based learning on students' performance in grammar class. Another research that focused on grammar teaching and web-based environment is a research done by Frigaard (2002). The research was participated by high school students and their performance on Spanish vocabulary, grammar and listening was investigated after they participated in language lab activities. The findings, which were from the analysis of the students' data and surveys from the five units of lesson, revealed that the students preferred to learn vocabulary and grammar in the classroom, but not the listening skills. Hence, the findings reveal that environment plays an important influencing factor in language learning.

Blended learning has become a popular form of education. It "means integrating the online and face-to-face formats to create a more effective learning experience" (Brew, 2008, p. 98). With

blended learning, teachers can use online resources in their daily classroom activities to engage students and help them become more active and more effective learners. Badawi defined blended learning as "a flexible approach that combines face-to-face learning activities with online learning practices that allow students to exchange collective and individual feedback and responses [in] four specific areas, namely, learner feedback, learner strategies, and alternative assessment synchronously or asynchronously" (Badawi, 2009, p. 15).

The blended learning classes in all the studies combined two modes: face to-face and CALL. The location of the face-to-face mode was the classroom and the CALL mode the computer lab or student home. The technology used in the CALL mode included CALL programs, learning management systems (LMSs), and the web. Most of the studies used LMSs (WebCT or Moodle) to deliver instruction, sometimes in conjunction with computer-mediated communication tools. The authors of the studies paid attention to the integration of modes, the second parameter in Neumeier's framework, by making some activities obligatory. Many studies have suggested the fundamental shift blended learning proposes. One study, conducted at Brigham Young University (BYU), examined how blended learning was changing instructional practices and the prevalence of blended learning at BYU (Graham & Robinson, 2007). Data collected came from faculty surveys and interviews. The data revealed that female teachers were more likely to use blended learning strategy, and adjunct professors were three times more likely to use blended learning strategy than not. Findings also revealed that faculty rarely substituted online instruction for face-to-face instruction.

The Graham and Robinson (2007) study opened a clear distinction between enabling, enhancing, and transforming blends. Enabling blends merely create greater access and convenience for students, whereas enhancing blends increase student and teacher productivity. However, a transformational blend moved from information transmission pedagogy to active learning constructivist pedagogy (p. 96). The authors of the study concluded that for blended learning to reach the transformational level, the primary objective of the teacher should first focus on the teaching and learning relationship and then efficiency or productivity (p. 107).

As blended learning becomes more established, it offers the opportunity for educators to develop new methods of communication with and among students, develop learning activities that are engaging to the digital native learner, and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learners' styles presented in any classroom (Bonk & Graham, 2007). Studies in this field indicate that it is important to consider some elements in the design of instruction that creates a setting for greater student learning.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the background presented above the following research questions can be posed:

1. Does blended learning lead to the acquisition of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?
2. Does web-based learning lead to the acquisition of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners?

3. Is there a significant difference among the three teaching methods of passive structures (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional)?
4. Does blended learning have any effect on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?
5. Does web-based learning have any effect on long-term retention of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners?
6. Which of the three grammar teaching methods (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional) has more long-lasting effects on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participant

The participants of the study were 44 Iranian EFL learners who were learning English in a language institute in Isfahan. These participants were selected from among a larger sample of 75 EFL learners after taking the Solution Placement Test. Both male and female learners participated in the study. Attempts were made to include an equal number of each gender, so that gender could be controlled. Since the study was intended to investigate the impact of blended learning on mid-proficiency participants, it was necessary to administer a placement test to make sure that the participants were homogenous. After the placement test, the 44 participants who were from the required level of proficiency were placed in two experimental and one control groups.

In one of the experimental groups, Blended Learning (BL), participants (N=15) received traditional teaching methods of the passive structure plus learning via the web. In the second experimental group, Web-based (WB), participants (N=15) received materials and instructions through the web. Finally, in the control group, Traditional, participants (N=14) were taught based on the traditional teaching methods of the passive structure and received the materials, instructions, and feedback through traditional methods in the classroom.

Instruments

In order to conduct the experiment and collect the required data, the following types of materials were employed:

The Solution Placement Test

In order to choose homogeneous participants and place them in the relevant groups, Solution Placement Test (Edwards, 2007) was used. It is essential to mention that the test has been designed to assess general knowledge of the key language as well as the receptive and productive skills and gives insight into what level language learners are. The test consists of three sections; the first part includes 50 multiple-choice items that assess learners' knowledge of key grammar and vocabulary from elementary to intermediate levels; the second part consists of 10 graded reading comprehension items, and the third section is a writing task which assesses learners' ability to produce the language. It should be noted that learners can be placed in different

proficiency levels based on the scores they receive and the placement criteria the test developer has identified.

A grammar pamphlet

In addition to Solution Placement Test, the participants were given a pamphlet which was taught during the course. The pamphlet was gathered from many books at intermediate level. The pamphlet contained several lessons explaining the target structure and providing plenty of lessons and exercises. In this pamphlet, different types of situations were presented to show where passive sentences can be used. For example, the passive voice was taught and presented in tenses, especially and other types of structures. It should be noted that all the experimental and control groups were required to study the pamphlet and do the exercises. For the Web-based and Blended Learning groups, the electronic version of the pamphlet was also uploaded so that they could access the materials and do the exercises.

A Weblog

Since an essential part of the course was online and participants had to send and receive their materials and assignments through the web, a weblog was designed. The content of this weblog was in correspondence with that of the course. In other words, all the participants in all the groups received the same amount of information. In fact, participants of the BL group, who also received instruction in the classroom, received the extra information and exercises through this page. In addition, they received their feedback through this page. Nevertheless, the page was more important for participants of the Web-based group. The students in this group also received all the material related to their course, including the pamphlet, exercises, and feedback through this weblog. In addition, participants were given an email address which they used in case there were any internet crashes or they wanted to get in touch with the instructor of the course.

Pretest and Posttest and delayed posttest

In order to make sure that participants were homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of the target structure, namely the passive structure, a pretest was administered. The test included 30 multiple-choice items, focusing on passives in different types of tenses and structures. It is essential to mention that the reliability and validity of the test had been checked before the study. In fact, in order to check the reliability of the test, it was given to a similar group of learners in a different institute and after checking the items and making sure that the test was reliable ($r=.81$), it was administered in the target samples. In addition, the test was given to two professional teacher to check the items and provide the researcher with suitable feedback.

In the last session of the study, the participants took a post-test, including 30 multiple-choice items to examine the efficiency of the instruction. It is imperative to mention that the post-test was the same as the pretest. However, the order of items was different. It was done because it was necessary to make a comparison between the performances of participants in the pretest and posttest.

In order to scrutinize the long-term effects of the instruction presented in the experiment and one week after the post-test, a delayed post-test was conducted. Like the pretest and the posttest, it was imperative to use the same test so that proper comparison could be made.

Procedure

At first, in order to select and place participants of the courses, the Solution Placement Test (Edwards, 2007) was administered. It should be noted that the validity and reliability of this test have already been established. That is, the test has been used to evaluate EFL/ESL learners' level of proficiency for years and in many countries with diverse first language backgrounds.

In order to do the experiment and implement the treatment, the following procedure was followed. First, the placement test was conducted with 75 Iranian EFL learners who voluntarily participated in the test and had mentioned that they were of mid proficiency levels. The participants of the study were EFL learners from a language institute in Isfahan.

From among the 75 EFL learners who participated in the placement test, 44 EFL learners were randomly placed in one control and two experimental groups. The participants of the control group received the materials and instruction in the classroom. They were given the course pamphlet at the beginning of the course. Each session, they covered one grammar point from the material along with exercises. In addition, they were given some extra materials exercises to do during the course. They were familiarized with the structure of passive and how to use it.

The treatment for the experimental groups was different. The participants of the Blended Learning group attended classes and received the pamphlet and instructions in the classroom similar to those of the control group. Nevertheless, unlike participants of the control group, they had to send their assignments and receive the instructor's feedback through the net and also download the extra materials and exercises through the class weblog. In addition, they could use email in order to get in touch with the instructor in case they faced any difficulty.

Participants of the Web-based group, who had the same specifications as the participants of the Control and Blended Learning groups, were required to do everything through the net. After taking the placement test and being placed in the relevant groups, participants of the Web-based group were given the instructions about what to do to during the course. Participants had to visit the weblog frequently and download the lessons, the course book, and the assignments. They were told to send their material to the researcher through an email which was given to them in the instructions. In addition, they were told to be in touch with the teacher by email and ask any question they had.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Pretest

In order to examine the impact of blended learning, i.e., the independent variable, on Iranian EFL learners' acquisition and retention of passive sentences, the dependent variable, participants of

the study had to do several test during the course. The first test of the participants was considered to be the pretest. Table (1) presents the descriptive statistics of the pretest.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Pretest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Web-based	15	7.20	1.74	.45	6.24	8.16	3.00	10.00
Blended	15	6.73	2.55	.66	5.32	8.14	2.00	10.00
Control	14	8.21	1.81	.48	7.17	9.26	5.00	11.00
Total	44	7.36	2.11	.32	6.72	8.01	2.00	11.00

In order to test the homogeneity of variances for the pretest scores, the Levene test was conducted. The results, as presented in Table (2) indicate that the difference was not significant and that the participants were quite homogeneous. This helped the researcher run the inferential statistics, i.e. one-way ANOVA to see whether there was a significant difference among the participants.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA for the Pretest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.49	2	8.25	1.92	.16
Within Groups	175.69	41	4.29		
Total	192.18	43			

The results show that there was no statistically significant difference at $p > .05$ level among the three groups: $F_{(2, 43)} = 1.92$, $p = .16$. In other words, there was no statistically significant difference among the participants of the Blended group ($M = 6.73$, $SD = 2.55$), the Web Based group ($M = 7.20$, $SD = 1.74$), and the Control group ($M = 8.21$, $SD = 1.81$) in the pretest. The results ensured that any possible effects that happened during the experiment would be the result of the treatment.

Results of the Posttest

In order to examine the impact of blended learning, i.e., the independent variable, on Iranian EFL learners' acquisition and retention of passive sentences, the dependent variable, participants of the study had to take three tests during the course, namely pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest. Their second test was considered as the posttest. Table (3) presents the descriptive statistics concerning the posttest. The table shows information about each group in terms of the number, mean, and standard deviation, standard error of measurement, the minimum, and the maximum scores, respectively.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the Posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Web-based	15	17.40	3.92	1.01	15.23	19.57	10.00	25.00
Blended	15	21.47	4.47	1.15	18.99	23.94	15.00	29.00
Control	14	25.93	3.56	.95	23.87	27.99	19.00	30.00
Total	44	21.50	5.25	.79	19.90	23.10	10.00	30.00

Similarly, Levene's test of homogeneity was run to make sure that there was no significant difference among the participants of the posttest.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA for the Posttest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	526.74	2	263.37	16.35	.000
Within Groups	660.26	41	16.10		
Total	1187.00	43			

As the results of the table above show, there was a statistically significant difference among the participants of the Blended Learning group ($M = 21.47$, $SD = 4.47$), Web-based group ($M = 17.40$, $SD = 3.92$) and Control group ($M = 25.93$, $SD = 3.56$). Nevertheless, in order to locate the difference among the control and experimental groups, the one-way ANOVA was followed by post-hoc tests.

Results of the Delayed Posttest

In order to examine the impact of blended learning, i.e., the independent variable, on Iranian EFL learners' retention of passive sentences, the dependent variable, participants of the study had to take a delayed posttest, which was their last test. Table (5) presents the descriptive statistics concerning the delayed posttest. The table shows information about each group in terms of the number, mean, and standard deviation, standard error of measurement, the minimum, and the maximum scores, respectively.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for the Delayed Posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Web-based	15	16.80	3.73	.96	14.74	18.86	11.00	22.00
Blended	15	21.73	4.27	1.10	19.37	24.10	11.00	27.00
Control	14	25.50	3.44	.92	23.52	27.48	20.00	30.00
Total	44	21.25	5.19	.78	19.67	22.83	11.00	30.00

Similarly, Levene's test of homogeneity was run to make sure that there was no significant difference among the participants of the delayed posttest.

Table 6: One-way ANOVA for the Delayed Posttest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	553.42	2	276.71	18.82	.000
Within Groups	602.83	41	14.70		
Total	1156.25	43			

As the results of the table above show, there was a statistically significant difference among the participants of the Blended Learning group ($M = 21.73$, $SD = 4.27$), Web-based group ($M = 16.80$, $SD = 3.73$) and Control group ($M = 25.50$, $SD = 3.44$). Nevertheless, in order to locate the difference among the control and experimental groups, the one-way ANOVA was followed by post-hoc tests.

Repeated Measurement

In order to examine the long-term effects of the treatment on the retention of passive structures, a repeated measures ANOVA was conducted. Table(7)presents the results.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Repeated Measures

	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Pretest	Web-based	7.20	1.74	15
	Blended	6.73	2.55	15
	Control	8.21	1.81	14
	Total	7.36	2.11	44
Posttest	Web-based	17.40	3.92	15
	Blended	21.47	4.47	15
	Control	25.93	3.56	14
	Total	21.50	5.25	44
Delayed	Web-based	16.80	3.73	15
	Blended	21.73	4.27	15
	Control	25.50	3.44	14
	Total	21.25	5.19	44

Table 7 shows descriptive statistics of the participants' scores in experimental and control groups in the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest). As the results of Table(7)show the mean scores of the control group in all the tests was higher than both experimental groups.

Table 8: Multivariate Tests

	Value	F	Hypothesis Error df	Sig.	Partial Squared	EtaNoncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^b	
Pillai's trace	.96	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00
Wilks' lambda	.04	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00
Hotelling's trace	21.62	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00
Roy's largest root	21.62	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00

Table 8 shows the results of analysis of variance for the effects of passing the time on the scores. Then this hypothesis that passing the time does not effect on the Participant's scores is rejected at the level of confidence, 95%. Because the significance level of this test is lower than 0/05,p<0/05.It is concluded that participant's scores changed through passing the time. Based on the effect size of time variable, repeated measure specified 96% of participant's scores changes.

Discussion

Research Question One

The first research question states: "Does blended learning lead to the acquisition of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?" As indicated in Chapter four, blended learning strategy used in the current study did not significantly affect students'achievement.However, in this study the control group significantly outperformed the experimental groups, as the results of statistical analyses indicated.

Of course it is imperative to mention that there are studies which have had positive results using the blended learning teaching methods. For example, Al-Zumor (2013) investigated the advantages and limitations of face-to-face language instruction and online language learning in the Blended Learning approach. The results indicated the positive effects of blended learning on students' reading opportunities and enriching their English vocabulary. Moreover, based on advantages demonstrated how Blended Learning provided an environment for more effective employment of indirect language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990). It showed that Blended Learning could enhance their writing, listening, grammar, pronunciation and speaking skills.

Similarly, Jia, Chen, Ding and Runa (2012) investigated vocabulary acquisition in a Blended learning class. They conducted surveys and interviews in order to demonstrate the positive effects of Blended learning on vocabulary acquisition. The result showed that students were more interested in this kind of class (Blended) than the traditional one. Blended learning could improve the students' performance in vocabulary acquisition. The results are in contrast to the ones in the present study in which participants of the Blended Learning group performed more poorly than the traditional group.

Keshta and Harb (2013) examined another study related to the effectiveness of Blended learning on developing English writing skills. They reached positive effects of Blended learning. Their findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference for the experimental groups. Their results showed that Blended Learning was quite effective in improving English writing.

Research Question Two

The second research question of the present study was intended to assess the effects of web-based learning on the acquisition of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners. Online presentation of materials and instruction followed in this study did not impact the students' acquisition of passive structure. In other words, making EFL learners participate in online or exclusively virtual classes would not necessarily result in better performance. The difference between the means scores of the Web-based group and the control group was so salient. Thus, the proposed web based learning did not improve learners' acquisition the passive structure in English. In another study, Al-Jarf (2004) investigated the effects of web –based learning on struggling EFL college writers. The results of the study showed that using web-based instruction in online writing classes resulted in a significantly more effective performance than the one in traditional classroom instruction. Although web-based instruction has been considered to be an important factor in enhancing the writing quality, this has not been supported by the results of the present study.

Research Question Three

The third research question was aimed to examine whether there is a significant difference among the three teaching methods of passive structures (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional). The results of post hoc tests indicated that the traditional teaching methods of writing as presented to the participants of the control group was more effective and the participants of this group significantly outperformed those of the Blended Learning and Web–based groups in terms of their acquisition of passive structures. Comparing the control and experimental groups, the results revealed a significant difference in this regard. However, a closer look at the results, i.e., the

means and the level of significance showed that participants of the control group had a better performance than those of the experimental groups.

The participants of the Blended Learning group had a slightly better performance than their counterparts in the Web-based group. Yusofa and Saadonb (2012) investigated the effects of web-based language learning on university students' grammar proficiency. Their study was intended to determine the effects of learning grammar, in three different English classes using three different methods of teaching, namely face-to-face method, blended method (traditional and web-based materials) and web-based learning method. The results indicated that for all the three modes, the pretest and posttest showed a significant difference. Thus, those three methods of instruction could improve students' performance in grammar. The findings of Yusofa and Saadonb's study revealed that there were significant differences between the two groups in their knowledge of English grammar. The online grammar instruction contributed to students' achievement in their English course.

Research Question Four

Research question four was aimed to examine whether blended learning had any effect on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners. As indicated in Chapter four, the results of post hoc comparisons for the delayed posttest indicated that the participants of the traditional group significantly outperformed those of the Web-based and Blended Learning groups in terms of their long-term retention of passive structures. Therefore, blended learning did not have a significant effect on the retention of passive structures. The results of this study clearly revealed that after conducting the posttest, participants of the Blended group showed a negative performance in remembering the passive structure in future performances. It is essential to mention that there was no study to date to make any comparison for similar and different results.

Research Question Five

The fifth research question was asked to scrutinize whether web-based learning had any effects on long-term retention of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners. The results showed that participants in this group had lower scores in terms of long term retention of passive sentences. The performance of this group in the delayed posttest was the same as that of the posttest and had a lower mean score.

Research Question Six

The last research question was aimed to ask which of the three methods of teaching grammar (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional) had more lasting effects on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners. As indicated in Chapter Four, the results of the experiment showed that the Blended Learning group did not actually affect the retention of passive structures and that the control group showed a better result. The results showed that the traditional method of teaching grammar had more lasting effects on long-term retention of the passive structure.

CONCLUSION

A few conclusions could be drawn from the findings of this research that help English language teachers and learners in both public and private schools to have some insights about teaching and learning English grammar, especially passive structures. The results of this study indicated that the proposed blended learning method did not improve participants' acquisition and long-term retention of the target structure. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that some students were quite satisfied with the proposed blended learning method in learning passive structure.

For all the three methods, it was found that the pretest, posttest and delayed posttest had a significant difference. Thus, these three methods of instruction can affect learners' performance in learning and producing grammar. The findings revealed that the integration method (blended) was not the best method to be used in the grammar class as it helped to improve participants' score. This finding gives the idea that teachers should encourage their students to use more of the internet and computer. This is because learners will enjoy using the benefits of technology in learning and can understand grammar lessons (e.g., the passive structure) more efficiently and easily. Blended Learning remains a relatively new concept at many English institutions; however, recent research appears to indicate that when "appropriately" implemented, blended learning can significantly improve the learning experience (Marsh, 2012).

The present study contributed to proving the effectiveness and impact of Blended Learning for EFL learners. Although for certain reasons Blended Learning did not have any significant effect on learning the passive structure, the positive effects shown by other studies cannot be ignored. In fact, in some other related research, the researchers consistently noted the clear advantages of this experience in learning skills and sub-skills. In this study, there were some limitations that need to be addressed and results of the study should be interpreted having these limitations in mind. Many problems can be related to the type of students who enroll in a blended learning class. The Blended classes were not suitable for every participant. Some students who did not have self-discipline and could have benefitted more in a face-to-face traditional class. In the web-based class there was a lack of spontaneous feedback and some students needed the interaction with teacher, so they failed to get good results. In the online part of the blended learning and web-based classes, participants had some problems sending their assignment and even observing the blog through the net, most of them did not have any email at first and took some time to make one. In addition, using the blog was somehow difficult for them, especially at the beginning of the study. This resulted in some problems for the teacher too. For example, sometimes they had to wait and it was quite time-consuming. Also, preparing the materials for the blended learning group was difficult and time-consuming. Participants in the online part needed to have verbal interaction. The researcher sometimes observed that students were eager to have face to face learning because of the emotional aspects of direct feedback. Students sometimes felt that they were given more work to do when on line materials were used. They often preferred the paper versions of the materials. Some of them were interested in going to the weblog but they did not like to type and send their assignment. This problem is related to their knowledge of the computer.

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DIAGNOSTIC TEST: THE PREPONDERANT CONNECTIVE BETWEEN THE PILOT STUDY AND ACTION RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Learner centred communicative language teaching classrooms allow teachers to do a wide variety of researches in different contexts; the action researches and the classroom researches are synonymous in their process and outcome too; they may be adjudged as the wash back sequence of globalization; these pedagogical exercises with the teachers as facilitators and monitors depend more on the teachers' ability to observe and their invincible belief in remedial approaches towards deficient performances of the learners. The present article deliberates on the diagnostic test administered to the first year engineering students of Dr. M. G. R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai; it was administered immediately after their induction into the course i.e. in the month of September, 2014. It was administered subsequent to a pilot study which investigated the students as the members of different language groups struggling to learn English as second language against the lack of parental and societal cooperation and the different variables that are detrimental to the learning of English as second language; the diagnostic test was designed to assess the cognitive and communicative implications in the overall English language proficiency of the new comers. The feedback proved that the students had not sharpened their listening and speaking skills at the tertiary level and hence their lack of oral communication. Pondering over the feedback, and taking the clue from action researches carried on in the English as second language (ESL) and English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms across the world, the researcher planned for the action research; with supporting technology intervention and oral communication practices in the form of role plays, the action research looked for honing the oral communication skills of the students for effective inter personal and academic communication in English.

KEYWORDS: globalisation, wash back sequence, action research, diagnostic test, preponderant connective

INTRODUCTION

When the students get inducted into Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University as new entrants in the professional course of their choice, the university takes responsibility to mould them as employable global citizens. As faculty of the university, the onus of developing the students' communicative skills with all its components squarely rests on the university English teacher. The prior knowledge about the students' language ability may show the direction for future course of action. As a first step, a pilot study was organised. It made use of a customised questionnaire (research instrument 1) to investigate the participants' personal factors such as age, and parental factors that usually influence second language learning at the early stages. The next step was to investigate the pattern of learning in the schools (medium of instruction and method of English learning), and then infer the socio political and cultural factors that might have influenced the students. The importance of English in the learner's perspective was to be ascertained. The analysis and findings suggested that the students have not honed their oral communication throughout their school education. So an action research was planned to hone the oral communication skills of the new entrants. On the basis of the findings of the pilot survey, the diagnostic test (research instrument 2) was designed with the purpose of reflecting how the students stood in relation to the attainment of the goals of the course in which they had got admitted on the basis of their knowledge acquired in the past. The findings helped the researcher to identify oral proficiency of the first year engineering students was not sufficient for the purpose of using English for inter personal and academic communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Test/assessment/ evaluation

Generally speaking, all classroom tests whether formal (paper and pencil tests: administered under controlled conditions) Hedge (2008) or informal (administered during classroom procedure) are formative in nature and they judge the students' level of performance on a specific task or unit in a syllabus during the course of learning. By and large all classroom tests are 'assessments for learning' because they give descriptive feedback to the students for self-realization and improvement in their academic performance; the teachers on their part can rely on these 'assessments for learning' to decide on required changes in the teaching learning process to achieve the desired outcome. In this view, classroom assessment has become an important medium that can support and enhance teaching learning (Shepard, 2000). The semester examinations at the end of a learning period, probably at the completion of the course itself are assessments of learning. They are summative in their function as they assess the learning outcome of a process as a product; they are usually considered separate entity. They categorise learners on certain criteria and offer least scope for learners' improvement. By way of their utility to sieve the learners for the next higher grade in the learning process, the present research considers them out of its purview.

The behaviourists consider classroom assessments and tests as cognitive strategies to focus on learner development (Linn & Gronlund, 2000). Linn and Gronlund (2000) posit that classroom assessments can address both the learning process and learning outcomes: these measurements can provide ways for teachers to know both the effectiveness of the process used to perform a

given task and the outcome of the performance. For Hedge, (2008) the classroom based assessments are “concerned with gathering useful information that the teacher can use to support student language learning” (p.384). Evaluation or assessment: used interchangeably (Nunan, 1991; O’Malley,1996) is exploratory to assess the learning outcome. In a teacher’s perspective, “A major reason for carrying out assessment and evaluation is to determine whether learners are progressing satisfactorily or not, and, if they are not, to diagnose the cause or causes and suggest remedies” (Nunan, 1991).The feedback from the assessments urge the teacher to be inquisitive about the possible methodologies and learning strategies in language learning for the benefit of the learners and help her to provide the less proficient students with constructive guidance for improvisation.

While discussing the syllabus based diagnostic achievement test for ESP (English for specific purpose) students, Bachman and Palmer (1996) suggest the diagnostic achievement test- other way of expressing ‘assessment for learning’, “should make it relatively easy for the test takers to perform at their best”(p.294). The types of feedback that the test takers receive enlighten them about their test performance quite directly. So the test developers and users should make the feedback relevant, complete, and meaningful to the test taker. While the scores to be appropriate to the demands of questions on the test taker, the verbal descriptions could be used to interpret the test scores, and personalised debriefing by the test administrator with the test taker could develop a positive affective response toward the test by the latter. Bachman and Palmer add that the feedback should be impartial and fair to regard the test taker as per se. The feedback could help a teacher to be decisive whether to continue the present instructional strategies or to bring a change in them. “... all those activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves will provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged” (Black and William,1998, p. 2).

Diagnostic test

Though the assessment tests can be diagnostic by their outcome, the diagnostic tests per se, a category on their own, enjoy a special significance in the teaching learning process. Unlike the assessments of learning, a diagnostic test is administered at the beginning of a course to assess the actual language ability of the students and to design a methodology by which the students can be facilitated to learn the target language. Before starting a diagnostic procedure, the teachers need to understand the teaching beliefs and the appropriate teaching practices used in similar classes; such attitude and fine observation, could help teachers to design and administer the test to the beginners. The teacher like a physician uses the test instruments to obtain scientific and definite proof for better diagnosis and the remedial measure thereafter. Therefore, a diagnostic test may be defined as the test which can provide a detailed picture of strengths and weaknesses in the learners’ relevant area of learning. For Bachman and Palmer (1996) “diagnosis involves identifying specific areas of strength or weakness in language ability so as to assign students to specific courses or learning activities” (ibid: p. 98). A diagnostic test can plug the gaps in students’ learning. Nevertheless, it should be in congruence with the objectives of the tests designed and administered in similar EFL and ESL contexts.

Diagnostic feedback

Diagnostic feedback is quite valuable to both the teacher and learner; Black and William (1998) opine that descriptive diagnostic feedback could improve the learning outcome. It helps the teacher to identify slow learners, less proficient and also the cause for the problem; to identify the specific areas of remediation; while accelerating the process of learning it can make the learning process effective and customised to the learner need. The learner is relieved of his test and new course anxieties and sets himself to get adjusted to the learning of new syllabus and a new environment. Though the method of learning and the syllabus of the content they learnt till then are not necessarily the focus of the teacher, a diagnostic test presumes that the students had the opportunity to learn what can be considered the requisites to continue the present learning and hence it perfectly synchronises with the notion of Brumfit and Roberts (1983) about diagnostic test: “right at the beginning of a new course and its content designed to reflect the goals of the course, so that one would then know how students stood in relation to attainment of those goals on the basis of knowledge acquired in the past” (p.126). Furthermore the diagnostic test must be customised for the purpose of identifying the present proficiency level of the students in terms of what they have learnt in the past and what they stand to learn in the future (Ur, 1991).

Certain diagnostic assessments are specifically designed for providing diagnostic feedback (Alderson, 2005; Gorin, 2007). Therefore, in the present context of professional education in a university, the students’ language ability to handle interpersonal communication and academic language performance must be assessed. The diagnostic test customised for the purpose must include cognitive tasks and communicative tasks suited for diagnosing learners’ strengths and weaknesses in the language skills. Such a diagnostic test requires a systematic design framework involving multiple steps (Davidson & Lynch, 2002; Mislevy, Steinberg, & Almond, 2003; Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001). Bachman and Palmer have pointed out the benefits of diagnostic feedback for the researchers in second language learning context. Bachman and Palmer suggest that the test scores can be used to describe levels or profiles of language ability for a variety of research purposes. The language tests that the researchers design may shed light on the test taker’s language knowledge and language ability including the effects of their characteristics and that of language tasks on language test performance, and the relationships among tests of different areas of language ability.

Alderson (2005) opines that a diagnostic test should be more exposing test takers’ weaknesses than strengths. Effective diagnostic feedback is not only his concern but also that of Black and William, (1998) and Zhao, (2013). Zhao (2013) enumerates a number of empirical studies on diagnostic language tests. According to her recording, the diagnostic test administered by Sewell (2004) to a number of adult learners in UK provided feedback on their language skills and abilities. It employed multiple choices and open writing tasks. The result was that the learners benefited by the comprehensive diagnostic feedback on their strengths and weaknesses as language learners. Surely, the observations made by Zhao are fit to be considered a bird’s eye view opinion about the existing diagnostic tests and their validity in assessment in general; a diagnostic test needs to be reliable and valid lest it cannot be a decision making and preponderant connective in an action research.

Reliability and validity

It is widely believed that the available literature on language testing do not offer the required guidance to teachers about the content and conduct of diagnostic tests and also the measures to make them reliable and valid. Generally, a test can be a reliable device “if it is so constructed that performances on it are not random, but are procured in a systematic way through the interaction of the test with the knowledge and ability of the individuals tested, so that if the test were repeated, the results should still place the candidates in the same rank order” (Brumfit & Roberts 1983). They further add that the teachers should eliminate ambiguous phrasing of questions and should check for the appropriate scoring for the question in view of their demand on the test user. In short, reliability refers to the consistency of the assessment procedure; better still to the score consistency (AERA,1999; Brown & Hudson, 2002; Henning, 1987; Sari Luoma, 2004) considers “reliability is important because it means that the scores are dependable so that we (teachers) can rely on them for decision making”.

As for validity, it refers to the purpose of the test and to see whether the purpose is achieved or not. A test should have ‘face validity’- that it tests the knowledge already exists with the candidate or “the situations in which the language was subsequently to be used; the test should show ‘content validity’ that it relates to the task for which proficiency is required; the test may be said to have ‘concurrent validity’ if its result is in concurrence with similar tests on the candidates placed on the same proficiency level; lastly if the test is constructed in such a way as to reflect current thinking on the aims of language teaching and the nature of language learning, it may be said to have construct validity (Brumfit & Roberts 1983; Savignon 1987). In short, they profess integrative or global language tests which are updated to the current thinking and criterion referenced to the communicative needs of the real world can be appropriate diagnostic tests. They add communication needs a working together of linguistic skills and other skills that are part of communicative skills. As such the construct validity of the diagnostic tests can be guided by the objectives of the learning process and its context.

Appropriateness of the customised diagnostic test

The orthodoxy of communicative language teaching believes learners are to be active participants in a teaching learning process as such they need to be active test takers too. Of late the communicative language classes have recognised the discrete language skills, such as grammar and vocabulary as essential components of oral communication to depict mastery over the language in the context of globalization. Bachman and Palmer believe that for language testing purposes teachers must consider the test takers’ language ability within the interactional framework of language use. The language ability involves two components: language competence or language knowledge and strategic competence or metacognitive strategies. The test developed may permit these components to interact within the frame work of language use in a given test task which demands the use of appropriate vocabulary and grammar. According to Larsen Freeman (2003), the exponent of linguistic heuristic principle, language exists through form, meaning and use. “As our principle tells us, with the difference of form comes a difference in meaning”(p. 44). As per her ‘challenge principle’, “It is impossible to separate form from meaning, meaning from use” (p. 45) Though it is possible to focus on any one of these dimensions in classroom for pedagogical reasons, it is true that classroom assessment based on

cognitive and constructive views of learning can provide both students and teachers with understandable information in a form to improve performance. . However, Bachman and Palmer suggest that the test scores can be used to describe levels or profiles of language ability for a variety of research purposes. The diagnostic test being a research instrument to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the engineering students to learn the academic language the cognitive and communicative aspects of language learning were part of its constructs and hence it had the construct validity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The Research questions addressed were as follows:

1. What is the participants' overall proficiency in English as second language?
2. Is it true that the new entrant students lack oral proficiency as they have informed in the questionnaire?
3. How can the students be facilitated to hone the required oral communication skills to meet the demands of the professional education?

METHODOLOGY

The diagnostic test spoken here was the sequence of the pilot study undertaken by the present researcher as a preliminary step to the 'Action Research to Hone Oral Communication Skills of Engineering Students' in Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai "The first step in a teaching process, is the collection of information about learners in order to diagnose the objective needs of the students (Richerich,1972), and it is more so with the action research. Action research is not exploratory in nature rather it is the process of posing the problem and identifying a solution which will give scope for exploring our teaching beliefs. "It is a cyclical process that follows a series of repeated steps like setting a goal, planning an action, to reach this goal, acting on this plan, observing the action, reflecting on the observation and setting the next goal"(Gebhard,1999 p.63). As such the research methodology has included a questionnaire to investigate the interrelationship between the various components of L1 and L2 language proficiency. The pilot study made use of a customised questionnaire (research instrument 1) to investigate the participants' personal factors such as age, and parental factors that usually influence language learning at the early stages and which act as affective filters in Second Language Learning. The next step was to investigate the pattern of learning in the schools (medium of instruction and method of English learning), and then infer the socio political and cultural factors that might have influenced the students. The importance of English in the learner's perspective was to be ascertained. It was a survey research because it was conducted by using questionnaires to collect the data, thoughts and feelings of participants. The descriptive survey method was adopted to scrutinise the responses and explain them" (Rajeswaran, 2015).

The appropriate objective inferences and findings from the pilot study guided the researcher to design a diagnostic test to identify the present proficiency level of the students in terms of what they have learnt in the past and in relation to the demands of the engineering course in which they

have been inducted and most importantly to ascertain the specific area of weakness in their learning and the mode of remediation to rectify it.

Participants

The research was conducted in the undergraduate engineering programme of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai. The participants were sixty five in number. They were from the different states of India and hence heterogeneous by virtue of their mother tongue, culture and tradition. They got admitted to the university after passing plus2 public examinations in Science, Mathematics, and English as second language.

Measuring conceptual skills through diagnostic Test

A diagnostic test was given in the course of the week after the students' induction into the course. The test investigated the class of sixty five to find if there were marked differences in the students' listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities. Though diagnostic tests should not be restricted into time limit, one hour and forty minutes was available for the purpose. It had the following components:

Sl. No.	TASKS	TESTED SKILLS	Marks
1	Dictation	L, W, C	5
2	Expanding the nominal compounds	L, W, C	5
3	Listening comprehension/Recalling the gist of an academic lecture:	L, W, C	5
4	Using a proverb in a context and presenting the write up orally	W, S, C	5+5=10

Each task was allotted five marks, explaining a proverb task was to be written and presented orally; it was allotted ten marks: writing: 5 marks; oral presentation: 5 marks; and hence the total assessment was for twenty five marks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dictation

A dictation test, the oldest form of listening and writing assessment was given to ascertain the cognitive ability of the participants to comprehend the English speech sounds and encode them by letters remembering spelling rules like silent letters, doubling of the consonants, the micro techniques, etc.,. Five words of scientific terms were dictated. Fifty six students could write correct spellings, the remaining nine did not write all the words correctly.

Expanding nominal compounds

To expand nominal compounds one should use appropriate prepositions with an innate common sense to mean the particular object referred to. While expanding them, the use of prepositions will vary depending upon the object and its function in the context. Thirty five students could expand the nominal compounds with appropriate prepositions; eleven students made few mistakes; nineteen students used confused sort of prepositions or no prepositions at all.

Listening comprehension

The students were to be assessed for their ability to listen, recall and write. At the beginning of the diagnostic test, a CD containing a lecture on 'Barriers to Listening' was played (Dutt, K. et al. 2008) and the students were advised to listen carefully to the lecture and take note in order that they could recall the lecture to answer the question asked. Only thirty students could take notes in phrases and write in the chronological order while the rest were not able to take notes and their comprehending ability was too poor to recollect that they remembered only at random.

Using a proverb in a context

Cultures are as different as languages themselves; it is true that many situations are common and universal in any language. So the exercise on proverb was included in the test. As proverbs are intricately intertwined with the common situations in a culture the researcher wanted to ascertain the students' ability to use a proverb of their choice in a context and write the same in a paragraph. The exercise on proverb was given to check not only their rote learning ability but to assess their ability to find the association of such proverbs in their own life and culture that they try to express their meaning in English. It was to check the test takers' retention ability for a long time (long time memory) whether they could recollect a common proverb and use it in the context; whether they were able to write a few grammatically correct sentences in a cohesive order and present the same orally.

The learners orally presented their write-ups. The following may give some idea of the rubrics for assessment.

Table 1: Holistic scoring rubric

Rating	Description
5	Speaks fluently-uses appropriate vocabulary and structure
4	Less fluent- with occasional errors in vocabulary and grammar
3	Speaks with difficulty- has vocabulary- no coherence
2	Speaks in single word utterance- searching for phrases and words
1	Lacks content - keeps silent- looks for prompts-no words- no grammar

The quantitative comments appearing in the form of 1,2,3,4, 5 in each column are indicative of student's oral proficiency in English: 1&2 – below the mark 3- fair 4- good 5 excellent. Further, it is a common assumption that lexical phrases or lexical chunks comprise a considerable part of a person's total vocabulary; probably a native speaker will know thousands of them easily. In a non- native speaker and ESL context though such expectations will not hold, the researcher expected a reasonable output since the proverbs are multiple word units that can easily be retained, recalled, interpreted and used in appropriate context. But, the performance of the students both written and oral showed poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, and poor content comprehension; fluency, cohesion and coherence were relegated to insignificance. Yet, although nine students professed to be fluent in English, they could not give a satisfactory oral performance.

Table 2: The number of students and the components that they lacked

components	grammar	vocabulary	content	coherence	fluency
No. of students	35	30	56	56	56

Discussion

As for dictation, the feedback could underpin the reason for poor performance of the nine students as they were from vernacular medium instruction at school. They were not able to comprehend the pronunciation of the words; their listening skill needed practice; moreover, probably test anxiety could have been a barrier that did not permit them to listen to properly. Attaining better pronunciation habits is intimately linked with listening process. Listening instructions at both beginning and intermediate levels of second language proficiency, greatly enhances the language learning potentials of ESL students (Dunkel,1986; Krashen & Terrel, 1983). Stevick (1976) wrote that in teaching of pronunciation all too often, self-consciousness leads to tension, tension leads to poor performance, poor performance leads to frustration, frustration leads to added tension, and so on around a downward spiral(p.146).

As for listening comprehension, ‘Recalling the gist of an academic lecture’ it was clear that listening to authentic audio CDs was new to the students. They have not groomed their listening skills to comprehend the spoken language and that too on the audio player. In the communicative approach, honing listening and speaking skills is the most important; they are the primary skills which are receptive and productive in their functions respectively. Listening is an active process of gathering the information passed on as input and the speech production is a multilevel interactive process of meaning creation. Proponents of comprehension approaches recognise the importance of listening in language comprehension, retention of information in memory and acquisition of second language competence. ESL methodologists argue that L2 pronunciation practice needs to be linked with the listening process. With better listening habits, Stevick (1976) assured better recognition of pronunciation for an anxiety free EFL learning. A view of listening comprehension describes comprehension of a speaker’s message as the internal reproduction of that message in the listener’s mind. So that successful listening produces the meaning much as the speaker intended (Clark & Clark, 1977).

As for expanding nominal compounds, the result that nineteen out of sixty five students used confused sort of prepositions or no prepositions at all showed the students’ poor grammar skill and lack of vocabulary knowledge. It proved what Haynes (1993) said about students: they (students) “sometimes made an incorrect guess about what an unknown word meant in a text, and then stuck with that meaning even though it made no sense in the context”. Morphology deals with affixes and their derivational effects. Laufer (1997) opines that as long as the derivational affixes are transparent identifying their meaning is easy; if they are not, the meaning is not clear. The researcher has identified the same problem with the noun affixes (nouns affixed before another noun) in the nominal compounds. While expanding them, the use of prepositions will vary depending upon the object and its function in the context. While talking about teaching pragmatically appropriate choices to the students, Freeman (2003) says, “At best all that we can do is call our students’ attention to the norms of linguistic usage. ...we can, however, help our

students to become sensitive to differences among forms in general as a way to make them aware of the possible implications of their choice” (p.61). The nominal compounds did not pose much of a problem for many students and it elated the researcher to find that the students had an aptitude oriented towards technology to infer and interpret the meanings.

As for using a proverb in a context, the exercise on proverb was given to check not only their rote learning ability but to assess their ability to find the association of such proverbs in their own life and culture that they try to express their meaning in English. Cultures are as different as languages themselves; it is true that many situations are common and universal in any language. “Proverbs often, have equivalents across languages” (Schmitt, 2008, p.100). So it was assumed that the students will find it an easy exercise. However, the written and oral performance of the students showed poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, and poor content comprehension; fluency, cohesion and coherence were relegated to insignificance. Although nine students professed to be fluent in English, they could not give a satisfactory oral performance.

While defining multiword units which comprise phrasal verbs, idioms and proverbs Schmitt says this kind of lexical phrases are common in a language to have functional utility, as such they facilitate clear, relevant and concise language use. They are important for pragmatic competence and communication in general that such lexical phrases are stored in human brain as a single unit of information in order to speed up the processing and use of language. Quoting John Sinclair, Schmitt continues lexical patterning allow variable expressions to have a syntagmatic structure. In this view, lexis and grammar “are combined into a single lexicogrammatical force” (p.113).

The fact that many students could not remember proverbs and find their relevance in some context has confirmed that their rote learning in schools was not conducive for lexical chunking to facilitate multiple storage in the mental lexicon. So, now it is the turn of the university teacher to familiarise the learners with lexical phrases advocating a focus on inducing lexical patterns from language input and also to concentrate on larger lexical phrases rather than individual words. This will help them to learn “the idea of lexical cohesion which is thinking about vocabulary not as discrete words but as interrelated members of cohesive discourse” (p.113); this kind of notion will be useful for students to organise ideas in academic writing and in oral discourses.

As for the assessment of students’ oral performance the components for the evaluation included content, language and delivery. The criteria need not be rigid but may accommodate the proficiency level of the class and the instructional goal (Gonzalez Pino, 1988). In a large class of students speaking different languages and no way near the zone of proximal development, pronunciation and accuracy were not stressed. Pronunciation is of least importance, only intelligibility is necessary in the non-native speaker to non- native speaker interaction context (Patil, 2007). Negotiation of meaning between non-native speaker students of English of different linguistic background stresses the importance of the co-operative nature of lingua franca communication. Since English is the lingua franca within the university campus and outside it, the non- native hybrid English is accepted as long as it is intelligible and comprehensible. The overall interpretation of the oral delivery was that the students were not fluent in speaking in

English. They were least motivated and were anxiety ridden that they were not ready to speak in English in front of their teacher and peers.

The assessment involved a detailed investigation method of scoring oral L2 performance and the interrelationship with the delivery of the content. This type of assessment gave insight into the overall weakness in their language learning. The pattern of their narrating had inflectional errors. Struggling to read what they themselves had written in English, for the reason that they were not sure of their sentence structure and their own handwriting was not helpful for reading in public under the pressure of language anxiety; hence their oral presentation was poor. Many of them used their mother tongue to explain and looked for prompting, which indicated that their vocabulary repertoire was not adequate to help their communication. It was observed that the students could write in English and they were not anxiety ridden to write but to speak in English. The most obvious problem in their learning was not having appropriate cognitive and metacognitive skills to sustain oral communication. The diagnostic test confirmed participants lacked oral communication.

Why role plays to enhance communication skills?

The literature available on various language learning strategies extrapolate that within the communicative approach, role plays can help the students to realise their communication goal. Though they are not cognitively demanding they give opportunity for the learners to use their cognitive and metacognitive skills to handle the language with confidence; they also help the students to shed off their inhibitions and language anxiety as the latter practice real world activities and academic functions.

Role plays can be used to express any content depending on the students' knowledge gained either from incidental reading or listening to teacher's introduction on certain topics for discussion or the situation for which the dialogues are created. The activity gives the students practice to think and speak without the strain of memorising. Role plays introduce the students to the socio cultural variations in speech acts, pragmatic aspect of the language such as requests and complaining, and discourse competence of coherence and cohesion. Students learn to understand the situation and appropriate linguistic choices made in the dialogue; at certain contexts teacher's introduction of prototypical phrases are also helpful.

It was decided that the students could present scripted role plays because as they wrote they could find the grammatical errors and rewrite taking the help of the teacher. The scripted role plays will help the teacher monitor the activity and the dialogues would not go out of her control (Alden,1999). It was also identified that technology aided practices such as viewing authentic video would circumvent the tedious process of modelling and would inspire self-confidence (Terrell, 1993), and repeated watching and listening to the videoed drama, soap opera etc., could help the students to reflect and improve their language ability. Weyers (1999) proved that the increase in the quantity and quality of input provided by the authentic video would result in enhanced oral production of the second language learners.

Anne Lazaraton (2001) feels EFL teachers who teach a heterogeneous (by native language and ethnicity) class of learners in non- English speaking environment, against the odds of large classes which deny them freedom to throw opportunity to provide feedback to the learners, also equally lack the motivation and opportunity to talk. So she suggests, “EFL teachers need to be particularly adept at organising class activities that are authentic, motivating, and varied. The use of authentic, engaging materials should be the basis for in class activities. If the necessary technology is available, showing movies, or recorded television programs and playing audio tapes of programs can be enjoyable for students and can provide them with authentic practice in listening to native speakers’ speech”(p.110).

Recording their pair performance of role plays will help them to identify their errors in role play performance and rectify them in repeated performance till they were satisfied of their performance. The process oriented approach with in the frame work of constructivist theories of language acquisition, self-observation and reflection help the learners to evaluate their L2speaking performance and adopt appropriate learning strategy to enhance the same (Castaneda & Gonzalez, 2011); task repetition (repeated role play performances) will direct learner attention and focus on form (Hawkes, 2010), which is essential for handling academic language. Bygate (1996) opines improved performance in a repeat task will enhance students’ grammar skills and lexis.

Gaining experience in oral communication by performing role plays as participants, the students can manage any situation demanding communication in English within the university and in the real world outside the university. “Role play is a classroom activity which gives the student the opportunity to practice the language, the aspects of role behaviour, and the actual roles he may need outside the classroom” (Livingstone, 1983, p.6). The interactive classes and the students’ participation in role play activities will help the students to hone their oral communication skills. As they shed off their fear and shyness, their confidence level increases (Saint Leger 2009), they will come to realise the recent global demand for people with communication skills in English. Indians, particularly students have come to realise the vanity of denying English its rightful place in academic and official language functions. This social awakening can definitely lead the enlightened engineering students to enhance their oral communication skills.

CONCLUSION

In the context of teaching the first year engineering students who are in the age group of seventeen years to twenty years the present research identifies them as young adults. The literatures pertaining to the adult learners consider them as ‘self- directed learners’ (Hills & Sutton (2001). Wenden (2002) says Self –directed language learners (SDLL) choose their learning strategies in accordance to their needs and beliefs; those who believe in learning language opt for cognitive strategies like memorization, rote learning and intensive reading to familiarise with vocabulary and structural aspects of the target language; but those whose priority is using the language pay more attention to communicative strategies. Holec (1981: p.16) says that a self-directed adult learner, adjusts his learning rhythm to his acquisition rhythm as he monitors the process of his learning which is aimed at certain specific outcome. Ultimately, the

learner evaluates at the end of a learning project to check whether the selected means of learning contributed to the desired objective.

Brown et al (1983) and Naiman et al (1978) have documented elaborately the use of learning strategies by young children, adolescents and adults to shed light on the effective learning strategies that could provide teachers guidance in improving the learning skills of low proficient language learners. As adult learners the engineering students analysed the diagnostic test feedback themselves to recognise their weakness in oral communication. They could underpin the gap between their language ability and the actual requirement in the context of studying a professional course. In such a context introducing them to a communication enhancing strategy like technology integrated role play activities will help them gain language attainment by taking an active part in actual communication. By practicing role plays they will learn interpersonal communication and academic language function for professional lineage.

It is worth mentioning the opinion of Dornyei (1995) on teaching communication strategies (CS). He says “raising learner awareness about the nature and communicative potential of CSs, encouraging students to be willing to take risks and use CSs, providing L2 (second language) models of the use of certain CSs And providing opportunities for practice in CS use will provide them a sense of security in the L2 by allowing them room to manoeuvre in times of difficulty...learners may decide to try and remain in the conversation and achieve their communicative goal. Providing learners help towards accomplishing this is, I believe, a worthy objective of communicative language instruction” (ibid.: pp. 80).

Scope and limitations of the study

In view of the findings and their usefulness in planning and designing further course of the action research, the researcher feels such customised diagnostic tests may be conducted for the benefit of student community. However, it is true that the pilot study and the diagnostic test were limited to a limited number of first year B.Tech. students of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai.

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APPENDIX I

Research Instrument: 1

DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1. Dictation words

(1X5= 5)

a. habitual b. sufficient c. detonate d. catalysis e. corrosive

2. Expand the following nominal compounds (1x5=5)

- a. Machine operator b. Circuit diagram c. Petroleum products
d. Water source e. Space travel

3. Take notes from what you listen to: (5)

Barriers to Listening (CD)

I'm sure all of you have come across people who are poor listeners and also some who are good listeners. If the person you are talking to is not listening to you actively, you do not feel encouraged to continue the conversation any further. So, it's important that you listen attentively to the person who is talking to you. This is very important when you are a student or when you are at work. To be an active listener, you must do several things.

First, look into the eyes of the person talking to you. Yes, make eye contact with that person. We communicate more through our eyes than through spoken words. That is why you find it difficult to communicate with a person who is wearing dark glasses because you miss the communication through the eyes.

Listening is not a passive activity. You communicate through gestures and facial expression. Such non-verbal communication can be helpful to the speaker. A stony, expressionless face can be very discouraging to the speaker. So, to be an active listener, learn to communicate through, gestures and facial expressions. If you're surprised, show surprise. If you're happy, smile. If you do not agree with what the other person says, signal your disagreement.

Thirdly, you must show your enthusiasm for what the speaker is saying. Your posture communicates your enthusiasm. If you sit back relaxed, you show disinterest. If you're an active listener, you should sit leaning forward and not backward. Finally, learn to respond to the speaker's words. Use responses such as ...mm..., ok, all right, perhaps, certainly, no, not at all, yes, very well, etc. Such responses help the speaker to understand whether you are with him or her.

The first thing to remember is that nobody is born a poor listener. There are many factors that lead to poor listening. The first reason for poor listening could be that the listener is not interested in the subject or the topic being discussed. In such cases, the listener does not make an effort to listen to and understand the content. As a result, he or she does not understand what the speaker is talking about. If you're not interested in history, you may not listen attentively to lectures on history.

Some listeners are partial listeners. They do not listen fully to the speaker's words. Again, this results in inadequate understanding. So, the second factor may be partial listening.

Some speakers speak very fast. Have you had an occasion when you found it difficult to understand someone because he or she was speaking too fast? That's the third factor – fast pace of delivery by the speaker. After listening to the speaker for a while, if you realize that you are not able to cope with the pace, you give up and stop listening. This can happen in classroom lectures. So, remember to speak at a pace at which the listener is comfortable.

Let's now talk about a fourth factor. What do you do when you do not understand what the speaker says? If you remain quiet or pretend that you have understood, you are making a mistake. Your failure to ask for clarifications can cause inadequate comprehension. It's interesting to learn why people don't ask for repetitions or clarifications. Some are shy, so they don't ask questions. Some do not have the chance to ask for a repetition because the speaker speaks continuously. Some do not ask questions or voice their doubts because they are unsure of their language competence. In all these cases, the listener stands to lose. So, do not make the mistake of not asking questions or seeking clarification.

Let me now talk about a fifth barrier to listening. Sometimes, the physical environment around you can make listening difficult. If there is too much external noise it can affect listening. Listen to this person who is standing in the middle of the street and is struggling to listen to the speaker.

A : I can barely hear you.

B : What I want you to do is ...

C : I can't hear you. I 'll call you back in 20 minutes.

You experience similar difficulty when there is loud music or loud noise from a machine.

Lastly, you can be a poor listener if you are engaged in other activities while listening to someone. You would have seen people doing other things while talking on the phone. Some continue reading the mail on the

computer, while some others continue watching television while talking to someone on the phone. In both cases, their attention is divided between the two activities they are involved in. This hampers their listening. Listen to a conversation where a man is working on the computer and listening to someone on the phone.

A : We should be able to deliver the goods on time as long as you assure us of payments on time.

B : Yes, yes.

A : Excellent. I will see that the goods are delivered today. Can I assume that your cheque will reach us in a week?

B : Yes. No, no, no. What did you say?

Let me sum up what we have discussed so far. To be good listener, you must do five things. Firstly, show interest in what the speaker is talking about. Secondly, listen fully, not partially. Partial listening leads to partial understanding. Thirdly, ask for clarifications. If you have not understood the speaker because he's too fast or because of any other reason, do not hesitate to ask for repetition or further explanation. Fourthly, avoid speaking or listening in a noisy environment. Finally, avoid doing something else while you're speaking to someone. If your attention is divided, it will hamper your listening severely.

Answer the following question: How can you be a good listener?

4. Explain a proverb in a context and present your write-up orally. (10)

EXPLORING CONTRIBUTIONS OF REFLECTIVE DISCUSSIONS TO EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' professional identity formation is one of the most significant aspects of teacher education program. Research suggests that teacher identity construction can be enhanced in different ways. One such way is conducting reflective discussions in teacher education programs to help teachers to teach thoughtfully and professionally. Due to the lack of extensive research in this particular area in the context of Iran, this study is intended to explore how incorporating reflective discussions into pre-service teacher education programs can help to develop student teachers' professional identity. Following this, ten Iranian student teachers (three males and seven females) attended a training program at a higher education institute in Tehran for 240 hours, five hours per week. After observing each sample teaching, either done by their peers or shown in video clips, the participants critically analyzed and discussed different aspects of the teachers' performance. The student teachers participated in an interview and wrote two reflective journals, at the end of each phase of the program, focusing on their teaching beliefs and identities. In addition to the recorded discussions and reflective journals, the teacher educator conducted a focus group session where the student teachers shared their ideas about the training program. The content analysis of the data supported the idea that reflective discussions affect the growth of pre-service teachers' professional identity. Finally, a cyclical model for conducting a systematic reflective discussion in teacher training programs is provided. Teacher educators and teacher education curriculum developers benefit from the findings in developing appropriate activities for teacher training courses and encouraging pre-service teachers in shaping their teacher identity.

KEYWORDS: *Reflective discussions, Professional identity, Teacher Training Course (TTC), Teacher identity construction, EFL pre-service teachers*

INTRODUCTION

The significance of contributing different techniques to teacher training courses (TTC) and enhancing language teachers' self-confidence to construct their role as a teacher has been discussed in various ways in the field of teacher education program (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Gee, 2000; Cattley, 2007; Maclean & white, 2007; Townsend & Bates, 2007; Trent, 2010; Ghasedi, 2013). However, the need for closer attention and more exploration on the process of the

transition from student teacher to teacher has been emphasized (Izadinia, 2013). Teacher educators like Walkington (2005) advise dedicating sufficient time to empower the ability of decision-making and judgment in pre-service teachers to encourage the teacher identity formation in teacher training courses. They believe that the process of identification and personification of the teacher's professional role is a complex phenomenon which grows by active participation in tasks like talking about their beliefs and ideas to develop the ability to judge the strength and weaknesses of their own and their peers' performance. Incorporating variety of reflective activities such as autobiographical stories, reflective journals, autoethnographic narratives, reading group forum to teacher education courses (Estola, 2003; Webb, 2005; Cattley, 2007; Maclean & White, 2007; Vavrus, 2009; Sutherland *et al*, 2010) reveals the significant role of reflective practices in the formation of teacher identity, as it is widely regarded they increase the teachers' self-confidence and empower their judgment ability. To shape a sense of self-awareness, beginner teachers need to professionally think themselves as teachers through a series of continually practicing activities during pre-service training career. Observations, role plays, readings, and performances would not be effective only through performing, knowing, and reading about teaching techniques (Wenger, 1998). Moreover, simply recording the classroom events can be misleading (Tomlinson, 2013).

While there have been plenty of reports on the studies of teachers' identity formation, implementing a systematic model for reflective discussions as part of the teacher training course materials has been lacking. Additionally, studies seldom have discussed on using appropriate pedagogical tools or specific activities leading to the emergence of teachers' professional identity in TTC programs. Further, the literature suggests that research on identity formation is absent in underdeveloped and developing countries (Izadinia, 2013) to the extent that it is called to a particular attention of researchers to focus on student teachers' identity in other contexts including Iran.

The present research aims to discover how Iranian pre-service teachers' professional identity is constructed through incorporating reflective discussions into the TTC program. Then, it will answer the question of what other particular activities can influence such a process and the implications of the findings on student teachers, teacher educators, and teacher education curriculum and materials developers will be discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional identity construction

Becoming a teacher requires the development of a professional identity and the construction of a special kind of self-image (Feiman-Neimser, 2000, in Wanzare, 2007) involving the transition from pre-service to in-service training in the profession of teaching (Wanzare, 2007, p. 343). While teacher's professional identity has been interpreted in multiple ways (Bijaard *et al.*, 2004; Cattley, 2007; Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite, 2010), it has been commonly defined as a continual and complex process (Cattley, 2007; Maclean & White, 2007; Izadinia, 2013) that is developed during the training career and grows under the influence of a variety of internal and external variables including social (e.g. context), affective (e.g. attitude), and cognitive (e.g.

prior experience) factors (Samuel & Stephens, 2000; Findlay, 2006; Olsen, 2008; Cook, 2009). Professional identity of a teacher emerges at a point when the student teacher is involved in the training activities; develops and changes, and gradually is formed as a professional image of the self that never fixed. This is why some scholars such as Izadinia (2013), in a review, finds no clear definition of the teacher identity across the literature and states that “identity” is not predetermined and stable, but it is shaped and reshaped during a process of active learning and practicing to teach. On the other hand, it is a process of transition from personal goals and dreams to professional accountability in a shape of a new self. Due to the strange nature of the professional identity of teachers, other notions like “openness to change”, “vulnerability”, “uncertainty”, and “fluidity” have been attributed to the image of self as a teacher (Cattley, 2007).

Given the significant role of student teachers as professional teachers, Bejaard et al. (2004) identified four characteristics of a teachers’ professional identity. Bejaard believes that a person’s identity and specifically professional identity is not a fixed entity, it is formed as a result of the interaction between the person and her/his context. He states that sub-identities such as teachers’ prior knowledge and beliefs are unique to individual teachers. Then, if the idea of individualized sub-identities happens to be true, it may increase the complexity of teachers’ identity and the teacher training programs. On the underlying factors and components contributing to teacher identity formation, Tajeddin and Khodarahmi (2013) found some more factors such as the role of self-efficacy, self-regulated professional development, and intrinsic job motivation in shaping EFL teachers’ professional identity. Having a better understanding of these features and the factors involved in the formation of teachers’ identity, for instance, context, motivation, and prior experiences are highly recommended as prompts that facilitate the process of the identity construction (Larsen & Phillips, 2005; Findlay, 2006; Schepens et al., 2009; Olsen, 2008).

Reflective discussions as a pedagogical tool

Reflection is defined as a special form of thought (Kremer-Hayton, 1988; Hatton & Smith, 1995) and *reflective teachers* is illustrated as “those who construct meaning from their work by monitoring, analyzing, and modifying their behavior according to their actions.” (Costa & Kallick, 2000). This idea is mainly directed to the active role of the student teachers in relation to their context of learning and teaching. They are called reflective practitioners (Abednia, 2012) and transformative intellectuals (Giroux, 1992) as their dynamic construct is transforming from teachers’ initial beliefs and expectations of professional identity during a reflective teacher education course. Since the reflective behavior of teachers is difficult to analyze, most evidence of reflective activities are documented through some of the written works such as journals, essays, and narratives (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Loughran, 1996; Lee, 2000; Geyer, 2008).

A pioneering scholar in reflective studies, Schön (1983) emphasized using reflective activities as a tool in professional developments in order to stabilize teaching practices in the early stages of teacher training courses and in his paper (1987, p. 31), defined “Reflection-in-action” as “a reflective conversation with the materials of a situation”. Following Schon, reflection and discussion happened to play a key role in a rich description of classroom activity and in the process of teacher development by other scholars (Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Tomlinson,

2013). In the same line, Sherry and Gibson (2002, in Wanzare, 2007) used reflection and discussion with mentors and between peers about action research outcomes in their model of effective strategies for the stages of promoting learning in teachers. In another study, Tapline, et al. (2007) argued that “through observing their peers conducting demonstration lessons and through engaging in reflective discussions about these lessons and their attempts, in general, teachers were able to provide a great source of support and inspiration to each other (p. 533).”

Given the above-mentioned ideas, the literature suggests that over the past decades, reflective activities as pedagogical tools have been implemented to explore the process of pre-service teachers’ identity construction. For instance, Webb (2005), Maclean and White (2007), and Sutherland et al. (2010) found “reflective research group” as a powerful process for debriefing and finding commonalities and “video reflection cycle” as an appropriate tool for shaping student teachers’ identities. Also, “online-seminar groups” appeared as an effective technique in making changes in student teachers’ cognitive and professional stance. Some other reflective activities such as reflective journals (Loughran, 1996; Weber & Mitchell, 1996; Walkington, 2005; Cattle, 2007; Poulou, 2007), autobiographical stories and autoethnographic narratives (Estola, 2003; Vavrus, 2009), and portfolios (Chitpin & Simon, 2009; Antonek et al., 1997) are documented as promising reflective pedagogical tools in the formation of student teachers’ professional identity through reflection on their own teaching practices. Similarly, Loughran (1996) supports using reflective practices as a teaching tool and highlights the need to be reflective in teaching careers. He suggests “journal writing” as an encouraging tool for student teachers to reflect upon their own practices and experiences. In support of Loughran, Fletcher (1997) considers reflective activities as an “explicit analysis of practice” and mentions that “Explicit analysis of practice can be a valuable tool in learning to teach” (p. 242).

According to studies, Tomlinson (2013) argues that the teacher-learners need to know the reason of applying some activities in class and suggests observing peers and discussing the scenes they have observed. Therefore, it can be concluded that for thinking and discussing reflectively, teacher educators need to develop intellectual skills in pre-service teachers. In other words, it can be inferred that in the process of teachers’ professional identity formation, cognitive and intellectual skills should be developed in parallel to teaching skills. Taken the above-mentioned definitions, the *reflective discussion* is generally understood to mean discussing purposefully and intellectually through monitoring and analyzing the intended activity. All the studies show that reflective discussions can be used as an effective pedagogical tool in teacher education and as a powerful stimulus to the student teachers’ professional identity growth.

Teacher education program and teachers’ professional identity

Teacher education is considered as an important step and a focal point in developing intellectual and reflective teachers and it is defined as “the art and science of educating focusing on the relationship between learning and teaching such that one does not exist as distinct from the other” (Loughran, 2006, p. 2). How can the teacher education program help shaping the teachers’ professional identity? “Teaching is a highly complex series of acts that cannot be learned easily and cannot be done by formula or recipe” (Huling-Austin et al., 1989). In other words, teaching is not simply acquiring a prepackage of knowledge, but constructing and reconstructing a certain

concept of professional image in a given context. It is appeared to say that teacher education acts as a bridge to link the initial entry of identity to professional identity and subsequent long-term learning. Huling-Austin (1990) mentions the continuum role of teacher education and describes it as “a continuum extending from pre-service through induction into teaching to ongoing in-service and career-long development” (Townsend & Bates, 2007, p. 359). Abednia (2012) also considers professional identity as the major outcome of teacher education and argues that the ways through which this process progresses and is shaped are influenced by teachers’ perception about both themselves and their students.

Supporting the above-mentioned ideas and sociocultural point of view, teachers’ cognition appears to be a “socially situated” activity and the process of teachers’ learning is considered to be a “socially negotiated” practice (Geyer, 2008, p. 628). In other words, teachers learn through practice in different contexts rather than through mere training programs. Similarly, Abednia (2012) highlights the critical role of context in teacher education in relation to constructivist approach and claims that the preliminary step in learning to teach is passing through the process of constructing professional identity rather than acquiring knowledge. He calls for more studies on the critical TESOL teacher education and believes that in Iran, teacher education “excludes the teachers’ voices and beliefs to a greater extent” (p. 707). Activity theory acknowledges social settings as an important factor in human development (Smagorinsky et al., 2004). Although, some other scholars found some tensions in teachers’ identity as a result of contextual changes such as the structure of the workplace and the relationship with colleagues (Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Findlay, 2006) and value the contextual factors on the formation of teachers’ identity. Given the fact that teacher education is the initial context of the emergence of teachers’ professional identity, turning a considerable attention to the design and contents of the teacher education leads to deeper understanding of positive and negative factors influencing teachers’ identity.

The evidence presented in this section suggests that professionalism, in general, and teachers’ professional identity in particular, is a dynamic process that can be facilitated initially through the stages of development, change, and becoming by incorporating pedagogical instruments to teacher education programs.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study is directed to answer the following questions:

1. How participation in reflective discussions with a group of Iranian pre-service teachers shape their professional identity as teachers?
2. What are the factors influencing the development of teachers’ professional identity?

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in a 240-hour teacher education program at a higher education institute in Tehran. The content of the course was selected according to a syllabus from the

Ministry of Education with minor modifications to the materials by the teacher educator to tailoring the course to the needs of the candidates. The course was in two phases. The first one allocated to the theoretical issues of language teaching and the second phase was a sort of integrating theory into practice. As part of the class activities of phase one, student teachers were supposed to watch videos on different teaching methods, analyze their teaching techniques, discuss reflectively, and make comments. Collectively, ten videos on language teaching methods were presented during five months in the phase one. As part of the class activities of the second phase, student teachers were required to role play teaching different language skills and components they learned through the course materials and critically discuss on their peers' and self performances. The purpose of selecting reflective discussions as a pedagogical tool is for the pre-service teachers can believe in themselves as teachers, be able to judge their own as well as peers' teaching, and grow purposefully and professionally. At the starting session of reflective discussions, the teacher educator asked questions after videos and performances as prompts and introduced the task in a systematic way. Accordingly, the student teachers, in pairs, first described the whole classroom events in videos or the performances, analyzed the techniques used by the presenter, discussed on their strong and weak points, and made comments. Leaving comments was in response to the question of "If you were the teacher of the presented classroom, how would you conduct that criticized part of the teaching?". A systematic model is presented as it is learned that some of the student teachers may remain baffled at the initial stages of reflective discussions or in Loughran's (1996) words "thinking aloud". Then, the educator provided them with some clear guidelines for avoiding the same problem.

The class met once a week for five hours, lasted for ten months and all student teachers had an equal chance to discuss critically and make comments on the teaching performance. The teacher educator gave feedback and necessary guidelines for each comment to finalize the discussion. The design of the study is presented through a schematic representation in figure 1:

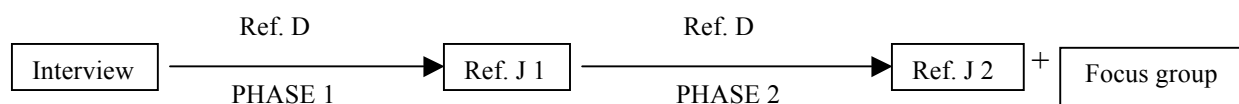


Figure 1: The schematic representation of the research design

Participants

The participants of the present study who were from different university disciplines and degrees were ten Iranian pre-service teachers comprised of three males and seven females enrolled in a ten-month teacher training program certified by the Ministry of Higher Education in Tehran. They were upper-intermediate to advanced level of English proficiency according to a placement test that was made through the English department as an initial requirement of the course. Only one of the candidates had taught in private classes before starting this course and others didn't have any experience of teaching. They were selected through convenience sampling (Best and Kahn, 2006; Farhady, 1995) where the researcher as a teacher educator was conducting the teacher training courses. It should be mentioned that in this study, the researcher is the same as the teacher educator and the names used for the participants are pseudonyms.

Materials

Reflective journals have proved four advantages as fostering self-awareness, constructing and expanding personal understanding, developing reflection and reasoning skills, and engaging in dialog with the teacher educator and peers (Abednia, 2013). To improve the use of reflective discussions (Ref. D), the research instruments are comprised of two reflective journals (Ref. J) at the end of each phase were collected and one focus group discussion at the end of the course was conducted. In addition, to know about the student teachers' initial motivation and their impression about the first day of the course, an initial interview was conducted at the end of the first day of the course asking two questions: *Why have you registered for this course? What is your impression about the first day of the course?*

Data Collection Procedures

To explore how pre-service teachers' professional identity is formed through contributing reflective discussions to teacher education program, after each video presentation, student teachers participated in a systematic reflective discussion. To help them go through the process of discussions and avoid confusing about how to start and how to proceed the discussions, the teacher educator gave them clear structured instruction on systematically passing through the stages of: 1- "*Describe*", that is describing the whole event, 2- "*Analyze*", that is identifying the teaching methodology and techniques, 3- "*Discuss*", that is discussing on different aspects of the teaching methodology, and 4- "*Reflect and Comment*", that is summing up the points discussed in the previous stage and suggesting constructive ways of improvement in response to the question of: "*If you were the teacher of this class, how would you manage the class events or how would you improve the poor section of the class?*". In phase two, as one of the course activities, the student teachers role-played teaching skills and techniques and after each performance, either their classmates' or their own performance, they went through the same systematic procedures of reflective discussions as they did in the first phase. The research instruments were two reflective journals and one focus group session. At the end of the first day of the course, the teacher trainees were asked to answer two interview questions: *Why did they register for this course? And what was their first impression regarding the class events?* The purpose of asking such questions was to learn about their purpose, expectations of the course, motivation, and their initial impression about the class before going through the stages of the study. The first reflective journal was collected on the last day of the first phase, including five questions and the second one at the end of the second phase consisting of six questions. The questions focused on student teachers' beliefs about the course activities and their own identity formation. Three of the questions in the first journal were also asked in a different form in the second one in order to explore the transition process of becoming a teacher and the construction of teachers' professional identity. Enhancing the efficiency of the study, the teacher educator, conducted a focus group session where the participants shared their ideas about the whole program, the materials and the techniques used, at the end of the second phase that is the end of the program.

Data analysis

The data were subjected to a thematic process (Moustakas, 1990) and were conducted in two stages. Initially, to have a background information before starting the training period, the participants' answers to the first two interview questions were analyzed based on two themes: 1- their motivation to register for the course; 2- their first impression of the first day class events.

Then, the questions of the two following reflective journals and the focus group were categorized under two main themes of “the effectiveness of reflective discussions” and “the formation of their teacher identity”; the answers were analyzed separately for each, and compared in terms of the content (Weber, 1990) to explore the changes upon the student teachers’ identity formation over time.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

As the purpose of the present study was examining the process of student teachers’ professional identity construction throughout a teacher training course contributing reflective discussions, only the two reflective journals, and the focus group were analyzed and the reflective discussions were taken as a pedagogical tool to facilitate the process of identity formation and the first interview at the beginning of the course was regarded as a background information before going through the two phases of the program. Therefore, the data collected from three sources after each phase of the program were read over and over, analyzed upon the participants’ ideas on the two main themes of the “*effectiveness of reflective discussions*” and their “*identity formation*”, and themes were identified accordingly and separately.

Cattley (2007) proposes that applying frameworks to the analysis of data can help the researcher to determine indicators of professional identity. Given that such a framework will facilitate the identification of teachers’ professional identity formation, the researcher used content analysis on a model which was comprised of integrating Fund et al.’s (2002) multi-dimensional classification scheme with Sutherland et al.’s (2010) professional model (Table 1). According to the defined items, the questions and answers of reflective journals and the focus group were subjected to be categorized as *Identifying*, *Analyzing*, *Critical Evaluating*, and *Problem Solving*, to investigate the changes in the cognitive process and the development of teachers’ professional identity over time. The table was designed into two columns: *Theoretical and Linkage*. *Theoretical* introduces the nature of the evaluation category, and the linkage describes the application of the theoretical aspect in the research steps.

Table 1: Professional focus model: description of categories

Categories	Theoretical	Linkage
Identification	Discusses an issue and/or experience from personal/theoretical perspective.	Discusses classroom techniques. Teacher identity is present, but not prominent.
Analysis	Identifies contributing personal beliefs/reactions and discusses relationships between these to issue and/or experience.	Examines the interaction between personal belief/reaction to issue and/or experience and relevant educational concept. Implications on the efficiency of reflective discussions.
Critical Evaluation	Evaluates reactions to the issue and/or experience in terms of their personal beliefs about teaching/learning.	Evaluates/reconsiders their beliefs/reactions using relevant educational concept. Evaluating the course activities.
Problem Solving	Discusses the possible solutions or identifies possible course of actions from the personal perspective.	Discuss possible solutions or courses of action justified by reference to relevant educational concepts. Suggestions for improving the course.

First, the interview with the participants was recorded and analyzed to save a record of their initial motivation for becoming a teacher and initial impression before starting the course.

Interview

The interview about student teachers' motivation and their first impression of the course was recorded and transcribed for the analysis. The results indicated that they, unanimously, loved the profession of teaching and all of them had a positive impression about the starting session of the term. Almost all of them claimed not having any previous experience of teaching before joining the program. The followings are some examples: (all the names are pseudonyms.)

I don't have any experience of teaching, but I love teaching English. (Shirin)
The subject of teaching is completely new to me. I like teaching English and learning about modern technologies and methodologies in language teaching. (Baran)
I like to learn how to teach and I like to teach besides my professional major. (Dina)

Since it was the first session and they didn't have any idea about the contents of the course, some signs of the low self-confidence were recognized on four of them.

I have an old dream of teaching English. I want to be a trained teacher and learn its methods, however, I'm worried about being a good teacher. At the end of this session, I felt that I can be a good teacher with your help. (Arash)
I love teaching, but I don't know whether I can be a qualified teacher. At the end of this session, now I feel that the course would be satisfied and effective. (Sina)
I was not sure to be a teacher because I was afraid of not being able to manage the activities. This session made my heart full of joy in a way that now I feel I can be a good teacher at the end of the program. (Tina)
Becoming an English teacher has been my childhood dream. This session was really good, however, a little stressful about the idea of not being able to be a good teacher. But I will do my best. (Taban)

Reflective Journals

Reflective journals have been commonly used in teacher education programs to help student teachers to think about their own teacher selves through a process of identification and analysis around the world (Abednia, 2013; Farrell, 2004). To avoid participants' confusion about what to write and how to write in the journals and to guide them, six questions for the first journal and five for the second one were designed carefully as reflection prompts. There wasn't any limitation on the length of the answers to questions. The first journal was to be completed at the end of the first phase and the second one at the end of the second phase that was actually the end of the course. Each phase lasted for five months and the questions in both journals were focused on two main themes of "the effectiveness of reflective discussions" and "the teacher identity construction". The questions and answers were read carefully and classified according to the developed four-dimensional model and coded. Each participant's answers to the questions of the first journal were analyzed in terms of the four developed categories and compared to the similar types of the questions and answers in the second journal to determine matches and mismatches

and to detect any changes in the process of their identity formation. The content analysis also examined the existence of self-perception and self-confidence of becoming a teacher in constructing teacher identity during the program.

The first question of the first journal asked about the student teachers' motivation to become a language teacher. The purpose of asking this question similar to the ones the researcher had in the interview was to find any changes in their motivation under the influence of the course materials. Almost all participants claimed that they loved teaching and they believed that teaching was an interesting challenge and dynamic. The analysis of answers to this question showed an increasing motivation to continue the course as it proceeded.

Now, I have a good feeling of becoming a teacher and I love teaching more than before. (Arash)

First, I was afraid of being a teacher. Gradually, I liked it and found it enjoyable. (Elnaz)

I love teaching and helping people. (Amin)

It's a nice feeling of self-confidence and usefulness. (Shirin)

Identification

The fifth question of the first journal and the first question of the second one asked student teachers to reflect upon the course sessions and especially the techniques used by the teacher educator and identify the parts which were effective in the formation of their teacher identity or were interesting to them. To increase the credibility of the study, these two questions were designed to elicit the same idea in two ways: first directly and then indirectly to find the changes in personal concepts relating to their identity formation. As a result, in response to the question five of the first journal: "*Which activities helped you in the formation of your feeling as a teacher during the course?*", eight of the pre-service teachers raised issues such as group discussions and giving feedback after role plays as the most effective techniques in the gradual construction of their identity as a language teacher. Only Amin and Shirin gave priority to writing lesson plans and maintained:

Writing lesson plans caused me to think of a real teacher. (Amin)

Writing a lesson plan for an imaginary class is one of the activities that made me think like a teacher. (Shirin)

To answer the first question of the second journal as "*Which activities were interesting to you as a language teacher?*", there was not a consensus among the participants. They mentioned almost all activities. Dina believed that the presentations were the most interesting activities while Baran, Hira, Elnaz, Sina, Tina, Taban, and Arash named watching videos about teaching methods, linking to teachers' forums, giving assignments according to the introduced websites as their interesting activities. In addition to the activities mentioned by others, Amin and Shirin liked discussions.

To me, the interesting activity of the course were discussions. Through discussions, I could share my own ideas with others and get feedback which taught me a lot. (Amin)
Presentations and discussing possible solutions in a class and different methods used in that situation were interesting activities. (Shirin)

Analyzing

Student teachers' professional identity can be constructed through the promotion of the self-description (Winslade, 2002, p. 35). The ability to describe selves is developed through the processes of critical and analytical reflection that play a central role in the development of teacher learners' professional knowledge and identity (Shulman & Shulman, 2004) and can be observed in their language (McLaughlin & Oliver, 1998). The second type of the questions asked about the participants' personal reaction about the efficiency of reflective discussions in the process of the formation of professional identity. Questions two, three, and four in the first journal intended to ask the student teachers analyze the steps they passed and compare their feelings as a teacher during the previous phase under the influence of the discussions. To make sure that student teachers understood about their own changes and could reflect them in their writings, the term "reflective discussions" was used explicitly and implicitly in the questions. In the question two of the first journal, student teachers were asked to compare their feelings as a teacher to that of the first day of the course: "*How are you feeling now as a teacher comparing to the first session you attended the class?*" Almost all of the participants regarded reflective discussions as an opportunity for emerging their latent self-confidence and they felt some sorts of changes in themselves as teachers in terms of their organization and attitude toward teaching and knowledge of teaching.

Now, it's more than what I used to think about teaching. Now, I know what is the meaning of teaching. (Dina)
I have learned a lot of techniques that I can use in my own classes. (Arash)
I feel more confident now. (Shirin)
Well, many things have changed since then. I'm more organized now. I know many strategies for facing different problems and for the students' needs. (Amin)
I feel more confident, I know how to behave in class and how to select materials.
Now, I'm aware of many things happening in the class time. (Hana)

To avoid fallibility of single items, Dornyei (2010) suggests the need of more than one item to address each identified content area, all aimed at the same target but asking about a slightly different aspects of it. Accordingly, question three of the first journal asked about the participants' feeling of becoming a teacher more directly leading them to their changes after class discussions: "*How class discussions after watching sample classes were effective on your feeling of becoming a teacher?*". Also, the fourth question asked, somehow the same idea in a different way: "*How talking about the strong points and weak points of your classmates' presentations played a role in the formation of your teacher identity?*". The participants regarded discussions and role plays very helpful in the formation of their teacher identity and they felt a change in their ability to teach.

First, role plays made me nervous, but after passing the time, now I think I have a lot of good abilities and ideas as a teacher. (Arash)

Also, questions three and four of the second journal which was given to the participants at the end of the program, asked about describing the changes in student teachers' selves as teachers: "How are you feeling as a language teacher now? Compare your feeling and attitude towards becoming a teacher with that of the starting day of classes." and "Describe your feeling in each step of changing from the beginning of the term." Analyzing participants' answers to these questions obviously shows the changes in their beliefs and identity. Studies show that teachers' awareness of their own teaching beliefs and areas of strength, improve their teaching practice. In addition, doing reflective tasks can increase teachers' self-awareness (Abednia, 2013).

At the beginning, I was shocked and confused. There were lots of new experiences. After a while, I could get used to them. I was changing my mind by getting knowledge about teaching. Now, I feel more responsible as a teacher. It's a nice feeling. I belong to a community of teachers and it's encouraging. (Arash)

First, I wasn't sure that I'd made a right decision. Gradually, I became more motivated. The peek of the changes in me was after accomplishing the classroom observations. Now, I feel more confident about being a language teacher. (Shirin)

Passing the course gave me more confidence in teaching. It made me more aware of the job. (Elnaz)

At the beginning, I had no idea about being a teacher. Moving from phase one to phase two, and doing more discussions and activities, gradually, I felt as a teacher. (Hana)

The responses to the questions about this section revealed evidence of changing and growing a sense of self-confidence, responsibility, motivation, and self and professional awareness in preservice teachers.

Critical Evaluation and Problem Solving

Pedagogical problem solving proved to be one of the primary benefits of writing reflections in Greiman and Covington' (2007) study. According to the created model, at the evaluation and problem solving level the student teachers were asked to reflect upon their own personal beliefs about the course activities and to discuss possible solutions and suggestions for improving the course. This type of question appeared at the end of both journals in different wording as a final remark: "Please evaluate the strong and weak points of the term. If you were the teacher of this class, how would you improve the sessions?" While teacher learners felt satisfied with the course materials, they suggested taking more time for classroom discussions.

Nice management of the sessions motivated me to follow all the sessions and the new techniques to develop my characteristics as a teacher. (Arash)

They were all merits! Suddenly, I realized that I'm able to think like a teacher. (Amin)

Responses show that following a regular exercise on critical reflection and discussion about the details of teaching can grow pre-service teachers professionally to achieve the ability of evaluation and judgment over teaching and curriculum.

Focus Group

Given the dynamic, authentic, and the multivocal nature of the focus group, it was implemented as a final data collection instrument to uncover pre-service teachers' perceptions of professional identity in a friendly atmosphere to reveal hidden factors in the process of its construction, and to put individual ideas into a collective practicum with all participants. . The focus group meeting, involving ten participants, took place at the last session of the program. The whole session was audio taped, transcribed, and analyzed upon the same identified themes as in journals. The discussions centered on the "*reflective discussions*" and the process of student teachers' "*professional identity construction*" to answer the research question and lasted for one hour.

In order to identify and evaluate the student teachers' reaction to this ten-month program, I encouraged them to reflect on their learning throughout the course. This allowed me to discover how they felt about the activities and their involvement in the teacher education program and how the course had influenced in shaping their teacher identity. The session started when the teacher educator (the researcher) shared an overview of the whole program from the first session to the last and reviewed the activities and pedagogical tools, focusing on the discussions after the performances and videos. The first question was: "*Try to remember your perception of becoming a teacher the first day you started the course. Then, focus on your teacher identity today that is the last day. How can you identify and describe the changes?*" and the second one was about their understanding of the factors involved in the forming their teacher identity: "*What are the factors that have shaped your identity as a teacher?*"

Not surprisingly, in discussions about the first question, eight participants regarded themselves as teachers with a high level of confidence that can be enhanced by having a positive feeling of taking risks in dealing with the problems about their teaching role (Walkington, 2005). This supports Izadinia (2015) who mentions that feeling positively about one's abilities as a teacher can impact on the pre-service teachers' identity formation. However, two of them showed more stress about teaching in their real classes that can be attributed to the dynamic nature of the student teachers' identity during its formation. As Tina mentioned:

At first, I thought teaching was so easy to handle. Now, I notice that it is a very sensitive task. A teacher should be really an organized and a professional person. I don't know whether I can be a good teacher.

Comparing Tina's first impression about teaching as her "old dream" with her idea in the last day of the course, reveals that her initial emotional stress about the starting point of learning to teach has been subjected to some fluctuations during the process of shifting from personal to professional identity. The same happened to Arash who obviously presented some fluctuations in the process of his identity construction. First, he started with a low confidence: "*I'm worried about being a good teacher.*" Then, as the course readings and techniques were progressing, he

said that he understood the meaning of “teaching” and believed that he achieved lots of good teaching skills and techniques to incorporate into future classes. Furthermore, he acknowledged the benefit of class discussions and the course precise schedule in putting him in a controlled context and forming his characteristics as a teacher. However, he felt stressful in discussing the first question.

Teaching is a sophisticated task as well as a sensitive responsibility that needs years of practice and experience. I feel there is a long distance to be a standard teacher.

In discussions about the second question, some of the participants found reflective discussions to help them think as a teacher while others took observation reports as a central factor in the formation of their professional identity. They also added other activities such as peer evaluation, role plays, videos, linking to international teachers’ forum, and lesson plans as important factors in shifting from student teachers to teachers. Among the participants, Taban named both observation reports and reflective discussions as strong stimuli for the construction of her teacher identity that made her think of creative techniques for classroom activities.

Focus group came to an end with student teachers’ suggestions for further programs such as incorporating more time for their presentations in different language levels and reflective discussions afterward. The focus group revealed that through participation in professional development, teachers expanded a range of positive and negative skills with implications for teacher education programs. For instance, self-confidence, self-awareness, decision making, professional knowledge, critical thinking and commenting, and a sense of feeling like stressful to start in the profession. Finally, it was found that the focus group can be used both as a facilitator in constructing teachers’ professional identity and a data collection tool in further studies.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, the development of teacher identity is a very complex and dynamic procedure that requires in-depth studies for exploring the factors and changes at the practicum. Although, teacher educators can benefit from the effectiveness of the program components, techniques, and pedagogical tools if they incorporate organized practices in the teacher education program. Practicing organized stages during the teacher training courses will organize the teacher students’ mind, enhance the cognitive processes of teacher identity formation, and will help pre-service teachers maintain their professional identity. Supporting Hatton and Smith’s (1995) classification system who identified three stages of reflection as *descriptive, dialogic, and critical* in students’ reflective utterances, a four-dimensional systematic cognitive model was designed to stabilize teaching practices and to stimulate the formation of professional identity of teacher students. Therefore, the student teachers went through the four levels of *Describe, Analyze, Discuss, and Reflect and Comment* as a systematic procedure after each performance, either on videos, their own practices, or peers’ performances. The schematic representation of this model is depicted in figure 2.

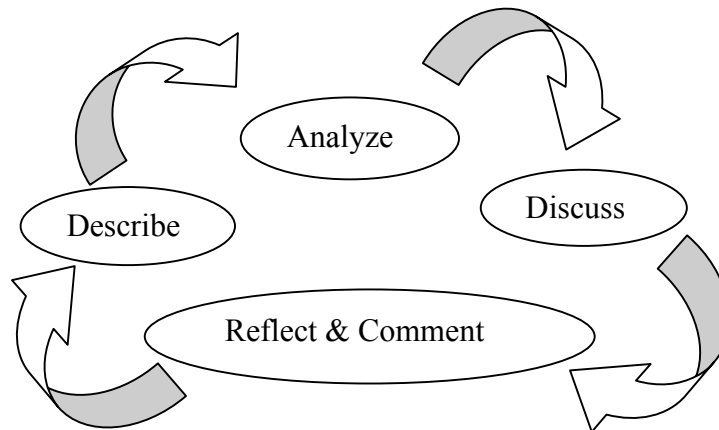


Figure 2: A Schematic representation of a systematic model for classroom Reflective Discussion

CONCLUSION

The present investigation examined the role of systematic reflective discussions after videos and performances on teacher students' professional identity construction. However, the question "how teachers' professional identity gets shaped?" is not easy to answer. It is a complex concept, including many cognitive, affective, and social factors such as the ability to control the practices, language, tools, values, beliefs, and contextual interactions may also lead them to a profession. It is actually a continual flux and unstable. Considering the complexity of the process of identity development in pre-service teachers, teacher-learners in this study, through one interview, two reflective journals, and one focus group session, presented a level of responsibility, organization, confidence, teacher voice, cognitive knowledge, professional competence, awareness of selves and the job, and skills of judgement, evaluation and problem solving which were supported as components of teachers' professional identity (Cattley, 2013; Izadinia, 2013; Abednia, 2015). The participants of the present study were found to consider reflective discussions to have a primary impact on the formation of their teacher identity. They also mentioned other pedagogical techniques such as linking to international teachers' forum, course readings, preparing lesson plans, observing in-service teachers' teaching and commenting to help them to shape their teacher identity. However, it seems none of the participants valued the psychological, contextual, and administrative factors like the teacher educator's motivation and attitudes, timetabling and the organization of the class time, the syllabus of the program, and the rapport she created between the student teachers and herself as the core of their identity formation. Furthermore, the relationship between the pre-service and in-service teachers at the time of classroom observations may also affect the changes in their identity. The data analysis revealed the changes in the level of growth towards a more professional status in the teacher learners' contributions in selecting classroom activities. They showed abilities for making decisions, planning lessons, and developing professional competence. In addition, the components of teacher identity like self-confidence, organization, the ability of judgment, and feeling of accountability were clustered in the findings of the present study. As it was realized at the final class sessions, the student teachers were able to select materials for the class to help their own knowledge promotion. Emerging this

skill proves the fact that reflective discussions can lead to teachers' autonomy, self-awareness, and decision making skills to emerge in the beginning teachers.

In line with above-mentioned findings and the developed model, it is recommended that systematic reflective discussions need to be integrated into teacher training courses across the program to shape the pre-service teachers' professional identity. Also, teacher educators create a motivating context for teacher-learners, giving them dare to freely discuss their ideas and generate creativity through systematic reflective discussions. As Pennington (1990, p. 133) argues about professionalism, he suggests that student teachers be trained on both required skills and the ability of the judgment. Making judgments by pre-service teachers about strong and poor practices will enhance their confidence and the ability to take the risk to challenge opinions (Walkington, 2005). In the present study, classroom observations were considered as one part of the required assignment and did not include in the analysis. Future studies can add the analysis of the student teachers' report on the classroom observations, as Geyer (2008) strongly advises incorporating both observation and evaluation as essential techniques into the teacher education programs.

Concentrating on the development of professional identity in student teachers and understanding the details of its process over teacher education program will assist teacher educators to prepare pre-service teachers for the complexities of teaching. In this process, the outstanding role of teacher educators and teacher education curriculum developers cannot be ignored. An implication of this is that the teacher educators select and conduct the classroom activities encouraging pre-service teachers in shaping their new identity as teachers. Developing the ability of reflection in teacher learners is the responsibility of all teacher educators. Furthermore, curriculum and teacher education materials developers will benefit from this knowledge to design and develop supportive programs, which can help teacher educators in their practice. A Supportive teacher education curriculum is recommended to include pedagogical tools to enhance the feeling of self-confidence and risk-taking abilities to challenge the problems of the teaching profession and help the pre-service teachers grow intellectually and educationally. As a result, throughout the journey of the professional identity construction, they will be able to pass through the transitional stages, moving from a dependent student teacher with a low level of confidence to an independent teacher. Along with this process, they will shape ability in teaching to grow a sense of becoming a teacher that can reflect critically upon their own practices, identify the contextual challenges, evaluate and judge their experiences, and can solve their own problems. An appropriate teacher education program should include professional development to deal with difficult students and the threats to professional identity. Furthermore, beginning teachers need to be equipped with psychological and educational skills in order to be able to suppress the frequency of stress and misbehavior at the first year of teaching.

The dynamic nature of the professional identity and the variation in factors affecting the identity formation of the student teachers suggest the limitations of the study. The limited number of candidates enrolled in this program can be extended and examined in more teacher education centers in different contexts. Also, the pre-service teachers' comments on the observation

sessions can be analyzed and taken into consideration to discover the changes through their practice and interaction with in-service teachers.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF IDEATIONAL GRAMMATICAL METAPHOR IN SCIENTIFIC & SPORTS TEXTS OF AMERICAN ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

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ABSTRACT

Journalistic writing has been a welcome source of typical language data for metaphor analysis. Since the metaphorical wording explains the situation more interestingly and formally in comparison with non-metaphorical language, it seems that even newspapers are no exceptions in terms of extensive use of metaphors, specifically of grammatical metaphor (GM). Inspired by Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1994), as an appropriate framework for analysis, this study explores the first type of GM known as ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM). In doing so, a corpus comprising 8 scientific and 8 sports texts of English newspapers (approximately 12000 words), were analyzed, compared and contrasted to pinpoint their similarities and dissimilarities in terms of nominalization and process types. The results revealed that the ideational metaphor has indeed pervaded scientific and sports texts, while indicating some differences. It's hoped that the findings of this study will bring a deeper understanding of GM in the sense that teachers and learners could recognize the importance of GM in the process of reading / writing instructions.

KEYWORDS: Grammatical Metaphor- Ideational Grammatical Metaphor- Systemic Functional Grammar- Nominalization

INTRODUCTION

Since special English is used in the press, so knowing the features in news English can help us get more accurate information around the world, and can fully enjoy the fastness and convenience

of the information age (Wu & Tang, 2010). One of these features is grammatical metaphor which is proposed first by Halliday, who treated it as an important component of the theory of system language functions and made significant contribution to the metaphor study. According to his theory of grammatical metaphor, grammatical metaphor includes two types – ideational metaphor and interpersonal metaphor, nominalization is the most common grammatical metaphor form, especially in the science and technology discourse and news discourse.

Through the work of Halliday (1994) and his colleagues, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is recognized as a very useful, descriptive and interpretive framework for viewing language as a strategic meaning making resource. One of Halliday's major contributions to linguistic analysis is showing how simultaneous strands of meanings are expressed in clause structure. Systemic functional linguistics studies the grammatical metaphor from the point of view of expressing the grammatical meaning, and they consider that the metaphor is not limited in the vocabulary level, but is often seen in the syntax level.

Ideational grammatical metaphor is the first type of grammatical metaphor. Nominalization as the most common form of ideational grammatical metaphor, makes action or process become concept and also, it reduces the number of clauses and more information is compressed into each nominal group. Nominalization can turn a dynamic process (*verbs*) into a static entity through re-categorization and thus provides us with a different way of construing the world, or of conceptualizing experiences from a different angle (Murar, 2004). Due to efficiency and convenience of being able to compact large amounts of information into a single word, nominalization is a widely exploited linguistic technique in news, scientific and political discourses (Choi, 2006). As Halliday has argued in his IFGs (Introduction to Functional Grammar; in all three editions of 1985, 1994, 2004), each nominalized or metaphorical wording in the metaphorical domain has its congruent wording in the congruent domain. The metaphorical domain explains the situation in more interesting and more formal ways in comparison with the congruent one.

Through the function of the grammatical metaphor in the building of the news discourse, we can comprehend more about the news features and understand the news texts. The study of the uses of grammatical metaphor is particularly useful in revealing how processes are changed into objects. Grammatical metaphor in this case changes not only the grammar of the texts but also the reader's reaction to texts. In this spirit, it seems that journalistic genre especially scientific and sports texts have been an interesting area for analysis and discussion, and since using grammatical metaphor in newspapers satisfies with readers' curiosity and excitement, it sometimes causes difficulties for readers to understand. In IGM, lexico-grammatical features are re-arranged to put forth a certain view of reality, i.e. they constitute an alternative way of constructing a picture of reality. One type of clause is expressed as another type and the processes and qualities are construed as if they were entities, through the process of nominalization (Halliday, 1994). Halliday (1985) defines that Nominalization is the single most powerful resource for creating GM. By this device, processes (congruently worded as verbs) and properties (congruently worded as adjectives) are reworded metaphorically as nouns; instead of functioning in the clause, a Process or Attributor, the function as Thing in the nominal group (Halliday, 1985, 1994; Cehan, 2004).

Halliday (1994), Vandenberg et al. (2003), and Taverniers (2006) maintain that traditionally metaphor is viewed as variation in the use of words, i.e. variation in meanings and hence the consequence of lexical or lexico-semantic processes. This is a view *from below*, taking the words as starting point and then saying something about the meanings these words realize (this has now come to be known, in a more accurate sense, as lexical metaphor). Metaphor is, however, employed in SFL in a relatively new sense to refer not to *the variation in the use of words* with a transferred meaning but to *variation in the expression of meaning*, following a SFL to the study of grammar proposed by Halliday (1985, 1994). Unlike the former view, this one is a view *from above* where the starting point is a particular meaning and the relevant question is how it can be expressed or realized. Taking this from *above view*, it is recognized that metaphorical variation is lexico-grammatical rather than purely lexical, and that lexical selection is just one aspect of lexico-grammatical selection or wording; the other aspect is grammatical (Vandenberg, et al., 2003). The two alternative perspectives are visually represented in figure 1 (based on Halliday's figure (1994/1985, p.342)) (as cited in Taverniers, 2003, p.6).

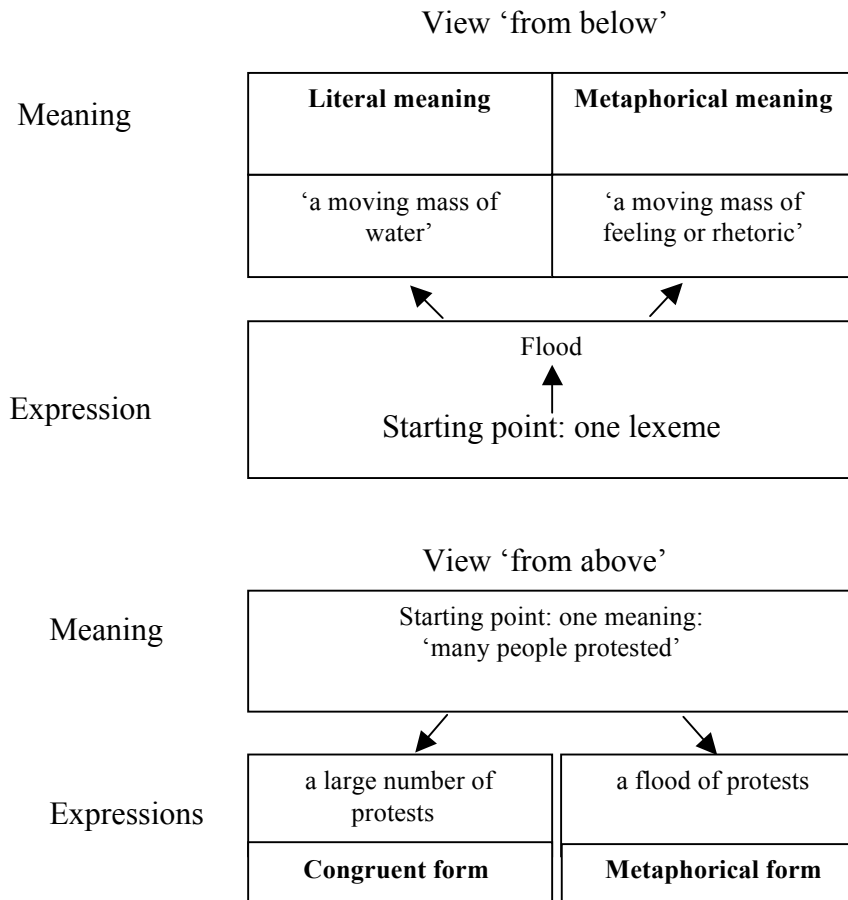


Figure 1: Two perspectives on metaphor (after Halliday 1994/1985, p.342)

Processes are central to transitivity. They center on the part of the clause which is realized by the verbal group and by nominalization; processes (congruently worded as verbs) and properties

(congruently worded as adjectives) are reworded metaphorically as nouns. Processes are also regarded as what *goings-on* and suggest many different kinds of goings-on which necessarily involve different kinds of participant in varying circumstances, while participants and circumstances are essential upon the doings, happenings, feeling and beings. Processes can be subdivided into different types.

Table 1: Overview of Process Types (Adopted from Halliday, 2004)

Process type	sub-category	
Material : Action Event	'doing' 'doing' 'happening'	bodily, physically, materially
Behavioral :	'behaving'	physiologically and psychologically
Mental: Perception Affection Cognition	'feeling' 'sensing' 'seeing' 'thinking' 'emotive'	emotionally, intellectually, sensorilly
Verbal:	'saying'	lingually, signaling
Relational: Attribution Identification	'being' 'attributing' 'identifying'	equal to, or some attribute of
Existential:	'existing'	there exist

The significant and important role of GM has always been a great area of research and investigation for many researchers. Halliday and Martin (1993), in a seminal study conducted a survey based on GM on scientific texts and found that when the lexical density goes up to some extent, the passage becomes difficult to read.

Holtz (2009), in her major study, has done a research titled *nominalization in scientific discourse: A corpus-based study of abstracts and research articles*. The corpus used in her work contains 94 full English scientific journal articles compiled from 12 sources covering four scientific domains, i.e., computer science, linguistics, biology, and mechanical engineering, and comprising over 420,000 words. The results indicate that Nouns are the most frequent lexical word both in abstracts and research articles. Nominalization occurs much more often in abstracts than in research articles, and that the difference in this occurrence is statistically significant. Moreover, abstracts generally show a much wider vocabulary range concerning the use of nominalizations than their research articles.

In another study, Hadidi (2012) analyzed a corpus comprising three business and three political texts to see how many instances of ideational metaphor are used and what the respective frequencies are. His findings revealed that ideational metaphor has pervaded political and business texts and is used approximately with the same frequency in both text types. In a similar study, Tabrizi 2013 analyzed a corpus comprising 5 political and 5 health texts of English newspapers in terms of IGM. Based on the findings, both text types include all types of processes, but the frequency and percentage of nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor used in political texts are more than health texts in English newspapers.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, as it seems, less research has focused attention on the analysis of newspaper texts from SFG perspectives. It is also worth mentioning that to date there are few comparative studies related to GM and IGM and none as the researcher knows has used the theories of the SFG to compare the nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor used in scientific and sports texts of English newspapers, and nearly all of the studies have exclusively investigated one text type, and if there are any, they have confined themselves to a small number of texts.

Most of the times, readers relate metaphor to the lexical domain of language and literature and don't know the important role of metaphor in a grammatical sense. And also, they think that there is only one way to convey their intended meanings, as a result, they express their meaning in informal and simple way. It is believed that identifying and comparing IGM in texts of English newspapers raise readers' awareness regarding the role and function of GM in written text and help them to know different ways of expressing the same meaning and convey their meanings in a more interesting and vivid way.

The principle purpose of this study firstly was to identify the ideational grammatical metaphor used in scientific and sports columns of English newspapers on the base of Halliday's (2004) framework and then to investigate how meanings are constructed and interpreted by application of ideational metafunctions in English newspapers across two text types, to highlight the nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor to determine their processes and to compare them with each other, and also the congruent mode of each clause will be given to uncover the difference between two text types.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with the above arguments, the following research questions and hypotheses were posed:

RQ#1. Is ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts?

RQ#2. Are the process types of IGM likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts?

H1. Ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) is likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts.

H2. The process types of IGM are likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts.

METHODOLOGY

In the following section, the corpus, i.e., the kinds of materials, and instruments, i.e., the kinds of model or models used to analyze the texts, procedure and design of the study will be discussed.

Corpus

Due to the paramount importance of selecting authentic and native texts in scientific and sports writings, an effort was made to choose those texts randomly from various sources of English newspapers, such as *Washington Times* (2013), *Washington Post* (2013), *New York Times* (2012) and *International New York Times* (2013). Because of time constraints, only 8 scientific and 8 sports texts, approximately 6000 words of each text type, were used as the corpus in order to pinpoint and analyze the frequency of metaphorical expressions (Nominalization) and process types for each nominalized word, and also to compare and contrast to find similarities and discrepancies between two text types in terms of IGM. This research was a comparative study and both text types should comprise the same number of words to be investigated appropriately. Thus, it was the same number of words that acted as our yardstick and enabled the researcher to say, for instance, how many instances of GM were used and which process type was dominant in either of the text types.

The design of the present study was descriptive-analytic which concentrated on the frequency of occurrences of IGMs and their congruent wording and process type in scientific and sports texts. It should be mentioned that in analyzing the data (identification and interpretation of IGM instances), this study employed the qualitative research method. Moreover, in order to find out the frequency, process type, role and function of IGM through SPSS software the quantitative research method was adopted.

Instruments

In order to compare and contrast possible similarities and dissimilarities and also to find congruent and metaphorical expressions as well as process types, in these 16 texts (approximately 12000 words) of scientific and sports texts, it was essential to choose a model or models to analyze the data. Therefore, the ideas of Martin, Matthiessen and Painter (1997) and Halliday and Matthiessen (1999) provided a reliably comprehensive groundwork to be utilized as the main theoretical foundation of the present research. According to Martin et al (1997), 6 process types in English are as followed:

- 1) Material: material clauses construe doings and happenings.
- 2) Mental: mental clauses construe a person involved in conscious processing, including processes of perception, recognition and affection.
- 3) Relational: relational clauses construe being and do this in two different modes – attribution and identification.
- 4) Behavioral: behavioral clauses construe human behavior.
- 5) Verbal: verbal clauses represent processes of saying.
- 6) Existential: existential clauses resemble relational clauses in that they construe the participant involved in a process of being, but differ from relational ones in that there is only one participant.

According to Halliday (1994), each metaphorical wording must have its equivalent congruent wording. So, in this research not only process types but also congruent domains of extracted IGM instances were discussed and displayed.

Procedure

To identify the instances of IGM in scientific and sports texts, the researcher read the texts thoroughly and pinpointed IGMs (nominalized wordings). It was noticed that nominalization is the most dominant feature of both scientific and sports texts that leads to IGM. After establishing and extracting IGMs, an effort was made to render metaphorical expressions in congruent expressions because elaborating both the congruent and metaphorical domains lead us to fully grasp the concept of transitivity system and IGM. It is worth noting that unpacking metaphorical wordings into congruent forms were based on inventories represented by Eggins (1994), Halliday (1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (1999), Martin et al. (1997), and Thompson (2004). Comparing metaphorical and congruent wording indicated that in most of the cases both of them allow us to explain the same situation, but the metaphorical wording describes the situation in a more encapsulated, brief, precise and concise way. Since IGM is closely tied with transitivity system which enables us to construe the world of our experience into a limited set of process types, an attempt was made to identify process types in all the extracted and rendered IGM instances.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

As mentioned before, the main purpose of the current study is to analyze, compare and contrast a corpus comprising 8 scientific and 8 sports texts to pinpoint their similarities and dissimilarities in terms of nominalization and process types, approximately 6000 words in each text type. These texts were analyzed in order to find out the number of IGM's instances and their respective frequencies in two text types. Furthermore, the data has been investigated to find out the role and function of IGM in these texts.

IGM in Scientific Texts

Scientific texts are generally concentrated on highly technical terms, and they are troublesome to understand due to their complexity in forms and meanings. The language of science is, by its essence, a language in which theories are built and its features are definitely those that make theoretical discourse potential. There are two types of resources in Scientific language: lexical and grammatical. Lexical ones include technical terminologies that scientific realm continuously construct i.e. technicality. Grammatical resources include constructing organized nominal categories so that they can be merged to construe a particular form of reasoning and sequential argument. Scientific genre is a highly nominalized discourse. Nominalization is indispensable since it is engaged both in technicality and rationality.

The following table shows samples of IGMs selected randomly from analysis of 8 scientific texts. In each table, in addition to the metaphorical wording, the probable congruent form, type of process and its frequency in per text are represented as well:

Table 2: Samples of IGMs extracted from 8 Scientific Texts

No.	Metaphorical wording	Congruent wording	Process type	Frequency in each text
1	that discovery	something which was discovered	Material	2
2	heat exposure	to expose to the heat	Material	1
3	suggesting that	and suggest that	Verbal	1
4	enthusiastically recommending	recommended enthusiastically	Verbal	1
5	leave us in the dark	darkens our view	Material	1
6	have trouble understanding a ...	not to understand a ...	Mental	1
7	epidemic of daydreaming	most of people daydream	Behavioral	1
8	loneliness	to be alone	Relational	1
9	individual registration	to register individually	Material	2
10	anatomical comparisons	to compare anatomically	Material	1

In the examples above, the processes (such as *discover*, *expose*, *register* and *compare*) become nouns (*discovery*, *exposure*, *registration* and *comparison*). It is worth noting that nominalization, as a form of GM, allows a large amount of information to be packed into a comparatively small space (such as, a noun group). This has the effect of *condensing* information within the sentence; it contributes to *language economy*.

Out of 658 nominalizations in total 8 scientific texts, 492 are material, 110 are relational, 15 are mental, 32 are verbal, 6 are behavioral and 3 are existential processes. By comparing the congruent and metaphoric versions in above instances, it implies that unpacking a text often involves re-inserting human actors often rendered unnecessary, by nominalization. The ability of nominalization to condense meanings is also clearly shown when we simply compare the length of the original nominalized text with the length of the unpacked version. Significantly, this unpacked version has lost much of its prestigious sound: it now seems very much more ordinary (and perhaps more accessible) than the original text (Eggins, 1994).

IGM in Sports Texts

Academic writing and adult writing frequently use nominalizations, and the sports discourse also is not excepted from this phenomena. As everybody knows, sports news has always been a great area of interest and entertainment, especially for adults. In these texts, lexis and grammar are re-arranged in a way to capture the mind of readers. Journalists in sports columns of some newspapers especially the ones analyzed in the current study, have used IGM to a great extent, so the application of grammatical metaphor comes to be one of the important stylistic features of English sports texts, since, sports texts must be motivating enough in capturing, arresting and getting the readers' attention and bringing them to the world of sports.

The following table represents samples of IGMs selected randomly from the analysis of 8 sports texts:

Table 3: Samples of IGMs extracted from 8 Sports Texts

No.	Metaphorical wording	Congruent wording	Process type	Frequency in each text
1	patriot's vulnerabilities	patriot is vulnerable in s.th	Relational	1
2	for a long gain	to gain success for a long time	Material	1
3	little choice	can be chosen by little chance	Material	1
4	tears in Naples	Naples cried	Behavioral	1
5	disbelief	not to believe in something	Mental	1
6	Neymar's movement	Neymar moved	Material	3
7	creativity	to be creative	Relational	1
8	no wasted motion in her legs	She moves very effectively and professionally	Material	1
9	exclusiveness	to be exclusive	Relational	1
10	Kidd said in a statement released by ...	Kidd stated something which was released by ...	Verbal	1

The instances of IGM in 8 sports texts indicated that nominalization was also utilized in these types of texts. In these 8 texts, there are 351 IGMs in which 269 go for material, 36 for relational, 28 for mental, 14 for verbal, 3 for behavioral and 1 for existential.

Frequency of IGM instances in Scientific and Sports Texts

In order to find out the frequency of IGM in these texts, the Chi-square test was found as an appropriate statistical procedure. The data were analyzed and conducted in SPSS program and tables and graphs were also extracted from SPSS too. Table 4 shows the number of IGMs observed in scientific & sports texts:

Table 4: The number of IGMs in scientific & sports texts

text type			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
scientific	658	504.5	153.5
sports	351	504.5	-153.5
Total	1009		

As shown in Table 4, the total frequency of IGM instances in scientific texts is 658, while in sports texts it is 351. Results of chi-square test revealed that there is a meaningful difference in the frequency of IGM in these two text types. So the hypothesis H1, indicating that *Ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) is likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts*, was confirmed.

The comparison of process types in scientific and sports texts

A Chi-square test was used to compare and contrast the process types used in these texts. The following tables show the frequency and percentage of Process types in scientific & sports texts as well as the results of Chi-Square Test:

Table 5: Process types in scientific & sports texts

text type * Process type Cross tabulation

			Process type						Total
			Behavioral	Existential	Material	Mental	Relational	Verbal	
text type	scientific	Count	6	3	492	15	110	32	658
		Expected Count	5.9	2.6	496.3	28.0	95.2	30.0	658.0
		% within text type	.9%	.5%	74.8%	2.3%	16.7%	4.9%	100.0%
sports	sports	Count	3	1	269	28	36	14	351
		Expected Count	3.1	1.4	264.7	15.0	50.8	16.0	351.0
		% within text type	.9%	.3%	76.6%	8.0%	10.3%	4.0%	100.0%
Total	Total	Count	9	4	761	43	146	46	1009
		Expected Count	9.0	4.0	761.0	43.0	146.0	46.0	1009.0
		% within text type	.9%	.4%	75.4%	4.3%	14.5%	4.6%	100.0%

Table 6: Chi-Square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.706 ^a	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	24.009	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.399	1	.121
N of Valid Cases	1009		

a. 3 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.39.

As seen in Tables 5 and 6, the results of chi-square showed that there is a meaningful difference in the process types which exist in these texts. According to the results, in addition to the employing the material and relational types to a great extent in these two types of texts, the mental process type in sports and relational one in scientific texts occupy a large space. Figure 2 displays the frequency of IGM in scientific and sports texts:

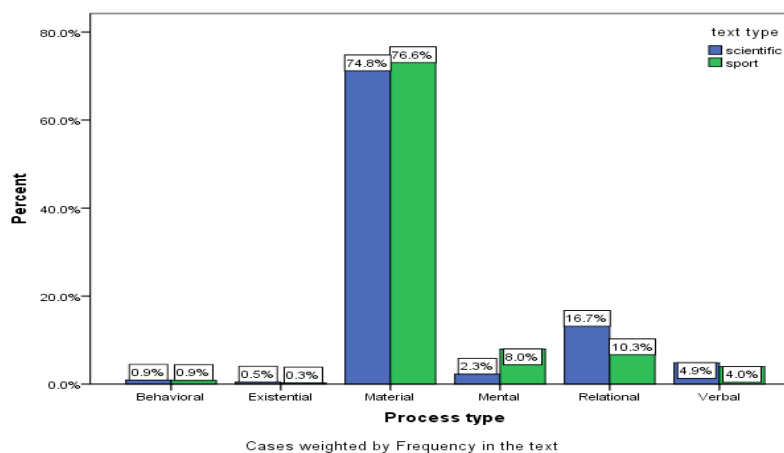


Figure 2: Frequency of process types in both scientific & sports texts

From 658 instances of IGM which were extracted from eight scientific texts, 74.8% are material, 16.7% relational, 2.3% mental, 4.9% verbal, 0.9% behavioural, 0.5% existential process types were obtained. The scientific texts represent the dominant textual forces of material and then relational process types than any other types.

351 instances of IGM were extracted from sports texts. Out of this number, 76.6% of them have material processes, 10.3% of them are relational, 8% mental, 4% verbal, 0.9% behavioral and 0.3% of them are existential. It should be stated that in each of the text types of the study, there aren't exactly the same numbers of GMs, but, the dominant process types in both are material (actions and doings, 492 in scientific , 269 in sports), and relational (based on being and having, 110 in scientific, 36 in sports).

So, regarding the use of all six process types in both of the text types and also having the material, and then relational process types, as their dominant process types; and on the other hand, some differences in the frequency of process types of IGM in two text types, can lead us to conclude that, the hypothesis H2, indicating that the process types of IGM are likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts, was confirmed.

Frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in each text type

The following Table and Figure show the frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in the scientific and sports texts:

Table 7: Frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in two text types

text type		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	scientific	110	65.1	65.1	65.1
	sports	59	34.9	34.9	100.0
	Total	169	100.0	100.0	

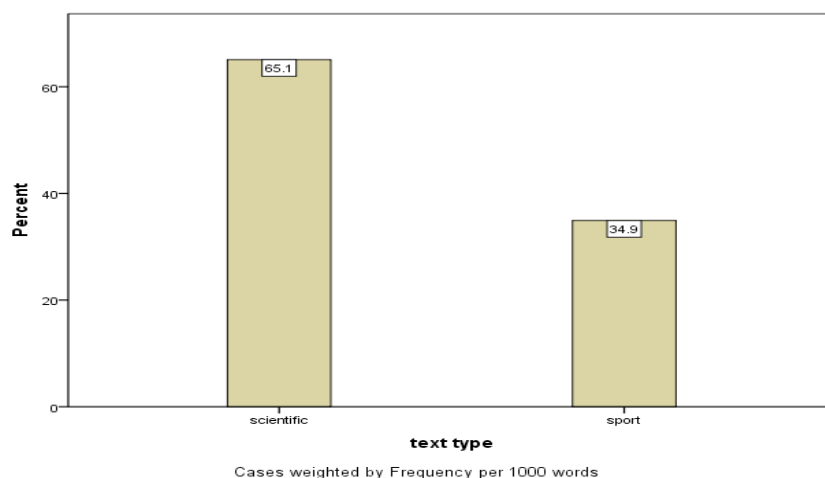


Figure 3: Frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in two text types

As it's evident in the above table and figure, scientific texts on the whole, have employed 110 instances (65.1%) of the IGM, and sports texts have employed 59 instances (34.9%) of IGM per 1000 words.

Discussion

Ideational grammatical metaphor is an incongruent representation of the experiential meaning in the configuration of the clause. Logical grammatical metaphor refers to ideas that are organized in an incongruent form at the level of discourse. Texts with a high degree of GM tend to be considered prestigious, abstract, objective, academic and formal.

In scientific texts, IGM plays a significant role and has a special ground in these types of texts; however in sports texts, the instances of GM are of a low level of frequency compared to the scientific ones. Nominalization has been used in both text types, turning the process (verb) into concept (noun). As a result, the tone of writing seems more formal and abstract.

This research finds support in the research findings of Halliday (1985), that the ideational grammatical metaphor or transitivity analysis should bring out a material process type. A rather obvious expectation that was construed by the analysis of congruent wording in scientific and sports texts was the higher frequency and dominant textual force of material process types in both of the text types. The results of the present study revealed that both scientific and sports texts of English newspapers employ IGM and approximately make use of all the six process types, but the level of IGM manifestation in scientific texts is higher than that in sports texts (scientific: 65.2 & sports: 34.8 percent). Furthermore the material and relational process types were found as the dominating textual forces in both text types and low frequency of other process types.

Considering the frequency of IGM per 1000 words in both texts, the findings also showed the high frequency of the material and relational processes compared to other processes.

Although the material and relational processes were regarded as the most frequent and dominant process types, it was found that the mental process in sports texts and relational process in scientific texts occupied a large space.

The next finding that the study reached was that not always a noun form standing as a sample of GM would be raised out of a verb form, but sometimes a noun form which has no verb form, plays the role of a GM. For example, in the following sentence, 'tear' is an example of GM which stands for the verb of 'crying'.

'But that goal will go down as beautiful in Dortmund's history- and it reduced Gonzalo Higuain, Napoli's Argentine striker, to *tears* in Naples'.

In the congruent wording of the above sentence, 'cried' is the verb form offered for 'tears'.

Furthermore, in some cases instead of verbs, the adjectives are nominalized. For example, the word *flexibility* doesn't have verb form. Rather, it is nominalized form of the adjective *flexible*. This is also true about the word *difficulty* from adjective form *difficult*.

CONCLUSION

In the current comparative study, based on systemic functional approach, a functional analysis was carried out in an attempt to identify IGM elements, in English newspapers across scientific and sports texts.

Nominalization- a typical process, leading to grammatical metaphor is a striking feature of scientific and sports texts, making the writing more interesting, lively, convincing and colorful. Based on the findings which address proposed research questions, nominalization has been used in both of the text types, turning the process (verb) to a concept (noun). Both of the scientific and sports texts, include all types of processes, but the frequency and percentage of nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor used in scientific texts, was more than sports texts in English newspapers. So, it can be concluded that, the type of text affects on the manifestation of IGM. In other words, the manifestation of IGMs is text-specific; since, the same number of texts from each text types (8 texts from each category), with approximately the same number of total words (6000 words of each category) were under analysis.

It was also noticed that, the occurrence of a GM in each text, increases the general volume of information, the clause or the sentence expresses: the greater the number of included nominalizations, the greater the volume of the information expressed by the sentence. Thus, GMs are crucial, ideal for the journalistic discourse especially scientific and sports texts which place high quality on the transference of information in an economical and condensed way. In each text, the goal is the conveyance of the intended meaning to the reader or the audience in a vivid, tempting and interesting way. Another conclusion drawn from through the identification of GM throughout the 16 texts (8 texts from each category), was the advantage of application of GM in increasing the lexical density. In both of the text types, the purpose of using an ideational metaphor is to render the lexis and grammar in the way the journalist wants in order to inform or produce a certain effect on his/her reader or audience. Without ideational grammatical metaphor both written texts would sound artificial and informal.

Grammatical metaphor instances in scientific texts of this study, serve several important functions like condensing, compacting, abstraction and creating technical and professional terms as well as lexical density, assuming the job of initiating the reader into certain economic world views or rigged states of affairs, in a quick, compact and desirable manner. GM happens in science, to be a powerful device to condense information about the context of situation. The condensing feature just corresponds to the characteristic of the news discourse that is using fewer words in a sentence to express more messages and also creating technical, expert and professional terms that are available to the beauty of clause and absorbs the reader's attention to follow the writing.

Grammatical metaphor in sports texts serves several functions such as condensing, compacting, encapsulation and produces certain effects on the reader's mind causing more ambiguities.

Limitations and delimitations of the study

Owing to grammatical metaphor usage in languages which is really wide and diversified, it is beyond both the scope of this study and researcher's personal capabilities to address the other types of grammatical metaphor such as interpersonal metaphor and also all texts of English newspapers. Instead, the present study is just restricted to the analyzing scientific and sports texts of English newspapers regarding ideational grammatical metaphor in SFL.

As is well-known, in statistics, the sample population, is of vital importance to the validity and credibility of research itself. However, the number of texts for analysis is to some extent limited and only eight texts were selected randomly from each category among the aforementioned newspapers. So, one should be very cautious in generalizing the results to other scientific and sports texts of other English newspapers or other genres and even one should choose more texts in both text types to expand his or her study scope. On the other hand, the study has approached the phenomena of grammatical metaphor only from a single theoretical framework, that is Halliday (2004).

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APPLYING CRITICAL THINKING TO IMPROVE TRANSLATION QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH TRANSLATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to explain the relationships between the critical thinking and translation quality to clarify the critical thinking abilities of undergraduate students and to provide insight into this relationship. Explanatory research design, among mixed research designs, was used. Data were collected from 106 undergraduate students in the department of English Language Teaching at Ataturk University in Turkey. In the first phase of the study, a questionnaire was conducted to the students to test the relationship between critical thinking skills and translation. In the second phase, students were interviewed to explain the effect of critical thinking abilities on their translation quality. For quantitative data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Quantitative data were analyzed with MINITA package program. The independent variables in the study are gender and the dimensions of critical thinking. The dependent variable is translation quality. For quantitative data, paired t-test and correlation analysis were conducted. As the qualitative data, textual analysis was done. The results of the study show that there is a positive relation between critical thinking skills and translation quality. Moreover, according to the results, critical thinking increases the translation quality of undergraduate students. Moving from these results, it is implied that critical-based activities in courses contribute to the translation performance of students and these activities help students to reflect on their translations with a critical perspective. At this point, this study recommends the teachers to use critical thinking –based techniques in their courses and to teach their students how to use their critical thinking skills.

KEYWORDS: Critical thinking skill, language learning, Translation theories.

INTRODUCTION

There is not a constant definition of CT, and the definitions of critical thinking have been changing (Huitt, 1998). Several definitions of critical thinking have been introduced in the education field. Fasko (2003) reported that “perhaps a hybrid definition would facilitate a synthesis of these various perspectives” (p.8). Beyer (1995) took into account critical thinking as the processes of 'making reasoned judgements' (p.8). Kurfiss indicated that critical thinking is an investigation whose aim is to see the sights of a situation, phenomenon, question, or problem to

arrive at a conclusion about it and to integrate all available data that can be convincingly justified (Kurfiss 1988; cited in Ab Kadir, 2007). Critical thinking is purposeful, reasoned, and goal-oriented included in problem solving, inference formulation and decision making procedures (Halpern, 1999).

Metacognition is considered, by Facione (1990) to be a core skill which has impact on a learner's critical thinking ability, and impacts on a learner's academic success (Facione 1990; cited in Deborahm 1993). "Metacognition is being aware of one's thinking as one performs specific tasks and then using this awareness to control what one is doing" (Jones & Ratcliff, 1993, p. 10; cited in Srinivasan & Crooks, 2005). Critical thinker engages in certain types of conversations and relations with others (Burbules, 1999). They think critically about what the others say and do not believe whatever they hear or see without pondering about it.

Indeed, the critical thinkers, use both the disposition (or propensity) and the relevant knowledge and skills to engage in an activity with reflective skepticism (McPeck, 1985). That is, not only are they prone to question things, but they have relevant knowledge and understanding to do productive performances. The term critical thinking refers to the use of those cognitive skills which lead to the approach a desirable outcome (Halpern, 2002). According to two conceptions of critical thinking, i.e. 'pure skills' and 'skills plus tendencies' (Siegel, 1988, p.6), the teaching approaches of critical thinking can be classified into two groups; (1) the teaching of critical thinking referring trainable and assessable reasoning skills and processes, and (2) teaching of critical thinking as well as dispositions and awareness along with critical thinking. Study demonstrates that it is important to involve students actively in different critical thinking processes, such as analysis of ideas through discussion, reflection and writing to make it significant (Solon, 2003).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical thinking has pivotal role in some key skills such as problem solving and decision making (Kallet, 2014). According to scholars, CT skills can be taught directly or explicitly but as teaching CT needs high capacity and confidence of both students and teachers, applying CT won't be that easy. So, teachers have to make the students ready to think critically and creatively in order to achieve their objectives. They can form discussion groups such as debating team and jigsaw groups to increase the students' interaction, debate and reflection (MacKnight, 2000). Similarly, Yuretich (2004) believed that teaching critical thinking is the teaching of reasoning skills, for example, analysis, synthesis and evaluation and let the students do active learning. Through applying active learning strategies, students were given the opportunities to process and evaluate information through discussion with each other. Therefore, giving students a critical thinking opportunity, for instance, allowing time to pause, reflect on, analyses and discuss an issue in a context to support critical thinking, is the key to critical thinking education. Also, in terms of teaching, engaging students in different types of reflection, exchange of information and group discussion in a context are main strategies for developing students' critical thinking skills (ibid).

On the other hand, utilizing different critical thinking skills by teachers or students and as a method of teaching can increase the efficiency of translation classes and it helps to enrich the quality of translation. Since last decades, translation has been taken into account as a novel discipline along with its theories, techniques, principles, and approaches. And the new perspectives to translation substituted with the old ones i.e., per se literary translation training. The colossal development of cybernetics, electronics, computers and the sciences of information require any training to cover most possible types of translation-interpreting (Gonzalez, 2008). Ho (2005) advised that translation studies should be carried out based on studying the cause-effect relationship between translation research and translation practice.

On the other hand, according to Zainudin (2012), translation is an activity of mediate meaning from a source language to a target language. The ability to choose the correct and appropriate translation technique is a prominent skill to translators; therefore, it is essential for translation students to be aware of what particular technique should be used and why. The new approaches to teaching translation include theories of translation regarding text type and function (Newmark, 1988). It means that in most of the places, English translation is being offered in various universities. And the “read and translate” strategy is the most favorable method (Gonzalez, 2004).

Indeed, translation instructions and consequently putting theory into practice are not usually taught to the students in class. What is asked from the students in most classes is reading and translating without pondering about what they are translating i.e., literary translation. Nowadays the world enquires competent and proficient translators in the most cases such as politics, commerce, and economy and so on. Hence, training competent translators is vital. Translation studies theories open new windows toward translation education. They contribute to the increase of efficiency in translation teaching, which leads to bringing up more qualified translation graduates.

These theories include linguistics, functional and theories of cultural turn. Toury’s model, as one of the theories of cultural turn, focuses on the fact that translation is between complete equivalence with the source text and complete acceptability in the target language through norms (2011). Toury (2000) declares that norms are not constant entities and sometimes, some kind of changes have occurred during translation process due to nature of norms. Sometimes, these changes occur more quickly, and sometimes the process may take longer, and this does not mean that translators are passive. Rather, many of them help shape the process of changing.

Translator choices in the process of translation are monitored by the norms. It is clear that incorporating theoretical components into translation process “accelerate and enhance the scope of the student’s progress, helping him/her to make appropriate decisions and manipulate appropriate strategies and tactics” (Gile, 1991, p.185). Ennic (1996) states that not only is critical thinking applicable to individual decision making but also to group decision making as well. While engaging in CT, students require monitoring their thinking process, evaluating their progress, making sure about accuracy and making decisions about the use of time and mental effort (Halpern, 2003). Darray (1999) concludes that the author constructs a text through his ideas

and images. The translator strives to transfer the meaning from SL to TL. S/he tries to translate as if the reader would not be able to feel that as a translated text; i.e. translator requires diagnosing a distinction between assumptions and facts. He needs to be capable of differentiating facts from inferences and evaluate the author's point of view.

Hence, according to Gaber (2002), CT contributes to activate the translator cognition and let the translator be able to utilize his/her mental activates in order to have a perfect performance during the translation process. Translation is a type of decision-making process categorized into some prominent activities such as: planning translation, analyzing information, translation, revision, editing, and proof reading reviewing, completing translation and delivering translation (Darwish, 2004). Dahroug (2007) also states that training students to strive consciously to use their CT skills to understand and manage their translation process is so important. That is exactly what CT believes on it. Commeyras (1989) stated that in order for evaluating possible interpretations to determine the meaning of the text, the learner has to comprehend the text via reasoning skill. Reasoning is one of the main characteristics of critical thinking and its necessity to use in translation is felt, as well. So, the students' need to use it as they read a text such for clarifying what they mean, giving reasons, evaluating reasons, elaborating, supporting their evidence and so on. Translation, especially translation of journalistic texts, directly relates with a variety of cognitive or critical thinking abilities. In other words, critical thinking ability is the one that deals with deep understanding of reading and translating.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. is there any relationship between translation quality and development of critical thinking ability in translation education?
2. To what extent does critical thinking empower translation quality of undergraduate student's translations?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is a concurrent validity study between a general critical thinking skills test, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), and translation test outcome evaluation. In this study, explanatory research design, among mixed research designs, was used. In the first phase of the study, a questionnaire was given to the students to test the relationship between critical thinking skill and translation. In the second phase, students were interviewed to explain the effect of critical thinking abilities on their translation quality. For quantitative data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Quantitative data were analyzed with MINITA package program. As to qualitative data, textual analysis was done.

Participants

106 undergraduate students (65 female, 41 male) in the department of ELT at Ataturk University in the spring of 2014 participated in the current study.

Data collections Instruments and procedure

The students, in the first phase, were given the critical thinking skill questionnaire and they were asked to translate five paragraphs consequently. The questionnaire consisted of 34 questions and 45 minutes time to fill in. Within a week they were taught CT skills and method of translating via CT skills. The study lasted from April until June. The instruments used in the current study were CCTST (California critical thinking test), a test for translation including paragraphs from Oliver Twist and BBC, tutorial course design and interview. The CCTST makes available a collection of scale scores describing strengths and weaknesses in different skill areas. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test gives scores on these scales: Evaluation, Inference, Deduction, Induction, Analysis skills and an overall critical thinking score (Facione, 1990). There are two methods of teaching critical thinking. One of them is teaching CT directly or overtly. It means that the teacher explains the definition of CT, its skills and dispositions and elaborates the prominence of learning CT not only in the students' academic life but also in their everyday life. This method mostly is taught in psychology courses. As CT is approximately abstract and hard to explain. Most of the teachers prefer to teach it directly in class. Test takers can get 0 to 34 scores in the test. Total scores ranging between 10 to 20 are considered as norm level. The common score is 16 with 4.45 SD. The reliability of the questionnaire was carried out by Delphi strategy and its validity was measured. In second part of the disposition test, 9 decision-making and problem solving questions were asked from the students to answer in Turkish. In the 2nd part, the students were asked to give feedback about the test. In this study, direct method of teaching CT was used. It took 30 minutes. The definition of CT and why it is used in our academic life especially in reading and translation were presented. Indeed, the presented PowerPoint slide at the beginning could draw the students' attention to the topic and made them follow the lesson eagerly. Firstly, a general question asked from the students to get them involved in the topic and some of the students' positive answers broke the ice and led to the pleasant interaction during the lesson.

Another method of teaching CT is indirect teaching. On the other hand, the students can learn CT skills covertly and indirectly; that is, students are able to know what CT skills are subconsciously during learning their own course. It is similar to what occurs in learning and acquisition distinguishes. In CT indirect teaching, teachers make students acquire skills without knowing exactly what happens in learning. This method of teaching needs much more time and experienced teachers, as well.

In this study, direct method of teaching CT was used. It took 30 minutes. The definition of CT and why it is used in our academic life especially in reading and translation were presented. Indeed, the presented PowerPoint slide at the beginning could draw the students' attention to the topic and made them follow the lesson eagerly. Firstly, a general question asked to the students to get them involve in the topic and some of the students' positive answers broke the ice and led to the pleasant interaction during the lesson.

After taking second translation test, some volunteer students were given an interview. The conducted interview was recorded and the students' feedback was analyzed consequently. As interview is one of the most widely-used instruments in qualitative research, it is used to make researchers provide the opportunity to collect data concerning the stages or the processes. As it

can be inferred from the interview, the participants mainly focused on efficient changing created by teaching CT skills in tutorial and its positive effect on their translation. Under such categories and codes, it was concluded that most of the participants believed in CT beneficial effect in their translation.

Data analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to evaluate the research questions. The data were analyzed using MINITAB statistical package. The independent variables in the study are gender and the dimensions of critical thinking. The dependent variable is the translation quality. Paired t-test and correlation test were conducted. According to Fisher (1925), 0.05 level of significance could be used as the alpha level to test each hypothesis (Cowles, 1982).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The total score reveals one's overall reasoning and, consequently, critical thinking skill level. The total includes the sum score of analysis, inference, and evaluation, which are the key skills in critical thinking. The CT overall scores of the translation students on the CCTST are summarized in figure 1. The mean score of the students on CT skill is 17.05 with the standard value of 5.20. The minimum and maximum scores are 5 and 29, respectively.

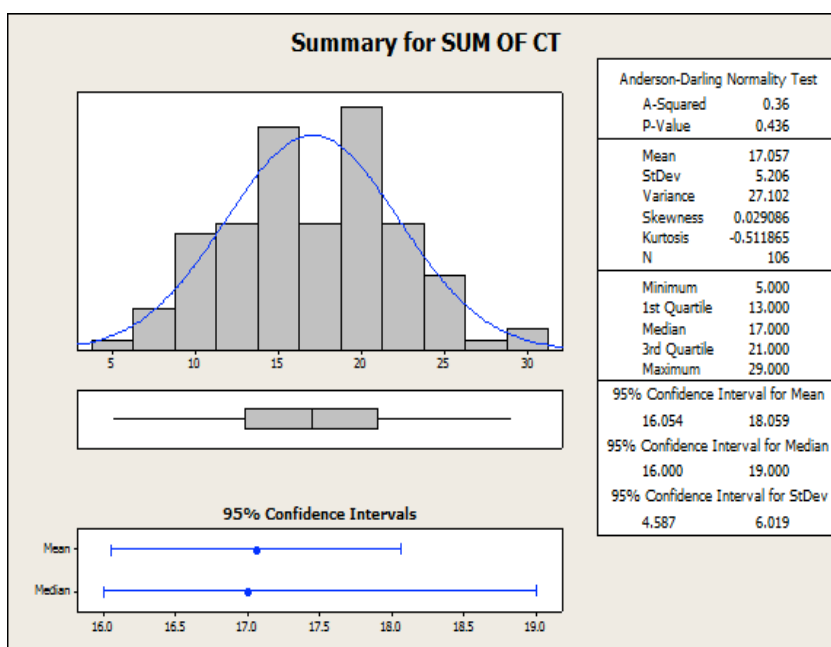


Figure 1: The CT overall scores of the translation students on the CCTST

The total translation score of the students on the translation tests were summarized in Figure 2. The mean score of the students is 99.35 with the standard deviation value of 39.46. The minimum and maximum scores are 21 and 223 respectively. The coherence scores' distribution with 99% confidence is normal.

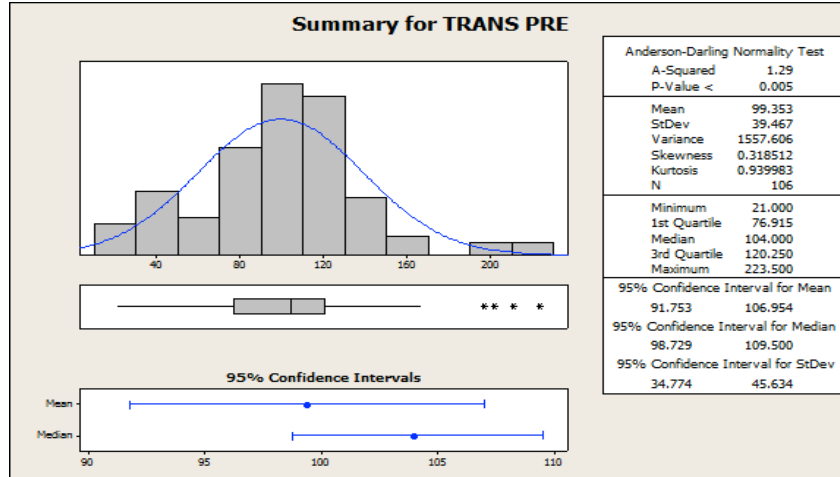


Figure 2: Results of translation test before CT course

The translation scores of the students after CT course translation tests are given in figure 3. The mean score of the students on the word is 165.19 with the standard deviation value of 27.28. The minimum and maximum scores are 93.0 and 217.1, respectively. The post translation scores' distribution with 90% confidence is normal.

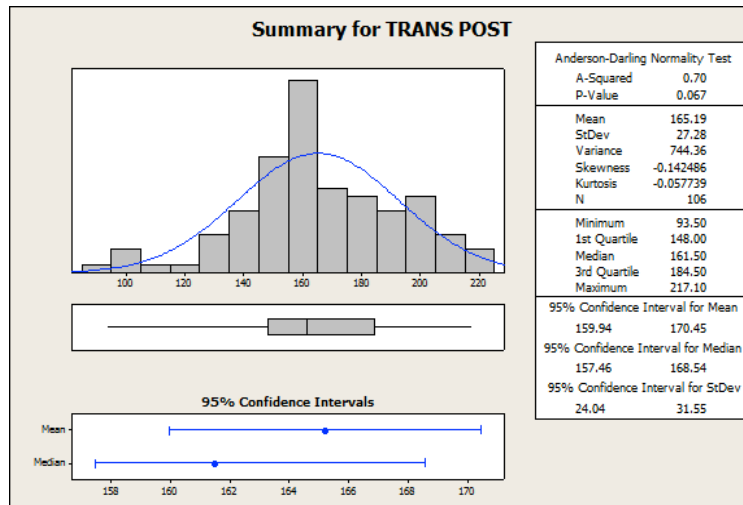


Figure 3: Results of translation test (overall) after CT course

Paired t-tests were used to compare the extent of changes in Translation quality before and after attending short CT training. Figure 4 shows the average pre- and post-test scores for all participants included (n=106). An overall increase in the scores is again seen from pre-to post-test, with very similar findings to the previous figures. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to find out the effect of the training on participants' knowledge. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores (M=99.35, SD=39.47) and post-test performances after training (M=165.19; SD=27.28); $t(106), p < .001$. The mean of total score advanced.

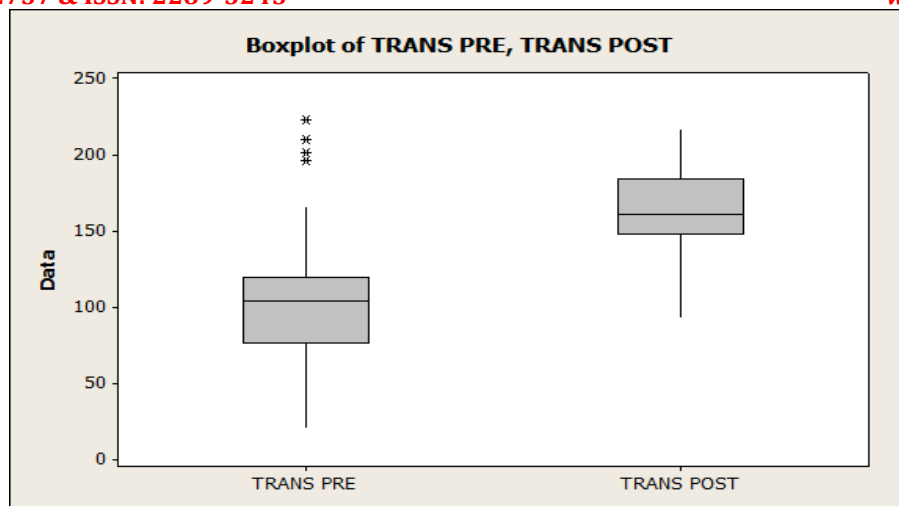


Figure 4: Comparison of pre-and post-test scores on translation quality

Discussion

The comparison of average pre- and post-test word scores for all participants shows an overall increase in scores from pre-to post-test. A paired-samples t-test was taken to determine the effect of the CT training. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores and post-test performances after training.

The pre- and post-test scores for all participants demonstrate an overall increase in scores seen from pre-to post-test. A paired-sample t-test was prepared to determine the effect of the training participants' knowledge. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores and post-test performances after training. In pre-test performance, students mostly translated traditionally. It means that word by word was preferred in the first test. Students translated the texts according to their surface meaning (denotative meaning). While in the second test, there was an obvious change in their performance. Indeed, the change was the result of tutorial and the presented CT skills, Interpretation, as one of the main skills was clarified and activated students' cognition to what they had already known; this is what we call background knowledge and it contributes to reading comprehension and translation consequently. Under the umbrella of CT, students' picked equivalents changed, as well.

Paired t-tests were used to compare the change in translation quality before and after attending short CT training. The average pre- and post-test scores for all participants show an overall increase in the scores. A paired-sample t-test was conducted to determine the effect of the training on participants. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores and post-test performances after training. The participants' understanding about the paragraphs was different on the shadow of presented tutorial. Pre-test results show that the participants could not mostly grasp the text coherence according to their translation equivalents. However, post-test results indicate that the participants could get the most delicate concept and such an understanding could lead to a better performance in the post-test performance.

In showing the probability of any relationship between translation quality and development of critical thinking ability it can be said that who has higher score in CT skill presents better performance in transition as well. On the other hand, translation theories are indirectly related to CT skills. For instance, according to Toury model, translation is a decision making process and norms play key roles in this process. Indeed, preliminary norms lead to the choice of what to translate in the first place and operational norms direct decision making during the translation process (Herman, 1991). In comparing the CT skills and translation process, it can be inferred that the same procedure takes place. On the other hand, overlapping CT skills including deductive inference, inductive inference, and inference to value judgements leads to decision making process results from Toury norms (Ennis 1987; cited in Aloqaili, 2012). Students' performance in evaluation is high, which means that students are capable to evaluate the text in order to critique or judge the value of its components syntactically, semantically and pragmatically, as well. On the other hand, evaluation skill makes the students evaluate the text and choose the best alternative according to their interpretation.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the results of the study, it is recommended to teachers to tutor CT skills in translation courses. It means that applying CT skills in translation classes can enhance the quality of students' performance and make them think critically about their own translation and reflect on it to present a good performance. Findings show that there is correlation between translation theories and critical thinking skills. As translation theories effect on translation performance, critical thinking can be impressive, as well. On the other hand, if teachers apply critical thinking skills in their translation classes and make students learn how to utilize such skills in translation activities, they will encounter with high quality performance of translation. Also, it can be inferred that learning translation technique equipped with logical thinking instruments, would expand the translators perspective and it would not limit them with traditional style of translation per se.

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