International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research

Islamic Azad University, Najafabad Branch

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International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research

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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Notes for Contribution

The *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, the refereed journal sponsored by Islamic Azad University–Najafabad, solicits and welcomes the submission of papers on various aspects of English language teaching and learning. Submissions should mirror relevant theoretical foundations and pedagogical implications, and should reflect a clear understanding of the contribution in the related literature.

Manuscripts should not have been published previously or be under consideration for publication elsewhere in any form. In addition, IJLTR will consider only one submission per author per volume. Manuscripts undergo a two-phase evaluation process. First, they are read by in-house committee. If the topic and scope are considered appropriate, they are then sent out for blind review to at least three readers selected from the editorial board.

The research areas include, but are not limited to, the following topics:
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Abstract (level 1)

Teaching communication strategies is one of the most challenging subjects which has its own supporters and opponents.

Keywords: teaching, strategies

Teaching communication strategies is one of the most challenging subjects which has its own supporters and opponents. Teaching communication strategies is one of the most challenging subjects which has its own supporters and opponents.

Methodology (level 1)
Participants (level 2)

Teaching communication strategies is one of the most challenging subjects which has its own supporters and opponents.

Materials and Instruments (level 2)

Teaching communication strategies is one of the most challenging subjects which has its own supporters and opponents. Many studies have been done to support teaching communicative strategies.

    Pretest. (Level 3)

    Proficiency test. (Level 4)

    Writing test. (Level 4)

    Multiple choice. (Level 5)

    Composition. (Level 5)

    Posttest. (Level 3)

    Motivation questionnaire. (Level 3)

Procedure (level 2)

    Treatment (level 3)

    Assessment (level 3)

Data Analysis (Level 1)

Discussion (Level 1)

References

Try to prevent references to other pages in the paper. If necessary, type (see p. XXX) in the text and explain in a separate document to which part of the text you want to refer. Please be specific: Mention page, paragraph and sentence.

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Use double quotation marks for quotes. Use single quotation marks only for quotes inside quotes. Quotes up to 40 words are integrated in the running text. Quotes longer more than 40 words are set apart in a separate paragraph with special formatting (i.e., block formatting). Shift the left margin 1 centimeter to the left, and use Times Roman 12 point as font. Add white lines above and beneath the quote.

When reporting quantitative results, please avoid excessive overlap between the text and the tables. There is no need to repeat in the text all of the numbers that appear in a table.

Also, avoid excessive overlap between the Results section and the Discussion/ Conclusion section. The Results section should contain what you have found, and the Discussion or Conclusion section should contain your interpretation of what you have found (not just repeat what is already in the Results section). If you would like to present the results and discussion together, use a single section labeled Results and Discussion.

Literature References:
Lynch (2000) describes strategy as an organization's sense of purpose. At least, three different levels of strategy within all organizations can be identified (Chaffey, 2002; Hackbarth & Kettinger, 2000).

References Instructions (Hanging Indentation):
Books with one author:
Example:
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Twaddell, W.F. (1957). Do we want to use the German umlaut? A boring
Story. In M. Joos (Ed.), Readings in linguistics I. The development of descriptive linguistics in America (85-87). University of Chicago Press.

Journal Articles:
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Picard, R. G. (2002). Research note: Assessing audience performance of public service broadcasters. European Journal of Communication, 17(2), 227-235.

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Hlatky, M.A., D. Boothroyd, E. Vittinghoff, P. Sharp, & M.A. Whooley (2002).The measurement of consistency and occasion with latent class models.Journal of the American Medical Association,287(5), 90-99. Retrieved November 19, 2000, from http://jama.ama-assn.rg/issues/v287n5/rfull/joc10108.html#aainfo

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Alejo, R. (in press). Where does the money go? An analysis of the container metaphor in economics: The market and the economy. Journal of Pragmatics.

Cameron, L., & Low, G. (n.d.). Researching and applying metaphor. Cambridge University Press.

Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (10th Ed.). (1993). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

Theses and Dissertations:
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Martinez, F. E. (2003). Exploring figurative language processing in bilinguals: The metaphor interference effect. Unpublished master's thesis, Texas A& M International University.

Amundin, M. (1991).Click repetition rate patterns in communicative sounds from the harbor porpoise. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stockholm University.

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Doyle, B. (2002). Howling like a dog: Metaphorical language in Psalm 59. The Annual International Meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, Berlin, Germany.

Research Paper

Politeness Strategies Used by English Native Speakers, Persian Native Speakers, and Iranian EFL Learners in the Production of Refusal Speech Act

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Abstract

A key aspect of effective communication is the use of appropriate speech acts. This study investigated the difference between Persian native speakers, Iranian EFL learners, and English native speakers in terms of the speech act realization of refusal and uncovered the reasons for which, each group of participants produced the refusal speech act regarding the Rapport Management Approach. To this end, 100 (male and female) intermediate EFL learners were chosen based on their performance on the Oxford Placement Test. 100 Persian native speakers among 140 students studying Persian literature at Najafabad Azad University were randomly chosen and they were asked to fill out a Discourse Completion Test (DCT), consisting of 12 situations realizing the refusal of four types of eliciting acts. Additionally, 12 English native speakers (6 males and 6 females) were also contacted through emails to participate in the study. The English DCT was given to two groups of participants and the Persian DCT was given to Persian native speakers. The politeness model proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) was adopted to show the differences between Iranian EFL learners, English native speakers, and Persian native speakers who were participants in this study. By using the SPSS software program, the results indicated 'negative' strategies as the most frequent ones and highlighted the significant role of face, social rights, and obligations in interaction. The findings revealed that among politeness strategies 'negative' strategies are the most frequent ones. The results also indicated that English native speakers use negative politeness strategies more than Iranian EFL learners. Therefore, English native participants regard themselves as having rights and obligations about other people more than Iranian EFL learners. The results of this study highlighted the importance of pragmatic knowledge in international communications.

Keywords: *Politeness Strategies; Refusal Speech act; Rapport Management Approach*

استراتژی های ادبی مورد استفاده زبانان انگلیسی، فارسی زبانان و زبان آموزان ایرانی در کنش گفتاری امتناع

یکی از جنبه های کلیدی یک ارتباط موثر، استفاده از کنش های گفتاری مناسب است. این مطالعه به بررسی تفاوت بین فارسی زبانان، زبان آموزان ایرانی و زبان آموزان انگلیسی از لحاظ درک کنش گفتاری امتناع و کشف دلایلی که هر گروه از شرکت کنندگان اکنش گفتاری امتناع را با توجه به رویکرد مدیریت ارتباط ارائه کردند، انجام شد. برای این منظور، 100 زبان آموز زبان انگلیسی متوسطه (مرد و زن) بر اساس عملکرد آنها در آزمون تعیین سطح آکسفورد انتخاب شدند. 100 فارسی زبان بومی از بین 140 دانشجوی رشته ادبیات فارسی دانشگاه آزاد نجف آباد به صورت تصادفی انتخاب شدند و از آنها خواسته شد تا آزمون تکمیل گفتمان (DCT)شامل 12 موقعیت را تکمیل کنند که متوجه امتناع چهار نوع کنش تحریک کننده می شود. علاوه بر این، با 12 زبان مادری انگلیسی (6 مرد و 6 زن) نیز از طریق ایمیل برای شرکت در مطالعه تماس گرفته شد DCT. انگلیسی به دو گروه از شرکت کنندگان و DCT فارسی به فارسی زبانان بومی داده شد. مدل ادب ارائه شده توسط براون و لوینسون (1987) برای نشان دادن تفاوت بین زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی، انگلیسی زبانان بومی و فارسی زبانان شرکت کننده در این مطالعه اتخاذ شد. نتایج با استفاده از نرم‌افزار SPSS ، استراتژی‌های «منفی» را به‌عنوان متداول‌ترین راهبردها نشان داد و نقش معنادار چهره، حقوق و تعهدات اجتماعی در تعامل را برجسته کرد. یافته ها نشان داد که در بین راهبردهای ادب، راهبردهای «منفی» بیشترین فراوانی را دارند. همچنین نتایج نشان داد که انگلیسی زبانان بیشتر از زبان آموزان ایرانی از راهبردهای ادب منفی استفاده می کنند. بنابراین، شرکت کنندگان انگلیسی خود را دارای حقوق و تعهداتی در رابطه با سایر افراد نسبت به زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی می دانند. نتایج این مطالعه بر اهمیت دانش عمل‌گرایانه در ارتباطات بین المللی تاکید کرد.

Introduction

Using different speech acts by men and women, native speakers and non-native speakers draw more attention to the study language of practitioners. Pragmatic knowledge as a part of

communicative competence (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) facilitates using appropriate different speech acts based on the context. Hymes (1971) proposed "communicative competence "which refers to a grammatical and social knowledge of a language user about how and when to use utterances appropriately. He stated that communicative competence consists of four types of abilities: (1) To what extent something is formally possible (2) To what extent something is feasible in the advantage of implementation (3) To what extent something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) about a context in which it is used and assessed (4) To what extend something is performed, and what it is doing entails (Hymes, 1972).

Crystal (1997) defined pragmatics as the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context and the way it is interpreted by the users. Boxer (2002) stated that individuals from the interactions with different communities are based on their pragmatic norms, so they may have different expectations and misperceptions.

Austin (1962) defined speech act as an act that a speaker performs when making an utterance in language and communication, such as stating, promising, ordering, greeting, warning, inviting, and congratulating. As Spencer-Oatey (2005) mentioned, people have specific goals when interacting with each other. These can be relational as well as transactional in nature. These goals can significantly affect their perceptions of rapport because any failure to achieve them can cause depression and dissatisfaction. According to Al-Errani (2007), the speech act of refusal occurs when a speaker directly or indirectly says 'no' to a request or invitation. He stated that a refusal is a face-threatening act to the listener/ requester/ inviter, because it contradicts his or her suspense, and is often realized through indirect strategies.

 The rapport Management Approach examines the way that language is used to make, keep and threaten social relationships, but it also includes the management of sociality rights and interactional goals. Additionally, the rapport management approach suggests a great balance between self and others, (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). The rapport Management approach is the basic and necessary concept in this study that should be interpreted. Management of harmony-disharmony among people consists of three interconnected components: the management of face, the management of sociality rights and obligations, and the management of interactional goals.

Face management involves the management of face sensitivities. Based on Goffman's (1967) definition, 'face' is one public image or social sense that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize. The face appears with personal social value and is connected to people`s sense of worth and respect. Sociality rights and obligations, on the other hand, are concerned with social expectancy and show people`s concerns over fairness, consideration, and behavioral appropriateness. This aspect has two parts: equity right which denotes that every member of society should have fair behavior and association that is the individual right to have a friendly relationship with others.

The present study aimed at investigating the politeness strategies when making a refusal according to the rapport management approach. Because Iran has the highest international tourist numbers, Persian native speakers and Iranian EFL Learners may face the biggest challenges of refusing the requests of English native speakers. It is important to know the different functional use of Politeness strategies by English native speakers and Persian native speakers to produce refusal speech acts. Moreover, the results of this study can be used as a reference for other language practitioners.

Literature Review

In the comparative study on refusal speech acts among Chinese and American English, Honglin (2007) demonstrated that both Chinese and Americans used varied expressions to refuse something. In addition, they were different in the directness of refusals based on situations and cultures. Direct and indirect speech acts of refusals were utilized in both languages.

Baranova (2008) scrutinized the politeness strategies used by two different cultures (American and Japanese). In this regard 73 American and 70 Japanese wrote rejection letters which consisted of three basic parts: preparation for the rejection, the actual rejection, and some remedy. Each part consisted of supportive moves to soften the impact of refusal. The written rejection letters were collected to examine the effect of Brown and Levinson's social variables on the choice of politeness expressionists. According to the results, in American letters 11% of participants used the direct method, 63% used the indirect and 26% used both methods. However, in Japanese letters, there was little variety. 99% of letters used direct rejection which 10% of them followed by an explanation, whereas 80% of them were without explanation, and 99% were preceded by an explanation, also in 1% of letters indirect rejection was used.

Hashemian (2012) studied the cross-cultural differences in performing refusal between Persian native speakers and English native speakers regarding the frequency of the semantic formulas. He also examined whether Persian EFL learners would transfer their L1 refusal patterns into the L2 or not. His study revealed no fundamental differences in the use of direct refusal strategies between English and Persian native speakers. The results of this study indicated the existence of pragmatic transfer in the use of Indirect and Adjuncts to refusals by both highly proficient and low proficient L2 learners.

Han and Burgucu-Tazegül (2016) investigated the discrepancies between native and non-native speakers of English in the use of refusals. They also scrutinized whether possible pragmatic transfer falls under the influence of L2 proficiency. The data were gathered via role-plays. The results indicated the participants frequently use indirect strategies for refusals in preference to direct ones. Turkish EFL learners preferred to use pragmatic transfers while utilizing refusal strategies. High proficiency level students rarely use pragmatic transfer. English native speakers gave less importance to status than EFL learners.

Tabatabaei (2019) investigated the language proficiency effects of using the refusal speech act by Iranian EFL learners. She used DCT to collect the data. The findings showed language proficiency as a neutral factor in the degree of pragmatic knowledge. She highlighted the role of teaching pragmatics and cultural behaviors of the target language in language classrooms to promote language learners' pragmatic competence.

Živković (2022)compared the use of refusal strategies by advanced Serbian EFL learners and English native speakers. DCT was used to examine refusal strategies. The results underlined some variances in terms of the frequency and content of special strategies. The EFL learners preferred to overuse regret/apology statements, more family-oriented excuses and explanations than the ones used by the English native speakers.

Shahi (2022) analyzed the use of refusal speech acts by Iranian EFL learners. The results indicated that female participants prefer indirect strategies but male participants prefer direct strategies. Female participants prefer accepting micro functions as refusal responses. However, reinforcing micro as refusal responses were used by male learners.

Previous speech act studies made use of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness' model or Leech's model; however, some disadvantages are associated with them. The disadvantage of Brown and Levinson (1987) is that it does not consider the social aspects of life. Therefore, the face was considered the only criterion for politeness. As a result, this study used Spencer-Oatey's (2002, 2005) rapport management approach to study speech acts. Therefore, the Rapport Management model is a new model which the researcher is persuaded to work on it.

Concerning Rapport Management, an attempt was made in this study to find appropriate answers to the following questions:

RQ1. What are the differences among politeness strategies used by English and Persian native speakers and Iranian EFL Learners in the use the of refusal speech act?

RQ2. Why do Persian native speakers use politeness strategies in Persian?

RQ3. What reasons are perceived by Iranian EFL learners in using politeness strategies in English?

RQ4. Why do English native speakers induce them to use politeness strategies?

Method

Research design

The design of the research was a descriptive comparative one in which Iranian EFL learners and English and Persian native speakers' responses were compared to find the difference between the politeness strategies and the reasons perceived by them in using such politeness strategies. In this research, the researcher attempted to investigate the speech act of refusal with regard the to Rapport Management approach. The components of methodology; participants, instrumentation,ons, and data analysis are explained below.

Participants

One hundred Iranian EFL learners out of 140 students (based on their performance on OPT) and 100 Persian Native speakers among 140 students (studying Persian Literature at Islamic Azad University, Najafabad Branch) were randomly chosen based on their availability to participate in the study. Moreover, 12 English native speakers, and Linked In network users (6 males and 6 females), were selected as participants. English questionnaire was sent to them via email so they could fill them out. In terms of gender, the participants included both males and females; i.e. each group consisted of 50 males and 50 females. Participants fall between the ages of 20-30.

Instruments

According to Cohen (1996), the discourse completion test (DCT)was used to gather data on speech acts. Two forms of (DCT) were typed, one in English and the other in Persian. The (DCT) consisted of 12 scenarios. Each participant had to answer in both Persian and English, since answering the English (DCT) may have an effect on the Persian (DCT) or vice versa, each person was asked to answer 6 Persian and 6 English questions. Hence, there was one questionnaire in two languages. These situations were in the form of a conversation and students were asked to put themselves in each situation and respond as if they were in the actual conversation. Moreover, each situation in DCT was followed by a three 5-point Likert scale. The Likert scale was utilized to find the cognitive reasons (face, interactional goals, sociality rights, and obligations) for participants in choosing the politeness strategy in performing refusal speech acts. This questionnaire was confirmed by 5 professors who had Ph.D. in English. There is one example from English DCT and the translation of it in Persian DCT below:

1. *You are the owner of a bookstore. One of your best workers asks to speak to you in private.*
Worker: As you know, I've been here just a little over a year now, and I know you've been pleased with my work. I enjoy working here, but to be quite honest I need a pay increase.

You: _____
Worker: Well ... then I guess I'll have to look for another job.
  A. To what extent do you think this request is unimportant for you to refuse?
  Not at all important   Very important
                    1   2   3   4   5

B.   *To what extent do you think the person who requests will be offended by your refusal?*

Not at all offended   Very offended

         1   2   3   4   5

C. *To what extent do you think the refusal can have negative consequences?*

Not at all negative consequences   Very negative consequences

  1   2   3   4   5

D. *Other reason* …………………………………………………………………

١. شما صاحب یک کتابفروشی هستید. یکی از بهترین کارمندانتان می خواهد خصوصی با شما صحبت کند.

کارمند شما: همانطور که مستحضر هستید من الان یک سالی هست که در خدمت شما هستم فکر میکنم از کارم راضی بوده باشید. باعث افتخار من است که باز هم اینجا کار کنم اما اگر واقعا راستش را بخواهید نیازمند حقوق بیشتری هستم.

شما ……………………………………………………………

کارمند شما: خوب ... پس در این صورت باید دنبال کار دیگری باشم.

الف. تا چه حد فکر میکنید امتناع از این درخواست برای شما بی اهمیت است؟

بی اهمیت   خیلی مهم

     ٥   ٤   ٣   ٢   ١

ب. تا چه حد فکر میکنید شخص در خواست کننده از امتناع شما رنجیده خاطر شود؟

اصلا رنجیده نمیشود   خیلی رنجیده میشود

     ٥   ٤   ٣   ٢   ١

ج. تا چه حد فکر میکنید امتناع از این در خواست عواقب منفی برای شما داشته باشد؟

عواقب منفی ندارد   عواقب منفی زیادی دارد

     ٥   ٤   ٣   ٢   ١

د. دلیل دیگر…………………………………………

Procedures

A sample of 100 participants out of 140, based on their performance on OPT were chosen among under graduated students in the Islamic Azad University Najafabad branch and 100 Persian Native speakers among 140 students who were studying Persian Literature. All of the participants responded immediately, taking about 20–30 minutes in the researchers' presence.

Some others consisting of English native speakers, received the DCT in their emails to participate in the study and after the questionnaire was completed by the participants, the classified answers were sent to the researcher's g-mail address. The estimated time to do the DCT was at most 16 minutes.

Results

The data collected were analyzed about the research questions posed in this research:

Table 1

Frequencies of Politeness Strategies of Refusal Speech Act Used by Persian native speakers, EFL, and English Native speakers

Strategies	Persian native speakers	ALL	NESs	Total
Bald-On-Record	22	20	2	43
Negative	57	58	7	122
Positive	14	16	2	32
Off-Record	7	6	1	14
Total	100	100	12	212

Table 1 indicates negative politeness strategy (*N* Total = 122) was used more than any other strategies by the three groups of participants in the study, and it was followed by bald-on-record

(*N* Total = 44), positive (*N* Total = 32), and off-record strategies (*N* Total = 14). Table 2 determines whether there was a difference among Persian native speakers, EFL learners, and English native speakers in terms of their frequency of using different types of refusal acts or not.

Table 2
Chi-Square Results for Comparing Politeness Strategies of Refusal Speech Act Used by Persian native speakers, EFL learners, and English Native speakers

		Value	*df*	*Asymp. Sig.* (2-tailed)
Pearson	Chi-Square	.496	6	.99
Likelihood	Ratio	.499	6	.99
Linear-by-Linear	Association	.149	1	.69
N of Valid Cases		212		

The *p-value* under the *Asymp. Sig.* (2-tailed) column in front of Pearson Chi-square was found to be larger than the specified level of significance (i.e. .99 > .05). It indicates that the differences among Persian native speakers, EFL learners, and English native speakers in terms of the frequency of using refusal speech act were not statistically significant. In other words, the three groups of participants were not different in terms of their frequency of use of the bold-on-record politeness strategy (although this strategy was more used by Persian native speakers than the other two groups), nor were they differ concerning their frequency of use of negative strategy, positive and off-record strategies (although the proportions of these three strategies were higher for English native speakers than for the participants of the other two groups).

Table 3
Frequencies of Reasons for Using Different Politeness Strategies by Male and Female Persian native speakers

Strategies	Sociality Rights and Obligations	Face	Interactional Goals	Total
Males	28	13	9	50
Females	11	19	20	50
Total	39	31	29	100

Table 3 indicates the frequencies of various reasons for males and females were different, with the biggest difference for *sociality rights and obligations* (Difference = 28 − 11 = 17), while the differences for *face* and *interactional goals* were 6 and 11, respectively. Table 4 revealed whether the difference between males and females concerning the reasons for using politeness strategies of refusal speech act was statistically significant or not.

Table 4
Chi-Square Results for Comparing Male and Female Persian native speakers' Reasons for Using Politeness Strategies of Refusal Speech Act

		Value	*df*	*Asymp. Sig.* (2-tailed)
Pearson	Chi-Square	12.70	2	.002
Likelihood	Ratio	13.07	2	.001
Linear-by-Linear	Association	11.58	1	.001
N of Valid Cases		100		

If you read across Pearson Chi-square to *Asymp. Sig.* (2-tailed) column, you can find that the *p-value* was less than the set alpha level (i.e. .002 < .05). It indicated that the difference between male and female Persian native speakers regarding the reasons for using politeness strategies of refusal speech act reached statistical significance.

Table 5

Frequencies of Reasons for Using Different Politeness Strategies by Male and Female EFL learners

Strategies	Sociality Rights and Obligations	Face	Interactional Goals	Total
Males	31	14	5	50
Females	10	13	27	50
Total	41	27	32	100

Table 5 shows that the frequencies of different reasons for male and female EFL learners were different: the differences were 22, 21, and 1 for *interactional goals*, *sociality rights, obligations*, and *face,* respectively. Table 6 shows whether the difference between male and female EFL learners regarding the reasons for using politeness strategies of refusal speech act reached statistical significance or not.

Table 6

Chi-Square Results for Comparing Male and Female EFL Learners' Reasons for Using Politeness Strategies of Refusal Speech Act

		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson	Chi-Square	25.91	2	.000
Likelihood	Ratio	27.94	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear	Association	25.35	1	.000
N of Valid Cases		100		

In Table 6, Pearson Chi-square to *Asymp. Sig.* (2-tailed) column, shows that the *p-value* was less than the set alpha level (i.e. .000 < .05). This means that the difference between male and female EFL learners regarding the reasons for using politeness strategies of refusal speech act was statistically significant.

Table 7

Frequencies of Reasons for Using Different Politeness Strategies by Male and Female English Native Speakers

Strategies	Sociality Rights and Obligations	Face	Interactional Goals	Total
Males	5	1	0	6
Females	2	0	4	6
Total	7	1	4	12

Table 7 indicates differences were 2 and 5 for *sociality rights and obligations*,0 and 4 for *interactional goals,* and 1 and 0 *faces*. Table 4.8 determines whether the difference between male and female English native speakers concerning the reasons for using politeness strategies of refusal speech act was statistically significant or not.

Table 8

Chi-Square Results for Comparing Male and Female NESs' Reasons for Using Politeness Strategies of Refusal Speech Act

		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson	Chi-Square	6.28	2	.043
Likelihood	Ratio	8.26	2	.016

| Linear-by-Linear   Association | 4.38 | 1 | .036 |
| N of Valid Cases | 12 | | |

Table 8 shows a *p-value* less than the alpha level (i.e. .043 < .05), which means that the difference between male and female English native speakers regarding the reasons for using politeness strategies of refusal speech act was statistically significant.

Discussion

This study aimed to answer the main question and sought to reveal the differences among politeness strategies used by English and Persian native speakers and Iranian EFL Learners in the use of the refusal speech act. To answer this question, results indicated no significant differences among Persian native speakers, EFL learners, and English native speakers in terms of the frequency of using the refusal speech act. The current findings indicated that Persian native speakers used the bold-on-record politeness strategy more than other groups. English native speakers intended to use negative strategy, positive and off-record strategies than others. A general comparison between Persian native and English native participants indicates that they select the same strategies. The results of this study are in line with Hashemian's (2012) study. He indicated no fundamental differences in the use of direct refusal strategies between English and Persian native speakers.

The other purpose of this study was to the reasons why Persian native speakers use politeness strategies regarding Rapport Management. Males prefer to use sociality rights and obligations. Because males considered social rights and advantages for themselves, they used sociality rights and obligations more than females. In Iranian society, most males are more independent than females economically, so they suppose certain rights for themselves such as their order to be performed and also to be responded to with respect. This is why they prefer to use sociality rights and obligations. In line with this study, Shahi (2022) analyzed the use of refusal speech acts by Iranian EFL learners and indicated that female participants prefer indirect strategies but male participants prefer direct strategies. Female participants prefer accepting micro functions as refusal responses. However, reinforcing micro as refusal responses were used by male learners.

To answer the third question, it shows that the frequencies of different reasons for male and female IEFLLs were different: the differences were 22, 21, and 1 for *interactional goals*, *sociality rights, obligations*, and *face,* respectively. Additionally, social rights and obligations as the first reason which was chosen by IEFL learners. According to the chi-square chart, it had a statistically significant effect on the rating of participants since the p-value is smaller than 0.05. Additionally, this factor has more effect on males' strategy selection than females, but interactional goals in females' view have more effect than males. In Iran society, most males are more economically independent than females, but according to this statistical outcome in using Interactional goals by females, the researcher came up with this reason that Iranian females EFLLs have more specific goals in their interactions with others, maybe they are more face-sensitive than Males. Han and Burgucu-Tazegül (2016) pointed out that the participants frequently utilized indirect strategies for refusals in preference to direct ones. Turkish EFL learners preferred to use pragmatic transfers while utilizing refusal strategies. English native speakers gave less importance to status than EFL learners.

Considering the last purpose of the study, the results indicated that English native male and female speakers have different reasons to choose refusal speech acts. The role of the Spencer-party's opinion in selecting a politeness strategy is proved here. Therefore, the results highlighted the effect of the other reasons that be equally accepted by Iranian EFL learners, English native speakers, and Persian Native speakers.

According to Spencer-oatey (2005), interactional goals exist in the minds of the interlocutors, but rights and obligations are *social*. In other words, if people don't observe their expected rights and obligations in interacting with others, they may feel annoyed. To achieve harmony in interaction, both speaker and hearer must share similar conceptualizations of face and rights, and obligations or, at least, understand each other's worldview to manage rapport properly. At the same time, harmony does not depend on sharing interactional goals, but on managing them properly. Interactional goals do not affect males selecting the strategy because the interlocutors may not find each other's goal, so they just notified the interactions as being developed socially. Results show that females are more sensitive to this kind of phenomenon. In brief, people expect social rights and obligations for themselves. This phenomenon is more common in intercultural interaction.

The consequences of this have some theoretical and pedagogical implications as to the use of proper speech act in different situations as well as teaching and learning techniques. Regarding implications, the findings of this study revealed different strategies exist among Persian native speakers, EFL learners, and English native speakers.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the refusal speech acts regarding Rapport Management Approach. This investigation also finds out the role of gender among Iranian EFL learners, Persian native speakers, and English native speakers as well. Generally, the greatest amount of strategies used by Persian native speakers, EFL learners, and English native speakers are the same, however, the percentage and frequency of each differ respectively.

Findings revealed differences in reasons observed and the frequency of using different strategies among Iranian EFL learners, Persian natives, and English native speakers. Also, gender plays a role in the use of politeness strategies among EFL learners, Persian natives, and English native speakers, and also supports reasons induced by 3 groups of participants. Since sociality rights were considered by Males of these 3 groups of participants, so the difference between males and females was observed.

In conclusion, teachers as direct practitioners of language in academic settings are, thus, suggested to raise EFL learners' pragmatic awareness besides their proficiency level. In other words, as learners' level enhances, pragmatic aspects should be taught to them which expose learners to authentic materials. In different situations, they can correctly recognize the situation and use the proper speech act. Consequently, students as other practitioners of language can benefit from this study by finding the difference between their native language and the target one. Comprehending these differences can help them to realize the situation where they are and they use appropriate speech acts. The findings of this study can shed light on politeness issues and provide EFL practitioners to manage more successful EFL classes. The present research can be a source for future studies on politeness strategies used by Persian Native speakers and EFL learners from a rapport management perspective. Further research can be done with larger numbers of English native speakers.

Also, the results suggested opportunities for future studies on politeness regarding different proficiency levels or distances among the interlocutors. Additionally, it would also be interesting to investigate the use of politeness strategies among bilinguals. However, in the present study, the DCT was used for collecting data for future studies on the current topic is recommended to use of another instrument like different scenarios or use interviews.

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Research Paper

Impact of Elementary Learners' L1 in Consciousness-raising Tasks on Their L2 Writing Accuracy

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Abstract

This study was an attempt to investigate the impact of elementary learners' L1 in consciousness-raising tasks on their L2 writing accuracy. To achieve this end, 32 male and female elementary EFL learners, aged 17 to 26, participated in this study. They were assigned to two experimental groups (L1 and L2 groups) using the intact group sampling technique. The treatment was 13 two-hour sessions in which the participants of theL1 group were exposed to consciousness-raising tasks through their L1, but the L2 group experienced the same tasks in English. In the end, a writing test was administered for both groups and the data collected through the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using a paired-sample *t-test* and one-way analysis of covariance. The results of the data analysis showed that theL1 group significantly outperformed the L2 group in writing accuracy. This finding verifies the rejection of the ideological dogma of using thefirst language in foreign language classes.

Keywords: *Consciousness-raising Tasks, Elementary Learners, Writing accuracy*

تأثیر زبان اول فراگیران ابتدایی در تمرینات افزایش آگاهی بر دقت نوشتاری آنان در زبان دوم

این مطالعه تأثیر افزایش آگاهی درزبان اول فراگیران ابتدایی بر دقت نوشتن در زبان دوم آنها را بررسی نمود. برای دستیابی به این هدف، 32 زبان آموز انگلیسی زبان ابتدایی مرد و زن 17 تا 26 ساله در این مطالعه شرکت کردند. آنها با استفاده از روش نمونه گیری گروهی در دو گروه آزمایشی L1 و L2 قرار گرفتند. آموزش 13 جلسه دو ساعته بود که در آن شرکت کنندگان گروه L1 از طریق L1 خود در معرض تمرینات افزایش آگاهی قرار گرفتند، اما گروه L2 همان تمرینات را به زبان انگلیسی تجربه کردند. در پایان برای هر دو گروه آزمون نوشتاری انجام شد و داده های جمع آوری شده از طریق پیش آزمون و پس آزمون با استفاده از آزمون تی زوجی و تحلیل کوواریانس یک طرفه مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. نتایج تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها نشان داد گروه L1 به طور قابل توجهی از گروه L2 در دقت نوشتن بهتر عمل می کند. این یافته تأثیر استفاده از زبان اول در کلاس های زبان خارجی را تأیید می کند.

واژگان کلیدی: تمرینات افزایش آگاهی، فراگیران ابتدایی، دقت نوشتن

Introduction

Nowadays, it is common for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers to use the student's mother tongue (L1) as a tool for conveying meaning and as a means of interaction both in English language institutes and in the classroom. Research shows that the complete deletion of L1 in the L2 situation is not appropriate (Butzkamm, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003; Schweers, 1999). When used appropriately, the use of L1 can be very beneficial. According to Brown (2000), "First language can be a facilitating factor and not just an interfering factor" (p. 68), and Schweers (1999) encourages teachers to incorporate the native language into lessons to influence the classroom dynamics and suggests that "starting with the L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learners' lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves" (p. 7). Research has shown that the occasional use of L1 by both students and teachers increases both comprehension and learning of L2 (Cook, 2001; Tang, 2002; Wells, 1999). The use of L1 in language classes can thus help both EFL learners and teachers. There are some concepts and activities which are very difficult to be described in the TL and it is very difficult to obtain contextual clues to explain a meaning (Gomez and Fuertes, 2003). The use of L1 not only facilitates but also avoids ambiguity and guarantees that students get the meaning through.

A consciousness-raising activity is basically another term for a grammar activity, or as Thornbury (1999) defined it, it is a smart term for what was once called grammar presentation. Consciousness-raising tasks are designed to raise the learners' language awareness (Roza, 2014). The immediate aim of these tasks is to help learners notice something about the language that they might not notice on their own. They are typically asked to reflect on it, usually by talking to peers. Consciousness-raising tasks can help build their conscious knowledge and understanding (their L1) of how the language works grammatically, socially, and culturally. It is an attempt to isolate a specific linguistic feature for focused attention (Ellis, 1993). Smith (1981) uses the term "consciousness raising" (CR) to refer to any kind of grammar focus utilizing varying degrees of 'explicitness' or overt rule stating and/or 'elaboration' or inductive presentation. Ellis (1993, 2000, 2003) uses the term specifically to mean a grammar focus activity that does not require the learners to produce sentences in the target language right away but simply aims to foster noticing. CR "involves an attempt to equip the learner with an understanding of a specific grammatical feature – to develop declarative rather than procedural knowledge of it" (Ellis, 2002, p. 168). For consciousness-raising, "Activities are provided to make learners aware of certain linguistic features in the input, without necessarily requiring them to produce them" (Richards, 2002, p. 158).

Regarding the importance of CR tasks, some studies have been conducted at national and international levels. Fotos and Ellis (1991) compared two groups of college students in the Japanese EFL context. One group was instructed with the direct CR tasks (teacher-fronted grammar explanations) and the other group received the indirect CR tasks (consciousness-raising tasks only). The results indicated that both groups progressed significantly on grammaticality judgment tests. In another study, Fotos (1994) examined the effects of direct CR tasks with the indirect CR tasks in the Japanese EFL context again. The results indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups. In another study, Alcon-Soler (2005) compared the effects of explicit versus implicit CR instructional tasks on English requests. Results of the study demonstrated that both tasks were effective; however, the participants in the explicit CR group gained better results than their counterparts in the implicit CR group. Concerning the effectiveness of CR tasks, Takimoto (2006) examined the effectiveness of two types of CR instruction, namely CR task only and CR task with reactive explicit feedback. The study was on English polite requisite forms and compared the performance of the two treatment groups with that of the control group. The results showed that the instruction was effective for the participants in both instructional groups and that they outperformed the learners in the control group. Regarding the between-group differences, the findings revealed that both instructional

approaches were somehow equally effective in improving the participants' English polite request forms. O'Brien (2015) explored the impact of developing a CR approach in error correction at the sentence level to improve students' proofreading ability.

Test results indicated a significant improvement in student performance as a result of structured input (specially prepared grammar material) and focused instruction (teaching that focuses on each specific grammar point identified as problematic). In another study, Tajeddin and Hosseinpur (2014), investigated the effectiveness of deductive, inductive, and L1-based CR instructional tasks on EFL learners' acquisition of the request speech act during a seven-week instruction period. The results of this study showed that by administering written DCT to 140 EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners, instruction had a significantly positive effect on the learners' acquisition of the request speech act. This comparison showed that the learners who were receptive to the L1-based awareness-raising tasks were more successful than the inductive task group learners.

Moradkhan and Sohrabian (2009) investigated the impact of grammatical CR tasks on the improvements of Iranian high school female students' knowledge of grammar. The results showed that the use of CR activities could be a very effective method in enhancing the grammatical knowledge of EFL learners. Behrouzi and Kazemirad (2012) examined the effect of CR tasks on the syntax acquisition of Iranian elementary EFL learners. To do so, the Cambridge Key English Test (KET) was administered to 85 elementary-level learners at a language institute in Tehran. The results of data analysis showed that the experimental group who worked on a sequence of CR tasks outperformed the control group on the post-test. Concerning the effects of CR activities on L2 production and reception, a study was carried out by Nosratinia and Roustayi (2014) in which the reading and writing skills were taken into consideration. They stated that "As a way of teaching grammar, CR tries to provide a language environment for learners to discover grammatical features on their own in order to develop their capability in writing" (p. 205). The results revealed that grammar CR tasks led to improvements in overall L2 writing and reading skills.

Because of the importance of L1 in L2 learning and also due to the significance of CR in developing and improving different skills of L2 learning, this study attempted to examine the impact of L1 in consciousness-raising tasks on L2 writing accuracy. It should be mentioned that previous studies have not addressed this impact, and they mostly took into consideration the effect of consciousness-raising tasks for grammar learning (Behrouzi and Kazemirad, 2012; Moradkhan and Sohrabian, 2009; O'Brien, 2015) without considering the role of L1. Even when they focused on the role of L1 in consciousness-rising tasks, they investigated the impact on grammar learning (Arshad et al, 2015; Fotos and Ellis, 1991; Scott and De la Fuente, 2008) or pragmatics (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005) and speaking (Tajeddin and Hosseinpur, 2014).

Based on what was stated above, the present study could fill the gap in the literature by providing evidence regarding the impact of L1 in consciousness-raising tasks on EFL learners' writing accuracy. In addition, the primary goal of this study was to find evidence to support the theory that L1 can facilitate L2 acquisition and help improve L2 writing skills and to reject the existing notion that L1 acts as a hindrance to L2 acquisition. Considering the objectives of the study, the following research questions were posed:

Q1: Does the use of L1 in consciousness-raising tasks engender a statistically significant improvement in the writing accuracy of elementary-level EFL learners?

Q2: Is there a difference between the L1- vs. L2-mediated consciousness-raising as far as the writing accuracy of the elementary EFL learners is concerned?

Method

Participants

In this quasi-experimental study, the participants were 37 male and female elementary EFL learners who were between 17 and 26 years old. They were either school students or university students learning English as a foreign language at Shokooh Language Institutes in Tehran, Iran. Since participants were already members of the existing classes in the language institutes, it was not possible to choose them randomly. Therefore, the sampling procedure was based on intact group sampling and participants from two classes of the institute were chosen. Then, the learners whose Oxford Placement Test (OPT) scores were between 15 and 23 were selected as elementary students. As a result, 5 learners were excluded and a totally of 32 participants in two groups of L1- and L2-mediated classes (hereafter L1 group and L2 group for short) provided data for this study.

Materials

In order to assess consciousness-raising tasks in this study, the tasks developed on the basis of the consciousness-raising sequence presented in *Impact Grammar* (Ellis, 1997) were used. These tasks consist of five sequences as follows: Attending task, Noticing task, Analysis task, Checking task, and Production task.

Attending task: Students read/listened to a text that they processed for meaning.

Noticing task: Students read/listened to the same text, which was now gapped, and filled in the missing words.

Analysis task: Students discovered how the target structure worked by analyzing the data provided by the text (In this research the focus was on understanding).

Checking task: Students completed an activity to check if they understood how the target structure worked.

Production task: Students were given the opportunity to try out or experiment with the target structure by producing their own sentences and writing about subjects. The texts used for these tasks were a paragraph of the three units of *Top Notch,* Third Edition Intro Student's Book (Richards, 2005). These conversations were chosen based on the aims of the study. They contained examples of correct usage of the target structures which were bolded and underlined by the book to enable learners to attend to the aim features.

Instruments

To determine participants' level of proficiency, an OPT was used. The test had three parts including vocabulary, reading, and grammar, consisting of 60 multiple-choice questions. To check the practicality of the test, it was first piloted with 29 similar learners to determine whether there were any problems concerning test administration and/or scoring. In so doing, the reliability of the test was also calculated through the KR-21 formula, and the coefficient turned out to be .85. The time allocation of this test was 60 minutes.

To assess the writing accuracy of participants, two parallel writing tests (with prompts of argumentative type) were administered as the pre-test and the post-test. The tests lasted about 30 minutes each time they were administered. The topics of the writing tests were chosen from the content of the book the learners were studying in the language institute. The reliability coefficients of the tests were estimated using the KR-21 formula and the result was .81 for the pre-test and .79 for the post-test.

Procedures

Having taken the OPT and the writing pre-test, the learners in the two groups were exposed to the interventions. The treatment was given during 13 sessions, each lasting 2 hours. In the first experimental group, which was called the L1 group, the learners underwent the treatment

including consciousness-raising tasks. In each session, they were given time to talk and understand the main purpose of the target language structure in their own native language (Persian), and this was followed by the teacher's elaboration and explanation. In the other group, which was called the L2 group, instead of giving time for talking in the native language, the learners were asked to talk and think about the structure under question in the target language (English), followed by the teacher's instructions in L2. The learners began by reading a text (conversation) that contained examples of new structures. They processed the text for meaning. Finally, a writing post-test was administered to both groups at the end of the instructional period. After the required data were collected, descriptive statistics were calculated (mean and standard deviations) and paired-sample *t-test* and one-way ANCOVA were employed to analyze them and find answers to the research questions.

Results

OPT Results

As mentioned above, an OPT was used to determine the English language proficiency level of the participants. Its statistical results are presented in Table 1. As can be seen, the mean OPT score of subjects was 19.69 with a standard deviation of 4.97.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for OPT

N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Median	Mode
37	19.69	4.97	0.40	-0.32	18.00	19

It was pointed out above that the learners who obtained scores between 15 and 23 were selected to take part in this study.

Improvements from pre-test to post-test

Table 2 below shows the results of the paired-sample *t-test* for comparing the writing accuracy of elementary-level EFL learners on the pre-test and post-test in the L1 group. As can be seen, the mean score of the post-test ($M = 9.23$) is considerably greater than that of the pre-test ($M = 5.01$) on the test of writing accuracy.

Table 2
Pre-test and Post-test Writing Accuracy Scores of the L1 Group

Tests	Mean	SD	Df	t	Sig.
Pre-test	5.01	1.32	14	-8.00	.00
Post-test	9.23	1.34			

The fact that the *p-value* under the *Sig. the* column was less than the significance level (.00 < .05) denotes that the difference between the pre-test and post-test writing accuracy scores of the learners in the L1 group was statistically significant, leading to the conclusion that using L1 for purposes of consciousness-raising in language classes would lead to the enhancement of the grammatical accuracy of the learners as manifested in their L2 writings.

One might speculate consciousness-raising, be it through L1 or L2, would bring about improvements in the L2 written accuracy of language learners. Hence, the pre-test and post-test writing accuracy scores of the learners in the L2 group were compared via a paired-samples *t-test*.

Table 3

Pre-test and Post-test Writing Accuracy Scores of the L2 Group

Tests	Mean	SD	Df	t	Sig.
Pre-test	5.19	0.94	16	-	.00
Post-test	7.47	1.66		12.00	

Since the difference between the pre-test ($M = 5.19$) and post-test ($M = 7.47$) writing accuracy scores of the learners in the L2 group was found to be of statistical significance (.00 < .05), it could be inferred that using L2-mediated consciousness-raising, not unlike L1-mediated consciousness-raising) significantly improved the L2 writing accuracy of elementary-level EFL learners.

L1- vs. L2-mediated Consciousness-raising

Since both L1- and L2-mediated consciousness-raising techniques were found to be effective, it was necessary to examine which of the two techniques would bear more fruitful results with elementary-level Iranian EFL learners. Thus, to make such a comparison, one-way ANCOVA was used since this statistical test could control for the possible pre-existing differences between the two groups (on the post-test) and compare their post-test scores accordingly. The results of the one-way ANCOVA are represented in Table 4 below.

Table 4
One-way ANCOVA Comparing the Post-test Writing Accuracy Scores of the L1 and L2 Groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	28.00		13.00	.00	.00
Intercept	31.00		30.00	.00	.00
Pre-test	2.00		2.00	.00	.07
Groups	24.00		23.00	.00	.00
Error	30.00				
Total	2245.00				
Corrected Total	58.00				

The *p-value* under the *Sig.* column here is .00, which is smaller than the significance level of .05, implying that the difference between the post-test writing accuracy scores of the L1 group ($M = 9.23$) and the L2 group ($M = 7.47$) was of statistical significance. In other words, L1 group learners could significantly outperform the L2 group learners on the post-test of writing accuracy. This means that L1-mediated consciousness-raising was more effective than L2-mediated consciousness-raising for the purpose of improving the writing accuracy the elementary-level Iranian EFL learners.

Discussion

Although using L1 and consciousness-raising tasks are attractive subjects for many researchers, the impact of using L1 in consciousness-raising tasks for teaching writing accuracy has not been investigated; however, it is possible to compare the obtained results with the findings of some studies which are similar to the present study. For example, Arshad et al. (2015) carried out a study to examine the impact of using L1 in consciousness-raising tasks on teaching grammar to students at beginner and upper-intermediate levels. The results of this study revealed

that the use of L1 in a consciousness-raising task can be beneficial for teaching grammar to beginner L2 learners. However, students of the upper-intermediate level did not benefit equally from L1 implementation in teaching grammar. The first part of their results is consistent with our findings, but the second part is against our findings. The reason can be related to the learners' proficiency level. Overall, both studies claim that the use of L1 in the consciousness-raising task for grammar learning is useful for learners at lower levels of proficiency.

In another study, Scott and De la Fuente (2008) investigated the use of L1 during consciousness-raising and form-focused tasks for language learning. The results indicated that using L2 during these types of tasks can hinder cognitive requirements to do the tasks which demand cognitive sources on the part of the students. Moreover, it hinders collaborative interactions. Therefore, they mentioned that the use of L2 is pointless when L1 is a natural and cognitive strategy. Although this study did not focus on grammar learning, the results supported the findings of our study. What they found was also true in the context of our study where EFL learners used L1 for consciousness-raising to reach writing accuracy. It seems that in our study when the learners used L1, their cognitive resources were devoted to learning instead of using L2. On the contrary, the learners who used L2 for consciousness-raising did not succeed compared to the other group. In addition, the findings of Scott and De la Fuente can be attributed to the learners' proficiency levels which were intermediate in their study. The same as the previous study, learners with lower levels of proficiency could benefit from the use of L1.

Alegría de la Colina and García Mayo (2009) also addressed the use of L1 in language learning of low proficiency learners. They reached a conclusion that low proficiency EFL learners benefit from the use of L1 in a variety of ways such as managing the task and discussing grammar and vocabulary, promoting attention and meaning comprehension, faster thinking, and self-regulation. It seems that this study also endorsed the use of L1 for language learning by elementary-level L2 learners. The findings of the present study are in line with their results. Although they did not use L1 for the consciousness-raising task that was the focus of our study, their study indicated that the use of L1 in other task types and for a variety of purposes can also be influential for language learning.

Other studies such as Tajeddin and Hosseinpur (2014) and Eslami-Rasekh (2005) also advocated the use of L1 in consciousness-raising tasks for learning a different aspect of a foreign language, which indicates that in addition to the usefulness of L1 in the consciousness-raising task for grammar learning that was concluded in our study, L1 can be helpful for learning other aspects when it is used in consciousness-raising tasks. Overall, it can be claimed that the findings of the present study are supported by other research studies in this area. The findings of this study are also in line with the language teaching approaches adopted in the post-method area that resulted in Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, and Total Physical Response. In these teaching methods, the use of the mother tongue is permitted and is considered as a facilitative tool for language teaching and learning. The results of the present study are in accordance with these approaches and provide additional evidence for their effectiveness.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate whether the use of L1 in consciousness-raising tasks has any significant effects on the writing accuracy of elementary-level EFL Learners. Thirty-two male and female elementary EFL learners between the ages of 17 and 26 participated in the study and were divided into two groups. While one group experienced consciousness-raising using L1, the other group underwent consciousness-raising using L2. Data analysis results indicated that the group that experienced consciousness-raising using L1 managed to obtain significantly higher writing accuracy scores compared to another group. Therefore, it is concluded that the use of L1

in consciousness-raising tasks does make a difference in the writing accuracy of EFL students and helps them to achieve higher writing accuracy goals.

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Research Paper

Attitudes of University Students toward English Language Education Policy in Iraqi Kurdistan

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Abstract

Despite widespread coverage of language policy in the literature, there has been scant research probing into English language education policy at tertiary levels in general and the higher education context of Iraqi Kurdistan in particular. The present qualitative study investigated EFL students' perceptions of English language education policy, current educational policies, and the purposes for learning in Kurdish contexts across genders and study fields. To this end, a version of Yang's (2012) questionnaire was adapted and administered to university EFL students majoring in soft and hard sciences (N=300, male 34%, female 67%) at two private and state universities in Iraqi Kurdistan. The statistical analysis of the obtained data revealed students' positive attitudes toward learning English as an international language in both soft and hard sciences. Notably, students stressed that all Iraqi Kurdish students should learn the English language in English- and Kurdish-medium classes. They also considered English competence as a significant academic accomplishment. However, some of them felt dissatisfied with the status quo of English education in their institutions. The findings of this study offer insights and recommendations for English education policymakers, administrators, and instructors at tertiary levels.

Keywords: *Attitudes, EFL, English language education, Iraqi Kurdistan, Language policy*

نگرش دانشجویان دانشگاه نسبت به سیاست آموزش زبان انگلیسی در کردستان عراق

علیرغم پوشش گسترده سیاست زبان در ادبیات، تحقیقات کمی در مورد سیاست آموزش زبان انگلیسی در سطوح عالی به طور کلی و زمینه آموزش عالی کردستان عراق به طور خاص انجام شده است. مطالعه کیفی حاضر به بررسی ادراکات دانشجویان زبان انگلیسی از خط مشی آموزش زبان انگلیسی، سیاست های آموزشی جاری و اهداف یادگیری در زمینه کردی در بین جنسیت ها و رشته های تحصیلی پرداخت. برای این منظور، نسخه ای از پرسشنامه یانگ (2012) برای دانشجویان انگلیسی زبان انگلیسی در رشته علوم نرم و سخت(N=300) ، مرد 34%، زن 67 (%)در دو دانشگاه خصوصی و دولتی در کردستان عراق اقتباس و اجرا شد. تجزیه و تحلیل آماری داده های به دست آمده نشان دهنده نگرش مثبت دانش آموزان نسبت به یادگیری زبان انگلیسی به عنوان یک زبان بین المللی در علوم نرم و سخت بود. شایان ذکر است که دانش آموزان تاکید کردند که همه دانش آموزان کرد عراقی باید زبان انگلیسی را در کلاس های متوسط انگلیسی و کردی یاد بگیرند. آنها همچنین صلاحیت زبان انگلیسی را به عنوان یک موفقیت تحصیلی مهم در نظر گرفتند. با این حال، برخی از آنها از وضعیت موجود آموزش انگلیسی در مؤسسات خود احساس نارضایتی می کردند. یافته‌های این مطالعه بینش‌ها و توصیه‌هایی را برای سیاست‌گذاران آموزش انگلیسی، مدیران و مدرسان در سطوح عالی ارائه می‌کند.

واژگان کلیدی: نگرش، زبان انگلیسی، آموزش زبان انگلیسی، کردستان عراق، سیاست زبان

Introduction

English has now become a worldwide language and consequently has become a daily language used by many over a wide scope of nations. According to Nettle & Romaine (2000), it is a

prevailing language in more than sixty of the states perceived by the UN. In addition, English is definitely the formal and major language of media around the world (Crystal, 2003). Likewise, English appears to be predominant in numerous scholastic orders, working environments, and global interchanges and distributions. Taking a close look at the ecology and diffusion of the English language in the twentieth century, one can recognize a dramatic increase in the number of English speakers due to globalization and the dominance of the United States in the world, especially in the Middle East and the Arabic world. as a result of this hegemony, globalization has been reinterpreted, and now people around the world use "Americanization" and "McDonaldization" as the alternative terms (Erling, 2002; Zughoul, 2003).

Numerous scholars have discussed the upsides of English popularity and globalization. For instance, Tollefson (2000) recommends that a worldwide language makes global correspondence more effective and yet additionally diminishes the likelihood of political clashes and extensions of intercultural correspondence boundaries. As for Kirkpatrick (2009), like a daily language in the use of ASEAN, English significantly decreases the interpretation and understanding of proposals. On the other hand, numerous individuals allude to the philosophical, social, and elitist intensity of English and the favorable financial position it offers to inner circle states, which is a type of 'semantic colonialism (Phillipson, 1992; 2003). Accordingly, English is typically considered the most globalized language for teaching domains in the world, and thus English vocabulary and pidgins have been sharply borrowed and produced in other languages. Furthermore, it becomes the language of economy, education, and communication in high manners, which is easily customized culturally. In terms of linguistic aspects, English tends to be the most influential language in translation fields (MaCallen, 1989: Kachru, 1991; Columas, 1992; Pennycook, 1994; Crystal, 1997: Canagarajah, 1999; Phillipson, 2003).

Literature Review

The number of teaching/learning agencies, universities, and institutions adhering to English language instruction increase daily. In addition, substantial use of social media and technology has led to a great shift in daily localized speaking languages, which hugely manipulate English terms and expressions.

Given the global popularity of English, a diverse number of aspects have been regarded to be influencing education and instruction. One important facet involves students' viewpoints on how language is taught and practiced. Many scholars have highlighted the importance of considering and incorporating student attitudes into educational issues (Friedrich, 2000; Gardner, 1985; Spolisky, 2000; Triandis, 1971). Gardner (1985) expressed that a student\'s degree of achievement in the acquisition of a second language is adequately identified with the indicators of perspectives toward that language. Overall, learners with inspirational perspectives will generally obtain the target language more adequately than those with negative mentalities. Inspirational mentalities could raise the limit of learning measures in a given period. Moreover, attitudes change over time due to encompassing contexts' effects (Oxford, 1994; Gardner, 1985).

Obviously, educational systems need to address the so-called dynamic attitudes of students. In this regard, Soleimani and Hanafi (2013) argue that EFL teachers must be responsive to students' attitudes and value their preconceptions, which can affect their success in learning English as a foreign language. As Kesgin and Arslan (2015) interestingly put, the attitudes of a working group toward the English language, gender, educational and economic status of parents may considerably differ, which is not normally the case in terms of accommodation and graduation. Thus, individual and gender differences in learning a language always have remained rather inconclusive. For example, Amin (2017) stated that EFL female learners have more positive attitudes toward learning and are more active in terms of following practical communication strategies. In the same vein, Akdamar (2020) concluded that female students particularly have

more positive attitudes than male students in learning English as a foreign language. However, whether these results hold true across contexts and educational sites warrens a more comprehensive examination.

The diffusion of English and its versions in different countries, called world Englishes, has motivated a number of researchers to determine English students' attitudes towards its use in different contexts. An example worth following is Kachru's (1985) Concentric Circle Model, which motivated Matsuda (2000) to specify the attitudes of young Japanese learners toward the use of English. The results showed that these learners did not have positive perspectives on Japanese English as a variety of world Englishes and preferred to learn native speakers' versions. Similarly, Friedrich (2000) carried out a survey in order to determine Brazilian learners' English-related attitudes and found that the use of English empowered learners to take part in diverse international interactions. Mutar (2019) indicated that attitude plays a great part in determining and directing learner behavior and finally leading to second language achievement. Kirkpatrick and Xu (2002) examined university-level Chinese language learners' attitudes toward the Chinese and native-speaker English varieties and reported students' preferences for native forms. Hilliard (2014) also showed students' positive attitudes toward the English language and believed that English language education policy should be systematized in Asian countries. More in line with the context of this study, Abu-Snoubar (2017) explored university students in Arab world countries and how they perceived learning English. Similarly, Mutar (2019) found Iraqi students' positive perceptions of English language learning, which were not different across genders and universities.

English Education in Iraqi Kurdistan: Policies and Improvements

These days, English has become the language used by millions of people around the world as a means of communication. In his paper on the English language pedagogy in the Arabic world, Zughaul (2003) noted that Asian countries, especially the Middle East, were developing rapidly in communication in terms of English education. However, students in the Kurdistan region of Iraq still face serious difficulties in communicating in English in secondary and high schools. Furthermore, it seems that students from the Kurdistan region need to learn English to communicate and interact internationally. In this regard, the Regional Government of Kurdistan KRG (2007) decided to develop a new English language curriculum called Sunrise for secondary and high schools, focusing on four important skills: writing, reading, listening, and speaking (Amin, 2017).

As mentioned, the Kurdistan Regional Government has taken significant steps since KRG 2007 to improve educational standards. Accordingly, the English language was introduced in the elementary classes in the schools, and the promotion of creative thinking in the classrooms was included in the school curriculum. (Sunrise for Kurdistan) The official website defines the new curriculum as a complete English curriculum written specifically for elementary and middle school students. "The curriculum has an interactive approach that connects listening, speaking, reading, and writing with a clear focus on grammatical structures. It is an interesting approach to learning through inspirational topic-based units, adventure writing, and more. Introduce languages and different activities "(Sunrise for Kurdistan).

The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and Scientific Research and the Ministry of Education (MOE) are responsible for language education policy in this region. Currently, MOHE supervises 18 public and 15 private universities, including various technical institutes in the Kurdistan Region. Moreover, MOE supervises over 3000 state secondary and prep schools with more than a hundred private and international schools. MOE further directs essential and auxiliary instruction, and MOHE controls college and establishment-level training. State-funded colleges do not charge educational costs, and students furnish understudies from external urban

areas with offices of complimentary quarters and enhancements (Amin, 2020). Thus, in Iraqi Kurdistan, the number of EFL learners increased dramatically in the first years and kindergartens and therefore demanded state and private institutions and schools that use English as the instructional medium to rise. In Iraqi Kurdistan, there are five different levels of colleges at state universities whose graduates are issued certifications to teach English:

- College of Languages in state universities (Available in all state and private universities)
- College of Art (Available in all state universities)
- College of Basic Education (Available in all state universities).
- College of Education and Human Sciences (Available in some state universities).
- College of English language teaching (Available in private universities)

Based on what was stated above, there is inadequate information on the students' perspectives on English use even though the KRG motivates them to acquire this language, and students' attitudes and the variables that influence their language learning process have received scant attention. Therefore, the present research might furnish sufficient information on the various aspects of English instruction in Iraqi Kurdistan. To address these gaps, this study has examined the attitudes of Kurdish EFL learners and their awareness of English varieties, especially Kurdish English. It has also explored the factors that may explain why their attitudes differ and examined the purposes for which Kurdish university students learn English and their perceptions of the English education policies in Iraqi Kurdistan. The following research questions have, thus, been addressed:

Q1. What attitudes do university students hold toward English language learning?

Q2. What attitudes do university students hold toward English language education policy?

Q3. Do male and female students differ in terms of their attitudes toward English language learning?

Q4. Do students' attitudes toward English Language Learning differ across university majors?

Method

Design of the Study

The current study has exploited a mixed-methods design including qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research has a crucial role in behavioral sciences, where the aim is to recognize hidden motives of behavior. This kind of research analyzes numerous impacts that motivate learners to behave in a particular manner (Kumar, 2008, p.8).

Participants

For the purposes of this study, 300 university students (male and female) from Iraqi state and private Kurdistan universities (Sulaimanieh University and the University of Human Development) were selected as the participants based on convenience sampling. Almost all the participants had studied English for about ten years. They were students in different years of study majoring in soft sciences; namely, History, Kurdish Language and Literature, Arabic Language and Literature, Banking and Finance, and hard sciences, including Dentistry and Information Technology. It is to be noted that university students were selected due to their stability, validity, and active engagement with school, society, and career preparation (Kirkpatrick & Xu, 2002; He & Li, 2009).

Instruments and Procedures

For data collection, a questionnaire was utilized as the instrument of the study. According to Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), questionnaires are among the most reliable approaches to data

collection in second-language studies. The instrument produced both quantitative and qualitative data which was analyzed mostly following a quantitative approach. The Average scores were calculated on a scale of 1-6 (i.e. (SD) =Strongly Disagree (D) = Disagree (SLD) = Slightly Disagree (SLA) = Slightly Agree (A) = Agree (SA) =Strongly Agree). The questionnaire consisted of 40 multiple-choice questions in three categories; Part I. Your attitudes toward English, Part II: Your attitudes toward the current English education policy, and Part III: Your attitudes toward the purposes for learning English. Additionally, part four consisted of demographic information, such as gender, age, college grade, major, and the year to start learning English.

<div align="center">

Results
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Attitudes towards English Language Learning
The first research question investigated Iraqi Kurdish university students' attitudes toward English Language Learning. Table 1 below shows the frequency and percentages of the participants' responses in this regard.

Table 1
Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Attitudes towards ELL

	Part I. Your attitudes toward English	SD	D	SLD	SLA	A	SA
1	English is an international language.	2(%)	21	1	6	104	166
2	English is the language used most widely in the world.	5	5	7	27	120	136
3	Knowing English is important in understanding people from other countries.	0	0	8	40	112	140
4	Knowing English is important in understanding the cultures of English-speaking countries, like the USA or the U.K.		1	2	31	127	139
5	If I have a chance, I would like to travel to English-speaking countries, like USA or UK.	2			21	111	166
6	I do not like learning English.	235	51	2	0	0	12
7	British English and American English are the major varieties of English in the world.	0	0	9	51	117	123
8	Many varieties of English exist in the world.			8	43	170	79
9	Non-native English speakers can also speak Standard English. (Here, Standard English refers to English spoken in English-speaking countries, like USA or UK.)	0	3	8	27	181	81
10	As long as people understand me, it is not important which variety of English I speak.	28	31	20	43	113	65
11	Like ─Singaporean English and ─Indian English, Kurdistan should have its own variety of English: ─Kurdistan English.	66	40	38	28	80	48

| 12 | When I speak English, I want to sound like a native speaker. | 29 | 30 | 12 | 3 | 110 | 116 |
| 13 | When I speak English, I want to be identified clearly as Kurdish. | 126 | 42 | 18 | 69 | 26 | 19 |

The analysis of the responses to item 1 indicated that 87% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with the international popularity of the English language. Answers to item 2 revealed that 87% of the respondents, who specified agree or strongly agree on choices, believed that English is the most widely used language in the world. Likewise, 84% of the participants (item 3) showed the respondents' interest in knowing English to understand people from other countries. Item 4 targeted the perspectives on cultural aspects in English-speaking countries, like USA or U.K. The results indicated that 89% agreed or strongly agreed with this item. The obtained data for 5 statements investigating their desire to travel to English-speaking countries, like the USA or UK, showed that 92% agreed or strongly agreed. For item 6, which asked, "I do not like learning English, " the cumulative totals for the agreed and strongly agreed categories were only 4%. The results obtained for item 7 disclosed that 80% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that British English and American English are the wide varieties of English in the world. The responses to item 8 revealed 83% agreement concerning multiple current varieties of English in the world. The result obtained for item 9 revealed 68.7% agreement on the potential of non-natives to use standard English. Concerning item 10, the answers showed that 59% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed that it is not important which variety of English they speak as long as people understand them. For item 11, 43% of the participants selected agree or strongly agree with the answers. The result for item 12 indicated that 75% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that sounding like native speakers could be an important aspect in speaking settings. Finally, the results unraveled that just 15% of the participants preferred to be identified clearly as Kurdish while speaking in English.

Attitudes towards English Language Education Policy

The second research question addressed Kurdish university students' attitudes toward English language education policy in this region. Table 2 indicates the frequency and percentages of responses.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Attitudes towards English Language Policy

	Part II: Your attitudes toward the current English education policy	SD	D	SLD	SLA	A	SA
1	All Kurdish students should learn English.	2	0	61	61	89	138
2	Kurdistan college students should use English in either spoken or written communications with each other.	30	25	22	35	106	82
3	English education should start from elementary school in Kurdistan.	34	51	7	28	38	142
4	English should not be a compulsory subject in the National College Entrance Examination in Kurdistan.	108	90	50	27	15	10
5	I would not take English if it were not a compulsory subject in school.	129	88	47	8	24	4
6	If English were not taught at school, I would	7	58	25	56	32	122

	study it on my own.						
7	Oral language skills are more important than literacy skills in college English education.	21	41	42	56	123	17
8	College English classes should be entirely conducted in English.	25	42	21	15	121	76
9	College classes should be conducted in both English and Kurdish.	28	88	12	35	108	29
10	Besides English classes, other college classes, such as Math, should be also conducted in English.	13	23	8	67	119	70
11	I am satisfied with the English education policy in the Kurdistan region.	44	86	10	43	103	14
12	I am satisfied with the English education curriculum in the Kurdistan region.	31	73	21	45	93	37
13	I am satisfied with the English learning textbooks and other materials used in our school.	22	80	31	43	58	66
14	I am satisfied with the English teaching methods used in our school.	48	43	59	21	91	38
15	American English is the best model for Kurdish learners of English.	22	39	49	20	39	131
16	British English is the best model for Kurdish learners of English.	14	71	45	24	113	33
17	I prefer native speakers rather than non-native speakers as my English teachers.	23	37	28	42	84	86

The results for item 1 showed that 79% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that all Kurdish students should learn English. Results for item 2 revealed that 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Kurdistan college students should use English in spoken or written conversations. In addition, for item 3, 63% of participants insisted on starting an English education in a Kurdistan primary school. Topic 4 explores participants' perspectives on whether English should be a compulsory subject in the National College Entrance Examination in Kurdistan. The results indicated that 8% agreed or strongly agreed with this point. The results for item 5 indicated 9% consent to whether or not they will learn English as a non-compulsory subject in school. For item 6, 51% said they would read English. Results obtained for item 7 showed that 47% of respondents agree on the importance of language skills in college English education. Responses to item 8 showed 65% acceptance of English medium education in college classrooms. According to the results for item 9, 47% of participants agreed or strongly agreed to receive college classes in both English and Kurdish. For item 10, 63% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with the instruction of other college classes in English, such as math, in addition to English classes. For item 11, 30% of participants expressed satisfaction with the English education policy in the Kurdistan region. In addition, 43% of participants found that they accepted or strongly agreed with the general educational approach. The results for item 13 indicated that 43% of participants were dissatisfied with the English curriculum in the Kurdistan region. By answering item 14, 41% were satisfied with the English learning textbooks and other materials used in schools. For the next item, 43% were satisfied with the English teaching methods used in their schools. Based on item 16 results 60% of participants believed that American English was the best model for Kurdish English learners. As for the question, 'whether

or not British English is the best model for Kurdish English learners', 49% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with one of the alternatives. Finally, for item 20, the results showed that only 57% of participants preferred to speak English to native speakers rather than non-native speakers.

Attitudes towards English Language Learning in Terms of Gender

The third research question examined Kurdish university male and female students' attitudes towards English language learning. To answer this question, at first, the normality of the collected data was examined. The results for the normality assumption are presented in the following table.

Table 3
Normality of the Collected Data

N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
300	-2.122	.141	4.087	.281
300	-1.927	.141	4.747	.281
300	-.867	.141	.077	.281
300	-.929	.141	1.024	.281
300	-2.010	.141	8.224	.281
300	3.700	.141	13.818	.281
300	-.675	.141	-.309	.281
300	-.541	.141	.393	.281
300	-1.149	.141	2.893	.281
300	-.826	.141	-.510	.281
300	-.136	.141	-1.473	.281
300	-1.135	.141	-.181	.281
300	.523	.141	-1.126	.281
Valid N (listwise)		300		

Since the amount of Skewness and Kurtosis is not between -2 and +2, it can be concluded that the collected data are not normal. Thus, to examine gender differences in perceiving English learning, the Mann-Whitney test was run as a non-parametric test. The descriptive statistics are reported in Table 4 below.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics across gender

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Attitudes	Male	180	147.97	26634.50
	Female	120	154.30	18515.50
	Total	300		

As the table shows, the mean rank for females is slightly higher than that for males. However, Table 5 below reports Mann-Whitney U results and reveals the significance of the differences.

Table 5
Difference between male and female students' attitudes

	Attitudes
Mann-Whitney U	10344.500

Wilcoxon W	26634.500
Z	-.621
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.535
a. Grouping Variable: Gender	

According to the table, the p-value is less than .05 (5.35), and thus there is no statistically significant difference between the males' and females' attitudes regarding English language learning. In other words, based on the results, it may be inferred that both genders hold the same views about English language learning in the Kurdistan region.

Attitudes towards English Language Learning in Terms of Major
The final research question investigated whether there is any statistically significant difference in the perspectives of students across majors (English & non-English) on English language learning. Table 6 below depicts the descriptives for both major types.

Table 6
Results of Descriptive Statistics of the Data

	Major1	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Attitudes	En-Stu	180	152.49	27447.50
	No-En-Stu	120	147.52	17702.50
	Total	300		

As table 6 shows, the mean rank of the non-English group in terms of English learning perspectives is higher. Table 8 reveals statistically significant differences.

Table 7
Difference between English and non-English students' attitudes

	Attitudes
Mann-Whitney U	10442.500
Wilcoxon W	17702.500
Z	-.487
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.626

a. Grouping Variable: Major1

According to Table 7, it can be deduced that there is not any statistically significant difference between the English and non-English major students' attitudes toward English language learning (p>.05). In other words, in light of our results, it may be inferred that students' 'major' does not play a substantial role in affecting students' attitudes toward English language learning in the Kurdistan region.

Discussion
English language has become globally prominent and is used for mutual communication. This has led to its linguistic hegemony over other languages to a great extent. Numerous factors play a role in learning a foreign language, including attitudes, worry, learning results, talent, brilliance, personal identity, and age. However, learner attitudes are considered extremely important in language learning. The present study examined the attitudes of university students toward English language learning in a Kurdish context. To understand the attitudes of Kurdish university students towards English education in the Iraqi Kurdestan region, a questionnaire was

administered to 300 students and their response4s were analyzed. The findings showed that Kurdish students had positive behavioral attitudes and felt relaxed whenever they had to speak in English classes. Besides, The Kurdistis participants disagreed with the statement that speaking English makes them feel worried. They proudly liked to speak, study, and practice English and contact English-speaking friends. In addition, Kurdish university students disclosed their attitudes using such expressions as 'confidence', 'relaxed', 'power of expressing ourselves, and 'knowing English improves our personality. The majority of Kurdish participants strongly refused that speaking English in front of other students could result in embarrassed feelings.

The findings provided descriptive data about Kurdish university learners' cognitive attitudes towards English education, and as a whole, their attitudes are positive. The analysis of the data revealed that Kurdish students find studying English important and making them more educated and knowledgeable. According to the responses, Kurdish students in the Kurdistan region of Iraq think about better performance in English subjects. According to the findings of the study, the majority of participants agreed that knowing English is an important goal in their lives. Besides, they showed to enjoy studying foreign languages and feel more confident. This is mainly due to their desire for English language learning and practice.

The findings are in line with a study by Abu-Melhim (2019) which examined the attitude of Jordanian students towards learning English as a foreign language, in which 64% of students responded positively. Similarly, Getty (2020) examined the attitudes of EFL students towards learning English at Debremarkos Comprehensive Secondary School in Debre Marcos, Ethiopia and found that they had a positive attitude. The results of this study showed that mainly 10th graders had a positive attitude towards learning English. The findings of the study are also in line with other studies conducted in this field. Many studies have found that motivated students are more confident in their second language, resulting in an increased desire to communicate (Brown, 2000; Ellis 1994; Knowles, 2000).

The findings of the study concerning the positive attitudes of Kurdish students towards the English language education system are, however, in stark contrast to previous studies (Hama Karim, 2018; Abdullah, 2015). For example, this study found a dramatic change in the attitude of Kurdish students toward English (Ahmed, et al., 2021)

Finally, it should be noted that several factors could contribute to Kurdish students' positive attitudes toward English language education, such as native-speaker teachers, peer groups, and learners' parents. Also, politics, economy, media, and technology factors could highly affect Kurdish university students to develop positive attitudes towards English language education policy. It is also postulated that parents' positive attitudes toward English education could influence students' viewpoints in this respect.

Conclusion

Looking at language acquisition, scholars have tried their best to discover attitude as an important element in this process. In all disciplines, attitudes have been regarded as a component that has drawn more attention due to their crucial part in human behavioral development. Oppenheim (1992) described the attitude as a situation of getting ready, a propensity to do or give a reaction to something in a particular way.

The present study has explored the attitudes of the English learners of Iraqi Kurdish universities toward learning English in terms of gender and major. The findings uncovered the uplifting attitude of the learners toward learning English with no critical contrasts among male and female learners. This indicates learners' consciousness of the importance of learning English as a vehicle of correspondence. The findings additionally revealed no great contrast among learners with respect to their discipline. Despite the fact that there was a subtle distinction in

learners' answers, the larger part of the participants demonstrated their readiness and enthusiasm to learn English for their educational accomplishment.

The present study has theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it will be advantageous for researchers and scholars interested in language education policy as it sheds light on major issues in this field. Practically, it provides insights for decision-makers in the Iraqi Kurdistan region to reconsider English Language Education Policy and teaching and learning the English language in the region to set fresh rules. Besides, the framework used in this research can be adopted in other studies addressing similar issues. Also, the present study might receive attention in second language acquisition, world-Englishes, and English language instruction due to the guidelines for English teaching practices.

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Biodata

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Research Paper

Equity on General English Achievement Tests through Gender-based DIF Analysis across Different Majors

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Abstract

This study is an investigation of gender equity in the context of the General English Achievement Test developed and used at Islamic Azad University (Isfahan Branch, IRAN), henceforth IAUGEAT, with test takers majoring in different fields of study. A sample of 835 students sitting for IAUGEAT was chosen purposively. The test scores were analyzed by the one-parameter IRT model. A focus group interview (10 test developers and language teachers) was also used to inquire into their perceptions about the impact of test takers' gender and major on test equity. The findings of the DIF analysis indicated a reciprocal action between item type and gender DIF as some items exhibited DIF across different subgroups. In three subgroups, they favored female students. In one subgroup, they favored males. In the other two subgroups, they favored males and females alike. The results were further confirmed by the qualitative data obtained from the focus group interview. In general, our findings strongly suggest that checking gender equity via a Rasch-model DIF analysis is both eminent and convergent with a qualitative evaluation of test-takers' performance by test developers and instructors.

Keywords: *Differential Item Functioning (DIF), Equity, Gender, General English achievement test, IAUGEAT, IRT, Test validation*

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برابری در آزمون های پیشرفت عمومی انگلیسی از طریق تجزیه و تحلیل DIF مبتنی بر جنسیت در رشته های مختلف

این پژوهش، بررسی برابری جنسیتی در چارچوب آزمون پیشرفت زبان انگلیسی عمومی است که در دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی (واحد اصفهان، ایران)، از این پس IAUGEAT، با آزمون‌دهندگان رشته‌های تحصیلی مختلف تهیه و مورد استفاده قرار می‌گیرد. نمونه ای از 835 دانش آموز نشسته برای IAUGEAT به صورت هدفمند انتخاب شد. نمرات آزمون توسط مدل IRT یک پارامتری مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. یک مصاحبه گروهی متمرکز (10 برنامه‌نویس آزمون و معلمان زبان) نیز برای بررسی ادراکات آنها در مورد تأثیر جنسیت و رشته شرکت‌کنندگان در برابری آزمون استفاده شد. یافته‌های تجزیه و تحلیل DIF نشان‌دهنده یک عمل متقابل بین نوع آیتم و جنسیت DIF است زیرا برخی از آیتم‌ها DIF را در زیر گروه‌های مختلف نشان می‌دهند. در سه زیر گروه، دانشجویان دختر را ترجیح دادند. در یک زیر گروه، آنها مردان را ترجیح می دادند. در دو زیرگروه دیگر، آنها مردان و زنان را به طور یکسان ترجیح می دادند. نتایج بیشتر با داده های کیفی به دست آمده از مصاحبه گروهی متمرکز تأیید شد. به طور کلی، یافته‌های ما قویاً نشان می‌دهد که بررسی برابری جنسیتی از طریق تحلیل مدل Rasch با ارزیابی کیفی عملکرد شرکت کنندگان در آزمون توسط توسعه دهندگان آزمون و مدرسان، برجسته و همگرا است.

واژگان کلیدی: عملکرد آیتم دیفرانسیل(DIF) ، برابری، جنسیت، آزمون پیشرفت عمومی انگلیسی، IAUGEAT، IRT، اعتبار سنجی آزمون

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Introduction

Validity is generally considered a yardstick for measuring test effectiveness. Test developers, consequently, focus on the validation procedure to guarantee the consequential aspects underlying the appropriacy of the right test or assessment for producing consistent results over time (for a recent validity argument in language testing, study Chapelle & Voss, 2021 and Winke & Brunfaut, 2021). It is greatly emphasized that the aftereffects evoked by a particular assessment or measure must not have any social and societal consequences (Messick, 1998). Therefore, given the pivotal role of tests used in education and their consequences for both the test takers and society, all experts in testing and assessment place a high premium on test developers' efforts to improve the conditions required for promoting test validity and validation. Essentially, test score interpretation must be valid because drawing conclusions based on test scores is a critical issue, so evidence of test validity is highly recommended by language testing and assessment practitioners (Bejar, 1990; Chapelle, 1999; Embretson, 1994; Kane & Mislevy, 2017).

Every year about two thousand students in IAU (Isfahan Branch) take part in general English classes and are given the test. Yet, little attempt has been made to standardize a test bank. Other departments expect the best possible service, and in order to fulfill this expectation and improvement of IAUGEAT, the current study was done. Although there have been scientific and operational opportunities for standardization of these tests, they have not gone through the standardization procedure yet. So most probably, there is a high capacity for promoting the level of general English assessment and the related instruction and education. Thus in an attempt toward further standardization of IAUGEAT, the present study investigated whether IAUGEAT demonstrates significant DIF in favour of a certain gender group with different academic backgrounds.

Literature Review

Test validation

Test validation plays a pivotal role in the analysis of test fairness, and attempts to improve test validation or prevent test unfairness has gained considerable momentum in recent years. Notably, the fact that a measure must measure what it purports to measure has long been recognized as an essential element in testing of language (Bachman, 2005; Bachman & Palmer, 2010; Chapelle, Enright, & Jamieson, 2011; Im & McNamara, 2017; Kane, 1992, 2006, 2013; Lado, 1961; Messick,1989; Nakatsuhara, Taylor & Jaiyote 2018).

Score meaning and the value suggestions of scores serve as one of the major indicators that signal test validation. A unified perspective of test validity, therefore, requires a thorough understanding of scientific and ethical influences which govern test interpretation and use, whereby operational considerations such as content, criteria, and consequences need to be carefully considered. This can help test developers enhance the validity of the targeted tests since factors like appropriateness and usefulness of interpretations test score can guarantee trustworthiness of construct validity (Kane, 2006; Messick, 1995). In the classical model of test validity, construct validity is considered as significant validity evidence along with content validity and criterion validity. It is related to the extent a test evaluates what it intends to be evaluating. Test validation and test fairness theories place a high premium on the evidential bases supporting the interpretations of test scores. Accordingly, as Bachman and Palmer (2010) rightly argued, without a robust validation, it would be difficult to justify any decision made on the basis of test scores' interpretation. As a result, it should come as no surprise that the creation of validity theories in language testing has become one of the essential aspects of educational measurement (Kane, 2006; Messick, 1989).

Among validity theories in language testing, Mesick's unitary notion of validity proposes two different but complementary groups of differences required to explain the characteristics of a

given language test. The first group of distinctions deal with the proofs located within the construct being assessed, and the relatedness between the usefulness of the test and the construct in question. By contrast, the second group of distinctions are in relation to the test consequences accommodating the sources affecting the construct being measured, and the impact of the test use on both the test takers and the society. Not surprisingly, the validity theory established in terms of test-takers' performance failed to address the practical guidelines governing test validation. Consequently, Kane (2006, 2012) proposed an interpretive-argumentative approach to test validation whereby "the logic, evidence, and rhetoric of arguments for the validity of an assessment" are of primary importance (Cumming, 2013, p. 3).

Developing fair and unbiased general English tests for university students from different majors is an issue of great importance. Thus domestic students studying various fields of study in non-English speaking countries might encounter problems understanding English texts and lectures because of an absence of English proficiency (Ramsay, Barker, & Jones, 1999). It has been argued that the main culprit might be related to university students' failure to cope with the socio-cultural and psychological dimensions of their English proficiency. As a result, they lack the necessary English self-confidence in the procedure of sociocultural and psychological adjustment to academic situations involving the English language (Trice, 2007; Yang, Noels, & Saumure, 2006).

DIF Studies

These problems may be confounded when the targeted achievement tests do not evaluate what they claim to evaluate due to both internal and external factors. According to Wright (2007), both standardized or non-standardized achievement tests are used to determine what a student has learned, such as vocabulary, grammar, and reading by specifying how much of the teaching content has been mastered by the targeted learners. What makes such tests really significant is the fact that they are designed to measure learners' current levels of knowledge for helping them advance at a suitable pace. Consequently, validation, equity, and fairness must carefully be considered in general English achievement tests. The European Federation of Psychological Association (E.F.P.A) has recently emphasized the necessity of collecting evidence attesting to the construct validity of high stake tests (Hope, Adamson, McManus, Chris, & Elder, 2018) and has maintained that differential item functioning (DIF) as an effective method of evaluating test quality for measuring the quality of the test, should be used because DIF analysis has a great bearing on test equity and fairness (Hernández, Tomás, Ferreres, & Lloret, 2015).

Accordingly, carefully designed quantitative approaches are often utilized to specify whether the test items or test scores have equivalent meaning for varying groups of test-takers. In other words, test fairness and equity are important considerations, so test developers must focus on the examinees' background characteristics like gender in order to guarantee the validity of test scores. To this end, differential item functioning (DIF) techniques are used to find biased items that have an adverse effect on the test validity and may lead to the unfair evaluation of test-takers' performance with different personal characteristics but the same language ability (Ozemir & Alshamrani, 2020).

Mentioning some studies investigating DIF in high stake tests, Barati and Ahmadi (2012) did research on DIF on the Special English Test of the Iranian National University Entrance Exam. Grammar, language function, and cloze sections favored females, whereas vocabulary and word order sections favored males. Both men and women were favored on the reading comprehension section equally. Alavi and Bordbar (2018) investigated gender DIF in language proficiency test in Iran, the National University Entrance Exam for Foreign Languages. The results showed that 40 out of 95 items of the test exhibited DIF, suggesting that the test marks are not free of construct-irrelevant variance. Darabi, Bazvand, and Ahmadi (2020) examined test fairness, focusing on the

subject-matter section of the Ph.D. The Entrance Exam of ELT held in 2014 in Iran. The results underscored that the test is biased since the tasks were not fully discussed in the Ph.D. course objectives, the test was best reliable for high-ability test-takers and 4 items were flagged for nonnegligible DIF.

In another related study, focusing on the validity of a General English Achievement Test, Jamalzadeh, Lotfi and Rostami (2021) examined both DIF and differential distractor function (DDF) items. The findings revealed five moderate-level DIF and ten DDF items indicating an adverse effect on test fairness. Bordbar (2021) explored the validity and DIF analytics of Iran's University Entrance Exam. The test results revealed that the test marks were not without construct-irrelevant variance and the test's fairness was not clarified. Mehrazmay, Ghonsooly, and De La Torre (2021) examined gender DIF in the 15-item reading comprehension section of the university entrance exam of ELT held in 2017 in Iran. Three items displayed large DIF. The findings show that women have lower chance of correct answer across all latent profiles.

Several statistical procedures for finding DIF have been proposed. For instance, the Mantel-Haenszel (MH) procedure (Holland & Thayer, 1988), SIBTEST (Shealy & Sout, 1993), Item Response Theory (IRT) methods (Camilli & Shepard, 1994), logistic regression (Swaminathan & Rogers, 1990), and multilevel DIF analysis (Kamata, 2001) are commonly used by the researchers' interested item analysis in language testing. Khodi and Karami (2021) investigated the comparability of findings from three extensively used DIF finding techniques: the Rasch model, Logistic Regression, and Mantel-Haenszel through the data from 35 item grammar section of the University of Tehran English Proficiency Test. This study, however, employed the MH, which can be employed for comparing two cultural groups when the observed item scores are dichotomous and the sum score represents the targeted latent variable.

Purpose of the Study

General English tests are commonly classified as high-stakes tests because the marks are often used as crucial indicators in determining students' future academic accomplishments. In the Iranian academic scene, a large number of students take part in general English classes and are tested at the end of the semester. Evidently, no serious attempt has been made to standardize the general English test banks. Although there have been many scientific and operational opportunities for standardization of these tests, they have not gone through the standardization procedure considering viral factors like the role of test takers' gender and major type on the quality of test equity and test fairness. The significance of investigating test equity by identifying any sources of bias in different academic contexts is vitally important in language testing where interpretation of test scores may have a great bearing on students' educational and professional opportunities. Unfortunately, in the majority of studies addressing test equity, the concerned practitioners have neglected the cumulative impact of both gender and major type on the validity of general English achievement tests.

Thus, in an attempt toward further standardization of IAUGEAT, the present study investigated whether IAUGEAT shows substantial DIF in favour of gender groups with specific majors. To this purpose, the following research questions were raised:

RQ₁: To what extent does the examinees' field of study influence any possible gender-based DIF?
RQ₂: What are the attitudes and subjective analyses of any possible gender bias in the test according to language instructors and educators at IAU?

Method

With adopting a convergent mixed parallel design method integrating quantitative and qualitative gathering, grouping, interpreting, and analyzing the related data, an attempt was made to examine the items exhibiting potential gender DIF in IAUGEAT. The main purpose of this design is to set up the requirements needed to best understand or develop a more complete picture of the research problems by obtaining different but complementary data. In fact, the method helps collect and analyze two independent strings of quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously in a single phase. By prioritizing the methods equally, maintaining the data analysis independently, and mixing the results during the overall interpretation, the method paves the way for discovering convergence, divergence, contradictions, or relationships of two sources of data.

In the quantitative stage, Mantel- Haenszel DIF detection was applied to the data related to different subgroups under scrutiny. In the qualitative stage, however, a focus group interview was used where a limited number of EFL teachers were randomly selected from the sample teachers teaching general English during the semester were randomly selected and asked about their opinion or perceptions about the validity and fairness of the test. By creating an interactive environment where the participants were able to freely discuss the possible causes of DIF and suggest solutions for improving the items on the test.

Participants
Test Takers
The data for this study was collected from 835 male and female undergraduate students in different majors at Isfahan Azad University (IAU), Iran. They had all sat for the IAUGEAT administered in the fall of the 2018-2019 academic year. Table 1 presents the participants' major. Notably, 63% of the test takers were females and 37% were males.

Table 1
Test Population in Terms of Gender

Subgroup	Total	Fe male	Male
Para medicine	80	55	25
Educational Sciences	227	197	30
Humanities	148	78	70
Agriculture	143	92	51
Physical Education	45	24	21
Engineering	109	31	78
Architecture	83	47	36
All Subgroups	835	524	311

Focus Group Participants
The researcher asked the language instructors and educators at the English department at IAU, Isfahan branch, to take part in the focus group and share their ideas on the possible cause of DIF and suggest ways to improve the items. Only ten of them participated in the focus group. Details of the focus group are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Focus Group Details

No.	Female	Male	Age	Education	Teaching Experience
10	5	5	35-50	Ph.D.	10-25 years

Data Collection

In general, the students taking IAUGEAT answer the questions manually. After grading the answer sheets, the teachers deliver them to the examination office. We obtained official permission from the university authorities in order to use the answer sheets as their source of data on the condition of confidentiality exclusively for this research project.

Instruments
IAUGEAT

Generally, students are required to take a general English course and pass the related exam as one of the mandatory modules in the undergraduate program. The assessment tool used for measuring students' knowledge of English is a general English achievement test. Therefore, the IAUGEAT used for assessing students from different majors in the autumn semester of 2018-2019 academic year was the instrument chosen for the DIF analysis. The test was organized into four sections: Vocabulary (25 questions), Grammar (15 questions), Cloze Test (10 questions), and Reading Comprehension (10 questions).

We employed jMetrik software in order to appraise the reliability from a single test administration. It computed Huynh's raw agreement and kappa statistics. Table 3 summarizes the result of the analysis.

Table 3
Huynh's Raw Agreement Index Statistics

Vocabulary	Grammar	Cloze Test	Reading	Total
0.90	0.81	0.82	0.90	0.92

Clearly, the grammar section of the test has the lowest value of reliability. Vocabulary and reading comprehension parts, however, have the highest reliability values. Overall, the test total reliability is equal to 0.92, showing an acceptable level of reliability.

Focus Group Interview

As already mentioned, ten of the language instructors handling general English courses at IAU, Isfahan branch, volunteered to participate in the focus group interview. The main objective was to find out their opinions on the possible causes of DIF and suggest ways to improve the test items. The information concerning the participating language teachers for the focus group interview is summarized in Table 4.

Data Processing
Detecting DIF

DIF exists when one specific group of test takers has a distinct expected item score than similar test takers from a different group. The condition suggests that certain items are evaluating something beyond the purported construct (Angoff, 1993; Pae, 2012; Meyer, 2014). Osterlind (1983) introduced five procedures for detecting possible bias in test items: By analysis of variance (ANOVA), transformed item difficulties (TID), chi-square ($x2$), item characteristic curve (ICC), and distractor response analysis. Chi-square ($x2$) was used as the main strategy for detecting possible test item bias in this study. To do so, jMetrik software was applied for psychometric analyses. First, 835 test takers' scores were loaded into an excel file. Then, they were converted into a notepad file required for jMetrik. Additionally, for testing statistical significance, common-odds ratio, ETS delta statistic, and the standardized mean difference (SMD) for describing practical significance, Cochran-Mantel-Haenszel (CMH) statistic was utilized. Notably, the analysis was separately done for each of the subgroups.
Assumptions Underlying Rasch model

There are two statistical suppositions; unidimensionality and local independence. Unidimensionality signifies that the test consists of items that make use only of one dimension. In other words, in this model, there is a single Ɵ for each testee, and other factors that might be influencing the item response are treated as a random error or nuisance dimensions. These factors are considered to be item-specific in that every item is unique and independent from other test items (DeMars, 2010).

A principle specific to Rasch model is that the comparison between the characteristics of any two testees should be equal no matter what subset of items is used for the comparison, and the comparison between the properties of any two items should be equivalent without regard to which subset of individuals is used for the comparison. This principle is known as specific objectivity. (Andrich & Marais, 2019; Bond & Fox, 2013; Rasch, 1977). In order to meet the assumption of uni-dimensionality in the Rasch model, the test was divided into its different parts and the analysis was repeated for each of these parts independently.

Alternatively, the assumption of local independence is, in reality, a provision in jMetrik which acts as an option for checking the assumption of local independence with Yen's $Q3$ statistic, defined as the correlation of residuals for a pair of items (Yen, 1984, cited in Meyer, 2014). By performing a correlation analysis, it was found out that no extreme values were present and the supposition of local independence was also supported.

CMH Chi-Square Statistic

Cochran–Mantel–Haenszel test (CMH) is a test employed in the investigation of stratified or matched categorical data. It helps the researcher to test the connection between a binary predictor and a binary outcome such as case or control status while taking into conideration the stratification. This procedure aims to test the formulated null hypothesis based on item scores providing every examinee is an independent member of the targeted group. By stratifying examinees in terms of matched scores and evaluating the difference between the observed and expected item scores pooled over all strata, it is possible to test the target hypothesis. In case the difference existing between matched scores is not due to chance factors, the null hypothesis will be rejected.

ETS DIF Classification Levels

According to Meyer (2014), ETS DIF classification levels could be described by ETS rules regarding the common odds ratio related to the magnitude of DIF. There are three types of rules labeled as A items, B items, and C items. "A" items have a CMH p-value larger than 0.05, that means the common odds ratio is strictly between 0.65 and 1.53. "B" items, on the other hand, have a common odds ratio lower than 0.53 and the upper bound of the 95% confidence interval for the common odds ratio is less than 0.65. That is, the common odds ratio is larger than 1.89 and the lower bound of the 95% confidence interval is larger than 1.53.

Results

In the quantitative phase, the data related to the comparative research whose main objective was to grant a comprehensive representation of the evidential bases regarding the targeted research questions, will be displayed and then will continue with a qualitative phase whereby an interview was used to further explore the importance of equity and test fairness in the interpretation of test scores.

Results of the quantitative stage

DIF analysis was used for each subgroup of testees from different majors taking the test. In particular, each of the Agriculture and Engineering subgroups had one item classified as "C"

showing a large amount of DIF. In the Agriculture subgroup, item 1 was qualified as C+, but in the Engineering subgroup item, 30 was qualified as C+. Notably, in other subgroups, certain items showed B magnitude of DIF which will be explained below.

Educational Sciences DIF analysis evaluated eight items (13.33%) showing a moderate magnitude of DIF. Four items (i.e., items 10, 17, 19, and 34) were classified as B- and was in the favor of the reference group (i.e., female students) (6.66%), whereas items 21, 42, 43, and 51 were classified as B+ and favored the focal group or male students (6.66%). The Characteristics of these items are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Items exhibiting DIF in Educational Sciences

Item No.	Subtest	Chi-Square	P-value	Class	Item Difficulty (CTT)	Item Difficulty (Rasch)	Item Discrimination
10	V	4.46	0.03	B-	0.64	-0.31	0.46
17	V	6.43	0.01	B-	0.60	-0.09	0.24
19	V	4.22	0.04	B-	0.66	-0.42	0.63
21	V	9.38	0.00	B+	0.82	-1.47	0.47
34	G	7.85	0.01	B-	0.44	0.71	0.30
42	C	4.40	0.04	B+	0.52	0.33	0.44
43	C	4.93	0.03	B+	0.67	-0.45	0.50
51	R	3.86	0.05	B+	0.74	-0.90	0.41

As indicated in Table 5 the highest percentage of DIF for the subgroup in Educational sciences belongs to the cloze test and favors females. Similarly, the Reading section of the test also favors females. The vocabulary and grammar parts of the test, however, favor males. The cloze and reading comprehension parts were basically related to comprehension check and female students in Educational sciences outperformed males in answering contextualized language items which need a more holistic view of the text. However, males were good at decontextualized language items.

Table 5

Percentage of DIF in Different Test Parts in Educational Sciences Subgroup

Test Part	Vocabulary	Grammar	Cloze Test	Reading
DIF Favoring Males	12%	6.66%	0%	0%
DIF Favoring Females	4%	0%	20%	10%
Total DIF	16%	6.66%	20%	10%

In the Para-medicine subgroup DIF analysis, six items (10%) exhibited moderate DIF magnitude. Five items were qualified as B- favoring male students (8.33%) and one item qualified as B+ favoring female students (1.66%). Items 2, 18, 21, 44, and 51 were classified as B- favoring the reference group (i.e., males), and item 29 was identified as B+ favoring the focal group or females. The characteristics of these items are depicted in Table 6.

Table 6

Items exhibiting DIF in Para-medicine Subgroup

Item No.	Subtest	Chi-Square	P-value	Class	Item Difficulty (CTT)	Item Difficulty (Rasch)	Item Discrimination

2	V	4.77	0.03	B-	0.58	-0.02	0.47
18	V	3.19	0.01	B-	0.95	-1.35	0.30
21	V	5.27	0.05	B-	0.99	-2.83	0.005
29	G	4.59	0.03	B+	0.81	0.23	0.30
44	C	4.57	0.03	B-	0.75	0.63	0.45
51	R	3.85	0.02	B-	1.00	-4.05	0.30

It is clearly observed that in the para-medicine subgroup, the highest percentage of DIF belongs to the vocabulary section and is in favor of males. The results related to both cloze test and reading sections favor males, while the grammar part favours students. It seems that the items favoring males or females change for different subgroups. Likewise, Table 7 provides a summary of the DIF analysis for the para-medicine subgroup.

Table 7
Percentage of DIF in Different Test Parts in Para-medicine Subgroup

Test Part	Vocabulary	Grammar	Cloze Test	Reading
DIF Favoring Males	12%	0%	10%	10%
DIF Favoring Females	0%	6.66%	0%	0%
Total DIF	12%	6.66%	10%	10%

The analysis of the test items in the Physical Education subgroup identified four items (6.66%) as exhibiting a moderate magnitude of DIF. Two items were in favor of male students (3.33%) and two items were in favor of females (3.33%). Items 45 and 55 were qualified as B-, favoring the reference group (i.e., the male students), while items 33 and 57 qualified as B+ favoring the focal group or females. The characteristics of these items are displayed in Table 9.

Table 8
Items exhibiting DIF in Physical Education Subgroup

Item No.	Subtest	Chi-square	P-value	Class	Item Difficulty (CTT)	Item Difficulty (Rasch)	Item Discrimination
33	G	7.05	0.01	B+	0.89	-0.16	0.30
45	C	3.85	0.05	B-	0.47	1.29	0.31
55	R	5.12	0.02	B-	0.76	1.07	0.59
57	R	6.10	0.01	B+	0.87	0.10	0.30

In the Physical Education subgroup, the highest percentage of items exhibiting DIF belonged to the reading test section favoring both males and females equally. The vocabulary part showed no DIF, whereas the grammar part favored females, and the cloze test favored males. Percentages of items exhibiting DIF in the Physical Educational subgroup for each test part for males and females are depicted in Table 9.

Table 9
Percentage of DIF in Different Test Parts in Physical Educational Subgroup

Test Part	Vocabulary	Grammar	Cloze test	Reading
DIF Favoring Males	0%	0%	10%	10%
DIF Favoring Females	0%	6.66%	0%	10%
Total DIF	0%	6.66%	10%	20%

The analysis of the Architecture subgroup revealed that four items (6.66%) had DIF. One item favored male students (1.66), and three items favored female students (5%). Item 42 was qualified as B- and items 14, 51, and 53 as B+. The characteristics of these items are depicted in Table 10.

Table 10
Items Exhibiting DIF in Architecture Subgroup

Item No.	Subtest	Chi-square	P-value	Class	Item Difficulty (CTT)	Item Difficulty (Rasch)	Item Discrimination
14	V	7.12	0.01	B+	0.58	0.37	0.49
42	C	3.91	0.05	B-	0.49	0.85	0.35
51	R	3.94	0.05	B+	0.79	-0.97	0.51
53	R	5.63	0.02	B+	0.79	-0.83	0.51

As can be seen, the highest percentage of items exhibiting DIF was related to the Reading part, and these items favored female students in general. While the Vocabulary part favored females, the cloze test favored males. The grammar part showed no DIF. All in all, the point that there is a lack of a fixed pattern for items favoring males and females was confirmed by going through the details of this subgroup too. Table 11 reports DIF percentages for the Architecture subgroup.

Table 11
Percentages of DIF in Different Test Parts in Architecture Subgroup

Test Part	Vocabulary	Grammar	Cloze Test	Reading
DIF Favoring Males	0%	0%	10%	0%
DIF Favoring Females	4%	0%	0%	20%
Total DIF	4%	0%	10%	20%

Similarly, the analysis of the Agriculture subgroup revealed three items (5 %) having DIF. Item1 was classified as C+ and items 4 and 37 were classified as B+. These items were in favour of the focal group or females. The characteristics of these items are depicted in Table 12.

Table 12
Items Exhibiting DIF in Agriculture Subgroup

Item No.	Subtest	Chi-square	P-value	Class	Item Difficulty (CTT)	Item Difficulty (Rasch)	Item Discrimination
1	V	7.81	0.01	C+	0.83	-1.23	0.24
4	V	7.30	0.01	B+	0.58	0.33	0.34
37	G	4.39	0.04	B+	0.65	-0.08	0.51

Clearly, the highest percentage of DIF was in the vocabulary part favoring female students. The Grammar part also favored female students. Cloze test and reading parts showed no DIF. Once again, an absence of a fixed pattern for items favoring males and females was confirmed by going through the details of the subgroup.

Table 13
Percentage of DIF in Different Test Parts in Agriculture Subgroup

Test Part	Vocabulary	Grammar	Cloze Test	Reading

DIF Favoring Males	0%	0%	0%	0%
DIF Favoring Females	8%	6.66%	0%	0%
Total DIF	8%	6.66%	0%	0%

The analysis of the items for the Engineering subgroup indicated that two items (3.33%) exhibited DIF. One of the items was in favour of female students (1.66%) and the other one favored male students (1.66%). In fact, item 30 exhibited C magnitude of DIF and favored female students, and item 45, exhibiting B magnitude of DIF, favored the male students. The characteristics of these items are depicted in Table 14.

Table 14
Items Exhibiting DIF in Engineering Subgroup

Item No.	Subtest	Chi-square	P-value	Class	Item Difficulty (CTT)	Item Difficulty (Rasch)	Item Discrimination
30	G	8.99	0.00	C+	0.36	1.41	0.25
45	C	4.61	0.03	B-	0.42	1.11	0.05

It is clearly observed that in the Engineering subgroup, the highest percentage of DIF belonged to the cloze test, which favoured male students. The grammar part of the test favored female students only, while the vocabulary and reading parts exhibited no DIF. The result of the DIF analysis for the engineering subgroup is summarized in Table 15.

Table 15
Percentage of DIF in Different Test Parts in Engineering Subgroup

Test Part	Vocabulary	Grammar	Cloze Test	Reading
DIF Favoring Males	0%	0%	10%	0%
DIF Favoring Females	0%	6.66%	0%	0%
Total DIF	0%	6.66%	10%	0%

Clearly, DIF analysis of the test items belonging to the Humanities Subgroup demonstrated a negligible, A-level DIF. Table 16 presents the percentage of items favouring males and females.

Table 16
Percentage of Items Favoring Females and Males in Each Subgroup

Subgroup	Educational Sciences	Para-medicine	Physical Education	Architecture	Agriculture	Engineering	Humanities
Males	6.66%	8.33%	3.33%	1.66%	0%	1.66%	0%
Females	6.66%	1.66%	3.33%	5 %	5%	1.66%	0%
Total	13.32%	9.99	6.66%	6.66%	5%	3.32%	0%

Looking at the DIF analysis of the items answered by testees from different subgroups indicates that some of the items on the test under scrutiny favored males while others favored females. Overall, females were more favored than males in Grammar and Reading, while in the Vocabulary and Cloze subsections of the test, males were more favored than females. The related percentages are reported in Table 17.

Table 17

*Number and Percentage of Items Favoring Females and Males in Each Test Part*

Test Part	Females	Males	Females	Males	Total DIF
Vocabulary (25 items)	4	6	16%	24%	40%
Grammar (15 items)	4	1	26.6%	6.66%	33.26
Cloze Test (10 items)	2	4	20%	40%	60%
Reading (10 items)	4	2	40%	20%	60%

As can be seen, items comprising the targeted test defy test equity and fairness and behave differently for different genders from different major types.

Results of the qualitative stage

The results of the focus group interview are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Results of the Focus Group interview
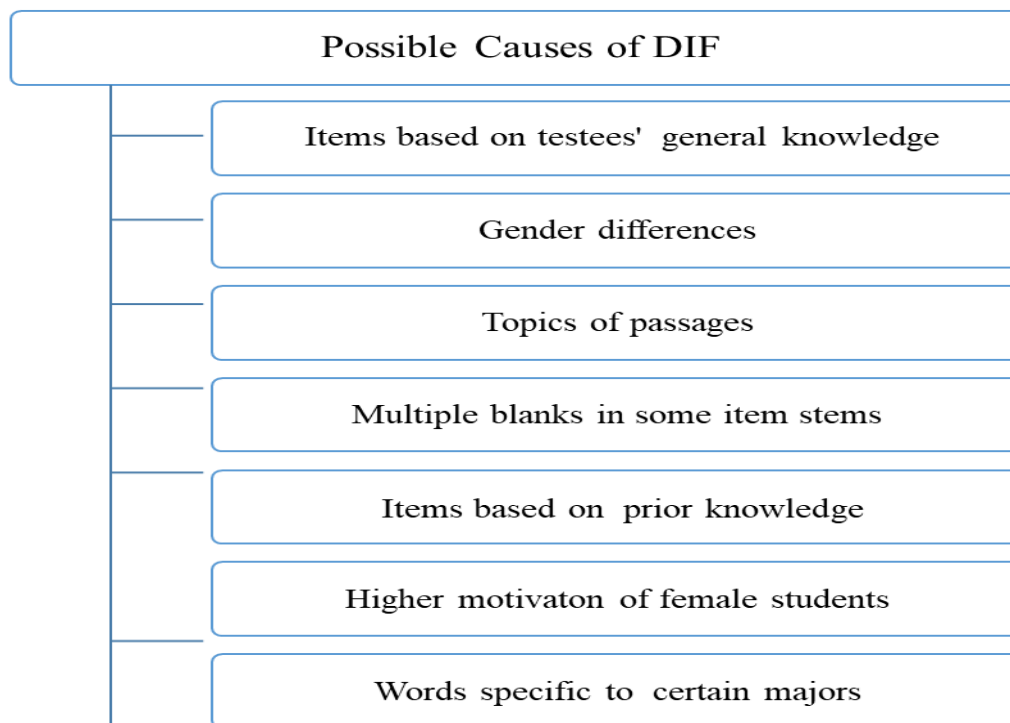
The interview directed under the guidance of the researcher brought to the surface a number of causes that adversely affected test fairness and equity. It was admitted that the construction of high-stakes general achievement tests required carefully designed plans considering all aspects of test bias.

The majority of the respondents who were interviewed felt that the targeted list of factors causing DIF might have a great bearing on the so-called rest equity and fairness. Comparing the results obtained from the two phases of the study, it was seen that the overall response to the questions posing the causes of DIF supported the experimental evidence overwhelmingly.

Discussion

This study aimed to apply DIF analysis to identify the possible threat to test validity by examining whether the items used in a given test function differentially among distinct sub-populations of the testees across different fields. We applied DIF analyses to find the biased items in a 60 item, multiple choice General English Achievement Test administered at IAU in Iran in order to examine the extent to which the examinees' field of study influence possible gender-based DIF. To achieve the predicted objectives, a two phase study plan comprising a quantitative and a qualitative phase was devised to investigate the validity of the test and its fairness. In the first phase, the main objective was to determine the extent to which the examinees' field of study influenced any possible gender-based DIF and to identify whether the items on the targeted test exhibited DIF in different subgroups or majors. The results of the quantitative phase, the gender-based DIF analysis of the test items, revealed that the examinees' field of study had a considerable effect on their overall test scores.

The findings are consistent with Ryan and Bachman (1992) who applied gender-based DIF analysis to examine the test performance of male and female test takers on TOEFL and FCE tests. The results revealed that four items favored males and two of them were biased toward females in the TOEFL test, whereas only one of the items favored males and one was in favor of the females in the FCE test.

The results were also in agreement with Barati and Ahmadi's (2012) findings based on gender-based DIF analysis showed that certain items in the grammar, language function, and cloze sub-sections of the Iranian National University Entrance Exam subtest favored females, while some of those in the vocabulary and word order sections favored males. It is encouraging to compare the results of the study with those found by Alavi and Bordbar (2018), who used gender-based DIF analysis to investigate test fairness in an Iranian high stake language proficiency test named the National University Entrance Exam for Foreign Languages (NUEEFL). The results revealed that 40 items out of the 95 items on the test contained irrelevant construct variance adversely affecting test equity.

The current findings also accord with the observations reported by Ravand, Firoozi, and Rohani in 2019. The results demonstrated that about half of the DIF items identified in the general English section of the university entrance exam for the English Master Program were contaminated with gender bias. Likewise, the findings of the study are consistent with those reported by Yoon (2020), and Geramipour (2020) who used DIF analysis reading comprehension and the findings of the studies indicated the presence of ten DIF items with a large size effect.

The thematic interpretation of the interview with the selected general English teachers based on the prespecified themes by the researcher in the second phase of the study demonstrated that there were possible sources of threat to validity and test fairness in the targeted general English test. During the focus group discussions, almost two-thirds of the participants (64%) pointed to and agreed with several causes of DIF. A common theme emerging out of the discussion was the case of topic familiarity for males in the cloze subsection in the test. Approximately half of those surveyed commented that the content of the text used in reading and cloze sub-parts of the test was responsible for the emergence of DIF. They stated that the questions in the cloze test could have been answered using general knowledge and they were biased towards males due to the text content and topic familiarity. They emphasized that the selection of content for reading comprehension and cloze subsections of the test should be chosen with utmost care and sensitivity.

Some items like item 1 in which there is a male proper name, or item 2 in which the item stem includes the word "brother" cause DIF because they point to a specific gender and such words or proper names could influence the perception and recall of things and events. Item 1 with the proper name" Reza" in the Agriculture subgroup analysis with a large magnitude of DIF

functioned to the advantage of females. Similarly, item 2 with the word" brother" functioned to the advantage of males in the Para-medicine subgroup. Replacing the stem of such items using short dialogues with male and female speakers was suggested for removing DIF in such items. In response to the causes of DIF for items favoring females, 70 % of those interviewed said that the reason for the higher percentage of DIF favoring females was that test developers were also females and they enjoyed the same cognitive learning style and a common perspective on the world as the female testees. Another reason was that obtaining a higher score has been of higher importance for females and this likely led to putting more effort even in the exam session and has consequently caused more response validity for females.

Overall, the results obtained from the interpretation of the comments in the focus group interview revealed that the majority of those in the interview (90%) completely agreed with prespecified causes of DIF and suggested that there was a great need for finding more effective methods of constructing general English tests where the items are bias-free only measuring the construct under scrutiny. It is observed that the results of this study corroborate the findings of a great deal of the previous work in the field of testing, where the application of DIF analysis could practically improve the quality of test validation (Bank, 2009; Belzak & Bauer, 2020; Chen Liu & Zumbo, 2020; Mckeown & Oliveri, 2017; Paulsen *et al*. 2020; Zhu & Aryadoust, 2020, among many others).

Conclusion

The present study aimed at examining the effect of gender on test-takers seating for a general English achievement test at IAU. It was found that the items on the test exhibited DIF in different subgroups. It revealed that three subgroups favored female students more than male students (Architecture, Agriculture, and Humanities), however, one subgroup favored males more than females. (Para-medicine) and two subgroups favored males and females equally (Educational Sciences and Engineering).) Regarding the test parts, in Grammar and Reading, females were more favored than males, while in Vocabulary and Cloze Test males were more favored than females. The findings of this study may bring about certain implications regarding gender DIF in IAUGEAT. The results may be advantageous to test developers by providing information concerning the influence of gender on the performance of test-takers. By identifying items free of DIF and modifying or eliminating those violating the validity of test, test developers should have a bank of tests in which the items are purely bias-free. Considering the scarcity of the DIF research on general English achievement tests, the present research could be insightful to the practitioners in this field and used as a platform for further studies in this regard. The results of the present study could also be helpful to teachers and learners. The results of the study have important implications for developing bias-free general English achievement tests. Validity is a multifaceted phenomenon that should be the main focus of test construction. However, to clearly understand the true nature of the influence of gender and testees' type of major on the interpretation of test scores, more research needs to be undertaken. More DIF studies focusing on the interaction effect of field of study with other factors can be very enlightening and will deepen understanding of the DIF and its possible causes. The evidence from this research suggests that more research is required to fathom out the true nature of test validity and test fairness. It was stated that of numerous methods available for detecting DIF, just one method was used in the present study for analysis and this could be regarded as one of the limitations of the study. The results of the current study were based on a limited item pool of 60 items; therefore, it needs to be repeated with larger samples of test items. Furthermore, the focus group was managed without the presence of the testees taking the targeted test. Their absence made the researcher's chance of reaping the benefits of the insider perspective, where those belonging to the study were not provided with the opportunity to express their own ideas. Taken together, the findings of this

study pave the ground for implementing projects at the national level through the collaborative work of concerned researchers, shedding light on the factors causing item DIF and contaminating test fairness.

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Research Paper

English Language Teachers' Reflections on Online Language Practices during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

During the Covid-19 pandemic, universities around the world faced closure because of social distancing and lockdown, therefore, unprecedently, education had to move online and universities in Iran were not exceptional. This sudden and abrupt shift required teachers to rethink their attitudes and beliefs. This study has been conducted to explore English Language Teachers' attitudes toward their practices concerning the effects of social distancing and the maximized use of technology in the teaching profession. Having adopted a qualitative method to investigate teachers' experiences, the data of this study were collected through interviews with nine English language university teachers, and their reflective journals. Generally, the results communicate considerable appreciation for integrating technology in English language courses. To be more detailed, this study revealed three main categories for positive attitudes (pedagogical innovation, instructional support, and professional identity formation) each with some subcategories. Also, the analysis highlights three concerns (technology-related challenges, classroom management, and inflexibility in behavior) for online teaching. The implications of the study mainly provide a welcoming environment for utilizing technology in teaching, especially in English language teaching.

Keywords: *COVID-19 Pandemic, English language teaching, online teaching, teachers' reflections*

نظر مدرسین زبان انگلیسی درمورد آموزش مجازی زبان انگلیسی در طول دوران اپیدمی کووید-19

در طول دوران اپیدمی کووید-19 دانشگاه های سراسر دنیا به دلیل فاصله گذاری اجتماعی و قرنطینه با تعطیلی مواجه شدند و دانشگاه های ایران از این شرایط استثنا نبوده اند ِ بنابراین به شکل بی سابقه ای آموزش مجازی اجباری شد. این تغییر ناگهانی مدرسین را مستلزم به بازاندیشی دیدگاه ها و عقایدشان کرد. این تحقیق در راستای بررسی دیدگاه مدرسین زبان انگلیسی نسبت به عملکردشان با توجه به تاثیرات فاصله ی اجتماعی و استفاده ی حداکثری از تکنولوژی در عملکرد آموزشی آنها انجام شده است. با استفاده از روش کیفی جهت بررسی تجربه ی مدرسین ،داده های این تحقیق از طریق مصاحبه از 9 مدرس زبان انگلیسی در دانشگاه و یادداشت های انعکاسی آنها جمع آوری شد. به صورت کلی، نتایج گویای رضایت قابل توجه مدرسین از ترکیب تکنولوژی در دوره های زبان انگلیسی می باشد. جزییات بیشتر نشان میدهد که نتایج این تحقیق نشان گر سه گروه از دیدگاه های مثبت (نواروی تدریس،حمایت تدریسی و تشکیل هویت حرفه ای) که هر کدام شامل زیرگروه هایی هستند میباشد. همچنین تحلیل داده ها سه دغدغه (چالش های مرتبط با تکنولوژی، مدیریت کلاس و عدم انعطاف پذیری در رفتار) در آموزش مجازی را نشان میدهند . کاربردهای این تحقیق اساسا یک محیط صمیمانه برای استفاده از تکنولوژی در آموزش مخصوصا آموزش زبان انگلیسی فراهم میکنند.

واژگان کلیدی: آموزش زبان انگلیسی، آموزش مجازی، نظر مدرسین،اپیدمی کووید-19

Introduction

Higher education has been involved in implementing online teaching and blended learning over the past two decades (e.g., Singh & Thurman, 2019). The outbreak of the recent pandemic,

Covid-19, and the emphasis on social and physical distancing accelerated the shift to Online Teaching and Learning (OTL) especially in higher education around the world, whether teachers were prepared or not (UNESCO IESALC, 2020). The recent pandemic gave birth to a new and unknown situation and left teachers with no choice but only adopt different forms of technology-based classrooms, communication, collaboration, and teaching. This situation requires teachers to become more adaptable and flexible for change, therefore the question of how prepared teachers are for such a shift has come forth (Hung, 2016). Luckily, this threat entailed a golden opportunity to answer and realize the extent to which teachers felt prepared for Online Teaching and Learning (Brooks & Grajek, 2020). However, there is still a continuous and persistent inconsistency in the implementation and adaptation of blended learning and online teaching which have resulted in very different experiences for both teachers and learners in different contexts, disciplines, and programs (Bernard et al., 2014). Therefore, it is critical to acknowledge the existence of multifaceted problems resulting from teachers' perceptions of how ready and prepared they are in implementing OTL in higher education (Martin et al., 2019). On the other hand, this sudden shift or even the willingness to adapt to the shift requires a range of changes in the practices of teaching which are rooted in complicated cultural, individual, institutional, and organizational factors (Kukulska-Hulme, 2012). To have a better-detailed understanding of teachers' perception of readiness for OTL, its relations to such factors need further investigation (Hung, 2016), and if we are to make sure that all students are provided with high-quality learning, exploring a wide range of factors related to university teachers who have adopted and used online teaching (especially to help the institutions to support learning and teach online) is a necessity (Kebritchi et al., 2017).

In the Information era, teacher education has already become a complex endeavor, because teacher educators' role is under continuous upgrades and changes. It is being transformed from being the main source of knowledge to being a role model, and a mentor for those teachers spending their pre-service training course, constructing the foundations of the future society (Niess, 2015; Van der Klink et al., 2017). There are numerous advantages of implementing ICT in teaching practices. One advantage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is that it overcomes the distance-and-time-related barriers which provide flexibility within a curriculum (Hill, 2006), diversified program, with a range of choices, and offer to make it easier to manage and opens doors for blended learning that is a mixture of digital and face-to-face (F2F) education (Gerbic, 2011). Therefore, implementing ICT demands not only a teacher's beliefs, skills, and self-efficacy, but also a mutual relationship between Information Technology (IT) and the practice of teaching.

However, technology also entails some challenges for the teaching profession, in relevance to teachers' everyday activities, skills, beliefs, and knowledge. Reportedly, within a blended curriculum, teachers have reported the demands of being more organizational, designing, structuring, planning, and executing their activities in a way to be in line with traditional educational contexts (Baran et al., 2013). Moreover, the way teachers interact with their learners, especially their non-verbal communication, the level of friendliness and intimacy, and the form and the amount of humor used in the classroom will change within a blended context (Baran et al., 2013). Some communicational functions, for example, social and cognitive, are put into practice through digital interactions. Teachers need to be "virtually present, in both synchronous and asynchronous communications, to provide feedback, for example. Teachers' presence can be categorized in two ways. The first is for teachers to contribute to discussions and make learners' learning process more valuable (Smits, 2012), while the second is for the teachers to provide social elements in the communication by making humor and acting compassionately which can be encouraging for learners to continue their communication. Often, teachers fail to pay attention to their second role, the social side of communication, in their online activities (Smits, 2012). To

teach successfully, teachers should acquire a wide range of pedagogical repertoire, by giving regular feedback, adding flexibility to learners' assignments, being aware of what learners are involved in, and identifying the critical moments to offer their support (Laat et al., 2007).

According to Comas-Quinn (2011), to become aligned with the characteristics of blended learning, teachers' pedagogical views may need some adaptation. Since such a process is referred to as "learning as becoming" (Wenger, 1998). Without a doubt, teachers who shift from a f2f to an online educational context (even partly), do mention changes in their self-image. As Baran et al. (2013) described this: "While deconstructing and remaking their teaching personas [professional identity], they had to rethink themselves as teachers and resolve the tensions of not having the conditions that they had in traditional classrooms" (p. 30). In their study, teachers' professional identities appeared to be adapted on a practical level by bringing changes in teaching strategies to address the needs of the digital environment; However, on a deeper conceptual level, the teachers maintained and preserved their beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning. When switching to online teaching, many teachers cling to their routines and transfer the same routines to the online context (Baran et al., 2011) which happens, at least, when the change period begins (Wiesenberg & Stacey, 2008). Most teachers develop and reform their professional identity while working in a f2f curriculum. These f2f experiences influence teachers' beliefs about teaching and the way they shape their daily practices (Gerbic, 2011). In short, IT incorporation into professional life provides challenges as well as opportunities for teachers. To be able to provide appropriate support, understanding teachers' attitudes toward technology-integrated educational practices is necessary. Accordingly, in the present study, we explore university English language teachers' perceptions of online Language Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Literature Review

The importance of technology in the education system, be it online or offline cannot be undermined, but at the same moment, we cannot ignore the fact that the usage of e-learning tools in online education largely depends on the instructor and student characteristics. Chyung et al. (2009) found that the major enabling or disabling factor in the approval of technology is the instructor's attitude. Kersaint (2003) while advocating the positive attitude of instructors toward e-learning, stated that an instructor with a positive attitude feels comfortable in the usage of e-learning tools and implementing them into their classroom to make the teaching experience better. Xhaferi et al. (2018) surveyed to analyze the attitude of instructors towards the usage of technologies in online education, in which the target population consisted of 49 university faculty members and found that subject of study and gender do not correlate with the attitude towards e-learning. To maintain success in the online educational system, the positive attitude of instructors is very crucial (Woodrow, 1992). However, it has not always been easy for instructors to maintain a positive attitude toward online learning. Watson et al. (1998) while asserting the importance of a positive attitude of the instructor, stated that attitude towards e-learning is a key factor not only in the development of technology but also overcoming their resistance to using the application of ICT in the teaching process. One of the major factors is the peculiarity of the technology itself that is responsible for affecting the instructors' attitude towards ICT (Rogers, 1995). Liaw et al. (2008) have categorized the instructor's attitude toward ICT into three different areas: affective, cognitive, and behavioral measurement. Affective (perceived enjoyment) and cognitive (perceived usefulness) measurements have a positive effect on behavioral intention (Liaw and Huang, 2002). An instructor with a positive attitude towards e-learning tools maintains the quality of learning and forms an important part of instructor characteristics (Al-Fraihat et al., 2020).

Davis and Fill (2007) mentioned that online instructors should possess more skills, especially in the implementation of technology in the classroom than a traditional ones. They should have a

positive attitude towards the usage of ICT, as these skills help them to develop e-competencies, which will have a positive effect on their entire teaching experience. Hiltz et al. (2000) suggested that, with the introduction of e-learning, the role of an instructor has undergone a major shift from a subject expert to a facilitator. Salmon (2012) identified the competencies of online instructors into different categories, which are knowledge of the online system, technical competency, communication skills, content proficiency, and personal features. Instructors' competency in e-learning is a major component of the instructors' role (Li et al., 2017).

Research Questions

As has been mentioned earlier, there are several complicated factors involved in understanding how prepared teachers are. Especially for those who are willing to adapt to this sudden shift. These factors are context-based and are related to cultural, individual, institutional, and organizational (Kukulska-Hulme, 2012) aspects of the context. To this end, and to our knowledge, such factors have been understudied in the context of higher education in Iran where both teachers and learners do not have full access to online resources and materials. Besides, the individual understanding of online technologies varies greatly from one person to another, causing heterogeneous classrooms in terms of the digital skills of teachers and learners, even though learners are homogenous in terms of their language proficiency level. To have a better-detailed understanding of EFL teachers' perception of readiness for online language practices, the following research questions direct our study:

RQ1. How do English language teachers perceive the implementation of technology in their teaching practices?
RQ2. What are teachers' concerns regarding the implementation of ICT tools in their English language classroom?

Methodology

Context and Participants

The current study was conducted at the Islamic Azad University of Kerman, Iran. In brevity, this university is a full degree center, and among the greatest educational centers in the south and southeast of Iran, offering more than 171 disciplines at different levels, ranging from undergraduate to doctorate levels. The number of participants in this study was nine English language teachers, (7 with Ph.D. in English Language teaching and 2 with Ph.D. in English Language Literature). They had minimum familiarity with utilizing technology in their teaching practices before the outbreak of Covid-19. However, the main objective of this study was to investigate and explore their attitudes toward the major educational transformation of traditional classes to fully online instruction.

This study was conducted between February and July 2021, when the shift to an online mode of instruction had already become mandatory, following isolation protocols. At the time of the study, it had already been about two terms that teachers were mandated to handle their classes online. Although all the participants partook in the study voluntarily, a privacy consent form was distributed among the participants to ensure the protection of their rights, privacy, and confidentiality of the participants. Every aspect of the study and the participants' involvement in the research were explained and all relevant questions from the participants were answered by the researchers. So, the participants were fully informed of this study. Moreover, participants were fully aware of their unconditional right of withdrawal under any circumstances without having to give any reasons. On the other hand, the researchers obtained permission from participants to use their data on any scientific platforms such as academic international journals and conferences providing that their identifiable information in the results is remained concealed. Therefore, we

have decided to use pseudonyms to fulfill our duty of ethical considerations in protecting the participants' privacy.

Data Collection Procedure

To study teachers' perspectives and attitudes toward the potential pedagogical changes in online settings, we employed a narrative strategy. In response to the effects of social distancing and increased use of technology, the participants shared their narratives through interviews and reflective journals. This methodology was adopted based on what Creswell (2003) called the consistency of the epistemological, ontological, and methodological aspects of the research. Our primary information was collected from the participants' reflective journals which were asked to be updated three times within the academic semester; in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. After the journals were obtained, all participants were invited to one of the researchers' rooms to have semi-structured interviews. The interview sessions were carried out in the participants' mother tongue, Persian so that the participants would feel more at ease and their message would be conveyed more thoroughly. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. While the first categorization system was developed from the data, the data were translated from Persian to English by one of the researchers and double-checked by another researcher to ensure loyalty to the original data.

We analyzed the obtained data from the interviews and reflective journals through a system of categorization that we called the Narrative Analysis Framework. To begin our analysis, we had to develop the essential elements in each narrative to form an understanding of each participant's professional identity. Therefore, first, we read and took reflective notes from the transcripts of the interviews and the data from the reflective journals. In the next stage, we used open and pattern coding (Creswell, 2008) to analyze data and find the main groups and subgroups. It was the open coding that was at the center of our analysis through which the interpretative and Vivo codes related to professional identity development were highlighted. Through constant comparison between the open codes, similar codes formed the basis for a category or pattern code. This process resulted in four elements of the narratives or main groups each containing other subgroups. Later, through the mutual discussion between the two researchers, the final agreement between categories and subcategories was obtained.

Results

Relying on Venkatesh and his colleagues (2012) definition of the attitude toward technology, that it is an *"individual's positive or negative feelings (evaluative effect) about using a specific technology", we present our findings in two sections to cover the positive attitudes and the negative attitudes.* The analysis of the qualitative data is supported by quotations from the participants of the present study. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed three main categories for positive attitudes and each of the categories has its subcategories which will be looked at more thoroughly in the following sections.

Positive attitudes

In the first section of our findings, we aim to report on themes regarding the positive attitudes of the participants in this study under three main categories labeled Pedagogical Innovation, Instructional Support, and Professional Identity Formation.

Pedagogical innovation

Yastrebova and Kryachkov (2013) argued that one way of mastering communicative competence is implementing innovation in foreign language teaching and learning, which is not feasible unless new teaching materials and computer technologies are used. After processing the data obtained from both interviews and participants' journals, this study identified some

commonly shared experiences of the participants which can decisively support pedagogical innovation.

Challenging Environment

Not long after the breakout of the pandemic, teachers had to step out of their comfort zone and wander around a new virtual context. In other words, online classrooms Once ICT has been integrated into teaching and learning, the environment within which teachers and students operate will change. Such changes are by no means free of challenges. Thus, the effectiveness of integrating ICTs into both teaching and learning demands understanding and applications of basic pedagogy and basic principles of interaction designs to bring the learning environment in line with the intended purpose and context. (Richards, 2006).

"... after 17 years of teaching, it was quite difficult and challenging to change my style of teaching, but this course forced me to adapt myself to modern teaching..."

"… after years of teaching traditional classes, I must admit that I am a total amateur in online classes. I mean, I can and I do teach classes online, but I think there is still much to learn about online classes for effective teaching…"

Change Adaptation

Another sub-theme revealed in the analysis refers to the adaptability of teachers to the new situation. Some participants found themselves more adaptable to upgrading their teaching following the new context while some others found it quite difficult to grow accustomed to online teaching. Such delayed alteration can be called "learning as becoming" (Wenger, 1998) which will happen throughout a period.

"… it is easier for me now as a teacher but challenging enough for the students to adapt themselves to that context immediately…"

"… At first, I resisted the situation, so I had to postpone my classes. I thought the pandemic would be tackled soon because I have no idea how to use computers for teaching. However, now I am convinced that the crisis will take time to be tackled, so I am [humorously] kind of forced to adapt myself to modern teaching..."

Technological Awareness

To overcome the new context-related challenges, and more easily adapt to new changes, one way is for teachers to gain more knowledge and become more aware of the available technology. The in-depth analysis of the data revealed that almost 70 percent of the participants acknowledged the usefulness of the course they had taken, meaning that attending teacher training courses where the utilization and implication of technology in teaching and learning is taught can function as an asset for online teaching and learning. This has been previously asserted by Davis and Fill (2007) who recommended that online teachers should be aware of the technology to possess more skills especially for utilizing technology in their classroom teaching practice.

"...... Before attending this course I knew nothing about using technology in my classes, but now I know how to make PowerPoints, attach soundtracks, send instructional and design online tests, all seem fantastic...."

Flexible Teaching

Our analysis has revealed that online teaching provides opportunities for teachers of any personality traits to teach learners of different styles and needs more effectively, providing that teachers have some level of technological awareness. Thanks to the Internet, teachers have more

resources at hand. In traditional classrooms, teachers had some difficulties printing out the materials for learners which could also charge teachers financially. However, in online classrooms, not only do teachers have more flexibility in teaching content to learners, but they can also share digital materials on their smartphones or computers. The more teachers become flexible in their teaching strategies, the more successful their online classes will be (Laat et al., 2007).

"….in online classes, I can tackle the rigidity of paper-based teaching. Now, I do more tasks with cell phones, and I feel that I am not book bound anymore. I also have a wide range of opportunities to create and deliver the content, and deal with different learners …."

"…. music, lyrics, I can make more real-life contexts and discuss real issues with my students more variedly using some authentic sources such as podcasts, I mean it is not like a formal class and it is more like teaching in a native environment rather than a class …."

Creativity

E-learning tools will provide teachers with a range of activities and possibilities for bringing variety into their teaching to make learning effective with the best possible results. Moreover, some teachers might go beyond the already-prepared materials and take the responsibility to modify, design, and develop carefully tailored activities to not only engage their students with the content but also facilitate learning. As for teachers' responsibility in online teaching, Ascough (2002) argued that online teachers' responsibilities are not limited to only uploading prepared materials then providing an explanation or giving summaries on the given topic, then receiving emails. In our study, almost every participant noted that the utilization of technology has sparked ideas to run their classes more effectively.

"…. I am now like a person who has faced lots of new ideas which I can adapt or even create more ideas out of them in my classes …."

"…. I have an observational sense of creativity; I mean even a small thing can sparkle a whole new idea in my mind …."

Social Involvement

Social constructivism focuses on collaborative learning which helps better the occurrence of meaningful learning (Vygotsky 1978). Socio-situational theories of cognition and learning shift the focus of research from what is happening in an individual's mind (cognitivism) to the cognitive process that results from the interaction of the individual with the social environment, the material world, and artifacts (Cited by Barak, M., 2010, from Vygotsky 1978). After a careful analysis of the data, most participants highlighted more engagement within society and the community.

"…. I think technology has made it more possible to be in touch with your learners even outside the classroom, I feel more like a mentor than a teacher….

"…. Social networking applications have become more appealing for me now as I can share my opinions with my colleagues or even on a larger scale with society…."

"… I have already started a personal page on a social media platform, and I enjoy making connections with other English teachers around the world and learning from their experiences…."

Systematic Manner

Technologies can significantly improve the procedure of integrating thoughts into practices when the tool is adopted and utilized regularly. Traditional classes might not offer as many tools as online classes; therefore, teachers might not tend to think about the exploitation of available

resources. However, online classes, since they are offering a good range of possibilities for teachers to teach more effectively, would encourage teachers to reflect on the most effective way of utilizing technology in their teaching, making them more organized and systematic in their planning, instruction, and activation of the language.

"…. the importance of technology had not been clear to me, even though I have been teaching in some special schools with special groups of students where I have full access to technology, but now I know how to use them more effectively for the sake of learning to meet the needs of the system better…."

Optimal Functioning

Finally, participants in our study experienced better teaching. This can be because of the motivation they had built to implement technology in their teaching. To ensure the effectiveness of ICT-based classrooms, attention should be paid to teaching, learning, and assessment based on knowledge, with the help of ICT to promote motivation for active learning as well as resource accessibility (Fullan, 2013; Kozma & Vota, 2014).

"…. I have stepped into an oceanic source of knowledge which has provoked my excitement to learn functional teaching…."

"… everything seems to be available within some clicks only…"

"… I think it is only the matter of the unexpected shift in the way of teaching that some learners or even teachers resist online teaching, and it takes time to prove it more effective and convenient to stay at home and learn online…"

Instructional Support

The second major theme extracted from the data is Instructional Support. Almost every interviewee found ICT tools to be time-saving support for instructing the content of their lessons. Based on documented records, any conditions facilitating learning, challenge, and support can help teachers, like other professionals, develop and thrive. (Avidov-Ungar, 2016; Willemse et al., 2016).

"…. gradually, during this semester, I could find better ways to convey and communicate my message better to my learners with the support of technology…."

"….. It has been particularly timesaving for me because I have become able to get my message across as clearly as before, or I can say even better, using technological aids, such as PowerPoint, …"

The in-depth analysis of data yielded three sub-categories for Instructional Support labeled A Role Model, Content Knowledge, and Self-Learning. These three will be more elaborated on in the forthcoming paragraphs.

Self-Learning

When stepping into a new context, teachers are more likely to start reflecting on their abilities following the available technology. In other words, ICT is primarily used as a teaching tool for self-learning (Wong, Choi, & Lee, 2008). Once teachers have utilized technological tools in their practice, they are more likely to become courageous to learn more about other applications and possibilities. The reflection may lead teachers forward in the sense that if the classes are successful, teachers may tend to learn more so that they can improve their classes. Those teachers who perceive the required resources can implement technology in the best way to meet their required resources. Considering the behavior model (Ajzen, 1985), the positive beliefs and attitudes of teachers can help them find resources more effectively and overcome barriers to successful teaching. On the other hand, if using technology is not perceived as successful, due to

the Self-regulated nature of online learning (Kauffman, 2015), individuals will become more self-motivated to regulate their learning strategies, meaning that teachers will probably try to learn more about gauging their practice in line with online teaching requirements.

"… at first, I used to take pictures from the textbook and share them with my students, …. When I observed some other classes held online, I realized how easy it can be to make a PowerPoint presentation …. It increased my teaching quality and learners took the class more seriously…."

"…I have never had to delve into using digital materials, and it was quite hard to think about designing such materials myself, but then I learned there are a lot of materials available online, for example on the Cambridge website, which gave me more ideas for teaching better…"

Role Model

Each platform and application can have certain features which can enable and inform some teaching strategies. To clarify, teachers should know what, for example, PowerPoint is, how it works and what features it offers. Once they have learned about different technological tools, they can exploit and take advantage of the tool much better. Also, modeling teachers' teaching with technological means can be highly effective for preservice teachers, especially in forming their perspective regarding technology (Doering et al., 2003).

"…during the semester, I came across some websites for online testing, more reliable and objective than my tests, which I used as a model for my students' final exams, …."

"…. I used the same way of teaching listening for some years, which was limited to the coursebook I had to teach, and some students would spoil the task by listening to the tracks before the session, but I was introduced to some websites which provide graded listening tracks such as elllo.com. Using it as a model has added a good level of unpredictability to teaching…."

Content Knowledge

In connectivism, individuals perform within a learning network of shared interests and interact and share their ideas freely with their peers which will lead to learning (Goldie, 2016). Through such a network, individuals not only exchange their ideas but also become a member of the network which forms a process through which knowledge can be created. Thus, learning how to put technology in use in a way to deliver the target content more effectively is a necessity for online teachers. Taking social media as an example, according to Buus (2012), teachers need to gain some knowledge about the relevant use of social media in their instructions, such as online learning. In other words, for being able to use social media in teaching more effectively, teachers must be continuously learning about the implementation of social media in online learning. Teachers' learning strategies of content knowledge can be fulfilled through peer mentoring, and experts highlighted technical aspects Cochrane and Narayan (2012). Teachers' interaction with their colleagues, on social media, can lead to creating new knowledge (Hajli et al., 2013). That can explain why online knowledge sharing has been emphasized to shape teachers' attitudes and learning (Wenger et al., 2011).

"…I believe that the Internet is great as it offers teachers a lot about every content they need to learn about even if the content is about teaching online…"

"......... Living in the EFL context of Iran, our only content is the book, but now using different sites, the limited content is no longer our main concern......."

"….. what I like about the Internet is that I can make the connection with my colleagues around the world and learn from them…."

Professional Identity Formation

Professional Identity has been defined as the picture that an individual has about himself/herself in his profession. This professional self-image, which is based on one's background and experiences, consists of different aspects of a profession, namely, routines, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs (Beijaard et al., 2004). Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) assert that "knowledge of teachers' perceptions of aspects of their professional identity may (…) be useful in helping them cope with educational change" (p. 115). Thus, the formation of their identity in a technological context is vivid in their responses. Almost all participants highlighted such construction of identity. In our study, the participants commented on the effects of using technology on their personal growth as well as their professional growth.

Personal Growth

Previously, Bakker and Demerouti (2007) created a model to understand job demands (which are fluid) and resources (which are provided by employers), and personal resources (which are self-efficacy and self-care practices) within a range of contexts that could influence teachers' stress and burnout. Regarding personal resources, in this study, as many as 7 out of 10 participants claimed that exposure to ICT tools provided a major change in the way they perceive themselves and their capabilities. This has also been supported by several scholars. It has been highlighted that stepping outside their comfort zone provides potential opportunities for personal growth and development (Dweck, 2008) and can thereby lead to perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991). From a deeper perspective, it can potentially cause transformative learning, especially when pre-service teachers are supported to bring new insights into their profession as teachers and deepen their learning (Smolcic & Katunich, 2017).

"…. I can say I have changed a lot. I see things that I didn't like to see before this…."

"….as a person, I feel more motivated for using technology in other aspects of my life, you know, I learned how convenient it makes everything to be, generally I have grown more rounded…"

Professional Growth

In addition to personal growth, the identity of a teacher is defined between confirmed meanings (conventional meaning) and the being-formed beliefs (innovation meaning) during practice (Clarke, 2009). IT-integrated teaching is constantly changing; therefore, teachers are perpetually served with innovation, change, and growth (Mueller et al., 2008), meaning that the teachers' profession is developing continuously. Once teachers have developed their perception of the technology in their practice, they can tune their teaching and form their professional identity as online teachers more easily than before.

"….. technology has a great role in learning and teaching, I can say I feel more like a modern teacher, more professional…."

"…. this course changed the picture of myself as a teacher greatly, I learned how effective it is to use technology in my classes…."

Teachers' concerns

In addition to positive attitudes and beliefs, a few participants shared some concerns about using technology in their teaching which is worth quoting. The following themes have resulted from the thematic analysis of the interview transcripts.

Technology-related Challenges

Technology cannot be always facilitative. The devices and tools should be always checked before each class so that both teachers and learners can experience a better class. The version of the operating systems, the type and the model of devices, and technological requirements are among those factors that could be managed before a class starts. However, sometimes an unexpected internet disconnection might occur during class. Without the Internet, online learning cannot take place. In the same sense, having a poor Internet connection can be problematic for maintaining a continuous session. Although the participants in the current study have a positive attitude toward ICT tools in general, and the implementation of technology in their teaching practice, they had more concerns about reliable Internet connection for both themselves and their students. According to one of the participants in the current study:

"…. The technology, no matter how useful, cannot operate if the Internet bandwidth is not reliable…."

Another participant mentioned some emotional concerns regarding the Internet connection:

"…. It makes me anxious, and it decreases students' satisfaction from my class when the Internet is disconnected…."

Not only for the participants in the current study, but also in other studies, the Internet connection has been proven to be a real challenge for some groups of people, for example, the intellectually disabled, who are normally at risk of being left behind for not having access to the Internet (Chadwick, Wesson, & Fullwood, 2013; Kennedy, Evans, & Thomas, 2011).

Internet connection might not be very reliable in different countries or areas due to the infrastructure of the Internet. However, the connectivity might be problematic for synchronous classrooms. On the other hand, for asynchronous teaching and learning, a stable internet connection is not as required as it is for synchronous classes. In their study, Mohamad Nasri et al, (2020) mentioned the same problem and offered one very simple alternative for teachers which is to use online messengers, such as Telegram and WhatsApp, as their plan "B" and continue their class asynchronously until connection has become stable.

Classroom Management

Student management can be very different between a traditional classroom and the online one. Almost all participants in this study mentioned the difficulty they have faced in their classroom management. However, even though they have mentioned that they are now used to managing their students more effectively over time, one participant mentions some concerns that are still causing problems and interfering with the teaching practice:

"….. in large classrooms, it is quite impossible to monitor students' activity and real presence in the class while giving the lecture. I cannot check every student all the time to see whether they are well engaged in the topic or not…."

The same problem has been mentioned among other problems by Christensen and Knezek (2018), "lack of self-efficacy to integrate technology, classroom management issues, attitudes toward technology, and a lack of pedagogical strategies" (p. 380). However, in other studies, teaching online has proved to enable teachers to engage learners more meaningfully and provide a better sense of community for learners without the constraints of traditional classes or even without having to struggle with classroom management issues (Archambault & Crippen, 2009).

Inflexibility in behavior

One of the participants highlighted the fact that if online education was more encouraged rather than imposed, it could have caused lower pressure on teachers.

"…. Although it was the only way of educational survival, I did not like the idea of having to use technology without any other options available. This disturbed my attitude toward my classes…."

According to Berger (2020), behavioral changes can be difficult considering the five barriers, called REDUCE which is an acronym for the five barriers, in which the letters represent Reactance, Endowment, Distance, Uncertainty, and Corroborating evidence, respectively. Reactance can be defined as the reactivity of being redirected rather than being empowered, which was highlighted in the current study. The next barrier, Endowment, refers to the discomfort caused by unfamiliarity. Distance is about how far an individual can go beyond their comfort zone. Uncertainty shows the level of suspicion an individual might have toward the new changes in behavior, and Corroborating evidence refers to a lack of endorsement of the new behavior by multiple capacities. However, the proposed solution to overcome such barriers is to break them down Berger (2020) so that teachers can be convinced to adopt the new behavior.

Discussion

Considering the shift into online learning caused by the pandemic of Covid-19, in response to lock-down protocols, this study has been set to investigate whether and how English language teachers might change or adapt their teaching practices. Having probed into participants' experiences within a technology-mediated program, three main categories for positive attitudes (pedagogical innovation, instructional support, and professional identity formation) each with several subcategories have been revealed. Besides the positive attitudes, the participants mentioned some concerns which were reported under three categories (technology-related challenges, classroom management, and inflexibility in behavior) of online teaching.

Undoubtedly and inevitably, the integration of technology has become the basis in language studies since it is the only means of providing input for English language students during the lockdown within an EFL context. The provision of pedagogical innovations helps teachers to present their optimal functioning by systematically utilizing technology, bringing more flexibility in their teaching practice through fostering change adaptation, encouraging creativity among teachers, providing a challenging environment with social involvement, and promoting technological awareness. However, the themes should be interpreted with caution, especially for novice teachers, since technology, on its own, cannot guarantee effective teaching and learning. In addition to the technological knowledge of teachers, pedagogical and content knowledge are equally decisive for the effectiveness of online teaching (Koehler & Mishra, 2005)

Confirming our findings, Hill (2006) reported that one advantage of technology-integrated classrooms is the flexibility that it brings into the curriculum by overcoming distance-and-time-related obstacles. Moreover, technology enables the diversification of programs by offering choices and options and making them more manageable leading to a blended curriculum that is a mixture of both digital and face-to-face education (Gerbic, 2011). This notion is in line with the idea of connectivism (Kop & Hill, 2008) that: "People can move from a learning environment controlled by the tutor and the institution to an environment where they direct their learning, find their information, and create knowledge by engaging in networks away from the formal setting. They still communicate with others, but their interests and preferences – rather than institutional requirements and choices – are the main drivers for their engagement with more knowledgeable others in their learning" (p. 9). In addition, technology also provides instructional support for English language teachers, as role models, by providing rich content knowledge and encouraging self-learning. Innovation can be brought into foreign language teaching and learning if new teaching materials and computer technologies are used. The main responsibility of teachers is to equip students with future skills which requires teachers to design and develop a curriculum based on optimal functioning regarding students' interests. However, the main attention should

be paid to teaching, learning, and assessment of content knowledge following ICT, so that the motivation can be promoted for active learning as well as the accessibility of resources (Fullan, 2013; Kozma & Vota, 2014).

Successful online teachers have been defined based on their capabilities of adopting and utilizing pedagogical strategies with flexibility (Laat et al., 2007), and comprehending the real meaning of blend (Demedts et al., 2015) because flexible curricula with ICT have made the classes very different from traditional expectations of a class (Hill, 2006). Therefore, integrating ICT into teaching effectively can determine the success of teaching and learning. To be able to address the demands of the "new normal" in education, teachers are better to improve their skills and knowledge of using different ICT tools in their practice. According to Ulla & Perales (2021), technology-integrated classrooms have become a necessity rather than optional, so that their function can be guaranteed in the future, in case of unpredicted health and socio-political crisis which can hamper the delivery of lessons.

Moreover, technology-integrated language classes can provide more opportunities for the personal and professional development of English language teachers. Clarke (2009) defined the identity of teachers to be between confirmed meanings (conversation meaning) and the being-formed beliefs (innovation meaning) during teaching. IT-based teaching constantly changes; teachers are being constantly served with innovation with technology (Mueller et al., 2008), which can also be interpreted that teachers' identity is constantly under development which makes teacher education more of a complex endeavor. From being a role model and mentor for pre-service teachers, teacher educators' role is upgrading and changing from being the major source of knowledge to being a role model and a mentor for pre-service teachers, thus preparing the foundation for the future society (Niess, 2015; Van der Klink, Kools, Avissar, White, & Sakata, 2017). The needs of society require teachers to feel more responsible for training pre-service teachers to meet the requirements of making a shift in education including competencies, skills, dispositions, and knowledge. Therefore, before the utilization of design competencies that contributes to the training of 21st-century teachers, not only ICT skills, but also relevant knowledge and the implementation of the knowledge in teaching, plus the development of an up-to-date technology-based curriculum should also be considered (Bower, Highfield, Furney, & Mowbray, 2013). Accordingly, and as Hoyos (2014) has mentioned, teachers' knowledge enhancement and skills in using digital tools and social media platforms will require teachers to grasp their new roles in online learning and facilitate students' learning despite school closure. This is to say that in an e-learning context, the instructor's role is enhanced and enlarges from being a teacher to a facilitator. On the other hand, students also expect their teachers to carry a positive attitude towards learning online, which will be an encouragement for students to share the same positive perspective (Baber, 2021).

Regarding the reported concerns, some teachers might have the same concerns with traditional classrooms, as numerous studies have investigated the case. Although online teaching is not really in its infancy, it still needs and requires more investigation to find practical solutions to deal with Internet-related challenges, classroom management, inflexible behavior, etc. However, it is worth mentioning that concerns might vary from one teacher to another due to their level of digital literacy. According to Martin and Grudziecki (2006), digital literacy comes in three levels, known as 1) Digital Competence, 2) Digital Usage, and 3) Digital Transformation. While in this digital era individuals might have some digital competence, thanks to computers and smartphones, for professionals there might be differences in the second level, Digital Usage, which refers to their digital competence within a specific profession or domain. This means that the knowledge of ICT tools cannot lead to successful online teaching and learning, and teachers should be trained to be able to use technological advancements in their profession more accurately so that they can benefit from the technology. Also, learners' digital literacy can play a

role. Teachers are required to design their materials in a way that needs a minimum level of digital literacy on the learners' side, while at the same time, they should encourage and motivate learners to become digitally more competent. Another consideration should be paid to different types of classes, learners' (age, gender, needs, etc.), and purposes before considering any solutions for the mentioned concerns which means that one possible solution might not work for different contexts. The authors of this article would also like to remark on the fact that this study was conducted within a context where the participants might not have full access to ICT tools and applications, making the concerns more highlighted for those who have the same limitation.

Conclusion

The recent pandemic, Covid-19, transformed education, especially English Language Teaching in an unprecedented way. English teachers were left with no choice but to rethink their practice and modify their teaching within a short time to be able to continue. Similarly, most institutes around the world changed their approach and adopted online learning to continue their practice. Such an obligation requires an investigation into English language teachers' attitudes concerning the effects of social distancing and the increased use of technology in teaching practice during Covid-19. When it comes to the health crisis and in times of similar emergencies when face-to-face teaching is not available, the use of web-based platforms and applications should be pedagogically considered.

On the other hand, when Covid-19 and its threats have been successfully tackled, educational institutions all around the world would probably move back to traditional classes, the so-called "old normal" which has been overtaken by the "new normal" that can be defined as a new conceptual practice to remind everybody including all educators and teachers to remain flexible with the new reality in education where "the application of e-learning [education] is poised to become much more prominent" (Pham & Hanh Ho, 2020). To meet the needs of the "new normal" in the education sector, teachers are suggested to keep their skills up-to-date and upgrade their knowledge of utilizing different tools of information and communication technology in their teaching practices. Rather than an option, integrating technology in the classroom has become a necessity so that in future unpredicted health and socio-political crisis, the delivery of the lessons and the pace of education will not be threatened, disturbed, or even interrupted. Sahlberg (2020) mentioned that "hopefully, when this crisis is over politicians decide to continue to follow that same strategy and use more professional wisdom and evidence from education professionals to inform the next education policies and school reforms" (p.5-6), therefore, another responsibility is for the government to require its department of education to support teachers through the provision of technological tools and additional training courses. In other words, this responsibility of the government is an ongoing process, even if Covid-19 will be tackled and eradicated.

Another lesson learned from Covid-19 is that the educational curriculum needs to undergo a reformation. To clarify, although different lessons and realizations have been experienced and considered in classroom teaching, the implementation of technology in various teaching strategies and approaches should be considered more seriously, so that teachers can adapt their pedagogy accordingly.

As for the limitation of the study, regardless of every effort of the researchers in this study to present clear results regarding the teachers' reflections on online learning, the number of participants was relatively small in this study, which suggests a difference between the attitudes of the participants and possible additional participants or other teachers. Furthermore, the implemented technology in different educational settings may differ locally, nationally, and internationally. Therefore, generalizations should be approached with caution. Further, this study is qualitative in nature, basically relying on interviews of participants and their reflective

journals, through which they shared their thoughts, views, and descriptions of situations in which technology has been utilized the practice of teaching the English language. Hence, to broaden the body of research on teachers' online learning a quantitative study is recommended.

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Biodata

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Research Paper

Reflexive Metadiscourse Markers in Academic Interviews: A Frequency and Functional Study

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Abstract
There are two different trends for the study of metadiscourse, including interactive and reflexive. The reflexive model suggested by (Mauranen, 1993) and (Ädel, 2010) cares about reflexivity in language. As reflexivity plays a pivotal role in spoken genres, this study aimed to study the frequency and functions of reflexive metadiscourse markers in academic interviews. Hence, this study focused on a corpus of three academic interviews carried out in English native academic context that was taken from "The Michigan Corpus of Academe Spoken English" (MICASE). The corpus was analyzed using the model by Ädel that includes four functional categories of *metalinguistic comments, discourse organization, speech act labels,* and *references to the audiences*. The results showed that about one-quarter of the personal pronouns were metadiscourse. Besides, among the personal pronouns that perform metadiscourse function, singular first-person pronoun was the most frequent while plural first-person pronoun was very rare. It was also found that among the four functions, the interviewees and interviewers *paid more attention to metalinguistic comments* and *references to the audience*. The results of this study could add to the knowledge of those participating in interviews in general and in the academic context in particular.

Keywords: *Interview, Metadiscourse, MICASE, Personal Pronoun, Reflexive Metadiscourse*

بررسی عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی در مصاحبه های دانشجویی

دودیدگاه متفاوت در مورد مطالعه عناصر فراگفتمانی وجود دارد. این دیدگاه ها عبارتند از: دیدگاه بر هم کنشی ودیدگاه بازتابی. مدل بازتابی عناصر فراگفتمانی توسط م‌اورانن (1993) و ادل (2010) ارایه شد. از انجایی که بیشترین کاربرد عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی در متن‌های گفتاری است، لذا این مطالعه در نظر دارد عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی را در مصاحبه های اکادمیک بررسی کند. به همین منظور، سه مصاحبه انگلیسی از پیکره گفتاری اکادمیک میشیگان انتخاب شدند. این مصاحبه ها بر اساس مدل ارایه شده توسط ادل (2010) که شامل چهار نقش فراگفتمانی بود تحلیل شدند. نقشهای فراگفتمانی مدل ادل (2010) شامل نکات فرا زبانشناسی، ساختار سخن، برچسب های گفتاری، و ارجاع به شنوندگان می شوند. نتایج تحقیق نشان دادند که یک چهارم ضمایر شخصی به کار رفته در مصاحبه ها، نقش فرا گفتمانی بازتابی داشتند. علاوه بر این، از بین ضمایر شخصی، اول شخص مفرد بیشترین کاربرد و اول شخص جمع کمترین نقش فراگفتمانی بارتابی را در مصاحبه های تحلیل شده ایفا کردند. نتایج نشان دادند که هر چهار نقش فراگفتمانی در مصاحبه های تحلیل شده به کار رفته بودند. نتایج این تحقیق می تواند به دانش شرکت کنندگان در مصاحبه های اکادمیکی در زمینه کاربرد عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی بیفزاید.

واژگان کلیدی: مصاحبه، عناصر فراگفتمانی، پیکره گفتاری انگلیسی اکادمیکی میشیگان، عناصر فرا گفتمانی بازتابی

Introduction
Cultural and social trends of human communities are displayed through communication, language, and talk (Van Dijk et al., 1997). Essentially, communication is social interaction

including information exchange that is performed among various people with distinctive knowledge, aim, and requirements in a given society (Aguilar, 2008; Schiffrin, 1980). Conveying information is the most significant task in communication, and the writer/speaker utilizes different linguistic statements to achieve a cohesive and logical construction of data. Some of these statements show how the speaker/writer creates the logical progress of the substance of the context and his subjective tendency according to the substance. These special linguistic statements are named metadiscourse. Hyland (2005) believed that "metadiscourse incarnates the opinion that communication is more than just the exchange of services, data, or goods, but also includes the assumptions, attitudes, and personalities of those who are communicating" (p.3), and metadiscourse is "the coverage term for the self- reflective statements utilized to communicate interactional definition in a context, helping the writer/speaker to declare an opinion and engage with readers as members of a specific community" (p. 46).

Metadiscourse refers to the speaker/writer's consciousness of the ongoing discourse and the writer-reader or speaker-listener interaction. In the written mode of communication, metadiscourse is the self-reflective language used to assist writers to manage their unfolding discourse, express their stance, and engage with readers (K. Hyland, 2005). Metadiscourse has been explained in different ways by various scholars.

Metadiscourse is a widely utilized term in recent discussion analysis and English for Academic goals, but it is not always used to represent the same thing. For some, it is a meaning limited to elements associated with the text itself, looking inside to those points of view of a discussion, which assist organize the text as text. Mauranen and Adel demonstrated this situation and proposed the label of the *reflexive model* (2010). The concept of reflexivity in language (Hockett, 1977; Lucy, 1993; Lyons, 1977) goes back to the metalinguistic function in Jakobson's typology of the language functions (Jakobson, 1980). Reflexivity and the metalinguistic function, essentially, refer to the capacity of natural language to ascribe to itself. Language users can use language to comment on language itself, the communicative situation, and their own roles in it.

Metadiscourse is treated from two points of view; one is the reflexive model suggested by Ädel (2010), and the other is the interactive model suggested by K. Hyland (2005). In the reflexive model of metadiscourse, reflexivity in language is underlined and taken to be the starting point for the model. By contrast, in the interactive model, reflexivity is not a scale but is utilized in place of the meaning to explain interaction—initially in written text—between the audience and writer, imagined extensively.

While research on metadiscourse has centralized to academic writing, academic speech is largely unexplored. In addition, comparisons of written and spoken metadiscourse are uncommon; thus, the differences and similarities between written and spoken types of metadiscourse are unclear.

College students have to deal with several academic literacies and skills, such as writing academic articles, taking notes, and listening to academic speeches. The students' achievement in their academic work depends on their prosperous undertaking of these skills. However, many students find it hard to deal with these literacies. Students of English as a Second and Foreign Language may face more difficulties due to their lack of the required skills to understand and produce a wide range of composite academic speeches (Zare & Tavakoli, 2016).

Over the last two decades, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) has enhanced in importance due to the increasing utilization of English in academic texts (Charles, 2013). EAP research has focused on evaluating the wide range of spoken and written genres such as conference presentations, research articles, textbooks, seminars, and lectures (Charles, as cited in (Zare & Tavakoli, 2016).

These studies have illustrated the properties of various modes of language used in academic settings. Metadiscourse is one of these properties receiving great consideration throughout the

literature. Metadiscourse suggests a framework to understand communication as social engagement. It clarifies some aspects of how we plan ourselves into our speeches by signaling our attitude towards both the substance and the audience of the context. Language is always a result of interaction, of the diversities between people, declared verbally. Metadiscourse options are the ways we construct and articulate these interactions. Thus, this is a dynamic perspective of language as metadiscourse stresses the fact that we converse with others as we write or speak, making decisions about the type of impacts we are having on our readers or listeners.

Having the importance of metadiscourse in communication on board, this study intends to shed the light on one of neglected genre in academic setting, interview. Thus, this study aims to investigate the frequency and functions of reflexive metadiscourse markers in interviewes.to meet this end, the following research questions are raised:

> **RQ1.** *How frequent are reflexive metadiscourse markers in English interviews?*
> **RQ2.** *How frequent are personal pronoun types performing reflexive metadiscourse roles in English interviews?*
> **RQ3.** *What are the discourse functions of personal pronouns performing reflexive metadiscourse roles in English interviews?*

Literature Review

Metadiscourse and Its Importance

The word metadiscourse suggests a way of language comprehension in use, representing a speaker or writer's efforts to direct a receiver's understanding of a context**.** Native speakers or writers of a language usually communicate more than just the exchange of services, goods, or data, doing this through what is called metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005)**.**

It is believed that metadiscourse, as a facilitator factor in communication, a supporter of an utterance or a position, and as an increasing factor of the reader-writer relationship, will help both non-native and native speakers and writers of a language to tell their ideas and engage with their listeners or readers efficiently (Fuertes-Olivera et al., Hyland & Tse, 2005**,** as cited in (Ghaffari et al., 2015).

Metadiscourse is the interpretation of a context by its producer in the course of writing or speaking and is a widely used term in current language teaching and speech analysis. Adel defines metadiscourse as "speech about the evolving speech or the writer's clear explanation on her own ongoing context" (Ädel, 2006). This indicates that the basic components of metadiscourse potentially contain the speaker/writer persona (the expressive function), the speech or text itself (the metalinguistic function), and the imagined or real audience (the directive function).

In general, the fundamental aim of the academic manuscript is to inform other academic researchers about the findings in a specific field. When the context has to be written in a foreign language, the academic manuscript is supposed to become more perplexing (Tafaroji Yeganeh & Ghoreyshi, 2015). Metadiscourse simplifies the development of a well-structured message that commits the readers and reveals the writer's stance toward audience of the text and the propositions. Metadiscourse shows the writer's social presence in the context, although it does not enhance any external data content.

As K. Hyland (2005) reported, metadiscourse analysis makes it possible to "access the ways that speakers and writers take up situations and equal themselves with their readers in a specific text" (p. 127). Metadiscourse evaluation reveals the social interaction between readers and writers. Therefore, this kind of analysis exhibits the way in which students engage with various contexts and exchange information. The present study is based on Adel's taxonomy (Ädel, 2010).

The study uses the reflexive model, again following Adel's criteria (Ädel, 2006) for metadiscourse, including explicitness, the world of speech, the current speech, and—for personal types of metadiscourse—writer-speaker qua writer- speaker and audience qua audience. One important point in Adel's model is keeping out the referential function, as it refers to entities in the real world, which is out of the world of speech. Ädel (2006) makes a difference between impersonal and personal metadiscourse.

Ädel (2006) describes personal metadiscourse as instances of metadiscourse that make a "direct reference to the reader and/or writer of the current context, either through nouns (like a writer, reader, and author) or pronouns (mainly I, their, you, and we possessive and oblique forms) (p. 47)." Phrases like "as you will see" (p. 162) and "as I showed above" (p. 48) are instances of personal metadiscourse.

As Ädel (2006) indicates, the focus in personal metadiscourse is "how readers and writers relate to each other within that world or how they relate to the world of speech (or the context) (p. 20)." Impersonal metadiscourse, however, relates to those cases of metadiscourse that "do not make clear reference to the speech contributors" (p. 14). Passive voice and other impersonal constructions may help prevent clear self or other exhibition in impersonal metadiscourse instead of utilizing nominal and pronominal references to the reader or the writer. Phrases, as shown and concluded above, are examples of impersonal metadiscourse (p. 48). However, there is a need to a deeper and more detailed sorting system.

Previous Research on Metadiscourse

Different EAP fields of research have evaluated a variety of genres in academic written English, including textbooks, different sections of research papers, and theses.

Some studies have focused on the role of metadiscourse for pedagogical objectives. These contain the impact of students' information of metadiscourse on their reading (Camiciottoli, 2003; Jalilifar & Alipour, 2007; Parvaresh & Nemati, 2008) writing (Cheng & Steffensen, 1996), listening comprehension (Hashemi et al., 2012; Pérez & Macià, 2002), and speaking.

Pooresfahani et al. (2012) explored the use of interactional and interactive metadiscoursal properties based on Hyland's taxonomy of metadiscourse (K. Hyland, 2005) in research articles from two disciplines, namely applied engineering and linguistics. Their findings indicated that the writers used interactive metadiscourse markers more than interactional ones in both set of research articles.

Dastjerdi and Shirzad (2010), Gold Sanford (2012), and Taghizadeh and Tajabadi (2003) examined the relationship between writing and metadiscourse markers. The first research used Vande Kopple's classification (Vande Kopple, 1985), while the second and third studies were based on Hyland's model (K. Hyland, 2005) and Hyland's taxonomy of metadiscourse (Hyland, 2000), respectively.

All studies showed a positive relationship between metadiscourse markers instruction and writing quality, confirming the association of metadiscourse markers and writing abilities. The literature on the relationship between speech and writing helps to predict how spoken and written types of metadiscourse may differ. Previous work on metadiscourse has failed to make this comparison as research into metadiscourse has almost exclusively dealt with the written language (Luukka, 1992; Thompson, 2003).

While showing similar overall frequencies of metadiscourse types cross-culturally, the results bring to the surface —both culture- and language-specific lexicogrammatical realizations of metadiscourse units – various preferences for impersonal/personal metadiscourse and also preferred textual expansions in the construction of dialogism via metadiscourse. This research compares speech and writing Metadiscourse through mapping interactions in academic writing reports on a study of advanced second language writing by predominantly L1 Cantonese

speakers, based on a four-million-word corpus of 240 masters' and Ph.D. dissertations. The analysis of metadiscourse will uncover one aspect of the social and rhetorical distinctiveness of disciplinary communities, as six various disciplines are examined, including electronic engineering, business studies, public administration, applied linguistics, biology, and computer science.

The results show that the use of metadiscourse varies both in the masters versus Ph.D. and in the disciplinary variables. As evidenced by the use of metadiscourse, members of these groups represent themselves and observe their readers in quite various ways. Pérez-Llantada's paper ―The speech functions of metadiscourse in published academic writing: language and issues of culture – presents a large-scale study of two key sections of research articles, which are introductions and discussions. The material is based on biomedical journals and represents 114 samples of introductions and discussions, retrieved from different populations: Spanish scholars writing in Spanish, North-American scholars writing in English, and Spanish scholars writing in English. The total word count per population ranges between approximately 65000 and 70000. Pérez and Macià (2002) analyzes the text-oriented and participant-oriented types of metadiscourse, based on Ädel (2006), with a view toward the discourse functions, carried out by metadiscourse. Then, these micro-level discourse functions are related to broader move-patterns found for introductions and discussions, based on Swales (1990). While showing similar overall frequencies of metadiscourse types cross-culturally, the results bring to the surface ―both culture- and language-specific lexicogrammatical realizations of metadiscourse units - various preferences for impersonal/personal metadiscourse and also preferred textual expansions in the construction of dialogism via metadiscourse. This research will compare speech and writing.

Methodology

Corpus

Even it is rarely happen but interview is considered as an important genre in academic context. Thus, this study intends to focus on this neglected academic genre. To this end, a corpus of three interviews extracted from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE). The interviews were extracted from the MICASE corpus due to the following justifications: first, the interviews were recorded in academic English native context and second, the interviews were available in transcribed form that make the analysis to be easier task. Details of the corpus are as follow:

Table1
Details of the corpus of this study

File Name			Recording Length (minute)	Transcript Word Count
Graduate Student Research Interview 1			34	5168
Graduate Student Research Interview 2			20	2963
Interview with Botanist			31	5159
Total			85	13290

The selection of these three interviews was based on the fact that there were only three available interviews in MICASE.

Framework

Adel (2006, 2010) is one of the pioneers that focused on reflexive metadiscourse markers in academic spoken and written genres. In this regards, she proposed one of the most

comprehensive and detailed framework for the analysis of reflexive metadiscourse markers in spoken and written academic genres. Thus, this study has used Adel's taxonomy (Ädel, 2010), which includes 23 discourse functions, divided into four main categories of *Metalinguistic comments, Discourse organization, Speech act labels, and References to the audience*. The category of Metatext referred to metalinguistic comments, including the discourse functions *of Repairing*, *Reformulating, Commenting on Linguistic Form/Meaning, Clarifying, and Managing Terminology*. *Repairing* (Example 1) refers to both self- and other-initiated suggestions and alterations to correct or cancel a preceding contribution. *Reformulating* (Example 2) refers to the offering of an alternative term or expression, not because the preceding contribution was regarded erroneous (as in the case of Repairing), but because of the added value of expansion. *Commenting on Linguistic Form/Meaning* (Example 3) includes metalinguistic references to linguistic form, word choice, and/or meaning. *Clarifying* (Example 4) is used to spell out the addresser's intentions to avoid misinterpretation. Here, clarifying does not refer to a specific interactive function; thus, it is not classified as a type of *Reference to the audience* as it involves examples of the addressers wishing to specify what they are (or are not) saying to avoid misunderstandings. *Managing Terminology* (Example 5) typically involves giving definitions and providing terms or labels for phenomena talked about.

Example 1: So, everyone knows that I didn`t mean to say hard real-time system.

Example 2: So, if you want rephrase it what happened to this airplane nobody……….

Example 3: You don`t know exactly what time step you`re gonna do a particular action

Example 4: What does it mean to have a probability of, the action, I mean after all, you`re contr-the action is what…….

Example 5: I`m calling temporally dependent unconditional probability rule function….

Discourse organization includes several discourse functions having to do with topic management: *Introducing Topic* (used to open the topic) (Example 6); *Delimiting Topic* (used to explicitly state how the topic is constrained) (Example 7); *Adding to Topic* (used to explicitly comment on the addition of a topic or subtopic) (Example 8); *Concluding Topic* (used to close the topic) (Example 9); and *Marking Aside* (used to open or close a "topic sidetrack" or digression) (Example 10). *Discourse organization* also includes a series of discourse functions having to do with phonics management: *Enumerating* (Example 11) helps show how specific parts of the discourse are ordered in relation to each other. *Endophoric Marking* (Example 12) points to a specific location in the discourse and refers to cases in which it is not clear or relevant whether what is referred to occurs before or after the current point (unlike Previewing and Reviewing). One example is when the audience is instructed to look at a table or turn to a specific point in a handout. *Previewing* (Example 13) and *Reviewing* (Example 14) point forward and backward in the discourse, respectively. The addresser uses them to announce what is to come, remind the audience what has already taken place in the discourse, and carry out contextualization (Example 15). Example 6: What we`re gonna do in this part of the defense……….

Example 7: You`re ganna end up in the state that we`ve talked about…….

Example 8: So, for each new problem that you add in to your system, I'm, I really………

Example 9: So, we set that originally and in fact in these sets we set it………….

Example 10: I prefer to skip this part because ……

Example 11: I`m going to talk about two different mechanisms.

Example 12: Therefore, as you can see in……………….

Example 13: I`ll go all the way around the schedule and………………

Example 14: If you remember from the plan. It was not an ordered set of action so………….

Example 15: Right, well, you`re controlling the action but you can`t control where you are in this cycle schedule when you do……….

Speech act labels include the discourse functions of *Arguing* (Example 16), used to stress the action of arguing for or against an issue; *Exemplifying* (Example 17), used to explicitly introduce an example; and a general category of *Other Speech Act Labelling* (Example 18) for those speech acts which are not sufficiently frequent - at least not in the present data set - to have their own label (examples below include giving a hint, suggesting, mentioning, and emphasizing).

Example 16: I argue that there`s two basic dimensions……………

Example 17: We could have more than one all the examples that I present have ………

Example 18: All the things that you`re prioritizing are things, are the, the ways things could go…………….

References to the audience include five discourse functions. *Managing comprehension* (Example 19) functions when the addresser wants to check the participants' understanding of the input. *Managing audience* (Example 20) involves directly addressing the participants and in some cases complimenting or reprimanding them for their behaviors. *Anticipating the audience's response* (Example 21) refers to cases in which the addresser predicts probable reactions of the participants to the information presented. *Managing the message* (Example 22) requires emphasizing the main part of the discussion to be remembered by the participants. *Imagining scenarios* (Example 23) happens when the participants are expected to suppose something in the shared world of the discourse.

Example 19: Would you come up with a different plan if you ordered them in some……

Example 20: So, we set your attention please? It is so……….

Example 21: Initially we set that to infinity because we don`t know what it`s supposed to be……………

Example 22: And then also we want you to think about making it easy for them to create ……………………………….

Example 23: Okay and the probability let`s say we`re computing is very dependent on ………….

Data Analysis Procedure

The researchers went through the following steps to analyze the data. First, they downloaded the interviews from the MICASE and save them into word format. Second, the interviews were scanned for personal pronouns, including I, We, and You. Third, the tagged personal pronouns were checked regarding their metadiscourse functions. Fourth, the metadiscoursive personal pronouns were classified based on the functional classification suggested by Ädel (2010), followed by the tabulation and discussion of the results as the last step.

Results and Discussion

The data were analyzed to answer the research questions. The reflexive pronouns performing reflexive metadiscourse roles were found to answer research question 1 (Table 2). The results presented in Table 2 indicate reflexive pronouns as important linguistic features that worth to be investigated and included in teaching syllabus of genres such interviews. Based on the results in Table 2, speakers or participants used personal pronouns in a metadiscoursive manner at about one-fourth of the whole personal pronoun presentations. This could be enough to show the importance of such linguistic features for investigation (Example 1). Compared to reports by Matroudy and Ebrahimi (2022) and Zare and Tavakoli (2016), personal pronouns with metadiscoursive functions in this study were far less than findings of Matroudy and Ebrahimi (2022) and close to findings of Zare and Tavakoli (2016). These differences and similarities in tendencies towards metadiscoursive personal pronouns could clearly suggest a close link to the nature of genres. For instance, Matroudy and Ebrahimi (2022) reported that around half of the personal pronouns served metadiscourse functions in Ph.D. defense sessions in two spoken

genres. They justified this finding as the use of personal pronouns for metadiscoursive functions could help establish explicit relations between speakers and audiences, helping them understand who was responsible for what was stated in the discourse. The results of the study are justifiable as the speakers prefer to use mainly the first-person pronouns in the interviews to show their authority concerning the ideas, opinions, and facts stated.

Example 1: **i** think so um **i** mean **i** certainly, learned a lot and **i** think a lot of it's useful, um... (xx) what what **i'**d learned from consulting. [S1: mhm] um... **i'**d like to, not necessarily restoration but just looking at sort of big picture, [S1: mhm] um, projects, ….

Table 2
Frequencies of Metadiscourse Markers (per 1000 words)

	Word count	Reflexive pronoun (per 1000)	Non-metadiscourse (per 1000)	Metadiscourse (per 1000)
Interview 1	5168	313 (60.56)	187 (36.18)	126 (24.38)
Interview 2	2963	209 (70.53)	178 (60.07)	31 (10.46)
Interview 3	5159	316 (61.25)	258 (50)	58 (11.25)
Total	13290	838 (63.05)	623 (46.87)	215 (16.17)

The data were analyzed for the frequencies of types of personal pronoun types (I, We, you) performing reflexive metadiscourse roles. As shown in Table 3, the pronoun *I* was used the greatest compared to other personal pronouns. This is the same in other studies reviewed in the literature. The possible justification for this great inclination towards the pronoun *I* could be that in interviews, there are mainly questions raised by the interviewer, and interviewees should answer them from their own point of view. Thus, the higher frequency of this pronoun is not uncommon. Besides, having the pronoun *I* in the subject position helps speakers to show their stance towards their expressions (Example 2). The pronoun *You* had the second highest frequency among reflexive pronouns. Its use can be explained by the fact the interviewees intend to draw the interviewer's attention to the intended discourse during interviews and ensure that they are following the discourse. Thus, it is clear that both speakers want to help each other to have a better understanding of the information or ideas presented (Example 2). The last personal pronoun in the list is We, which did not receive attention from the speakers, possibly because the nature of the interview imposes only the use of *I* and *You* pronouns.

Example 2: S2: um... **i** think there's there's some good things and there's some things that **you** know **i** wish were a little different. [S1: mhm] um... it's, Saint Lawrence was a really small school there's two thousand people. [S1: mhm] and their main focus was, educating people [S1: yeah] um and not_ and research and publishing took uh was secondary. [S1: yeah] um, and coming um, so at Saint Lawrence um **i** think people_ the professors', um experience was conveying information to people. [S1: right] and on a more on a really personal pers- personal level, [S1: mhm] and um... here it just seems like, um, **you** know their their fo- they they do great work they're really intelligent, [S1: yeah] they're just not as polished, at presenting_ conveying [S1: uhuh] information it seemed, [S1: uhuh] and that and that was a big shock, [S1: yeah] and and also **i** mean it could be that **you** know **i** was out of school for... six seven years and, **you** know it sort of glorified, <S1: LAUGH> school a little bit. [S1: uhuh] um um... the (xx) could also be that it's so expensive and, and **i'**m paying for it this time <SS: LAUGH> instead of my parents and um, that can make, make a big difference too. [S1: yeah] um so i think that's kinda the the biggest thing. [S1: mhm] um.

Table 3
Frequencies of reflexive pronoun types (per 1000 words)

	I	You	We	Total words

Reflexive pronouns	141 (10.60)	73 (5.49)	1(0.08)	13290

As shown in Table 2, around two-thirds of the reflexive metadiscourse markers served the function of the metalinguistic comments. Besides, around one-third of the reflexive metadiscourse markers were used to refer to the audience function. The other functions received no attention from the speakers while running the interview (Example 6-7). These results are in contrast with the results obtained by Zhu (2018) and in line with the results reported in Zare and Tavakoli (2016). It seems that both the interviewer and interviewee prefer the orientation toward the discourse itself through the inclination towards the function of metalinguistic comments. This metadiscourse function refers to the intention to clarify and correct the discourse or repair the expressions. As the comprehension of the information presented in the interview guarantees the continuation of the discourse, the interviewee and interviewer prefer to use reflexive metadiscourse markers to make their discourse more interpretive and understandable. The use of reflexive pronouns to serve the function of reference to the audience is justifiable, given that genres such as interviews are dialogic in nature. In such genres, speakers refer to the audience to ensure catching the attention of the audience as they play a major role in the continuation of the interview.

Example 6: S2: um **i** think we just, just through the master's, um planning course [S1: mhm] project and process, um... we**...** **i** guess we had started talking before Christmas, um we had... um... **i** guess i sent around s- an, an email summarizing, sort of, we were sen- people were sending back and forth potential topics, [S1: mhm] projects um we sent that around and **i** think we had, um... that was, kinda informal, [S1: yeah] and that started like in November [S1: uhuh] and then, um... and **i** think i posted some information on it and then... **i** guess just in the, in the um, in the class we, Lou came in and, and gave a, talk on it and s- and, um, showed some aerial footage [S1: mhm] um of the river, and, so i just, **i** think through, through that whole process [S1: yeah] and they just seemed interested in it.

Example 7: S2: um <PAUSE:11> uh **i** don't know [S1: mhm] um <PAUSE:09> probably, um... just, talking to different people in the program i've **i** mean i've [S1: mhm] feel like i've picked up a lot of information from... from people, just other students, um, but also... um one of the professors um i'm taking a class with him now um Rob Buford has started_ h- has um, been looking at a lot of stuff um and he works a lot with Bob Seyfarth [S1: mhm] um, their_ **I** guess their approach for looking at rivers and streams is, that, more from like a geomorphological point of view [S1: mhm] that like the geology um was here first and then th- the biology of the streams and the chemistry all came after that and so that, shapes everything [S1: yeah] um, just because it was here first and it's older and there's some interactions that go on after that, that just looking at it from that perspective, um **i** think is really neat um, an- and that's and that's **i** think unique to the_ to the school.

Table 4
Frequencies of four categories of reflexive metadiscourse markers (%)

Function	Frequency	Percentage
Metalinguistic comments	132	61.39
Discourse Organization	- -	
Reference to audience	82	38.13
Speech Act Labels	1	0.48
Total	215	100

As shown in Table 5, the clarifying metadiscourse function is the only subcategory of metalinguistic comments function used in the interview analyzed (Examples 8). This finding is in line with the findings reported by Zare and Tavakoli (2016). This result is not uncommon as there

is a kind of relationship between the interviewee and interviewer, which could signal the need for clarification to guarantee comprehension of the discourse. It is important to make the discourse as clear as possible to provide a transparent stance concerning the ideas and opinions presented in the interview. This function seems to help the interviewee to convince both the interviewer and other possible listeners and students.

Example 8: S2: um **i** think we just, just through the master's, um planning course [S1: mhm] project and process, um... we**... i** guess we had started talking before Christmas, um we had... um**... i** guess i sent around s- an, an email summarizing, sort of, we were sen- people were sending back and forth potential topics, [S1: mhm] projects um we sent that around and **i** think we had, um... that was, kinda informal, [S1: yeah] and that started like in November [S1: uhuh] and then, um... and **i** think i posted some information on it and then... i guess just in the, in the um, in the class we, Lou came in and, and gave a, talk on it and s- and, um, showed some aerial footage [S1: mhm um of the river, and, so i just, **i** think through, through that whole process [S1: yeah] and they just seemed interested in it.

Table 5
Frequencies of metalinguistic comments (%)

Sub-Function	Frequency	Percentage
Clarifying	132	100
Total	132	100

As shown in Table 6, anticipating the audience response is the most frequent sub-function of the reference to audience function (See Example 9). This sub-function is frequently used to fulfill some communicative purposes related to the genre of the interview. In the interview, the interviewer prefers to predict and guess the interviewee responses to be able to prepare the next possible question.

Example 9 : S1: yeah, it is, and and also how um... how inexplicable in a way it is when somebody manages to really like shift the, thinking in a whole field [S2: mhm] and then **you** think well of course <LAUGH>[S2: right] **you** know that's been there all along but i- it wasn't just difficult for you to see it was difficult for [S2: yeah] **you** know difficult for everyone to actually get it in perspective or [S2: mhm] or to see that it had consequences or **you** know something like that

The next sub-function receiving about one-third of the reference to audience function is managing comprehension. In the spoken discourse interviews, for instance, the listener has no chance to get back, check, and understand or comprehend the information; thus, managing comprehension seems a necessity in spoken discourse (Example 10).

Table 6
Frequencies of reference to audience (%)

Sub-Function	Frequency	Percentage
Anticipating the audience response	51	62.19
Managing comprehension	31	37.50
Imagining sceneries	1	0.31
Total	82	100

There were no other functions of reflexive metadiscourse in the interview analyzed.

Conclusion

This study explored the use and functions of reflexive metadiscourse markers in interviews extracted from the MICASE corpus. The interviews were analyzed using the taxonomy of reflexive metadiscourse pronouns suggested by Ädel (2010).

Based on the results reported in this study, around a quarter of the reflexive pronouns used in the corpus were metadiscoursive in function. Therefore, the function of reflexive pronouns is supposed to be important for exploration as they not only perform authority or self-mention functions but also other functions such as metadiscoursive, of which the ESL students need to be aware.

Among the reflexive pronouns, the interviewee and interviewer preferred to use the first-person pronoun *I* more than other reflexive pronouns, indicating that the speakers desired to present their stance concerning the presented discourse and take responsibility for their expressions. Thus, the use of the first-person pronoun here is considered a norm imposed by the nature of the genre under investigation. ESL students possibly treat this genre as other academic genres in which the use of the first-person pronoun *I* cannot be regarded as a norm. Thus, it seems necessary to consciously raise ESL students' knowledge about this conclusion.

Concerning the functions of reflexive metadiscourse, metalinguistic comments and anticipating the audience response were commonly used in the interviews analyzed, and the other two functions were somewhat neglected. Thus, reflexive metadiscourse markers mostly served to establish relationships with audiences, including the interviewer and interviewee. This concluding remark can be included in similar courses such as seminars, in which the authors are mainly responsible for others' understanding.

The findings of this study have important implications for developing knowledge of ESL students and instructors on how to present the functions of metadiscourse in genres such as seminars, and also how to engage the listeners in the discourse to encourage them to pay attention to the presentations while making sure that they focus on the content.

This study could also have the following recommendations for further research: first, reflexive metadiscourse markers have received less attention compared to the interactive and textual markers suggested by Hyland (2005). Thus, further research with the focus on reflexive metadiscourse markers are required. Second, in academic context, functions of personal pronouns are restricted to grammatical functions and their metadiscourse functions are neglected. Thus, further researches that focus on metadiscourse functions of personal pronouns are suggested.

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Biodata

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Research Paper

Impact of Employing Augmented Reality Technology on Lowering Adult EFL Learners' Foreign Language Anxiety

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Abstract

This study intended to explore the effect of Augmented Reality (AR) on lowering foreign language anxiety (FLA) in adult Iranian EFL learners. To this end, a triangulation study including a quasi-experimental pre-test post-test design in the first phase, and an oral interview in the second phase was designed and implemented. Forty adult Iranian EFL learners took part in the quantitative study and were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The authors developed and delivered the AR-infused materials through the Zappar application, an AR platform. The treatment involved the conventional language teaching method for the control and the AR-integrated one for the experimental group for 20 sessions. The anxiety level of learners in both groups was assessed before and after the treatment to check for any effects. Data on participants' FLA has been gathered through Horwitz's (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Survey (FLCAS) questionnaire and analyzed via ANCOVA in SPSS. Also, the participants in the experimental group were interviewed at the end of the experiment to provide feedback on their AR-integrated language learning experience. Results revealed that AR did not affect learners' foreign language anxiety levels. Also, some learners found it not very relaxing and easy to use. This could be attributed to the novelty of the experience and the cognitive load imposed on learners. The study's outcomes were in contrast to several previous research findings; however, since research in this area is still in its infancy, more research should be done on the impact of AR on language education.

Keywords: *Augmented Reality, CALL, Educational Technology, Mobile Learning*

مطالعه ترکیبی بررسی تاثیر استفاده از فناوری واقعیت افزوده بر کاهش اضطراب زبان‌آموزان بزرگسال

این مطالعه با هدف بررسی تأثیر تکنولوژی واقعیت افزوده بر کاهش اضطراب زبان خارجی در زبان آموزان بزرگسال ایرانی انجام شده است. بدین منظور، یک مطالعه ترکیبی در دو مرحله، شامل طرح نیمه آزمایشی پیش آزمون‌پس آزمون در مرحله اول و مصاحبه شفاهی در مرحله دوم طراحی و اجرا شد. 40 نفر از زبان آموزان بزرگسال ایرانی در بخش کمی این مطالعه شرکت کرده و به طور تصادفی در دو گروه آزمایش و کنترل قرار گرفتند. مطالب افزوده شده توسط برنامه Zappar که یک پلتفرم واقعیت افزوده است تهیه و در اختیار دانش آموزان قرار گرفتند. آزمایشی که در این تحقیق انجام شد شامل استفاده از روش آموزش زبان سنتی برای گروه کنترل و روش تلفیقی با واقعیت افزوده برای گروه آزمایش به مدت 20 جلسه بود. برای بررسی تاثیر بدست آمده، سطح اضطراب فراگیران در هر دو گروه قبل و بعد از آزمایش ارزیابی شد. داده‌های مربوط به اضطراب شرکت‌کنندگان از طریق پرسشنامه سنجش اضطراب کلاس زبان خارجی هورویتز (1986) جمع‌آوری شده و از طریق آنالیز کوواریانس مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. همچنین، شرکت کنندگان در گروه آزمایشی در پایان آزمایش برای ارائه بازخورد در مورد تجربه یادگیری زبان با استفاده از واقعیت افزوده مصاحبه شدند. نتایج نشان داد که این تکنولوژی بر سطح اضطراب زبان خارجی زبان آموزان تأثیری ندارد. همچنین، برخی از زبان‌آموزان عنوان کردند که استفاده از آن چندان آرامش‌بخش و آسان نیست. این یافته را می توان به تازگی تجربه و بار شناختی تحمیل شده بر فراگیران نسبت داد. نتایج این مطالعه در تضاد با چندین یافته تحقیقات قبلی بود. با این حال، از آنجایی که تحقیقات در مورد کاربرد این فناوری در آموزش زبان هنوز در مراحل اولیه است، تحقیقات بیشتری باید در این زمینه انجام شود.

کلمات کلیدی: واقعیت افزوده، فراگیری زبان به کمک کامپیوتر، فناوری آموزشی، یادگیری توسط موبایل

Introduction

Various technologies have been incorporated into the teaching and learning of English during the past years. One recent technology is Augmented Reality (AR) which bridges the real and virtual worlds. This brings up capacities that can enhance learning and teaching. AR is a valuable instructional tool because it integrates digital objects and the actual educational environment (Liu et al., 2010). It can embed digital media content into the real world via a specific device's screen like a tablet or a mobile phone. AR could make the learning settings more dynamic, enjoyable, and collaborative than before (Lee, 2012). Moreover, it provides a richer learning experience for the learners, which results in improved educational outcomes (Liu et al. 2010). Researchers have also added that this technology adds enjoyment and fun to the learning environment, thus enhancing learner motivation (Lazoudis et al. 2013).

Besides, AR is beneficial to the teaching and learning process in different ways. One of the most significant benefits of this technology for education is stimulating various sensory modalities such as sight, touch, and hearing. Consequently, AR technology enables learners to engage actively in the process of learning (Pérez-López and Contero, 2013). Mahadzir and Phung (2013) found out that when learners are faced with audio-visual learning content provided with AR technology, they get motivated and learn better, especially young primary school students. Besides, Chen (2019) found that employing AR in learning math reduced learners' anxiety levels and boosted their motivation and performance.

Finally, as Godwin-Jones (2005) asserted, although technology brings exciting capacities to the language classroom, there is no consensus on how it affects learners' foreign language anxiety levels. The reason is that the topic is not attended to adequately by the researchers in the field. Therefore, this paper aims to study the effects of one recent technology, i.e., Augmented Reality, on foreign language anxiety (FLA).

Literature Review

Augmented Reality

To "augment something" denotes the increase in the amount of something, its value, size, and so on, of something (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2015). To "augment reality" is to "strengthen" or "extend" reality itself. Thus, Augmented Reality has been utilized to portray the innovation behind developing or strengthening the real world.

Augmented Reality is defined as "a modern computer-assisted learning environment that combines the observed real-world phenomena with graphically added information or images; even spatially positioned sounds can be used" (Salmi et al. 2012, p. 285). Some scholars defined AR as a technology that inserts virtual information such as audio, text, and 3D content in real-time (Cascales et al. 2013). Also, Malik (2002) asserted that AR integrates 2D and 3D computer graphics into the real environment. Others believed that Augmented Reality is a live view of the physical, real environment, either directly or indirectly, whose elements are accompanied by computer-generated sensory input like graphics, sound, data, and the like (Olalde and Guesalaga, 2013).

Augmented Reality is a variety of Virtual Reality (VR). VR submerges users in an artificial setting where they cannot see the reality around them. Conversely, AR permits the user to see reality, with virtual objects superimposed upon or composited with this reality. AR complements reality rather than completely supplanting it (Azuma, 1997).

AR technology is an increasingly developing tool. It is evident from research that it proved successful and popular in any domain it served. Kipper and Rampolla (2013, p.8) mentioned that "it continues to develop over the decades and works its way into the modern technological landscape of today". AR technology can be used in various areas. Examples include advertising, navigation, tourism and sightseeing, education, entertainment and games, and medicine. "Several

major companies have used augmented Reality for visualization, training, and other purposes" (Lee, 2012, p. 403).

Augmented Reality applications offer much more than images, audio, or videos overlaid in the real world. They propose various helpful applications. One application is that it creates novel potentials for education acknowledged by multiple educational researchers (Wu et al., 2013).

AR has affected the education sector dramatically. According to Lee (2012, p. 40), it "is one technology that dramatically shifts the location and timing of learning". AR enables learners to interact with the world. Images and physical objects can come to life with the power of interactive digital audio, video, and 3D items. It is believed that Augmented Reality can help students learn better as it generates novel, thought-provoking opportunities (Koutromanos et al., 2015). AR applications offer limitless possibilities to the learning environment. Most learners today are used to using technology very quickly. Therefore, integrating these technologies into the instruction can engage learners in the teaching and learning process. As one type of such technology, Augmented Reality can create challenging, engaging, and interactive opportunities for teaching and learning.

In sum, the application of Augmented Reality as new technology has been of interest recently in many terrains, including education. It brings about opportunities to various unique, attractive, and collaborative fields. The possibilities created by AR cannot be experienced in any other way, hence the outstanding value of this technology. Research has also supported its use and proved beneficial in different fields, including education. There are many platforms and apps available to employ this technology. In the next section, the application used in this study, called Zappar, is introduced and elaborated on.

Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as the feeling of fear which appears in a threatening situation (Lazarus, 1966). Although anxiety occurs as a cognitive-affective reaction to what might happen in certain circumstances, people differ in how a situation appears threatening to them (Leary, 1982). This varied response has been the focus of research in this field.

This different individual response to anxiety is divided into three main types: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. First, trait anxiety refers to an immediate response to a specific stimulus that provokes anxiety. In this type, anxiety is considered a passing psychological state. Second, state anxiety refers to an individual's disposition. Third, situation-specific anxiety refers to a specific situation in which one feels anxious (Pekrun, 2000).

Regardless of the type of anxiety, it may occur to individuals when positioned in learning, specifically foreign language learning, situations. This is called foreign language anxiety (FLA). Various definitions have been proposed for this construct. It is a multifaceted concept that involves the learners' psychology as relevant to their attitudes and feelings, self-worth, and self-confidence (Clément et al., 1980). Young (1992) defined it as a complex psychological occurrence unique to foreign language learning. More accurately, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) described Foreign Language Anxiety as the feeling of strain and nervousness especially linked to second or foreign language settings, or the apprehension and negative emotional response provocation when learning or employing a foreign language.

It is worth to note that most of these definitions developed from the claim made by Horwitz et al. (1986) that Foreign Language Anxiety is "a phenomenon related to but distinguishable from other specific anxieties" (p. 129). Horwitz et al. (1986) were the first scholars who hypothesized FLA as a unique type of anxiety specific to foreign language learning. Their FLA theoretical model has been critical in language learning anxiety research.

Horwitz et al. (1986) considered foreign language anxiety "responsible for students' negative emotional reactions to language learning" (Horwitz, 2010, p. 114). These researchers devised a

tool for their research to assess anxiety in the language classroom. They called it the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which aimed to evaluate this specific type of anxiety. A large number of researchers have used this scale since its development. Thus, their paper "Foreign language classroom anxiety", has become the foundation for research on language classroom anxiety.

Many researchers have employed FLCAS since its development in various settings and learners. Spanish language learners did the original study in their first year of university. Other studies examined language anxiety and how it related to performance at different levels of teaching, i.e., beginner, intermediate, and advanced (Saito and Samimy, 1996), with students who revealed diverse levels of anxiety, i.e., low-anxious, average-anxious, and high-anxious students (Ganschow et al. 1994), and also in the exploration of the consistency of foreign language anxiety in students who were learning two languages at the same time (Rodriguez and Abreu, 2003).

Empirical Studies

The effect of employing technology on language learning anxiety has been of interest to several researchers; however, there is a limited number of published works on this issue. For instance, Rahimi and Soleymani (2015) studied the effect of using mobile learning on anxiety in listening in EFL learners. Participants of their study were 50 intermediate-level EFL learners in Iran. They compared listening anxiety in learners who used mobile phones and desktop computers for listening activities. Results revealed that using mobile phones lowered the anxiety in learners compared to using desktop computers.

Web-based language learning as a more common mode of technology-integrated learning was also studied by some scholars regarding FLA. For instance, Bashori et al, (2020) conducted mixed-methods research with 167 vocational high school students to see if the web-based system reduced speaking anxiety. They also interviewed 11 students and 5 teachers about their experiences. Results of their study showed that students revealed a moderate-to-serious level of speaking anxiety. Also, interview results revealed that learners felt reduced levels of anxiety in the web-based setting compared to face-to-face communication. The authors suggested more studies to examine the actual enhancement of SLA over time.

Some researchers investigated the effects of VR on language anxiety and reported the positive impact of such technology on lowering learners' anxiety (Gruber and Kaplan-Rakowski, 2022). For instance, Wehner et al. (2011) examined a virtual learning environment called Second Life on language learning anxiety. They concluded that learners who studied language in Second Life experienced lower levels of foreign language anxiety than those who followed the traditional curriculum. Also, Kruk (2016) reviewed foreign language anxiety while using Second Life. Data was collected through questionnaires and session logs. Results of the study showed that learners demonstrated a low level of FLA. Moreover, Melchor-Couto (2017) observed language learning anxiety among learners who took part in oral interaction through Second Life. The study concluded that the FLA levels decreased in learners using Second Life compared to those who did not.

Moreover, York et.al. (2021) examined the effects of employing three modes of Synchronous Computer-mediated Communication, i.e., voice, video, and VR, on FLA in 30 undergraduate Japanese university students in a factorial design. Results revealed that the three modes were successful in reducing learners' FLA, however, no statistically significant differences were shown between mean scores. Results of the analysis of data gathered through the study revealed that learners' affective features as well as their different dispositions to technology may be the underlying reason for their different opinions in this regard.

Another example of using technology in language learning is Robot-Assisted Language Learning (RALL). Alemi et al. (2015) investigated the effect of such technology on attitude and

language anxiety levels in Iranian EFL learners. Participants were 46 female junior high school students divided into two groups. One group went through the RALL experience while the other learned the language by the conventional method only. Data was gathered through questionnaires. Results revealed that the students in the RALL group had lower levels of anxiety and more positive attitudes toward vocabulary acquisition. This was due to the fun nature of the experience, which helped the students learn more effectively and develop higher motivation levels.

In recent years, Augmented Reality technology has been incorporated into language learning, and various researchers have investigated its effect. For instance, as relevant to this study, Bacca (2014), in a systematic review study on the application of Augmented Reality in educational settings, demonstrated that learners who experienced AR-integrated learning had a positive mindset toward the experience and showed a high degree of academic achievement. In addition, they had a sense of satisfaction and a lower amount of anxiety while employing AR technology in the classroom. The study concluded that such effects could be attributed to shifting from a traditional classroom to a more modern and interactive learning environment.

Liu (2009) examined the effect of an English learning environment called Handheld English Language Learning Organization (HELLO) which was developed to facilitate listening and speaking among learners. The study participants were 7th-grade students who experienced educational games in this environment. The study revealed that students showed lower anxiety levels in practicing speaking when interacting with the software than a real human being. Also, it caused more satisfaction and enjoyment in students and helped them learn better.

Kucuk et al. (2014) examined language achievement, attitude, and cognitive load in English language learners while studying the language through Augmented Reality. The study participants were 122 5th graders in Turkey. Through causal-comparative and correlational analysis methods, results revealed that secondary students were satisfied and pleased with their AR-integrated learning experience, had low anxiety levels, and were willing to use such technology in their future language learning.

Silva et al. (2015) examined the effect of using ARBlocks as an AR tool developed to scaffold education in an experiment in an English language school for three months. They compared its application in kids in control and experimental groups. Results showed that students had less anxiety and higher enthusiasm, eagerness, and excitement to participate in AR-infused lessons.

Hsu (2017) conducted a study to compare two AR-based educational games for learning English. The study investigated learning effectiveness, cognitive load, language anxiety, and other variables in 38 elementary school students. Data was gathered through questionnaires in a pre-test and post-test design. Results demonstrated that in cases where learners experienced more anxiety, they had more learning efforts. Also, it was shown that a bit of anxiety and learning effort is helpful in learning. According to Hsu (2017), the self-directed learning approach implemented in AR-based educational games could cause learning anxiety, promoting effective education.

Finally, Bursali and Yilmaz (2019) attempted to investigate the effect of Augmented Reality on learning permanency, reading comprehension, and attitudes in language learners. The participants were 89 students in the 5th grade. The study followed mixed-methods, embedded design research. Students in the experimental group studied reading comprehension with the aid of AR technology. In contrast, those in the control group went through conventional learning without using AR. Results demonstrated satisfaction and positive attitudes on the part of the learners. Also, they showed low anxiety levels and a desire to use similar applications in other courses.

Based on the above studies and the available literature in general, it should be acknowledged that technology brings up opportunities and capacities to the educational setting, enhancing the

learning/teaching experience (Groff, 2013). Today, most language learning is still done through conventional paper books, while some integration of computers or media is being witnessed. More recent advancements, such as mobile-assisted language learning, have been introduced in the field. Due to its rapid-developing nature, many other opportunities such as Virtual Reality (VR) or Augmented Reality (AR) learning have been created. There is an urge to consider such potential in the design and implementation of language learning courses to be able to maximize the learning outcome.

The problem addressed in this study was to investigate the efficiency of integrating AR into Iranian EFL learners' foreign language anxiety. The AR experience investigated in this study was maintained through personal mobile devices, hence providing a systematized sub-study of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). This study attempted to bridge the gap between conventional modes of language learning and the most recent MALL technology being introduced in the field, i.e., Augmented Reality (AR). It reconciles theory and practice based on the relevant literature and the authors' experience. The study offered a feasibly applicable AR-enhanced language learning system that aligns with the facilities most language learners have at hand today and could maximize learning by exploiting AR's instructional potential. To the authors' best knowledge, no previous research has been done on the issue of adult EFL learners outside formal academic settings in Iran.

The study was significant because it examined how learners interacted with AR as a relatively recent form of educational technology to see if it can be successfully implemented in language education in Iran. Also, unlike most previous studies, the current research dealt with the mentioned issue through mixed methods to obtain more reliable results. The results of this study are beneficial to language learners who would integrate some self-study into their language learning. Also, language institutes and other educational organizations can employ findings that provide some language teaching in their system. Moreover, language teachers and materials developers can use the results of this study to enhance their role in their profession.

Consequently, to fill the gap in the literature, this investigation was guided by the following research question:

RQ1. *Does Augmented Reality affect foreign language anxiety levels of adult Iranian EFL learners?*
RQ2. *How do learners reflect on the AR-infused language learning experience concerning FLA?*

Method
This mixed-methods study followed a quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test design in the first stage and an oral interview in the second stage. Data was collected through questionnaires and oral interviews elaborated on in the following sections. For this purpose, an AR-enhanced treatment was employed to examine the effect of Augmented Reality on language learning anxiety through which the experimental group experienced the application of AR technology in their language learning.

Participants
The present investigation's population includes adult EFL learners. Participants were 40 male and female adult beginner-level EFL learners enrolled in a general English course in a language institute in Shiraz, Iran. In total, 50% of participants were males (n=20), and 50% were females (n=20), and their ages ranged from 20 to 40 years. Learners in the experimental group (n=20) also participated in the interview study.

The sample was selected based on intact sampling, consisting of two classes. The classes comprised students who had already passed the previous level of EFL education in the same institute. The institute's administration assigned students to each class, and the researcher had no interference in the process. Choosing this number of students was to eliminate the instructor effect. The researcher needed both classes to be taught by the same teacher. So, based on the administrative limitations of the institute, this could only be done in two classes. After the students were assigned to the two classes, the researcher randomly selected one class as the control and the other as the experimental group to participate in the study.

Materials and Instruments

Several materials and instruments were used for data collection in this study. They included the instructional materials, assessment materials, and AR tools introduced individually below.

Instructional Materials

The instructional materials used in this investigation were Interchange 1, the 5th edition coursebook, and complementary components. The conventional paper version of the book was used for the control group. Students had to cover units 9-16 of the book during the 20-session course defined by the institute. Also, the control group used an AR-integrated version of the same book, which the author has developed for the specific purpose of this study. The AR-enhanced book is elaborated on in more detail below.

The Interchange coursebook was selected as the instructional material in this investigation because, first, the study focused on adult learners, and the book suitably serves adults. Second, this coursebook is relatively well-known in Iran. Most language learners and teachers have experienced using it before, thus creating a more familiar learning environment for both the teacher and the learners.

Assessment Materials

Two types of assessment materials were used in this research. First, to get more accurate results, the level of English of the participants at the time of the treatment was controlled so as not to interfere with the variables under investigation. This was done through their scores on the previous level's achievement test. Second, to assess language learning anxiety, Horwitz's (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used both at the beginning and after completing the course. It consists of 14 items that assess language learners' level of learning anxiety.

The questionnaire underwent relevant reliability and validity checks. Also, it was pilot tested before actual administration. It was offered to the participants in their mother tongue, i.e., the Farsi language. The purpose for this was that participants in this study were not advanced-level English speakers, so the researcher could not ensure the precision of the results when facing the students with the data collection tool in English. So, it was administered in the participants' mother tongue. Indeed, the translated version of the instrument was validated before administration.

Besides, in the qualitative section of the study, a structured interview was done with participants in the experimental group for them to be able to reflect on their learning experiences. Interview questions were proposed by the researcher based on experience and the relevant literature and validated by five scholars in the field to ensure validity. The questions aimed at eliciting responses from participants to get more detailed insight into the nature of the AR experience in relation to the foreign language anxiety in the learners.

Augmented Reality Application and Tool

This study implemented and accessed augmented reality technology and features through the Zappar application, which works online. It is a marker-based app that uses complex computer algorithms to bring to life the picture it scans through the camera. This app can analyze at least 30 images simultaneously, thus providing a rich 3D experience to the user. (https://www.zappar.com)

Zappar can be a delivery channel through which one can turn anything like printed materials or physical object products into interactive content, creating exciting videos, animation, games, and so on. This AR app, like others, adds a new visual dimension to what is typically seen through a mobile device's camera, making novel and engaging real-world experiences. This app is free for both iOS and Android systems. One can scan the available AR codes through the app, but they need to make a subscription to make the codes and employ AR for their purpose.

Zappar provides its own ZapWorks content authoring tool to create AR content, offering different modules for users with various proficiency in creating digital content. One can create the content themselves or get help from Zappar professionals. After creating the content, the platform will assign a specific trigger to it called a Zapcode. One can put the zapcode in any position or place that they prefer. Then, users will scan the Zapcode and access the digital content behind them.

The code that should be triggered, or scanned, by the camera is called the Zapcode. It is like a QR code that allows revealing multimedia content. It shows the user where the AR content is available. It consists of two parts, i.e., bolt and bits. The "bolt" is the Zapcode surrounded by "bits", a specific arrangement of bars. These marks tell the app which digital, pre-made content it should download and show to the user. When created, Zapcodes are only online or accessible, depending on the subscription one has made. There are limitations to the period when it is accessible and the number of times it can be scanned. (https://www.zappar.com)

As a user, first, one has to download the app. A new feature provided by this platform is the Web application which allows users to access the features without downloading the app and only referring to the website. This enables ease of access to many more users. Then, one has to scan the Zapcode he has found using their mobile phone camera. The app tries to find the code, scans its different layers, and shows the multimedia content hidden behind the trigger after only a few seconds. The user sees the physical world around them on their mobile screen, augmented by some virtual multimedia content. Users can use the AR feature as long as they hold their device camera about the mark. The AR feature would disappear by moving the device, allowing the learner to access reality alone. This experience is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1
Using Zappar App. (Source: www.zappar.com)
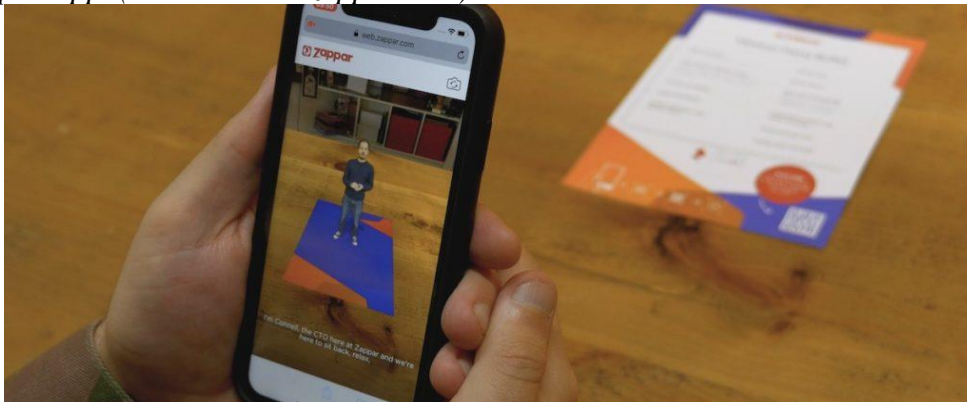
As Figure 1 shows, there is a piece of paper on a table in the real physical environment. There is a Zapcode printed on it at the bottom right corner. The user-triggered that code and used his mobile phone camera to scan it. Then, a link appears on the phone through which the user is led to the Zappar website. This way, users can access the AR features without downloading the app. The digital figure of a human standing on a blue platform appeared on the mobile screen. This is the digital content behind this code. The content is probably accompanied by audio and other media formats and is interactive, i.e., the user can interact with it to explore additional features.

Zappar has been used for many different purposes. Among its significant applications defined on its website, one can name retail, packaging, events, and education. It can bring to life whatever was previously regarded as 2D and add an engaging, collaborative, and interactive dimension. It provides a creative and exciting platform to benefit from the potential of both the real and the virtual worlds and present ideas and information more accessible and comprehensible to the users.

The authors developed the AR-infused version of the Interchange paper book for this study, which the control group used. To this end, first, they decided what information could be added to each section of the unit in the paper book to be immediately accessible to students while studying. They decided, for instance, that the grammar section should include a few immediate interactive exercises, and the pronunciation section should be complemented with the audio playing of the sentences or words of focus. The reading section should offer new vocabulary definitions and synonyms, and so on.

Then, they collected the information needed to be turned into the AR materials from the accompanying books, CDs, and online materials. The reason for choosing the extra information only from what was available in the series was that the researcher wanted both control and experimental group classes to be offered the same amount of data in the classroom, not to make a difference in the results.

The collected data was then turned into AR multimedia, and interactive content using ZapWorks, the Zappar workplace, to create AR content. The AR features added to the coursebook included a variety of multimedia formats, including text, audio, and video. The content was then saved in the platform's repertoire and was accessible to users. After creating and saving each design, a Zapcode was created, which could be downloaded by the researcher, and used where applicable.

The researcher then downloaded and copied the Zapcodes on sticky papers. Before beginning the course, the researcher put the sticky Zapcodes in the relevant places at a corner on top of each section. The researcher decided to use a minimal number of Zapcodes to avoid extra cognitive load on the learners. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show a learner from the experimental group exploring the AR content in the book.

Figure 2
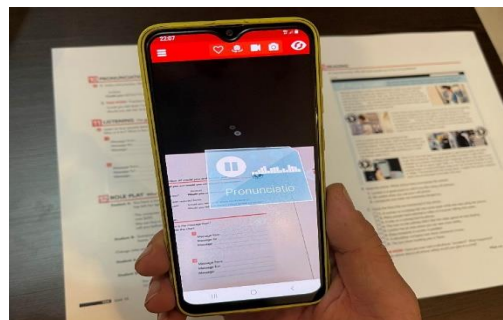*Sample Pronunciation Section Enhanced with AR*

Figure 2 shows the time when a learner scanned the AR content in the pronunciation section of a unit (Unit 15). The only difference between the conventional coursebook and the AR-enhanced one is that several Zapcodes are attached to it. The mark can be seen in the corner of each exercise where applicable.

When the student scans the code, a virtual audio playing widget is shown on the mobile screen. The learners can see the real environment on their mobile screen, and the virtual augmented content. The virtual content is interactive, which means that the learner can play and pause the audio as he wants. The virtual content was still available if the learner moved his device within a specific range. By moving away from the mark, the virtual content would disappear.

Figure 3
Sample Reading Section Enhanced with AR
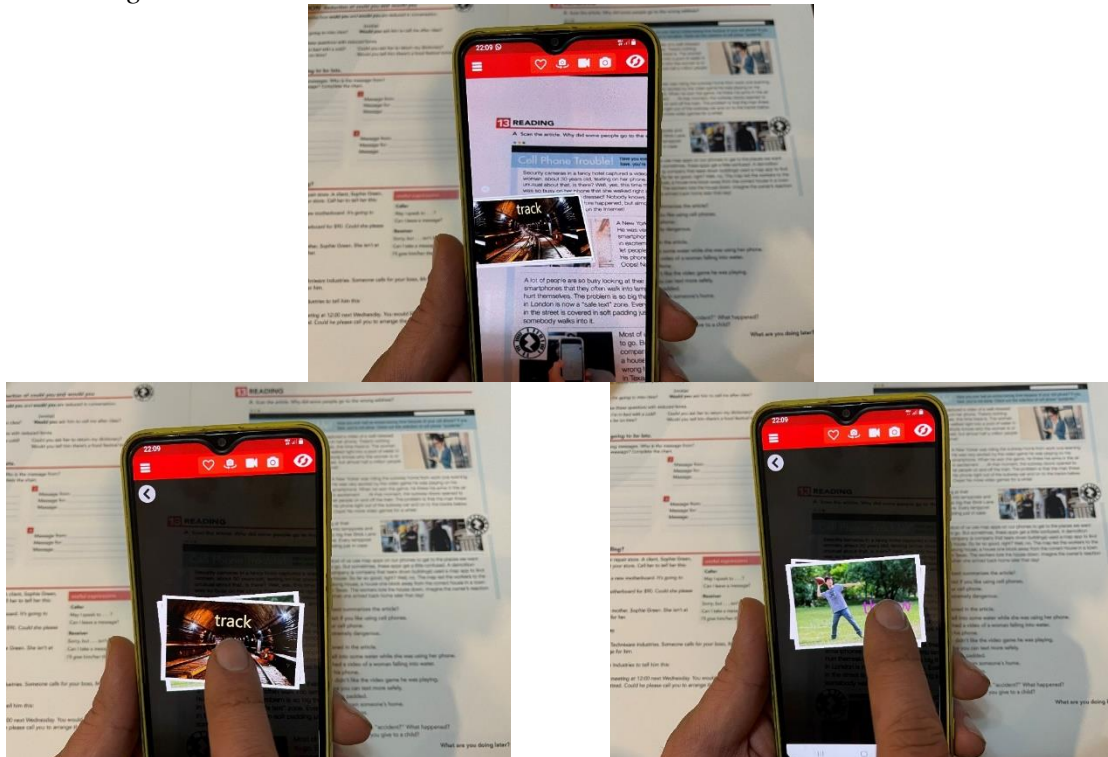
Also, Figure 3 shows the time when the learner was trying to explore the AR content in one section of the reading passage. When the code was scanned via the camera, a few pictures in the form of an album appeared on the mobile's screen. Each picture showed one new word and an image to describe its meaning. As the content was interactive, the learner could explore the pictures, magnify them, and the like, based on his requirements.

All AR content in the book could be accessed in the same way. Students could scan the code with the camera of their mobile phones, which were already connected to the Internet, access the augmented feature, and interact with them where applicable.

Twenty books were prepared, in this fashion, to be used by the participants and one to be used by the teacher in the experimental group. Since the institute had to provide the students with books and related materials at each level, it was feasible for the researcher to access the coursebooks and get them distributed to the relevant participants at the beginning of the course.

These AR features acted like resources that helped learners get more input in different formats, which aided them in learning each lesson section.

Procedure

The current study employed quantitative data collection and analysis techniques. After the participants were at hand through intact sampling in two classes, the researcher selected one class as the control and the other one as the experimental group.

Before the course started, a series of preliminary preparations were done. First, the researcher collected participants' previous-level exit exam scores to control their level of English at the time of the treatment. Then, the books for the experimental group were prepared as explained above and submitted to the institute to be distributed among students. Also, the researcher equipped the experimental classroom with high-speed WiFi Internet for participants to use during class times.

Next, the teacher responsible for teaching both groups was informed of the teaching approach she had to follow for both classes and was asked to pursue as much similar procedures in both as possible to avoid any instructor and instructing effects to the extent possible. Then, she was trained on the AR content, how to access them, and how to resolve any potential facility-related flaws that could appear during the experiment.

Then the two groups had to start the 20-session course defined by the institute. In the first session, the teacher described and instructed how to access and use the new AR features the students would experience in the experimental group. She also let the students connect to the Internet connection and download the Zappar application. She ensured all students could use the Zappar app properly with no issues.

Also, in the first session, participants in both groups were asked to fill out Horwitz's (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire, while those in the control group were asked to fill out the first two questionnaires only.

Both groups then underwent the 20-session course. After completing the course, learners were post-tested in the final session. The post-test consisted of a re-administration of the FLCAS in both groups. Besides, experimental group participants were interviewed individually to reflect on their AR learning experience. After the data collection phase, the obtained data were analyzed through proper quantitative data analysis techniques, discussed next.

Data Analysis

Analysis of covariance with SPSS was used to analyze the quantitative data obtained through the study. To observe the effect of AR on the learners' anxiety, the researcher analyzed the results of the data gathered through questionnaires at the two administrations using ANCOVA. Learners' scores on the previous level's achievement test were considered a covariate and controlled in the analysis.

Based on SPSS Survival Manual (Pallant, 2007), ANCOVA is used when there is a pre-test post-test design, e.g., comparing the impact of two different interventions, taking before and after measures for each group. The pre-test scores are considered a covariate to control pre-existing differences between the groups. This feature makes ANCOVA very useful in situations with relatively small sample sizes or medium effect sizes.

For questionnaire validation, a panel of five experts who held doctorate degrees in TEFL were selected and invited to participate in this study. They were contacted via email, phone, and face-to-face meetings by the researcher when required. The reason for pilot-testing and consulting the panel of experts was to check the tool's reliability and validity initially before the beginning of the study.

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was adopted from Horwitz's (1986). It was translated to Farsi by the researcher and validated by the panel of experts. It was confirmed for face and content validity. Also, before applying the tool for data collection, it was pilot-tested to check its reliability. Using Cronbach's alpha formula, the reliability of the instrument was

measured. Also, the reliability of the tools was assessed a second time after administering them to the study's participants. Table 4.5 reports the reliability of FLCAS in the pilot and actual study.

Table 1
Reliability of FLCAS

Questionnaire	Cronbach's Alpha in Pilot Test	Cronbach's Alpha in the actual administration
FLCAS	0.82	0.84

As shown in Table 4.5, the tool's reliability was 0.82 in the pilot study and 0.84 in the data collection phase. So, the instrument proved to be a reliable source of data collection for this study.

Finally, data gathered through oral interviews with learners in the experimental group were analyzed via thematic analysis to specify the recurring themes in learners' experience in applying AR in language learning. The results of data analyses are presented in the following section.

Results and Discussion

Quantitative Analysis Results

Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to respond to the quantitative research question. To begin with, before applying ANCOVA, a normality test was done to ensure it was the proper analysis method for the data at hand. The normality assumption was assessed using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test. Table 4.13 presents the result of the normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnoff).

Table 2
Kolmogorow-Smirnov Test of Normality

Variable	Statistic	Sig.
Achievement Post-test	0.182	0.06
Anxiety Post-test	0.197	0.27
Attitude and Motivation Post-test	0.171	0.09

As can be deduced from the findings in Table 4.13, the significance level obtained in the test (K-S) was more than the criterion value of 0.05. So, it could be concluded that the distribution of the variables under study in the statistical sample was normal, and ANCOVA could suitably be done to respond to the research questions.

Next, Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances was used to test the homogeneity of the regression coefficients. Results showed that homogeneity was established (F = 6.16, Sig. = 0.18), and this assumption is met to run ANCOVA. Table 4.14 summarizes the mean scores of both groups' pre-tests and post-tests derived from the FLCAS questionnaire. As Table 4.16 shows, the experimental group had a higher mean score after the experiment (mean = 3.17) than the control group (mean = 2.87).

Table 3
Anxiety Descriptive Statistics

Group	Mean	SD	N
Control	2.87	0.44	20
Experimental	3.17	0.52	20
Total	3.02	0.50	40

To test whether this difference was statistically significant, a one-way between-groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted. Participants' scores on the pre-test were used as the

covariate in this analysis. Preliminary checks were conducted to ensure that there was no violation of assumptions of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances, homogeneity of regression slopes, and reliable measurement of the covariate. The result is shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4
Anxiety ANCOVA Results

Source	Sum Of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected model	1.329	2	.665	2.854	0.070	**0.134**
intercept	8.28	1	8.283	35.568	0.000	**0.490**
Pre-test	.408	1	.408	1.750	0.004	**0.045**
group	.399	1	.399	1.714	0.199	**0.044**
error	8.617	37	.233			
total	376.403	40				
Correct total	9.946	39				

As Table 4.17 shows, after adjusting for pre-intervention scores, there was a significant difference between the two intervention groups on post-intervention scores on learning anxiety, i.e., FLCAS test, F = 1.714, p = 0.199, partial eta squared = 0.044. There was no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This indicated that the Augmented Reality experience did not affect reducing the learning anxiety level of students.

Interview Results

In the interview, students were asked to reflect on their experience focusing on language learning anxiety. Most students claimed to have had a novel and positive experience, while some had faced difficulties during the course. More specifically, learners reported that the AR learning environment was "less formal," thus "reducing stress and apprehension in learners," as one participant (Amin) claimed. Also, using this technology, "learning was, in part, similar to a game for students," as mentioned by some other participants, and made them feel relaxed (like Mohammad and Bob).

However, about half of the participants believed that the learning experience could be affected by the "type", "availability", or "quality" of the facilities. For example, one participant (Farshid) claimed that "if my mobile phone had a larger screen, I could have a better experience reading the written content." "Although this could be resolved to an extent by moving the device back and forth," as he reported, "it took time for me to discover such a feature and made me a bit disappointed at the beginning."

Also, as stated by another participant (Hedye): "older mobile devices with lower functioning speed might make the experience a bit time-consuming and make me stressed." Besides, as mentioned by another participant (Ray) "internet access in general" and "low internet speed" can be considered as other limitations in AR-enhanced language learning.

Finally, the lack of interest in technology is a challenging factor in employing AR in language learning. In this regard, three students (Mojgan, Max, and Saeed) asserted that they could not prefer the AR experience because they "did not like" or "feel comfortable with technology" in general. One of them (Mojgan) felt "somehow indifferent" to it and thought "it was not crucial to be used in the classroom." Also, as Saeed stated, "it could be a sort of game or fun experience in the class, but that learning could still occur without implementing it." In this sense, using such a technology in the language classroom was thought of as "unnecessary," as mentioned by Max.

Discussion

The current study aimed at examining the impact of using AR as a recent type of educational technology in language learning. It reported on developing and employing AR-infused course materials to compare their efficacy with conventional language teaching methods. More specifically, it investigated the effect of AR on reducing foreign language anxiety in adult Iranian EFL learners. Results revealed that AR did not reduce the FLA in adult EFL learners. However, the interview results revealed that most learners enjoyed the AR learning experience while some faced challenges.

The obtained quantitative outcomes are in contrast to most available literature in that they did not affect reducing participants' FLA. According to Rahimi and Soleymani (2015), Wehner et al. (2011), Kruk (2016), Melchor-Couto (2017), Bashori, et al. (2020), and York et al. (2021) employing technology in the form of mobile learning, Virtual Reality (VR), and Robot-Assisted Language Learning, web-based learning, and CMC lowered anxiety levels in language learners. Such an effect was not obtained in the current study. The reason might be that first, AR is a new technology; learners in Iran have hardly employed it in education and for purposes other than fun like the entertainment applications such as Snapchat and games like Pokemon Go. Such a novelty of the experience is possible not to cause a relaxing and non-threatening learning environment for the learners.

Next, in the case of using mobile phones, VR, and robots in learning, students interact with a machine, not a real human being, which according to Kruk (2016), lowers their inhibitions and anxiety, whereas, in the case of AR-integrated learning, most of the interaction is happening in the real world, with some elements of virtuality added. Of course, this should be further investigated in the research. In case of confirmation, AR-infused activities should be designed to maximize non-human interaction.

Another important point to consider in this regard is that previous studies, such as those of Liu (2009), Kucuk et al. (2014), Silva et al. (2015), Hsu (2017), and Bursali and Yilmaz (2019), focused on participants of relatively lower age groups, for instance, kids or high school students and none considered examining FLA in adult learners which was the focus on this study. Accordingly, one can assume that age, or at least age groups, is a differentiating factor in the nature of the effect foreign language learners get from technology in learning. AR might cause a less threatening environment for young learners compared to adults. Adults sometimes do not find themselves proficient in using technology or even not interested. This might cause more cognitive load and inhibition in their minds while learning a foreign language. Subsequently, this calls for more research on the effect of AR, and other recent educational technology advancements, on language learners of different age groups.

Also, it is worth noting that the interview results confirm that AR indeed reduced participants' FLA levels which is itself in contradiction to the quantitative results. According to participants' expressions, it created a more relaxing learning setting and the game-like nature of the experience was fun for them. This contradiction can be justified by considering the probable cognitive load that using technology imposes on some learners and not others. Again, this contradiction confirms that to achieve a clearer understanding of the way AR affects FLA in participants, more research should be done, especially with the consideration of affective and demographic differences.

Conclusion and Implications

The study has implications for language researchers, policymakers, and instructors. Researchers are suggested to perform more investigations to add to the bulk of knowledge on the new topic of employing AR in language education. Language policymakers and curriculum developers should encourage more technology in language learning, mainly in Iran, to familiarize learners and

teachers with its potential. Finally, language instructors should update their knowledge of the most recent technologies used in language learning in the world to benefit from their capacities in their teaching.

This study had some limitations. First, the number of participants could be more to allow for more comprehensive data. Second, the study could be designed in a mixed-methods research format to get more insights into the nature of the effect of AR on language learners and monitor their inhibitions and anxiety in the course of learning. Researcher observation, think-aloud protocol, or oral interviews with the participants could provide more data to elaborate on the quantitative results obtained in the study.

Finally, further research can explore the effect of using AR on different age language learners. Also, it is suggested that other affective and demographic factors be considered, which might interact with how AR impacts FLA.

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Research Paper

Developing an English Textbook for Iranian Senior High School Students

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Abstract
Developing textbook material is a crucial component of any curriculum, which should be based on sound and systematic techniques. In a detailed view, considering the importance of knowing English not only as an international language but as the language of commerce, tech and science, English course needs to be programmed efficiently to provide a suitable circumstance of learning for learners. In this regard, the present study is to develop a new English textbook for Iranian Senior High Schools to provide an opportunity for high school students as well as teachers to be actively engaged in the text, questions, and images of the textbook based on William Rummy's Technique to keep up with the developments of the field. The results of the study demonstrate demonstrates that the involvement index is appropriate enough to actively engage the learners in the newly developed English textbook. That is, the texts, questions, and images within the textbook are suitably developed to engage the students actively.

Keywords: *Content Analysis, Iranian Senior High School English Textbooks, Material Development*

تهیه کتاب درسی انگلیسی برای دانش آموزان ایرانی سال آخر دبیرستان
تهیه مواد درسی یکی از اجزای اساسی هر برنامه درسی است که باید بر اساس تکنیک های صحیح و منظم باشد. در یک نگاه تفصیلی، با توجه به اهمیت دانستن زبان انگلیسی نه تنها به عنوان یک زبان بین المللی، بلکه به عنوان زبان تجارت، فناوری و علم، دوره انگلیسی نیاز به برنامه ریزی کارآمد دارد تا شرایط یادگیری مناسب را برای زبان آموزان فراهم کند. در این راستا، پژوهش حاضر به منظور تهیه کتاب زبان انگلیسی جدید برای دبیرستان ایرانیان است تا فرصتی را برای دانش آموزان دبیرستانی و همچنین معلمان فراهم کند تا به صورت فعال درگیر متن، سؤالات و تصاویر کتاب بر اساس ویلیام رامی باشند. تکنیک رامی برای همگام شدن با پیشرفت‌های این رشته. نتایج نتیجه‌گیری این مطالعه نشان می‌دهد که شاخص درگیری به اندازه کافی مناسب است تا فعالانه فراگیران را در کتاب درسی انگلیسی تازه توسعه‌یافته درگیر کند. به این معنا که متون، سؤالات و تصاویر درون کتاب درسی به نحو مناسبی ایجاد شده اند تا دانش آموزان را به طور فعال درگیر کنند.
واژگان کلیدی: تحلیل محتوا، کتاب‌های درسی انگلیسی دوره متوسطه ایران، توسعه

Introduction

Pourzahir (2015) states that educational activities and learning experiences ought to be arranged so coherently that they are able to support each other properly. He believes that arranging the contents of the learning process plays a crucial role in improving the general curriculum of any educational program, programs. According to Brian Tomlinson (1998), textbooks are materials used by teachers to facilitate the learning process for pupils. These materials expose learners to the new language in various ways to increase their knowledge and experience. On the other hand, a large number of variables such as learning theories, teaching theories, learners' characteristics, and teachers' proficiency and experience can influence the profitability of the textbooks. Therefore, not only developing textbooks cannot be underestimated in any curriculum, but also it ought to be based on a sound and systematic pattern to be able to assist a large number of learners to in learning learn foreign language languages as efficiently as possible. Furthermore, the advent of various methods during the recent century has caused to release releasing a wide variety of textbooks in the market, each of which follows and emphasizes a specific part of the learning and teaching process. Following the previous studies, the most considerably effective factors in developing or evaluating a textbook include authentic content, communication in opportunities, conscious and subconscious learning, left and right-brain activities, corpus material, contextual realization, pedagogical realization, physical appearance, and sequence of activities. The previous studies also reveal that providing suitable materials can improve the cognitive development of the learners to be critical thinkers. Consequently, developing, evaluating, or adapting a textbook material is a crucial component of any curriculum which should be based on sound and systematic techniques.

The problem

As human communities are altering frequently altering their requirements and goals are changing continuously, either. On the other hand, in some countries like Iran that the whole educational curriculum is prescribed, and the main mainly general policies of the educational system of schools are determined and controlled by the higher organizations, including the Ministry of Education, so the contents of the textbook, as the most crucial components of the curriculum, plays an important role in learning and teaching process. In fact, according to Educational Product Information Exchange (1976), approximately Two -two-thirds of the time in the classroom is dedicated to written materials, especially textbooks. Therefore, developing efficient textbooks is one of the crucial duties of the Ministry of Education of every country that should be followed by comprehensive, valid, and reliable methods to fulfill the needs of students as well as the needs of society. To do so, the present study is to develop new material for the 10th grade considering Tomlinson's Text-driven Approach as well as William Rummy's technique. Having developed a new material for Iranian Senior High Schools, the following step of the present research is to study the improvement of learners' language proficiency as well as teachers' perspective toward the newly developed English textbook.

Significance of the study

This study is to scientifically reveal the students' involvement index of each section of the newly developed English textbook that can provide a crystal clear road map for teachers to design more efficient lesson plans by modifying the texts, images, and questions by using other materials or teacher-made questions to increase the extent of involvement of students with the textbook generally. Moreover, the results of this study can assist educational managers, programmers, and deciders to augment their perspectives toward higher levels of learning. The results of this study can help to compare and find out if the contents of the current English textbooks meet the general goals and specified behavioral objectives of the educational system correctly as they are predetermined or not. Finally, since the contents of the textbook play a twice

vital role in the Iranian top-down predetermined curriculum, the eventual output of this study can provide a supportive opportunity for high school students to increase the students' involvement index in different sections of the textbook, including texts, questions, and images as much as possible to keep up with the developments of the field.

Research Questions

Attempting to solve some of the existing problems of English learners, teachers, and materials, the present study considers the questions as follows:

RQ1. To what extent does the newly developed English textbook engage the students in text, questions, and images actively based on William Rummy's Technique?

RQ2. Does the newly developed English textbook have a significant effect on developing students' language proficiency?

RQ3. What are English teachers' perceptions toward newly developed English textbooks?

Review of Literature

William Rummy (1969) is a quantitative technique for content analysis that determines the extent to which students are involved in the contents, problems, images, and questions of a textbook. In other words, this technique investigates if the intended book actively engages students in the learning and teaching process. This technique divides the included contents into active, inactive, and neutral categories. In active categories, students involve learning activities, and conversely, in inactive categories, students do not involve any learning activities, and neutral categories do not play any important role in calculating the involvement rate of the learners with included text, questions, and images. Moreover, evaluating the existent textbooks, numerous studies have been done based on William Rummy's technique to clarify the active involvement index of learners in the textbooks' contents in various fields like mathematics, science, English a, etc

Mizutani, M & Chalak A. (2017) evaluated the involvement index of Iranian high school students in contents, images, and questions of mathematics textbooks to clarify the level of students' activity engagement quantitatively. The results of this study showed that the contents, images, and questions of this textbook respectively equal 0.87, 1.47, and 1.5. Thus, there is a balanced harmony among the students, questions, and images of the book to actively engage the learners.

Shahmuhammadi, M. (2016) also analyzed one of the textbooks elementary school called Profession and Technology. The results of this study show that the involvement index of contents, questions, and images of this book equals 1.35, 1.05, and 1.75, respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that learners are more actively engaged in the images rather than the contents and the questions.

Rezvani, R. (2012) analyzed the English Textbook of the Iran Language Institute to specify the students' involvement index of the teaching-learning Process based on William Rummy's technique. The results of this study revealed that only the text, questions, and activities given in the textbook encourage students' involvement in the teaching and learning process.

William Rummy's Technique

William Rummy is a quantitative technique for content analysis that determines the extent to which students are involved in the contents, problems, images, and questions of a textbook. In other words, this technique investigates if the intended book activelengagesge students with the learning and teaching process. This technique divides the included contents into active, inactive, and neutral categories. In active categories, students involve learning activities and conversely, in inactive categories, students do not involve any learning activities and neutral categories do not

play any important role in calculating the involvement rate of the learners with included text, questions, and images (cited in Fathi, 2016):

Evaluation of Text of the Book

Using William Rummy's technique requires defining clearly the unit of analysis that is the smallest part of any content contents, which typically is considered as a sentence. These units can include all intended contents or randomly selected ones. Having selected the units of the content, the following factors are to be categorized accurately to separate active, inactive, and neutral categories of the book quantitatively.

Expression of the truth as simple sentences, assumptions, or observations

Expression of results, general principles, or generalizations

Definitions of terms

Questions that are mentioned in the text and their answers are given immediately by the author

Questions that require students to analyze the assumptions given to them to answer the questions

Activities that ask the students to express the result they achieve

Activities that ask the students to do an experiment and analyze the result or to solve the issues

Questions that are presented to attract the students' attention are not answered immediately by the author

The students are asked to notice pictures or stages of an experiment. In general, any sentences that do not fall into any above categories are included in this category.

Questions about the meaning

Of the ten above categories, "a," "b," "c," and "d" are classified as inactive categories. "e," "f," "g," and "h" are considered active categories and the last two one including "i," and "j" are classified as neutral categories that do not play any important role in students involvement index rate:

$$\text{Involvement index for text} = \frac{\text{Active sentences}}{\text{Inactive sentences}}$$

Evaluation of Questions of the Book

Exactly like the text evaluation, William Rummy's technique has defined a few factors based on which the entire included questions of the intended textbook can be classified into different categories.

Questions that can be answered directly in the book

Questions whose answers are related to quoting the definitions

Questions that students should answer on what they have learned in the new lesson to conclude new results

Questions that ask students to solve a particular problem

Among the above-mentioned kind of questions, "a" and "b" categories are considered inactive questions, and c and d are active ones.

$$\text{Involvement index for questions} = \frac{\text{Active questions}}{\text{Inactive questions}}$$

Evaluation of Images of the Book

The whole included pictures of the textbook ought to be classified into one of the following categories to calculate to what extent students engage with the learning process through these pictures.

Pictures that merely describe a specific issue

Pictures that ask students to carry out an experiment or activity using given data

Pictures that explain the strategies for doing an activity

Pictures that are included in none of the above categories.

Among the four above-mentioned categories, while the "c" and "d" categories are considered neutral ones, the "a "and "b" categories are inactive and active, respectively respectably.

$$\text{Involvement index for images} = \frac{\text{Active images}}{\text{Inactive images}}$$

Tomlinson's Text-driven Approach (TDA)

The Text-driven Approach to materials design effectively reverses a long-standing method based on *teaching points*. Allwright (2005), a strong critic of teaching toward teaching points, defines them as "bits of the target language" that a teacher should cover in a lesson and that students should learn in a lesson (p. 9). Such a pedagogical approach suggests that teacher/s designers can dictate learning. The classroom experience, however, indicates that students and teachers may often have very "different agendas" (Nunan, 1995, p. 140). As Nunan (1995) puts it, "While the teacher is busily teaching one thing, the learner is very often focusing on something else" (p. 135). Crabbe (2007) shifts the focus of instruction from teaching points to learning opportunities. He defines the term *learning opportunity* as "a specific cognitive, or metacognitive activity that a learner can engage in that is likely to lead to learning" (2007, p. 118).

In keeping with a focus on learning opportunities, Tomlinson (2013a) presents the *text-driven* approach to materials design, an approach which requires, first, the selection of relevant and stimulating texts and, second, the specification of teaching points around the chosen texts. In other words, the approach calls for texts to determine teaching points, not for teaching points to determine texts. With a "library of potentially engaging texts" on hand (Tomlinson, 2013a, p. 100), the teacher/materials designer can choose texts that (a) fit learners' needs and interests and (b) aid in the teaching of content appropriate for learners. This focus on relevant and stimulating texts suggests that the text itself, by engaging learners in a topic of interest, may lead learners to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided through teaching points and/or to create their learning opportunities.

As indicated above, the starting point for developing text-driven materials consists of the finding or developing of texts that will lead to student engagement, with *engagement* being defined as "a willing investment of energy and attention in experiencing the text in such a way as to achieve interaction between the text and the senses, feelings, views, and intuitions of the reader/listener" (Tomlinson, 2013, p. 100). To determine whether or not a found or created text is relevant for use in the classroom, Tomlinson (2013) asks several questions, among which are the following:

• Are the target learners likely to be able to connect the text to their lives?

• Are the target learners likely to be able to connect the text to their knowledge of the world?

• Is the text likely to stimulate divergent personal responses from the target learners?

• Is the text likely to contribute to the personal development of the learners? (p. 101).

If the answer to these questions (and others) is YES, the text is suitable. The materials designer's job, however, is far from over. The materials designer needs, for example, *readiness activities*—that is, activities which attempt to lead learners to make important connections

between their own lives and their own experiences on the one hand and the forthcoming text on the other (Tomlinson, 2013). Also needed are *intake response activities*—that is, activities that allow learners "to share with others what the text means to them" (Tomlinson, 2013a, p. 104). And the design process necessarily entails *development activities* intended to provide learners with the opportunity to use language in original ways to build on the meanings they have obtained from the text (Tomlinson, 2013).

Method

This study is descriptive and mixed-method research. Since there is no assumption about the distribution of variables variable through the intended textbooks, the researcher is confined to working with non-parametric statistics appropriate to nominal levels of data. Thus, the quantitative aspect considering the weight, frequencies, and percentages of the variables and the output of the SPSS software reveals the distributions of the codes.

The qualitative aspect of the study regarding the total contents of the intended textbooks is analyzed and interpreted through the defined formula involvement index of texts, images, and questions based on William Rummy's Technique. Furthermore, the researcher also interviewed a few English teachers who had more than 10 years of experience in teaching English Course courses in Iranian senior high schools to interpret their orientation toward the English learning process taking place in Iranian senior high schools, comparing students' learning process in terms of the newly developed one.

Participants
Corpus

The entire contents of the newly developed textbook are also analyzed based on William Rummy's technique to measure the active involvement index of students.

Students

Attempting to answer the other question of the study, during the 2019-2020 academic year, a sample of 30 high school students as the representatives of the whole population of Iranian senior high school students were randomly selected based on accessible population and being taught through the newly developed English textbook versus another 30 high school students as control group being taught through the current vision series English textbooks by the same teachers. The participants' gender was both male and female. It is also worth mentioning that both groups were homogenized via a PET test to observe and control the likely external variables as much as possible and then given a pre and post-test post-test to study the existing significant differences if any.

Teachers

The other group of participants of the present study includes 30 English teachers who had more than 10 years of experience in teaching English courses in Iranian senior high schools to interpret their orientation toward the English learning process taking place in Iranian senior high schools and students' learning process. The perception of these teachers is analyzed via a textbook evaluation questionnaire (Mielkey, 2005), among whom 5 teachers were randomly selected based on accessible population to take part in a semi-structured structure interview to enrich the gained data on the newly developed textbook.

Instrumentation

William Rummy's Technique

William Rummy is a quantitative technique for Content Analysis that determines the extent to which students are involved in the contents, problems, images, and questions of a textbook. In other words, this technique investigates if the intended book actively engages students in the learning and teaching process. This technique divides the included contents into active, inactive, and neutral categories. In active categories, students involve learning activities, and conversely, in inactive categories, students do not involve any learning activities and neutral categories do not play any important roles in calculating the involvement rate of the learners with included text, questions, and images (cited in Fathi, 2016).

Involvement index for text

Using William Rummy's technique requires clearly defining the unit of analysis as the smallest part of any content (which typically is considered a sentence). These units can include all intended contents or randomly selected ones. Having selected the units of the contents, the following factors are categorized accurately to separate active, inactive, and neutral categories of the book quantitatively.

a. Expression of the truth as simple sentence, assumptions, or observations

b. Expression of results, general principles, or generalizations

c. Definitions of terms

d. Questions mentioned in the text and their answers are given immediately by the author

e. Questions that require students to analyze the assumptions given to them to answer the questions

f. Activities that ask the students to express the result they achieve

g. Activities that ask the students to do an experiment and analyze the result or to solve the issues

h. Questions presented to attract the students' attention, were not answered immediately by the author

i. The students are asked to notice pictures or stages of an experiment. In general, any sentences that do not fall into any above categories are included in this category.

j. Questions about the meaning

Of the ten above categories, "a," "b," "c," and "d" are classified as inactive categories. "e," "f," "g," and "h" are considered active categories and the last two one including "i" and "j" are classified as neutral categories that do not play any important roles in students involvement index rate.

Involvement index for questions

Exactly like the text evaluation, William Rummy's technique has defined a few number of factors based on which the entire included questions of the intended textbook are classified into different categories:

a. Questions that can be answered directly in the book

b. Questions whose answers are related to quoting the definitions

c. Questions that students should answer them based on what they have learned in the new lesson to conclude new results

d. Questions that ask students to solve a particular problem

Among the above-mentioned kind of questions, "a" and "b" categories are considered inactive questions, and "c" and "d" are active ones.

Involvement index for images

The whole included pictures of the textbook are classified into one of the following categories to calculate to what extent students are engaged in the learning process through these pictures.

a. Pictures that merely describe a specific issue

b. Pictures that ask students to carry out an experiment or activity using given data

c. Pictures that explain the strategies of doing an activity

d. Pictures included in none of the above categories

Among the four above-mentioned categories, while the "c" and "d" categories are considered neutral ones, the "a "and "b" categories are inactive and active, respectively.

Text-driven Approach

Text-driven is considered as a material development approach based on which the whole included texts are opted by potentially engaging ones rather than by pre-selecting instructing points. Tomlinson believes that applying texts which increase increases learners' affective engagement and stimulate stimulates them to laugh, cry, disturb or exhilarate as well as texts that increase the learners' cognitive engagement through problem-solving, thinking, evaluating ideas and so on, can occupy learners' whole brain to respond the teaching process more actively (Tomlinson, 2015).

According to Tomlinson (2013a), the text-driven approach to material design initially selects the relevant and stimulating texts and then specifies the teaching points included in the selected texts. In other words, these are the stimulating texts that determine the teaching points, not the teaching points that specify the texts. Applying this approach, material designers make an effort to select the texts which fulfill the learners' needs and interests to lead the learners to take advantage of the learning opportunities via stimulating content. To achieve this goal, Tomlinson (ibid) asks several questions as follows:

Are the target learners likely to be able to connect the text to their lives?

Are the target learners likely to be able to connect the text to their knowledge of the world?

Is the text likely to stimulate divergent personal responses from the target learners?

Is the text likely to contribute to the personal development of the learners?

Therefore, the present study attempts to develop new material for Iranian senior high school students by considering a text-driven approach to engage the students effectively as well as cognitively in the learning process.

PET (Preliminary English Test)

To assure the homogeneity of the learners, before the beginning of the classes, a Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered among the 60 students. The PET exam tested all four skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

It should be mentioned that the reading section is divided into 5 parts with a total of 35 questions, and also, the listening section is divided into 3 parts with a total of 7 questions. However, as the English course in the Iranian junior high school curriculum focuses on reading comprehension and somehow on the listening skills of the students, the writing and speaking skills of the test were omitted.

Parallel Researcher Made Pre-Test and Post-Test

Since the researcher evaluates the effectiveness of her developed material, she needs to run two groups of senior high school students, one as the experimental group who were instructed to apply the newly developed material and the other as, the control group who were being taught the current materials. Furthermore, as she aims at finding the possible differences in the effectiveness of the treatment, i.e., the newly developed material, administration of parallel researcher-made pre-test and post-test seems mandatory. The advantage of a researcher-made test is that it matches

more closely the content that is covered in the classroom or the research study. Therefore, tests are prepared by the contents of the current English textbooks and newly developed ones to be performed as pre-test and post-test between the experimental and control group. Two sets of tests comprise the main defined educational behavior within official documents of the Ministry of Education, including language components (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) and skills (reading comprehension, writing, listening, and speaking). Thus, the researcher-made test is given to two experts to evaluate the items regarding content validity for intermediate students. Then, the test is piloted on 30 intermediate students to check the factors like the item difficulty and the assigned time. Following these procedures, the researcher administered the revised pre-test and later post-test among the 60 senior high school students.

Textbook Evaluation Questionnaire

The textbook evaluation questionnaire applied in this study (Mielkey, 2005) is based on the aims and achievements, skills, language type, activities, and technical considerations utilized by several researchers to evaluate textbooks. The questionnaire includes 24 items with 5 Likert-scale levels level beginning with (excellent-4) and ending (totally lacking-0). It also includes four subcategories of content (5 items), vocab/grammar (5 items), exercise and activities (7 items), and context (7 items).

Semi-interview

The semi-structured interview is held among five experienced teachers randomly selected among the same 30 teachers who checked the textbook evaluation questionnaire to enrich the gained quantitative data and also to elaborate more on the effectiveness of the newly developed English textbook as the main outcome of the present study. The pre-prepared questions of the interview consist:

1. What is expected from senior high school students to be proficient in terms of language proficiency?

2. What is missing in senior high school students which may hinder their language comprehension or production?

3. What are your preferred learning styles and teaching techniques to eliminate or lessen your deficiencies?

4. How do you express the nature of your needs in different skills or sub-skills?

5. As a senior high school teacher, what do you require to concentrate more to enable them to achieve more success in their learning trend?

6. If you were going to evaluate the newly developed English textbook generally, what would you say?

Thus, the qualitative part of the study, which refers to teachers' opinions about students' domains of learning, is implemented through an open-ended interview to be interpreted and analyzed to deeply investigate the responses to the research questions. By the way, all the semi-structured interview sessions are recorded with the interviewees' permission. It is done for further use to be coded and analyzed for qualitative purposes.

Results and Discussion

The present study is to develop a new English textbook for 10th graders based on Tomlinson's Text-driven Approach (2013a) to actively engage the students in the learning process as much as possible, increasing the efficiency of the current prescribed curriculum.

Analysis of Research Question 1

Attempting to calculate the Involvement Factor of the contained text of the newly developed textbook, the whole texts are codified based on the defined categories, and the active and inactive texts are clearly distinguished to achieve the extent of involvement of the learners in the text:

Table 1
Content Analysis (text) of Newly Developed Student's Textbook and Workbook based on William Rummy's Technique

Newly Developed Student's Textbook	Lesson1	Lesson2	Lesson3	Total
an (inactive)	76	64	68	208
b (active)	43	51	47	141
Involvement Factor = b/a= 208/141 = 0.67				
Newly Developed Workbook	Lesson1	Lesson2	Lesson3	Total
an (inactive)	46	52	44	142
b (active)	37	29	33	99
Involvement Factor = b/a = 99/142 = 0.69				

Results demonstrate that the involvement factor of the text contained within the newly developed textbook equals 0.67, which is considered properly active however the involvement factor of the newly developed workbook is higher (0.69), and it seems to be able to be actively involved in the learners in such a text suitably.

Following William Rummy's Technique to accomplish the considered research question related to the extent of involvement factor of the images of the newly developed textbook in addition to its workbook, the whole images of every single lesson are codified and then shown in the table below:

Table 2
Content Analysis (image) of Newly Developed Student's Textbook and Workbook based on William Rummy's Technique

Newly Developed Student's Textbook	Lesson1	Lesson2	Lesson3	Total
an (inactive)	11	14	13	38
b (active)	11	9	10	30
Involvement Factor = b/a= 30/38 = 0.78				
Newly Developed Workbook	Lesson1	Lesson2	Lesson3	Total
an (inactive)	9	11	7	27
b (active)	6	8	5	19
Involvement Factor = b/a = 19/27 = 0.70				

Regarding the achieved results of quantitatively figuring active and inactive images contained within the newly developed textbook and workbook, 0.78 of the existing images actively involve the learners, which is good, and the images of the workbook are assumed to actively involve (0.70) the learners properly, either.

Having studied the involvement factor of text as well as images of the newly developed textbooks, the involvement factor of the newly developed textbook and its workbook in terms of required questions and activities are elaborated as follows:

Table 3

Content Analysis (questions) of Newly Developed Student's Textbook and Workbook based on William Rummy's Technique

Newly Developed Student's Textbook	Lesson1	Lesson2	Lesson3	Total
an (inactive)	8	10	13	31
b (active)	9	9	8	26
Involvement Factor = b/a= 26/31 = 0.83				
Newly Developed Workbook	Lesson1	Lesson2	Lesson3	**Total**
an (inactive)	18	21	17	56
b (active)	16	18	14	48
Involvement Factor = b/a = 48/56 = 0.85				

As the table above reveals, the extent of involvement factor of the questions contained within the newly developed textbook equals 0.85, which implies the required exercises and questions actively involve the learners. Furthermore, the exercises of the workbook consist of highly active questions (0.85), which can actively involve the students to challenge their foreign language skills in higher levels of thinking.

Analysis of Research Question 2

Considering research question 2, ". Does the newly developed textbook have a significant effect on developing students' language proficiency?" a parallel researcher-made pre-test and post-test proficiency test is developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the newly developed materials. To do so, two groups of senior high school students are run, one as the experimental group instructed through the newly developed textbook and the other as one control group being taught through the current materials. As the researcher aims at finding the possible differences in the effectiveness of the treatment, i.e., the newly developed material, administration of parallel researcher-made pre-test and post-test seems mandatory. Therefore, tests are prepared by the contents of the current English textbook, and the newly developed one is to be performed as a pre-test and post-test between the experimental and control group. Two sets of tests comprise the main defined educational behavior within official documents of the Ministry of Education, including language components (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) and skills (reading comprehension, writing, listening, and speaking). Thus, the researcher-made test is given to two experts to evaluate the items regarding content validity for intermediate students. Then, the test is piloted on 30 intermediate students to check the factors like the item difficulty and the assigned time. Since the study is designed based on a semi-experimental research method, an experimental group (30 students) and a control group (27 students) were randomly selected through an accessible population during the 2019-2020 academic year as a research sample. After teaching the both experimental and control groups by the same teacher within 25 sessions (45 min per session) through different English textbooks (newly developed English textbook to the experimental group and Vision1 to the control group), both groups took a researcher-made test that contained 20 close-ended items including the proficiency factors such as reading, writing, listening, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Moreover, the content validity of the test is verified by 4 experienced English teachers teacher, and also reliability coefficient of the test is calculated via Cronbach's alpha Homogeneity method (0.79). Various descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution table, and also t-test as well as Kolmogorov Smirnov as inferential statistical methods are applied via SPSS.

The table below reveals the descriptive data of students' English language proficiency variable in the experimental group (being taught through the newly developed English textbook) and control group (being taught through the current English textbook). According to the attained data,

the mean of the experimental group equals 16.46 and the standard is deviation 1.99, whereas the mean of the control group is 13.85, and the related standard deviation is 1.7.

Table 4
Descriptive indicators of research variables in experimental and control groups

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Test	experimental	30	16.4667	1.99540	.36431
	control	27	13.8519	1.70302	.32775

Furthermore, table 4, including the results of the independent t-test, demonstrates the existing difference between the English language proficiency variable of the experimental and control group. Applying Leven's Test, the homogeneity variance within the groups is studied, and the results show shows that Leven's test is not significant (F= .860, p = .058). Thus, the condition of the variance homogeneity within the groups is met, and the independent t-test can be used to observe the homogeneity. Following the gained table, the significance level of the t-test is lower than (p 0.5), which is significant. In other words, there is a significant difference between the English language proficiency of the experimental and control group, and the mean of the former is calculated more than the latter. Therefore, it can be claimed that students who taught the English language through the newly developed textbook are more proficient than that students who taught this language through the current vision series textbooks.

Table 5
Independent t-test results comparing experimental and control group scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Test	Equal variances assumed	.860	.358	5.291	55	.000

Analysis of Research Question 3

In pursuit of finding out the next research question, "What are English teachers' perceptions toward the newly developed English textbook?" 30 teachers randomly selected through the accessible population during the 2019-2020 academic year answered a textbook evaluation questionnaire (Mikey, 2005), including a five-point Likert scale. Then, a semi-structured interview was held among five experienced teachers randomly selected among the same ones to enrich the gained quantitative data and also to elaborate more on the effectiveness of the newly developed English textbooks as the main outcome of the present study. The pre-prepared questions for the interview consist of:

1. What is expected from senior high school student to be proficient in terms of language proficiency?

2. What is missing in senior high school students which may hinder their language comprehension or production?

3. What are your preferred learning styles and teaching techniques to eliminate or lessen your deficiencies?

4. How do you express the nature of your needs in different skills or sub-skills?

5. As a senior high school teacher, what do you require to concentrate more to enable them to achieve more success in their learning trend?

6. If you were going to evaluate the newly developed English textbook generally, what would you say?

Thus, the qualitative part of the study, which refers to teachers' opinions opinion about students' domains of learning, will be implemented through an open-ended interview to be interpreted and analyzed to deeply investigate the responses to the research questions. By the way, all the semi-structured interview sessions are recorded with the interviewees' permission. It is done for further use to be coded and analyzed for qualitative purposes.

Research question 3 dealt with the teachers' evaluation based on the newly developed English textbook for senior high school students, called *So Can I.* As it was discussed before, Mikey's (2005) course book evaluation questionnaire was distributed among the 30 teachers to estimate the evaluation of the newly developed English textbook for senior high school students. The questionnaire includes 24 items with 5 Likert-scale levels beginning with (excellent-4) and ending (totally lacking-0). It also includes four subcategories of content (5 items), vocab/grammar (5 items), exercise and activities (7 items), and context (7 items).

Table 6
Teachers' Evaluation of Newly Developed English Textbook

Category	Subcategory	Mean	Total Mean
Textbook	Content	3.29	
	Vocabulary &Grammar	1.60	2.50
	Exercises & Activities	2.31	
	Attractiveness of the Text & Physical Make-up	2.83	
Teacher's Manual	General Features	–	
	Background Information	–	
	Methological Guidance	–	
	Supplementary Exercises & Materials	–	
Context	Appropriateness for Curriculum	3.10	
	Students	2.3	2.65
	Teachers	2.55	
	Total Mean	2.575	

According to table 6, the total mean of teachers' responses was 3.575, which came almost halfway between 2 (Adequate) and 3 (Good), which indicates teachers did show much interest and satisfaction with the newly developed English textbook. To enable the researcher with stronger responses, she decided to administer the semi-structured with 5 teachers, i.e., 10 of them, about the newly developed English textbook who have been teaching English for more than 5 years of experience in Iranian senior high schools.

Interview Question 1: If you were going to evaluate this English textbook generally, what would you say?

"I think the book could enjoy the real pictures of people more. I'm not very happy with the pictures. In addition, the presentation of grammar and vocabulary is very satisfactory since it allows the students to discover the structural points themselves."

"The book doesn't contain a teacher's manual. I think such a book can be of great help to teachers regarding harmonious teaching methodology, and techniques for activating learners' background knowledge. Instead, this textbook ended with audio scripts and answer keys which could satisfy the learners to be less active!! in-class time, but could not make the teachers happy."

"This course book could make more benefits by offering a workbook, by which I mean more exercises could be provided for the learners to practice the language more, while they are away."

"Though it's good to be familiar with the international procedures and items, presenting some of these topics may sound offensive to some."

Table7
Results from the Semi-Interview Question with Teachers

	Total number of participants	Lack of Shortage of			
		Teacher's Manual	Workbook	Real Pictures	Localization
Number of Participants	10	**10**	**10**	9	9
Percentage of Participants	100%	**100%**	**100%**	90%	90%

As Table 7 suggests, (nearly) all the teachers agreed lack or shortage of teacher's manuals, workbooks, real pictures as well as localization were among the weakest aspect of the book, resulting in their dissatisfaction with the textbook.

Discussion

Studying the Involvement Index of texts, images, and questions of the newly developed English textbook, results demonstrate that the involvement factor of the text contained within the newly developed textbook equals 0.67, which is considered properly active however the involvement factor of the newly developed workbook1 is higher (0.69), and it seems to be able to actively involve the learners in such a text suitably. According to William Rummy's Technique, to activate the involvement index of the learners within the textbook, the smallest units require the students to analyze the assumptions given to them to answer the questions, provide activities that ask the students to express the result they achieve and also activities that ask the students to do an experiment and analyze the result or to solve the issues and finally ask questions that are presented to attract the students' attention, not answered immediately by the author.

Furthermore, findings reveal the extent of involvement factor of the questions contained within the newly developed textbook equals 0.85, which implies the required exercises and questions actively involve the learners. Furthermore, the exercises of the workbook consist of highly active questions (0.85), which can actively involve the students to challenge their foreign language skills in higher levels of thinking. According to William Rummy's Technique, questions that students should answer based on what they have learned in the new lesson to conclude new results and also questions that ask students to solve a particular problem are the potential to activate the involvement of the learners. Eventually, regarding the achieved results of quantitatively figuring active and inactive images contained within the newly developed

textbook and workbook, apparently, 0.78 of the existing images actively involve the learners which are good. Also, the images of the workbook are assumed to actively involve (0.70) the learners properly, either. Accordingly, pictures that ask students to carry out an experiment or activity using given data can actively involve the learners rather than pictures that merely describe a specific issue, pictures that explain the strategies of doing an activity, or pictures that are included in none of the above categories. In general, texts and questions which expose the learners to reflect using different techniques like completing the text, finding a solution, presenting some suggestions, and so on, can lead the learners toward more active involvement in the textbook. In terms of images, it can be asserted that images from the considered textbook stimulate the curiosity and creativity of the learners.

Overall, the involvement index is appropriate enough to actively engage the learners in the newly developed English textbook. That is the texts, questions, and images within the textbook are suitably developed to engage the students actively.

Moreover, comparing the English language proficiency of students being taught via the newly developed textbook versus the students being taught through the current Vision series, findings reveal that the mean of the experimental group equals 16.46 and the standard deviation is1.99 whereas the mean of the control group equals 13.85 and the related standard deviation is 1.7. That is, the results of the independent t-test demonstrate that there exists a significant difference between the English language proficiency variable of the experimental and control group. Applying Leven's Test to the homogeneity variance within the groups, the results show that Leven's test is not significant (F= .860, p = .058). Thus, the condition of the variance homogeneity within the groups is met and the independent t-test can be used to observe the homogeneity. Following the gained table, the significance level of the t-test is lower than p 0.5. In other words, there is a significant difference between the English language proficiency of the experimental and control group as the mean of the former more than the latter. Therefore, it can be claimed that students being taught the English language through the newly developed textbook are more proficient than the students being taught through the current vision series textbooks. . The reliability and validity of the material could be guaranteed as they were made based on the learners' needs and the documents available on the Iranian senior high school. According to different multiple types of tasks required by TDA, including development and input response activities, learners were required to create real-life context dialogues, role play, and act out the created as well as make presentations to let them ready and gain sufficient confidence in communicating, responding and participating in English conversations among the classmates.

Furthermore, this study explored the Iranian senior high school teachers' perception of the newly-developed English textbook through a questionnaire developed by Miekley (2005). According to the gained statistical results, the frequencies and percentages for the teachers' perceptions towards the content, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and activities, and context of the newly-developed English textbook, can be concluded that the majority of the teachers believed that the content (45%), vocabulary and grammar (53%), exercises (43.3%) and context (51.6%) of the new English textbook were excellent. The results also indicated that the content (34%), vocabulary and grammar (26%), exercises and activities (37.1%), and context (25.7%) of the new English textbook were rated as good; moreover, the residuals were higher than t/-1.96, that is to say, the teachers' perceptions towards different aspects of the newly-developed English textbook were unanimous. On the other hand, to support the qualitative data in this study, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview with 5 English teachers in Iranian senior high schools (selected randomly) to collect data on their perception of the process of teaching while using the newly-developed English textbook. The interpreted conclusions of the interview can be discussed in this manner: although the course and material development, like teaching, is a complex multidimensional process, all teachers are potential materials developers. Such a process

requires the careful fulfillment of a well-informed framework of components, which will eventually let both teachers and students make remarkable progress.

Conclusion

Attempting to find out the mere impact of Tomlinson's Text-driven Approach a new English textbook and also to consider the higher order of thinking of Bloom's taxonomy, the researcher developed an English textbook for the students in Iranian senior high schools. Having developed the new textbook, the researcher decided to check the students reading comprehension and listening proficiencies as the most considerable skills in Iranian High Schools. So, she prepared a pre-test based on currently used materials (Vision Series) courses. The test was in the form of a teacher-made test with a total number of 20 items included in it. The content of the test was prepared from the currently available textbook. The pre-test was administered at the beginning for both experimental and control groups. The result was registered within the format of the time-one process to be statistically analyzed. The newly-prepared textbook was taught within 16 weeks of an academic year, three hours each week. To show the comparison of the reading comprehension enhancement and listening Proficiency of the students after teaching the newly-prepared English textbook, the researcher decided to prepare a post-test based on the newly-taught textbook. The test was administered over a time-two period among 30 participants within two groups of experimental and control. Based on the statistical analysis the results indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test, thus the newly-prepared textbook causes the students' listening and reading proficiency enhancement.

The other aim of the research was to find out the Iranian English teachers' perception toward the newly-developed English textbook. In doing so, she chose 10 English instructors. The newly-prepared textbook was given to teachers and at the same time asked to fill out the questionnaire developed by Miekley (2005). The statistical results indicated that the majority of the teachers believed that the content (42%), vocabulary and grammar (56%), exercises and activities (44.3%), and context (48.6%) of the newly-prepared textbook were excellent. To support the qualitative data and fulfill the triangulation in this study, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview with 5 field instructors of EFL teachers to collect data on their perception of the process of teaching while using the newly-developed textbook. As a result, it ought to be acknowledged that developing a textbook is a multidimensional task during which the entire effective factors are to be carefully considered so that the provided material plays an active role in teaching and learning flow. In other words, developing an English textbook for non-native learners is not just to do with improving students' grammar, and vocabulary, but it is to stay abreast of the new useful findings to evoke teacher as well as student motivation leading them toward deconstructive thinking. To do so, English textbook developers are required to be fully acquainted with textbook-developing criteria and frameworks.

Generally speaking, it seems implementation of Tomlinson's Text-driven Approach, which is to actively engage the affection as well as cognition of the learners in the pedagogic material as much as possible (i.e. stimulating learners to feel and think) causes the promotion of affective domain of the newly developed textbook. To achieve effective learning, as Tomlinson (2013a) argues, textbooks ought to boost learners' preferences, enthusiasm, and interests to form a meaningful connection in their minds and real life. Tomlinson and Musahara (2004) acknowledge that too much exposure and strict practices will not help the learners to improve sufficiently but pedagogic authorities ought to provide engaging material for the learners that stimulate them to react to the learning process as well as possible. Tomlinson (2013a) also discusses that mechanical drills and rote learning strategies such as substitution, repetition, and other low-level activities do not engage the learners in learning adequately. Thus, findings reveal that there is a significant difference in the newly developed textbook regarding the consideration of the

affective domain in comparison with the current English textbook. Furthermore, texts and questions which expose the learners to reflect using different techniques like completing the text, finding a solution, presenting some suggestions, and so on, can lead the learners toward more active involvement in the textbook. In terms of images, it can be asserted that images from the considered textbook stimulate the curiosity and creativity of the learners. Overall, the involvement index is appropriate enough to actively engage the learners in the newly developed English textbook. That is, the texts, questions, and images within the textbook are suitably developed to engage the students actively.

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Research Paper

Metadiscourse Markers in Quantitative and Qualitative Applied Linguistics Research Articles' Discussions: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

Metadiscourse markers are aspects of a text's organization denoting a writer's stance toward its propositional content. Given the ideological difference between quantitative and qualitative research in terms of determinacy, metadiscourse markers can be viewed as a venue through which writers' epistemological positions are presented. The present study was designed to compare the use frequency of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in the discussion section of 20 quantitative and 20 qualitative applied linguistics research articles, with reference to Hyland's (2005) framework. The analysis involved the comparison of frequency counts of metadiscourse markers across the two corpora using a series of Chi-square tests. To that end, the results were computed and analyzed through SPSS. The results revealed significant differences in terms of the frequency of all interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers except for frame markers, evidentials, attitude markers, engagement markers, and boosters. The findings of study have important implications for academic writing instruction.

Keywords: *Interactional metadiscourse markers Interactive metadiscourse markers, Qualitative research, Quantitative research*

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بررسی مقایسه ای نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی در بخش مباحثه یافته های مقالات پژوهش های کمی و کیفی در رشته زبانشناسی کاربردی

نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی به ابعادی از متن اطلاق می شود که موضع نویسنده را نسبت به محتوای گزاره ای آن نشان می دهد. با توجه به تفاوت ایدئولوژیک پژوهش های کمی و کیفی از منظر قطعیت، نشانگرهای گفتمانی را می توان به منزله ابزاری در راستای بیان مواضع معرفت شناختی نویسندگان دانست. مطالعه حاضر با هدف مقایسه فراوانی بکارگیری نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی تبادلی و تعاملی در بخش مباحثه یافته های ۲۰ مقاله مربوط به پژوهش کمی و ۲۰ مقاله مربوط به پژوهش کیفی در رشته زبانشناسی کاربردی، بر اساس چارچوب هایلند (2005) انجام شد. در تحلیل داده ها که در برنامه آماری SPSS صورت پذیرفت، آزمون خی به منظورمقایسه تعداد نشانگرها در دو زیر-پیکره مورد مطالعه بکار گرفته شد. نتایج حاکی از تفاوت هایی معنادار در فراوانی بکارگیری کلیّه نشانگرهای تبادلی و تعاملی به استثنای نشانگرهای قالبی، ارجاع درون-متنی، نگرشی، ارتباطی، و تأکیدی بود. یافته های این مطالعه می تواند در حوزه آموزش متون علمی و دانشگاهی کاربردی باشد.

واژگان کلیدی: فراگفتمانی: نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی تبادلی ؛ نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی تعاملی ؛ پژوهش های کمی ؛ پژوهش های کیفی

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Introduction

Effective production of written academic discourse is contingent upon not only adequate content knowledge but also knowledge of discursive features that the related discourse community deems appropriate and functional. Research articles (RAs), as the epitome of written academic discourse, are no exception. The bulk of research on "English for research publication purposes" (ERPP) (e.g., Li & Flowerdew, 2020) is support for the significance of mastering RAs' discursive features to publish in high-ranking English-medium journals. Among discourse-related features of RAs, generic moves and steps, transitivity processes, information structure and thematic development, cohesion, and metadiscourse markers have been shown to implicate in the effectiveness with which authors encode their intended meanings and induce interpretations of propositional content (e.g., Akmilia et al., 2022; Jalilifar, 2011; Phonhan, 2021; Wei, 2015; Yang, 2021). Studies in this regard have substantiated the differential use of such features not only across the sections of RAs (e.g., Saidi & Talebi, 2021), but also in RAs across various disciplines (e.g., Adel & Ghorbani Moghadam, 2015). However, these have rarely addressed the discoursal features of RAs reporting differentially designed research with an eye to quantitative (Quan) and qualitative (Qual) paradigms.

Investigating the discourse-related features of RAs reporting Quan and Qual research finds justification in their ideological and epistemological differences: Quan research is more objective and quests for generalizability, while Qual research is more visibly focused on individual meaning, and characterized by emergent questions, design, and procedure (Creswell, 2013; Dornyei, 2007). These differences have implications for the way authors organize their propositions, and represent themselves and engage their readers in the text. The generalizability of Quan research is associated with the author's objective presentation and argumentation of their findings. On the other hand, the in-depth analysis of individual meanings in Qual research allows the author's subjective interpretation to be linguistically encoded.

Among linguistic devices that help writers organize their text and encode their point of view, metadiscourse markers stand out. Such devices act as mediators between the information provided in the text and writers' own perspectives, helping them to project themselves into their discourse, and to show their attitude toward both the audience of the text and the content. They also come of aid to readers in decoding the hidden message intended by writers as they reflect culture-specific writing conventions. Hyland (2004) defined metadiscourse as a dynamic aspect of language, applied by the writer/speaker to interact with the reader/hearer, and divided them into interactive and interactional ones. Interactive metadiscourse markers are employed to facilitate comprehension by leading readers through the text. On the other hand, interactional metadiscourse markers are employed to help writers to signal their attitude toward the text, and to engage readers in the construction of the text. Several studies have been carried out in relation to the use frequency and function of metadiscourse markers (e.g., Ghazanfari et al., 2018; Kim & Lim, 2013; Loi & Evans, 2010), but most have treated a single aspect of metadiscourse such as hedges or boosters, and fallen short of considering the use of metadiscourse markers in their totality in articles reporting differentially designed research, including Quan and Qual research.

The venue through which these differences are most conspicuously communicated is RA's discussion section. More specifically, since authors' interpretations of findings surface in research articles' discussions, the investigation of the use of metadiscourse markers in the discussion section of an article is justified. Sheldon (2013; 2019) has this point in his recognition of the ideologically-laden nature of RA discussions. This might be one reason behind the difficulty novice writers experience in writing the discussion section of their RAs or theses (Al-Shujairi, 2021; Jin, 2021). According to Jalilifar, (2011), this difficulty originates, among others, in RA authors' lack of awareness of the peculiar discoursal features of the discussion.

The discussion section has been assigned different rhetorical functions by researchers. Adopting an objective and therefore Quan-research associated perspective, some primarily see it

as the place for the mere presentation of findings and positioning them in the context of existing research (e.g., Moyetta, 2016). Others, however, have accentuated the interpersonal, argumentative, and interpretive function of the discussion section, deeming it appropriate for making claims about the study's contribution to disciplinary knowledge (e.g., Basturkmen, 2012; Dujsik, 2013). This standpoint is more aligned with the inherent subjectivity of Qual research. The variously sketched functions of the discussion section might be owing to research's ignorance of the research paradigms' implications for the discourse aimed at reporting them. Devices employed by authors in the discussion section of a research report could vary across qualitative and quantitative research, owing to the peculiarities of each. This is despite the fact that this section has received "scant attention" in the literature (Kurniawan & Lubis, 2020, p. 137). Against this background, the present study investigated interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in quantitative and qualitative applied linguistics research articles' discussion sections.

Review of Literature

RAs are now acknowledged as the major genre of written academic discourse for the exchange of up-to-the-mark disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and research findings. Accordingly, authors need to be equipped with knowledge of their discoursal features, on top of content knowledge, to persuade their readership of the merits of their research. This aim is verbalized in the discussion section, which is viewed as one of the essential, yet difficult-to-write, parts of an RA, particularly for novice writers (Al-Shujairi, 2021; Amnuai, 2017; Basturkmen, 2012; Comert & Al-Beyati, 2019; Gounder, 2012; Jalilifar, 2011; Kurniawan & Lubis, 2020). In the face of the various models of the rhetorical moves of the discussion section, Al-Shujairi (2021) found the presentation of findings and their comparison with existing research evidence as the two obligatory moves. Referring to the three metafunctions of language outlined in systemic functional linguistics (see Halliday & Mathieson, 2004), discourse tools that potentially realize these two moves can be said to be more textual in nature. Most of the models have, however, assigned a special position to the authors' interpretation, evaluation, explanation, hypothesis formation, generalization, and argumentation as well, which convey the interpersonal load of the propositions (e.g., Dudley-Evans, 1994; Hupkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988). These textual and interpersonal discourse tools are collectively referred to as metadiscourse.

The term *metadiscourse* was first introduced by Zellig Harris (1959), and it has ever since been widely investigated by language teaching and second language acquisition (SLA) researchers (e.g., Abdelmoneim, 2009; Adel, 2006; Crismore, 1984; Dafouz, 2003; Hyland, 1998, 2004, 2005, 2008). Associated with the rhetorical function of texts, metadiscourse entails the way writers depict themselves and their perspectives. Hyland (2000, 2005) described metadiscourse as the linguistic resources employed to organize a discourse or encode the writer's attitude toward its content or the reader. In view of the Hallidayan distinction among ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions (Halliday & Mattheissen, 2004), metadiscourse markers tend to more visibly carry the interpersonal load of a text (see Abdi, 2002; Alipour, 2018; Atai & Sadr, 2008).

The significance of metadiscourse in assisting writers with effective writing and also readers with comprehension cannot be overstated. Simin and Tavangar (2009) conceptualized metadiscourse as pragma linguistic devices used to account for attitudes as well as the architectural properties of any text: "the second level of discourse which fulfills the textual and also interpersonal functions on language to point and help readers rather than advise them" (p. 230). Without metadiscourse, the writer is likely to distort the message intended to be conveyed (Mulholland, 1999). Metadiscourse has been in evidence in applied linguistics research since the 1990s, and due to its importance, a considerable amount of literature exists on the role of

metadiscourse in academic writing, including RAs (e.g., Abdi, 2002; Esti Nugrahani & Bram, 2020; Kim & Lim, 2013; Simin & Tavangar, 2009).

Hyland (2005) offered a demarcation between *interactive* and *interactional* metadiscourse markers. Interactive metadiscourse markers reflect the writer's awareness of a participating audience, and the ways they seek to accommodate its probable knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations, and processing abilities (Hyland & Tse, 2004). They are employed to shape a text in a way to meet the needs of particular readers, and to set out arguments so as to reflect the writer's interpretations and goals. They fall into the five categories of transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses. The function and examples of each of these are presented in table 1.

Table 1
Interactive Metadiscourse Markers (adapted from Hyland, 2005, p. 92)

Category	Function	Example
Transitions	expression of relations between the main clauses	in addition, but, thus, and
Frame Markers	reference to discourse acts, sequences, and stages	finally, to conclude , my purpose is
Endophoric Markers	reference to other parts of the text	noted above, see fig., in section 2
Evidentials	reference to the information from part of the text	according to x, z states
Code glosses	elaboration of propositional meanings	namely, for example, such as, in other words

On the other hand, interactional metadiscourse markers relate to the personal attitude of the writer toward the text and its potential audience, and are more directly bound with disciplinary discourse conventions (Hyland 2004). These interactional resources fall into the five categories of hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers, as displayed in table 2.

Table 2
Interactional Metadiscourse Markers (adapted from Hyland, 2005, p. 92)

Category	Function	Example
Hedges	withholding commitment to propositional content	might, perhaps, possible, about
Boosters	emphasizing certainty to close dialog	in fact, definitely, it is clear that
Attitude Markers	expressing writer's attitude toward propositions	unfortunately, I agree surprisingly
Self-mentions	making explicit reference to the authors(s)	I, we, my, me, our
Engagement Markers	explicitly building a relationship with the reader(s)	consider, note you can see

Metadiscourse is highly reflective of the context and co-text in which the text is situated. Hyland (2000) posited a close relationship between the use of metadiscourse and the norms and expectations of those who use it in particular settings. In a similar vein, Hyland (2005) pointed out that as metadiscourse functions to represent the social aim of writers, it can be considered as a social act, rather than a simple thread of language objects. This means that its use varies vastly depending on the addressee, the purpose of communication, and other aspects of the social

context. This sociolinguistic perception of metadiscourse justifies its investigation across different fields of study, and across reports of differentially designed research.

Research on metadiscourse has majorly centered on intra-discipline and language-specific variations of its use (e.g., Abdi, 2002; Blagojevic, 2004; Dafauz, 2003; Hyland, & Tse, 2004; Keshavarz & Kheirieh, 2011; Kim & Lim, 2013; Mardani, 2017; Noorian & Biria, 2010; Simin & Tavangar, 2009; Swales, 2004; Sultan, 2011; Kawase, 2015). Metadiscourse markers seem to boost the organization and acceptability of RAs. Gholami and Ilghami (2016) investigated 40 biology RAs in terms of the use of metadiscourse markers, and found (b) Iranian writers' more frequent use of both interactive and interactional markers compared with native RA writers, and (b) a strong positive relationship between RAs' use frequency of metadiscourse markers and the impact factor of the journals they were published in. Evidence also comes from Soleimani and Mohammadkhah (2020), who found metadiscourse markers, particularly interactional markers, more frequent in book reviews published in ISI journals in comparison with those published in non-ISI journals.

As for inter-disciplinary research, Hyland and Tse (2004) found metadiscourse markers more frequent in soft sciences. Harwood (2005) carried out a qualitative corpus research project of self-promotional *I* and *we* in academic work in four disciplines: physics, economics, computing science, and business and management. The study showed that even supposedly "author-evacuated" (p. 1207) articles in the hard sciences can be seen to have a self-promoting flavor with the help of personal pronouns. Along the same lines, Abdi (2002) compared social sciences (SS) and natural sciences (NS) disciplines' use of hedges, emphatics, and attitude markers in their discussion of findings. The disciplines were found to differ in their use of hedges and attitude markers, but there was very little variance between them in terms of emphatics' use. The in-depth analysis of the corpus showed the predominance of validity markers used to support arguments. In a similar vein, Sarani et al. (2016) investigated the use of hedges, boosters, and attitude markers in the discussion and conclusion sections of RAs by non-humanities and humanities writers, and discovered that hedges and attitude markers were more common in the humanities RAs. The use of metadiscourse markers by academic writers with different first languages has also been investigated, and differences located (e.g., Allami & Mirshamsi, 2013; Jalilifar, 2011; Zarei & Mansoori, 2011).

In the domain of applied linguistics, Esti Nugrahani and Bram (2020) investigated the use of metadiscourse markers in eight language teaching journal articles, and found interactive markers more frequent. More specifically, they reported transitions as the most frequent and boosters as the least frequent markers in their corpus. In a similar vein, Abdollahzadeh (2011) investigated hedges, emphatics, and attitude markers in the conclusion section of 60 applied linguistics' RAs. The results showed the remarkable tendency of authors to hedge their propositions. Ghazanfari et al. (2018), too, investigated the use of these markers in applied linguistics and chemistry RA introductions, and found interactive markers more frequent than their interactional counterparts in both disciplines, with evidentials, transitions, and code glossed as the most common categories; however, none of these studies have distinguished between Quan and Qual RAs in their analyses. This is despite the fact that the writing conventions associated with each can be, for one, defined with respect to the employment of metadiscourse markers.

In line with the social turn of applied linguistics (Ortega, 2013), the discipline witnessed a surge of interest in Qual and mixed-methods research; however, studies into the features of their associated written discourse are far and few between. Quan and Qual RAs are assumed to encode the differential epistemology underlying them, and metadiscourse markers are among the means for achieving this. While Qual research seeks to uncover individual meanings in emergent designs, Quan RAs are valued for their design-related rigor, objectivity, and generalizability (Creswell, 2013; Dornyei, 2007). The tension between Qual research's subjectivity and Quan

research's objectivity is embodied in the discussion section of their related RAs. Accordingly, the investigation of their discoursal features, including metadiscourse markers, gains salience. Existing studies have addressed the discoursal features of either Qual or Quan research, or ignored their paradigmatic differences. For one, Rahimpour et al. (2015) investigated the discourse tools employed to represent authors' identity in Qual applied linguistics RAs. They found that authors used mental processes, and inclusion and activation devices to reflect subjectivity, individual meaning, and researchers' visibility. Metadiscourse markers encode the interactive and interactional dimensions of discourse. Therefore, the comparison of their use in the Quan and Qual RAs' discussions could shed light on how their associated ideologies are linguistically encoded. Against this backdrop, the following three research questions were formulated:

RQ1. What are the most frequent metadiscourse markers in Quan and Qual RAs' discussions?

RQ2. Is there a significant difference between Quan and Qual RAs' discussions in terms of the use frequency of metadiscourse markers?

RQ3. Is there a significant difference between Quan and Qual RAs' discussions in terms of the use frequency of the subtypes of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers?

Methodology

Corpus Compilation
The corpus applied in this study consisted of a randomly selected sample of 40 RAs (published from 2014 to 2020), consisting of 20 Quan RAs and 20 Qual RAs, of which the discussion sections (22984 words for Quan and 23052 words for Qual articles) were investigated in terms of the use of metadiscourse markers. They constituted one-third of a bank of 142 RAs from three reputable journals in the field of applied linguistics. The journals were all indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection, with an impact score beyond 1 (Q1):

Language Awareness (published by Taylor & Francis Ltd.)

Language Teaching Research (published by Sage Publications)

TESOL Quarterly (published by Wiley-Blackwell)

The 142 RAs (a) were all single-authored, (b) had a distinct discussion section, (c) reported either Quan or Qual research and (d) were exclusively related to second language acquisition.

Instances of use of different subcategories of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in 20 quantitative and 20 qualitative discussions were manually coded by two raters, and inter-coder agreement was ensured (see Procedure). The coders were Ph.D. candidates of ELT, who were debriefed on the goals of the study and provided with definitions of the metadiscourse categories prior to coding.

Procedure
The present study applied Hyland's (2005) categorization of metadiscourse markers. The study employed a descriptive (ex post facto) design, and the approach to the analysis of the corpus was "directed qualitative content analysis" (DQCA). DQCA involves detecting and coding instances of the use of elements of a pre-existing analytic framework (Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse markers, in this study) (see Mayring, 2014). Firstly, the corpus was compiled based on the mentioned criteria (see Corpus compilation). The second step was to comparability of the lengths (word count) of the Quan and Qual corpora. Following a 60-minute debriefing session with one of the researchers (an assistant professor of applied linguistics specializing in discourse analysis), the other researchers engaged in locating and determining the type of the metadiscourse markers used in 30% of each corpus (i.e., Quan and Qual discussions) (see Kanoksilapatham, 2005) based on Hyland's (2005) model constituted the next step. Subsequently, the inter-coder agreement was ensured in a Cohen's kappa coefficient of .76.

Cohen's kappa, which was run separately for each of two general categories of metadiscourse on the two raters' detected instances, is a measure of inter-rater agreement for categorical scales when there are two raters. Cases of disagreement as to the type of the detected instances of metadiscourse markers were then discussed, and agreements were reached by all the researchers. Disagreements occurred mainly because one metadiscourse token could equally take as an instance of more than one category. The multi-functionality of some metadiscourse markers is also referred to by Hyland (2005). To exemplify, the word "mostly" could be viewed as both an attitude marker and a booster (see Flowerdew, 2013). Clauses containing such cases were double-checked for meaning and writer's possible intention to resolve ambiguities. The final step was counting instances of metadiscourse markers in the two corpora separately. As for data analysis, a series of Chi-square tests were conducted to compare the frequencies of metadiscourse markers, both generally and specifically with an eye to each of their subtypes.

Results

This study was designed to investigate and compare the use frequency of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in Quan and Qual RAs' discussions. The first research question addressed the most frequent metadiscourse markers in Quan and Qual discussions. A total of 2425 interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers were located in the corpus of study: 1698 in Quan and 727 in qualitative Qual discussions. Table 3 illustrates the frequency counts and percentages of the subtypes of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in each corpus separately. The results indicated that in both Quan and Qual, transitions and self-mentions were the most frequently used markers, constituting 54.18%, and 36.39% of all markers in Quan discussions, and 71.52% and 12.79% of all markers in Qual discussions. Other markers, on the other hand, comprised a negligible percentage of all located cases. In both corpora, hedges ranked third in terms of use frequency, making up 4.47% of all detected instances in Quan discussions and 8.66% of all detected instances in Qual discussions. Overall, 89% of the all located markers in both Quan and Qual RAs were self-mentions and transitions, followed by hedges with a 5.73% share of all markers. Accordingly, in each of the Quan and Qual discussions as well as Quan and Qual discussions put together, transitions were the most frequent interactive metadiscourse markers, and self-mentions were the most frequent interactional metadiscourse markers.

The second research question was formulated to find out whether the two corpora differed significantly in their general use of metadiscourse markers in Quan and Qual discussions. To answer this question, a Chi-square test was run. The obtained significant Chi-square value [$\chi2 (1) = 5.173$, $p < .05$, $\Phi = .65$] supported the hypothesis as to the significant difference between the number of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in Quan and Qual discussions, with an acceptable effect size, as shown in the Phi coefficient (Φ) (see Table 4). Accordingly, the second question was answered in the affirmative. In other words, Quan discussions housed a significantly higher number of metadiscourse markers in comparison with Qual discussions.

Table 3
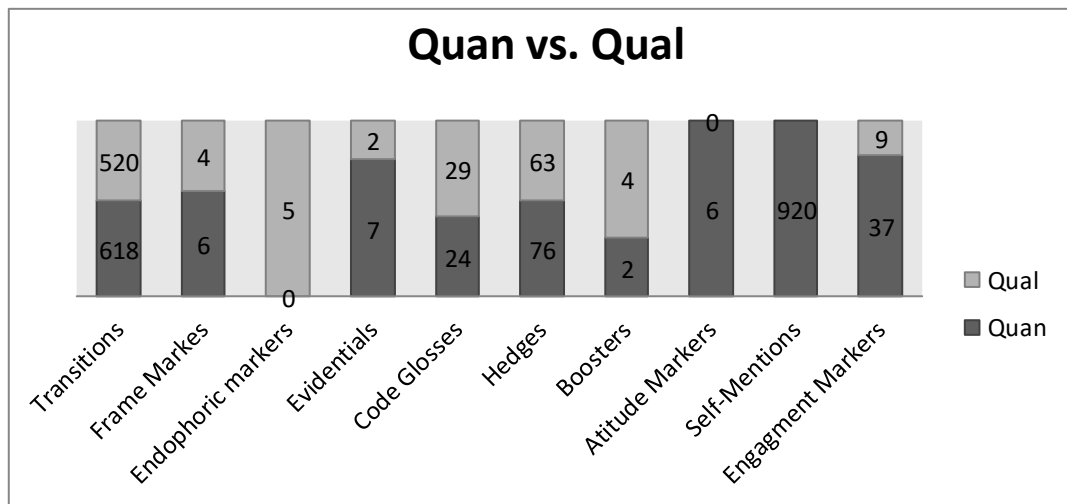*Use Frequency of Metadiscourse Markers in Quan and Qual RAs' discussions*

Metadiscourse Markers		Quan discussions		Qual discussions	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Interactive	Transitions	618	36.39	520	71.52
	Frame markers	6	0.35	4	0.55
	Endophoric	0	0	5	0.68

	markers				
	Evidentials	7	0.41	2	0.27
	Code glosses	24	1.41	29	3.98
	Hedges	76	4.47	63	8.66
	Boosters	4	0.25	2	0.27
	Attitude markers	6	0.35	0	0
Interactional	Self-mentions	920	54.18	93	12.79
	Engagement markers	37	2.17	9	1.23

Figure 1 provides a sketch of the differences with regard to the use of the subcategories of metadiscourse markers.

Figure 1
Frequency of Metadiscourse Markers in Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research

The third research question involved the comparison of the use frequency of each of the subtypes of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. To answer this question, a series of Chi-square tests were run (separately for each of the subtypes of interactive and interactional markers). The significance level was also set at the more conservative .01 level to adjust for multiple comparisons. As evident in Table 4, significant differences were observed for transitions [χ^2 (1) = 132.44, p <.01, Φ = .54], self-mentions [χ^2 (1) = 20.24, p <.01, Φ = .65], endophoric markers [χ^2 (1) = 3, p <.01, Φ = .36], code glosses [χ^2 (1) = 15.13, p <.01, Φ = .73], and hedges [χ^2 (1) = 15.4, p <.01, Φ = .33]. Accordingly, the question was positively answered. Effect sizes were acceptable for code glosses, transitions, self-mentions, and hedges, but it was moderate for endophoric markers. Differences were not significant for frame markers, boosters, evidentials, attitude markers, and engagement markers.

Table 4

Chi-Square Values for Binary Qual-Quan Discussions' Comparisons of the Subtypes of Metadiscourse Markers

Metadiscourse Markers		χ^2	df	Sig.
Interactive	Transitions	132.44	1	.00
	Frame markers	6	1	.49
	Endophoric markers	3	1	.00
	Evidentials	0.5	1	.47
	Code glosses	15.13	1	.00
Interactional	Hedges	15.04	1	.00
	Boosters	0	1	1
	Attitude markers	3	1	.08
	Self-mentions	209.24	1	.00
	Engagement markers	2.56	1	.10
Total		5.173	1	.00

The investigation of standard residuals was also revealing. For three of the metadiscourse markers' subtypes for which significant differences were detected across the two corpora (i.e., transitions, self-mentions, and hedges), standard residuals were far beyond expectation, falling outside the range of +/- 1.96. This indicates that:

the deployment of *transitions* in Quan discussions was significantly beyond the expected frequency (46.92%, Std. Residual = 9.68);

the deployment of *self-mentions* was significantly below the expected frequency in Qual discussions (41.77%, Std. Residual = -12.09), but its deployment in Quan discussions was significantly beyond the expected frequency (54.18%, Std. Residual = 7.91); and

the deployment of *hedges* was significantly beyond the expected frequency in Quan discussions (5.73%, Std. Residual =3.30), but its deployment in Qual discussions was significantly below the expected frequency (4.74%, Std. Residual = -2.16).

In sum, the results showed that Quan discussions embedded more metadiscourse resources than their Qual counterparts. The results also indicated that transitions, self-mentions, and hedges were the most frequently used metadiscourse markers in both Quan and Qual discussions. However, other markers were rare. Moreover, transitions, self-mentions, and hedges were used significantly more frequently in Quan discussions. On the other hand, code glosses and endophoric markers were used significantly more frequently in Qual discussions, though they were rare in both.

Discussion

The present study showed significant differences in terms of the use frequency of metadiscourse markers in the discussion sections of Quan and Qual RAs. Transitions, self-mentions, and hedges were the most frequent metadiscourse markers in both Quan and Qual corpora. Authors of Quan discussions deployed self-mentions, transitions, and hedges most frequently, while authors of Qual discussions used transitions, self-mentions, and hedges most frequently, in descending order of magnitude in both cases. Other markers were rarely drawn upon in either corpus. Moreover, Quan discussions housed (a) a generally higher number of metadiscourse markers, irrespective of their type, and (b) a significantly higher number of transitions, self-mentions, and hedges, compared with Qual discussions. On the other hand, Qual discussions embedded a higher number of endophoric markers and code glosses, though these were rare in both corpora. No significant differences were detected for other metadiscourse markers.

That among interactive metadiscourse markers, transitions were frequent in both Quan and Qual corpora is justified on account of cohesiveness as an essential feature of well-constructed written texts of all types. Transitions are known to boost the comprehensibility and smoothness of a text (Hinkel, 2001; Tanskenan, 2006; Duruk, 2017; Rasooyar et al., 2019; Köroğlu, 2019) located a wide variety of transitions in the introduction, results and discussion, and conclusion sections of English MA theses written by both native and Turkish speakers, irrespective of their research designs. This provides evidence for the essentiality of such metadiscourse makers in academic writing. According to Hyland (2005), transitions, which mark addition, contrast, causation, or consecution, provide comprehension-enhancing links between the steps of an argument. This function makes them particularly useful for meeting the main rhetorical function of the RA discussion, namely argumentation (Al-Shujairi, 2021; Jalilifar, 2011). However, Quan discussions embodied significantly more transitions, as it did more metadiscourse markers in general. This observation can be attributed to Quan research's inherently greater systematicity and rigor as well as its pre-ordained design (Creswell, 2013), which would demand more linguistic discourse-organizing devices in its associated written discourse. It is upon the authors to present their argumentation and interpretation in their discussions in relation to each of the research questions separately, and this would invoke more transitions to render the text comprehensible and easy to follow. The inherent systematicity and objectivity could also have induced the use of more metadiscourse markers, irrespective of their type. To capture systematicity in discourse and to make their discussions more relatable to the readership in the face of all objective measures taken to conduct their research, Quan discussions' authors are compelled to use more metadiscourse markers.

On the other hand, Qual research's more dynamic and emergent nature allows RA authors to discuss their findings in a more integrated manner (McKay, 2006: Benson et al., 2009), which would lead to a general and holistic, rather than research-question specific, understanding and interpretation of the findings. Written academic discourse reporting Qual research seems to reflect these distinguishing features of Qual research, most evidently in the discussion of findings. The representation of the epistemological underpinnings of Quan and Qual research studies in their respective reports is conceded by Dobakhti (2013), whose study showed Quan and ndiscussions' incorporation of differential "commenting on findings" strategies.

The frequent deployment of hedges, one of the two most frequent interactional metadiscourse markers in both Quan and Qual corpora, is also explicable in terms of disciplinary discourse conventions. As a discipline in the humanities, applied linguistics seems to demand the use of hedges as a way of keeping facts and opinions distinct, and accentuating the provisional nature of claims (Nizigama & Mahdavirad, 2021). In this regard, Takimoto (2015) found hedges more frequent than boosters in philosophy RAs, likewise being among the humanities, while both were rare in natural sciences RAs. Authors of both Quan and Qual RAs hedged their statements, indicating the greater implications of discipline (i.e., humanities vs. non-humanities) for the choice of hedges over boosters, compared with RAs' underlying research paradigms (i.e., Quan or Qual).

This is not to totally deny the significance of the research design, as Quan RA authors deployed a significantly higher number of hedges in their discussions than their Quan RA authors. Qualitative research is known for the space it allows authors to push their subjective, yet theory-informed, interpretation of the findings, without aiming for generalizability (Dobakhti, 2013; Creswell, 2013; Dornyei, 2007; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014; McKay, 2006). This inherent subjectivity can be said to have been registered in Qual discussions' less frequent assimilation of hedges. There was not, however, a parallel increase in the use of boosters, since instances of these interactional metadiscourse markers were infrequent in both Quan and Qual discussions. Those Qual RA authors used fewer hedges, but did not opt for boosters, attitude markers or

engagement markers instead, can be rationalized with reference to the promotion of the "impersonal" discourse in the field of applied linguistics over the years (Hyland, 2005). They seem to have preferred neutral argumentation over definitiveness or stance-taking to maintain an alliance with the disciplinary discourse on Quan research. This likely strategic discourse-related measure could be thought of as one reason for the increasing acceptance of Qual applied linguistics research (not to mention the field's epistemological development (see Ortega, 2013)), despite its initial refutation by purist Quan researchers (see Dornyei, 2007).

This so-called "good intention" of Quan and Qual researchers to bring their interests closer to one another can also justify the observed difference in terms of the self-mention token's frequency. In addition to transitions and hedges, self-mentions were used frequently in both Quan and Qual discussions, though they were found to be way more frequent in Quan discussions. Hyland (2001, 2002) initiated the discussion on the projection of researchers' identity in the discourse that reports their research, and self-mentions (which had been long frowned upon in quest for impersonality in written academic discourse (see Wang & Zeng, 2021)) can best serve this purpose. Quan researchers' reflection of their researcher-identity through self-mentions can be partly owing to their likely intention to meet up to the standards of the field's changing epistemology. They seem to have taken a discourse measure which shows their recognition of the value of Qual research and its underlying themes, including individual (rather than group) meaning, and the dynamic nature of the interrelationships of the various aspects of the research as an activity system, including the researcher as a subject (see Michelle & Myles, 2004). With Qual researchers' infrequent use of boosters, and Quan researchers' more frequent use of self-mentions, Quan and Qual discourse can be said to be acting as a catalyst to bring the Quan and Qual camps' closer together. Wang and Zeng (2021), for example, found expert authors to use self-mentions in the absence of boosters in research articles belonging to different fields of study. This line of argumentation, however, stands in need of more research evidence that targets RA authors' intentions behind their choice of certain categories of metadiscourse markers over others.

Qual RAs' discussions were found to embody significantly more endophoric markers and code glosses. As for endophoric markers, Qual discussions' authors generally need to make frequent reference to verbal data (e.g., interview or diary excerpts) presented in the RAs' results section to thrust the interpretation and argumentation of their findings. However, Quan data are rarely, if ever, referred to in the discussion section (see Dobakhti, 2013). This can explain why endophoric markers were more frequent in Qual discussions. In addition, the rhetorical function of argumentation based on verbal data in Qual discussions seems to have demanded more elaboration from authors to convince their potential readership of their subjective interpretations with reference to their own resources (data and analyses), rather than external sources in the form of evidentials. Dobakhti (2013) found Qual RA authors to comment on their findings in their discussions through elaboration, rather than explanation; code glosses can be said to best verbalize this discourse strategy.

Last but not least, the observed insignificant differences between Quan and Qual discussions in relation to frame markers, evidentials, boosters, attitude markers, and engagement markers should be interpreted cautiously, owing to their rarity in both sub-corpora and the small corpora investigated. Based on this observation, however, it is apt to say that both Qual and Quan authors tended to organize their text mostly through transitions, and establish their relationship with their readers mostly through hedges and self-mentions. The predominance of these metadiscourse markers can be, for one, attributed to instructional emphasis on these at the cost of other markers (e.g., Behbahani et al., 2018).

Conclusion and Implications

A main discoursal feature of written academic discourse is metadiscourse in all its variants. Research has substantiated the disciplinary and language-specific attachments of these markers (see Wang & Zeng, 2021), and the present study provided evidence for the significance of Quan and Qual research paradigms for metadiscourse markers' deployment in terms of both their types and frequency. Based on the results, it can be concluded that Quan discussions make greater use of metadiscourse markers in general to reflect such research's greater rigor and systematicity, as well as its quest for generalizability. Irrespective of the research paradigm, though, transitions, hedges, and self-mentions are the most frequent interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in RAs' discussions. Moreover, Quan discussions tend to project the researcher(s)' identity through self-mentions, and this visibly brings them in line with applied linguistics' epistemological development toward valuing individual meanings and subjective activity systems-based interpretations (see Creswell, 2013). Qual researchers, too, tend to avoid deploying boosters, attitude markers, and engagement markers in excess, despite the research paradigm's dynamism and flexibility, probably to appeal to purist Quan researchers. These researchers also realize the elaboration discourse strategy in discussing their findings (Dobakhti, 2013) through endophoric markers and code glosses. Overall, written academic discourse brings to the forefront the ideological and epistemological orientation of Quan and Qual research partly through metadiscourse makers. As for the significance of metadiscourse markers' use for the effective writing of RAs' discussions, Hyland's proposition (2005) is worth mentioning: Metadiscourse reflects how authors strive to portray themselves, their texts, and their readers as they frame, scaffold, and present their arguments and research findings in ways that their disciplines recognize and value.

The study has both theoretical and pedagogical implications. Theoretically, the ideology underlying Quan and Qual research paradigms is reproduced in their associated discourse, particularly in the discussion of the findings where discourse organization and writer-reader relations gain salience. Metadiscourse markers' use is both mediated by research-paradigmatic properties, and constructive of them. This is evident in Quan researcher's use of self-mentions, which contradicts the typically impersonal nature of Quan discussions, and Qual researchers' avoidance of boosters, and attitude and engagement markers, which goes against Qual research's provision of space for negotiating individual and subjective interpretations. Paltridge (2012) provides support for the idea that discourse (Quan and Qual RAs' discussions, in the present study) and reality (research-paradigmatic properties) are mutually constitutive of one another. Practically, the predominance of transitions, hedges, and self-mentions probably indicates an excessive instructional focus on these at the expense of others. The findings invoke writing instructors, specially instructors of ERPP, to (a) raise their learners' awareness of the interaction of research paradigms and discourse that reports them, and (b) treat all metadiscourse markers (both interactive and interactional) in their awareness-raising endeavors. ERPP learners should be familiarized with the whole range of metadiscourse markers, and instructed to use them in relation to common rhetorical moves of Quan and Qual RAs' discussions.

The study's limitations should be admitted. The small corpus of the study obviates drawing definitive conclusions, particularly with respect to other markers than transitions, hedges, and self-mentions. A larger corpus could potentially yield more reliable findings regarding metadiscourse markers' use frequency differences across Quan and Qual discussions. Moreover, authors' L1 background and gender were not controlled for, but further research is needed to find out if these mediate the use of metadiscourse markers across Quan and Qual corpora. Author's L1 background is especially important since research has substantiated language-related associations of the discoursal features of academic writing (Wang & Zeng, 2021). Authors of both Quan and Qual articles in the present study came from a variety of language backgrounds and included both native and non-native speakers. Investigating whether the findings of this study

will hold true if L1 background is controlled for can shed more light on the use of metadiscourse markers in applied linguistics' RA discussions.

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Biodata

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Research Paper

Effects of Peer and Teacher Online Feedback on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Performance

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effect of using online peer and teacher feedback on Iranian EFL learners' writing performance. To this end, 28 male and female learners of a private language institute writing class in Tehran, Iran, were purposefully selected to participate in this study. They were divided into two equal groups. The first group received online PR and the second group received online TF. In order to consider the results of the treatments, two types of *t*-tests were run. First, to check the effect of the two types of online feedback on EFL learners' writing performance, paired sample *t*-test was run, and then to make a comparison between the TF and PR, an independent sample *t*-test was done. The obtained results indicated that both types of online corrective feedback are effective. However, the TF group outperformed the PR one. The implication of this finding is that technology integration in L2 classrooms and, more specifically, providing learners with online corrective feedback will lead to more progress in EFL learners' writing performance.

Keywords:*Peer feedback, teacher feedback, writing performance*

تأثیر بازخورد آنلاین همتایان و معلمان بر عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی

این مطالعه با هدف بررسی تأثیر استفاده از بازخورد آنلاین همتایان و معلمان بر عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان ایرانی انجام شد. بدین منظور، 28 نفر از زبان آموزان دختر و پسر کلاس نویسندگی مؤسسه زبان در تهران، به طور هدفمند برای شرکت در این پژوهش انتخاب شدند. آنها به دو گروه مساوی تقسیم شدند. گروه اول PR آنلاین و گروه دوم TF آنلاین دریافت کردند. به منظور در نظر گرفتن نتایج تیمارها، دو نوع آزمون t اجرا شد. ابتدا برای بررسی تأثیر دو نوع بازخورد آنلاین بر عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی، آزمون t نمونه زوجی اجرا شد و سپس برای مقایسه بین TF و PR، یک آزمون t نمونه مستقل انجام شد. نتایج بهدستآمده نشان داد که هر دو نوع بازخورد اصلاحی آنلاین مؤثر هستند. با این حال، گروه TF بهتر از یک PR عمل کرد. مفهوم این یافته این است که ادغام فناوری در کلاس های درس L2 و به طور خاص تر، زبان آموزان با بازخورد اصلاحی آنلاین منجر به پیشرفت بیشتر در عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی می شود.

واژگان کلیدی: بازخورد همسالان، بازخورد معلم، عملکرد نوشتاری

Introduction

Since writing requires students to translate their thoughts into words, it has PRoven to be

challenging for EFL students. Due to their poor Proficiency level, students often struggle with word choice, grammar, sentence structure, alternative phrases, and cultural understanding while writing (Chen, 2002). In order to improve their writing skills, EFL writing instructors have been thinking about how to use efficient teaching strategies.

According to Process writing theory, feedback is a crucial component of writing in a foreign language and is receiving more and more attention in ESL. Numerous research projects are done on feedback (Keh, 1990; Hyland, 2003; Yang et al., 2006). Some studies seek to understand the nature and purpose of feedback (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Hyland, 2003). The impact of written instructor feedback and written peer feedback on writing is covered in other studies (Yang et al., 2006; Lee, 2007). According to Paulus' research (1999), both peer and teacher feedback was used in the revision Process, with the teacher's input leading to more revision and being more well-liked by students. The compulsory revision also had the potential to greatly improve the results. The secondary schools in Hong Kong studied by Tsui and Ng (2000) and the Chinese students learning English in Singapore studied by Hu (2005) both revealed a favorable attitude toward peer feedback.

Internet-based language teaching and learning has recently become popular due to the advancement of information technology, particularly the widespread use of the Internet. As a result, some research on online feedback is done, with a particular emphasis on the impact of online peer feedback on the writing of foreign language learners (Yang & Meng, 2013) and the impact of online peer feedback in comparison to traditional peer feedback on writing in a second or foreign language (Tuzi, 2004; Liu & Sadler, 2003). However, little study has been done on the various online writing feedback formats.

Literature review

Electronic feedback (e-feedback) has been included in the Process writing technique as a result of the widespread technology in EFL writing classes (Farshi & Safa, 2015; Ho, 2015; Seiffedin & El-Sakka, 2017). In foreign language writing classes, many forms of e-feedback have been used; one of them is known as online peer feedback (OPR), which occurs when classmates Provide comments to students who have finished their work and submitted their updated text through an online tool asynchronously (Hu, 2005). By assisting one another in resolving writing-related issues, OPR aims to improve writing Proficiency (Shintani, Ellis, & Suzuki, 2014). OPR has been shown to be effective in enhancing grammatical correctness (Van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012), Providing learners with the opportunity to negotiate to mean (Ho & Savignon, 2007), and encouraging learner enthusiasm and involvement (Chang, 2009). But studies have also shown that students are uncomfortable with the veracity of peer evaluation (Liu & Carless, 2006). Particularly, less experienced students are less likely to be able to Provide thprovideuctive criticism and PRecise remarks that their more experienced friends need in order to enhance their writing (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Additionally, Tuzi (2004) and Diab (2010) noted that OPR often focuses on local-level adjustments (such as grammar, punctuation, language, and sentence structure) as opposed to global-level advancements (such as content, organization, tone, and purpose). Another drawback of OPR is that late or absent responses from peers may affect students' motivation and the success of their OPR application (Shang, 2017).

Feedback

An essential component of the Process method is feedback. Feedback is emphasized as an "essential and crucial contribution to the growth of a work of writing" by Tsui & Ng (2000). The writing process is permeated by, shaped by, and molded by feedback. Feedback is "an input from a reader to a writer with the consequence of supplying information to the writer for correction," according to Keh (1990). and "by receiving comments, the writer discovers where he or she has

deceived or confused the reader by not Providing enough information, illogical arrangement, lack of development of ideas, or anything like wrong word-choice or tense." According to experts, feedback in this study refers to recommendations or specific revision information that might Provide hints for imPRoved writing.

Types of feedback in writing

Depending on who delivers it, feedback may be divided into two categories: instructor feedback and peer feedback. The topic of teacher criticism of student writing in foreign language classes has received a lot of attention. Some examine the format and information included in the instructor feedback. For instance, Hyland (2003) found that although instructor input that focused on the form might have an immediate effect on the modification of their drafts, it had no discernible impact on the growth of their writing. According to Montgomery & Baker (2007), instructors tend to comment more on specific concerns like grammar and spelling than they do on more general ones like thought and substance.

Online teacher feedback (OTF)

Depending on who delivers it, feedback may be divided into two categories: instructor feedback and peer feedback. The topic of teacher criticism of student writing in foreign language classes has received a lot of attention. Some examine the format and information included in the instructor feedback. For instance, Hyland (2003) found that although instructor input that focused on the form might have an immediate effect on the modification of their drafts, it had no discernible impact on the growth of their writing. According to Montgomery & Baker (2007), instructors tend to comment more on specific concerns like grammar and spelling than they do on more general ones like thought and substance. Some examine how pupils' writing is impacted by instructor criticism. Students that got incorrect feedback from instructors outperformed those who did not, according to Ferris & Roberts' (2001) research.

Others look at how students see and feel about instructor comments. According to Straub (1997), pupils were equally interested in obtaining instructor input on both local word and grammatical errors as well as more general topics like substance and purpose. The majority of students PReferred teacher comments over peer comments, according to Tsui & Ng (2000), and teacher comments might result in more modifications.

Online feedback is receiving increased attention as a result of the Internet's integration with language learning and teaching. Research on online instructor feedback on students' writing is comparatively few in comparison to conventional studies on teacher feedback. Some concentrate on the way in which students respond to online instructor feedback. For instance, Duan (2011) researched student acceptance and PReferences for various online instructor feedback kinds and discovered that students PRefer one-on-one online feedback like e-mail and are more likely to accept input like suggestions.

Others look at how online instructor feedback affects revision (Yang et al., 2013; Alvarez et al., 2012). Alvarez et al. (2012), for instance, suggested that by investigating the nature and purpose of online teacher feedback on students' text revisions, students could benefit from it and improve their writing in a constructive way, particularly when the feedback took the form of suggestions and questions rather than direct correction. Overall, specialized research on online teacher feedback is fairly uncommon.

Online peer feedback (OPR)

Peer review has also been a contentious subject. Some examine the advantages of pupil comments on their writing (Keh, 1990; Lochhart & Lockhart3). They emphasized how reading peer writings may help students improve their own writing while also saving instructors time and

increasing audience awareness. Some academics, however (Zhang, 1995; Nelson and Carson, 1998), contest the benefits of peer review. Based on the emotional qualities of feedback, they discovered that ESL writers PReferred instructor feedback to peer feedback and that they used teacher comments more often than peer comments in their revisions.

The electronic peer feedback feature has been shown to be effective in improving grammatical accuracy (Van Beuningen et al., 2012), exposing students to a variety of writing styles (Ho & Savignon, 2007), and Providing global revisions (Guardado & Shi, 2007; Yang, 2011), fostering learner motivation (Wu, Petit, & Chen, 2015), and developing critical thinking skills (Chang, 2009). Tuzi (2004) studied 20 college writers to examine the link between online criticism and how it affected the revisions of EFL authors. The study's findings demonstrated that students' revisions benefited most from online peer criticism, which enabled them to improve their original writings at both the sentence and paragraph levels and enabled them to add new content. The impact of online peer criticism on the weblog posts of 13 Taiwanese EFL college students was examined by Liou and Peng (2009). Results showed that participants improved their compositions more successfully in the blogging environment and made more comments for their peers. The participants said that receiving training focused on blogs increased their incentive to write better, yet, not all of the participants felt certain that their comments were helpful.

As was indicated in the literature cited above, research on feedback has shown the significance of feedback in writing. There is, however, a dearth of studies comparing the efficacy of various online feedback formats for writing in a foreign language. In order to evaluate the impact of online peer feedback with that of online instructor feedback, research must be conducted. To this end, the following research question was addressed in the present study:

RQ. Do online teacher and peer feedbacks affect Iranian EFL writing performance?

Methodology
Participants
This study was conducted in a private language institute writing class in Iran. The writing class was held two times a week for 120 minutes to foster students' paragraph writing skills using a process writing approach to improve learners' writing abilities. Twenty-eight language students in this class, comPRisingcomprisingand 16 females, were the participants of this study. The participants ranged in age from 17 to 23 years. The participants were randomly divided into two groups. The first group received online peer feedback for their PRoblems and the second group received online teacher feedback.

Instruments
The instruments used in this study were as follows:

Writing tasks
At the beginning of the class, all the participants took part in an in-class writing assignment so that the researcher could choose homogeneous learners. The categories were based on overall writing scores, including the use of vocabulary, sentence structure, organization, and content provided by Cool Sentence Corrective Network (the maximum score is 100 points). This PRe-writing task lasted a total of 90 min, during which students were asked to write a paragraph (200–250 words) with the title, "Autobiography". After finishing the composition, the participants sent their writing to the instructor via e-mail for scoring (Provided by Cool Sentence Corrective Network). The results showed that the participants' writing scores ranged from 15 to 40 points, with a mean of 23.3 (SD = 8.46). Regarding the treatment sessions, they were asked to write about "a perfect birthday party" for peer feedback and to write about a "dream home" for teacher

feedback.

Online peer and teacher feedback tool

Moodle (a modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment) was adopted in the writing course as the tool for OPR and OTF. Moodle was offered at the research site and served as the platform for students to submit their assignments and peer feedback. Students were required to submit their texts for review and to access their already-submitted texts and accompanying reviews in Moodle mode. After completing the writing assignments, students submitted them using Moodle as the computer-mediated mode for peer and teacher feedback.

Procedures
Data Collection Procedure

Paragraph writing framed this writing course content. As a course requirement, participants were instructed to take part in PRe-writing tasks. The students then received training in writing assignments and Providing effective peer feedback for the allocated tasks. For example, the instructor explained the features of a paragraph, brainstorming, a good topic sentence, supporting and concluding sentences, and transitional signals, and then provided a sample article for the students to PRactice peer review. Based on the research purpose, students in the first group were asked to focus on local-level revisions and underline PRoblematic grammar, words, or sentences and then participate in online discussions for the comments added by their peers. To help the students to Provide effective comments in the peer feedback Process, before the first writing task, the instructor described the effective methods for adding peer comments by modeling how to identify local-level PRoblems (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) and made concrete suggestions. After composing the first assignments, the students submitted their first drafts to Moodle. The students of the first group then chose partners to review each other's drafts: Upon logging into Moodle, the students could submit texts for review and access their already-submitted texts as well as accompanying reviews in the discussion section. Students were required to review and provide feedback outside the class within two days. Then, the mean score of the revised writing tasks after OPQ application was computed based on the aspects of syntactic complexity, grammatical accuracy, and lexical density. The same process was repeated for the second group's writings, but this time the learners received their teacher's feedback.

Data Analysis PRocedure

In order to obtain the quantitative results of the study, the obtained scores of the two groups were analyzed by SPSS. First of all, in order to find out the effectiveness of each feedback type, paired sample *t*-test was run. In the next step, in order to compare the differences in performance of the two groups independent sample *t*-test was run. Then, the data from the writing tasks, including the first drafts, online teacher or peer feedback, and modified drafts, were examined from two facets: the PRactical feedback Provided by the teacher or peers in accordance with Hyland's definition (1998), successful revisions in accordance with Conrad and Goldstein's (1999) classification, and types of revisions in accordance with Faigley and Witte's taxonomy (1981). In order to prove reliability, a different teacher was invited to do the analysis. There was 89% agreement.

Results and Discussion

Tables 1 and 2 below illustrate the results of paired sample *t*-test and independent-sample *t*-test used to assess the degree to which online instructor feedback and online peer feedback impact foreign language learners' writing, respectively.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Two Pairs' Performance

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	PRe-test peer FDBK	25.07	14	8.04	2.1
	Post-test peer FDBK	49.6	14	11.1	2.9
Pair 2	PRe-test teacher FDBK	22	14	5.3	1.4
	Post-test teacher FDBK	78.5	14	8.6	2.3

The PRe-test and post-test mean scores of both groups show that students' writing has improved to some degree. In addition, the paired sample *t*-test sig. values of 0.000 indicate a statistically significant difference following the online feedback therapy for both groups.

Table. 2

T-test Statistics for the Performance of Two paired Conditions

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	
P. 1	PRe and Post-test peer FDBK	-24.5	15.09	4.03	-33.2	-15.8	-6.08	13	.000
P. 2	PRe and Post-test teacher FDBK	-56.5	11.6	3.1	-63.3	-49.8	-18.1	13	.000

Although it is shown above that both groups receiving online feedback showed statistically significant improvement in writing, it is unclear if there is a meaningful difference between the two separate online feedback groups. In order to shed light on the findings, a *t*-test based on independent samples was carried out.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Two Groups

	Conditions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-tests writing tasks	Peer	14	49.6	11.1	2.9
	Teacher	14	78.5	8.6	2.3

The mean scores for Online Peer and Teacher feedback conditions were respectively 49.6 and 78.5, which can be seen in Table 3, and the two mean scores are not near to one another. And as Table 4 below indicates, the sig. value is 0.56, which is larger than the significance threshold of 0.05, indicating that the scores do not violate the assumptions. The value sig. two-tailed is 0.000; so, there is a significant difference in the student's writing abilities as a result of getting teacher feedback. To summarize, the input students get from their online teachers and the feedback they receive from their online peers has a statistically-significant effect on the students' performance. There is, however, a discernible difference between the two distinct types of online feedback groups (eta square is 0.68 which indicates a large difference).

Table 4

Independent Samples 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
post-tests	Equal variances assumed	.3	.56	-7.6	26	.000	-28.9	3.7	-36.6	-21.1

Discussion

Consistent with earlier research (Xiao & Lucking, 2008), the current study revealed that online PR and TF might effectively improve learners writing skills in every assessed parameter. This effect may entail PR-related learning efforts. These individuals committed a lot of energy to PR, which may explain their improved results. These students considered online PR as a challenging undertaking, but leveraging peer feedback helped their learning and modifications. Previous research on PR's usefulness from learners' viewpoints supports this finding (Covill, 2010; Yang, 2011).

This research indicated that online PR imPRoved writing cognitively, affectively, socially, and linguistically (Connor & Asenavage, 1994). Learners are required to commit more time to peer criticism and self-reflection for cognitive growth. How peers-built material, PResented ideas, arranged paragraphs, sequenced phrases or words, and picked language and grammar might be a great model to copy or a poor example to avoid (Liu & Hansen, 2002). Peer relationships may increase mutual understanding and effective growth. PR PRomotes good writing attitudes and reduces anxiety (Ho & Savignon, 2007).

Social awareness may be boosted through intergroup encounters. When commenting on peer works, students might estimate based on comparable learning backgrounds or explicitly ask peers. Students learn their duties as readers and writers via confirmation (Wu, 2006). Linguistically, PR form-filling exercises strengthen students' knowledge of composition standards. The feedback obligation drives students to hunt for linguistic expertise to point out their classmates' flaws, but the effects aren't visible owing to their poorer English writing skills. After instruction and mentoring, pupils should improve.

In the case of PR favorability, the experimental group of learners cared about PR initiatives and wanted specific feedback. Incompetent verbal and writing abilities hindered most learners' roles as learning facilitators. They could identify PRoblems from a reader's standpoint, but it was hard to Provide consistent, thorough criticism. Different reviewers' feedback might generate misunderstandings. Learners may value PR for cognitive growth, language awareness, and social engagement. They were nonetheless cautious about their counterparts' PR quality (Yang et al., 2006).

PR enhances social relationships, especially when resolving feedback and comment disputes. When PR differences arise, some students say they'll contact peers for alternatives rather than sticking to their original opinion. Their views toward the Process led to more peer conversations and less instructor intervention. The students seemed to understand that PR required them to negotiate/compromise with, refer to, and consult many readers to update their content (Storch, 2005). Most learners didn't think friendships would hamper PR when giving feedback to peers. This contradicts certain research. The teacher emphasizes PR's significance throughout training; thus, most students don't take criticism personally (Min, 2005).

Both sets of students felt TF could PRoperly detect mistakes, Provide alternate exPRessions, and highlight topic PRoblems. Yang et al. also favor TF (2006). Peer feedback listed these qualities as flaws. Feedback seems confusing and difficult. With poorer language skills, these pupils may be unable to compose a phrase effectively, making brief writing difficult. Implicit feedback that encourages autonomous Learning may not fix their PRoblems. Teachers may need to provide more scaffolding to help these pupils PRoduce PRoper sentences.

Online TF versus PR showed that learners had a greater awareness of TF and critical reflections of their writing than online PR. Students believed the online platform offered many benefits, including the ability to view peer group compositions, convenience and flexibility (an easily manipulated interface, convenient feedback, immediate access to Internet resources, and recorded revisions), and environmental protection (reduction of paper waste). Several studies support these views (S. S. J. Lin, Liu, & Yuan, 2001; Xiao & Lucking, 2008). Elola (2010) claimed that online collaborative learning environments could engage learners in content development and Provide a tool to create, transform, track, and erase work with built-in accountability. This generation of students lives in an electronically mediated learning environment and uses online technology to learn English writing.

Online TF had a greater impact than online PR because students found it more dependable for correcting grammatical faults and word meanings. Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) discovered the reformulation technique did not engage pupils extensively. Students had little time to discover PRoblems and remedy them. Online corrective feedback doesn't represent pupils' cognitive depth (Mila & Mayo, 2013; Tocalli-Beller & Swain, 2005).

TF in this research helped students PRoduce more PRecise writing than online PR. In both cases, pupils can recognize and explain faults (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010; Bitchner & Storch, 2016). Students may use TF to more reliably grasp instructor comments on their writing. The students were really engaged. Using technology, teachers give online feedback. It emphasized metalinguistic signals and explicit and implicit text correction. Metalinguistic hints helped students enhance their language skills so they could modify their works based on lecturers' remarks and recommendations (Stefanou & Revesz, 2015; Karim & Nassaji, 2020).

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, several key discoveries and pedagogical implications may be gained. Online instructors and online peer feedback may help foreign language writing. Both groups improved after receiving online instructor or peer feedback. Online instructor and peer comments affect students' writing revision. Students may read feedback points and use them in revision writing, resulting in effective revisions and diverse types of revisions.

Technology integration in L2 classrooms is viable and beneficial since it's not limited by time or space. In terms of writing education or Learning, it may give a suitable platform where students can communicate, debate, and pool ideas using internet technologies. Second, instructors are urged to offer more online feedback, which is an essential aspect of Process-oriented writing and may assist enhances students' writing in terms of language, ideas, organization, etc. Follow online instructor comments to improve writing, then. Third, students should be encouraged to contribute online peer criticism, which benefits both them and others. They may enhance their writing by reading classmates' work. The approach may also help pupils build language expertise and collaborate. In writing instruction, online instructor and peer feedback should be used. They may enhance pupils' writing and get them involved in revision.

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Research Paper

Impact of Cognitive Intervention Instruction on the Phonological Awareness of Dyslexic Students at Primary Schools

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Abstract
This experimental research centered on considering the effect of cognitive intervention instruction on the phonological awareness of Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools. For this purpose, 32 male and female students between 8 to 11 years of age with 90 to 110 IQs average, were purposefully selected from primary schools and randomly assigned to a control group and an experimental group. Wechsler Intelligence test (WIT), Karami and Noori (KNT) test, and a cognitive intervention package were used as tools in this research. Then, to check the participants' phonological awareness, (KNT) measurement was applied to the students. The covariance analysis of the resultant data showed that this package was effective on the phonological awareness of the experimental group after receiving the cognitive intervention package in contrast to the control group. The independent sample t-test also showed that there was no statistically meaningful difference between dyslexic male and female students in the experimental group regarding phonological awareness. The findings recommend that instructors at primary schools should teach the students to use cognitive intervention programs in phonological awareness to accelerate and do their more effective homework and develop productive insights into their phonological awareness.

Keywords: *Cognitive intervention instruction, Dyslexic students, Primary schools, Phonological awareness*

بررسی تأثیر آموزش مداخله شناختی بر آگاهی واج‌شناختی دانش آموزان نارساخوان مدارس ابتدایی
این پژوهش آزمایشی با طرح پیش‌آزمون- پس‌آزمون با هدف بررسی تأثیر آموزش مداخله شناختی بر آگاهی واج‌شناختی دانش آموزان نارساخوان ایرانی در پایه سوم ابتدایی انجام شد. 32 دانش‌آموز دختر و پسر 8 تا 11 سال، با میانگین ضریب هوشی 90 تا 110، در یک گروه کنترل و یک گروه آزمایش به‌صورت تصادفی انتخاب‌شدند. آزمون هوش کودکان وکسلر (WIT)، آزمون کرمی و نوری (KNT) و بسته مداخله شناختی به‌عنوان ابزار در این پژوهش مورداستفاده قرار گرفت. سپس، برای سنجش آگاهی واج‌شناختی دانش‌آموزان در دو مرحله پیش و پس‌آزمون، از آزمون خواندن و نارساخوانی(نما) در بین دانش آموزان استفاده شد. تحلیل کوواریانس نشان‌داد که بسته مداخله شناختی بر آگاهی واج‌شناختی دانش‌آموزان گروه آزمایش پس از دریافت بسته مداخله شناختی در مقایسه با گروه کنترل مؤثر بود (p<0.01). آزمون تی نمونه مستقل نیز نشان داد که بین دانش‌آموزان دختر و پسر نارساخوان گروه آزمایش، ازنظر مشکل آگاهی واج‌شناختی و آموزش مداخله شناختی، تفاوت معنی‌دار وجود نداشت. این نتایج به مربیان مدارس ابتدایی پیشنهاد می‌کند تا به دانش‌آموزان بیاموزند که چگونه از برنامه مداخله شناختی در تسریع آگاهی واج‌شناختی خود استفاده کنند و تکالیف مؤثرتر خود را انجام دهند و بینش‌های سازنده‌ای را در آگاهی واج‌شناختی خود ایجاد کنند.
واژگان کلیدی: آموزش مداخله شناختی، آگاهی واج‌شناختی، دانش آموزان نارساخوان، مدارس ابتدایی

Introduction

Phonological awareness knowledge is an internal ability to help students to think about the sound structures of language (Gillon, 2000). Phonological awareness permits students to discriminate, remember and manipulate sounds at the sentences, words, syllables, and sound levels (Seki, 2008). More specifically, phonological awareness is the power to realize and play with sounds in spoken language (Webster & Plante, 2010). It is an essential skill that underlies a student's ability to learn to read and spell (Laing & Espelan, 2005). Students cannot begin to connect the sounds of their language to letters and letter combinations without strong skills in phonological awareness (Lemon & Fuchs, 2010). In fact, students must be able to isolate and blend sounds into word parts to learn to read as well as spell (Kjeldson & Olofsson, 2003).

Students who experience problems with phonological awareness actually have difficulty relating environmental sounds with specific things because for dyslexic students at primary schools, this is a very challenging task in their difficulties in decoding and encoding (Kjeldson & Olofsson, 2003). Students who experience problems with phonological awareness often cannot play with sounds (Konaz, 2010). These learners may have difficulty with letter reading and spelling. They are slow learners to learn the ability to pronounce words in written language (Klingner & Vaughn, 2015). Clearly, students with poor phonological skills are not good at understanding how letters and letter patterns play to represent language in written form (Rose, 2009). In reality, phonological awareness problems can be related to dyslexia which is a specific learning disability (Thomson, 2013). Dyslexic students are not able to pronounce the sounds satisfactorily. They have difficulties with accurate, fluent word recognition, spelling, and decoding abilities (Wray, 2016).

Consequently, students with phonological skills problems need much more adequate instruction to practice because deliberate instruction makes it easier for dyslexic students to develop their phonological awareness (Van Riper & Erickson, 2018). Therefore, a cognitive intervention package instruction as an innovative intervention is necessary for learners who do not make adequate progress with phonological skills. Cognitive intervention package instruction is effective in developing phonological awareness, practicing associating sounds, and spelling patterns, and practice decoding words (Leather .& Henry,2013).

Purpose of the Study

Whereas learning phonological components for Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools is to some extent difficult and takes a considerable amount of time and effort to learn well, it is necessary for all dyslexic students to know how to use cognitive intervention in education to read materials more successfully. To help this group of students, some researchers conducted a lot of studies to solve this problem, but the findings of such studies were not the end-all answer to the problems of dyslexic students. Consequently, the present research aimed at investigating the effect of cognitive intervention instruction on the phonological awareness of Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools. Thus, the following research questions were addressed:

Research Questions

Q1. Is cognitive intervention instruction effective in the phonological awareness of Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools?
Q2. Is there any significant difference between Iranian dyslexic male and female students regarding cognitive intervention instruction and phonological awareness at primary schools?

Review of Literature

Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness has generally been defined as "a general awareness associated with sounds and phonemes that are in spoken words" (Moats & Tolman, 2019, p.289-394). Phonological awareness clearly draws on letter sounds' knowledge, patterns of sounds, and the capacity to manipulate that knowledge in decoding written words that are unfamiliar to readers (MacCullagh, 2014). Students who experience problems with phonological awareness have two dominant difficulties in the reading process. The first major difficulty that students suffer from is the shortage of explicit instruction and practice in phonological and phonemic awareness. The other major difficulty is problems in the phonological processing system of language (Moats & Tolman, 2019).

Students who experience phonological awareness difficulty usually have these problems:
➢ They are not able to pay a lot of attention to rhymes and the repetition of sounds
➢ They are not able to remember how to pronounce words (Casy, 2020)
➢ They are not able to recognize different sounds in similar words
➢ They cannot separate syllables in a compound word (Cornwall, 2001)
➢ They are not able to recognize the first sound in a word
➢ They are not able to spell a word into its separate sounds
➢ They do not have the ability to add, subtract and replace sounds in a word
➢ They are not able to recognize and produce correct sounds based on phonetics and spelling (Cornwall, 2001).

Cognitive Intervention Instruction and Phonological Awareness

Cognitive intervention is one type of learning strategy that good students utilize to learn teaching materials more and more successfully in the classroom (Long & MacBlain, 2007). Repetition, organizing, summarizing, guessing meaning, and using imagery for memorization are cognitive interventions that provide a structure for learning while a task may not be learned by different steps (Wheldall & Rothwell, 2015).

Cognitive intervention instruction supports experienced learners with phonological awareness difficulty to develop internal procedures that enable dyslexic students to perform tasks that are complicated (Wagner, 2011). In fact, one area where cognitive intervention is fundamental is phonological awareness because it can help students who experience phonological awareness difficulty to understand what they read as well as write (Waldie, Austin, Hattie & Fairbrass, 2014).

As a matter of fact, using cognitive intervention instruction on the phonological awareness difficulty in the classroom, "supports the teacher to fulfill an important role in bridging the gap between dyslexic students and skill to be learned" (Moore & Hammond, 2010, p.85-110). Explicit instructions such as independent practice, and verbal and written practice, may also be used for students to help them to make it easier to know how to manipulate cognitive knowledge more successfully because actions that are repeated each time can significantly effect important learning outcomes for students (Stackhouse & wells, 2009).

To consider the possible effect of cognitive intervention instruction on the phonological awareness of Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools, Faramarzi, Ghorbanchian, and Poor Sayyed (2014) in a study considered the effect of the phonological educational intervention on the reading performance of primary students in grade three with developmental dyslexia. The results of this conducted research showed a significant difference (P≤0.001) between the experimental and control groups. The results of this research also revealed that phonological educational intervention is effective on the reading performance of dyslexic children and the method can be used to promote such dyslexic children.

In another study, Prusty, Gupta, and Raghavan (2019) investigated the effect of cognitive intervention on academic achievement in children with phonological awareness disabilities. In

this research, they came to the conclusion instruction cognitive intervention on the phonological awareness of dyslexic students at primary schools was effective in improving reading and phonological awareness of dyslexic primary students in grades three and four. The results of this research also indicated that after receiving cognitive instruction, the experimental group in contrast to the control group had a considerable development in their phonological awareness scores.

Garavand, Khoshbakht and Azizifar (2022) investigated the effect of cognitive intervention training on elementary school students' reading performance with dyslexia. In this research, descriptive statistics and covariance analysis showed a meaningful difference between the experimental and control groups after receiving the cognitive intervention training ($p < 0.01$). In this conducted research, an independent sample t-test also revealed this program was effective on the students' reading performance with dyslexia, particularly, on reading words, chain words, words, and text comprehension components.

Pahlavan Neshan and Rostami Ravari(2016)considered the impact of phonological awareness training on the speed-reading of boy students with dyslexia. The results of this research showed that the students in the experimental group who received the phonological awareness training over two months significantly increased their speed-reading in comparison to the control group. The results also indicated that teaching cognitive intervention on the speed-reading disability can increase the reading promotion of dyslexic students in reading difficulties.

Mcbreen and Savage (2020) in research investigated the impact of a cognitive intervention program on the phonological awareness of primary school students. The results of this research showed that after receiving the cognitive intervention program, the reading ability of the dyslexic students was improved. The results also indicated that there was no statistically considerable difference between male and female students with dyslexia in the experimental group after receiving the cognitive intervention program.

Methodology

Participants

The randomly chosen participants in this research were 32 dyslexic male and female students in grade three between 8 to 11 years old with 90 to 110 IQs average in control and experimental groups of equal size.

Instruments

The instruments used in the present study are as follows:

Wechsler Intelligence Test (WIT). WIT is a suitable measurement that was first used to examine the students' intelligence between 6 and 12 years old (Zangiabadi, Sadeghi & Ghadampour, 2018). Alpha reliability of the measurement was found 0.88 and 0.85 respectively (Sharifi & Rezaie, 2018).

Karami and Noori Test (KNT). KNT is the test that was first designed by Karami and Noori to examine Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools (Sharifi & Rezaei, 2018). This test involves Reading Comprehension, Reading Words knowledge, Sound Elimination, Letter and Phoneme Patterns, and Category Mark (Sharifi & Rezaei, 2018). Alpha reliability of the test was found 0.83 in this research.

Cognitive Intervention Package (CIP)

This cognitive intervention package includes:

➢ Identifying a skillful primary teacher to teach the package

- ➢ Drawing students' attention to a task through highlighted material
- ➢ Using pencil cues to pay attention to punctuation
- ➢ Specifying aids for memorization
- ➢ Practicing through verbalization and visual study
- ➢ Practicing sounds and phonemes through games
- ➢ Teaching students to play sounds and phonemes in print words
- ➢ Teaching students to divide, add and subtract the sounds
- ➢ Helping students to manipulate sounds in different words (Waldie, Austin, Hattie & Fairbrass, 2014).
- ➢ Conducting post- test

Data Collection Procedure

For collecting the required data, firstly, using the Wechsler Intelligence test (WIT), dyslexic students were identified and they were divided into a control and an experimental group. After that, Karami and Noori's (KNT) test was used to measure the students who had experienced phonological awareness difficulty. After manipulating the pre-test in two groups, the Cognitive Intervention Package for 10 sessions was only taught to the experimental group. On the other hand, to consider the differences between the control and experimental groups in phonological awareness a covariance analysis was used. Then, the independent sample t-test also was used to consider the difference between dyslexic male and female students in the experimental group regarding phonological awareness difficulty and cognitive intervention.

Data Analysis Procedure

Using a covariance analysis, the data was analyzed to deliberate the influence of cognitive intervention instruction on the phonological awareness of students. Then, an independent sample *t*-test was used to measure the difference between dyslexic male and female students in the experimental group regarding phonological awareness and cognitive intervention.

Results

The results obtained from the analysis of the data are presented in the following tables:

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation in the Control Group in Pre- and Post-Tests

	Pre –Test			Post-Test	
Component	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Phonological awareness	16	15	1.86	14.49	1.48

Table 1 above clearly presents the number of participants, the means in the pre-and post-tests, and the standard deviation in the control group. The mean of the phonological awareness component in the pre-test in the control group is (mean=15) while the mean of phonological awareness in the post-test in this group is (mean=14.49). This means that there is no meaningful difference between the means of the two groups.

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation in the Experimental Group in Pre- and Post- Tests

	Pre-Test			Post-Test	
N	Mean	Std. Deviation		Mean	Std. Deviation
16	15.63	1.59		19.81	1.97

Based on the means in the pre-test and post-test and standard deviation in the experimental group, the phonological awareness mean in the pre-test is 5.63, while the mean of this component in the post-test in this group is 19.81. This means that the mean for the experimental group in the post-test is higher than the mean for this group in the pre-test. Therefore, there is a meaningful difference between the means of the experimental group after receiving the cognitive intervention package.

Table 3
Normal Distribution of Phonological Awareness Scores in the Control and Experimental Groups

	Control Group		*Experimental Group*	
Degrees	Statistic Level	Sig.	Statistic Level	Sig.
Pre-Test	0.954	0.59	0.885	0.06
Post-Test	0.956	0.63	0.886	0.06

The above table shows that the distribution of this variable is completely normal and the domain of this distribution number is found at p<0.05.

Table 4
Leven's Test in Pre- and Post-Test Stages

Pre-Test Stage		*Post-Test Stage*	
Statisic Level	*Sig.*	*Statisic Level*	*Sig.*
0.159	0.69	0.428	0.52

According to Table 4, the value of the significant level in F is higher than 0.05 (p≥ 0.05). Consequently, the homogeneity assumption of variances is completely established. This is to say that conducting the covariance analysis test is statistically logical and perfectly acceptable.

Table 5
Cognitive Intervention Instruction and the Phonological Awareness along with the effect of Pre-Test

Changes	**df**	**Mean**	**F**	**Sig**	**Eta**
Scores	1	7.18	55.9	0.001	0.66
Impact of Variable	1	125.9	981.4	0.001	0.97
	27	0.128	---	---	---

Covariance analysis indicated that the effect of the cognitive intervention instruction on the phonological awareness of the dyslexic students is considerable because the Eta value is $\eta^2 = 0.97$, P = 0.001, and $F_{1, 29} = 981.4$.

Table 6
Changes in Phonological Awareness in the Experimental and Control Groups

Groups	Mean & Std. Deviation		Change (Percent)	Dependent T-test	Sig
	Pre-Test	Post- Test			
Experimental	15.63±1.59	19.81±1.97	+26.78	-13.69	0.001
Control	15±1.86	14.49±1.48	-3.4	0.235	0.82

In the above table, covariance analysis clarifies that the effect of the cognitive intervention instruction is statistically more on the phonological awareness of dyslexic students in the experimental group than in the control group.

Table 7
Results of the Independent Sample t-Test

Sig. level	t value	Mean difference
0/76	-0/306	-0/269

Table 7 shows the significant level, *t-value*, and mean difference in the post-test of students in the experimental group. The significant level in this table is more than 5%. In other words, this difference is 95% between the male and female students in the experimental group. It is thus perceived there is no significant difference between dyslexic male and female students at primary schools in the experimental group, in contrast, to the control group in terms of the effect of cognitive intervention instruction on phonological awareness.

Discussion

The obtained results indicated that phonological awareness is affected by cognitive intervention instruction. This finding supports the theory that explicit instructions such as independent practice, and verbal and written practice must be used for students to help them to know how to manipulate cognitive knowledge more successfully. In fact, actions that are repeated each time can significantly impact learning outcomes for students (Stackhouse & wells, 2009). Accordingly, this finding is in line with those in the previous research conducted by Faramarzi, Ghorbanchian & Poor Sayyed (2014), Prusty, Gupta & Raghavan (2019) & Garavand, Azizifar and Khoshbakht (2022).

The results of this research also revealed that cognitive intervention package instruction affects the phonological awareness difficulty of dyslexic students because dyslexic students often are not able to understand similarities and differences of sounds in print words (Anderson & Meier-Hedde, 2011). The results also revealed that cognitive intervention instruction supports advanced learners with phonological awareness difficulty to develop internal procedures that enable dyslexic students to perform tasks that are complicated. So, the results are in line with those of the previously-conducted studies by Faramarzi, Ghorbanchian & Poor Sayyed (2014), Prusty, Gupta & Raghavan (2019), Garavand, Khoshbakht, & Azizifar (2022), Pahlavan Neshan & Rostami Ravari (2016).

The results of the independent sample *t*-test indicated that there was no statistically meaningful difference between dyslexic male and female students at primary schools in the experimental group with respect to cognitive intervention and phonological awareness difficulty. These results are consistent with those of the research previously conducted by Mcbreen and Savage (2020) who concluded that there was no statistically considerable difference between dyslexic male and female students in the experimental group with respect to cognitive intervention and phonological awareness difficulty.

The present research revealed that cognitive intervention is one type of learning strategy that good students utilize to learn teaching materials more successfully in the classroom, and that repetition, organizing, summarizing, guessing meaning, and using imagery are cognitive interventions that provide a structure for learning while a task may not be learned (Wheldall & Rothwell, 2015). Finally, according to what has been mentioned above, cognitive intervention package instruction is effective in the phonological awareness of dyslexic students such as recognizing sounds, phonemes, sound patterns, and sound and letter correspondence which are affected by cognitive intervention package instruction.

Conclusion

The present experimental research aimed at exploring the effect of cognitive intervention instruction on the phonological awareness of Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools. The results indicated that cognitive intervention package instruction is effective in the phonological awareness of students at primary schools so this significance level was considered $p \leq 0.05$. In fact, the results of covariance analysis revealed that the phonological awareness difficulty of Iranian dyslexic students at primary schools including syllables, sound levels, letter reading and combinations, and spelling are affected by cognitive intervention program instruction. Accordingly, cognitive intervention instruction necessarily plays a key role in accelerating phonological awareness of dyslexic students to know how to use cognitive strategies for language learning.

In addition, the results of this research also indicated when teachers spend sufficient time and interest to use cognitive intervention to accelerate phonological awareness knowledge of the dyslexic students in the classroom, they can better understand and interpret the learning process. Thus, cognitive intervention instruction is undoubtedly useful and productive for all language reading-related elements, especially phonological awareness. This means that the conducting and interpretation of such tasks is not only informative but can even be useful in students' reading and phonological awareness difficulties. Therefore, primary school teachers should know that students with phonological difficulties have some difficulties with phonological processing because of failure in rapid naming, problem in articulation speed, and shortage in the auditory short term (Washburn & Mulcahy, 2014).

The results of this research are only confined to the phonological awareness knowledge of third-grade dyslexic students at primary schools. It cannot be extended to other different elements of reading skills. Based on the results of this research, primary teachers at schools are encouraged to focus more on the effect of cognitive intervention instruction on other types of dyslexia. The major point is that cognitive intervention package instruction on the phonological awareness of dyslexic students at primary schools can play an important part in accelerating phonology awareness knowledge and information, especially, in relation to the acquisition of phonological awareness of dyslexic students at primary schools. Consequently, teachers are urged to advocate concentration on cognitive intervention instruction in the phonological awareness of dyslexic students at primary schools in the classroom.

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Biodata

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Research Paper

Iranian EFL High School Teachers' Perceptions of Virtual Learning System Opportunities: Challenges and Threats

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Abstract
Based on the importance of virtual classrooms and due to the inevitability of using them in difficult situations such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the current study was an attempt to investigate the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' experience. Also, probing the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' opportunities, exploring the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' challenges and threats, and informing the educational society of the solutions to the barriers of virtual learning systems based on the perception of high school EFL teachers were the other objectives of the current study. To this end, the attitudes of 120 EFL teachers (males=67, females=53) with the age range of 30 to 50 who were teaching at different high schools of West Azerbaijan province, Urmia, Iran, were gathered via a researcher-made questionnaire. The results of the study show that although high school teachers faced some barriers such as low internet access, low interaction, and low concentration by learners, actually they actually have positive attitudes toward the use of digital learning, particularly in virtual classrooms. Furthermore, the findings showed that data retention power and quick and easy access were favored by most of the teachers, and they believed these two items can be regarded as positive opportunities. In addition, teachers presented some comments such as adding visuals to the virtual classrooms, using chat boxes, and planning interaction hints to resolve the virtual classrooms' existing problems such as poor connection and low concentration. The implications of the study will be discussed.

Keywords: *High School Teachers' Perceptions, Opportunities, Problem Solving, Virtual Learning Systems*

دیدگاه معلمان دبیرستان انگلیسی زبان انگلیسی از فرصت های سیستم آموزش مجازی: چالش ها و تهدیدها

بر اساس اهمیت کلاس های مجازی و به دلیل اجتناب ناپذیر بودن استفاده از آن در شرایط دشواری مانند همه گیری کووید 19، پژوهش حاضر تلاشی برای بررسی درک معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستانی از تجربه سیستم های یادگیری مجازی بود. همچنین بررسی نگرش معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستان نسبت به فرصت های سیستم های یادگیری مجازی، بررسی نگرش معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستان نسبت به چالش ها و تهدیدات سیستم های یادگیری مجازی و آگاه سازی جامعه آموزشی از راهکارهای رفع موانع سیستم های یادگیری مجازی مبتنی بر آموزش. ادراک معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستان از دیگر اهداف پژوهش حاضر بود. برای این منظور، نگرش 120 معلم زبان انگلیسی (67 مرد = 53 زن = 53) با دامنه سنی 30 تا 50 سال که در دبیرستان های مختلف استان آذربایجان غربی، ارومیه، ایران تدریس می کردند، از طریق یک پژوهشگر ساخته جمع آوری شد. پرسشنامه. نتایج مطالعه نشان می دهد که اگرچه معلمان دبیرستان با موانعی مانند دسترسی کم به اینترنت، تعامل کم و تمرکز پایین زبان آموزان مواجه بودند، اما در واقع آنها نگرش مثبتی نسبت به استفاده از یادگیری دیجیتالی به ویژه در کلاس های مجازی دارند. همچنین، یافته‌ها نشان داد که قدرت نگهداری داده‌ها و دسترسی سریع و آسان مورد علاقه اکثر معلمان بوده و معتقدند این دو مورد را می‌توان به عنوان فرصت‌های مثبت تلقی کرد. علاوه بر این، معلمان نظراتی مانند افزودن تصاویر به کلاس‌های مجازی، استفاده از جعبه‌های گفتگو و برنامه‌ریزی نکات تعاملی برای حل مشکلات موجود کلاس‌های مجازی مانند اتصال ضعیف و تمرکز پایین ارائه کردند. پیامدهای مطالعه مورد بحث قرار خواهد گرفت.

واژگان کلیدی: ادراک معلمان دبیرستان، فرصت‌ها، حل مسئله، سیستم‌های یادگیری مجازی

Introduction
New technologies are being adopted by classrooms in the twenty-first century more frequently because of their promise to make learning easier for students of all skill levels. In light of this,

technology integration presents a strategy for coordinating classroom instruction with how students go about living their daily lives. In reality, research is starting to demonstrate that technology might improve education in numerous ways, including by potentially increasing student motivation and achievement (Lizcano et al., 2020; Maatuk et al., 2022). Teachers can differentiate their instruction in ways that were not conceivable when limited to traditional classroom media because of the immense flexibility of technology (Ms & Toro, 2013). Technology has a well-established place in general education classrooms, but it also offers many benefits to students with special needs. For instance, assistive technology comprises various tools and services that are specially made to support students with disabilities. Therefore, technology can enhance educational opportunities and improve outcomes in classrooms that include students with a variety of exceptionalities (Lara et al., 2020).

In debates about technology integration, the teacher's role is frequently ignored (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). Because of the enormous flexibility of technology, teachers can differentiate their instruction in ways that were not imaginable when restricted to traditional classroom media (Ms & Toro, 2013). In general education classrooms, technology has a well-established place, but it also has a lot to offer students with special needs. Assistive technology, for instance, consists of a variety of tools and services that are expressly designed to aid students with impairments. As a result, technology can increase learning opportunities and outcomes in classrooms where kids with a range of exceptionalities are present (Lara et al., 2020). The function of the teacher is frequently disregarded in discussions regarding technological integration (Bitner & Bitner, 2002).

Teaching and education have benefited from new and contemporary advantages as a result of the advent of a new information technology era and the advancement of computers and mobile devices (Xie et al., 2019). Many of us recall passively listening to our teachers as they lectured the material in front of the class during our school and college years. In those teacher-centered classrooms, students were merely passive receivers of knowledge rather than actively participating in their own learning processes. Fortunately, a new approach to learning known as blended learning has emerged as a result of the development and penetration of technology into education. Blended learning combines traditional instruction with online tasks and activities to create a collaborative, student-centered learning environment (Bonk & Graham, 2006). Due to its inverted learning process, the virtual classroom, which is a key component of blended learning, gives students more learning time before, during, and after the lesson (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

In virtual classrooms, students receive input materials beforehand, such as lecture videos the teacher has recorded or downloaded from websites, and class time is spent working together on projects and having conversations (Xie et al., 2019). Cooperative learning strategies, such as computer-based instruction or digital learning, are crucial for the next generation because adult students or even young students would benefit from this method of instruction in terms of cognitive and social development, and in some circumstances where traditional classrooms are not appropriate, especially in Coronavirus era that we experienced it.

At these times, in light of the technological developments and extensive connections among learners, and due to the introduction of modern digital devices into classrooms, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and computer-mediated communication has exerted significant effects on language learning and teaching, and it is worth noting that the universities, schools, and language and educational centers in Iran were not exceptions to use virtual or online classrooms. Based on my personal teaching experience as a high school teacher and as a person who was and is challenged by the virtual classrooms' revolution in educational settings, I was curious about exploring the perceptions and attitudes of EFL teachers at high schools about the opportunities, challenges, barriers, and solutions to the virtual classrooms in a systemic and scientific study, as the point of views of teachers are diverse and the problems of virtual classrooms can be resolved under the detailed and analytical studies and research. The researcher in the current study was

after investigating the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' experience. Also, probing the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' opportunities, exploring the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' challenges and threats, and informing the educational society of the solutions to the barriers of virtual learning systems based on the perception of high school EFL teachers were the other objectives of the current study.

Literature Review
Definition and History of Digital Learning

Technology is advancing so quickly that education must keep up. They had to be able to learn anywhere, at any time (Wolfinger, 2016). Online education has been popular at various international institutions for the past 20 years. The majority of schools, colleges, and universities did not use this instructional modality prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but as a result of the outbreak of the Coronavirus, educational institutions realized the need for digital learning and a variety of digital teaching aids emerged. A course called virtual or digital learning is created for students who participate in remote learning but do not attend traditional classes (Zhang et al., 2005). According to research, digital learning is particularly useful as an active learning environment since it can give students a range of cognitive and metacognitive activities to engage in while learning (Oliver, 1996).

It is argued that as students absorb and reflect on the material, they are learning, and their learning is enhanced. As a result, it develops a medium that can detect knowledge gaps and encourage learning in a collaborative setting. Additionally, reflecting time is offered by digital learning, which enables students to study more effectively and actively than in a traditional setting.

Utilizing student-centered methods is encouraged by digital learning, which also creates a dynamic learning environment with plenty of visual and auditory stimulation (Pi-Hua, 2006). Despite playing a significant part in the learning environment, digital learning has several disadvantages. For instance, it is difficult to tell whether the instructor considers learning to be their responsibility or only gives students the barest amount of direction. It is also challenging to determine whether the results of the acquired knowledge are both creative and productive (AbuSeileek, 2012).

Learning a foreign or second language, such as English, has seen a significant transformation in the modern day because of technology and the usage of newly developed tools like computers, which can enhance the teaching and learning processes. Digital learning is one of the areas of technology that are related to learning a second language.

According to Niu et al. (2022), digital learning, also known as hybrid learning, is a sort of teaching and learning approach that combines in-person or tutorial learning with an online learning environment. The degree of complexity of online learning can range from straightforward proprietary lessons that are simple to use and produce to more sophisticated online learning lessons that have many intriguing features. Both the teacher and the student must take the time to learn how to search, choose, upload, and store these challenging online learning activities. The cost of adult basic education is covered by the integrated online curricula chosen by a program, institution, or state education authority (Gilakjani & Rahimy, 2019).

The broad field of virtual or digital learning is where the current study fits in. On the Internet, remote distance learners can participate in virtual education, also known as e-learning. The teacher and student enter the virtual classroom at a set time and engage with each other in a virtual environment. It is one of the varieties of virtual education and unquestionably the greatest type of virtual education (Sharma & Barrett, 2007).

In online virtual learning, the teacher can offer PDF files, PowerPoint presentations, as well as audio and video, to the pupils in order to share the necessary instructional themes. It is feasible to educate practically by allowing students access to the teacher's desktop and by allowing them to see the environment of various software in real-time. According to Aparicio, et al. (2016), e-learning is not a novel idea that focuses on the use of digital systems to facilitate and enhance learning. The educational need and purpose that underlies online learning are established by those two factors (Valverde Berrocoso et al., 2020). Sangrà, et al (2012) claim that e-learning is the delivery of learning and training programs through the use of technology. Its goal is to provide educational programs through electronic means. Because both students and teachers can speak with one another while participating in online learning and teaching, it acts as a means of communication. Allowing pupils to use information and communication technologies, it enhances their learning.

Njenga and Fourie (2010) claim that e-learning is a powerful tool that should be employed by all educational institutions. It might take the place of interpersonal communication while simultaneously bringing down the price of education. It makes learning more interesting. As a result, students are rarely bored when using technology, which makes the learning process fascinating. It is web-based learning that gives teachers and students instruction and growth via online means like the Internet, audio, and video, among other things.

Theories Supporting Virtual Learning
Vygotsky's Symbolic Mediation Theory
Lev Vygotsky (1979) developed a number of ideas over his educational career that highlight the meditative aspect of learning, whether by signs or via human mediation, such as using signs as psychological instruments or a Zone of Proximal Development. Virtual learning in particular and digital learning, in general, are both supported by Vygotsky's symbolic mediation theory. The social, cultural, and developmental processes are all connected in Vygotsky's theory. In his study of learning and memorization, Vygotsky (1979) placed a strong emphasis on the significance of sign operations involving auxiliary signs, writing that the use of signs leads humans to a specific structure of behavior that breaks away from biological development and creates new forms of a culturally-based psychological process (1979). The learner and the knowledge that has to be acquired are connected through these external signs. The conventional stimulus-response model with a symbolic mediator is shown in Figure 1 (Vygotsky, 1979).

The method of sign operation that takes place during learning and memory is shown in the diagram. The system exhibits the usage of a "psychological tool," or external sign, which is identified in the structure of a stimulus-response process by its mediating role (1979). This implies that sign operation is involved in cognitive activities such as learning and memory since one uses "indirect (mediated) activity" (1979, p. 54) through symbolic signals such as schemes or pictures. The system is based on Vygotskian sign operation representations, as demonstrated in Figure 2.1, and shows how mediation functions when a variety of learning sources are used. In digital settings, this sort of mediation enables the learner to interact with the course material utilizing a variety of sign systems, such as pictures, videos, collages, and situations.

It is crucial to remember that in the context of digital learning environments, the sign that mediates new knowledge can take many different forms, including video, music, photographs, and written text. These forms are all part of a sign system that is different from the one you are used to. We can therefore assume that a mediator is a member of a different sign system than the one that is used to convey knowledge. This sort of representation, where a written, artistic text is supported by a multimedia representation and the study material is transmitted through various digital media, is best exemplified by the platform education on screen. In a digital learning

environment, this sort of representation calls for the use of multiple auxiliary mediators, such as signals, to connect the learner and the knowledge, such as signs (x) of symbolic sign systems.

Figure 1
The Vygotskian scheme of stimuli (S), response ®, and mediator (X) (Vygotsky, 1979)
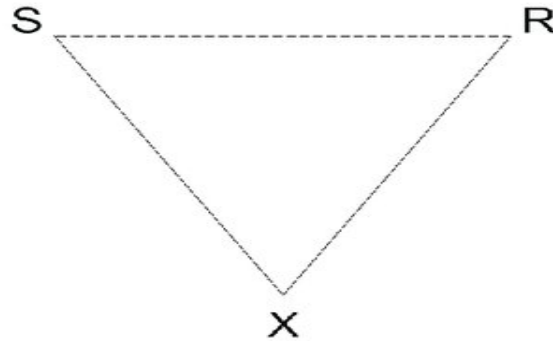
Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

As stated by Dung (2020), Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) "derives its significance as a dynamic and advanced approach of teaching and learning, in which the computer and computer-based resources such as the Internet are widely used to present, reinforce, and assess the learning contents" in the field of teaching English as a second language. As indicated, the current study attempted to stick to the issues existing in the virtual learning domain. Just like other online provisions, the usage of CALL frequently faces prominent concerns from teacher training, IT infrastructure, investment budget, etc. (Slimp & Bartels, 2019).

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

MALL is the other idea that underpins virtual learning. Mobile learning is defined as learning done on small, portable computing devices that can be used to enhance both the student and instructor's learning experience overall (Hafour, 2022). The student's performance rate can be raised and the learning environment will also be of higher caliber with mobile assistance. You can incorporate active learning in settings where you haven't done it before (Sorensen, 2009). The wireless technology industry is expanding quickly. The majority of the developments support mobile learning's viability and the variety of course software that may be created for it. Each of these has actively pushed for the development of mobile learning and made a contribution to the enrichment of courses on mobile phones (Nikolopoulou, 2018).

Related Empirical Studies

Numerous studies have been conducted on virtual learning, including those on the perceptions of important stakeholders as well as the efficiency of virtual classrooms and web-based training. Gobbo and Girardi (2001) looked at teaching methods and computer integration to see how teachers felt about technology-based classrooms. They claimed that teachers' attitudes and computer training are positively correlated. Teachers' use of computers in the classroom is influenced by their training. The results showed that the implementation of computers in instructors' classes depends heavily on both teaching philosophies and computer proficiency.

There should be a sufficient chance for teachers to learn about new technology. Teachers' views regarding CALL were studied by Cavas and Keserciolu in 2003. The results showed that

many teachers had favorable opinions of CALL, and there was no gender difference in their opinions on computer-assisted instruction. Despite the fact that many teachers lacked appropriate computer knowledge, Mcalister et al. (2005) observed that teachers' attitudes toward computers were generally positive. They stressed the need for teachers to have IT training and to be respected as role models for their students. Additionally, Gulbahar (2008) found that instructors' proficiency with computers was impacted by poor technical infrastructures and a lack of training. The role of teachers is influenced by their views and interest in computers. According to Ocak and Akdemir (2008), instructors' computer literacy is important for computer use.

Teachers who are computer literate are better able to include computers in their lessons. In actuality, instructors' views about computers and their computer proficiency are related. Recent research by Gherhes et al. (2021) concentrated solely on the educational process's beneficiaries and sought to understand how they felt about face-to-face and online learning, as well as if they would want to return to the traditional method of instruction. 604 Politehnica University of Timisoara students were expected to respond anonymously to an 8-question survey from December 2020 to February 2021, and their responses served as a representation of their perceptions.

The findings reveal the respondents' levels of interest in going back to school (particularly for those who have only benefited from online courses) and their level of participation in such courses. The findings also detailed the benefits and drawbacks of the two educational models from the perspectives of first-year students (who benefited only from e-learning) and upper-year learners (beneficiaries of both face-to-face and e-learning). The study outlined important data on e-learning from the viewpoints of the students, which should be taken into account to comprehend the continuous changes in the educational process and to address any unique issues it may have in order to ensure its durability.

Applying computers in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs in Iran has been the subject of extensive research. Dashtestani (2013) conducted research on the attitudes of Iranian teachers toward computers. The results showed that teachers view using computers in the classroom favorably. Additionally, research about Iranian teachers' views on using computers was conducted by Mollaei and Riasati in 2013. The findings indicated that Iranian teachers have a favorable attitude toward using computers in their lessons. A study by Sadeghi et al. (2014) revealed that Iranian teachers who used computers more frequently than other teachers had favorable sentiments regarding using them in L2 classes. Pourhossein Gilakjani (2018) also looked into how teachers felt about using computers to teach English pronunciation. The results demonstrated that teachers were interested in using computer technology because it gave them a fun and engaging atmosphere, assisted them in learning the correct pronunciation, and enhanced the effectiveness of their pronunciation education.

The results also showed that employing computer technology increased teachers' desire and trust in it because it had a strong potential to alter their teaching methods. The results also showed that teachers believed employing computer technology was not a danger to the conventional ways but instead produced better results than these methods and that they had sufficient knowledge of computer technology to assist them to teach pronunciation successfully. Even though more study on virtual learning has been done in recent years, there are still a lot of unresolved problems (Girish et al., 2022). Wang (2003) discovered that the aspect of learner satisfaction with e-learning is rarely included in the study.

We must, however, gain a better understanding of where, when, and under what circumstances online learning can be applied most effectively as well as how it can be applied, as the use of e-learning and online classrooms persists to significantly increase in higher education and professional contexts. We assume that using online courses as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic is unavoidable in the world in general and in Iran, in particular, taking into account the

above-mentioned research and the fact that Iranian EFL learners are restricted in using widely popular online media such as Twitter and YouTube. However, EFL teachers' perceptions towards virtual learning, particularly in large schools in Iran's context, are unaffected so far. Even though Pourhosein Gilakjani (2018) attempted to investigate teachers' perspectives on technology-based classrooms, in reality, he neglected the difficulties and possibilities, the obstacles, and their solutions in virtual classrooms; consequently, the current study is an effort to fill the gap in the literature. In short, based on the objective of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: What is the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' experience?

RQ2: What is the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' opportunities?

RQ3: What is the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' challenges and threats?

RQ4: What are the solutions to the barriers of virtual learning systems based on the perception of high school EFL teachers?

METHOD

Participants

The research sample was taken from EFL teachers in an EFL context like Iran. Based on convenience sampling, a total of one hundred and twenty EFL teachers were chosen as the sample of the study from among 170 teachers of four high schools in Urmia, Iran, in order to fill out a questionnaire in online teaching. The initial participants of this study were 170 and from the initial 170 administered questionnaires by the teachers, a number of 50 of them were excluded from analyses due to their incomplete and careless answers. As a result, the final number of participants was 120. Table 1 illustrates the demographic information gathered by a set of questions from the scale under study.

Table 1
Demographic information gathered from EFL teachers

		Frequency	**Percentage**
Gender	**Male**	67	56%
	Female	53	44%
Age	20-30	32	27%
	30-40	78	65%
	40-50	7	6%
	50 and above	3	2%
Academic degree	BA	28	23%
	MA	86	72%
	PhD candidate	5	4%
	PhD	1	1%

Instruments

In order to gather data, an attitude questionnaire was used. For the investigation and data collection, an online survey-based questionnaire was designed to estimate the online learning challenges and the solutions to the existing problems. The survey-based questionnaire contains 20 multiple questions (yes/no, multiple-choice, and open-ended questions), which covered the study's objectives. It was designed via Google Forms and distributed among high school EFL teachers using WhatsApp groups at the end of the first semester of 2021. The questionnaire consists of different parts; the first part is about teachers' demographic information, the second part includes a set of questions about teachers' experiences with online learning platforms and the facilities which they could use, the third part is about the problems which they encountered during online learning, the fourth part is about their satisfaction with online learning, and finally, open-ended questions to get any extra information about online education teachers to want to add or mention. The questionnaire was checked for validity and reliability fulfillment. The reliability of the scale was estimated during the pilot study that was done with 20 EFL teachers from the same sample and the value was reported to be .79. Furthermore, the validity of the questionnaire was expert-validated.

Procedure

To achieve the purpose of this study and address the questions posed, certain procedures were followed as follows:

In order to investigate EFL teachers' attitudes towards technology-based classrooms in high schools, over a two or three-month period, the researcher collected data using the questionnaire devised by the researcher. The participants at four high schools (two male and two female high schools) were required to inform about the demographic information. At first, having checked the comprehensibility of the item statements, the questionnaire was distributed to the EFL teachers. The questionnaires were delivered to the teachers at different branches in person or via social networking groups and emails. The respondents had as much time as they needed to fill out the questionnaires and sent them to the researcher. In trying to put the quantitatively collected data in meaningful ways, the researcher used SPSS version 21 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Results

Investigating the First Research Question

In order to answer the first research question, which investigated the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' experience, a set of questions were used. Table 2 shows the teachers' beliefs about their virtual learning systems' experience.

Table 2
EFL Teachers' Beliefs on Virtual Learning Systems' Experience

Personal experience in virtual learning before Covid-19	Yes	Frequency	Percentage
		76	63%
	No	44	37%
Level of E-learning literacy	Highly proficient	19	16%
	Above average	39	33%
	Average	58	48%
	Slightly proficient	4	3%
	Not proficient	0	0
The level of comfortability with virtual classrooms	Very uncomfortable	5	4%
	Uncomfortable	21	17%
	Neutral	7	6%

Comfortable	85	72%
Very comfortable	2	1%

As it is clear from Table 2, more than half of Iranian EFL teachers (63%) had personal experience in virtual learning before Covid-19; however, just 37% of them reported a lack of this experience before the Coronavirus pandemic, which made distance learning inevitable. Moreover, around 60% of the teachers stated that their E-learning literacy level was average. Less than half of them (39%) had a level of above average, with 16% that saw themselves as highly proficient. Less than four percent were slightly proficient, and none of the teachers reported their unproficiency. The level of comfortability with virtual classrooms was the other question that aimed to gauge teachers' experience with virtual learning. As the results showed, most of the teachers (72%) were comfortable with virtual classes and just 17% were uncomfortable with the existing situation on virtual learning, and 4% as very uncomfortable teachers with the E-learning context. Moreover, from the total of 120 high school teachers, 7 of them had no idea about this item and just 1% of them choose the item as very comfortable. In general, most Iranian EFL teachers had less difficulty with virtual classrooms and already experienced virtual classrooms before Corona pandemic.

Investigating the Second Research Question

In order to answer the second research question, which is concerned with the perception of high school EFL teachers toward virtual learning systems' opportunities, a set of questions in the form of 5 points Likert scale was designed. The teachers were required to answer the questions to explore their attitudes towards E-learning opportunities that can be considered as virtual classrooms 'advantages. Table 3 illustrates the attitudes of teachers to virtual learning systems' opportunities.

Table 3
EFL Teachers' Beliefs on Virtual Learning Systems' Opportunities

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Social and national savings	10/8%	14/12%	15/13%	81/67%	0
Data retention power	0	6/4%	1/1%	78/65%	35/30%
Positive social impacts	14/12%	9/7%	8/6%	69/58%	20/17%
Quick and easy access	3/2%	5/4%	16/13%	67/56%	30/25%
High interaction	14/12%	22/18%	17/14%	62/52%	5/4%
High approximate of verbal language	20/17%	31/26%	15/13%	49/40%	5/4%

As the results obtained from Table 3 indicate, Iranian high school EFL teachers had different attitudes to the virtual learning systems' opportunities and they reported their satisfaction with virtual classrooms due to their merits. Regarding social and national savings, 67% of teachers considered it as a positive factor in virtual classrooms, 13% had no idea, 12% disagreed with the item, and finally, 8% strongly disagreed with it. Data retention power was favored by most of the teachers as more than 90% of them agreed (both agree and strongly agree) with this factor. The same result was reported with the factor of quick and easy access. The role of positive social impacts was similar to the first item (social and national savings), and teachers had different views on it; however, the weight of agreement was high in comparison with the disagreement. In

terms of the last two items (High interaction & High approximate of verbal language), the point of view was to some extent different since the teachers were not satisfied with these items and the results in agreement and disagreements were fifty and fifty (about 50% in each pole). In sum, data retention power and quick and easy access were two items favored by high school teachers and they believed these two items can be regarded as positive opportunities.

Investigating the Third Research Question

The focus of the third research question was on the problems which EFL teachers at high schools encountered in virtual classrooms due to their demerits. Table 4 indicates the results.

Table 4
EFL Teachers' Beliefs on Virtual Learning Systems' Challenges and Threats

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Low interaction and communication with learners	6/5%	9/7%	9/7%	79/67%	17/14%
Low internet access	3/2%	6/5%	4/3%	91/77%	16/13%
Low time management	14/12%	32/27%	10/9%	49/41%	15/12%
Depression due to the social isolation	11/9%	29/24%	17/14%	50/43%	13/10%
Low concentration	5/4%	9/8%	8/7%	80/67%	18/15%
Negative social impacts	17/14%	21/17%	9/8%	71/60%	2/1%

Based on the findings of Table 4, the items of low interaction and communication with learners, low internet access, and low concentration were the challenges and threats that EFL teachers of high schools mostly encountered with. As it is axiomatic, 90% of the teachers agreed with the big problem of low internet access and about 70% agreed on the other two items (low interaction and communication with learners and low concentration) as the other prevalent threats to virtual classrooms. Low time management and depression due to social isolation were the challenges that about half of the teachers regarded as challenges and the other half disagreed with their nature as problems.

Investigating the Fourth Research Question

To give solutions to the above-mentioned threats to virtual classrooms, the teachers were asked to present statements in the form of comments. One of the novice teachers with a BA degree believed that a solution for low internet access can be using visuals:

   Extract 1: If you're faced with a *poor connection*, your speech can become distorted and hard to follow. *Using a range of visuals such as pictures and diagrams* is helpful to keep students following the lesson, even if they can't hear you clearly. Drawing visuals during your live lesson will be more successful than displaying static images on the screen. Students can easily follow the process if they draw and talk simultaneously.

The other teacher (female, MA, at the age range of 30-40) stated that recording lessons can be the other cure for poor connection:

   Extract 2: although virtual classrooms are easy to access, however, I prefer traditional and face-to-face classrooms. *Recording live teaching* provides a way for students with poor access to watch lessons in their own time due to low internet access. We can upload each video to a shared area and explain how to find it. Not only is it inclusive for learners with limited access to devices, but it's also useful when a student is unwell and needs to catch up.

Preparing for low connection was the other suggestion to manage the problem, as reported by one of the male teachers with the age range of 40-45.

Extract 3: Teachers should be *prepared for the worst so they're ready if their poor internet connection prevents a live lesson from taking place*. Sending Emails to students before teaching and sharing any resources they'll need can be helpful. Teaching them what to do if facing a connection problem that stops the lesson from happening. They can use the resources the teacher has sent to complete activities in their own time.

Since the statements were brief and short in length, and most of them were repeated; hence, some of the important solutions reveal in the form of a list.

For low concentrations, teachers can teach lessons via colorful and attractive slides.

Increasing peer interaction through various tasks can be helpful for low interaction.

Teachers can ask students to answer the questions via microphones. This can increase concentration.

The chat function by getting students to share answers, opinions, ideas, etc., can be a fantastic tool for teachers in the online classroom to overcome the low interaction and communication.

Planning interaction patterns can be useful for overcoming low communication in virtual classrooms.

Discussion

The goal of the current study was to find out how Iranian EFL teachers felt about advantages and threats, as well as about the problems and solutions associated with virtual classrooms and how happy they were with the virtual classrooms they used during the Coronavirus pandemic. While some EFL teachers were happy taking their courses online and in virtual classrooms, others still prefer taking their sessions in a physical classroom. For causes including data retention capacity and rapid and easy access, the majority of teachers had favorable attitudes regarding virtual classrooms; yet, they complained about some difficulties like slow internet and poor interaction rates.

This supports research by Brown and Liedholm from 2002, which evaluated student learning outcomes in an online course. They discovered that students taking the course online did noticeably lower on tests than those taking it in the traditional format. Second, the majority of students concur that communicating with teachers has gotten more difficult as a result of online learning, and they also concur that connecting with teachers has grown more difficult. Third, most students do not feel motivated to participate when attending online courses, their productivity has not grown, and their comprehension of the subject matter has gotten worse.

Our results are consistent with those of Boling et al. (2012), who found that most study participants believed online courses reduce interaction with others and individualize learning. Our findings on the issue of decreased interaction are consistent with those of McConnell (2006), who found that one major issue with online learning was that students felt more alone and were reluctant to connect and communicate. But this issue can be resolved by several methods, such as creating interaction plans and encouraging students to express their responses via chat boxes, as Instructors in this study stated.

The findings concur with those of Shi and Fan (2021), who investigated the attitudes of professors and students of online teaching courses in China, in terms of obstacles and concerns. In all, 34 teachers and 255 marine students from various maritime education and training (MET) institutions in China took part in this study. According to the survey, China's online ME education remained undeveloped. For teaching and learning ME, simple and constrained online approaches were used. The use of innovative online approaches was significantly hampered by the exam-focused teaching style. Individual learning needs should be addressed as a result of the fact that many online features had not been used to their full potential.

As previously said, one of the major obstacles cited by the high school instructors in this survey was the lack of internet access, which is undoubtedly related to Iran's current political climate.

The findings are consistent with Khan and Abid's study from 2021, which attempted to evaluate how remote labs and classrooms would be affected by the "social separation" caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the authors, there are a number of obstacles to creating virtual schools, such as a lack of internet connectivity nationwide and few resources available to a broad community during such outbreaks. These results highlight the need of using interactive technology in online social work classrooms in order to promote the human interaction that is so crucial for student learning and practice (Hitchcock et al., 2019). To build and implement the systems for virtual classrooms, one needs appropriate training in this technology as well as thorough program preparation, requirements that were mainly missing in teaching training courses in Iran.

Conclusion

Online education is a novel and fascinating method to learn almost anything. It has had a favorable effect on both teachers' and students' lives (Kulal & Nayak, 2020). The quality of education has increased as a result of the expanding use of technology in the learning environment, particularly in the Covid 19 era. As the findings demonstrated, these classrooms really had certain advantages, such as strong data retention and quick access, despite the difficulties EFL teachers experienced, such as limited internet connection and low concentration on students' turns. Teachers were actually positive about virtual classrooms, although there is always space for growth in terms of online learning. It is clear that there are more substantial advantages to online learning, such as the fact that it increases literacy rates by creating engaging, high-quality virtual classrooms (Lin & Zheng, 2015). But there are several considerations that must be made in order for implementation to be successful in a place like Iran.

This entails bolstering infrastructure facilities, enhancing Internet connectivity, raising the bar for interaction and communication, changing students' and teachers' attitudes, etc. Colleges and other educational institutions must give students and professors effective instruction and assistance about the use of virtual classrooms in order to increase their satisfaction. Online classes demand a learner-centered atmosphere where students must be self-motivated and self-directed, in contrast to traditional classroom learning, where students are frequently accused of being spoon-fed. Colleges and educators must make every attempt to alter students' perspectives. Colleges or the government must routinely bring training and development programs to instructors and students in order to accomplish this goal. The study also demonstrated that although virtual classrooms will play bigger roles in the future, they cannot take the place of traditional face-to-face classroom instruction. It can be challenging to switch completely to online instruction. However, given what EFL teachers indicated, we cannot discount the advantages of virtual learning environments.

As a result, it is necessary to comprehend the barriers to accepting online learning and take appropriate action to overcome them.

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Research Paper

Intercultural competence, Intercultural sensitivity, and Language Pedagogy: Perspectives of Iranian Novice and Experienced EFL Teachers

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Abstract
Intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity have drawn the attention of a myriad of scholars in the fields of language teaching, communication, culture, gender, and ethnicity. This is the rationale behind the current research aiming at investigating EFL teachers' beliefs concerning the concepts of intercultural communication competence (ICC) and intercultural sensitivity (IS) and how such concepts are promoted in their real practices in English classes. To this end, utilizing a qualitative design, a sample of 20 EFL teachers (11 experienced and 9 novice teachers) from different language institutes in West Azerbaijan province were selected. A semi-structured interview and a three-session observation were conducted as data-gathering tools. The results of the data analysis indicated that even though Iranian EFL teachers were familiar with the concepts of IS and ICC and they knew that language and culture are not isolated terms, they ignored culture in the classes due to some regularities imposed on them by society. As a matter of fact, for teachers, the concept of language is the top priority while culture plays a second fiddle. The study has some pedagogical implications for EFL teachers and learners in overcoming cultural differences to improve the level of language proficiency.

Keywords: *Cultural Awareness; EFL Teachers' Beliefs, Intercultural Communicative Competence; Intercultural Sensitivity*

شایستگی بین فرهنگی، حساسیت بین فرهنگی، و آموزش زبان: دیدگاه معلمان انگلیسی تازه کار و با تجربه ایرانی

شایستگی بین فرهنگی و حساسیت بین فرهنگی توجه هزاران محقق را در زمینه های آموزش زبان، ارتباطات، فرهنگ، جنسیت و قومیت به خود جلب کرده است. این منطق پشت تحقیق فعلی است که با هدف بررسی باور های معلمان زبان انگلیسی در مورد مفاهیم شایستگی ارتباط بین فرهنگی (ICC)و حساسیت بین فرهنگی (IS) و چگونگی ترویج چنین مفاهیمی در شیوه های واقعی آنها در کلاس های انگلیسی انجام می شود. بدین منظور با استفاده از یک طرح کیفی، نمونه ای متشکل از 20 مدرس زبان انگلیسی (11 مدرس مجرب و 9 معلم مبتدی) از موسسات زبان مختلف استان آذربایجان غربی انتخاب شدند. یک مصاحبه نیمه ساختاریافته و یک مشاهده سه جلسه ای به عنوان ابزار جمع آوری داده ها انجام شد. نتایج تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها حاکی از آن است که معلمان زبان انگلیسی با وجود اینکه با مفاهیم IS و ICC آشنایی داشتند و می دانستند زبان و فرهنگ اصطلاحات مجزا نیستند، اما به دلیل قوانینی که جامعه بر آنها تحمیل می کند، فرهنگ را در کلاس ها نادیده گرفتند. در واقع، برای معلمان، مفهوم زبان اولویت اصلی است در حالی که فرهنگ در کمانچه دوم نقش دارد. این مطالعه پیامدهای آموزشی برای معلمان و زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی در غلبه بر تفاوت های فرهنگی برای بهبود سطح مهارت زبان دارد.

واژگان کلیدی: آگاهی فرهنگی؛ باور های معلمان زبان انگلیسی، صلاحیت ارتباطی بین فرهنگی؛ حساسیت بین فرهنگی

Introduction

Foreign culture is intrinsically linked to learning and teaching a foreign language. Differently put, language and culture are intertwined (Ayu, 2020). Language refers to the embodiment of cultural reality, the expression of cultural reality, and the symbol of cultural reality (Li et al., 2020). The significance of teaching culture in a second or foreign language class cannot be understated. Learners should be equipped with cross-cultural competence. Language teachers need skills beyond their subject-matter expertise in order to help learners improve their intercultural competence. Nevertheless, as Jedynak (2011) pointed out, some foreign language teachers neglect intercultural competency in their teaching because they fail to incorporate it in effective communication. Recently, intercultural competency has drawn significant academic attention from experts in fields like language teaching education, cultural research, ethnic surveys, gender, and communication (Byram, 2013; Soodmand et al. 2018).

Language learning, according to Derenowski (2011), is not separate from its cultural context; rather, culture and language are intertwined. According to Cunningsworth (1995), teaching language solely as an abstract system would not prepare students to apply it in everyday situations. Therefore, foreign language teaching materials that contain aspects of the target language culture are typically chosen by language teachers. Additionally, they must be aware of the influence of culture and be sufficiently sensitive to apply cultural differences in a useful way in actual classroom activities. Along with the ICC, IS of EFL teachers appears to be important in terms of teaching methodology.

Moreover, it is believed that with more years of teaching experience, teachers' IS beliefs and practices can change. As it was highlighted by Bhawuk and Brislin (1992), in order to be successful in a different culture, a person must be interested in his own culture, sensitive to cultural variances, and respectful of others from other cultures. Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) argued that intercultural sensitivity is a requirement for intercultural competence, meaning that in order to be interculturally competent, one must first acquire this ability. Even though ICC and IS have received a lot of research attention (Pourakbari & Chalak, 2015), this area of inquiry is underresearched. This is because language learners and teachers frequently struggle with intercultural competence issues, which may arise from the differences between their own culture and the culture of the target language (Mostafaei Alaei & Nosrati, 2018). Consequently, students may form unfavorable opinions about or separate themselves from the culture of the second or foreign language, which results in a lack of desire and effort.

Both language teachers and students seem to benefit from promoting their intercultural sensitivity and competence (Guilhereme, 2002). Due to the importance of ICC and IS and the dearth of studies, the current study aimed to conduct a context-specific sort of research in ICC and intercultural sensitivity with the contribution of EFL teachers with short- and long-term experiences in an EFL context like Iran. In other words, this study was intended to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions of ICC and intercultural sensitivity and how they promote ICC and intercultural sensitivity in their real practices in English classes. The results of this study may enhance the cultural awareness of Iranian students and encourage them to more easily share and exchange certain cultural values with students from other countries. Consequently, cultural differences and stereotypes can be lessened.

Review of Literature

Intercultural Competence (ICC)

ICC is a framework for intercultural learning that equips students of foreign languages with the attitudes, information, and abilities necessary for successful cross-cultural communication (Byram, 2013; Sinicrope et al., 2007). The idea of teaching students to engage responsibly and effectively with persons from diverse linguistic systems, backgrounds, and worldviews is highly emphasized in the literature on ICC (Fantini, 2007). Instructors are encouraged to design foreign

language lessons that require students to reflect on their own beliefs about the target culture as well as create opportunities for students to take part in active inquiry about the goods, strategies, and viewpoints of another culture in order to prepare students for intercultural interactions (Moore, 2006; Deardorff, 2009).

Learners should be engaged in activities that foster the intercultural competencies required for being involved in mutual interaction with cultural diversity after attitudes and knowledge have been addressed (Byram, 1997). By giving students the chance to exercise their skills in analysis, interpretation, communication, and interaction with regard to the goods and practices of the target culture, instructors are enabled to integrate an intercultural attitude into the curriculum (Byram, 1997). Teachers should be aware of the cultural differences and components between source and target cultures when teaching and emphasizing culture.

Intercultural Sensitivity (IS)

The other variable of the current study is IS. It is seen as a necessary condition for ICC (Hammer et al., 2003), meaning that a larger IS increases the likelihood of ICC (Dong, Day, & Collaço, 2008; Peng, 2006). Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) emphasized the importance of IS for educators in the modern classroom and claimed that IS can anticipate how well people would get along with people from various cultural backgrounds. Chen and Starosta (1997) considered IS as the individual's "ability to develop emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promote appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication" (p. 1). It is considered as examining an individual's capacity for discrimination and exposure to cultural diversity using IS measurement (Hammer et al., 2003).

Teaching English as a foreign language involves more than merely teaching grammar and vocabulary; it also involves assisting learners in developing an understanding of the language's culture, values, and way of life. EFL teachers can do this by integrating cultural variations into the materials and providing a consistent source. It is expected of EFL teachers to have an open mind, which can result in a high IS level, which in turn leads to the students' engagement in a multicultural setting. Atay et al. (2009, p. 124) asserted that "the intercultural dimension in the teaching of foreign languages has become one of the most special concerns for teachers and researchers in the field," because it may lead to communication with people of different cultures (Boudouaia et al., 2022; Young & Schartner, 2014). Undoubtedly, the value of IS resides in its capacity to combat inequality, conduct relevant cultural distinctions, and foster intercultural communication skills (Alaei & Nosrati, 2018).

Pertinent Empirical Studies

According to some earlier studies, IS and the intricacy of ICC in EFL learning processes have drawn the attention of academics and experts in the field (e.g., Lou & Noels, 2017; Mostafaei Alaei & Nosrati, 2018). Teaching culture to L2 students is a necessity (Deardorff, 2009). This is due to the fact that English is now a language that speakers share in order to communicate across linguistic and cultural realms (Su et al. 2016). A significant number of studies have been undertaken in the areas of ICC and IS. For example, 108 international postgraduate candidates from 17 various countries were investigated by Sarwari and Abdul Wahab (2017) using a mixed-method design to examine the association between IS and ICC. The study's findings showed that the two variables were closely related and had an impact on one another. They came to the conclusion that the students' strong intercultural sensitivity helped them perform effective interactions, and their intercultural communication competency helped them initiate intercultural conversation.

Iranian EFL teachers' IS was examined by Alaei and Nosrati (2018). To choose volunteers, the researchers used the LinkedIn professional network. The sample consisted of 167 private

language institution instructors who worked in various American cities. High amounts of IS were detected among the subjects, according to the data. More importantly, the viewpoints of the participants demonstrated that they were better at appreciating various cultures and enjoying interactions than at being attentive, engaged, and confident during those interactions.

Level and demographic disparities among EFL teachers were examined by Boudouaia et al. in 2022. A sample of 182 Algerian EFL instructors from universities, high schools, and middle schools was selected to gather quantitative data. The findings showed that interaction confidence, interaction delight, and interaction attentiveness were relatively the lowest among the IS components, with interaction engagement having the highest mean value and respect for other cultures having the second-highest rank. The results indicated that there were significant variations between male and female teachers in the interaction enjoyment dimension, with female EFL teachers reporting higher levels of interaction pleasure. The study did not find any appreciable variations in the educational backgrounds, teaching backgrounds, or teaching levels of EFL teachers in IS. The literature review on the topic revealed that very scant research has been done on ICC and IS. In Iran, the literature on ICC development in FL teaching as well as in intercultural sensitivity and studying two variables of ICC and IS in EFL teachers' classrooms with short- and long-term experiences in terms of practices and beliefs is scarce. Thus, it is hoped that the current study would help bridge the gap in this regard. In short, based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: What are the experienced and novice EFL teachers' beliefs about IS and ICC?
RQ2: How do experienced and novice EFL teachers perform interculturally when it comes to actual teaching practice in EFL classes?

Method

Participants
Utilizing a qualitative design, the current study was conducted to investigate experienced and novice EFL teachers' beliefs about IS and ICC as well as the application he intercultural activities in their teaching methodology. To this end, a sample of 20 (12 male and 8 female) EFL teachers with short- and long-term experiences from different language institutes in West Azerbaijan province were selected. In accordance with this sub-category, from the total of 12 male EFL teachers, 7 of them were experienced teachers and 5 of them were novice teachers. Also, of 8 female teachers, 4 of them were experienced teachers and the rest were novice teachers. They were selected conveniently and based on their willingness to participate in the study.

Instruments
To collect the required data, a semi-structured interview was used, whose questions revolved around teachers' real practices and beliefs about interculturality and intercultural sensitivity. There were 5 questions in the semi-structured interview that revolved around IS and ICC. The questions were as follows:

What is the definition of intercultural competence, in your idea?

What are the elements of intercultural competence?

What are mostly addressed aspects of intercultural competence in ELT textbooks, based on your idea? In other words, textbooks are sensitive to which aspects of culture?

What are the less touched aspects of intercultural competence in ELT textbooks, based on your idea?

What tasks and activities do you use in your real practices to increase students' levels of IS and ICC?

The other research instrument was a three-session observation phase, with the purpose of observing the classrooms of EFL experienced and novice teachers. Out of the three teachers, two were experienced teachers out of whom, one was female and the other was male. Also, one male teacher was considered a novice and was observed during 3 sessions. The researcher was responsible for the observation and taking notes from the classes in terms of teachers' real practices of ICC and IS.

Procedure

At the onset of the study, volunteer EFL teachers were required to take part in the interview sessions in order to deeply investigate their ICC and IS beliefs. The teachers were categorized into experienced and novice based on their self-reports. It is worth mentioning that a teacher with er less than 5 years of experience was counted as a novice one, while one with more than 5 years of experience was counted as an experienced one. Each interview took between thirty and forty minutes and it was held in the teachers' native language for the ease of discussions. Later, the recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated. Both transcriptions and translation files were emailed to the participants for verification purposes. They were informed that they could modify the files in case of any confusion or contrast. Finally, the transcriptions were content-analyzed in a cyclical manner, and temergingged themes in the final cycle were elaborated on by subsuming minor ones under more inclusive themes. Participant anonymity was ensured by keeping their names, identities, and schools confidential. The participants were also informed about the purposes of the study. They were ensured that there were no value judgments in the study, and merely their opinions on the questions mattered. As the next step, the results of the interviews with the teachers were discussed and presented in the form of extracts in the qualitative data analysis section. Furthermore, the observation phase was run with 3 EFL teachers during three sessions in order to investigate teachers' practices of ICC and for this reason, content analysis was conducted to identify, code, and classify the frequent themes and episodes in both the interview section and observation section to validate and enrich the quantitative findings.

Results
Investigating the First Research Question
The attitudes of EFL teachers towards IS and ICC was the focus of the first question that was explored via a semi-structured interview. The first question of the interview was about the definition of intercultural competence. One of the interviewees (an experienced female teacher), considered culture awareness as the central skill for intercultural competence and believed that:

Extract 1: *Cultural awareness is the central skill for intercultural competence. By ICC, learners can show their understanding and critical stance toward practices and products from both domestic and foreign cultures.*

Moreover, another interviewee (a novice male teacher) saw ICC as the integration of language and cultural awareness and stated that ICC is the use of language in society, self-analysis, and analysis of the significance of language and culture for the self.

Extract 2: *In my idea, the integration of language and cultural awareness can be defined as ICC. Furthermore, ICC is the use of language in society, self-analysis, and analysis of the significance of language and culture for the self.*

The other definition of ICC by the other interviewee (novice female teacher) was as follows:

Extract 3: *In my opinion, an ability to evaluate critically the cultural differences between target and source culture is the definition of ICC.*

One of the interviewees (an experienced male teacher) defined the concept of ICC as follows:

Extract 4: *The notion of critical engagement with culture can be defined as ICC. It is worth noting that, in my opinion, ICC by critical engagement refers to a purely intellectual awareness and is not passive.*

Moreover, an EFL teacher with 16 years of teaching experience believed that ICC implies as:

Extract 5: *ICC is defined as critique, both political and social that leads to active engagement with the world. Foreign language education which includes criticality could and should lead a stage further, to critique, engagement, and social action, beyond our own state and society.*

Another teacher (novice teacher) looked at ICC from the lenses of the internal and external world and believed that:

Extract 6: *The definition of ICC can be concerned with both the internal world and the external world. The internal world, that is oneself, is a form of critical thought that is demonstrated in critical self-reflection; and the external worlds d, a form of critical thought that is demonstrated in critical action.*

Moreover, one male teacher who was considered an experienced teacher mentioned:

Extract 7: *ICC extends the focus on language explicitly to other dimensions of culture. Furthermore, critical cultural awareness includes a critique of our own communities and societies as well as that of other countries. It does this because foreign language learning inevitably draws attention to other countries, where the language being learned is spoken, and to the communities asocietiesety of those other countries.*

The following three short definitions of ICC were reported by the other teachers who were considered experienced teachers:

Extract 8: *In my perception, ICC is an understanding of the differences between a person and people from other countries or other backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values.*

Extract 9*: I define ICC as an ability to evaluate cultural differences on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.*

Extract 10: *ICC is about understanding that our cultures impact and shape how we see the world; those differences are natural aat when we work with people from other cultures, we need to be aware of where, when, and how our cultures may either help or hinder us in terms of communication and collaboration.*

As it is clear, both experienced and novice teachers of different genders believed that awareness of cultural values and varieties goes back to the nature of ICC. The second question of the interview was a search about the elements of ICC. One of the interviewees (a novice teacher) listed the ICC elements as follows:

Extract 11: *Elements of ICC can be listed as personality factors, religious factors, micro-culture factors, cultural barriers, and cultural gaps, each of these plays a role in creating effective communication. Sometimes they can even be cultural conflicts. Common cultural background can also be considered as its dimensions. For example, we have a common cultural background with the Turks, but not with the British. Awareness of these can be effective. Of course, most of these topics go back to pragmatics. In fact, interlanguage pragmatics grows because of these cultural factors.*

One female teacher as an experienced instructor listed the following items:

Extract 12: *In my idea, ICC might include the following elements:*

The individual's knowledge of his/her own culture and how he/she is expected to behave according to the norms to be accepted as a member of the culture.

The individual's justified knowledge of the possible problems with existing cultural practices

Overall, the individual's confident, justified, and critically keen knowledge and ability to critically review the differences between cultures.

The other interviewee with 12 years of teaching experience with high self-confidence stated that:

Extract 13: *ICC can be regarded as being comprised of two distinct dimensions: social and psychological dimensions.*

The other teacher as a novice listed extra ICC elements as follows:

Extract 14: *ICC is a multidimensional construct that includes various components including the following but not limited to:*

- *cultural orientation of the learners towards a phenomenon,*
- *equality of cultures*
- *development of multiple cultural perspectives in the course of education*
- *awareness of one's own culture and the target community's*
- *understanding of one's own cultural identity*
- *learners' awareness of local cultural experiences and norms*

Furthermore, an experienced teacher stated:

Extract 15: *elements of ICC can be cultural Sensitivity and respect for others' cultures. Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures.*

Based on the results of the interview, other elements were reported by the interviewees such as *religious elements, awareness of one's own cultural worldview, attitude towards cultural differences, knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, knowledge of power in cultural differences, and cross-cultural skills.*

The third question of the interview aimed to touch on the attitudes of the participants on the mostly addressed aspects of ICC in ELT textbooks. It is worth noting that all of the interviewees (100%) had a negative attitude to this question and the main key construct obtained from the teachers' attitudes (regardless of their teaching experience) was the fact that ELT textbooks published in Iran were not exposed to cultural issues due to the social power, hence it can be claimed that ICC is not observed in ELT books such as high school textbooks. Since the key constructs (such as attention to the relational issues and linguistic aspect of culture) and attitudes were the same, then some of the extracts were presented below:

Extract 16: *In my idea, most of the textbooks written in the area of ELT in Iran try to teach religious topics and Persian literature in English. In fact, they teach monocultural perspectives.*

Extract 17: *the answer to the question is crystal clear. Religion and Islam, and all of the proper names of Iranian people are the only mostly touched aspects in ELT textbooks.*

Extract 18*: Highly-touched aspect of ICC in Iranian textbooks is just attention to the backgrounds and common values of Iranian members and cultures.*

The fourth research question aimed to discover the aspects of ICC (personality factors, religious factors, intercultural pragmatics, and so on) that the interviewees think are less attended in ELT textbooks. One of the teachers (novice teacher) believed that:

Extract 19: *In Iranian high school textbooks, the focus is on Iranian culture rather than different cultures such as America. In ELT textbooks published in Iran, the target culture of America, England, and Britain are less touched. The reason can go back to the political issues that we are aware of and as all of us know, the politicians oblige the syllabus designers to not focus on the cultural issues since the focus increases the level of ICC of the high school students that this can result in another revolution that the high-power is not interested in.*

Similar to extract 19, the other interviewee (an experienced teacher) believed that;

Extract 20: *Since pragmatic competence is difficult to be grabbed by high school students due to their low level of general English knowledge, just the general intercultural aspects and some of the native cultural topics that have been approved by the authors of high school and university textbooks have been used in the textbooks.*

The other teacher (novice teacher) compared native English textbooks with non-native English textbooks like Visions and mentioned that:

Extract 21: *There are books on the market like connects that meet the needs of teens with cultural differences but Visions are more adapted to Iran's culture and even the proper names such as Mr. Tabesh and so on. In these cases, we cannot claim that the target culture is touched. I with 100 percent can say that just Iran's culture and tradition are used in high school textbooks.*

In general, based on the results obtained from the fourth question of the interview, EFL teachers (regardless of teaching experience length) believed that the target culture is ignored in Iranian ELT textbooks and attention was paid to the source culture and Iranian proper names.

Based on the results of the interview regarding teachers' activities in order to improve the levels of IS and ICC in their classes (the last question of the interview), teachers reported that various tasks which can be influential should be performed. For instance, one of the teachers with 8 years of teaching experience mentioned the term "motivation" and "encouragement of the learners" about cultural differences:

Extract 22*: I have always been trying to encourage my students to learn about the target culture as well as the language itself. In order to do so, I motivate the students by telling them the advantages of knowing these cultural differences and how they can help them interact with native speakers.*

In addition, one of the enthusiastic teachers (novice teacher) asserted that:

Extract 23*: my learners and I share our knowledge about cultural issues. We have some activities such as playing games, role-playing, debates, etc. I help them to correct their errors and they have to ask whatever they want to know about the English language, their lives, and culture.*

The other interesting activity was presented by one of the male teachers as a long-term experienced teacher:

Extract 24: *In order to increase the level of sensitivity of the students in terms of culture, I ask them to picture themselves as a person who was born in that society with those people, this way I can see that they stop defending their cultures and being offensive toward another culture.*

In sum, the teachers with differences in the level of teaching experience listed the following tasks for increasing IS and ICC. Teaching students to value other cultures, to respect each other's culture, making the learners aware of cultural differences, explaining that every society is unique in terms of its values and culture and encouraging them to study the books of prominent authors and watch some top movies to be able to compare that culture with their own were the other activities that teachers do to improve attitudes towards cultural issues and increase cultural sensitivity in their classes. As it is crystal clear, Iranian EFL teachers with differences in teaching experience, had similar attitudes towards the various questions of the interview that which can be a sign of the high intercultural awareness level of Iranian EFL teachers. However, to deeply investigate the teachers' real practices in culture, three of them were observed during a three-session observation phase and they were asked to devote a quarter of the class time to topics highlighting the cultural differences. The following section is a brief elaboration of the results gathered from this phase.

Investigating the Second Research Question

In order to answer the second research question which was concerned with the real practices of the culture in English classrooms, a three-session observation was run with three novice and experienced teachers. The results of content analysis of the classrooms in terms of culture showed that in Iranian English classrooms, language is the priority, and culture plays the second fiddle.

Furthermore, the reactions of both novice and experienced teachers in terms of culture were the same and all of them ignored culture in most cases.

The development of language proficiency was given priority in the observed classes; culture was rarely specifically mentioned or discussed. During the classes, 80 percent of the questions the teachers asked were about the meaning of words, the difference between this word and that word, and asking to explain the phrase/sentence. The teachers had a keen interest in an exact understanding of every word, low tolerance for ambiguity, and a focus on discrete grammar points and specific syntactical constructions. As a result, about 80% of classroom time was spent on the elaboration of language points, with the students listening or taking notes. In addition, translation from either English to Persian or Persian to English was used about 30% of the time in the classroom and was seen as a reliable way of testing and measuring the students' mastery of the language and understanding of the text. The data also suggest that cultural topics appeared at an average of five times in a 70-minute class period and were included as part of a class. When a cultural topic came up in the text, the teachers would seize the opportunity. Their comments were prompted by textual information in the textbook which usually took the form of a definition, a quick comparison, or a translation. Finally, the strategy of *silence* was observed in some cases when students asked for further explanations from the teachers (for example, dancing and gender equality) in order to elaborate on the cultural differences.

Discussion

The main objective of the current study was to explore the attitudes of EFL learners toward the concept of IS and ICC. Furthermore, their real classrooms' practices in reaction to the cultural differences were observed during three sessions. The results showed that even though Iranian EFL teachers were familiar with the concepts of IS and ICC and they knew that language and culture are not isolated terms, actually they ignored culture in the classes based on some stipulations that society imposed on them. As it is clear, one of the major goals of teaching English as an international language is to make it easier for learners to communicate their ideas and promote cultural understanding through the medium of English. Intercultural competence and consequently intercultural sensitivity, the ultimate aims of acquiring a language cannot be attained if the teachers ignore the target culture and focus solely on the learners' native culture.

New languages teach people how to think and act differently, and it truly allows them to communicate across linguistic boundaries. It appears that sticking to one culture is ineffective. As a result, it is acknowledged that learning a language and understanding the target culture cannot be done separately (Valdes, 1986). To increase students' awareness of the target culture, the target culture should be taught alongside the source culture in course books and English classes.

As the results of the semi-structured interview with the teachers showed, they ignored the target culture and basically focused on the source culture. The reason for the focus on the target culture instead of the source culture, as the interviewees mentioned during the interview phase, can be the power of the society that obliges the authors and syllabus designers in the first place and teachers in the second place to focus mostly on source culture rather than target culture and attempted to censor the culture differences' elements. Sometimes, a society's prevalent norms forbid bringing something to light, which leads to censorship.

Freshwater (2004, p. 226) quoted Kuhn (1988), as a scholar who views censorship as "a continuing process encapsulating complex and frequently contradictory relations of power" rather than "either fixed or monolithic." The content that is, in theory, intended to give the learners intercultural knowledge and develop their cultural competency may, unfortunately, be harmed by an overemphasis on the source cultural content. ELT textbooks may not adequately reflect cultural ideas.

The findings of this study were in line with those of Saricoban and Oz (2014), Mostafaei Alaei and Nosrati (2018), and Alvarez's study in terms of cultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity (2020). Cross-cultural competence, intercultural awareness, intercultural stance, and comprehension of intercultural communicative skills were of utmost significance in all of the investigations.

The current study generally highlighted the beliefs of EFL teachers regarding IS and ICC. All of them were aware of the concept of culture and the impact that cultural awareness can have on the language proficiency of EFL learners, but they chose to ignore cultural differences and tried not to pay attention to the nuances of culture when developing their ELT textbooks because of the power of the society. Most of the teachers were aware of the nature of IS and ICC and they knew that language and culture are intertwined and cover each other and teachers and syllabus designers should practice culture and use it in designing textbooks and teaching. They even were aware of various elements of IS and ICC (as the following extracts show), however, some restrictions impede them from taking the concepts of IS and ICC into account in real practices:

Extract 25: *The ideological dimensions of IS and ICC need to be taught more. Unfortunately, such cultural ideas are not included in our textbooks. The clear presentation of the ideological background of the authors in the form of intercultural issues has been ignored in high school textbooks surely due to the power issues. For this reason, I can definitely claim that IS and ICC is not touched in high school textbooks. Furthermore, we teachers also try to ignore cultural terms in the classes since some rules do not allow us to disseminate culture.*

Extract 26: *when we teach English, most of the time we face idioms or vocabulary that are directly related to English culture, if we do not teach them, they will not understand that idiom or vocabulary. Other examples are about events in other countries like Charismas or Thanksgiving, if we do not tell them about them, they get confused, but unfortunately, the high power in society sometimes tries to censor them and changes the textbooks to one's loss of culture. So, considering the above-mentioned examples, I can claim that teaching CCA in Iran's context is essential since it increases the students' general English and it allows individuals to empathize with the people they work with.*

The current study's findings contradict Errington and Gewertz's (2004) assertion that instructors' ideas regarding cultural teaching were found to have an effect on their teaching practice, supporting the idea that teachers' beliefs influence how they behave in the classroom. Even while almost all of the study's participants acknowledged the value of cultural teaching in EFL instruction, they attempted to disregard it and engaged in censorship for a myriad of purposes. According to Errington and Gewertz (2004), teachers' perceptions of the value of cultural education typically align with the way they actually teach. Educators who agree that cultural education has value and is required for its own sake are more likely to promote their students' development of intercultural competency than those who disagree.

In addition to the teachers' high awareness of the concept of intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity, they all were aware of the details of culture. One instance can be their knowledge in reaction to the first question of the interview that aimed to define intercultural competence. Teachers defined intercultural competence with different phrases and terms such as central skill for intercultural competence, the integration of language and cultural awareness, the use of language in society, self-analysis, analysis of the significance of language and culture for the self, and so on. Furthermore, both novice and experienced teachers mentioned the highly and lowly touched categories of culture in the classes and ELT textbooks and stated that gender equality, the culture of English-speaking countries, and most English proper names were less touched by the teachers and ELT textbooks, however, Iranian proper names and Islam as the prevalent religion in Iran was used in a high rate in the books published by the Ministry of Education. In sum, based on the attitudes of EFL teachers, regardless of their years of experience,

it was indicated that culture is critical in language learning and policymakers should pay special attention to it in order to make a high connection between language and culture to improve L2 learning in a simple manner.

Conclusion and Implications

To answer the first research question which investigated the Iranian EFL teachers 'attitudes toward intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity, an interview was conducted with 20 novices and experienced EFL teachers. They each had similar views concerning each of 5 interview questions about IS and ICC in managing classes where cultural differences were discussed and in using cultural terms while designing ELT textbooks in Iran, and most of them believed in the holistic use of English and so placed emphasis on familiarity with the target culture. Most of them reported on the role of censorship in presenting cultural terms related to the target culture and claimed that the high power in society is responsible for the censorship in culture. However, they partly shared the view that it is necessary to learn about the source and target cultures as they may complement each other in certain aspects. The other aim of the study was related to the teachers' real classroom practices in reaction to cultural differences. The results showed that even though Iranian EFL teachers were familiar with the concepts of IS and ICC and they knew that language and culture are not isolated terms, actually they ignored culture in the classes based on some stipulations that the higher education and curriculum designers imposed on them.

For l2 learners, the findings of the present study have implications. Culture has a significant impact on language learners' qualitative and quantitative performance, so raising ICC and enhancing students' awareness of cross-cultural differences may be helpful in preparing students to adapt to cultural differences. This is the responsibility of competent syllabus designers and teachers. Therefore, EFL students should look for chances to raise their ICC and IS levels. In order to raise the ICC and IS levels of their courses, syllabus designers should consider the interculturality of the students and teachers as well as the need for cultural sensitivity. To create a better program, suitable resources, and tasks that will encourage ICC, curriculum creators and material producers should collaborate with students and teachers.

Additionally, they could contribute to the development of more appropriate curricula for the educational system by providing both implicit and explicit guidance on how to foster intercultural competence. It is advised that future research compare the various situations in which English is taught as a foreign language, such as schools, private institutions, and universities, considering the various teaching and learning contexts.

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Research Paper

Systemic Functional Approach in Translation Quality Assessment of a Novel: A Case Study of *The Sound and The Fury*

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Abstract

Translation quality assessment with its focus on the formulation of a comprehensive model for translation evaluation has gained a growing interest in the field of translation studies. However, little attention has been paid to the use of linguistic theories in the evaluative judgment of a translation. This study aimed to apply a particular kind of linguistic analysis based on systemic functional linguistics (SFL) as a framework for the translation quality assessment of a novel. Meanwhile, it aimed to identify the kinds of overt errors and the used translation strategies in English to Persian. To this end, thirty pages of The Sound and The Fury by Faulkner (1329) and its translation by Bahman Sholevar (2003) were selected and the mismatches across the three metafunctions of ideational, interpersonal, and thematic meanings were identified based on SFL. The comparison of the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) revealed that the ideational meaning had the greatest number of errors as produced by the translator. Moreover, omission constituted the largest kind of overt translation error. Thus, the translator mostly used reduction strategies and text expansion strategies in translating the ST. The results showed that SFL can successfully be applied to evaluate the correct translation of the three metafunctions of language. This study has important implications for syllabus designers of translation studies, translation teachers, and literary translators.

Keywords*: Ideational meaning, Interpersonal meaning, Metafunction, Systemic functional linguistics, Thematic meaning*

رویکرد کارکردی سیستمی در ارزیابی کیفیت ترجمه یک رمان: مطالعه موردیThe Sound and The Fury
ارزیابی کیفیت ترجمه با تمرکز بر تدوین یک مدل جامع برای ارزیابی ترجمه، توجه روزافزونی به حوزه مطالعات ترجمه پیدا کرده است. با این حال، توجه کمی به استفاده از نظریه های زبانی در قضاوت ارزشی ترجمه شده است. هدف این مطالعه به کارگیری نوع خاصی از تحلیل زبانی مبتنی بر زبان شناسی عملکردی سیستمی (SFL) به عنوان چارچوبی برای ارزیابی کیفیت ترجمه یک رمان بود. ضمناً با هدف شناسایی انواع خطاهای آشکار و راهبردهای ترجمه انگلیسی به فارسی مورد استفاده قرار گرفت. برای این منظور، سی صفحه از کتاب «صدا و خشم» اثر فاکنر (1329) و ترجمه آن توسط بهمن شولهور (2003) انتخاب شد و عدم تطابق بین سه فراکارکرد معنایی فکری، بین فردی و موضوعی بر اساس SFLشناسایی شد. مقایسه متن مبدأ (ST) و متن مقصد (TT) نشان داد که معنای ایدهآل بیشترین تعداد خطا را در مترجم دارد. علاوه بر این، حذف بزرگترین نوع خطای ترجمه آشکار است. بنابراین، مترجم بیشتر از راهبردهای کاهش متن و راهبردهای گسترش متن در ترجمه ST استفاده کرده است. نتایج نشان داد که SFL را می توان با موفقیت برای ارزیابی ترجمه صحیح سه فراکارکرد زبان به کار برد. این مطالعه پیامدهای مهمی برای طراحان درسی مطالعات ترجمه، معلمان ترجمه و مترجمان ادبی دارد.
واژگان کلیدی: معنای ایدهآل، معنای بین فردی، فراکارکرد، زبانشناسی کارکردی سیستمی، معنای موضوعی

Introduction

Linguistic theories play the main role in the development of translation theory. In fact, without the use of the linguistic theory, it would be difficult for the translation theory to be theorized and systematized, even though the translation process is greatly affected by non-verbal characteristics, such as culture and esthetics created by different languages. The study of translation theory would be benefited from the theory of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) (Herawati, 2010). Many scholars of translation studies have called SFL a powerful tool for decreasing the subjectivity of translation assessment (Kim & Matthiessen, 2015; Li, 2017).

Translation has always been considered as an important part of communication between languages and cultures (O'Connell, 2007). It is a meaning-making activity and all kinds of translations lead to the creation of meaning (Halliday, 1992). Meanwhile, translation is a highly complex task because the translator has to understand the cultural and linguistic systems of the source text (ST), decode it, and then encode it into the cultural and linguistic systems of the target text (TT) (Nguyen, 2015). The complexity of translation is due to its continuous challenge with meaning (Manfredi, 2011). Therefore, texts are considered layers of multidimensional meanings rather than containers of content (Steiner & Yallop 2001). Regarding language as a system for meaning-making, SFL provides a helpful set of means for exploring language and its meaning in a communicative context. Hence, translation is mainly concerned with the text, and the meaning encoded in it can utilize SFL in examining texts for translation purposes (Nguyen, 2015). Based on SFL approaches to language, meaning is encoded both in the text and the context in which the text is produced. Like translation in which vocabulary and grammar play an important role, SFL also deals with lexico-grammar which includes both lexis and grammar (Halliday, 1978). Systemic functional approaches toward translation studies have mainly focused on the study of the parameters of translation shift and translation equivalence (Wang, 2015). Hence, SFL is particularly relevant to translation because according to Manfredi (2008), it is not concerned "with a static or prescriptive kind of language study, but rather it describes language in actual use and centers around texts and their contexts" (p.49). Thus, the theoretical problems of translation can be explored through a systemic functional perspective and functional grammar can be used as an instrument for text analysis and the creation of a new text in the target language (Manfredi, 2008).

SFL is based on the linguistic theory of Halliday (1978) which shows the relationships between language and context and describes how people use semiotic resources strategically to communicate appropriately across a set of different contexts (Schleppegrell, 2004). According to this theory, language is considered as a set of systems from which users can make choices to make meanings in a social context to get certain communicative functions (i.e., interacting with others, expressing their experiences, or organizing coherent and logical messages (Hyland, 2004). In SFL, the three variables of the context of the situation (field, tenor, and mode) affect our language choices because they are linked to the ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions of language which Halliday calls 'semantic metafunctions. This relationship is known as the context-metafunction resonance (Hasan, 2014) and is very important in understanding SFL's concept of social life as a semantic construct (Bartlett & O'Grady, 2017). Thus, the field of discourse activates ideational meaning; tenor determines interpersonal meaning and mode identifies textual meaning. To put it briefly, ideational metafunction is the result of language being used to represent experience and to communicate information. In other words, language presents a theory of human experiences and some lexicogrammar resources of every language are devoted to it. Ideational meaning is divided into two components: experiential and logical (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). The experiential component encodes the experiences while the logical component shows the relationship between them (Manfredi, 2011).

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2013), the ideational function of language is 'language as reflection'. In ideational metafunction, transitivity is one of the clause analysis

methods. There are three elements in the transitivity process. The participants in the process, the process itself, and the circumstances connected with the process. Halliday has also divided the process types into six ones: mental, material, behavioral, verbal, relational, and existential (Halliday, 2001). Through logical meaning, clauses are linked together using logico-semantice relations to form clause complexes. Two main systems of taxis and logico-semantic relations determine how clauses are related to each other. Taxis or the degree of interdependency is composed of the two elements of parataxis and hypotaxis. In parataxis, the two clauses are of equal status; in other words, the two clauses related to each other are independent. In hypotaxis, the two clauses linked together are not of equal status one of them is independent and the other is dependent. The selection between hypotaxis and parataxis shows the relations between two clauses within a clause complex. Clause complexes are often composed of a combination of hypotaxis and parataxis (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013).

Interpersonal metafunction of language is used for human interaction. In other words, language is used for enacting our personal and social relations with other people. The clause of grammar does not only represent some processes with its different participants and circumstances, but it is also a proposal or proposition through which we question or inform, make an offer or give an order and express our attitudes toward whom we are speaking with and what we are speaking about. This kind of meaning is more active. Hence, the interpersonal meaning of language is 'language as an action. Thus, interpersonal metafunction is both personal and interactive (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013); and it shows the relationship between interactants and their attitudes and is realized in grammar by the systems of mood, modality, and appraisal (Miller, 2005).

The textual metafunction of language refers to the construction of a text. In other words, it is the need for a text to be a coherent and cohesive whole. In textual metafunction, the clause is represented as a message, and the textual resources are divided into structural and conjunction resources. The structural resources refer to the thematic structure of the text (theme and rheme) and information structure (given and new information). The cohesive resources refer to conjunction, ellipsis, reference, and lexical cohesion. The thematic structure is composed of two parts: theme and rheme. The theme always starts from the beginning of a clause and it creates the environment for the remainder of the message, rheme. Themes can be marked or unmarked. Unmarked themes are usually the subject of the clause and marked theme is something other than the subjects. Adverbial groups (like yesterday, suddenly, finally) and propositional phrases (in the morning, in the afternoon, etc.) are the most common types of marked clauses. The clause is the unit in which different kinds of meaning including ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings are integrated into a single syntagm (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013).

One indicator of translation quality assessment is the number of translation errors in the target language test. Error counts can be used to assess quality in general and fidelity in particular (Gile, 1994). Based on House's (1977, 2015) model of translation quality assessment, translation errors can be divided into two types covertly erroneous translations and overtly erroneous translations. The covert errors include the mismatches along the situational dimensions and the overt errors include those which result from a mismatch of a denotative meaning of the ST and the TT elements. Overt errors are grouped into two categories. The first category concerns denotative errors that can be subdivided into additions, omissions, and substitutions consisting of either wrong combinations or wrong selections of ST elements. The second category of overt errors or breaches of the target language system is divided into cases of ungrammaticality and cases of dubious acceptability or breaches of the norms of usage.

Additions and omissions are the most frequent strategies translators refer to when they encounter a problem in translation. The lexical and structural complexities in translating a text and the culturally specific elements in the ST cause the translator to omit a culturally undesired

part from the ST or to add another part to the TT. Because the systems of the two languages are either culturally or systematically different, such changes as adding or omitting a part of the text may be unavoidable (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2009; Hatim & Munday, 2004). It should be mentioned that besides addition and omission, some other techniques like substitution (Baker, 1992) may be used to compensate for the loss of meaning in translation. Any text can be subjected to misrepresentation or distortion when it is expanded or some additional information is added to it when it is reduced or some information is omitted from it (Bassnett, 2002).

Since the founding of SFL, different researchers have adopted this theory to study translation. In a study, Dupont (2020) investigated the placement of the conjunctive adjuncts (e.g. *however, therefore*) in two registers including the research articles and editorials using the framework of SFL and relying on the concepts of theme and rheme to describe this placement. The study aimed to explore the effect of register variation on the differences between the two languages of French and English. The results of the study showed that although register variation had an important role in the placement of conjunctive adjuncts into each language system, language was a better predictor of placement than register. This was because the cross-linguistic differences in placement between French and English were fixed across different communicative situations. In another study, Najafi Dehkordi (2018) investigated the extent to which ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and textual meaning are accurately translated by 15 M.A. translation students in Iran. The students were randomly selected and they were given the text of State-Sponsored Horror in Oklahoma to translate. Then, each clause of the English text and its translation was analyzed to identify the three metafunctions of language and to classify the errors. The results showed that ideational meaning was the most frequent kind of error. The results of this study were compatible with Halliday's statement that a translation is not considered as a good translation if the TT does not match the ST ideationally.

This study relied on the linguistic aspects of translation based on SFL as the framework for this study. It compared the novel **The Sound and The Fury** (1928) by Faulkner and its translation by Bahman Sholevar (2003). The ST and the TT described the linguistic properties used to encode ideational, textual, and interpersonal meanings. The translator's sensitivity to the selected meaning in the ST and his way of desexualizing this meaning on the TT based on SFL principles underlying the translation quality assessment in this study. In many studies conducted on translation quality assessment, the linguistics dimension of the language of translation as the focus of research has been neglected. Meanwhile, many translators try to create equivalence in terms of ideational meaning and they forget the interpersonal and textual aspects of meaning. According to Halliday (2001), equivalence in translation should be done in the three metafunctions of language (ideational, textual, and interpersonal meaning).

The present study is designed to answer the following questions:

RQ1. What is the frequency of errors in the three metafunctions suggested by SFL?
RQ2. What kinds of overt errors have occurred in the translation process of the three metafunctions of language?
RQ3. Which strategies have the translator frequently used in translating The Sound and The Fury?
RQ4. Can SFL be appropriately used to evaluate the correct translation of the three metafunctions of language?

Method

Materials

For this study, Faulkner's (1929) novel The Sound and The Fury in its English version as the ST and its translation by Bahman Sholevar (2003) as the TT was chosen as the case study. Then, the mismatches in the three metafunctions in the ST and the TT were identified according to Halliday's (1978) model of SFL and the type of overt translation errors was identified according to House's (1977) model. The data collection process and analysis were done systematically and the results were presented in the form of graphs.

Procedure

This study which is a descriptive qualitative one aims to assess the translation quality of Faulkner's (1929) The Sound and The Fury and its Persian translation using Halliday's SFL model. To do so, the different sections of the book from the beginning, the middle, and the end sections were selected to represent the whole work. Some clauses of the ST were analyzed to see the mismatches in the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings in the ST and the TT. Then, the translated Persian clauses were compared with the original ones to identify the translation errors based on three metafunctions (ideational, interpersonal, and textual), the error types (omission, addition, substitution, breaches of the target language system), and the translation strategies used mostly by the translator. Finally, the frequency and percentage of the errors in each metafunction of language, the error types, and the used translation strategies were identified and tabulated separately.

Results

Ideational meaning

Ideational meaning which is activated by the field is divided into experiential and logical meanings. Experiential meaning shows the way we experience the world by encoding the experiences and logical meaning shows the relationships among experiences. Experiential meaning is built up by the transitivity systems which are represented by the participants, processes, and circumstances (Santosa, 2003). Transitivity constructs experiences into a set of manageable processes (Halliday, 2004). A process consists of three elements: the process itself, the participants, and the circumstances related to that process. The Participants and circumstances are the main elements in the process. According to Halliday (2004), there are different types of processes among them material, mental, verbal, and behavioral processes. Material processes need to do with acting. They are processes of doing. Mental processes describe the state of mind and that they do with the process of sensing and verbal processes are the processes of saying, speaking, talking, and explaining. Finally, behavioral processes are the processes of behaving (Gerot and Wignell, 1995).

Experientially inaccurate sentences

Example 1: The carriage jolted and crunched on the drive.

TT: درشکه تلق تلوق میکرد و روی خیابان باغ بالا پایین می‌پرید.

In this sentence, the circumstance of manner (on the drive) is misrepresented in translation. The translation error applied in this sentence is **substitution**. It could simply be translated as follows:

"درشکه تلق و تلوق می‌کرد و در هنگام حرکت بالا پایین می‌پرید".

Example 2: let's run to the house and get warm.

TT: بیا بریم خونه گرم شیم.

In this sentence, the material process (run) has been untranslated and its exact meaning has not been conveyed in the TT. Meanwhile, the conjunction (and) has not been translated. The translation error is an **omission**. The following translation has been suggested for it.

"بیا سریع بریم خونه و گرم شیم."

Example 3: it's rather excrutiating-ly apt that you will use it to gain the reductio absurdum of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's.

TT: بطرز عذاب‌دهنده‌ای شایسته است که آن‌را برای تحصیل پوچی تجارت بشری بکار ببری که همانقدر بدرد احتیاجات شخصیت بخورد که بدرد احتیاجات پدرت یا پدر پدرت خورد.

In this case, the experiential meaning of the clause is misrepresented by not precisely translating the circumstance of quality (rather excruciatingly) in the first clause and the circumstance of means (to gain the reductio absurdum). The transition error is **substitution** at the lexical level. It could be simply translated as follows:

"اکیدا بهت توصیه می‌کنم که تو ار آن برای تحصیل برهان تمام تجارب بشری استفاده کنی که همانقدر بدرد احتیاجات شخصیت بخورد که بدرد احتیاجات پدرت یا پدر پدرت خورد."

Example 4: You'd better slip on your pants and run.

TT: بهتره شلوارتو پات کنی و بدوی.

In this case, the material process has been misrepresented. Slip-on here means to do it as quickly as possible. Thus, some components of its meaning have been omitted in the translated text.   **Omission** can be considered as a translation error in this sentence. It could be translated as follows:

بهتره هر چه زودتر شلوارتو پات کنی و بدوی.

For More examples of experientially inaccurate sentences, see appendix 1.

Logical meaning
Taxis

Taxis are a way of linking clauses in certain meaningful and systematic ways to form a complex clause (Eggins, 2004). Clause complex has an interdependent relationship in a way that one unit is interdependent on another unit (Halliday, 2004). Based on the interdependent relationship, the clause complex can be divided into paratactic and hypotactic. Paratactic is the relationship between two independent clauses. The conjunctions that connect these two clauses are and, or, and yet. Sometimes, commas and semicolons may be used to connect these clauses. Hypotactic is the relationship between one independent clause and a dependent clause (Halliday, 2004).

Lexico-semantic relations

Lexico-semantic relations and taxis link two or more clauses in a clause complex. According to Halliday (2004), there are different kinds of lexico-semantic relationships any of which may hold a primary or secondary place in a clause. The lexico-semantic relationship is the expansion of the meaning of the clause complex into two ways: projection and expansion (elaborating, extending, and enhancing) (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2013).

Example 5: We stooped over and crossed the garden, where the flowers rasped and rattled against us.

TT:دولا شدیم و از باغ گذشتیم. به جایی رفتیم که وقتی گلها به ما می خورند خس خس میکردند.

The clause complex is a hypotactic clause showing elaboration, i.e. the dependent clause clarifies and elaborates the meaning of the independent clause by adding an explanatory statement to it. However, the translator has changed the hypotactic clause complex into two I clause complexes. Moreover, the logico-semantic relation in the translation is not observed at all and the dependent clause is translated as a separate sentence. Therefore, the TT has not represented the logical relation between the two clauses. The translation error is a **substitution** at the syntax level. It could be translated as:

" ما دولا شدیم و از باغ جایی که گلها موقع برخورد با ما خس خس می کردند گذشتیم".

Example 6: I can't make them come if they ain't coming.

TT: اگه خودشون نخوان بیان من که نمی تونم مجبورشون کنم.

The clause complex is a hypotactic enhancing clause of a causal-conditional relationship. The translator has changed the order of dependent and independent clauses. The translation error is a **substitution** at the syntax level. It could be simply translated as:

"من نمی تونم آنها رو وادار کنم بیان اگر خودشون نخوان"

Example 7: Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought.

TT: گفت چون هیچ نبردی فتح نمیشود حتی در هم نمی گیرد.

In this case, the two sentences have been translated as if they are paratactic clauses. Meanwhile, the experiential meanings of the two sentences have not been conveyed very well in the translated text. The translation error is **substitution** at word and syntax levels. It could simply be translated as:

"او گفت چون هیچ نبردی تا به حال برنده‌ای نداشته است. حتی جنگی هم صورت نمی‌گیرد.

Textual Function in Persian and English
Thematic Structure

In the SFL approach to text analysis proposed by Halliday (2001), there is always the first element in the clause followed by the rheme which is the remainder of the clause. There are three kinds of themes: a topical theme which is the first ideational element; a textual theme which is the conjunctive adjunct or conjunction; and an interpersonal theme which is a modal adjunct (Munday, 1998). According to Munday (1998), a theme coincides with the grammatical subject of a clause in English.

Textually inaccurate translations

Example 8: **Listen at you**, now.

TT: حالا نگاش کن.

Here the predicator (verb) is the marked theme (listen). The order of theme and rhyme is not observed in this translation. Meanwhile, the translator has wrongly misinterpreted the sentence, i.e. the transitivity pattern and experiential meaning are violated. The translation error is a **substitution** in which the marked theme is substituted by another marked theme. It could be simply translated as

"غر نزن حالا. "

Example 9: You don't want your hands frozen on Christmas, do you?

TT: مگه میخوای روز عید دستت یخ زده باشه.

In this sentence, the topical theme is *You* and the remainder of the sentence is the theme. Here the translator not only has changed the transitivity and experiential meaning of the circumstance of the clause (Christmas is translated to عید), but he also has changed the place of theme and rheme. The translation error is **cultural substitution and substitution** at the syntax level. It could be translated in the following way:

"تو که نمیخوای تو کریسمس دستات یخ بزنه، میخوای؟"

Example 10: Uncle Maury was putting the bottle away on the sideboard in the dining room.

TT: در ناهار خوری دایی موری داشت بطری را توی قفسه سر جایش می گذاشت.

The topical theme is Uncle Maury and the theme is the remainder of the sentence. The translator has changed the order of theme and rhyme in translation. The translation error is **substitution.** It could be translated as follows:

"دایی موری داشت در ناهار خوری بطری را سر جایش در قفسه می گذاشت."

For more examples of textually inaccurate sentences, see appendix 2.

Interpersonal Meaning

Language is always enacting our social and personal relationships with other people we are speaking with. The clause of the language is not only a process of conveying the experiences but also is a proposal or proposition through which we question or give information, make an offer or give an order and express our attitudes toward the person with whom we are speaking and what we are speaking about (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). Interpersonal meaning is used to encode interaction and it is expressed through mood or modality (Halliday, 2001).

Mood/Modality

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2013), a clause is composed of two parts: a mood which is a combination of a subject and a finite, and a residue which is the remainder of the clause. The mood element carries the meaning of a clause as an interactive event. The residue consists of a combination of three functional elements: predicator, complement, and adjunct.

Sister Susie	's	sewing	shirts	for soldiers
Mood	finite	predicator	complement	adjunct
mood			residue	

Interpersonally inaccurate translations

Example 11: Perhaps, it'll be the best thing, for all of us.

TT: شاید این برای ما بهتر از هر چی باشه.

The sentence begins with a modal adjunct (perhaps) followed by a subject (it) and a finite ('ll); both of which form the mood. The finite ('ll) has not been translated in the TT. The finite and the predicator have been infused into one single lexical verb and this has changed the mood structure of the clause. The translation error is an **omission**. The correct translation can be as follows:

شاید، این برای همه ما بهترین چیز خواهد بود.

Example 12: I could hear Queenie's feet and the bright shapes went smooth and steady on both sides, the shadows of them flowing across Queenie's back.

TT: صدای پای کویینی را میشنیدم و شکلهای روشن و صاف و مرتب در دو طرف رد میشدند و سایه‌هایشان روی پشت کویینی میافتاد.

In this sentence, there is a paratactic relationship between the first and the second clauses and a hypotactic relationship between the second and third clauses. The first clause is composed of a subject (I) and a finite (could), both of which form the mood. The finite (could) has not been translated in the TT. The finite and the predicator have been infused into one single lexical verb and this has changed the mood structure of the clause. Moreover, the transitivity and the experiential meaning of the second clause have been violated in which the circumstance of manner (smooth and steady) has not been translated correctly. Meanwhile, the logical relationship between the second and the third clause has not been observed in the TT and the relationship between the second and the third clause has become paratactic. The translation error is **omission** and **substitution** at the syntax level. The correct translation could be as follows:

"من می‌توانستم صدای پای کویینی را بشنوم و شکلهای روشن به آرامی و پی در پی از هر دو طرف رد می‌شدند طوری که سایه‌هایشان روی پشت کویینی می‌افتاد."

Example 13: We're going to the cemetery." Mother said.

TT: ما میریم قبرستون

Once again, the finite ('re) has not been translated in the TT. The translation error is an **omission.** The correct translation could be like this.

"ما داریم میریم قبرستون."

Example 14: Then she began to cry again, talking about how her flesh and blood rose to curse her.

TT: بعد او دوباره گریه را سر داد، و صحبت از این میکرد که چطور اولاد خودش قد علم کرده بودند تا او را نفرین کنند.

In this case, there is not any finite in the dependent clause, however, the predicator (rose up) has been translated with a finite included in it. Thus, the mood structure of the ST has been changed. Also, the hypotactic clause has been translated into a paratactic one. Thus, the logico-semantic relationships of these clauses have been changed. Meanwhile, the experiential meaning of the circumstance of the role has been misrepresented. The translation errors are **substitution at the word level, substitution at the semantic level, and addition.** The correct translation could be as follows:

" بعد او دوباره گریه کرد، در حالیکه صحبت از این میکرد که چطور فردی از گوشت و خون خود قد علم کرد تا او را نفرین کند."

Frequency of Metafunctional Errors and Error Types

Figure 1
The frequency of metafunctional errors
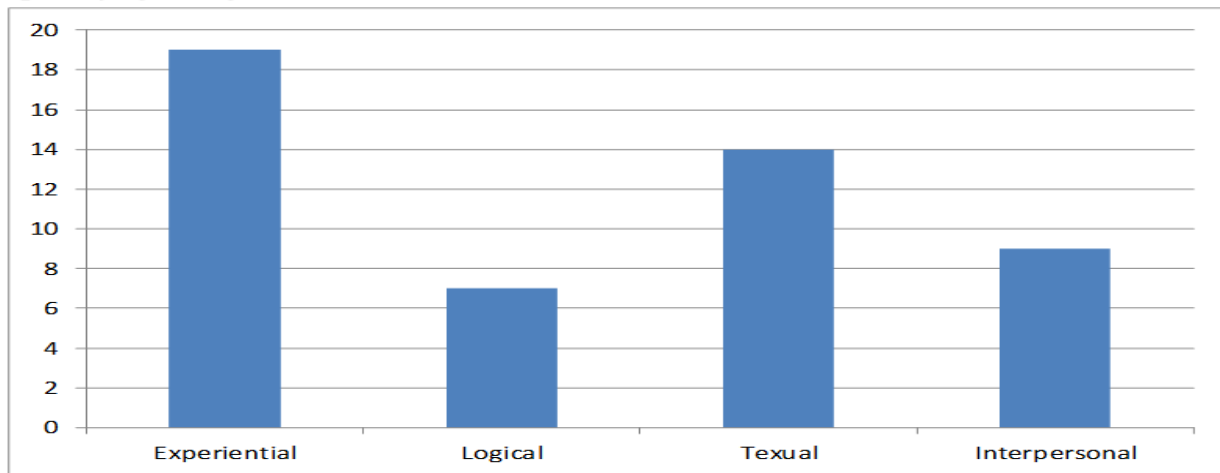
Figure 2
The frequency of the error types
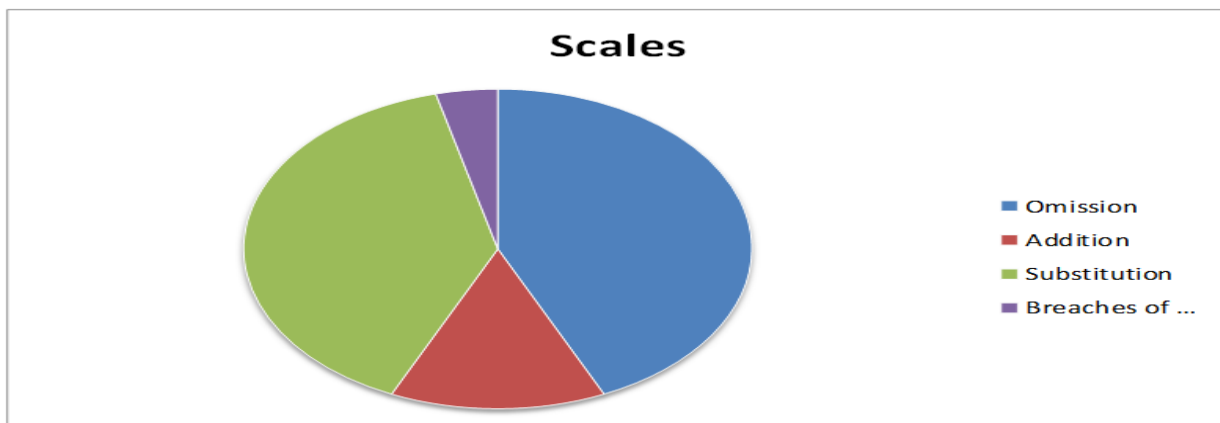
Discussion

The comparison of the ST and the TT revealed several mismatches along the three metafunctions of ideational, interpersonal, and thematic meanings. As shown by Figure 1, it is clear that the experiential meaning had the highest number of errors among the other categories. Textual meaning, interpersonal meaning, and logical semantic relationships formed the second, third, and

fourth categories of errors, respectively. It should be mentioned that the ideational meaning is composed of experiential and logical components. Therefore, ideational meaning is considered one of the metafunctions of the language in which the greatest number of errors has been produced by the translator. The cause of a high number of errors in ideational meaning may refer to some factors such as the existence of multiple equivalences such as *quit talking* translated as *haram boredom* rather than *Saket shodan*, imperfect knowledge of the target language such as *reducto absurdum* translated as *pooch* rather than *borhan half* or *crawl* translated as *to rattan* rather than *sinekhiz rattan* and the errors which are due to the lack of time, stress and oversight such as *experiences* translated as *Gujarat* rather than *tajarob*. The fact that the translator had produced the highest number of errors in ideational meaning is compatible with the results of the study carried out by Najafi Dehkordi (2018). In a study to investigate the role of SFL in the text analysis of the translated texts by 15 M.A. translation students, Najafi Dehkordi (2018) found that the students made the highest number of errors in translating ideational meaning. According to Halliday (2001), translation equivalence occurs in the ideational metafunction and a translation is not qualified as a good translation if the TT does not match the ST ideationally. Therefore, one of the main criticisms made of the translated texts is that while the ST and the TT may be equivalent ideationally, they may not be equivalent interpersonally or textually. Therefore in translation equivalence, high value can be attributed to the interpersonal or the textual meaning in the case that the ideational meaning is taken for granted. With these explanations, the answer to question one gets clear.

An overt kind of translation is needed for literary texts (House, 1977). Out of 51 errors, 22 (43.1%) belonged to omission, which constituted the largest number of errors. Substitution, addition, and breaches of the target language system formed 20 (39.2%), 7 (13.7%), and 2 (3.9%) errors, respectively (Figure 2). It should be mentioned that all of these errors belonged to the subcategories of mild semantic errors in which the inaccuracy in the translation of some lexical items only slightly distorted the intended meaning and mild phrasing errors where the translator only conveys the gist of what is said and does not exactly translate the whole sentence (Barik, 1994). According to Baker (1992), "A certain amount of loss, addiction, or skewing of meaning is often unavoidable in translation; language systems tend to be too different to produce exact replicas in most cases" (p.57). The omission was the most frequent error because the translator had intentionally or unintentionally omitted some of the meaning components of the lexical items or he had omitted some parts of the text. Meanwhile, substitution was the second type of error because the translator had chosen an unacceptable lexical item or clause or he had changed the grammatical structure of the sentence. The results of this study are compatible with the results of the study done by Heidari Tabrizi, Chalak, and Taherioun (2013) on assessing the quality of the Persian translation of Orwell's Eighty-four based on House (1977, 2015) model of translation quality assessment. The results of their study showed that omission and substitutions were considered major errors. Thus, it can be said that the translator of The Sound and The Fury used text reduction strategies such as omission and text expansion strategies such as addition and substitution in translating the novel. With these explanations, the answer to questions 2 and 3 gets clear.

With the systemic approach trying to explain the internal relationships of a language as a system and with the functional approach seeing language as a device for social interaction, SFL considers both the form and the function and can be used in translation quality assessment (Nguyen, 2015). Meanwhile, SFL can mainly be used for text analysis. Thus, SFL is useful to the theory and practice of translation and it can be used to investigate the theoretical problems of translation (Herawati, 2010). As it is clear from this study, SFL was successfully applied to evaluate the correct translation of three metafunctions of language. As noted by Haliday (2001),

all three metafunctions of language should be considered in assessing the translation quality of a text. These explanations make the answer to question 4 clear.

Conclusion

This study aimed to show that the theoretical framework of SFL can provide an effective metalinguistic resource in translation quality assessment. Hence, the translation quality of the novel The Sound and The Fury was assessed through the three metafunctions of language presented by SFL. SFL can provide an extensive amount of choice in text production (Gil, 2013). Therefore, it can be used to compare the ST and the TT in translation studies and to find the deficiencies in translation. In this study, the translation errors were classified along the SFL taxonomy of the language metafunctions into ideational, textual, and interpersonal meanings. Meanwhile, the types of overt errors frequently done by the translator were categorized into omission, substitution, addition, and breaches of the target language system. The results of this study showed that among the three metafunctions of language, ideational meaning had the largest number of errors in the translation of the Sound and the Fury translated by Bahman Sholevar (2003). This is because translation equivalence is usually described in ideational terms in a way that if a translation does not match the ST ideationally, it cannot be considered a translation (Manfredi, 2011). Textual meaning and interpersonal meaning formed the second and third categories of errors. It should be mentioned that different values are ascribed to textual and interpersonal meaning in translation because equivalence in translation can be achieved through the three metafunctions of language (Halliday, 2001). The types of errors usually done by the translator were mostly omission and substitution. Therefore, the existence of different types of errors in literary translations calls for the need for the translation quality assessment of literary texts in Iran. Taking into account the theoretical framework of SFL, translators can detect and avoid many problems and errors in translation. The findings of this study showed that the translator of *Sound and Fury* had applied different strategies such as expansion (addition and substitution) and reduction strategies (omission) in the translation of the ST. These strategies occurred at the word and sentence levels. Hence, the translator trainees should be trained to use these strategies correctly and to recognize and utilize larger textual elements.

SFL approach to translation studies might have significant implications for syllabus designers of translation studies, translation teachers, and literary translators. The syllabus designers might design a curriculum in which they use SFL as a linguistic model for translation studies and translation quality assessment. The teachers could teach the principles of SFL to translation trainees because the SFL-based practice in translation may be effective in improving their knowledge of text analysis. Hence, students who are informed of SFL principles can learn how to use ideational, textual, and interpersonal resources to translate more elaborately and to organize their translated texts into meaningful units. According to Pérez (2005), "translation trainees should be exposed to a variety of approaches to translation which are inspired by and connect to different theoretical schools so that students are in this way taught to be flexible in their approach to texts and will also learn theory in practical application" (p. 1). Meanwhile, literary translators can apply SFL principles in the translation of literary texts so that they can get familiar with the problems encountered in the translation of these kinds of texts and the strategies they can use to cope with those problems. Thus, they can provide equivalence not only in ideational meaning but also in textual and interpersonal meaning too.

The following suggestions and recommendations can be incorporated in including the framework of SFL into translation studies. First, this study was carried out on a sample of thirty pages of the book the Sound and the Fury and its translation. Similar studies with a broader sample are required to prove the results of the study. Second, this study adopted a qualitative methodology of SFL-based textual analysis of the ST and compared it with its translation. Other

studies may assess the translation quality of two or more texts to see whether they conform to the SFL principles and whether equivalence is provided in the three metafunctions of language or not. Third, this study was conducted on the English-Persian translation of the novel the Sound and the Fury. Other studies can be carried out on Persian-English translations and other literary texts such as poems. Fourth, this study investigated the translation quality in terms of the three metafunctions of language. Further research might also assess the translation quality of these metafunctions on interpretations or oral translations.

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Appendix 1
More examples of experientially inaccurate sentences
Example 1: Do you want to make him sick, with the house full of the company?

TT:میخوای با خونه پر از مهمون مریضش کنی؟

In this sentence, the circumstance of place (with a house full of the company) is not naturally translated. The translation error is a **breach of the target language system**. It could be translated as follows:

آیا میخوای اونو مریض کنی، اونم در خونه‌ای که پر از مهمونه؟

Example 2: "But to have the school authorities think that I have no control over her, that I can't—"

TT: اما اینکه اولیای مدرسه فکر بکنن که من هیچ تسلطی بر او ندارم، که من نمیتونم---

In this sentence, the circumstance of the role (authorities) has been mistranslated. The translation error is **substitution** at the lexical level. The correct translation can be as follows:

"اما اینکه مدیران مدرسه فکر بکنن که من هیچ تسلطی بر او ندارم، که من نمیتونم---"

Example 3: "I'm afraid you'll lose your temper with her," she says.

TT: میترسم عصبانی بشی بهش بپری.

In this sentence, the modal adjunct and the material process have been translated correctly. However, in this rendition, the translator has added elements to the process and this has changed the ideational meaning of the clause. The translation error in **addition**. The correct translation can be as follows:

" میترسم از کوره در بری."

Example 4: "I'm afraid to go and leave Quentin."

TT : میترسم برم و کونتین رو بذارم.

Here, some meaningful components of the material process (leave) have been omitted. The translation error is an **omission.** It could be translated as follows:

"میترسم برم و کونتین رو تنها بذارم."

Example 5: I give it to you not that you may remember a time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it.

TT: من اینرا بتو میدهم نه برای اینکه بیاد زمان باشی بلکه برای آنکه بتوانی گاه و بیگاه زمان را فراموش کنی و تمام نفست را برای فتح آن حرام نکنی.

In this case, the circumstance of time (for a moment) in the second independent clause has been left out in the translation. Meanwhile, the modal of the first dependent clause (may) has not been translated. The translation error is an **omission.** The correct translation can be as follows:

"من اینرا بهتو میدهم نه برای اینکه بتوانی بیاد زمان باشی بلکه برای آنکه بتوانی گاه و بیگاه برای لحظهای زمان را فراموش کنی و تمام نفست را برای فتح آن حرام نکنی."

Example 6: "Remember she's your own flesh and blood," she says.

TT: گفت یادت باشه که گوشت و خون هر دوتون یکیه.

In this case, the circumstance of means in the mental clause has been translated by including an extra numerative expression. The translation error in **addition**. The correct translation can be as follows:

"گفت یادت باشه که از او از گوشت و خون توه**."**

Appendix 2
More examples of textually inaccurate sentences

Example 7: "You can never get them out in time to catch yourself, fat as you are."

TT:انقدر چاقی که نمیتونی بموقع دستاتو در بیاری تا خودتو نگهداری."

In this sentence, the theme of the clause is an unmarked one while in the translation, the theme is an adverbial phrase which is the marked one. Therefore, the translator misrepresented the theme of the clause. Meanwhile, the adjunct or the mood (never) of the sentence has not been translated. The translation error is **substitution at the syntax level and omission**. It could be translated as follows:

"تو هرگز نمیتونی به موقع دستاتو از جیبت در بیاری تا خودتو نگه داری چون خیلی چاقی."

Example 8: "He coming up the walk."

TT:همینجا، داره میاد

In the ST, the unmarked theme is not translated at all and it is replaced by a marked theme in the translation. Meanwhile, the circumstance of the place (the walk) has not been translated. Thus, the ideational meaning of the clause is not represented very well. The translation error is **substitution at the syntax level and omission**. The correct translation could be as follows:

"اون تو راهه داره میاد."

Example 9: Then I can watch her during the day and you can use Ben for the night shift.

TT: اونوقت روزها من میتونم مواظبش باشم، واسه کشیک شب هم میتونی بن رو بذاری.

In this sentence, the unmarked theme (I) in the second clause has been replaced by a marked theme in the translated text. The translation error is a **substitution** at the syntax level. The correct translation can be as follows:

"اونوقت من می‌تونم روزها مواظبش باشم، و تو می‌تونی از بن واسه کشیک شب استفاده کنی.

Biodata

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Review Paper

Barriers to Integrating Information Communications Technology into English for Specific Purposes: A Review of Current Studies

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Abstract
This study aims to report on the literature related to the barriers to ICT (Information Communications Technology) integration into ESP (English for Specific Purposes) instruction that hinder promoting ESP instruction through this integration. The literature review has also shed light upon ways of addressing these barriers. To meet this end, the paper begins with discussing a review of some of the important Iranian and international studies on barriers to ICT integration in ESP instruction and then the paper highlights several first-order, and second-order barriers, and ways of addressing them to help in promoting and changing traditional ESP instruction and materials. It is suggested that this review could be useful for those who make decisions about the ESP courses, for ESP material developers, and for ESP teachers to change from traditional ESP instruction, which is teacher-centered and text-based, to a new ESP instruction through ICT integration. This review has also implications for practice. Change is mostly challenging; reporting a review of previous studies on barriers to ICT integration at the tertiary level and proposing ways of addressing them may help defeat the barriers and may enhance acceptance of new ESP teaching and learning methods.

Keywords*: First-order barriers, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Information Communications Technology (ICT), Second-order barriers*

موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در زبان انگلیسی برای اهداف خاص: مروری بر پژوهش های کنونی
این مطالعه گزارش پیشینه پژوهش های مرتبط با موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در آموزش انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه که مانع ارتقا آموزش زبان انگلیسی از طریق این ادغام هست می باشد. بررسی پیشینه پژوهش راه‌های رفع این موانع را روشن تر کرده است. به منظور نیل به این هدف، مقاله با بررسی برخی از پژوهش های مهم ایرانی و بین‌المللی در مورد موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در آموزش انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه آغاز می شود و سپس تعدادی از موانع اولیه، ثانویه و راه‌های رسیدگی آنها برای کمک به ارتقا و تغییرآموزش سنتی انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه برجسته می شود. این پژوهش می تواند برای افرادی که در مورد درس های انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه تصمیم گیری می کنند، برای توسعه دهندگان مطالب آموزشی انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه و برای استادان انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه مفید باشد که آموزش انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه از آموزش سنتی که استاد محور و مبتنی بر متن است به آموزش جدید انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه از طریق ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات تغییر پیدا کند. این مقاله مروری دارای فواید عملی نیز می باشد. در بیشتر مواقع، تغییر چالش برانگیز است. این گزارش مروری درباره پژوهش های قبلی مرتبط با موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در سطح آموزش عالی و پیشنهاد راه هایی برای رسیدگی به آنها ممکن است به رفع موانع کمک کند و ممکن است پذیرش روش های جدید آموزش و یادگیری آموزش زبان انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه را افزایش دهد.

واژگان کلیدی: فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات، موانع اولیه، انگلیسی برای اهداف ویژه، موانع ثانویه، آموزش

Introduction
A growing body of studies continues to demonstrate integrating ICT in English language educational settings could promote English teaching and learning. This crucial role of

integrating ICT in ESP at the tertiary level has been declared and indicated well in previous studies (e.g., Yu, Chang, & Wu, 2015; Marsden, 2017; Rezaei & Meshkatian, 2017; Song, 2017; Yang & Kwok, 2017; Asmalı, 2018; Dashtestani, 2018; Kerkeb, 2018; Ahmed, 2019; Constantinou, Papadima-Sophocleous, 2020; Lawrence, Ahmed, Cole, & Johnston, 2020).

Although ICT integration in ESP has a crucial role in promoting ESP instruction, different barriers can impact ICT integration. Finding these barriers in various institutes is necessary to eliminate them (Chalak & Rassouli, 2014). AmmaAmmaad, Jabu, and Tahir Tahir expressed that this improvement in employing technology for educational programs requires a longer time as it is not an automatic process. This could be because persuading most faculty to use technology in teaching was never free of obstacles (Zhu, 2008). In addition, the following factors influence this process: curriculum and education, institution preparation, the competence of teachers, financial issues, and many other factors that need to be considered (Aam madeAm made, 2018).

It is, therefore, of great interest for language scholars and language curriculum planners to consider the challenges and key factors in employing technology-mediated approaches such as ICT integration in the ESP context at the tertiary level (Fathi Vajargah, Jahani, & Azadmanesh, 2010; Shaabi, 2010; Atai & Dashtestani, 2013; Soleimani & Khanjani, 2013; Zalpour, 2013; Chaaban, 2014;). This study focuses on reviewing empirical and review studies on barriers to ICT integration in ESP in international and Iranian papers. In addition, the study also scrutinizes the lesser-researched issue of addressing these barriers to ICT integration at the tertiary level in Iran. Most of the previous research on instructional technology has focused on the effect of technology instruction on varietyvarioussof such as motivation and learning processes; however, less research investigated the barriers to technology instruction (Abdelrahman et al., 2019; Sabiri, 2020; Shabii, 2010). This is while ingesting barriers to technology instruction will contribute to implementing strategies for possible solutions (Zirra, 2019).

Additionally, even though ESP researchers have been recommended to explore the barriers to different technology in different contexts and cultures (Chalak & Rassouli, 2014; Dashtestani & Stojkovic, 2015), the barriers to ICT in ESP at the tertiary level in the Iranian context have not been extensively investigated. A look into the literature review makes it clear that only a few studies associated with barriers to ICT use in ESP at the tertiary level in Iran were conducted (Fathi Vajargah et al., 2010; Soleimani & Khanjani, 2013; Zalpour, 2013). In addition, even though a plethora of studies examine the technology integration in EFL instruction contexts and school levels (Park & Ertmer, 2008; Zhu, 2008; Timothy, 201Timothy Rosa, 2016; Thoma, Hutchison, Johnson, Johnson, & Stromer, 2017), there is a dearth of review study to examine integrating technology in ESP instruction in the tertiary level (Dashtestani & Stojkovic, 2015).

Taking into account that the integration of technology in ESP contexts may bring about challenges and opportunities which might differ from the ones in English as a foreign language context (Dashtestani & Stojkovic, 2015); therefore, what is left underexplored, particularly in the Iranian context, is exploring the barriers to ICT incorporation in the ESP context in the tertiary level in Iranian context (Fathi Vajargah et al., 2010; Zalpour, 2013), which is addressed in this research.

Scope of This Review Study

The present study aims to review empirical studies on barriers to ICT integration and ways of addressing them in different studies at the tertiary level. This review study is extracted based on an extensive review of the literature on ICT use in ESP at the tertiary level. It is a part of a Ph.D. dissertaPh.D.n that scrutinized this area. The scopes of this study are (a) empirical studies published in peer review journals, and theses relevant to ICT use in ESP instruction from 2010 to 2020 were used in the literature review section to fulfill the objective of this study; (b) the

research provides different studies from diversity countries; (c) the context is at tertiary level in the area of English for specific purposes. Ertmer's (1Ertmer'ssification for barriers to ICT use was used for the aim of this study to focus on finding the barriers to ICT integration.

The Article Reviews

One of the most significant recent changes in higher education is ICTs use. These fast changes have not influenced all societies equally. Indeed, the history of utilizing modern ICT tools in higher education is short but expanding at different rates in different situations (Zareee, 2011). More specifically, despite the significant powers of ICT for education, real development and reform are slow (Chalak & Rassouli, 2014). Because many barriers could influence and hinder this integration process. Therefore, the following now examines different international and Iranian studies on the barriers to ICT integration at the tertiary level that affect reforming and promoting education by ICT, followed by discussing and scrutinizing first-order and second barriers to ICT use in ESP.

Fathi Vajargah et al. (2010) investigated the obstacles, facilitators, and risks of employing technologies in higher education. The research was conducted at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran. The researchers selected the population of university academics and students. A questionnaire was used for data collection. The results revealed the obstacles to ICT integration in curriculum development at the tertiary level. In addition, facilitating factors and crucial supports required for employing ICT in higher education curriculum development were also reported. Moreover, the advantages and disadvantages of using ICT for curricular activities at the tertiary level were examined.

Shaabi (2010) discussed the barriers to ICT integration based on five factors. This study used an observant and semi-structursemi-structuredth teacher and administrators. The study reported that sufficient ICT tools, teacher development, adequate technical support, funding, and design could be important for successful ICT integration in ESP instruction. The study also reported the sociocultural factor as a significant factor in employing ICT in ESP in public tertiary institutions in Saudi Arabia.

Atai and Dashtestani (2013) conducted a study to examine undergraduate students, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instructors, and instructors' attitudes toward the Internet in EAP courses of civil engineering in Iran. The data were collected through a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and non-participant observation. The results demonstrated that most participants had positive attitudes toward the Internet. However, the results revealed that EAP instructors did not employ Internet-based activities in their classes. In addition, most constraints in employing the Internet in EAP courses were found. It was concluded that there was a need for training in different Internet-based skills for undergraduate students of civil engineering. Their findings presented implications for renewing the EAP programs.

Zalpour (2013) reported that several are on the way to using ICT tools in Iranian ESP classes. The results showed that factors such as lack of technical support, lack of access, lack of knowledge and skill, lack of time, lack of application (software), and lack of methodology were barriers to ICT use in the class. This study collected the data through a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and observations. The study's results indicated that Iranian ESP teachers held positive attitudes toward employing ICT tools in ESP classes. Moreover, the participants perceived that the ICT integration made ESP interesting. In addition, utilizing ICT positively and significantly was related to ESP teachers' IT competence and teaching methods. Besides, ICT integration in ESP teaching was not related to teachers' experience in ESP teaching. Finally, he concluded that employing ICT was explored to be correlated inversely with ESP teachers' age. This study suggested that effective IT training, ICT recourses, ESP software, adequate time, and

new curricula um should be provided for incorporating ICT tools more effectively in Iranian ESP classes.

Chaaban (2014) carried out an in-depth study through mixed-methmixed methodsbanese context. The study focused on factors within the wider cultural, economic, and, most importantly, political contexts. The study showed that lack of government funding, shortage in technological equipment and other resources, little follow-up and support, incomplete integration of ICT within the existing curriculum, exclusion of ICTs from the formal assessment of learners, inconsistencies among policymakers, exclusion of the private sector from the plan, problems with professional development, and problems with teacher preparation are barriers to ICT use.

Mirriahi, Vaid, and Burns (2015) examined the resistance of academic staff to integrating technology with on-campus foreign language teaching. The qualitative case study was used in a large research-intensive North American higher education institution. They explored perceived usefulness and ease of use that influence teachers in employing technology. In addition, they found a lack of attention to the pedagogical affordances of technology when instructors make adoption decisions. They also emphasized the need for higher education leaders to establish strategies for developing awareness of the advantages of technology-enabled teaching and learning.

Dastjerdi (2016) investigated the factors impacting ICT adoption among distance education students based on the Technology Acceptance Model in Isfahan, Iran. A researcher-made questionnaire was employed as a data collection tool. The results revealed that perceived usefulness directly impacts the decision to employ technologies. In other words, technology will be regarded to be part of teaching if it is easy-to-useasy to useful for teachers.

Aslan and Zhu (2017) examined variables that predict Turkish pre-service teachers' ICT integration into their teaching practices. The data were collected through two questionnaires. The variables were ICT competence, perceived competence in ICT integration, attitudes toward ICT, anxiety about employing ICT, external barriers to ICT integration, ICT-related courses, pedagogical knowledge, and prior experience in utilizing ICT. A total number of 599 pre-service teachers, in their fourth year of training programs, from the subject areas of Turkish language, social sciences, elementary mathematics, and science participated in the study. The results revealed that pedagogical knowledge, ICT-related courses, and perceived ICT competence were critical in predicting ICT integration into teaching practice. The findings of this study also indicated that pre-service teacher-training programs, particularly pedagogical knowledge and ICT-related courses, have a significant impact on enabling pre-service teachers to employ ICT in their teaching.

Isiyaku, Ayub, and AbdulKadi (2018) examined the antecedents to Nigerian business education teachers' pteachersons of the usefulness of technology in their teaching. The study investigated whether computer self-efficacy, perceived enjoyment, and subjective norm were antecedents to teachers' perceived use of ICTs in business education classrooms at the Nigerian tertiary level. The study employed a structured questionnaire, which used items adapted from previously validated studies, for collecting data. The sample was selected from 212 teachers from the business education faculties of 13 tertiary colleges in Northwestern Nigeria, sub-Saharasub-Saharaneachers' computer self-efficacy and perceived enjoyment of ICTs were explored to considerably impact teachers' perceived use of ICTs. The city suggested that Nigerian teachers should be trained to incorporate ICTs into the curriculum and be supported with ICT services to contribute to ICT problems in their classroom.

classrooms019) investigated the role of ICT in the Ethiopian higher education system. The researcher reviewed the literature and interviewed professionals from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and Technology to investigate the role of ICT in the higher

education system of Ethiopia. Limited infrastructure, users' attitudes towards ICT, management support, skilled human resources, and policy issues supporting ICT integration were investigated, which impact the implementation of ICT in Ethiopian higher education.

Ubogu and Orighofori (2020) investigated ICT as a strategic tool in the internationalization of higher education. The study employed the descriptive survey research design. The sample was selected fro171 from 123 female lecturers. They were chosen from six tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. Data analysis was conducted with mean, standard deviation, and z-test. Results revealed that ICT played an essential role in the internationalization of higher education by promoting the interchange of information and collaboration among divergent higher institutions and decreasing the processing of admission into higher education. In addition, ICT leads to more accessible teaching and learning in higher education, increasing the status of higher institutions worldwide and decreasing the workloads of staff in higher institutions. The results also showed the challenges of facing the internationalization of higher education through ICT. These challenges were poor budgets and ill-equipped ICT facilities in tertiary institutions. This study recommended that government increase access to ICT facilities by establishing ICT centers in all higher education institutions.

These studies are explained were explained based upon the theiinvestigationsns of ICT integration in ESP. The review indicated a dearth of research on the barriers to ICT integration in ESP, especially in the Iranian context. The previous studies on ICT incorporation in ESP showed that more studies are needed to enrich the gap in the literature. There is, particularly, a relative paucity of studies investigating barriers to ICT integration in ESP in the Iranian context and examining ways of addressing these barriers. Therefore, to address the gap in the relevant literature in this area, this study specifically reviewed barriers to ICT use at the tertiary level. Because finding these barriers is the initial step toward defeating them and converting them into enablers (Goktas, Yildirim, & Yildirim, 2009), the following section discusses and explores different barriers to ICT integration in ESP instruction and examines how to address these barriers.

Barriers to ICT Integration in TertiLatelyatel
First-order Barriers

In this study, to focus on finding the barriers to defeat them, defeatingere categorized into two groups based on Ertmer' (1Ertmer'sassification. According to Ertmer's classification (1999), external barriers to ICT integration refer to first-order barriers. They consist of the following issues: lack of access to computers and software, lack of sufficient time to plan instructions, and insufficient technical and administrative support (Ertmer, 1999). Commonly, first-order barriers are defined in terms of the following resources: equipment, time, training, and support that is missing or inadequately presented in teachers' implementation contexts (Means & Olson, 1997). Indeed, external barriers to ICT integration are mainly related to ICT infrastructure (Aslan & Zhu, 2017).

Lack of ICT training was emphasized in the previous studies on ICT integration in higher education and ESP (Shaabi, 2010; Atai & Dashtestani, 2013; Aslan & Zhu, 2017; Isiyaku et al., 2018; Ergado, 2019). According to Soleimani and Khanjani (2013), most EAP practitioners know little about different pedagogical software and e-tools. It seems unavoidable that teacher training programs in Iran contribute to teachers obtaining such literacy. Together, these studies suggested teacher training to increase teachers' competence in ICT use and to address the barrier of lack of training in ICT use at the tertiary level,

Lack of ICT funding and access to ICT is frequently cited as another barrier to ICT integration at the tertiary level in previous studies (Fathi Vjargah et al., 2010; Shaabi, 2010; Zalpour, 2013; Chaaban, 2014). Am made Etam made2018) reported that the accessibility of

technology was one factor in technology integration for teaching in some countries including Iran and Saudi Arabia. Similarly, Shekari (2010) found that the relatively y low integration of ICT facilities (46%) in teaching and learning in higher education colleges by teachers and students is influenced by inadequate ICT tools in higher education.

Lack Thlack technicalnical support for ICT integration in higher education was also noted as an important barrier by fewer researchers (Shaabi, 2010). Different technologies are not commonly run and directed by teachers themselves. Thus, technical support is necessary to deal with technical breakdowns that can decrease success in learning (Braul, 2006). This barrier, lack of technical support, was also asserted by Shekari (2010), a low level of institutional collaboration with professional units for technical help is oof nef the barriers perceived by teachers to effectively employing an ICT for teaching and learning in tertiary educaticollaborative approach approachpproachgested to address this barrier. The collaborative approach to technology made faculty more competent to enjoy constant and coordinated technology integration for their projects and classroom use (Zhu, 2008).

Time limitation is frequently referred to n trprevioustudies as the main barrier to ICT use at the tertiary level. Regularly, nontechnology-using teachers are frustrated with a lack of time to generate additional lessons for integrating technology; they also expressed that for incorporating technology into the lesson, they had to recreate all of the lessons (Keengwe, Onchwari, & Wachira, 2008). Frequently, teachers express that they have no time to add more or new activities to their current curriculum since they are overwhelmed with meeting standardized test demands (Biancarosa & Griffiths, 2012).

Similarly, Zhu (2008) expressed that time was the biggest barrier to faculty learning technology and using it in their teaching. The solution to this first-order barrier (i.e., time limitation) to ICT integration is through training that concentrates on technology as a tool rather than an isolated curriculum (Morgan, 2011; Franciosi, 2012; Kurt, 2013). For example, Hixon and Buckenmeyer (2009) stated that instructors were capable to learn technology skills focused on technology as a tool, then going back to their classrooms to utilize these skills. This type of focused pedagogical training has equipped instructors to incorporate technology into their current curriculum rather than isolate them from the curriculum or add to the workload of teachers or students (Boud & Hager, 2011; Kopcha, 2012).

Considering the abovementioned evidence, it seems that first-order barriers can be addressed by providing strong infrastructure to give everyone equal access to ICT, taking precautions to facilitate ease of use, and employing technical staff to assist users. Reducing these external barriers to ICT integration or the improvement of a strong ICT infrastructure would appear to be one of the crucial factors in empowering teachers to incorporate ICT into their lessons (Akbulut, Odabas, & Kuzu, 2011).

Another important barrier to ICT integration at the tertiary level asserted in previous studies is the sociocultural barrier (Shaabi, 2010; Zareee, 2011; Chaaban, 2014). Successful ICT integration in language instruction is closely related to the sociocultural environment (Shaabi, 2010; GregoGregorydgebLodge). Traditionally, providing a cultural change is an arduous and long-term process with academic strong resistance (Herrington et al., 2010). Indeed, many barriers exist to efficient practice for technoltechnology-enhancingng by teaching tertiary-level staff. These barriers to technology use are a) cost; b) intellectual property matters; c) custom and practice; and d) preconceptions and attitudes (Tynan, Ryan, Hinton, & Lamont Mills, 2012; Walker et al., 2014). Therefore, time, lack of academic staff knowledge, lack of funding, and university and department culture were the most important barriers which have continued (Walker, Voce, & Ahmed, 2012; Walker et al., 2014).

The cultural factor as a barrier to ICT integration in universities is also supported by Fathi Vajargah et al. (2010, p. 38) who expressed that there are several challenges concerning ICT use

in Iran, such as "lack of National Policy for using ICT in Higher Education, lack of adequate investments, cultural obstacles, financial challenges, lack of continuity in ICT use, and lack of systematic training and development programs." Therefore, the cultural barrier is essential to ICT integration at the Iranian tertiary level.

Second-order Barriers

Technology-related teacher characteristics (i.e., intrinsic barriers) are related to teachers' beliefs about employing technology and their knowledge and skills in utilizing technology (Graham, Culatta, Pratt, & West, 2004; Abbitt 2011a). Intrinsic barriers are the true gatekeepers to technology integration, and "little will be gained if second-order barriers are not addressed" (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, Sadik, Sendurur, & Sendurur, 2012, p. 433).

The most common personal barriers or second-order barriers to ICT integration cited by researchers fell into three categories: perceived ICT competence (Aslan & Zhu, 2017), computer anxiety (Pamuk & Peker, 2009; Ahmad, Kamba, & Usman, 2012); and attitude toward technology (Egbert & Borysenko, 2018; Goodwin, Ling, Tee, Yeung, & Li, 2015; Miranda & Russell, 2012; Petko, 2012; Sang, Valcke, Van Braak, Tondeur, & Zhu, 2011; Van Braak, Tondeur, & Valcke, 2004) that are explained more in details in the below section.

Perceived ICT competence is closely associated with the issue of perceived ICT self-efficacy. Self-efficacy belief is referred to as an individual's abilities or skills. ICT self-efficacy can be defined as an individual's belief concerning their abilities to employ ICT (Aslan & Zhu, 2017). Perceived ICT competence seems to play a role in determining users' willingness to utilize ICT in their own lives, such as utilizing search engines to search for information on the Internet, employing presentation programs, utilizing the Internet to communicate, using a word processing program, and so on (Aslan & Zhu, 2017).

Perceived competence in ICT integration relates to how teachers can integrate ICT into their teaching practices. As opposed to perceived ICT competence, perceived competence in ICT incorporation is associated with incorporating ICT skills "(e. g, using simulated tasks to discover, experience and ex,periment, selecting and evaluating educational software, creating lesson plans through ICT, having the knowledge and skills necessary for ICT integration, etc.)." (Aslan & Zhu, 2017, p. 555).

Previous studies showed that anxiety or inner fear of technology, which is related to personal barriers, was also regarded as the barriebarrierhinder hindersrs' perceptions of ICT use in the class. For instance, Pamuk and Peker (2009) claimed several teachers have computer anxiety, which will hinder them from effectively employing educational technologies. The study also showed that computer anxiety is a significant barrier to determining the extent of ICT integration in teachers' lessons.

Similarly, other studies revealed that the technophobia of practitioners (Wood et al., 2005) is an important issue to be taken into account as a barrier to ICT integration (Wood et al., 2005; Dashtestani, 2012; Maftoon & Shahini, 2012; Atai & Dashtestani, 2013). Thus, technophobia has been the crucial barrier impeding academic staff from effectively utilizing ICT for teaching and learning (Ahmad et al., 2012). This barrier related to personal barriers, technophobia, or fear of being incapable in front of their students can be addressed through training (Yemothy, 2015). Thus, one helpful suggestion could be that "prior experience and success with this innovation are necessary for teachers to develop a sense of self-efficacy and a feeling of mastery before they are comfortable integrating this technology within their teaching" (Wood et al., 2005, p. 202).

Teachers' attitude toward ICT use was also an important barrier to ICT integration associated with personal barriers. This personal barrier, teacher perceptions of ICT integration, was cited frequently in previous studies (Miranda & Russell, 2012; Petko, 2012; Goodwin et al., 2015). For example, Egbert and Borysenko (2018) stated that integrating technology depends on the

teacher's readiness to use and beliefs about the technology tools; that is, teachers who do not feel convenient with or have negative attitudes toward the technology are less disposed to integrate it in their classes. Thus, part of teacher preparation must be related to teacher beliefs and attitudes toward technology.

Teachers must recognize that technology will not replace them but that employing technology for language instruction can be challenging. Indeed, "T [t]eachers' perception of the importance of ICT is also essential, as the valuing of ICT in teaching and learning is likely to make ICT applications more sustainable" (Goodwin et al., 2015, p. 134). In the same vein, Miranda and Russell (2012) stated that teachers' experience with ICT application, teachers' beliefs concerning ICT advantages, and perceived importance of ICT for teaching strongly predicted their ICT application in the classroom.

To address barriers to ICT integration related to personal (second-order barriers), at a tertiary level, pre-service programs providing technology incorporation courses and training opportunities are graduating competent teachers with significantly decreased personal barriers regarding technology incorporation (Williams, Foulger & Wetzel, 2009; Anthony, 2012; Uslu & Bumen, 2012). Other researchers in Iran also asserted teacher training programs to adds second-order barriers (personal barriers). For example, according to Soleimani and Khanjani (2013), technical and pedagogical training is required in teacher education.

Discussion and Conclusion

This review of the literature set out to gain a better understanding of different barriers, first-order and second-order, to ICT integration in ESP instruction at tertiary the level. The review has also set out to light some solutions to these barriers. Most of the barriers extrinsic to teachers that were cited frequently in the previous studies are included as follows:

Lack of ICT funding and access to ICT was frequently cited in the pous studies (Fathi et al., 2010; Shaabi, 2010; Shekari, 2010; Zalpour, 2013; Chaaban, 2014). The time limit time barrier is also confirmed in the previous literature (Zhu, 2008). The solution to this barrier, time limitation to ICT integration, is through training that conceconcentratesechnology as a tool rather than an isolated curriculum (Morgan, 2011; Franciosi, 2012; Kurt, 2013).

The next barrier related to first-order barriers to ICT integration in higher education, which was frequently cited in the literature (Shekari, 2010), lacks technical support. The solution to lacttheheof technical support barrier to ICT integration could be through dinga tacollcollaborativeach with technology making faculty more competent to enjoy constant and coordinated technology integration for their projects and technology uses in the classroom (Zhu, 2008). LThe lTheof an ICT training barrier was also emphasized in the previous studies on ICT integration in higher education and ESP (Shaabi, 2010; Atai & Dashtestani, 2013; Aslan & Zhu, 2017; Isiyaku et al., 2018; Ergado, 2019). Considering all of the evidence in the literature, it seems that first-order barriers can be addrbyhrough providing strong infrastructure to give everyone equal access to ICT, taking precautions to facilitate ease of use, and employing technical staff to assist users. Reducing these external barriers to ICT integration or the improvement of a strong ICT infrastructure would appear to be one of the crucial factors to empower teachers to incorporate ICT into their lessons (Akbulut, Odabas, & Kuzu, 2011).

On the second-order barriers, which are related to personal issues, there are many barriers teachers deal with in integrating ICT. The most common personal barriers or second-order barriers to ICT integration cited by researchers fell into three categories: perceived ICT competence (Aslan & Zhu, 2017); computer anxiety (Pamuk & Peker, 2009; Ahmad et al., 2012); and attitude toward technology (Van Braak, Tondeur, & Valcke, 2004; Sang, Valcke, Van Braak, Tondeur, & Zhu, 2011; Miranda & Russell, 2012; Petko, 2012; Goodwin, Ling, Tee, Yeung, & Li, 2015; Egbert & Borysenko, 2018).

To address barriers to ICT integration related to personal (second-order) barriers, at a tertiary level, pre-service programs providing technology incorporation courses and training opportunities are graduating competent teachers with significantly decreased personal barriers regarding technology incorporation (Williams, Foulger & Wetzel, 2009; Anthony, 2012; Uslu & Bumen, 2012). One helpful suggestion could be to provide prior experience for teachers to utilize technology in their teaching to address the technophobia barrier. As Wood et al. (2005) asserted that "prior experience and success with this innovation are necessary for teachers to develop a sense of self-efficacy and a feeling of mastery before they are comfortable integrating this technology within their teaching." (p. 202)

Second-order barriers far out weight the first-order barriers. Indeed, intrinsic barriers are the true gatekeepers to technology integration. If second-order barriers are not addressed, little will be gained (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, Sadik, Sendurur, & Sendurur, 2012, p. 433). We could not think that ICT integration in education will automatically promote through providing computers, setting up computer labs, and connecting educational institutions to the Internet. Indeed, understanding ICT use in education goes beyond providing these facilities. (Kousha & Abdoli, 2004)

In sum, the study adds to the growing body of research that indicates different barriers to ICT integration in ESP instruction that teachers and students deal with. Furthermore, this study has gone some ways towards enhancing our understanding of ICT usatithe n tertiary level in Iran by examining different barriers and ways of addressing them in different contexts to defeat these barriers, to promote ESinstructionnd to change the traditional ESP instruction in Iran through ICT integration. However, further research is required to develop a deeper understanding of barriers to ICT use and ways of addressing them exploring more ignoring the ng diversity of stakeholders' perceptions.

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Abstracts in Persian

استراتژی های ادبی مورد استفاده زبانان انگلیسی، فارسی زبانان و زبان آموزان ایرانی در کنش گفتاری امتناع

فراهت جزایری

چکیده

یکی از جنبه های کلیدی یک ارتباط موثر، استفاده از کنش های گفتاری مناسب است. این مطالعه به بررسی تفاوت بین فارسی زبانان، زبان آموزان ایرانی و زبان آموزان انگلیسی از لحاظ درک کنش گفتاری امتناع و کشف دلایلی که هر گروه از شرکت کنندگان اکنش گفتاری امتناع را با توجه به رویکرد مدیریت ارتباط ارائه کردند، انجام شد. برای این منظور، 100 زبان آموز زبان انگلیسی متوسطه (مرد و زن) بر اساس عملکرد آنها در آزمون تعیین سطح آکسفورد انتخاب شدند. 100 فارسی زبان بومی از بین 140 دانشجوی رشته ادبیات فارسی دانشگاه آزاد نجف آباد به صورت تصادفی انتخاب شدند و از آنها خواسته شد تا آزمون تکمیل گفتمان (DCT) شامل 12 موقعیت را تکمیل کنند که متوجه امتناع چهار نوع کنش تحریک کننده می شود. علاوه بر این، با 12 زبان مادری انگلیسی (6 مرد و 6 زن) نیز از طریق ایمیل برای شرکت در مطالعه تماس گرفته شد DCT. انگلیسی به دو گروه از شرکت کنندگان و DCT فارسی به فارسی زبانان بومی داده شد. مدل ادب ارائه شده توسط براون و لوینسون (1987) برای نشان دادن تفاوت بین زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی، انگلیسی زبانان بومی و فارسی زبانان شرکت کننده در این مطالعه اتخاذ شد. نتایج با استفاده از نرم‌افزار SPSS ، استراتژی‌های «منفی» را به‌عنوان متداول‌ترین راهبردها نشان داد و نقش معنادار چهره، حقوق و تعهدات اجتماعی در تعامل را برجسته کرد. یافته ها نشان داد که در بین راهبردهای ادب، راهبردهای «منفی» بیشترین فراوانی را دارند. همچنین نتایج نشان داد که انگلیسی زبانان بیشتر از زبان آموزان ایرانی از راهبردهای ادب منفی استفاده می کنند. بنابراین، شرکت کنندگان انگلیسی خود را دارای حقوق و تعهداتی در رابطه با سایر افراد نسبت به زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی می دانند. نتایج این مطالعه بر اهمیت دانش عملگرایانه در ارتباطات بین المللی تاکید کرد.

واژگان کلیدی: استراتژی های ادبی، کنش گفتاری امتناع، رویکرد مدیریت ارتباط

تأثیر زبان اول فراگیران ابتدایی در تمرینات افزایش آگاهی بر دقت نوشتاری آنان در زبان دوم

سعیده السادات فتاح زاده، سجاد شفیعی، فریبا رحیمی اصفهانی

چکیده

این مطالعه تأثیر افزایش آگاهی درزبان اول فراگیران ابتدایی بر دقت نوشتن در زبان دوم آنها را بررسی نمود. برای دستیابی به این هدف، 32 زبان آموز انگلیسی زبان ابتدایی مرد و زن 17 تا 26 ساله در این مطالعه شرکت کردند. آنها با استفاده از روش نمونه گیری گروهی در دو گروه آزمایشی L1 و L2 قرار گرفتند. آموزش 13 جلسه دو ساعته بود که در آن شرکت کنندگان گروه L1 از طریق L1 خود در معرض تمرینات افزایش آگاهی قرار گرفتند، اما گروه L2 همان تمرینات را به زبان انگلیسی تجربه کردند. در پایان برای هر دو گروه آزمون نوشتاری انجام شد و داده های جمع آوری شده از طریق پیش آزمون و پس آزمون با استفاده از آزمون تی زوجی و تحلیل کوواریانس یک طرفه مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. نتایج تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها نشان داد گروه L1 به طور قابل توجهی از گروه L2 در دقت نوشتن بهتر عمل می کند. این یافته تأثیر استفاده از زبان اول در کلاس های زبان خارجی را تأیید می کند.

واژگان کلیدی: تمرینات افزایش آگاهی، فراگیران ابتدایی، دقت نوشتن

نگرش دانشجویان دانشگاه نسبت به سیاست آموزش زبان انگلیسی در کردستان عراق

مومن یاسین امین، جواد غلامی

چکیده

علیرغم پوشش گسترده سیاست زبان در ادبیات، تحقیقات کمی در مورد سیاست آموزش زبان انگلیسی در سطوح عالی به طور کلی و زمینه آموزش عالی کردستان عراق به طور خاص انجام شده است. مطالعه کیفی حاضر به بررسی ادراکات دانشجویان زبان انگلیسی از خط مشی آموزش زبان انگلیسی، سیاست های آموزشی جاری و اهداف یادگیری در زمینه کردی در بین جنسیت ها و رشته های تحصیلی پرداخت. برای این منظور، نسخه ای از پرسشنامه یانگ (2012) برای دانشجویان انگلیسی زبان انگلیسی در رشته علوم نرم و سخت (N=300، مرد 34%، زن 67%) در دو دانشگاه خصوصی و دولتی در کردستان عراق اقتباس و اجرا شد. تجزیه و تحلیل آماری داده های به دست آمده نشان دهنده نگرش مثبت دانش آموزان نسبت به یادگیری زبان انگلیسی به عنوان یک زبان بین المللی در علوم نرم و سخت بود. شایان ذکر است که دانش آموزان تاکید کردند که همه دانش آموزان کرد عراقی باید زبان انگلیسی را در کلاس های متوسط انگلیسی و کردی یاد بگیرند. آنها همچنین صلاحیت زبان انگلیسی را به عنوان یک موفقیت تحصیلی مهم در نظر گرفتند. با این حال، برخی از آنها از وضعیت موجود آموزش انگلیسی در مؤسسات خود احساس نارضایتی می کردند. یافته‌های این مطالعه بینش‌ها و توصیه‌هایی را برای سیاست‌گذاران آموزش انگلیسی، مدیران و مدرسان در سطوح عالی ارائه می‌کند.

واژگان کلیدی: نگرش، زبان انگلیسی، آموزش زبان انگلیسی، کردستان عراق، سیاست زبان

برابری در آزمون های پیشرفت عمومی انگلیسی از طریق تجزیه و تحلیل DIF مبتنی بر جنسیت در رشته های مختلف

مهری جمال‌زاده، احمدرضا لطفی، مسعود رستمی

چکیده

این پژوهش، بررسی برابری جنسیتی در چارچوب آزمون پیشرفت زبان انگلیسی عمومی است که در دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی (واحد اصفهان، ایران)، از این پسIAUGEAT ، با آزمون‌دهندگان رشته‌های تحصیلی مختلف تهیه و مورد استفاده قرار می‌گیرد. نمونه ای از 835 دانش آموز نشسته برای IAUGEAT به صورت هدفمند انتخاب شد. نمرات آزمون توسط مدل IRTیک پارامتری مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. یک مصاحبه گروهی متمرکز (10 برنامه‌نویس آزمون و معلمان زبان) نیز برای بررسی ادراکات آنها در مورد تأثیر جنسیت و رشته شرکت‌کنندگان در برابری آزمون استفاده شد. یافته‌های تجزیه و تحلیل DIF نشان‌دهنده یک عمل متقابل بین نوع آیتم و جنسیت DIF است زیرا برخی از آیتم‌ها DIF را در زیر گروه‌های مختلف نشان می‌دهند. در سه زیر گروه، دانشجویان دختر را ترجیح دادند. در یک زیر گروه، آنها مردان را ترجیح می دادند. در دو زیرگروه دیگر، آنها مردان و زنان را به طور یکسان ترجیح می دادند. نتایج بیشتر با داده های کیفی به دست آمده از مصاحبه گروهی متمرکز تأیید شد. به طور کلی، یافته‌های ما قویاً نشان می‌دهد که بررسی برابری جنسیتی از طریق تحلیل مدل Rasch با ارزیابی کیفی عملکرد شرکت کنندگان در آزمون توسط توسعه دهندگان آزمون و مدرسان، برجسته و همگرا است.

واژگان کلیدی: عملکرد آیتم دیفرانسیل(DIF) ، برابری، جنسیت، آزمون پیشرفت عمومی انگلیسی، IAUGEAT، IRT، اعتبار سنجی آزمون

نظر مدرسین زبان انگلیسی درمورد آموزش مجازی زبان انگلیسی در طول دوران اپیدمی کووید-19

مهدی شهدادی گوغاری، مهری حداد نرافشان

چکیده

در طول دوران اپیدمی کووید-19 دانشگاه های سراسر دنیا به دلیل فاصله گذاری اجتماعی و قرنطینه با تعطیلی مواجه شدند و دانشگاه های ایران ازاین شرایط استثنا نبوده اندِ بنابراین به شکل بی سابقه ای آموزش مجازی اجباری شد. این تغییر ناگهانی مدرسین را مستلزم به بازاندیشی دیدگاه ها و عقایدشان کرد. این تحقیق در راستای بررسی دیدگاه مدرسین زبان انگلیسی نسبت به عملکردشان با توجه به تاثیرات فاصله ی اجتماعی و استفاده ی حداکثری از تکنولوژی در عملکرد آموزشی آنها انجام شده است. با استفاده از روش کیفی جهت بررسی تجربه ی مدرسین ،داده های این تحقیق از طریق مصاحبه از 9 مدرس زبان انگلیسی در دانشگاه و یادداشت های انعکاسی آنها جمع آوری شد. به صورت کلی، نتایج گویای رضایت قابل توجه مدرسین از ترکیب تکنولوژی در دوره های زبان انگلیسی می باشد. جزییات بیشتر نشان میدهد که نتایج این تحقیق نشان گر سه گروه از دیدگاه های مثبت (نواروی تدریس،حمایت تدریسی و تشکیل هویت حرفه ای) که هر کدام شامل زیرگروه هایی هستند میباشد. همچنین تحلیل داده ها سه دغدغه (چالش های مرتبط با تکنولوژی، مدیریت کلاس و عدم انعطاف پذیری در رفتار) در آموزش مجازی را نشان میدهند . کاربردهای این تحقیق اساسا یک محیط صمیمانه برای استفاده از تکنولوژی در آموزش مخصوصا آموزش زبان انگلیسی فراهم میکنند.

واژگان کلیدی: آموزش زبان انگلیسی، آموزش مجازی، نظر مدرسین،اپیدمی کووید-19

بررسی عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی در مصاحبه های دانشجویی

اورانوس رضایی، سید فواد ابراهیمی، سعید یزدانی

چکیده

دودیدگاه متفاوت در مورد مطالعه عناصر فراگفتمانی وجود دارد. این دیدگاه ها عبارتند از: دیدگاه برهم کنشی ودیدگاه بازتابی. مدل بازتابی عناصر فراگفتمانی توسط مِاورانن (1993) و ادل (2010) ارایه شد. از انجایی که بیشترین کاربرد عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی در متنهای گفتاری است، لذا این مطالعه در نظر دارد عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی را در مصاحبه های اکادمیک بررسی کند. به همین منظور، سه مصاحبه انگلیسی از پیکره گفتاری اکادمیک میشیگان انتخاب شدند. این مصاحبه ها بر اساس مدل ارایه شده توسط ادل (2010) که شامل چهار نقش فراگفتمانی بود تحلیل شدند. نقشهای فراگفتمانی مدل ادل (2010) شامل نکات فرا زبانشناسی، ساختار سخن، برچسب های گفتاری، و ارجاع به شنوندگان می شوند. نتایج تحقیق نشان دادند که یک چهارم ضمایر شخصی به کار رفته در مصاحبه ها، نقش فرا گفتمانی بازتابی داشتند. علاوه بر این، از بین ضمایر شخصی، اول شخص مفرد بیشترین کاربرد و اول شخص جمع کمترین نقش فراگفتمانی بازتابی را در مصاحبه های تحلیل شده ایفا کردند. نتایج نشان دادند که هر چهار نقش فراگفتمانی در مصاحبه های تحلیل شده به کار رفته بودند. نتایج این تحقیق می تواند به دانش شرکت کنندگان در مصاحبه های اکادمیکی در زمینه کاربرد عناصر فراگفتمانی بازتابی بیفزاید.

واژگان کلیدی: مصاحبه، عناصر فراگفتمانی، پیکره گفتاری انگلیسی اکادمیکی میشیگان، عناصر فرا گفتمانی بازتابی

مطالعه ترکیبی بررسی تاثیر استفاده از فناوری واقعیت افزوده بر کاهش اضطراب زبان‌آموزان بزرگسال

آیلار نوروزی فرد، محمد بوالی، مصطفی زمانیان، احسان رسایی

چکیده

این مطالعه با هدف بررسی تأثیر تکنولوژی واقعیت افزوده بر کاهش اضطراب زبان خارجی در زبان آموزان بزرگسال ایرانی انجام شده است. بدین منظور، یک مطالعه ترکیبی در دو مرحله، شامل طرح نیمه آزمایشی پیش آزمون-پس آزمون در مرحله اول و مصاحبه شفاهی در مرحله دوم طراحی و اجرا شد. 40 نفر از زبان آموزان بزرگسال ایرانی در بخش کمی این مطالعه شرکت کرده و به طور تصادفی در دو گروه آزمایش و کنترل قرار گرفتند. مطالب افزوده شده توسط برنامه Zappar که یک پلتفرم واقعیت افزوده است تهیه و در اختیار دانش آموزان قرار گرفتند. آزمایشی که در این تحقیق انجام شد شامل استفاده از روش آموزش زبان سنتی برای گروه کنترل و روش تلفیقی با واقعیت افزوده برای گروه آزمایش به مدت 20 جلسه بود. برای بررسی تاثیر بدست آمده، سطح اضطراب فراگیران در هر دو گروه قبل و بعد از آزمایش ارزیابی شد. داده‌های مربوط به اضطراب شرکت‌کنندگان از طریق پرسشنامه سنجش اضطراب کلاس زبان خارجی هورویتز (1986) جمع‌آوری شده و از طریق آنالیز کوواریانس مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. همچنین، شرکت کنندگان در گروه آزمایشی در پایان آزمایش برای ارائه بازخورد در مورد تجربه یادگیری زبان با استفاده از واقعیت افزوده مصاحبه شدند. نتایج نشان داد که این تکنولوژی بر سطح اضطراب زبان خارجی زبان آموزان تأثیری ندارد. همچنین، برخی از زبان‌آموزان عنوان کردند که استفاده از آن چندان آرامش‌بخش و آسان نیست. این یافته را می توان به تازگی تجربه و بار شناختی تحمیل شده بر فراگیران نسبت داد. نتایج این مطالعه در تضاد با چندین یافته تحقیقات قبلی بود. با این حال، از آنجایی که تحقیقات در مورد کاربرد این فناوری در آموزش زبان هنوز در مراحل اولیه است، تحقیقات بیشتری باید در این زمینه انجام شود.

واژگان کلیدی: واقعیت افزوده، فراگیری زبان به کمک کامپیوتر، فناوری آموزشی، یادگیری توسط موبایل

تهیه کتاب درسی انگلیسی برای دانش آموزان ایرانی سال آخر دبیرستان

حنانه شبانی، حسین رحمان پناه، احمد محسنی

چکیده

تهیه مواد درسی یکی از اجزای اساسی هر برنامه درسی است که باید بر اساس تکنیک های صحیح و منظم باشد. در یک نگاه تفصیلی، با توجه به اهمیت دانستن زبان انگلیسی نه تنها به عنوان یک زبان بین المللی، بلکه به عنوان زبان تجارت، فناوری و علم، دوره انگلیسی نیاز به برنامه ریزی کارآمد دارد تا شرایط یادگیری مناسب را برای زبان آموزان فراهم کند. در این راستا، پژوهش حاضر به منظور تهیه کتاب زبان انگلیسی جدید برای دبیرستان ایرانیان است تا فرصتی را برای دانش آموزان دبیرستانی و همچنین معلمان فراهم کند تا به صورت فعال درگیر متن، سؤالات و تصاویر کتاب بر اساس ویلیام باشند. تکنیک رامی برای همگام شدن با پیشرفت‌های این رشته. نتایج نتیجه‌گیری این مطالعه نشان می‌دهد که شاخص درگیری به اندازه کافی مناسب است تا فعالانه فراگیران را در کتاب درسی انگلیسی تازه توسعه‌یافته درگیر کند. به این معنا که متون، سؤالات و تصاویر درون کتاب درسی به نحو مناسبی ایجاد شده اند تا دانش آموزان را به طور فعال درگیر کنند.

واژگان کلیدی: تحلیل محتوا، کتاب‌های درسی انگلیسی دوره متوسطه ایران، توسعه

بررسی مقایسه ای نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی در بخش مباحثه یافته های مقالات پژوهش های کمی و کیفی در رشته زبانشناسی کاربردی

مرضیه باقرکاظمی، میلاد مرادپور مقدم واجرگاهی، سادات جوادی

چکیده

نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی به ابعادی از متن اطلاق می شود که موضع نویسنده را نسبت به محتوای گزاره ای آن نشان می دهد. با توجه به تفاوت ایدئولوژیک پژوهش های کمی و کیفی از منظر قطعیت، نشانگرهای گفتمانی را می توان به منزله ابزاری در راستای بیان مواضع معرفت شناختی نویسندگان دانست. مطالعه حاضر با هدف مقایسه فراوانی بکارگیری نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی تبادلی و تعاملی در بخش مباحثه یافته های 20 مقاله مربوط به پژوهش کمی و 20 مقاله مربوط به پژوهش کیفی در رشته زبانشناسی کاربردی، بر اساس چارچوب هایلند (2005) انجام شد. در تحلیل داده ها که در برنامه آماری SPSS صورت پذیرفت، آزمون خی به منظورمقایسه تعداد نشانگرها در دو زیر-پیکره مورد مطالعه بکار گرفته شد. نتایج حاکی از تفاوت هایی معنادار در فراوانی بکارگیری کلیّه نشانگرهای تبادلی و تعاملی به استثنای نشانگرهای قالبی، ارجاع درون-متنی، نگرشی، ارتباطی، و تأکیدی بود. یافته های این مطالعه می تواند در حوزه آموزش نگارش متون علمی و دانشگاهی کاربردی باشد.

واژگان کلیدی: فراگفتمانی؛ نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی تبادلی ؛ نشانگرهای فراگفتمانی تعاملی ؛ پژوهش های کمی ؛ پژوهش های کیفی

تأثیر بازخورد آنلاین همتایان و معلمان بر عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی

محمد عزیزی، رضا شمس، نرگس توسلی استهبانی

چکیده

این مطالعه با هدف بررسی تأثیر استفاده از بازخورد آنلاین همتایان و معلمان بر عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان ایرانی انجام شد. بدین منظور، 28 نفر از زبان آموزان دختر و پسر کلاس نویسندگی مؤسسه زبان در تهران، به طور هدفمند برای شرکت در این پژوهش انتخاب شدند. آنها به دو گروه مساوی تقسیم شدند. گروه اول PR آنلاین و گروه دوم TF آنلاین دریافت کردند. به منظور در نظر گرفتن نتایج تیمارها، دو نوع آزمون t اجرا شد. ابتدا برای بررسی تأثیر دو نوع بازخورد آنلاین بر عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی، آزمون t نمونه زوجی اجرا شد و سپس برای مقایسه بین TF و PR، یک آزمون t نمونه مستقل انجام شد. نتایج به‌دست‌آمده نشان داد که هر دو نوع بازخورد اصلاحی آنلاین مؤثر هستند. با این حال، گروه TF بهتر از یک PR عمل کرد. مفهوم این یافته این است که ادغام فناوری در کلاس های درس L2 و به طور خاص تر، زبان آموزان با بازخورد اصلاحی آنلاین منجر به پیشرفت بیشتر در عملکرد نوشتاری زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی می شود.

واژگان کلیدی: بازخورد همسالان، بازخورد معلم، عملکرد نوشتاری

بررسی تأثیر آموزش مداخله شناختی بر آگاهی واجشناختی دانش آموزان نارساخوان مدارس ابتدایی

سعدی گراوند، طیبه خوشبخت، اکبر عزیزی فر، شهرام ولیدی

چکیده

این پژوهش آزمایشی با طرح پیش‌آزمون- پس‌آزمون با هدف بررسی تأثیر آموزش مداخله شناختی بر آگاهی واجشناختی دانش آموزان نارساخوان ایرانی در پایه سوم ابتدایی انجام شد. 32 دانش‌آموز دختر و پسر 8 تا 11 سال، با میانگین ضریب هوشی 90 تا 110، در یک گروه کنترل و یک گروه آزمایش به‌صورت تصادفی انتخاب‌شدند. آزمون هوش کودکان وکسلر (WIT)، آزمون کرمی و نوری (KNT) و بسته مداخله شناختی به‌عنوان ابزار در این پژوهش مورداستفاده قرار گرفت. سپس، برای سنجش آگاهی واجشناختی دانش‌آموزان در دو مرحله پیش و پس‌آزمون، از آزمون خواندن و نارساخوانی(نما) در بین دانش آموزان استفاده شد. تحلیل کوواریانس نشان‌داد که بسته مداخله شناختی بر آگاهی واجشناختی دانش‌آموزان گروه آزمایش پس از دریافت بسته مداخله شناختی در مقایسه با گروه کنترل مؤثر بود ($p<0.01$). آزمون تی نمونه مستقل نیز نشان داد که بین دانش‌آموزان دختر و پسر نارساخوان گروه آزمایش، ازنظر مشکل آگاهی واجشناختی و آموزش مداخله شناختی، تفاوت معنی‌دار وجود نداشت. این نتایج به مربیان مدارس ابتدایی پیشنهاد می‌کند تا به دانش‌آموزان بیاموزند که چگونه از برنامه مداخله شناختی در تسریع آگاهی واجشناختی خود استفاده کنند و تکالیف مؤثرتر خود را انجام دهند و بینش‌های سازنده‌ای را در آگاهی واجشناختی خود ایجاد کنند.

واژگان کلیدی: آموزش مداخله شناختی، آگاهی واجشناختی، دانش آموزان نارساخوان، مدارس ابتدایی

دیدگاه معلمان دبیرستان انگلیسی زبان انگلیسی از فرصت های سیستم آموزش مجازی: چالش ها و تهدیدها

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چکیده

بر اساس اهمیت کلاس های مجازی و به دلیل اجتناب ناپذیر بودن استفاده از آن در شرایط دشواری مانند همه گیری کووید 19، پژوهش حاضر تلاشی برای بررسی درک معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستانی از تجربه سیستم های یادگیری مجازی بود. همچنین بررسی نگرش معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستان نسبت به فرصت های سیستم های یادگیری مجازی، بررسی نگرش معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستان نسبت به چالش ها و تهدیدات سیستم های یادگیری مجازی و آگاه سازی جامعه آموزشی از راهکارهای رفع موانع سیستم های یادگیری مجازی مبتنی بر آموزش. ادراک معلمان زبان انگلیسی دبیرستان از دیگر اهداف پژوهش حاضر بود. برای این منظور، نگرش 120 معلم زبان انگلیسی (67 مرد = 53 زن = 53) با دامنه سنی 30 تا 50 سال که در دبیرستان های مختلف استان آذربایجان غربی، ارومیه، ایران تدریس می کردند، از طریق یک پژوهشگر ساخته جمع آوری شد. پرسشنامه. نتایج مطالعه نشان می دهد که اگرچه معلمان دبیرستان با موانعی مانند دسترسی کم به اینترنت، تعامل کم و تمرکز پایین زبان آموزان مواجه بودند، اما در واقع آنها نگرش مثبتی نسبت به استفاده از یادگیری دیجیتال به ویژه در کلاس های مجازی دارند. همچنین، یافته‌ها نشان داد که قدرت نگهداری داده‌ها و دسترسی سریع و آسان مورد علاقه اکثر معلمان بوده و معتقدند این دو مورد را می‌توان به عنوان فرصت‌های مثبت تلقی کرد. علاوه بر این، معلمان نظراتی مانند افزودن تصاویر به کلاس‌های مجازی، استفاده از جعبه‌های گفتگو و برنامه‌ریزی نکات تعاملی برای حل مشکلات موجود کلاس‌های مجازی مانند اتصال ضعیف و تمرکز پایین ارائه کردند. پیامدهای مطالعه مورد بحث قرار خواهد گرفت.

واژگان کلیدی: ادراک معلمان دبیرستان، فرصت‌ها، حل مسئله، سیستم‌های یادگیری مجازی

شایستگی بین فرهنگی، حساسیت بین فرهنگی، و آموزش زبان: دیدگاه معلمان انگلیسی تازه کار و با تجربه ایرانی

سینا خلیلی، محمد محمدی

چکیده

شایستگی بین فرهنگی و حساسیت بین فرهنگی توجه هزاران محقق را در زمینه های آموزش زبان، ارتباطات، فرهنگ، جنسیت و قومیت به خود جلب کرده است. این منطق پشت تحقیق فعلی است که با هدف بررسی باورهای معلمان زبان انگلیسی در مورد مفاهیم شایستگی ارتباط بین فرهنگی (ICC) و حساسیت بین فرهنگی (IS) و چگونگی ترویج چنین مفاهیمی در شیوه های واقعی آنها در کلاس های انگلیسی انجام می شود. بدین منظور با استفاده از یک طرح کیفی، نمونه ای متشکل از 20 مدرس زبان انگلیسی (11 مدرس مجرب و 9 معلم مبتدی) از موسسات زبان مختلف استان آذربایجان غربی انتخاب شدند. یک مصاحبه نیمه ساختاریافته و یک مشاهده سه جلسه ای به عنوان ابزار جمع آوری داده ها انجام شد. نتایج تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها حاکی از آن است که معلمان زبان انگلیسی با وجود اینکه با مفاهیم IS و ICC آشنایی داشتند و می دانستند زبان و فرهنگ اصطلاحات مجزا نیستند، اما به دلیل قوانینی که جامعه بر آنها تحمیل می کند، فرهنگ را در کلاس ها نادیده گرفتند. در واقع، برای معلمان، مفهوم زبان اولویت اصلی است در حالی که فرهنگ در کمانچه دوم نقش دارد. این مطالعه پیامدهای آموزشی برای معلمان و زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی در غلبه بر تفاوت های فرهنگی برای بهبود سطح مهارت زبان دارد.

واژگان کلیدی: آگاهی فرهنگی; باورهای معلمان زبان انگلیسی، صلاحیت ارتباطی بین فرهنگی؛ حساسیت بین فرهنگی

رویکرد کارکردی سیستمی در ارزیابی کیفیت ترجمه یک رمان: مطالعه موردی The Sound and The Fury

حسن کاظمی، رویا رنجبر محمدی

چکیده

ارزیابی کیفیت ترجمه با تمرکز بر تدوین یک مدل جامع برای ارزیابی ترجمه، توجه روزافزونی به حوزه مطالعات ترجمه پیدا کرده است. با این حال، توجه کمی به استفاده از نظریه های زبانی در قضاوت ارزشی ترجمه شده است. هدف این مطالعه به کارگیری نوع خاصی از تحلیل زبانی مبتنی بر زبان شناسی عملکردی سیستمی (SFL) به عنوان چارچوبی برای ارزیابی کیفیت ترجمه یک رمان بود. ضمناً با هدف شناسایی انواع خطاهای آشکار و راهبردهای ترجمه انگلیسی به فارسی مورد استفاده قرار گرفت. برای این منظور، سی صفحه از کتاب «صدا و خشم» اثر فاکنر (1329) و ترجمه آن توسط بهمن شولهور (2003) انتخاب شد و عدم تطابق بین سه فراکارکرد معنایی فکری، بین فردی و موضوعی بر اساس SFLشناسایی شد. مقایسه متن مبدأ (ST) و متن مقصد (TT) نشان داد که معنای ایدهآل بیشترین تعداد خطا را در مترجم دارد. علاوه بر این، حذف بزرگترین نوع خطای ترجمه آشکار است. بنابراین، مترجم بیشتر از راهبردهای کاهش متن و راهبردهای گسترش متن در ترجمه ST استفاده کرده است. نتایج نشان داد که SFL را می توان با موفقیت برای ارزیابی ترجمه صحیح سه فراکارکرد زبان به کار برد. این مطالعه پیامدهای مهمی برای طراحان درسی مطالعات ترجمه، معلمان ترجمه و مترجمان ادبی دارد.

واژگان کلیدی: معنای ایدهآل، معنای بین فردی، فراکارکرد، زبانشناسی کارکردی سیستمی، معنای موضوعی

موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در زبان انگلیسی برای اهداف خاص: مروری بر پژوهش های کنونی

بهاره کشتی آراست، هادی صالحی، امید طباطبایی، رویا بهارلویی

چکیده

این مطالعه گزارش پیشینه پژوهش های مرتبط با موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در آموزش انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه که مانع ارتقا آموزش زبان انگلیسی از طریق این ادغام هست می باشد. بررسی پیشینه پژوهش راه‌های رفع این موانع را روشن تر کرده است. به منظور نیل به این هدف، مقاله با بررسی برخی از پژوهش های مهم ایرانی و بین‌المللی در مورد موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در آموزش انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه آغاز می شود و سپس تعدادی از موانع اولیه، ثانویه و راه‌های رسیدگی آنها برای کمک به ارتقا و تغییرآموزش سنتی انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه برجسته می شود. این پژوهش می تواند برای افرادی که در مورد درس های انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه تصمیم گیری می کنند، برای توسعه دهندگان مطالب آموزشی انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه و برای استادان انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه مفید باشد که آموزش انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه از آموزش سنتی که استاد محور و مبتنی بر متن است به آموزش جدید انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه از طریق ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات تغییر پیدا کند. این مقاله مروری دارای فواید عملی نیز می باشد. در بیشتر مواقع، تغییر چالش برانگیز است. این گزارش مروری درباره پژوهش های قبلی مرتبط با موانع ادغام فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات در سطح آموزش عالی و پیشنهاد راه هایی برای رسیدگی به آنها ممکن است به رفع موانع کمک کند و ممکن است پذیرش روش های جدید آموزش و یادگیری آموزش زبان انگلیسی با اهداف ویژه را افزایش دهد.

واژگان کلیدی: فناوری اطلاعات و ارتباطات، موانع اولیه، انگلیسی برای اهداف ویژه، موانع ثانویه، آموزش

فهرست مطالب

مشاورین علمی این شماره :

اعضای هیئت تحریریه